



This introductory critical diffraction, which frames the PhD by Portfolio, has been delivered in digital format but has also been provided as this paperback book. This unorthodox approach is intentional as the materialities and paratextualities of the book in your hand strengthen many of the claims within the following text. Specifically, the materialities of words align with the materialities of jewellery 'things' and they both recede from view in their intra-active becoming-with. The approach in creating this book centres on two specific and key thoughts: creative art-production and the poetics of things {such as the artbook}) can be critical (at an advanced level), and that materialities offer implicit, tacit, and embodied knowledge which further activate the meaning (and explicit knowledge) of any semantically written and meaning-full text.

The author asks that the audience and examiners review this text (the paperback) as the original, and the standard format submission as its supplemental.

A deeper rationale for the format of this text can be located in Appendix D.



# I Can't Even String a Sentence Together

*Or*

## Why Wear Words

*...a practice-led enquiry into the relations of language,  
narrative, body, and thing...*

by  
Jonathan BOYD

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of PhD  
by Prior Publication/Portfolio

Kingston University  
Kingston School of Art

September 2024  
commentary word count: 29, 731

# Abstract

This PhD by portfolio contributes to the field of jewellery and, more widely to applied art in ways which are positional, methodological, and poetic. Substantiated by a 'jewellery thinking' which shifts away from the socially mechanistic approach of the Body/Wearer/Viewer/Object dynamic towards a type of art-as/is-jewellery production which implicitly and explicitly explores the materialities of words and meanings inherent in jewellery. Three questions emerged over the fourteen years of practice which interrogate why and how we wear words, how things/meaning/words take form and how one might write a 'thing'.

This introductory diffraction frames the portfolio, via a rhizomatic and emergent methodology, offering lines of flight through academic and creative writing. '*...saccades...*' and 'Fixations' are utilised as chaptering devices separating creative emergent writings which emphasize non-hierarchical rhizomatic potentialities, alongside critical diffractions which locate the portfolio of practice in appropriate literature and contexts. This chaptering reflects the physical and material process of reading where our eyes flit across the text in seemingly chaotic oscillations and fluctuations. Written as a paperback book, this critical diffraction emphasises the material nature of reading as an intimate act where words disappear and reappear from sight in a process similar to the wearing of jewellery. It is an approach that sees all writing as a form of art practice and all art practice as a form of writing.

The portfolio contains artefacts, exhibitions, and writings which have been showcased extensively and internationally, with their impact disseminated holistically as a pedagogical model for teaching. A practice-led approach has been key in the development of artworks and writing where poetic interpretations have grown from various forms of linguistic and literary analysis and where the 'knowingly not-knowing' of artistic practice is palpated for new potentials in the relation of 'things' and words. Jewellery is written, as a type of making, in an intra-active emergence and methods are appropriately multi-disciplinary. Methods include the conceptual (deconstructive, rhizomatic, emergent, asemic, Lucretian/kinetic materialism) and practical (creative writing, performance, complex-casting, traditional handcraft, digital experimentation, moving image). What results from this research is a way of understanding jewellery as a discipline.



The portfolio is contextualised within a lineage of fictioning or narrative practices, difference via topophilic resonance, jewellery theory and deconstructive approaches to craft informed by Astfalck, den Besten, Legg, Rana, Rowe and Ungar. Of significant impact is the grounding in a wide range of social theory, new materialisms, popular science, and postmodern/poststructuralist philosophy specifically, but not limited to, Ahmed, Bachelard, Barad, Barthes, Burrows, Berardi, Deleuze, Derrida, Dennett, Genette, Golding, Guattari, Han, Harman, Heidegger, Ingold, Miller, Nail, Rovelli, and Stewart.

The original contribution to the disciplines of jewellery and applied art is evidenced through the collation of this portfolio and framed through this diffractive commentary. The contributions are multifaceted, offering positional, methodological, and poetic insights. Positionally, a cross-analysis of jewellery with textual criticism and philosophy reveals jewellery to be a richly entangled matter, symbiotic and intra-active in its becoming-with. Methodologically, a neurodivergently rhizomatic approach has allowed jewellery-as-art creation to be multiplicitous and far-reaching beyond its traditional social and decorative framing. Poetically, in the cross-pollination of words and things, jewellery has been shown, like words, to recede from view in their co-becoming-with. Due to its methodological approach a teleological final output is replaced by lines of flight; however, an appropriate conclusionary point is evidenced in an asemic, AI influenced, turn away from the semantic baggage of the word.



Fig. i

## Acknowledgements

This research has been undertaken over a significant period and in the shadow of too many significant influences to name. Jewellery Manifest holds a long list of thanks which span the first ten years of this research, and my love and thanks continue to extend to all those listed there.

This PhD by Portfolio has been wonderfully supported by my supervisors Professor Sara Upstone and Alexis Teplin who have been critical, insightful, and supportive of my plans in the writing of this critical commentary. Sara, thank you for your generous reflection and support.

It would be impossible to discuss my research without highlighting two key figures, Professor Michael Rowe and Professor Johnny Golding, whose influence, support, and wild discombobulating conversations have radically changed the trajectory of my life, thinking and academic career.

Thank you to Professor Ken Neil for his support in undertaking this reflection on my research and all my colleagues in MERC (especially my co-lead Professor Peter Oakley) and Applied Art (in particular Dr Steve Brown with whom I've found a fellow level of ~~madness~~ creativity).

Thank you to my family Jo, Rosa, and Luca.

This is for Luca.



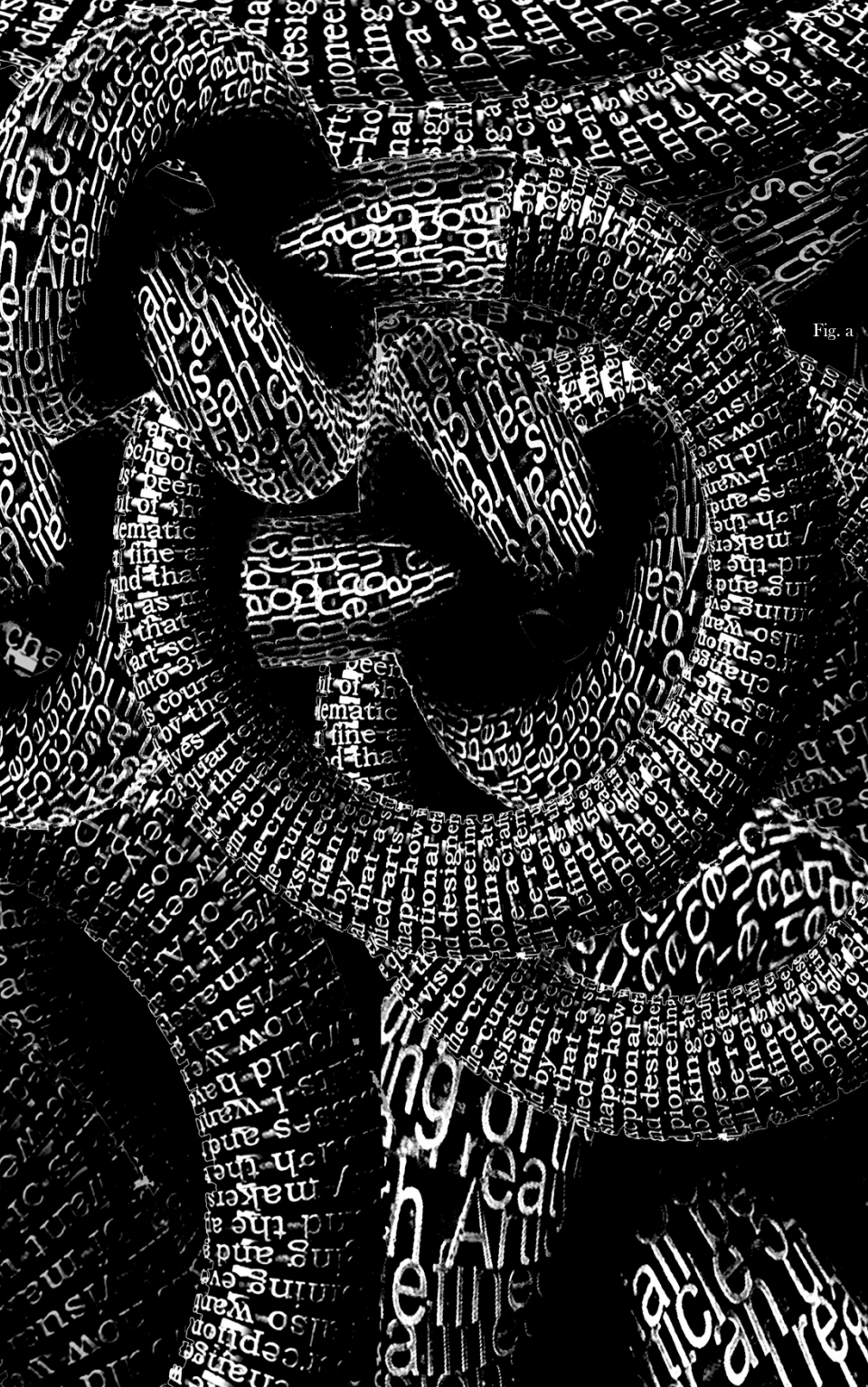


Fig. a

## List of Figures

Where the listed figures relate to artwork or aspects of Boyd's own research, the column on the right indicates in which Block of the Portfolio this artwork can be found.

<u>Fig. i</u>	3	Boyd, J. (2022). <i>Twisted Words (Or) A poetic re-analysis of the convoluted meaning of craft</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<u>Fig. 1</u>	17	Boyd, J. (2024). Image of the Cretan Hills (Greece, 2024). Image copyright: Boyd, J.	-
<u>Fig. 2</u>	22	Boyd, J. (2022). Sketch; <i>anatomy of an eye</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	-
<u>Fig. 3</u>	29	Boyd, J. (2019). <i>I Can't Even String a Sentence Together</i> . Image copyright: Flury F / Gallery SO.	Block 2
<u>Fig. 4</u>	30	Rana, M. (2023). <i>Jewellery is Life, Installation at the Goldsmiths Company</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	-
<u>Fig. 5</u>	30	Boyd, J. (2019). Cover of <i>Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 6</u>	30	Boyd, J. (2019). <i>Page: 86 of Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 7</u>	32	Boyd, J. (2010). <i>Wittgenstein Filigree</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 8</u>	42	Boyd, J. (2015). <i>Possible Narratives from an Empty Space #1</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 9</u>	44	Boyd, J. (2012). <i>An Endless Rant on Craft</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 10</u>	45	Boyd, J. (2014). Clyde Built. Image copyright: The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 11</u>	46	Boyd, J. (2023). Image from Radical Matter peer-reviewed essay: <i>(This excerpt comes from a longer essay documenting the thinking and positioning of these images)</i> Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<u>Fig. 12</u>	47	Murphy- Johnston, L. (2022), <i>Acting Like a Chair on the DLR</i> . Image copyright: Murphy- Johnston, L.	-
<u>Fig. 13</u>	47	Liu, K. (2021). <i>Bacterial Landscape</i> . Image copyright: Liu, K.	-
<u>Fig. 14</u>	47	Boyd, J. (2024). <i>...pink....</i> Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Appendix
<u>Fig. 15</u>	48	Boyd, J. (2024). (detail) <i>...pink....</i> Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Appendix
<u>Fig. 16</u>	49	Boyd, J. (2020). Still from moving image performance <i>Beige</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 2
<u>Fig. 17</u>	49	Boyd, J. (2020). Still from moving image performance <i>Beige</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 2
<u>Fig. 18</u>	50	Rowe, M. (2023). <i>Metaphysics of Presence [Thinging Thoughts/Thoughting Things]</i> . Image copyright: Rowe, M.	-
<u>Fig. 19</u>	51	Boyd, J. (2024). <i>...it matters what knots knot knots... (or) ...why are you wearing my granda's watch....</i> Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 4



<a href="#"><u>Fig. 20</u></a>	52	Boyd, J. (2024), (detail/accompanying photo) <i>...it matters what knots knot knots... (or) ...why are you wearing my granda's watch...</i> Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 21</u></a>	53	Boyd, J. (2019) Image of exhibition: <i>Thoughts Between the Land and the Sea: Raising the Doggerland</i> . Gallery SO London. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 2
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 22</u></a>	54	Boyd, J. (2019). Box of <i>Illustrations of the Doggerland</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 2
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 23</u></a>	54	Boyd, J. (2021), Detail from box; <i>Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line</i> , Gallerie Marzee. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 24</u></a>	55	Boyd, J. (2019). <i>Untying This Mess</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 2
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 25</u></a>	55	Boyd, J. (2019) <i>Very Little Common Ground</i> . Image copyright: National Museum of Scotland.	Block 2
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 26</u></a>	57	Boyd, J. (2016). <i>Street Furniture #3</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 27</u></a>	57	Boyd, J. (2016). Still from making of <i>Street Furniture #3</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 28</u></a>	59	Boyd, J. (2017-24). Scan From Personal Collection Of Marginalia's. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 2
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 29</u></a>	61	Boyd J (2009). <i>Impenetrable Philosophy</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 30</u></a>	72	Boyd, J. (2019). <i>Illustrations of the Doggerland</i> . Image copyright Flury, F/ Gallery SO.	Block 2
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 31</u></a>	75	Boyd, J. (2019). Page 161 of: <i>Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 32</u></a>	77	Boyd, J. (2019). Page 146 of: <i>Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 33</u></a>	77	Boyd, J. (2021). Cover of <i>Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 34</u></a>	77	Boyd, J. (2024). Digital Sketch of basic Perceptron. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	-
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 35</u></a>	78	Boyd, J. (2021). <i>Tim Ingold on the Chaise Lounge</i> . At Gallerie Marzee. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 36</u></a>	78	Boyd, J. (2021) Box of <i>Performing a Reflection on Shine</i> . Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line at Gallerie Marzee. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 37</u></a>	78	Boyd, J. (2021) VR drawing of <i>Performing a Reflection on Shine</i> . Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line at Gallerie Marzee. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 38</u></a>	78	Boyd, J. (2021) <i>Performing a Reflection on Shine</i> . Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line at Gallerie Marzee. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 39</u></a>	79	Boyd, J. VR Drawing of <i>Performing Words in Space</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 40</u></a>	80	Boyd, J. (2019). Pages 150 & 154 of: <i>Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 41</u></a>	83	Boyd, J. (2016). Still from <i>TO SORN</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1

<u>Fig. 42</u>	83	Boyd, J. (2016). <i>The M8 Intersection at Charing Cross as a Metaphor for my Heartbeat</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 43</u>	85	Boyd, J. (2023) <i>Still from admin</i> . Image credit: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<u>Fig. 44</u>	85	Boyd, J. (2023) <i>Still from admin</i> . Image credit: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<u>Fig. 45</u>	90	Boyd, J. (2021). <i>Fossilisations of Gesture</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<u>Fig. 46</u>	91	Boyd, J. (2016). <i>TO SORN Documenting a Rare Sight and still from TO SORN</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 47</u>	91	Boyd, J. (2019). Still from Gravity Sketch writing in VR for <i>Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line</i> . Image credit: Boyd J.	Block 2
<u>Fig. 48</u>	92	Boyd, J. (2019). Pages 220 & 221 of: <i>Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 49</u>	93	Boyd, J. (2017). Detail from casting experiment/ <i>Untitled: Jonathan Boyd and Adam Henderson</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 50</u>	94	Boyd, J. (2017). Casting experiment/ <i>Untitled: Jonathan Boyd and Adam Henderson</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 51</u>	94	Boyd, J. (2017). Casting experiment/ <i>Untitled: Jonathan Boyd and Adam Henderson</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 52</u>	95	Boyd, J. (2019). Four wall panels: <i>Out at Sea #1-3 &amp; 5</i> . Image copyright: Boyd J.	Block 2
<u>Fig. 53</u>	95	Boyd, J. (2019). Four wall panels: <i>Out at Sea #1-3 &amp; 5</i> . Image copyright: Boyd J.	Block 2
<u>Fig. 54</u>	95	Boyd, J. (2019). Four wall panels: <i>Out at Sea #1-3 &amp; 5</i> . Image copyright: Boyd J.	Block 2
<u>Fig. 55</u>	95	Boyd, J. (2019). Four wall panels: <i>Out at Sea #1-3 &amp; 5</i> . Image copyright: Boyd J.	Block 2
<u>Fig. 56</u>	108	Boyd, J. (2017). <i>Yield</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 57</u>	109	Boyd, J. (2017). <i>Yeild</i> . Image copyright: Heffels, M./Gallerie Marzee	Block 2
<u>Fig. 58</u>	111	Boyd, J. (2019). Still from Gravity Sketch writing in VR for <i>Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line</i> at Gallerie Marzee. Image credit: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<u>Fig. 59</u>	113	Boyd, J. (2019). Still from Gravity Sketch writing in VR for <i>Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line</i> at Gallerie Marzee. Image credit: Boyd, J.	Block 3
<u>Fig. 60</u>	113	Boyd, J. (2023). Image from <i>Radical Matter</i> peer-reviewed essay: <i>(This excerpt comes from a longer essay documenting the thinking and positioning of these images)</i> Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<u>Fig. 61</u>	114	Boyd, J. (2023) Scans of artbook: <i>Vol.3</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<u>Fig. 62</u>	115	Boyd, J. (2009). <i>Boyd Truetype</i> . Image copyright: Royal College of Art Library Collection.	Block 4
<u>Fig. 63</u>	115	Boyd, J. (2009). (detail) <i>Boyd Truetype</i> . Image copyright: Royal College of Art Library Collection.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 64</u>	115	Boyd, J. (2009). (detail) <i>Boyd Truetype</i> . Image copyright: Royal College of Art Library Collection.	Block 1



<a href="#"><u>Fig. 65</u></a>	116	Boyd, J. (2023) <i>admin</i> and <i>...presemic undulations...</i> installed at Cromwell Place in London. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 66</u></a>	116	Boyd, J. (2023) <i>...presemic undulations...</i> installed at Cromwell Place in London. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 67</u></a>	116	Boyd, J. (2023) (detail) <i>...presemic undulations...</i> Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 68</u></a>	119	Boyd, J. (2010). <i>Case Study #1 in the Latent Potential of Objects</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 69</u></a>	120	Boyd, J (2024). (multiple pages). <i>...this is not a house...</i> Image copyright Boyd, J.	
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 70</u></a>	120	Boyd, J. (2019). Pages 163 of: <i>Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 71</u></a>	120	Boyd, J (2024). <i>...this is not a house...</i> (brooch). Image copyright Boyd, J.	Block 4
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 72</u></a>	122	Boyd, J. (2019). Pages 216 of: <i>Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts</i> . Model with <i>Heirloom to an Heiress to Nae Much but Love</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 73</u></a>	122	Boyd, J. (2023). <i>Distributed Knotting's Or Where 'Not-knowing' Meets 'Unthought'</i> . Image copyright Heffels, M./Gallerie Marzee	Block 4
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 74</u></a>	122	Boyd, J. (2023). <i>Distributed Knotting's Or Where 'Not-knowing' Meets 'Unthought'</i> . Image copyright Boyd, J.	Block 4
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 75</u></a>	122	Boyd, J. (2023). Scan from book: <i>Distributed Knotting's Or Where 'Not-knowing' Meets 'Unthought'</i> . Image copyright Boyd, J.	
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 76</u></a>	124	Boyd, J. (2019). Detail of pages 161 of: <i>Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 77</u></a>	127	Boyd, J. (2023). Installation of works at the research exhibition <i>...proliferating materialities...</i> at Gallery SZN. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 78</u></a>	128	Warren, M. (2019). Detail of <i>Viewpoint II</i> . Image copyright: Warren, M.	-
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 79</u></a>	130	Boyd, J. (2023). <i>Beneath the Surface</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 4
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 80</u></a>	138	Boyd, R & Boyd, L. (2024). Home image of bracelet made by Rosa and Luca O'Neill Boyd. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	-
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 81</u></a>	148	Boyd, J. (2019). Wall panel: <i>Out at Sea #1</i> . Image copyright: Boyd J.	Block 2
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 82</u></a>	149	Boyd, J. (2021). Scan of REF Portfolio: <i>Beyond the Bench</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Appendix
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 83</u></a>	149	Boyd J (2016). Scan of bin, taken Maryhill Road, Glasgow. Image copyright: Boyd J.	Appendix
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 84</u></a>	150	Boyd, J. (2019). Still from Gravity Sketch writing in VR for <i>Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line</i> at Gallerie Marzee. Image credit: Boyd, J.	Block 2
<a href="#"><u>Fig. 85</u></a>	151	Boyd, J. (2014). Detail of Sprue flow. REF 2014 submission. Image copyright: Boyd, J.	-

<u>Fig. 86</u>	155	Boyd, J. (2023-24). Details of material workshops specifically focusing on carbon and AI, ink and Heidegger and group asemic workings. Image copyright: Boyd J.	-
<u>Fig. 87</u>	155	Boyd J (2023-24). Details of material workshops specifically focusing on the cuneiformic and palimpsestic. Image copyright: Boyd J.	-
<u>Fig. 88</u>	155	Boyd, J. (2023-24). Details of material workshops specifically focusing on carbon and AI, ink and Heidegger and group asemic workings. Image copyright: Boyd J.	-
<u>Fig. 89</u>	156	Boyd, J. (2023-24). Detail of material workshops specifically focusing on carbon and AI, ink and Heidegger and group asemic workings. Image copyright: Boyd J.	-
<u>Fig. 90</u>	156	Boyd, J. (2023-24). Detail of material workshops specifically focusing on carbon and AI, ink and Heidegger and group asemic workings. Image copyright: Boyd J.	-
<u>Fig. 91</u>	158	Boyd, J. (2019). Cover of <i>Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 1
<u>Fig. 92</u>	158	Boyd, J. (2019). Cover of <i>Thoughts Between the Land and Sea: Raising the Doggerland</i> . Image copyright: Boyd, J.	Block 2
<u>Fig. 93</u>	158	Boyd, J. (2024). Cover of <i>I Can't Even String a Sentence Together or Why Wear Words</i> (PhD by Portfolio submission Kingston School of Art). Image copyright: Boyd, J.	-
<u>Fig. 94</u>	159	Boyd, J. (2024). Editing detail of <i>I Can't Even String a Sentence Together or Why Wear Words</i> (PhD by Portfolio submission Kingston School of Art). Image copyright: Boyd, J.	-

Images have been used on blank reverse pages, these images shift from entwined narrative structures towards an asemic materiality and then non-semantic material flows in clay and water. This shift in imagery broadly reflects the shift in the research.

<u>Fig. a</u>	7 & 13	Boyd, J. (2023-24). A collage of multiple artworks. Image copyright: Boyd, J.
<u>Fig. b</u>	17, 97 & 131	Boyd, J. (2023-24) An asemic undulating narrative structure developed through data sets of Boyd's physical works and Runway ML. Image copyright: Boyd, J.
<u>Fig. c</u>	141 & 147	Boyd, J. (2023-24) 3D CAD illustration of <i>...presemic undulations...</i> (2023) Image copyright: Boyd, J.
<u>Fig. d</u>	153 & 157	Boyd, J. (2023-24) Image from clay and palimpsest workshop. Image copyright: Boyd, J.
<u>Fig. e</u>	161 & 169	Boyd, J. (2023-24) Image of flowing water from Boyd's personal photo collection. Image copyright: Boyd, J.

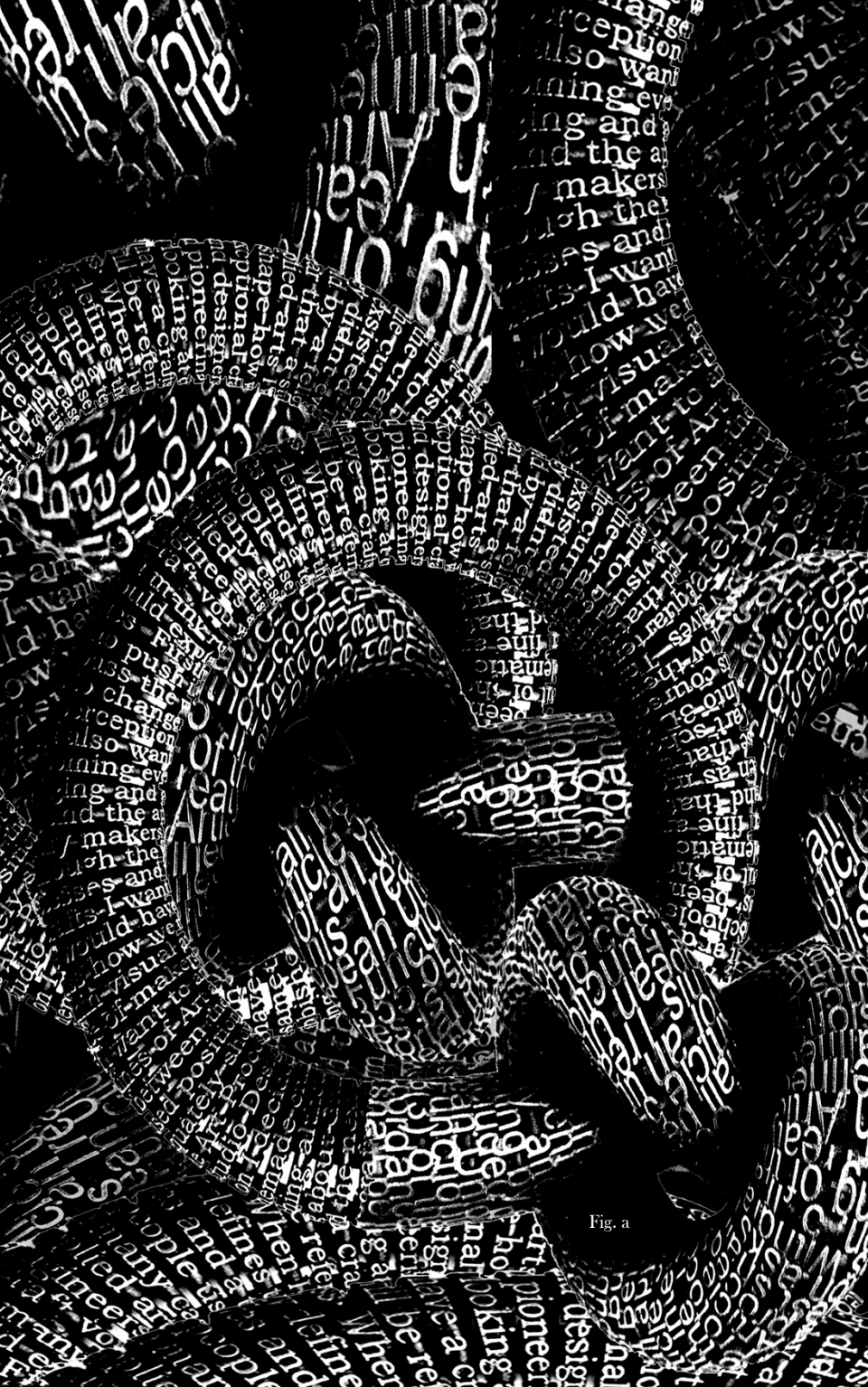


Fig. a

# Abbreviation Key

## Abbreviations of Author's Work/Words

*JM* *Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts.*  
Publication. 2019. Boyd J.

*RtD* *Thoughts Between the Land and Sea: Raising the Doggerland.*  
Exhibition, Gallery SO (London). 2019. Boyd J.

*EDotTL* *Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line.*  
Exhibition, Gallerie Marzee (Nijmegen). 2021.  
Boyd J.

B/I<>M/D(I)/M Relational ground for jewellery practice to develop, featuring four key components:

- Body
- Im<>Material
- Difference (Identity)
- Meaning

## Other Abbreviations

AI Artificial Intelligence  
ML Machine Learning  
LLM Large Language Models (such as ChatGPT)



# Contents

i	Title Page	1
ii	Abstract	2
iii	Acknowledgements	4
iv	List of Figures	6
v	Abbreviation Key	12
vi	Contents	13
vii	Preface	16
viii	GLOSSES	< - >
ONE	THRESHOLD	22
	<i>...saccades... &amp; Fixations</i> <i>-methodology and contribution-</i>	
TWO	<i>...saccade...</i> (630 words)	38
THREE	<i>first</i> Fixation How One Wears Words?  <i>- bodies-</i> <i>- in&lt;&gt;material-</i> <i>- difference (identity)-</i> <i>- meaning -</i>	42
FOUR	<i>...saccade...</i> (440 words)	68
FIVE	<i>second</i> Fixation How Might Form In-form Meaning, and Meaning In-Form Form?  <i>-form-</i>	72

*-in-forming-*

SIX	<i>...saccade...</i> (562 words)	100
SEVEN	<i>third</i> Fixation How Might One Write a Thing?  <i>-might-</i> <i>-write-</i> <i>-thing ≈ one-</i>	108
EIGHT	<del>Conclusion</del>	134
NINE	Postface	138
Appendix A	Key Terms ( <i>a gloss-ary</i> )	142
Appendix B	The Role of Technology in the Research	148
Appendix C	Pedagogical Testing Grounds	154
Appendix D	Format of Commentary	158
Appendix E	Curriculum Vitae	162
	- Bibliography	170
	- Outline of Portfolio	184



Fig. b

## Preface

The following critical diffraction was completed in late August 2024. It was completed as I hastily pasted cross-referenced page numbers into the List of Figures; a task undertaken in a taxi ride to the airport. Post-flight one morning, on the largest Hellenic island, I was contemplating the way in which the heat-haze separated the layers of mountains into what appeared as an arrangement of paper cut-outs. Like the scenery had been arranged for a stage play. The physical ruggedness of the barren and mountainous summits folded into stacked planes. This folding laid in direct opposition to the hazy blending of the blues of the sea and sky which formed a swirling, transitional ambiguity. The mercilessness of the Grecian sun created these effectly blurrings, the strength of its glare causing a doubting of ‘one’s’ own perception of ‘things’.

This landscape, with its hidden labyrinthine tunnels, offered the ancient Cretans a worldview, not of static objects but of “*a process-view of the world where life and death were two dimensions of the same meandering process...*” where “*the world was not just indeterminate flux. It also had labyrinthine patterns that folded and ebbed in and out of each other in iterative spirals...*” (Nail, 2024, 116).

Waking early to read and write whilst the searing sun slowly rose creating these perceptual effects became a daily routine. One morning, reading *Chaos and Poetry* by Italian theorist Bifo Berardi (a text which has offered increasing influence). As I used my red pen to underline through a marginalic reading, I tilted the book back to think on what I had just read; that through: “*a new phase of... digital mutation... the sensorium itself had plunged into computational environments of simulated experience*”, (Berardi, 2018, 67). I gave the iPhone sitting next to my coffee, a fleeting, despairing glance.

As I refocused and tilted the page back, something momentarily struck me. In that specific moment of wearing words, in this instance my ‘wearing’ might also be described as a ‘reading’, the ferocity of the sun cast an intense glare across the page. The tiny fibres of the page raised and appeared multiplicitous as the tiny cast shadows made materialities monumentally evident. The difference in their diminutive scale and their

starkly massive appearance due only to the scaled intensity required in any 'reading'. For a second, the black ink seemed to float above this pagely sea of interwoven matters. As I pulled the page back upright, the glare shifted and shone instead across the surface of the atramentous, inky type. As the light caught their surface they disappeared only to remerge very quickly. I repeated this movement several times and watched as the letters disappeared and reappeared, and in tandem watched as the sea of interwoven fibrous matters emerged and dissipated. I re-read, and as I re-read the words disappeared in a different way, replaced by an internal monologue ~~speaking~~ the words I was reading.

...

This transition of words and things mingling and receding, in and out of view, was made perceptually explicit and manifest. The material page had forced itself beyond the words only for the words to reposition themselves at the fore. The page was not a binary between matter and meaning but a flux between the two. Words and things had perceptually entangled.

Whatever my practice and research has grasped at over multiple years seemed, to me, to be encapsulated in this sliver of a moment.

Words had come to/into matter.

Fig. 1



# GLOSS\*

Gloss: Gloss

- Gloss is a double-edged word.
- It is contranymic.<sup>1</sup>
- A ‘glossary’ is an archive of glosses.
- Gloss (or the gloss-y) offers a shine, a reflection away towards other orientations, and other ways of ‘seeing’ ‘things’ (*denoting an ocularity in its sensibility*).
- A gloss reflects away whilst simultaneously peering through the surface of an understanding.
- Conversely, a gloss also offers a linguistic and infrapaginal depth to a term, offering additional meaning (*denoting the linguistic in a non-ocular sensibility*)
- A gloss is explicit *différance*.<sup>2</sup>
- It evidences a differing and a deferment of one term or one surface to multiple others.
- It is bi-directional and multiplicitous in both its seeking from and peering through a plane of meaning/interpretation.
- In our relations to shiny things (the gloss) we are left in ponderously uncanny territory as “*in its heterogenous values shininess is unstable... there are two poles of shininess’ values: the precious and the superficial.*” (Diepeveen & Van Laar, 2021, 15)
- The contranymic character of the term gloss plays on the duality inherent in the materiality of shiny things; forever seeking depth when haunted by a feeling of uncertainty.
- The gloss evidences this duality through concepts of labour (a historical transcendence) and imitation (kitsch), of knowing and not-knowing.

\*Several creative glosses (methodological explorations of a key term) will appear throughout this text to situate the ways in which meanings are questioned/opened/explored/contextualised.

---

<sup>1</sup> Contranym: a word having two meanings that contradict one another.

<sup>2</sup> “When written with an ‘a’, *différance* alludes to how the French verb *differer* means not only ‘to differ’, but also ‘to defer’, suggesting the idea of a deferred payment.” (Richards, 2008, 17)

## GLOSS

Gloss: Re-search (*Method as Marginalia, 2020*)

- *Re: To bring back, to return...*
- *Search: the finding or moving towards...*
- *Re/Search: To bring back to the search which is the seeking/moving towards...*
- *To bring back to the search is to bring back to a thing which has continual movement...*
- *The search is continually moving towards, it is not static, you are searching...*
- *The bringing back must be brought back within the search, you can't bring something back to an exterior of a search, as this would not be the search...*
- *This continual bringing back to within the search creates an inhabiting of the search, a living within the search...*
- *It is not a linear bringing back because the search is forever moving and its movement towards is not restricted by two dimensions...*
- *The forever movement of the bringing back within the search means the search is alive...*
- *It has agency...*
- *Living is experiential and therefore so is the bringing back within the search...*
- *Living involves sensing and so this is a sensuous experiencing of the bringing back within the search...*
- *It gains rigour from its very nature/experience/sensual burden of being alive. Being alive is complex and must be rigorous due to the complexity of living...*
- *It gains originality from its agency and growing independence...*
- *It gains significance from its ever delving backwards (an endless contextualising) ...*
- *It works (moves) toward a deeper revealing through its living motion of ever returning within the search...*
- *This motion, this very movement is by definition a continual practising of a practice; a returning within and working through....*



*“I read while writing: slowly, taking pleasure in prefacing at length each term.”*

(Derrida, 1973, 43)

*“The text has no stable identity, no stable origin, no stable end.”*  
(Spivak, 1974, xii)

# THRESHOLD

'Introduction' is a disheartening term in some respects. It productively and predictably tells you; this is what is to come. You have started. It feels misplaced here. As does 'prologue' whose typical brevity would be stretched to breaking point. As will become clear both terms are methodological misfits with what is to follow. A 'threshold' however offers something different; it leads to a type of 'and' thinking. It talks of a tipping point, that there was some-thing-here-before now changing. Some-thing is spilling over. A 'threshold' is the turning of the page, the placing of the marital ring, the removal of the marital band (see: 48), the threshold is an *"undefined zone between the inside and outside... a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one's whole reading..."* (Lejeune via Genette, 1997, 2).

This THRESHOLD will provide the reader with two important contexts to support the reading of this rhizomatic and diffractive portfolio commentary. The initial section will focus on how one reads this text and how to navigate its variations on chaptering. This is followed by a section that provides a methodological framework and outlines the contribution of the research to the field of Applied Art.

- ...saccades... and Fixations -

When reading, *"researchers have shown that eyes work together, and when searching for an object move in a series of rapid jerks, known as*

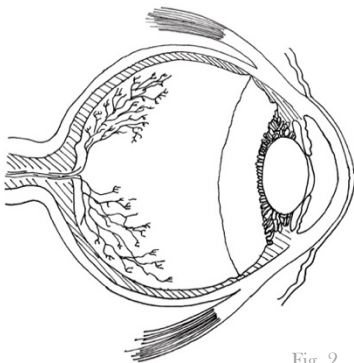


Fig. 2

*saccades (from the French, 'the flick of a sail'). Between each movement, there is a period of relative stability, known as fixation. During reading, the eyes do not follow lines of print in a smooth linear manner but proceed in a series of saccades and fixations"* (Crystal, 2007, 121). In addition, there is researched evidence that for those across the neurodivergent spectrum, there may be different and more intensive saccade functions/fluctuations

(Huang & Chan, 2020). The following texts utilise this conception of the neurodivergent, multi-directional, jittery, hyper-saccade, and the hold of the stable fixation as a rhizomatic literary methodological device where academic critical diffractions entitled Fixations are de-territorialised by preceding short chapters entitled *...saccades...*. Within the portfolio, there is precedence for approaching chaptering creatively as seen in *Jewellery Manifest: Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts (JM)* (2019) where chapters were split into two sides reminiscent of a vinyl Long Player record. In JM this was done as the two sets of chapters had different feels to this author. Side One dealt with textual ideas, Side Two is more experimental and focused on jewellery and narrative.

Here, in the following text, the chapters can be understood as follows:

*...saccades...* Reflecting the short, rapid agitated movements of the saccade, these texts will develop discussion through the rhythm and cadence of (a) creative rhizomatic writing. This format of writing has developed through recent research, specifically the essay: (*This excerpt comes from a longer essay documenting the thinking and positioning of these images*) (2023). These writings use a non-hierarchical format,<sup>3</sup> poetically offering lines of flight which fire off in multiple directions. Their functionality lies in their palimpsestic logic and their connections to other texts which endlessly defer and contextualise. In the Derridean sense these saccades are supplementary, by which I mean necessary,<sup>4</sup> and Deleuzian in the methodological appropriateness to the portfolio. Like Kafka's doors, windows and picture frames, the footnotes are essential in their rhizomatic portaling to different possibilities and contexts.

It is suggested that a rhythmic reading should be followed by a slower de-constructive/re-constructive read oscillating between text<>footnote. The appropriateness of the footnote within these texts is through its alignment to the history of the gloss (see: 18) and its relation to the

---

<sup>3</sup> Including the rejection of capital letters.

<sup>4</sup> "Through Derrida's exploration...the idea of the pure original is utterly ruined...The origin is never pure, because according to the logic of the supplement, there can always be a more original origin, an origin before the origin. Moreover, the origin is in need of the supplement in order to achieve its identity...No origin without supplementation" (Richards, 2008, 19).

paratextual nature of the margins. As with a neurodivergent reading, they encourage a contranymic uneasiness with the text (Genette, 2010, 319); they both reveal new insights whilst offering Deleuzian multiplicities. Footnotes take the marginal and place it at hand. Like the jewellery in this portfolio, which are worn textual artefacts, the words of the footnote shift and move just out of our intentional gaze and any move of these quotes into the poetic text would “*mean creating a lumpish or confusion generating hernia*” (Genette, 2010, 328). It is of no methodological misunderstanding that hernias are discovered through palpation.<sup>5</sup>

### Fixations

Fixations align to a more standard variation of academic writing, written with equal rigour to the *...saccades...* but holding a centre of discussion as opposed to the saccade’s intention which is to offer the text as the multiplicitous. Each Fixation frames the work within the portfolio whilst defining how the works answer the differing and emergent research questions. The *first* Fixation asks how one wears words and explores the textualities (and the political nature) of things. The *second* Fixation explores the materiality of words, whilst the final and *third* Fixation makes demands of semantic exactitude, exploring and making sense of the ruins of the word in light of synthetic Large Language Models. All three employ a ‘jewellery-thinking’.

### GLOSS

Six interspersed paratextual GLOSS appendices offer poetic interpretations of key terms, opening textual meaning to poetic possibility. These sections differ from *Appendix A: Glossary*, which provides more contextually objective interpretations.

Throughout this text, and the portfolio, quotes are written in italics (in *JM* (2019) a sans serif font is also used); whilst not academic standard, this has been done as a way of creatively visualising the difference between my own opinions and those of others. Further, italics offer the cursive

---

<sup>5</sup> The term palpating is taken from Deleuze as a process which indirectly feels, although doesn’t touch for differences. Such terminology is useful in relation to the “*knowingly using not-knowing*” (Fortnum, 2013, 84) of art research where implicities and differences are palpated for meaning.

dimension removed from upright fonts (Bringham, 2001, 56) the former highlighting the trace of contextual complexities in the text whilst the latter evidences a trace of the histories of writing at play in any text.

The portfolio brings together a critical practice in both artwork and writing. Block One consists of the critical reflection *JM*, which positions ten years of practice (2009-2019). Whilst a key output, *JM*'s ideas have been further framed, questioned, and expanded upon in subsequent research. This critical diffraction serves as a testament to the progression of the research, highlighting the ongoing critical coherence both before and after *JM*'s publication, and therefore could be understood as a sequel to that work.

Blocks Two and Three centre on two major solo shows and aligned writing; these emphasise the political nature of the practice and developed new ways of materialising writing. They also question the socio-political stakes of wearing words.

Block Four brings together recent research utilising and critiquing Artificial Intelligence (AI) developing an asemic turn within the work. In a rhizomatic approach, there is no grand conclusion but instead an emergent body of possibilities and potentialities, making interrogative demands of the discipline and finding new "lines of flight". Whilst such an approach defies closure, the research evidences a conclusion (of sorts) in Block Four via an exhaustion of the word where semantic meaning has dissolved leaving the materialist ruins of asemic flow.

The sense and fluctuations of 'sight' have been offered as an approach for chaptering, yet it does so knowing that our senses are not always to be trusted and they cannot be separated with success. Normative ocularity delivers a certain way of perceiving the world and to make sense of our multiple senses we shift through the poetic processing of making-sense, and in making art *"the eye loses its pre-eminence in the very area in which it is dominant."* (Serres, 2016, 37). In traversing the sense-making properties of this research meaning is often 'palpated' via types of nonsense, that is, an exploration of the creative 'not-knowing' (the making). 'Touch' (the dry 'feel' of this paperback against the reader's skin) also plays a role in the implicit meanings within this text, as the word fades in and out of view.

*"...sense is a nonexistent entity, and, in fact, maintains very special relations with nonsense."* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1969, x).

This critical, rhizomatic diffraction shapes an understanding of the PhD by Portfolio which, in turn, examines the relations between words and things; the materialities of words and the textualities of things. It offers artworks as jewellery, understood as prose. This section will examine and describe the (practice-led) methodologies within the portfolio in an environment where “*the centre can no longer hold*” (Margetts, 2019) and where material-led practices (historically ‘applied art’ {no ‘s’})<sup>6</sup> have shifted away from idealised and hylomorphic form-ations of matter (think Leachian artefact) towards increasingly non-teleological flows of making. It contributes positionally, methodologically, and poetically to the consequences and shifting sands of post-~~craft~~<sup>7</sup> where “*the condition is...*” one of “*de-territorialization*” and, in which “*local communities have dispersed into a web of nomadism and migratory and virtual networks*” (Margetts, 2019, 50).

The positional contribution situates jewellery as an intra-active and symbiotic art-form offering complex onto-epistemological interpretations further enlivened when aligned to our understanding of the complexities of words. The methodological contribution is evident in the neurodivergent rhizomatic approach which creates generative potentialities and multiplicities, integrating conceptual methods such as emergence, deconstruction, diffraction and asemic logic. The poetic contribution frames the materialities of words and the textualities of jewellery, expanding jewellery’s fictioning potential, and suggesting that jewellery, like words, recede from view, in any attuned-being-in-the-world.

Methodologically, the rhizome is a concept developed by philosopher Gilles Deleuze and psychoanalyst Felix Guattari in their readings of Franz Kafka and further developed in the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia: A Thousand Plateaus*. This rhizome critiques cause-and-effect hierarchies of root>tree, arborescent knowledge structures towards a horizontal interconnected system (Sutton and Martin-Jones, 2008, 3). Rhizomatic thinking is one of de-territorializations, re-territorializations,

---

<sup>6</sup> Applied arts is a terminology to be wrestled with as it continues a hierarchical relationship with between applied and fine arts. A repositioning should expand on the concept of material-led practice hence a noted removal of the ‘s’ shifting any plurality away from the multiplicity of disciplines (jewellery, ceramics etc), towards a plurality of applications (to which there are innumerable ways to be led by and processes material).

<sup>7</sup> As outlined in Jewellery Manifest, craft in relation to discipline is always written in erasure (sous rature): ~~craft~~ (JM, Boyd, 2019, 57)



multiplicities, possibilities, and assemblages where “*multiplicity...acts on semiotic flows, material flows and social flows simultaneously*” and where “*there is no longer a tripartite division between a field of reality... and a field of representation... and a field of subjectivity.*” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, 25). This simultaneity, or better, enmeshment of textual<>material<>social flows is key to the research.

A critique of the rhizome, such as Johnny Golding’s, argues that the rhizome “*still seemed closer to metaphor and description than a tool with which to combat the binaries and all associated restrictions*” (Golding 2010, 13-14). However, the practice’s approach is not an exploration of, as many have visualised, a linear set of interacting networks like Actor-Network Theory (although this re-presentation has been dismissed by A.N.T theorist Bruno Latour). Instead it considers the rhizome as something akin to ginger, fibrous and interconnected, but also mushy. Fibrous complexity suspended in goo. The methodological thinking is interconnected yet diffuse, explicit yet oozes distractedly. It is defined by connecting relations in non-mathematic exactitude towards a fleshy meandering with intent, a sprawling flânerie.<sup>8</sup> Acknowledging Golding’s critique, the research is continually pulled back within this rhizomatic sprawling. In a sense, this is not to disagree with Golding instead it is to suggest that whatever thought runs through the practice sounds (or feels, or tastes) like the “and”ing of the rhizome. An interconnectivity, which is porous. Research highlighting similarities between brain and symbiotic fungal root structures (Baluška, Yamashita & Mancuso, 2021) align with descriptions of rhizomatic mapping suggesting a poetic interpretation wherein the rhizome is understood less as a metaphor and more as a parallel<>kin.

Alongside this, theorist and physicist Karen Barad has utilised the term diffraction instead of reflection (or reflexivity) as a methodology, arguing that reflexivity and reflectivity offer patterns of sameness, whilst diffraction “*maps where the effects of difference appear... bring(ing) the reality of entanglements to light.*” (Barad, 2007, 72). Through the writing of this diffraction, I am bringing to light the emergent coherence of the portfolio where an emphasis on diffraction over reflection is an onto-epistemological decision (knowing and being are not discrete concepts). It is one where entangled matters flow and fold in waves rather than in straight lines. It is an approach which emphasises “*dynamic relationality*” and where disciplinary boundaries do not “*entail a relation of absolute*

---

<sup>8</sup> For evidence of such a sprawling flânerie see *TO SORN* via (JM, Boyd, 2019, 197)

*exteriority*” (Barad, 2007, 93). Not understood as contradictory, these two approaches enmesh through a rhizomatic restlessness which in its multi-directionality and emergent possibilities keenly aligns with the hyperactive neurodivergence at play within the practice.

Key to the methodology is the positioning between Derridean deconstruction/monolingualism and Deleuze and Guattari’s analysis of Kafkaian ‘minor literature’ (1986), in which I am suggesting neurodivergent voices are implicitly included. Despite this exploration of poststructuralism, jewellery (as physical thing and theoretical space) creates a type of poetic joy<sup>9</sup> which counters poststructuralism’s scepticism. Jewellery demands a metamodern sensibility; described as an “*oscillation between aspects of both modernism and postmodernism*” where “*an informed naivety, a pragmatic idealism... oscillat(e) between sincerity and irony, deconstruction and construction, apathy and affect*” (Turner, 2015).<sup>10</sup> Jewellery then “*turns postmodern ethics inside out and discovers a kind of virtual ethics*” or “*Revolutionary Happiness*” (Storm, 2021, 25). Jewellery fosters intimacy and quiet joy, grating up alongside the postmodern exchange of “*solving problems for problematizing*” (Storm, 2021, 279). However metamodernism in its dialectic approach might not go far enough. A negation of negation only flops from one side to the other, always leaving an “*excluded middle*” (Golding, 2021, 462). Golding rejects any dialectic approach framing instead the “*encounter*” as offering a “*first glimpse of a speculative onto-epistemological materialism: fluid sticky; drawing a limit but infinite, subjective but objective...*” (ibid, 464) and “*where there is nothing wrong with hope.*” (ibid., 486).

Golding’s *Radical Matter*, a philosophical poetics, positions the art practitioner’s approach not as a counter to hard logic but as a required “*re-staging of ‘knowledge’ away from individuality... towards a distributed intelligence*” and a “*being-with together*” which “*brings with it a certain kind of parrhesia, a certain kind of truth telling, one rooted in empathy and care*” (ibid., 485-486). As in Golding’s “*encounter*”, this research folds and weaves naivety and criticality, play and questioning, hope, and being. These things are entangled, not two sides of one coin.

---

<sup>9</sup> “*jewel in Old French stems from a root word less literally tied to ideas of decoration but instead meaning ‘that which brings us joys’*” (JM, Boyd, 131, 2019)

<sup>10</sup> [www.metamodernism.org](http://www.metamodernism.org)

Positionally, in its multi-directional attention, the practice<>research can be framed as defining an innovative type of ‘jewellery-thinking’.<sup>11</sup> This ‘jewellery thinking’ acts as a way of developing a greater understanding of jewellery as an art form, as well as jewellery as a lens for understanding and exploring the world. ‘Thinking’ is utilised in a Heideggerian sense of ‘Being’ highly attuned to our being-(or Deleuzian becoming, or quantum emergence)-in-the-world.

Part of this positioning is the alignment with my experience as a neurodivergent reader through embodied marginalia which foster types of concrete ‘concrete’ (minor) literature (Deleuze, 1986). The product of this includes artworks and physical manifestations of a turning my inherited monolingualism, in which I have found my dwelling so discomfoting,<sup>12</sup> inside out. *I Can’t Even String a Sentence Together* (Boyd, 2019) is one such work of concrete ‘concrete’ (minor) literature, a single-stringed sentence flowing out of a book (an amended, painted copy of Homer’s *Odyssey*) into a fine chain.

*“What does it mean to read  
jewellery?”*

*What does it mean to wear  
words?”*

...

*I can string a necklace...*

*But...*

*I can’t even string a sentence  
together...”*

(Boyd, Society of Jewellery  
Historians Lecture, 2020)



Fig. 3

Positionally, jewellery is entangled with human and beyond human matters, it constantly palpates a type of personal nostalgia (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 160, point XIV), whilst simultaneously presenting a futuring difference in its wearing. Not as a type of conservative nostalgia but an affective melancholic materialism one that understands time through our embodied cognition (jewellery becomes the body).

---

<sup>11</sup> ‘Jewellery thinking’ is an original term, although it may be understood to bear a resemblance to the publications: *Thinking Jewellery* and *Thinking Jewellery Two* by Theo Smeets (2005 & 2017).

<sup>12</sup> Derrida, 1996

If time is defined through spatial relations and the ways in which we orientate ourselves in the world, then jewellery (as an extension of our body) acts as part of our bodily connection between space and time: *“We simply don’t observe the conceptual structure of time flow based on domains of human experience such as tastes, flavours, or colours... Human beings... organise chronological experience and conceptual structure in terms of a very specific family of experiences: the experience of things in space”* (Nunez, via Malafouris, 1999, 52).

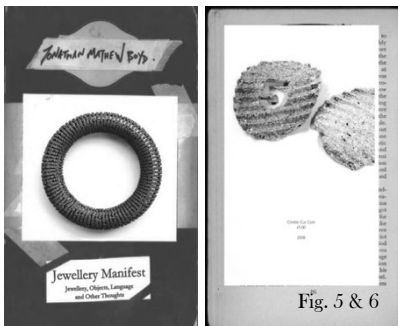
Jewellery, is not, as painted by Glenn Adamson a supplemental lack in the identity of a person (2022, 21), but rather an important intra-action of person and material. Jewellery is part of any performative coming/doing/living-together-with. In *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, Karen Barad positions the idea of intra-action as an alternative to interaction. The conceptual shift outlines that things don’t just effect each other, but rather emerge in entangled relations. The works in this portfolio are not the *“unidirectional practice of creation that flows from the author (artist) to page (artwork), but rather the piece of writing is an iterative and mutually constitutive working out and reworking”* (Barad, 2007, x).<sup>13</sup>

This intra-active position does not align with one of Marjan Ungar key theorems: *“jewellery is nothing less than wearable money...”* (2019, 6). Instead the practice situates jewellery as performative actant which trembles the root of the subject-object binary. Jewellery is, like re-search (see: 19), acting as a living thing/process/becoming (see: 64). It is some-thing that

gains trajectory. Jewellery is a certain type of living and requires a certain type of ‘thinking’; and via Mah Rana (2002), jewellery *“...is Life”*.

To follow any logic which monetises jewellery appears unaware of a contemporary moment when the value of money is increasingly mobile in relation to

Fig. 4



<sup>13</sup> My parentheses.

its materiality. No longer is money a material exchange but instead is a virtual set of immaterialities traded and shifted through the movement of data. Monetary materiality is now a different one birthed from lithium mines and oily grubby fingerprinted screens. Jewellery is a carrier of a different value set. Money might be better considered when equated to the value system of fried potato snacks (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 85-86).

If not related to money, for the practice to emerge as it has a shift in the conceptualisation of jewellery relations had to take place. Developing out of/post *JM* a different relational space emerged. This jewellery-thinking is anchored by four considerations:

- Body. (*Whatever a desiring or affective body might be/consist of*)
- Im<>Material. (*Taking for granted the inseparability of the immaterial and material and embracing non-anthropocentric possibilities*)<sup>14</sup>
- Difference (*for différance*). (*Understood as the underlying principle of identity*)
- Meaning. (*This differs slightly from previous jewellery research as communication exists as only one dimension of meaning-making*).

Poetically, each of these relations has progressed in its complexity as the research has developed. For example, questions such as, what is a body, and what are the relations between material and immaterial have not been taken as given; instead shifting as the practice has evolved. A four-relational-logic,<sup>15</sup> the B/I<>M/D(I)/M differs from previous theories that focused on a Maker/Wearer/Viewer/Object dynamic.

The M/W/V/O relationship stems from Sociologist Georg Simmel who “proposed that the structure of jewellery is composed of the Wearer and

---

<sup>14</sup> Note that here the research breaks away from the Cartesian dualism of the lofty ethereal immaterial mind and weighty fleshy material body towards ideas of embodied cognition, or as later described towards the concepts of Material Engagement Theory which intertwine cognition and material culture. (Malafouris, 2017, 50)

<sup>15</sup> A neologism and refutes the term ‘fourfold’ as they don’t fold into each other, a fourfold indicates a type of symmetry where relations fold to meet in direct correlation. This is not the case of the four-way relationship where the relations grow and shrink, defendant on emergent possibilities of complex engagements, systems, and environments: “*there is no ontological difference between relations and that-which-they-relate...relations... are only varying degrees of reciprocal simultaneous change. They are like waves in water...*” and these relations are “*asymmetrical ways with different degrees of entanglement...relationality is fundamentally asymmetrical, irreversible and continually changing.*” (Nail, 2024, 70-72)



Fig. 7

*Viewer interaction*” which “*jeweller and author Bruce Metcalf argued that the Maker (also) plays a major role in addition to the Wearer and Viewer*” (Geremia, abstract, 2020). Utilising Bourdieusian habitus and Wittgensteinian language games Allison Geremia, in her 2020 PhD, makes a further argument that the Object should also feature as part of these relations. This Wittgensteinian analysis reminds of this practice’s own attempt at exploring, and soon dropping interest in, Wittgenstein (Wittgenstein Filagree, Boyd, 2010. {JM, Boyd, 2019, 75}).

Whilst interested in the M/W/V/O interactions the practice has become interested in what happens above and below cultural and social interactions arguing that the M/W/V/O will always be limited to a sociological analysis. M/W/V/O thinking will always rest upon the bed of Simmel’s definition of jewellery as: “*Adornment is the egotistical element... the aesthetic phenomenon of adornment...a point within sociological interaction the arena of man’s being-for-himself and being-for-the-other where these two opposite directions are mutually dependent as ends and means*” (Simmel, 1908, 207).

Positioning jewellery beyond the social sphere is to remove it from “*the fetishism of the commodity... which attains its ultimate fulfilment in the spectacle where the real world is replaced by a selection of images which are projected above it, yet which at the same time succeeded in making themselves regarded as the epitome of reality*” (Debord, 1994, 19). The symbolism of the ring is important, but it is not the only matter of importance in the intra-active co-becoming of persons and things. Jewellery is more than social signifier and more than a fetishized symbol of contemporary cultural desires. If the post-modern jeweller “*rejected what they considered to be status-laden jewelry bound by sexual stereotypes or contaminated by exploitation, in favour of the equity conveyed by materials of no intrinsic worth*” (Phillips, 1996, 195), could it also be suggested that they also replaced these issues with ironic detachment and an ongoing inwards problematising. In its postmodernity, was some of the affective resonance stripped from jewellery?

B/I<>M/D(I)/M relations offer a vantage beyond the surface of social and cultural interactions offering intra-active poetic and storying/fictioning potential for jewellery thinking/making/becoming. It is a logic which is affective in its relations, where the affective: “*emerge(s) out of muddy, unmediated... giv(ing) way to thresholds and tensions, blends and blurs*” (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, 4).

Affective relations create what Sara Ahmed describes as ‘*happy objects*’. These are orientational ways in which affectual properties between a body and things are ‘sticky’ in their coming-together-ness and can produce happiness (as well as anxiety {Ahmed, 2010, 30-37}). This is further backed by my own writing which highlights the etymology of jewellery as; “*jewel in Old French... a root word less literally tied to ideas of decoration but instead meaning ‘that which brings us joy’*” (JM, Boyd, 2019, 131).<sup>16</sup> Ahmed’s affective objects produce both happiness and anxiety and the same can be said of the jeweller’s ability to capture the affective joy-inducing nature of material whilst also taking a darker turn in Alex Turner’s lyrics: “*...it’s no one’s fault but yours... you thought the wolves would be impressed... you’re a sinking stone, you know what’s it’s like to hold the Jeweller’s hands.*” (Turner, 2009). Here, the jeweller acts as a metaphorical and shadier figure, one whose skilful ability to manipulate, define an ability to twist and coerce not just matter, but wearer. Jewellery is inherently joyful, manipulatively so.

This is the contranymic gloss(iness) of jewellery (and metal), joy, reflectivity, and naivety (and oft kitsch) mired amongst depths of labour and transcendence (Diepeveen & van Laar, 2021, 15). It is a critical space which allows confidence in addressing political, social, textual, and ethical issues within a discipline often viewed as purely decorative.

The practice demanded the B/I<>M/D(I)/M logic emerge as works like *Beige* (2019 {see: 49}), *Out to Sea* (2019 {see: 93}), *admin* (2024 {see: 85-87}) could not have been created through the relations of W/M/V/O due to their questioning of object-ness, the uncertainty of the wearer and expectation on any audience. The shifting B/I<>M/D(I)/M relations do not influence the research questions rather they give a (groundless) grounding in which to understand jewellery and through which the research questions can function.

---

<sup>16</sup> In JM this etymological wordplay is taken even further to position jewellery as under-researched because of its connection to joy>joke>comedy, and comedies seeming lower status than tragedy.



Poetically, this ‘jewellery thinking’ pays a debt to M/W/V/O, as social flows are important but are only one alongside material and semiotic flows. Singularly the social flow of M/W/V/O is aligned to the hylo-morphic machinery of cause and effect. Material exists, Maker wields it to their vision, for the Wearer to wear it, allowing a Viewer to see it, in turn reifying its status as the ‘Object’, i.e. that which ‘stands in opposition’. Jewellery however is irrational (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 160, point IV), and referential of wider perceptions of reality (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 160, point XII). Jewellery is an affective grasping of things (love, memory, matter{s}) all of which reside just out with a utilitarian worldview; *“In between matter and memory... is affection.”* (Sutton, 2008, 117).

Arguments against poetic knowledge define it as overtly *“romantic”* (Taylor, 1998, 5), but jewellery is an ‘intimate’<sup>17</sup> relation between body and im<math>\leftrightarrow</math>material (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 160, point VII). Jewellery is poetic in the *“sensory-emotional-experiential”* (Taylor, 1998, 6) experience of reality. Jewellery embraces romantic notions whilst offering a platform (making/wearing) to be radical in its romantics. Poetic approaches are inherently radical as they stretch beyond the limits of language which impose semiotic organisations of time, space, and social conditions; *“Poetry is the excess which breaks the limit and escapes measure... The poetical act is the emanation of a semiotic flow that sheds a light on non-conventional meaning on the existing world... poetry is the act of language that cannot be defined, as ‘to define’ means to limit...”* (Berardi, 2018, 21).

To think of jewellery poetically is to think beyond the limitations that the ‘world’ places on it. Jewellery ‘things’ are much more than the *“passive substratum for society to imprint itself upon”* (Malafouris, 2017, 18) and these inherent radical qualities defy Peter Dormer’s and Ralph Turner’s statement that *“very few jewelers attempt socio-political comment in their work”* (1986, 150). Jewellery is political even if unintentionally so.

Ultimately, the research cultivated a jewellery practice as fine art writing, but there are other ways we wear words which are not explored within the research notably wordings in tattoos and in clothing. Clothing is differentiated from jewellery in that it serves a ‘functional’ purpose, with the words on clothing often acting as social signifiers and brand associations that link you in this way, or that way, to a way of being-in-the-

---

<sup>17</sup> The research acknowledges here that not all intimacies are positive.

(capitalist)world. Functionality aside,<sup>18</sup> often the written word sits on top of garments in the form of band or brand logos. The inquiry within the portfolio is not interested in thing or word solely as social signifiers. Tattoos are also not explored as they sit out with the symbiotic nature of jewellery, as through permanent modifications of the body they become a part of the assemblage of bodily actants, rather than a being-with.

The fundamental difference that separates these two types of wearing words (tattoos, and clothing) from my own is that they evidence words-on-things. The practice in the portfolio does not place words-on-things, instead, words-write-things. Jewellery is written as a making process. Here, it also diverges from the history of words and adornment such as posey rings and amulets which have writing inscribed *on* them.

\* \* \*

This THRESHOLD has given context to the *...saccades...* and Fixations that follow. Each Fixation will delve into a specific research question framing the practice, giving insight into the ways in which the portfolio has generated new insights. *...saccades...* run between these texts as an undercurrent of poetic sensibility and criticality; “*...but enough of the excuses and precautions, the unavoidable themes or cliches, of every preface, no more dawdling on the threshold of the threshold*” (Genette, 1997, 15).

---

<sup>18</sup> Lisbeth den Besten highlights jewellery’s ambiguousness of function in that it is “*not an implement, a utensil or an appliance... the function of jewellery is manifold and rather complex*”(2021, 11)

*“Reading a text is never a scholarly exercise...it is a montage of desiring machines, a schizoid exercise that extracts from the text its revolutionary force.”*

(Deleuze and Guattari, 1977, 106)

*“Matter and meaning are not separate elements. They are inextricably fused together, and no event, no matter how energetic, can tear them asunder.”* (Barad, 2007, 3)

## ...saccade...

(630 words)

*... and ... in this scatter<sup>19</sup> of thoughts ... which ... shift in their endless and-ing<sup>20</sup> ... and which unfold and fold in skins of possibility<sup>21</sup> ... a certain type of thinking<sup>22</sup> is enabled ... in a pre-semantic<sup>23</sup> move ... a type of 'knowing' <> 'not-knowing'<sup>24</sup> is enacted ... it is palimpsestic<sup>25</sup> ... a copy of an amendment ... of a re-writing ... of a copy ... of a re-writing ... of an amendment ... temporal challenges ... the past always closer than the recent<sup>26</sup> ... states of mind and states of matter enlaced in a spiralling helical co-shoogling ...*

---

<sup>19</sup> (mini)Gloss: Scatter: in Scotland the 'scatter', or a 'scramble', explains the of throwing penny's into the air for the nearby children to catch, track down and pocket. The penny's scatter and take, not just flight, but paths in various directions, clashing, diverting, rolling, some coming to an end, other disappearing down drain covers to unexpected resting places. The material bodies in the scatter take on unusual discordant flights and rest, almost always just out of sight, just out of reach. Different stories all relational in a big-bang of the multiplicitous throw.

<sup>20</sup> "...establish a logic of the AND, overthrow ontology, do away with the foundations, nullify endings and beginnings...the middle is by no means an average, on the contrary, it is where things pick up speed." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, 28)

<sup>21</sup> "...the subject is 'the result of the folding of the outside, ...the subject is the individual who, though practice and discipline, has become the site of bent force, that is the folded inside of an outside'. The subject does not produce the fold but rather is produced through the folds as an actualisation of time." (Attiwell, 2017, 102)

<sup>22</sup> "Thinking is unlike any other act insofar as it is an act at all. It is a calling in more than one sense of that richly evocative word. Thinking defines the nature of being human and the more thoughtless we are, the less human we are...Thinking is questioning and putting ourselves in question as much as the cherished opinions and inherited doctrines we have long taken for granted." (Gray, 2004, xii)

<sup>23</sup> From the 'asemic', which is always undermined by any semiotic critique; "a seme is a unit of meaning...an asemantic text, then, might be involved with units of language for reasons other than producing meaning... as such, the asemantic text would seem to be an ideal, an impossibility, but worth pursuing for just that reason" (asemic writing 3, via Schwenger, 2019, 1)

<sup>24</sup> "The artist's perception of their physical encounter with material is rarely characterised as an adversarial one of mastery these days but artists often describe how the material processes of making art unfold in unexpected ways...artists knowingly use 'not-knowing'. In creative processes, and the statements that emerge from them, there is a productive to-ing and fro-ing between the known and the unknown and it is important to keep mindful of their provisional nature" (Fortnum, 2013, 76)

<sup>25</sup> The palimpsest has been used as a teaching method in many of my explorations of writing. Students have been encouraged to interact with the text through marginalia and collage creating a type of co-authored palimpsest (Method as Marginalia, and Writing as Practice workshops delivered at MRes, MFA, MA level, 2019-2023). Recent workshops exploring the cuneiformic and the materiality of clay to create virtual palimpsest via AI image interpolation.

<sup>26</sup> "in the palimpsest far from putting one layer on top of another rather... what's happening is the past is rising up even as the present sinks down" (Ingold: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=r.5ztVBhbO8E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r.5ztVBhbO8E), accessed 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024.)

a creative thinking that surges in intensities and flows capturing and harnessing chaos<sup>27</sup> ... we may like to think we think in words ... that we picture a semantic exactitude in our minds eye and transfer it to the page/screen<sup>28</sup> ... that mind dictates body in any writing of a 'thing'<sup>29</sup> ... but the words stutter ... tremble ... quiver in their deferment of meaning and their impossible task of re-presentation ... or whatever it was that glanced past the expressive image of thought ... in that moment ... a moment ago ... layering ... and ... layering ... strata-ed in its material memory<sup>30</sup> ... (all memory is material<sup>31</sup>) ... the flailing desperation in the dance of the feral<sup>32</sup> neuron<sup>33</sup> ... and ... in my being/becoming artist... i ... (aye) ... faze into an awareness of the fractious nature of my hyper-dis-tractions ... the pull into

---

<sup>27</sup> Art is a "...real yet not empirical, undifferentiated reservoir of impersonal and imperceptible forces, simultaneously co-existing in a profusion of indistinguishable orders.... art captures the forces of chaos, differentiating them through framing operations to form compounds or block of sensation." (Bird, 2017, 54)

<sup>28</sup> "it is not a though the hand...gradually empties out what first fills the head, such that the entire composition slides like a transfer from mind to paper; rather both hand and head are together complicit throughout in the work's unceasing generation" (Ingold, 2013, 127)

<sup>29</sup> "We begin to confront the thingness of objects when they stop working for us: when the drill breaks, when the car stalls, when the window gets filthy, when their flow within the circuits of production and distribution, consumption and exhibition, has been arrested, however momentarily. The story of objects asserting themselves as things, then, is the story of a changed relationship to the human subject and thus the story of how the thing really names less an object than a particular subject-object relation. As they circulate through our lives, we look through objects (to see what they disclose about history, society, nature, or culture - above all, what they disclose about us), but we only catch a glimpse of things." (Critical Enquiry, Autumn 2001, Brown, 4.)

<sup>30</sup> "Memory, Mother of Muses - the thinking backwards to what is to be thought is the source and ground of poesy. This is why poesy is the water that at times flows backward towards the source, toward a thinking as a thinking back..." (Heidegger, 2004, 11)

<sup>31</sup> "For an object of pure wonder, the human brain is extraordinarily unprepossessing. It is, for one thing, 78-80% water with the rest split mostly between fat and protein." (Bryson, 2019, 49)

<sup>32</sup> "Your average neuron is apparently docile enough to spend its long lifetime doing the same job while maintaining a spark of autonomy, a modest ability... feral neurons, in effect; (are) a bit less stable, more selfish a bit more likely to morph themselves into novel connections with neighbours... Brains are computers, but they are very unlike computers in use today... idiosyncratic neurons... evolved to fend for themselves..." (Dennett, 2018, 174-174).

<sup>33</sup> Neurons look to reach out 'blindly' in hope for a connection with another in a poetic grasping: "a connection: one cell talking to another. A brain cell, or a neuron, has a large main body, with small strands sticking out. So, one neuron, the transmitter, uses a really thin strand called an axon. A second neuron, the receiver, can receive contacts along its main body, or along strands that branch out like a tree, called dendrites. When the axon tip of a transmitter connects to a receiver, that's a synapse." (<https://neuroscience.ucdavis.edu/news/making-and-breaking-connections-brain#:~:text=The%20links%20between%20neurons%20are,with%20small%20strands%20sticking%20out>. Accessed Dec 1st, 2023)

*the plural nature of multiplicities ... and a rhizomic emergence<sup>34</sup> in its manifestation ... to materialise words is a matter of bodily interaction ... the synesthetic song that sounds like an orange<sup>35</sup> ... and ... the house which is not a house<sup>36</sup> ... a materialisation which occurs in the shifting oscillations between the speech and writing ... not that 'one' should be so inclined to create a clear divide between the two<sup>37</sup> ... jewellery dictates a kind of thinking ... a kind of material<person>intra-action<sup>38</sup> ... the ring is not the social symbol it makes out it is ... it is the end product of the supernova ... the shimmering shiny thing that catches the light ... it is a microcosm of the universe ... a flight through the empty 'stuff' of space<sup>39</sup> ... the unnoticed (un)touch of the ring on the finger ... a touch of one body <human> with another <cosmic> with another <the pre-suppositional of the body without organs>... jewellery thinking of depth is a moment of re-flection on wider entanglements<sup>40</sup> ... jewellery as contranymic gloss<sup>41</sup> ... depth and reflection ... the joke ... and ... the tragedy of outpouring and consolidation of all*

---

<sup>34</sup> "Systems in which organized behaviour arises without an internal or external controller or leader are sometimes called self-organizing. Since simple rules produce complex behaviour in hard-to-predict ways, the macroscopic behaviour of such systems is sometimes called emergent. Here is an alternative definition of a complex system: a system that exhibits nontrivial emergent and self-organizing behaviours." (Mitchell, 2009, 13)

<sup>35</sup> "John Lennon asked George Martin to make a song sound like an orange. Strange as it sounds, as a request the reasoning is clear: we can never fully know the objects that surround us, and our ability to manipulate them can only live up to our ability for translation. Thought to object, object to reflection, the object reacts back and onwards with a reliable circularity." (JM, Boyd, 2019, 45)

<sup>36</sup> See portfolio: *...this is not a house...* (Boyd, 2023)

<sup>37</sup> "Speech suggests presences, transparency, authenticity, uniqueness, while writing gets a bum rap for being a mark of absence, open to forgery, duplication, the need to interpret, to read...Derrida points to the materiality of sound as a physical trace indicating a potentially larger system of communication...Both (speech and writing) are dependent on a system of language requiring a physical trace, either a sound or a mark. The materiality of these marks...reveal both speech and writing as systems of re-presentation..." (Richards, 2008, 13)

<sup>38</sup> "intra-action signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies. That is, in contrast to the usual 'interaction', which assumes that there are separate individual agencies that precede their interaction, the notion of intra-action recognizes that distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through their intra-action...agencies are only distinct in relation to their mutual entanglement; they don't exist as individual elements." (Barad, 2007, 33)

<sup>39</sup> "...by 1930, the void had become the vacuum of quantum theory, which is about as far from nothing as you can get - it is a space packed with particles popping in and out of existence." (Webb, 2013, 2)

<sup>40</sup> "Entanglement is the strangest of all strange quantum phenomena, the one that takes us furthest away from our old understanding of the world." "It is the phenomenon by which two distant objects maintain a kind of weird connection, as if they continued to speak to each other from afar. They remain, as we say, "entangled," linked together. Like two lovers who can guess each other's thoughts when apart." (Rovelli, 2021, 81 & 82)

<sup>41</sup> See "Gloss", 18.

*that has been before ... if adamson was wrong<sup>42</sup> ... and missed the point ... and ungar ... well the less said the better ... or ... maybe more should be said ... "jewellery is neither less nor more than money"<sup>43</sup> ... it has a value system of its own ... money is increasingly non-material ... floating in big data as a series of zero's and one's ... it is a promise ... jewellery is a relation ... as much as it is relational ... sometimes involved in relation-ships ... jewellery is the flow of meaning through material ... a grasping and reaching out of difference ... a palpating<sup>44</sup> of something ... or a vibration of ... a type of thinking<sup>45</sup> ... (one which is poetically robust) ... where jewellery is a sort of grasping ... a finding of place and meaning ... a reaching out into the world ... it often hides just out of plain sight ... a little like the language (in which we supposedly dwell<sup>46</sup>) ... a little like the flailing desperation in the dance of the neuron ... and ...*

---

<sup>42</sup> *"...a piece of jewelry both compensates for and exposes a lack in the thing that is adorned. To wear a piece of jewelry is to tacitly admit a need ornamentation..."* (Adamson, 2022, 21)

<sup>43</sup> *"Jewellery is essentially nothing less than wearable money..."* (Ungar, 2019, 6)

<sup>44</sup> *"Palpation is not a traditional philosophical activity. It does not seek to comprehend, if by comprehension we mean bringing within our intellectual control...It palpates something that eludes our theoretical grasp, something that ... eludes our knowledge."* (May, 2005, 20)

<sup>45</sup> *"Thinking is unlike any other act insofar as it is an act at all. It is a calling in more than one sense of that richly evocative word. Thinking defines the nature of human being and the more thoughtless we are the less human we are...Thinking is a questioning and putting ourselves in the question as much as the cherished opinions inherited from doctrines, we have long taken for granted."* (Gray, 1976, xi)

<sup>46</sup> *"My monolingualism dwells, and I call it my dwelling; it feels like one to me, and I remain in it and inhabit it. It inhabits me... Yet it will never be mine, this language, the only one I am thus destined to speak, as long as speech is possible for me in life and in death; you see, never will this language be mine. And, truth to tell, it never was."* (Derrida, 1998, 1&2)



## first Fixation

### How One Wears Words?

*"I only have one language; it is not mine."*  
(Derrida, 1996, 1)

What are the relationships and alliances between the words we produce and the things we wear? The practice, throughout the portfolio, palpates for connections between words and things, seeking correlations and discrepancies between the activities of wearing and of speaking<>writing. Words and things flow and fold through our embodied experiences and a brooch such as *Possible Narratives from an Empty Space #1* (2015) offers a clear example of a work which imagines the ways in which spoken words, in their materiality, might not only align topographically to a place (here, an empty park in Maryhill, Glasgow), but also signify the material histories of printed typography. In addition to this text<>material dialogue a type of fictioning is taking place. David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan defined fictioning as "*exploring fictions that involve realities to come... as well as the more general idea of fiction as intervention in, and augmentation of existing reality*" (Burrows & O'Sullivan, 2019, 2). As an example, this work evidences the poetic combination of fictioning, things, text, speech, image, time/space/place taking place within the B/I<>M/D(I)/M relations that so importantly defines the research in the portfolio.

Fig. 8



The practice then, has examined textual engagements as fundamentally material ones. But where should it be read that this interest in things 'wordly' grew? *JM* suggested a frustrated reading of Jean-Paul Sartre's autobiography *Words* (Boyd, 2019, 33-35), but there are memories that

suggest it lies further back, perhaps a 'love at first sight' encounter with the Glasgow School of Art Case Room. An evocative space, hidden in the submerged floors of a brutalist architecture now demolished. The Case Room carried a thick air of all things 'thingly' and 'wordly'. Shelves upon shelves of sticky lead characters. Multiple sizes, multiple shapes. The metallic smell offered an atmosphere that carried a density. It was a space that expressed the materiality of language. But, in a process of ever diffraction and rhizomatic multiplicities, a beginning is neither important or the point. One could find other personal starting points for an obsession with wordly things. The cursive copying of my mother's script to forge detention documents or the excruciating humiliation of being forced to recite Burns in an aching English accent. Both memories matter, but neither offers a 'start'; memory is an unreliable narrator. In wearing words we foster unreliable narration as words shift and move around ourselves. Text's unreliability lies in its palimpsestic editing and re-editing, in its drafting and re-drafting, spoken words dissipate in clouds of carbon dioxide and recordings of our spoken words only act as recordings and copyings of that absence.

In response to this question of wearing words and their unreliability this Fixation will follow the methodologically outlined B/I<>M/D(I)/M; utilising subheadings which explore the textual nature of 'bodies', the '(in)material', 'difference' and 'meaning'.

*-bodies-*

Bodies writhe around together (as evidenced daily on the London Underground) in their intra-actions with things and do so as an expressed cohesion of body, mind, and extended material world. These arguments counter Cartesian histories in which: "*there is the immaterial, active thinking soul or mind, and... the material, unthinking, passive body. The mind... animates the mechanical and lifeless body, and that is the source of our intellect. The body, on the other hand, is lifeless flesh and bone and has no intelligence of its own*" (Roberts, 2020, 30). As these bodies writhe in their 'doings' the works have absorbed the M/W/V/O relationship in the following ways. The maker (read, author) is never more explicitly not-there i.e. 'dead' (Barthes, 1967, 145), than in any wearing (the wearer becomes a reader of sorts), its wearing creates a ready-at-handness where it disappears from view, in so doing jewellery is an ever-becoming in a symbiosis with the body (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, point X).

A notion of a 'body' consumes the roles of maker, wearer, and viewer (the human body) as well as accepting that our own bodies are also only functioning machines of multiple living agencies. 'Body' also integrates the wider complex systems of society (the body politic, for example where we are ruled over by jewellery {crown}), cosmic bodies of planetary ecosystems, and the multiplicitous presupposition of identity the Body Without Organs (BwO) in which matter and assemblages are part of a seemingly unstructured dance towards desiring machines. Deleuze and Guattari's BwO is to think of a body without organisational structures, a type of pre-identity, which can be aligned with the coming-togetherness of Baradian intra-action.

Fig. 9



In this the immanent character of things and in their intra-actions the artist/maker channels chaos to remake matter into art, and the wearer channels social languages in the formation of an identity. In our dwelling in language, we presuppose our identities which are shifting and ever-developing.

In the making/wearing/viewing of *An Endless Rant on Craft* (2012) different poetic readings are offered in every occasional glance. The three-dimensionality of the spiralling text offers continual shifting relations of possible meanings. The bodies of meaning and physical intermingling bodies are continually re-defining new relations between thing, word, and person via the shifting wrist which manoeuvres the textual bangle creating ongoingly different textual outpourings.

In their continual search for relations between languages of words and languages of things, the artworks have often sought to find ways in which a textual form may find a way to embody a narrative's meaning and structure. This can be seen in *An Endless Rant on Craft* or in works like *Clyde Built* where linked and interlocking stories of a longer narrative are

broken into interlinked and connected chain links (further outlined in *JM*, Boyd, 2019, 79).



Fig. 10

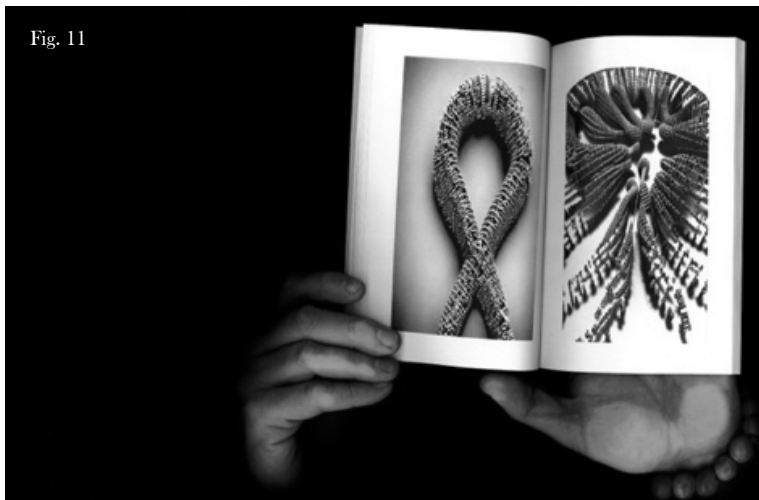
In works such as this, the form of writing takes its cue from the meaning inherent in the text and seeks to find dimensionally appropriate narrative structures for them to be written and read. Knotted meaning creating knotted forms, interlinked narratives creating interlinked chains of meaning. This creates a stark and strongly aesthetic relationship (reminiscent of the material language of the Case Room) between form and meaning (a ‘concrete’ concrete minor literature).

In recent reflections on these works there is an assumptive way in which forms and writing relate and as this research has progressed the desire to find more emergent and embodied modes of writing have grown. This shift moved towards the act of writing, as well writing as a productively generative and emergent activity.

Jewellery then, is understood as a relational art form in an increasingly relational world. Theoretical physicist Carlo Rovelli describes the “*relational interpretation of quantum theory*” as the ways in which any “*physical object manifests itself to any other physical object... we think of the world in terms of objects, things, entities (in physics, we call them ‘physical systems’): a photon, a cat, a stone, a clock, a tree, a boy, a village, a rainbow, a planet, a cluster of galaxies... These do not exist in splendid isolation. On the contrary, they do nothing but continuously act upon each other.*” (Rovelli, 2022, 67-68).

Our physical relationality has a continuous impact on the meaningfulness of this object-text which also seeks to highlight the textuality (the rant) of immaterial things (era4).

Fig. 11



This “jewellery-thinking” often sees bodies and jewellery in unusual ways. In *(This excerpt comes from a longer essay documenting the thinking and positioning of these images)* (2019), the body and jewellery act as a type of hauntology.

Mark Fisher described hauntology as a “concept, or puncept. *Hauntology was the successor to... trace and difference... it referenced the way in which nothing enjoys a purely positive existence. Everything that exists is possible only on the basis of a whole series of absences, which precede and surround it, allowing it to possess the consistency and intelligibility that it does*” (Fisher, 2014, 17-18). In this work the hand (body) and the pink beaded bracelet (jewellery) hover in the background withdrawing from view, pressing down pages of speculative textual formations onto a flatbed scanner. It highlights a memory of the body and the memory of the jewellery. The jewellery’s presence here is secured by its absence. In my practice, the bodily is always present (in its multiple interpretations). In these images, narrative structures have a sense of formation, that bodies of textuality are always in (intra)formation (*Vol.3*, Boyd, 2024).

The complexity of bodily meaning is explored holistically throughout my teaching (Appendix B) and recent graduates have confronted the limits of our conception of the bodily. Specifically, Kexin Liu and Lili Murphy-Johnston can be seen exploring jewellery as performatively bodily.



*Acting Like a Chair on the DLR* (2022). Lili Murphy-Johnson challenges an understanding of the object<>subject relation, deriving from a practice-led feminist methodology questioning objectification. Asking what it entails to have a body and what does it mean to be an object that is used. Here this object of objectification is a seat on London's Light District Railway.

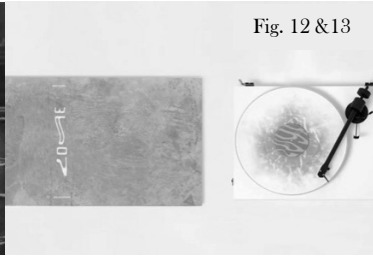


Fig. 12 & 13

*Bacterial Landscape* (2021). Kexin Liu questions what her body is, and by extension what is the (her) self. “*Through 16s amplicon sequencing, the (her) bacterial make-up was analysed and then translated into soundscapes. After that this sonic information was later embedded in a vinyl record coloured with Serratia marcescens, a pigment-producing bacteria that can be found in human body.*” (Liu, RCA 2021, 2021)

In the portfolio thinking and practice incorporate not only post-structuralist considerations of language they also consider jewellery as an emergent actant in the vast set of relational and entangled complex systems such as Liu's and Murphy-Johnson's multi-actant bodies. Rovelli describes entanglement as “*the phenomenon by which two distant objects maintain a kind of weird connection, as if they speak to each other from afar...*” entanglement is “*none other than the external perspective on the very relations that weave reality*” (Rovelli, 2022, 81 & 88). Further, poetically aligning entanglement with our own fleshy being Rovelli recounts a story of close a friend who on hearing of quantum relationality would “*lay on his bed for hours... thinking about how each atom in his body must have interacted in some distant past with so many other atoms in the universe. Every atom in his body had to be entangled with billions of atoms dispersed throughout the galaxy...*” (Rovelli, 2022 83).

Wearing jewellery is an intimate yet entangled intra-action where touch is not an actual connection but a repelling of electromagnetic forces of electrons between person and thing. To touch is to repel. Following the completion of the portfolio there was a return to the scanner as a method-for-making the artwork. *...pink...* (2024) (see: Appendix Block ) framed the poetic

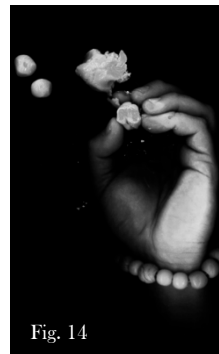


Fig. 14

contradiction that all things are relational and intra-active whilst touch is always mediated, even by forces of repulsion: *“Instead of thinking of touch as that which is immediate - without mediation- we understand instead that even as one experience may have more visceral tactility than another, that touching is always some degree touching at a distance, and across a distance that is not empty but full of mediation”* (Bratton, 2022, 74). In *...pink...* (2024) the beads that are worn are also being made, but due to the distributed nature of the AI interpolated animation, the beads which are being mixed by the fingers start to fuse and become entangled with the body. The detail (below) highlights the visual ways in which material and body become enmeshed. The clear delineation between person and matter becomes blurred.

Fig. 15



Poetically ‘touch’ offers a mediated intimacy, a relation, which like all relation(ship)s draws closer and repels away. A concept clearly outlined in Otto Kunzli’s ‘unwearable’ necklace famously made from the disowned wedding rings of failed marriages (1985-86). In this Dadaist approach, Kunzli sourced these items through an advertisement in a local paper. The necklace was tangibly wearable but intimately, poetically, unwearable. Intimacy is not always a positive closeness. Jewellery in its symbiotic-ness is the ongoing-intimate. Jewellery becomes a deeply poetic entanglement.

*-in<>material-*

In undertaking the writings-of/through-jewellery evidenced in the portfolio, meaning and matter have been locked in a permeable entanglement, and my jewellery can be understood as grappling with the complexity of reality (there must be stratified reasons people are so drawn to gold?). Meaning resides in the hands of the person/artist/maker but also in the wearer and material and to dissect their differing meaning-

making abilities would be to over-credit the differences created by temporal shifts in the life of things/persons/matters.

Whilst it might be considered a highly 'literal' approach to rethink the language of jewellery through the language of words, the theoretical underpinnings of this research offer a metaphorically materialistic (Derrida's textile *différance*, Deleuzian soil dwelling rhizome, Heidegger's 'ready<>present-to-hand-hammering' of the object<>thing, Barad's waved framing of matter and meaning) way of exploring words, creating a feedback loop between material and the immaterial which embodies the process of a continual oscillation between the wearing/meaning of words and the wearing/meaning of jewellery.

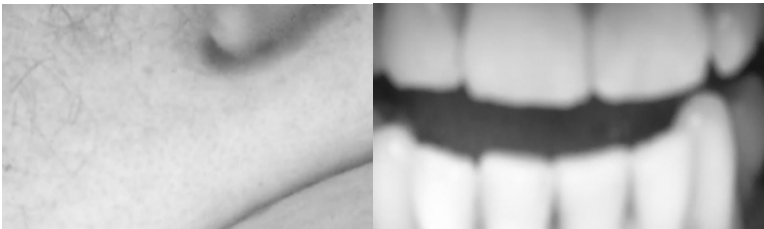


Fig. 16 & 17

The artwork *Beige* (2020) explores the spoken word as adorning the body in a way akin to jewellery. The accompanying text explained; “*Words exist materially and immaterially. Written; physical ink adorns the pre-action blankness of the beige page. Spoken words also contain a material presence, acting as a form of temporary jewellery adorning our bodies. These spoken words exist in the shift of exhaled sound waves. Carbon dioxide and the movement of oxygen and hydrogen molecules. Here, the spoken word is materially and temporarily a decorative concern.*” (Boyd, 2010).

*Beige* displaces the relation of writing as the usual mode of creation within the body of work. Undertaking an oppositional play on Derrida's questions of absence and presence and the historically framed phonocentrism in Western thought to illustrate how “*Derrida points to the materiality of sound as a physical trace indicating a potentially larger system of communication*” (Richards, 2008, 13).

*Beige* palpated the absence/presence relation in jewellery, questioning the materiality of the words we wear but also explores the



interiority/exteriority of words. Once the words were externalised, they become an artefact and no longer part of my thinking<>becoming. Like Daniel Dennett's refusal to drink spit in a cup, the words become superfluous to my bodily being: *"It seems to do with our perception that once something is outside our bodies it is no longer quite part of us anymore. - it becomes alien and suspicious - it has renounced its citizenship and becomes something rejected."* (Dennett, 1993, 414).

In a further twist of logic, the words written to become jewellery (such as *An Endless Rant on Craft*, 2012, see: 44) recede from view when worn, yet the spoken word leaving our bodies become distinct 'things' external from us in their wearing. I have lost my words, I now wear them, and I cannot re-call them, *"Sometimes absence is better than presence. Absence makes the heart grow fonder."* (Richards, 2008, 24). This work can be seen to be in a lineage of craft practices that question the presence<>absence dynamic in a material-led practice.

Significant examples of this can be seen in the metal work of Michael Rowe. In *Metaphysics of Presence [Thinging Thoughts/Thoughting Things]*, (2023), Rowe described the metal artwork where; *"...absence becomes evident as we see a silver jug in pre-production and post-production states. The working drawing represents the pre-production visualisation of a concept for a silver jug. As post-production remnants, the plates trace the absence of silver sheet removed for the construction of the silver jug. In Metaphysics of Presence the silver jug itself remains absent"* (Rowe, 2023).



Fig. 18

Memory, which is often understood as the grasping of absence, offers a clutching at meaning which continues to develop in the roots that take hold within the research. Like life, I have developed the practice forward but understood it backwards. Language and the issues it fosters are temporal, in that they are inherited. Language flows through us, it makes part of us.

Fig. 19



The work *...it matters what knots knot knots... (or) ...why are you wearing my granda's watch...* (2023) further explores memory and the relations of jewellery and our temporal being-in-the-world. It questions the chronological linearity of cause and effect. It understands time not as factual given but instead as a language which divides and rationalises reality in ways similar to our use of words. In a similar sense to how dialects divide language in localities so is time a localised concern “In *...granda's watch...* golden roots of memory sprout from my Grandfather's Rail Service Timex in a very literal way (the

root can be part of the rhizome but not the other way around), but the work cannot be defined by an arborescent logic. It seeks an unpicking of time in various directions. The stopped railway watch ('time' only exists because of the railways) speaks to a commodified life of labour, a colonisation of time and a mechanistic way of understanding our place in the world. The unravelling fabric of tentacular roots is of gold forged in a supernova beyond our comprehension. This is time but not as ticking clock or even the root, (the rhizome is 'short-term memory' or even 'anti-memory' {Deleuze and Guattari, 1983, 23}) but as a reflection on the personal and the dilemma of being stuck in a lack of 'now'. Carlo Rovelli paints the issue with nowness: *“The notion of the ‘the present’ refers to things that are close to us, not anything that is far away... The idea that a well-defined now exists throughout the universe is an illusion, an illegitimate extrapolation of our own experience”* (Rovelli, 2018, 40). Jewellery is close to us, and the practice is an attempt at defining a being-in-the-world and attunement to a “now”, even if “now” is illusionary.

As part of its embodied ready-to-handed-ess {JM, Boyd, 2019, 143} jewellery speaks away from a mechanistic time to an emotional or affective understanding of time. In its exhibiting *...granda's watch...* was

accompanied by a faded reprint of an image of my grandfather (dressed in a plastic Santa suit) with a ring of gold around the wrist wearing his watch. A rational thought (post-making) would later suggest that this highlights the wrong wrist,<sup>47</sup> but jewellery-thinking includes this type of poetic unreliability, like memory.



Fig. 20

*-difference (identity)-*

*“...to be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an identity, self-contained existence. Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals do not pre-exist their intra-actions; rather individuals emerge through and as part of their intra-relating.”*

(Barad, 2007, ix)

If *Beige* explored the phonocentric relation of a jewellery material-becoming/materiality, *JM* (2019) spent considerable time reflecting on the relationship between writing and speech with notable works such as *Clyde Build* (2014) and *Potential Narratives from an Empty Space #1* (2015), utilising verbatim or fictionalised conversations. Artworks found conversations solidified, linked, knotted, growing, folding, collapsing.

In these ways the *JM* Chapter ‘Words’ (Boyd, 2019, 65-99) is the first critical reflection on what, why and how I was exploring language in relation to ideas of deconstruction. *JM* marked a key point in my journey as an academic, artist and researcher. Having started as a Senior Tutor at the Royal College of Art in 2017, I became increasingly aware of the positive ways in which fine art methodologies could support my research. Previously as a lecturer at The Glasgow School of Art, I inhabited a space within the School of Design whose practices felt limiting in conceptual scope. If *JM* was a reflective undertaking within the possibilities of fine art methods, a new body of work was concurrently created palpating the rich

---

<sup>47</sup> Like me, I assume my Grandfather was right-handed.

potential of jewellery as a socio-political form inhabiting this new fine-art contextualisation.

Fig. 21



*JM* and the exhibition *Thoughts Between the Land and the Sea: Raising the Doggerland (RtD)*, held at Gallery SO in London, were both opened/released on the same day in September 2019. Featuring 25 wearable and 8 interdisciplinary artworks (jewellery, animation, film, sculptural wall works), *RtD* explored the concept of emergent identities through the lens of socio-political jewellery which questioned what identity and difference meant in an exhausting (and disappointingly) post-Brexit U.K. It worked through jewellery as a social-political actant; think purple and green jewellery of the suffragettes or the differing colours of poppies. Working from the concept of a newly raised Doggerland<sup>48</sup> the exhibition refused to define whether this landmass had been raised or whether the British Isles were sinking towards it. The sombre political mood that infiltrated these works was framed by repeated listening to the lyrics of Blur's *This is A Low*:

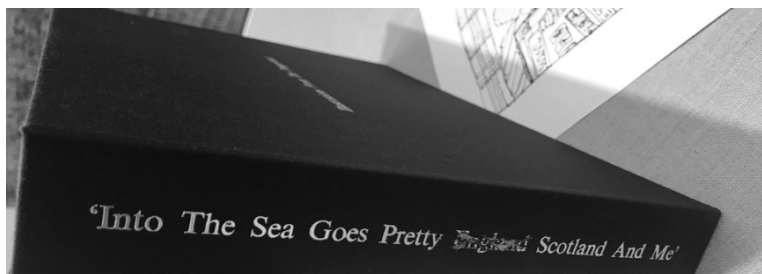
*“And into the sea,  
goes pretty England and me.  
Around the Bay of Biscay,  
and back for tea.  
Hit traffic on the Dogger Bank,  
up the Thames to find a taxi rank.  
Sail on by with the tide  
And go to sleep.*

---

<sup>48</sup>Doggerland was the area of land that connected the UK with Europe until it was submerged approximately 10,000-7,000 years ago. It takes its name from the fishing region Dogger Bank which is located in the North Sea.

*And the radio says,  
This is a low,  
but it won't hurt you.  
When you're alone,  
it will be there with you.  
Finding ways to stay so low"* (Albarn, 1995)

Fig. 22



Borrowing a subtitle from the song's lyrics 'England' is crudely scratched into erasure and replaced by the autobiographically appropriate 'Scotland'. The jewellery works are archived in boxes, with these archiving methods featuring heavily in this exhibit and since. Additionally, it is necessary that *RtD*'s accompanying poetic text is read/understood in a Scottish dialect (the text also going to a small length to play on stereotypical 'Scottishness' with a short {Irvine}Welshian section). Whilst *JM* (2019, 39) defines the internal<>external dilemma of my Scottish verbal-interiority, this poetic text and the exhibition note an important fracture: a fracture that is social<>cultural<>political<>aesthetic. The United Kingdom as dis-united; "*I reject my culture and my language, neither were really mine anyway*" (Boyd, 2019, 11).

Fig. 23

The goal of this archival presentation is to treat jewellery not just as wearable thing but as a political contextual record. These boxes are often in addition to publications, poetic titling, new logos (such as the VR headset in *EDot/TL* opposite), animations, moving image and further installative aspects all of which further amplify the



text<>jewellery. They are context in as much as context is content, they are a threshold into the meaning of the work. They hold a political and paratextual force for the artwork providing what Gérard Genette describes

as the: “*threshold... a ‘vestibule’ that offers the world at large the possibility of stepping inside or turning back... an edge... a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of transaction*” (Genette, 1997, 2). If the things in the portfolio discuss the textuality of things, they must by extension, palpate the paratextualities of things. The contexts in the margins, those things just out of view. The hidden connections. Entanglements of the matters contained.

Fig. 24



In exploring this political textuality<math>\langle\rangle</math>paratextuality, *Untying This Mess* (2019) was not to be understood as metaphor but instead as a metamorphosis of matters and by extension meaning. The words transform; physically knotting themselves. The poetic concreteness of this text is a knotting of what is, and by extension what is not possible in a text. The text is taken directly from Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty. Words which were written as pure deferment to other words, describing actions required to leave the European Union. The deferment here did not allow the possibility of

actioning these words. They were instructions to do something that the words themselves implied could not, or should not, be done. As Donna Haraway famously stated: “*It matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with; it*

Fig. 25



*matters what knots knot knots, what thoughts think thoughts, what descriptions describe descriptions, what ties tie ties. It matters what stories make worlds; what worlds make stories.*" (Haraway, 2016, 12)

The exhibition was critical of the decision to leave the EU, leaving the research floundering with the idea of how one grapples with identity when difference has been politicised. Brexit 'did happen' although it was to a notoriously poor degree of success because in the metamorphosis of knotting there can be no containment; "...containers have insides and outsides; in the topology of the knot, however, it is impossible to say what is inside and or outside. Rather knots have interstices. Their surfaces do not enclose..." (Ingold, 16, 2015). In a knot, things can slip, leak, and loosen. If *Untying this Mess's* knotting evidenced textualities of political manoeuvring to be unactable Very Little Common Ground commented on the predicable circularity of political manoeuvring with two differing and endless dialogues from the Daily Mail and Guardian. Their differences are made explicit in the tiny bit of shared ground in this three-dimensional Venn diagram. Of this work curator Sarah Rothwell described "a jewel that visually illustrates the United Kingdom today, a divided and fragmenting series of nations, struggling with its voice and how to articulate the UK's identity and place within a global community when society can no longer find any common ground...", Boyd "can be placed within a lineage of satirists who challenge society by ridiculing the language used by those in positions of power." (Rothwell, 2023, 15)

If jewellery and person relate through the B/I<>M/D(I)/M they do so via complex and entwined political and ethical implications. Jane Bennett describes the importance of material agency. Bennett's vital materialism outlines a position where "human individuals are themselves composed of vital materials, that our powers are thing-power..." where "there is no necessity to describe these differences in a way that places humans at the ontological center or hierarchical apex" (Bennett, 2010, 11). This description challenges the ontological break between person and thing through material/wordly empathy. Bennett further describes the subject-object relation as having ameliorated human suffering. Jewellery has had a historical role via a M/W/V/O perspective deciding who is a subject and who is to be objectified. Where my writing has hinted at this (JM, 2019, 127), Vivi Touloumidis's 2022 PhD *Pharmakos; Adornment as Social Tool* offered explicit focus on the role of adornments as active agents in social discomfort, repression, stigmatisation, and marginalisation of communities for political reasons.

Bennett further highlights that the subject-object divide has created an instrumentalization of nature. Much of the portfolio considers this attunement of vital materialism by *“linger(ing) in those moments during which they find themselves fascinated by objects, taking them as clues to the material vitality they share with them. This sense of strange and incomplete commonality with the out-side may induce vital materialists to treat nonhumans – animals, plants, earth, even artifacts and commodities – more carefully, more strategically, more ecologically”* (Bennett, 2010, 18).

The alignment with Bennett’s vital materialism can be witnessed in *Beyond the Bench* (Appendix B), in which assemblages were made with things found in the streets of Glasgow, photographed multiple times to create photogrammetric meshes, and turned into artefacts. This is reminiscent of Bennett’s poetic description of the street and the beauty of the interacting surfaces, matters and meanings which in so doing seek a more empathetic and ecological engagement with the world.



Fig. 26 & 27

*-meaning-*

Throughout the portfolio artworks fiction to invest meaning. This is done through making/writing/doing of/with words, although other forms of meaning are investigated. Namely, the performative symbiosis of jewellery, which embraces the traversal of matter and meaning where the foundations of things come alive in a rich tapestry of potentials. Here, textualities reside in materialities of metal (the case room lead, silver prose, the metal materiality of data flow).



Metal artefacts offer a *metallic vitality* (Bennett, 2010, 59) which shivers through the work. Works push against definitions of ‘fixed matter’ (neither metal or language are inert) as metaphorically and literally the works embody black inky things where ink is latent potentiality for ever-forthcoming meaning-making. Ink is writing-in-wait. This is mirrored in their material making where complex spruing systems (Appendix B) evidence the fluidity of the molten metal seeping into delicate moulds. Fluidity of process, fluidity of reading and fluidity of meaning are tightly bound.

An awareness of the surrounding world of things and their poetic, affective, fluid potentialities has presented curious choices. Bins are chosen not because there is a punk-esque obligation to undermine material narrative. This has been done by era-defining jewellers like Bernhard Schobinger. Rather the seemingly strange choices of everyday rubbish, this city’s detritus, is chosen because *“We live our lives through objects, but this leads to a tendency to look through them...”* (JM, Boyd, 2019, 229). The choices of these things often come from daydreamic sequences creating affected attunement to space/place/time/feel; *“...to be affected by the unserviceable, resistant or threatening character of that which is ready-to-hand, becomes ontologically possible only in so far as Being-in such has been determined existentially beforehand in such a matter that it encounters within-the world can “matter” to it in this way... openness to the world is constituted existentially by the attunement of a state of mind.”* (Heidegger, 1962, 176).

Bin bags and rusty railings are material assemblages that evidence an affective intimacy with the surrounding, urban world, one which hides in plain sight: rotting foods, bacteria-festering plastic folds, razor-sharp tin can edges. This is ethically contextualised through Timothy Morton’s extension of Heidegger in ‘ecological tuning’: *“attunement is a living dynamic relation with another being- it doesn’t stop...attunement is the feeling of an object’s power over me - I am being dragged by its tractor beam into its orbit... you are already a symbiotic being entangled with other symbiotic beings... you are breathing air, your bacterial microbiome is humming away, evolution is silently unfolding in the back ground...”*(Morton, 2018, 139 & 167 & 212). All of the meshes collected for these works emerged after intensive human activities; working, reading, commuting, where they appeared as daydreamic horizons projecting back an often (in)visible world.

Friction appears in a search for meaning between new materialists such as Bennett and Barad and post-structuralists such as Derrida and Deleuze. Jason Ānanda Josephson Storm highlights this friction: “*New Materialism... aspired to repudiate the turn to language in favor of an emphasis on materiality...*” but “*...merely transposed poststructuralist presuppositions about language into ontology*” (Storm, 2021, 162). Storm shows that where new materialism critiqued post-structuralism it did so by introducing similar but differently framed problems. Art practice allows an approach which mixes the materiality of the assemblage and can align with the materiality of reading a text, and in so doing can differently coagulate opposing theoretical positions.

In a hyper-distracted reading deriving meaning from text has proven difficult and an inability at ‘fluid’ or ‘linear’ reading shaped an apprehensive approach to literature. The linearity of fiction and the expectation of reading from a beginning to an end is beyond this researcher’s grasp. Too many intersecting thoughts, too many lines of flight. Reading theoretical works is undertaken differently, simultaneously, impulsively, tracking down relations between multiple books at any given time. Using pens to trace lines, scribbling hastily written glosses into the margins, starred and emphasised words driving meaning into cognition through an embodied interaction. Deleuze and Guattari’s writing on *Kafka* gives this research greater context than could be derived from a distracted reading of the source material. Marginalia does not bode well for fiction.

In my embodied reading<math>\leftrightarrow</math>tracing the page becomes a fraught mess of criticality. The marginalic act encourages a reading which is only partially interested in the text but is more keenly involved in rooting the text in all that exists beyond it. It is an interactive way of making the text come alive. The textuality of the text is revealed through a further

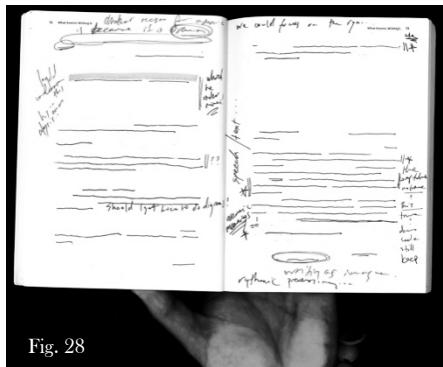


Fig. 28

textual gesture from the reader. It is close to Deleuze’s “*intensive way of reading, in contact with what is outside the book, as a flow meeting other flows, one machine among others, as a series of experiments for each*

*reader in the midst of events that have nothing do with books, as tearing the book into pieces, getting it to interact with other things...*" (Deleuze, 1990, 8-9). Marginalia No2. showcases this type of reading and is one of a series of artworks where I strip the words out of books leaving behind only my marginalic scrawl. Different colours of pens denote different overlaid readings, lines scored across the page acting as an embodied reading helping the fluctuating eye take in what is personally and perceptually missed. As embodied readings, they evidence a type of impulsive archiving.

The works in the portfolio can be described as types of concrete 'concrete' minor literature, in that they can be framed in a lineage of 'concrete prose', and further concretised in their shift from two dimensions to three. They borrow from Deleuze and Guattari's exploration of Franz Kafka as a type of 'minor literature'. In their 1975 essay, *Kafka* they outline several of the key concepts that would be fully fleshed in *A Thousand Plateaus*. In particular, they describe multiple misunderstandings in previous analysis of Kafka's work. They define Kafka's writing as rhizomatic in its multiple possible entrances and exits. Kafka creates tightly defined spaces within his stories which develops an ongoing radical and non-hierarchical politics: "*Minor literature is completely different; its cramped space forces each individual intrigue to connect immediately to politics. The individual concern thus becomes all the more necessary, indispensable, magnified, because a whole other story is vibrating in it.*" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, 17)

In my own works the Scot's neurodivergent voice (mine) should and, to be clear, is not painted as a minority. However, with some license, one can stretch this concept and see that there is still a difficulty present within the language which I speak. I am an outsider to it, my monolingualism palpates a discomfort. The role of the minor is also developed in the shadow of David Burrow's and Simon O'Sullivan's concept of fictioning and mythopoesis in which the Kalkian 'minor' is not a specific identity but instead is: "*an enunciation or assemblage that is always in a state incompleteness... minority is not to do with number (it is not necessarily smaller), but to do with a model - the major- that it refuses...which foregrounds the affective character of a language; a stuttering and stammering of the major - the undoing and remaking of sense.*" (Burrows & O'Sullivan, 2019, 19). If jewellery's dominant narrative is of the precious, the signifier, the decorative, these narratives require a quaking from within just as Kafka's writing trembled the use of its own language. There is something at stake in wearing words, when worn these text-things,

are lived life marginalia, and the margins threaten the perspective of the centre.

This minor voice is increasingly encapsulated in a wider, and marginalic, environmental textuality or what Mark Fisher describes as Capitalist Realism: “a pervasive atmosphere, conditioning not only the production of culture but also the regulation of work and education and acting as a kind of invisible barrier constraining thought and action” (Fisher, 2008, 16). In highlighting this oppressive environmental textuality, a font was created and used in many of the works from 2015-2019. This font of capitalist logos offered a “beige dream of capitalistic hierarchies...” where “individual characters... add an extra complexity to the narratives, where images, whole paragraphs, whole sentences, whole words and single letters could be analysed for individual meanings” (JM, Boyd, 2019, 95). These characters depressingly become cultural iconographies evidencing a “reflexive impotence...” where persons “know things are bad... they know they can’t do anything about it. But that reflexivity, is not a passive observation of an already existing state of affairs. It is a self-fulfilling prophecy” (Fisher, 2008, 21), or as I suggested in *RtD*:

## EVERY THING MUST GO

Fig. 29



In my ‘minor’ reading and writing JM described the way in which Jean-Paul Sartre’s words lifted from the page during yet another flailing reading. Whilst artist Xu Bing’s

words/characters fly away in a beautiful transcendent murmuration (Bing, 2002) mine move leadenly, impenetrable, and piled up (*Impenetrable Philosophy* {Boyd, 2009}). This weightiness is a political refusal to be understood, one which is tangled and fought against throughout the portfolio. There is a sense then that a lack of access to textual meaning offers a chance to pull at language’s threads, untangle the knots of meaning and step outside its boundaries.

In the works, words are always on the turn, shifting to other possible exits and entries. It defines a fight against historic knowledge systems/expectations and finds new ones through non-linear readings and the grafting of the book/object/artwork into newly written formations aligning jewellery thinking with a type of writing/making which can only ever be political. In the difficulties of comprehending language and the difficulties of imbibing words due to cognitive distractions the practice has led to a reusing of language. What Sara Ahmed describes as a “*necessary reuse of use*” to make something work through breaking its system; “*When we cannot make use of somethings we might find uses for other things. What is usually understood as a limit or a restriction can be an opening... misfitting can be understood as generative precisely given it involves friction; when bodies do not fit seamlessly into space, things happen... you have to modify things to make them useable... creativity can be a disruption in the order of things and can be intended as such... you have to break into a system when you do not have legitimate access to that system*” (Ahmed, 2019, 224-225). Through the broken syntax of my reading, words and letters have had to be broken, to be re-used in order to make-sense.

\* \* \*

*“Reality is a luxuriant stratification....”* (Rovelli, 2022, 65)

Often understandings of jewellery circle in narratives of ‘luxury’, but our understanding of material reality beyond our perception is also a series of overlapping desires, intertwining cognitive systems and luxurious<sup>49</sup> possibilities. To grasp a conclusion to the question How One Wears Words? would be, in one sense, methodologically unsound. The rhizomatic rejects the notion of the arborescent, teleological outcome. Yet, through this *first* Fixation practice has evidenced that in their strange (im)materialities, we do wear words. In *Beige* (2020) these are not metal or inky artefacts but the unavoidable matter(s) of speech as an extension of Derrida. It has also voiced that through a minor writing, via Deleuze and Guattari, that any reading<>writing<>making<>wearing of a neurodivergent outpouring is implicitly political.

---

<sup>49</sup> The term luxurious is taken from an etymological analysis of luxury as sensual pleasure, and by an extended leap through word association that sense-ual pleasures are not purely sexual but are intimate, affective, and complex in the ways we make sense of our senses.

The wearing of words and their impacts are inseparable. Jewellery and body coexist in a productively contradictory dance of symbiosis and intra-action giving meaning to each other and raising significant questions of where a body (and by extension the embodied mind) ends. The research, through its convergence of ‘thing’ and ‘word’ has sought to find correspondences between aspects of post-structuralism and philosophical directions presented by the material turn. The *(im)materialities* of words flow from *bodies* into the complex assemblages of the world forging *differences* and, in turn, *identities* storying *meaning*.

Through the practice, a continual palpating of jewellery has led to a poetic framework in which jewellery as arts-practice is produced. Jewellery is framed, and understood, as an essential<sup>50</sup> voice in engaging with the world, and the practice has utilised this essentialness to explore its deeper themes, in particular how an exploration of jewellery in relation to literary analysis unfolds a useful comparison between these two languages. Both the language of words and the language of jewellery recede from view in their impactfulness (or use<sup>51</sup>) and there is a productive cross-examination of the materiality of language and the meaningfulness of jewellery.

Words that we wear through our dwelling within them are implicitly and explicitly political, they also carry a significant materiality whether soft and gaseous or hard and metallic. However, B/I<>M/D(I)/M logic leads not to a final conclusion instead it leads to multiple points of reflection posing new questions that emerged through the portfolio. This framework takes that we wear words as a given but demands an understanding of how these words take form or, presenting the question: *how might form in-form form and form in-form meaning?*

---

<sup>50</sup> See JM “...jewellery entwines with our collective consciousness beyond our existence as the species *Homo sapiens*, and therefore beyond *Homo faber*. It gives us some insight into the use or wearing of objects for non-utilitarian, purely social or possibly hierarchical fictions and functions: it must be hard wired into our actual being. It speaks to the human animal above and beyond what theory could articulate.” (Boyd, 2019, 41)

<sup>51</sup> Avoiding the of the use as a subject<> object binary, instead look to Ahmed: “Use does not necessarily correspond to an intended function... Use thus brings things into existence through gradual modifications of form; to form is to transform.” (Ahmed, 2019 24-25). And there is no suggestion here that objects can’t have equal transformative power on persons (“...it matters what knots knot knots... (or) ...why are you wearing my granda’s watch...”, see: 51).

# GLOSS

Gloss: Jewellery (From *JM*, 2019, 33)

- Jewellery continually develops a language of the miniature.
- Jewellery is an actor involved with the best and worst of human action.
- Jewellery is a language that predates words.
- Jewellery is irrational.
- Jewellery is a joke<sup>32</sup>.
- Jewellery, like comedy offers great insight into the human condition, unconscious actions and deserves interrogation.
- Jewellery is intimate.
- Jewellery is ever ready-at-hand.
- Jewellery is the sign.
- Jewellery and person have a symbiotic relationship.
- Jewellery contains material agency.
- Jewellery is referential of a wider reality.
- Jewellery is non-medium and non-material specific.
- Jewellery depends on nostalgia.
- Jewellery demands a process of overmining not a continual undermining.
- ~~Objects~~ Things<sup>33</sup> (jewellery) and humans have an equal impact on reality.

Amendments (2024)

- Jewellery, ~~like~~ as/is art, offers thingness in the narrower sense (material) and in its broader sense (immanent and immaterial).
- Jewellery is intra-action.
- Jewellery has no inherent relation to monetary value<sup>34</sup>.
- Jewellery is not a lack of some-thing.

---

<sup>32</sup> For further explanation see: 133 *JM* (Boyd, 2019) in the portfolio.

<sup>33</sup> This 2024 amendment reflects the shift away from a dalliance with Object-Orientated-Ontology in *JM* towards more poetic analysis reverting back through Tool-Being towards the late Heideggerian positioning.

<sup>34</sup> *Jewellery is essentially nothing less than wearable money...* (Ungar, 2019, 6)

# GLOSS

## Gloss: Stuff/Objects/Things

- Stuff, objects, and things are not terms used interchangeably as each of these terms carry their own ontological significance.
- Stuff is diffuse. (Miller, 2013, 1)
- It is related to material culture in its broadness and its meaning lies in its lack of specificity.
- Stuff loosely names objects at a distance, and object relations to other objects.
- Because of its relational properties, stuff is an emergent term.
- Stuff is a shifting slider, multiple components making up a seemingly complex interplay of matters.
- In its oft-ironic usage stuff is the most postmodern of these terms.
- Objects lay in opposition to the subject. (Brown, 2019, 20)
- A dalliance here, within the portfolio, through Object Orientated Ontology has seen my own arguments crumble and fall to pieces (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 161).
- Objects lack the diffuse poetics of stuff and grasping of things.
- For these reasons object has proven a term with diminishing returns throughout the research.
- Things is the preferable terminology.
- Things exist in the narrow and broad sense (Heidegger, 1967, 5)
- In this broad sense, rests haecceity or ‘thisness’ (see: 138-139)
- Things are always a grasping towards more-that-we-can-sense.
- Things are the senses put through the cognitive poetics of “making-sense”.
- The thing is the material artefact and its beyond (space/time).
- This is the things ‘thingness’. (Heidegger, 1967, 16)
- The things thingness is an embrace of the ‘not-knowing’.
- The thing embraces the some-thing, the any-thing and no-thing.
- And no-thing (space) is always filled with stuff. (Laughlin, 2005, 17)
- ~~*We wallow in stuff.*~~
- ~~*We attempt to divide and control via objects.*~~
- ~~*We think through things.*~~



*“Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you heading for? These are totally useless questions.”*

(Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, 27)

*“Language has been granted too much power. The linguistic turn, the semiotic turn, the interpretive turn, the cultural turn: it seems that at every turn every “thing” - even materiality - is turned into a matter of language ....”*

(Barad, 2007, 132)

## ...saccade...

(440 words)

... this is the (post)<sup>55</sup> ~~craft~~/art practitioner evidencing a poetic turn within embodied knowledge ... and ... offering a blurring of human and machine and storytelling relations ... acts of mythotechnesis<sup>57</sup> ... where technology and things and material<sup>58</sup> act as extensions of oneself ... continual ready-to-handedness<sup>59</sup> ... whether hammer ... brush ... torch ... kiln ... the stitch ... the knot (an inherently unstable structure {story<sup>60</sup>}) always in an act of tightening or loosening) ... or the algorithm...the dance of meaning-making escalates ... we

---

<sup>55</sup> “A catchword for the condition of post-craft is therefore “de-territorialization.” Local things made with local materials for local communities have dispersed into a web of nomadism and migratory and virtual networks...post-craft marks out a continuously shape-shifting field. Ultimately, post-craft describes an era of practices that help us consider the ever-shifting shape of things in our lives” (Margetts, 2022, 50-51)

<sup>56</sup> “The word craft ties itself in knots as one needs to use the term ~~craft~~ (in reference to the groupings of objects), as not to do so would ignore the historic and underlying context of an item of jewellery or ceramic. This context is necessary, as no other word can be used to position the item, but it becomes self-undermining through its association with the amateur, a certain category of aesthetic and, most importantly, that this use of the term undermines its other use; craft as being, as motion. When using the word as a noun, due to my concerns over the word’s misuse I will employ Heidegger’s and Derrida’s tactic of erasure (sous rature). “Language is indeed straining here...To make a new word is to run the risk of forgetting the problem or believing it solved...” This transformation should rather involve ‘crossing out’ the relevant terms and thus liberating them, exposing ‘the presumptuous demand that (thinking) know the solution of the riddles and bring salvation.” (Spivak/Heidegger)” in (JM, Boyd, 2019, 57)

<sup>57</sup> “...mythotechnesis approaches the fictioning of new modes of existence by specifically attending to future human-machine relations and assemblages through a consideration of the technics of adaptation and cloning, as well as through technologies of coding, compression and layering, and also editing, scanning, time-stretching, copying and pasting. We suggest that such technics produce a machine fictioning which explores the future development of analogue and digital technologies and also modes of embodiment and disembodiment...” (Burrows and O’Sullivan, 2019, 7)

<sup>58</sup> “...materials are ineffable. To describe any material is to pose a riddle, whose answer can be discovered only through observation and engagement with what is there. The riddle gives the material a voice and allows it to tell its own story: it is up to us, then, to listen, and from the clues it offers, to discover what is speaking...” (Ingold, 2013, 31)

<sup>59</sup> “When we make use of ...equipment, which is proximally and inconspicuously ready-to-hand, the environing Nature is ready-to-hand with it. Our concerned absorption in whatever work-world lies closet to us, has a function of discovering; and it is essential to this function that, depending upon the way in which we are absorbed, those entities within-the-world which are brought along in the work and with it (that is to say, in the assignments or references which are constitutive for it, remain discoverable in varying degrees of explicitness and with a varying circumspective penetration.” (Heidegger 1962, 2013 ed, 101)

<sup>60</sup> “Knots are always in the midst of things, while their ends are on the loose, rooting for other lines to tangle with.” (Ingold, 2015,22)

could ... well ... why not?<sup>61</sup>... read them as distributed and asemic<sup>62</sup> meanderings<sup>63</sup> ... shed semantic baggage ... and finding paths through curiosity ... perhaps ... where rationalised technological systems enmesh with human intention ... sense and non-sense<sup>64</sup> ... of 'not-knowing'<sup>65</sup> and 'unthought'<sup>66</sup> ... a space where cognitive systems reach out and knot beyond the meat (or fat<sup>67</sup>) of human thought ... thinking with empathy through sensuous acts of making ... these acts of "knowing-from-the-inside"<sup>68</sup> allow a materially-directed-process to emerge ... for even in our interactions with the clean/neat/hard

---

<sup>61</sup> Somewhere between (a conceptual) Baker, Barstow and Berdoo, a complete breakdown of formal relations to all external properties begins...an edge of the desert...

<sup>62</sup> "In the case of asemic it is meaning itself, or rather the sign's capacity to convey meaning, that is eliminated. So asemic writing is writing that does not attempt to communicate any message other than its own nature as writing. It is, in the words of Michael Jacobson, "a shadow, impression, and abstraction of conventional writing" (Schwenger 2019, 1)

<sup>63</sup> "...it is not as though the hand, in drawing, gradually empties out what first fills the head, such that the entire composition slides like a transfer from mind to paper; rather both hand and head are complicit throughout in the works unceasing generation..." (Ingold, 2013, 127)

<sup>64</sup> "Nonsense is that which has no sense, and that which, as such it enacts the donation of sense is opposed to the absence of sense." (Deleuze and Guattari, 1990, 72). "What then is the paradoxical relation between sense and nonsense? sense is a paradoxical element that resides in the proposition but is the attribute of things. nonsense is the paradoxical element that circulate among language and things and brings them together...sense is an effect of nonsense..." (May, 2005, 108)

<sup>65</sup> The artist's perception of their physical encounter with material is rarely characterised as an adversarial one of mastery these days but artists often describe how the material processes of making art unfold in unexpected ways...artists knowingly use 'not knowing'. In creative processes, and the statements that emerge from them, there is a productive to-ing and fro-ing between the known and the unknown and it is important to keep mindful of their provisional nature" (Fortnum, 2013, 84)

<sup>66</sup> "Unthought... a kind of thinking without thinking..." but "unthought may also be taken to refer to recent discoveries in neuroscience confirming the existence of nonconscious cognitive processes inaccessible to conscious introspection but nevertheless essential for consciousnesses to function. Understanding the full extent of their power requires a radical rethinking of cognition from the ground up...unthought also names the potent force of conceptualising interaction between human and technical systems that enables us to understand more clearly the political, cultural and ethical stakes of living in contemporary developed societies...most human cognition happens outside of conscious/unconscious; cognition extends through the entire biological spectrum, including animals and plants; technical devices cognize, and in doing so profoundly influence human complex systems..." (Hayles, 2017, 1-5)

<sup>67</sup> The human brain is nearly 60% fat.

<sup>68</sup> From *Knowing from the Inside*: "What then is the relation between thinking and making? To this, the theorist and the craftsman would give different answers. It is not that the former only thinks and the latter only makes, but that the one makes through thinking and the other thinks through making.... In the art of inquiry, the conduct of thought goes along with, and continually answers to, the fluxes and flows of the materials with which we work. These materials think in us, as we think through them...To practise this method is not to describe the world, or to represent it, but to open up our perception to what is going on there so that we, in turn, can respond to it" (Ingold, 2013, 6)

*artificial systems ... the systems hide complex intertwined materialities ... for a jeweller (of sorts) ... gold is closely associated with the ring and with the heat of the forge ... storing artefacts and technologies ... yet in these times of quantum uncertainties ... where fold and flows and waves dominate over the 'hard' stuff ... and ... where rhizomatic<sup>69</sup> myths and materialities proliferate ... gold maintains alchemic readings ... but offers new ones as a different matter of meaning-making ... not the ready-to-hand technology of the ring ... but as the hidden under aluminium/glass/plastic-framework/casing technology ... as the conductor (here, offered poetically, as well literally) ... where its soft manipulability ... its conductive nature ... its state of never-tarnishing ... allows zero's and one's to travel at vast speeds...the power of gold never tarnishes<sup>70</sup> but the arena of 'unthought' is not the hard clean place we may imagine ... it is just as dirty ... the image of the ai may be that of the retro-futuristic ... the clean ... wiped-down dettol-ed surface ... but ... they are products of dirty processes and vast scales of material engagement ... the result of extractive human<sup>71</sup> and non-human practices ... they are the results of silicon ... copper ... gold ... silver ...all soft<sup>72</sup> when taken out of their alloyed everydayness...of fluid crystal ...*

---

<sup>69</sup> "a rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*. the tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance...the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, "and... and... and..." where are you going? where are you coming from? what are you heading for? these are totally useless questions...the middle is by no means an average; on the contrary, it is where things pick up speed. between things does not designate a localizable relation going from one thing to the other and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one and the other away, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle..." (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980, 2004 ed., 27)

<sup>70</sup> "the solar nature of the luminous surfaces of noble metals constitutes their value and power, rendering them attractive to the human mind, which begins by desiring the experience of shine and ends by desiring the shining objects themselves. not only because they are beautiful, but also because they promise power. the very act of possessing them is like possessing the sun itself." in Pravu Mazumdar, *Gold and Mind*, <https://klimt02.net/forum/articles/gold-mind-pravumazumdar>, accessed 7<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

<sup>71</sup> "OpenAI used outsourced Kenyan laborers earning less than \$2 per hour...as the app was also prone to blurring out violent, sexist and racist remarks...because the ai had been trained on hundreds of billions of words scraped from the internet—a vast repository of human language...OpenAI sent tens of thousands of snippets of text to an outsourcing firm in Kenya, beginning in November 2021. much of that text appeared to have been pulled from the darkest recesses of the internet. some of it described situations in graphic detail like child sexual abuse, bestiality, murder, suicide, torture, self-harm, and incest." in <https://time.com/6247678/openai-chatgpt-kenya-workers>, accessed 7<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

<sup>72</sup> "Soft stuff, by definition, deforms and flows...soft matter provides many illustrations of... (the)... claim that the notion of fundamental physics should not be tied to any one scale of length or energy, and that while 'reductionism'... is an essential tool in science, it cannot be the whole story of how we understand the world. Nature is built from many components,

*but ... they are equally the products of grubby oily fingerprints ... rare minerals scorched from the land<sup>70</sup> ... and the belly button fluff that accumulates in the charger portal of the computer/iphone ... and ... and ... and ...*

---

*but fundamentally novelty arises also from the way they are assembled hierarchically.”*  
(McLeish, 2020, 2 & 5)

<sup>71</sup> *“The mining that makes AI is both literal and metaphorical. The new extractivism of data mining also encompasses and propels the old extractivism of traditional mining... The cloud is the backbone of the artificial intelligence industry, and it’s made of rocks and lithium brine and crude oil”* (Crawford, 2021, 31)

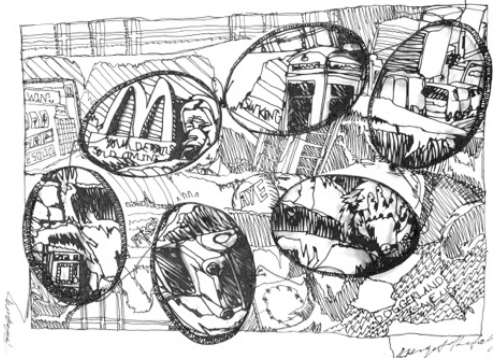
How Might Form In-Form Meaning And Meaning In-Form?

*“Materials are ineffable. They cannot be pinned down in terms of established concepts or categories. To describe any material is to pose a riddle, whose answer can be discovered only through observation and engagement with what is there. The riddle gives material a voice and allows it to tell its own story; it is up to us, then, to listen...”*  
(Ingold, 2013, 31).

How does form come to matter, or perhaps to reverse this question how does matter come to take form? What is form, or for that matter, what is any formlessness that needs a taking of form? What is the shift from one ‘thing’ to another? And what are the hierarchies and roles of matters involved in the emergence of ‘things’. The Applied Art disciplines have inclined towards formalist readings of objects. The sense that the object contains within it all that one needs to know. But the thinking laid out within the portfolio paints a relational dimension to jewellery as the storying ‘thing’ where form is emergent and situated. This chapter will delve into the materialities of wordly things, the practicalities of material encounters, and their situated and contextualised forming.

Fig. 30

In *Illustrations of the Doggerland* (RtD, 2019) “...pictures become a kind of writing as soon as they are meaningful” (Barthes, 2009, 133), and here disappointing contemporaneous meaning stems from UK mythologies<sup>74</sup> such as M25 traffic jams, high-rise MacDonaldis signs, an image of Boris (appropriately) holding his head in his hands,



<sup>74</sup> Also from Roland Barthes: “...myth is a type of speech” which “is made of a material which has already been worked on so as to make it suitable for communication” (2009, 131 & 133)

submerge<>emerge from the salty waters of the North Sea as an explicit exploration of how stories submerge<>emerge and dissolve into each other in intra-active complex systems. Story is not only inherent in the artefact but is an intricate and complex intertwining of flows and ‘thinkings’, ‘becomings’ and ‘things’. This Fixation will use the following subheadings *-form-* and *-in-form-* to discuss these questions and how ideas come from and through the portfolio of practice.

It should be noted that jewellery as storying artefact has received significant research and forms the basis of PhD’s by Jivan Astfalck and Jack Cunningham. Jewellery theorist Lisbeth den Besten concludes her discussion of narrative jewellery with the following thought: *“the narrative is there in the pieces, but it has to be stirred up by the viewer, who will complete it. Therefore the maker, the wearer, the viewer and the message are entangled in an indefinable and ongoing discourse with one another.”* (den Besten, 2012, 105). den Besten, in line with Astfalck, uses the lens of narratology for this enquiry however it re-establishes the M/W/V/O as a humanist and mechanistic dynamic. Entangled in this sense means all mixed up. Recently, philosopher Byung-Chul Han has described our inhabiting of a *“post-narrative era”* where capitalist storytelling has divided narrative into information blocks of *“self-presentation or self-promotion”* (Han, 2024, ix). There is a fleeting thought contained within my research that any narrow focus on the narrative of an individual jewellery item, out of its wider referential relations and context, may achieve the issue.

In B/I<>M/D(I)/M relations entangled refers to the much wider quantum possibilities that we (human and non-human) are all interrelated and interacting in emergent states. The stories being lived out in these artworks are not confined to human interactions, although they are deeply entwined with what Daniel Dennett describes as the *“narrative self”* Dennett defines the narrative self as; *“Our fundamental tactic of self-protection, self-control, and self-definition is not spinning webs or building dams, but telling stories... and just as spiders don't have to think... our tales are spun, but for the most part we don't spin them; they spin us. Our human consciousness, and our narrative selfhood, is their product, not their source... Like the biological self, this psychological or narrative self is yet another abstraction, not a thing in the brain, but still a remarkably robust and almost tangible attractor of properties, the "owner of record" of whatever items and features are lying about unclaimed.”* (1993, 418). But more, they are entwined through more far-reaching complex narratives and poetic multiplicities of matter and meaning.



There is philosophical weight behind this shift of hierarchy away from the artist/maker as the ultimate figure of authority through Martin Heidegger's positioning of the artist as the fourth most significant actant in the creation of a work of art<sup>75</sup>. In his essay *"The Origin of the Work of Art"* (1950) Heidegger outlines the artist as a gateway for any artwork to emerge. His words were inflammatory as they stripped away the modernist perception of the artist-as-genius; *"he is... adamant that it is art that is the origin of both the artwork and the artist not vice-versa"* (Bolt, 2011, 105). It is of no less luck to this text, at least, that Heidegger's analysis of art interrogates the silver artefact and silversmith. His hierarchy of significant actants reads as follows: silver (matter), chalice-ness (idea), circumscription (limits/confines), and only then, the silversmith.

*"Silver is that out of which the silver chalice is made. As this matter (hyle), it is co responsible for the chalice. The chalice is indebted to, that is, owes thanks to, the silver out of which it consists. But the sacrificial vessel is indebted not only to the silver. As a chalice, that which is indebted to the silver appears in the aspect of a chalice and not in that of a brooch or a ring. Thus the sacrificial vessel is at the same time indebted to the aspect (eidos) or idea of chaliceness. Both the silver into which the aspect is admitted as chalice and the aspect in which the silver appears are in their respective ways co- responsible for the sacrificial vessel... But there remains yet a third that is above all responsible for the sacrificial vessel. It is that which and bestowal. Through this the chalice is circumscribed as sacrificial vessel. Circumscribing gives bounds to the thing... Finally there is a fourth participant in the responsibility for the finished sacrificial vessel's lying before us ready for use, i.e., the silversmith."* (Heidegger, 1977, 7-8)

Silver is often considered an inert, stable, and hard substance however Heidegger's position, which pre-dates the New Materialists, also *"conceives of matter itself as lively or as exhibiting agency"* (Coole and Frost, 2010, 7). Deleuze and Guattari have also pointed to metal as offering not just a vitality but a musicality: *"metallurgy has an essential relation with music, it is by virtue not only of the sounds of the forge but also the tendency within both arts to bring into its own, beyond separate forms, a continuous development of form and beyond variable matters, a continuous variation of matter: a chromatism sustains both music and metallurgy"* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, 453). In jewellery the inherent

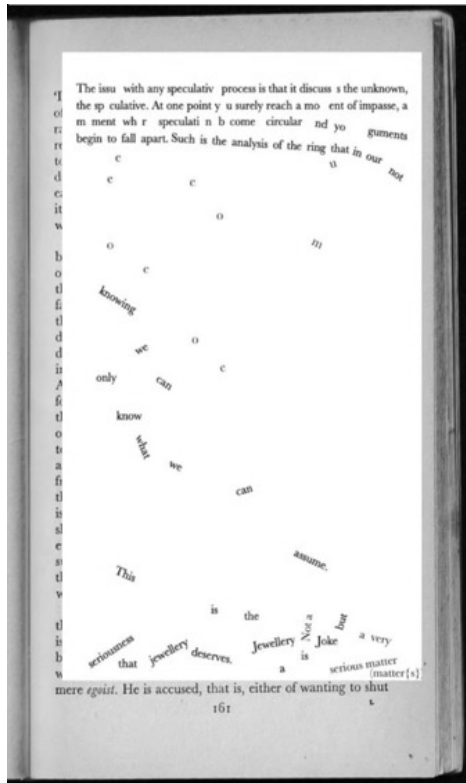
---

<sup>75</sup> Heidegger should be handled with care and criticality and is understood in light of secondary critical writers such as Sara Ahmed and Johnny Golding.

music of metallurgy brims with life just out of scope from a human vantage or as Bennett puts it: “a metallic vitality, a (impersonal) life, can be seen in the quivering of these free atoms at the edges between the grains of the polycrystalline edifice” (Bennet, 2010, 59). The research positions language/words, so often perceived as the stable communicator, as something radically unstable and continually deferred in tandem with the idea that the materials, with which the practice takes its form (metal), are also perceived as stable and inert substances but which are anything but. Metal, like language, is trembling with instability just out of grasp. A point of contention may arise here that this text suggests jewellery is non-medium specific, yet metal is being discussed at length. Whilst true it should be noted that despite jewellery’s non-medium specificity the portfolio demonstrates a practice largely undertaken through the use of oxidised silver, a material used for its castability and its ability to take on the aesthetic of ink.

Jewellery, in their metal compositions presented in this portfolio, are complex and multi-actant storyings, they are not merely artefacts but the narrow and broader ‘thing’ which generatively straddles productively contradictory terms such as symbiotic<>intra-active. Rather than standing in binary opposition to each other the symbiotic<>intra-active productively oscillates, evidencing a productive temporal move over the ten years. Drawing from different disciplines, symbiosis from biology, intra-actions from the new materialisms of Barad, they paint slightly different pairings of the jewellery <> body relationship, but they should not be understood

Fig. 31



as exclusionary of each other. They also offer usefully different temporal concepts; the symbiotic nature of jewellery<>person is a short-shared life whilst the intra-activity of matter<>meaning is infinite in all directions (emergence). The symbiotic relates directly to the short intensity of the relationship between a person and thing.

In a 'jewellery thinking' a flat(er) ontology<sup>76</sup>, such as this crumbling speculative realist exploration, can only go so far before the dead-pan question returns "but isn't it a body wearing a thing"? In my practice, I have understood jewellery to be both poetically symbiotic (a co-living with) and intra-active (these are things and bodies which have emerged together and now share a space/time/environment of co-becomings) this has been further framed through my critical reflection in *JM*. In this sense Barad and Bill Brown (in *Thing Theory*<sup>77</sup>) have offered productive ways in which we can see the world having shared agencies between things and persons whilst still recognising that there is such a thing as a person. In jewellery's (and person's) co-grasping out into the vast and wild world, multiple dynamic encounters take place. Heidegger offered that any encounter with an artwork is slow and sensuous. Jewellery is both of these, slow-making (an alternative description for ~~craft~~), slow living-with (the productive contradiction of the symbiotic<> intra-active), a slow-becoming (the non-anthropocentric vantage of coming together of things to create an encounter {gold as cosmic, person as carbon and fat etc}) and sensuous in the encounter (the wearing and sharing and entwining of bodies material and person) in the B/I<>M/D(I)/M dynamic.

In jewellery, an immediate encounter "*with the thing is something we do not need either to demand or to arrange. It happens slowly. In what the senses of sight, hearing, and touch bring to us, in the sensations of color, sound, roughness, and hardness, things move us bodily, in a quite literal sense. senses belonging to sensibility, is perceptible by means of sensations.*" (Heidegger, 1960, 8)

-form-

---

<sup>76</sup> "Note that modern philosophy... is not flat since it assumes a strict division between human thought on one side and everything else on the other..." (Harman, 2018, 54)

<sup>77</sup> In *Other Things* Bill Brown further contextualises his concept of *Thing Theory*: "...*Other Things* leaves the subject-object binary in place (while repeatedly discovering it distorted or displaced) ...the field of things should be understood to include the pre-emergent subject as a thing entangled in things- this is a field of things from which both subject and object precipitate in and as their relation." (Brown, 2015, 20-22)



Fig. 32

Encountering the ‘thing’ that is jewellery, it’s a much closer encounter than, say, one with a painting. The ring continues its forming, post-making. The forming is not withheld by an absent author, much in the same way that any deconstructive reading takes new form in the absence of any author, but in a more materialised sense, as bashes dent the surface, scratches reveal fresh shiny unoxidized metal and fleshy folds of skin grow round and over tight wedding bands (JM, Boyd, 2019, 143). The artist allows a form from some-thing which in turn takes on new forms in matter and meaning in symbiotic <math>\leftrightarrow</math> intra-action. All form has form even the formless has something of a form about it.

Taking as its starting point the consideration that rhizomatic writings, such as *A Thousand Plateaus*, creak, and break by the linear conventions of typeset, *Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line (EDoTL)* (2021), undertook a deliberately exploratory set-up where form-less writings might be enabled. The metaphor of rhizome doesn’t quite cover the intentions of academic writing. Chapters can be read in any order and words may create pictures that fly in multiple directions, but the line on the page, the end of the sentence continues in a linear logic. One sentence starts with another following closely after, and, in turn, each paragraph precedes its follower. *EDoTL* looked to see if a more methodologically appropriate approach to writing rhizomatically could be possible, where the emergent outcomes of multiple complexities feed into an ongoing flux of meaning.

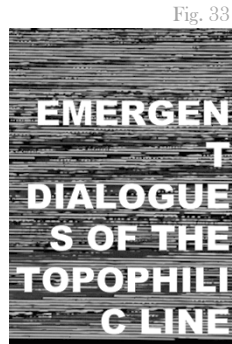


Fig. 33

The experimental set-up for this practical and embodied writing also sought to explore the type of binarism inherent in Machine Learning (ML) systems and their zero<math>\leftrightarrow</math>one logic. The single-layer ‘neural perceptron’, the historic unit of ML served as inspiration for the set-up. In a single layer perceptron: “the square indicates the neuron itself; the arrows going into the

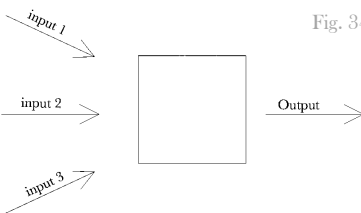


Fig. 34

square correspond to the inputs of the neuron ... each input is associated with a number called its weight... each input neuron is either in active or inactive.” (Wooldridge, 2020, 173). In this process and the resulting artworks, the logic of numerical computation is replaced by a fuzzy logic of bodily sensation; computational weight replaced for feel and attunement. Things coming in and out of focus. Momentary beats of bodily logic starting<>stopping then redirecting. This was undertaken by

Fig. 35



positioning myself in a digital landscape via a Virtual Reality headset. I listened to several audio sources whilst allowing my right hand to gesture character and words. Lines emerged in a strange unknowing dance of writing, mark-making, and drawing. In one performative outcome, a strange mix of an audio-reading by anthropologist Tim Ingold and the debut album by Wet Leg gave rise to the inexplicable mix of anthropologic and euphemistic writing. In this space and with no pre-set or pre-determined textural goal envisaged, the distinction between writing and drawing became

increasingly blurred, although as Ingold highlights: *“Writing is still drawing. But it is a special type of drawing in which what is drawn comprises the elements of a notation”* (Ingold, 2007, 127).

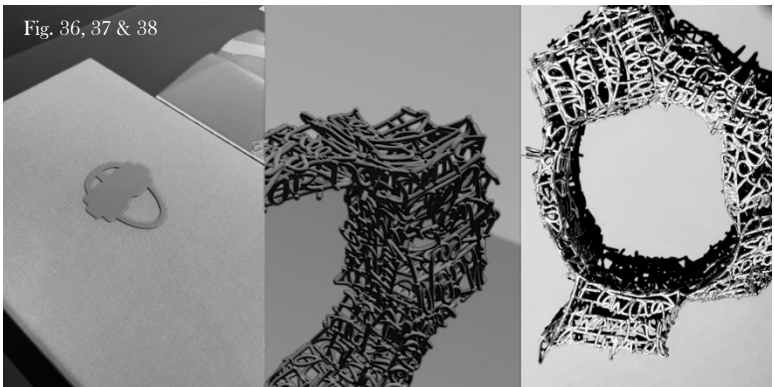


Fig. 36, 37 & 38

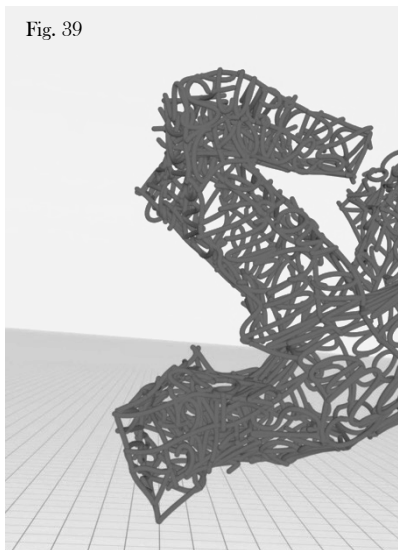
The lines of text moved away from my body in performative gestural shifts. This was a fully embodied writing with letters ranging in scale from small to the size of my torso. Rosemarie Anderson outlines: *“Embodied writing tries to let the body speak... Continuing to write in a Cartesian style no longer seems acceptable... disembodied writing just perpetuates the object-subject bifurcation... Embodied writing includes both internal (imaginal, perceptual, kinaesthetic, and visceral date usually known only by the experienter) and external (sometimes observable to others...) sources of information... The body speaks for itself through the vehicle of words...”* (Anderson, 2001, 83-88).

Distinct from Anderson’s description this embodied writing does not convey embodied meaning through content alone (signified meaning) but additionally through its process and form. The gestural scale of the writing is felt intuitively and attuned to two sensory environments: the ocular brushness of the infinite and Day-Glo virtual environment and the cold real-world matters of my studio in the middle of February. Sight feels like it is working against the senses in VR. The various works had different affective impacts in their forming,

the greater the stress load the greater the spikes in shape. Whilst not intended, the closer the exhibition deadline loomed, the greater the spikiness in each work. Spikiness occurs from more fraught bodily reactions.

This embodied doing breaks down the linear logic of a text and defies the Cartesian mind/body divide. The embodied interactions in this virtual realm offered more radical multiplicities as the ground on which one writes gives way for an open and endless expanse. The supposedly fixed two-dimensions of writing became three. Words bend around and twist, readability becomes uncertain. The bodily cursive act (now shifting in its emergent scales) becomes the form in ways which embraces unpredictability: *“How can one write without ground; can it be a form of*

Fig. 39



scribing when there is nothing to scribe against? With no canvas or paper on which to place the line, a freedom exists that is both invigorating and nerve-inducing.” (*EDotTL*, Boyd, 2021, 13)

Fig. 40



This type of writing saw a move away from the majority of textual forms present in the works of *JM* and *RtD*, with a noted return to a type of cursive, even if stretched to breaking point. In this sense, it offered parallels to the reflective writing undertaken in *JM* around the interactive artwork

*Experimental Adornment* (2009). That commentary reflected on the successes and failures of AN interactive artwork which allowed people to draw/write/scribble on each other. Both *Experimental Adornment* and *EDotTL* offered dimensional, temporal, and performative ‘doings’. Their difference is *EDotTL*’s faltering ground and a shift away from *Experimental Adornment*’s maker<>viewer dynamic towards the subjective<>embodied made possible by the mytho-technical possibilities of VR.

The uncertainty in these emergent forms saw a substantial and aesthetic shift from the work undertaken and evidenced throughout *JM* where lines of font would helix into concrete narrative structures. Additionally, an aesthetic cohesion was broken (from the materiality of carbon-inky, black typeface). However, something more profound happened. Language was being channelled differently and the concerns of textual linearity became about the mark being made rather than a line of meaning to follow. These lines also shifted into a strange virtual materiality (the carbon-driven synthetic environment). This can be understood as a shift in the research from the fixation (or fixed) to the saccade (the diffuse).

Lines of words no longer followed lines of text on the material page and instead, something new is palpated, an emergent writing which follows only the line and the trace of the immaterial mark. Politically the work stands against Ingold’s provocation that “*the straight line has emerged as a virtual icon of modernity, an index of the triumph of rational, purposeful design over the vicissitudes of the natural world...*” and which “*associated*

*straightness with mind against matter, with rational thought against sensory perception, with intellect against intuition, with science against tradition, with male against female, with civilisation against primitiveness... with culture against nature...there is no reason, intrinsic to the line itself why it should be straight.*" (Ingold, 2016, 156-157).

Against any mechanistic approach, these writings are less empirical in their evaluation and more bodily<>material(y)<>fluid(y) in their thinking. This embodied thinking was a call to *"think non- conceptually and systematically yet with rigor and strictness about the nature of being... to avoid subjectivity involved in separating the human being and Being, subject and object... a thinking that is at once receptive in the sense of listening and attending to what thinks convey to us and active in the sense that we respond to their call"* (Glenn Gray, 2004, xiv). This was a seeking rigour beyond the empirical.

*"Science does not think"* (Heidegger, 2004, 8)

In this 'doing' a playful reversal of the Derridean idea that a reader can undertake a deconstruction of a text is created as any 'readability' can only take place in the momentary unfolding of art. Textual reading becomes redundant and instead, a deconstructive writing is developed where writing unpicks its own process for flaws and irregularities in its formation. What was written becomes a form of formless writing. The plasticity of the material and the plasticity of the words takes a central role.

Plasticity of materials (words and other things) plays a significant role in all approaches to the research in this portfolio. Materials are actants in which the artists engage and briefly work with and through. It is a strange interplay of the *"ineffability"* of stuff (Ingold, 2013, 31), the creative becoming of *"not-knowing"* (Fortnum, 2013, 84) and of *"following the material"* (Lange-Berndt, 2015, 14). Plastic approaches reject the formalist and hylomorphic<sup>78</sup>, and instead embrace emergence and the complexity of art systems to co-create with matters finding emergent possibilities through iterative feedback loops and experimental leaps in the not-yet-there.

In following the material into the un-known then what leads? Is it the latent potentiality of ink that is contained within the pen, that flows from

---

<sup>78</sup> *"The hylomorphic model... corresponds to the perspective of a man who stands outside the works and sees what goes in and what comes out but nothing of what happens in between..."* (Ingold, 2013, p25)



the nib, or the graphite that is glued within the pencil? Is it the soot, that makes the ink, that comes from the burning of coal, or the tree that lived and was buried and decomposed or was it the sun rays that grew its trunk<sup>79</sup>. These ‘materials’ shift in their temporalities into each other. However, when in VR the visual trace of the material world is oddly removed, and materiality shifts to the other senses. It’s an experience which is heady, and which results in an embodied writing but also a curious feeling of motion sickness. The colourful and weightless environment of the virtual space is somehow aligned with the damp and dank smells of my studio, intermixed sounds (zero<>one audios and cognitively filtered background noises- birds-motorway etc) and the unflattering weightiness of my body. The in-forming of meaning becomes a leap, a creative and critical act, but it is not one without rigour as environment and dwelling, or attunement to this distorting environment is undertaken, another way to put this is “*context is content*” (Margetts, 2023).

Jewellery has an interesting and specific relation to environment (jewellery understood as souvenir, that is; “*this capacity of objects to serve as traces of authentic experience... the souvenir distinguishes experiences...*” {Stewart, 1984, 135}) and this relationship has been well explored through notions of the topophilic or the development/emergence of a ‘sense’ of place: “*Topophilia is the affective bond between people and place or setting. Diffuse as concept, vivid and concrete as personal experience...*” (Tuan, 1974, 4). Beth Legg has explored this notion of the topophilic in jewellery in her PhD *The Materiality of Place: An Investigation into the Makers Approach to Material and Process as a Reflection of Place within Northern European Contemporary Jewellery Practice* (Edinburgh College of Art/Edinburgh University, 2013). Legg’s research opens the way environment shapes the aesthetics of contemporary jewellery but fits broadly into a M/W/V/O approach whilst having a vested interest in natural environments.

Topophilia has influenced the practice and *TO SORN* (2015) evidenced an interdisciplinary exploration of identity through a flâneurial approach to psychogeography and the differences between city and country. *TO*

---

<sup>79</sup> See Appendix C for taught workshops where these ideas are tested.



Fig. 41

*SORN*, was a series of 18 jewellery pieces which stemmed from the film *TO SORN*. As an exploration of identity, the film captured myself and a close friend walking 35 miles from Glasgow (the birthplace of my children) to Sorn, in Ayrshire (the birthplace of my close friend).<sup>80</sup>

However, rather than explorations of purely urban environments as evidenced in works like *The M8 Intersection at Charing Cross as a Metaphor for My Heartbeat* (2016) (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 103-122), *EDotTL* found a new discombobulating virtual environment to make ‘sense’ of.

The topophilic resonance of this virtual environment with all its inter-sensuous arguing undermined by the overbearing weight on the ‘visual’ supported a methodological scaling<sup>81</sup> which while remaining rhizomatic embraces notions of emergence. The scaling takes place at multiple points through the gestural writing with words drawn the size of my body and then scaled down to create intricate fillagree-texts that align with jewellery’s obsession with the power of miniature worlds (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 160, point I)



Fig. 42

The creation of art, the forming of meaning through making can itself be understood as an emergent act of multiple complex processes and systems

<sup>80</sup> Further analysis of *TO SORN* can be found in the portfolio (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 199- 211)

<sup>81</sup> Much is described in emergent theories in relation to concepts of scaling in particular in the book Geoffrey West in his book: *Scale: The Universal Laws of Life and Death in Organisms, Cities and Companies* (2018), describes how and why things reach certain ideas of size dependant of interactions and patterns at different scales: “the scalability of living systems underlies their extraordinary resilience and sustainability both at the individual level and for life itself.” (West, 2018, 103)

working together. At this point it, would be amiss not to highlight the significant influence of philosopher<>poet<>researcher Johnny Golding and her research group Entanglement. Here, I first drowned in the complex ideas of emergence, entanglement, and ‘making-sense’. However as a busy academic, my attendance at these sessions was irregular, and I had to find out through my own directions and reading how these ideas might work through and within my practice. Melanie Mitchell describes emergence as “...systems in which organized behaviour arises without an internal or external controller or leader are sometimes called self-organizing. Since simple rules produce complex behaviour in hard-to-predict ways, the macroscopic behaviour of such systems is sometimes called emergent. Here is an alternative definition of a complex system: a system that exhibits nontrivial emergent and self-organizing behaviours.” (Mitchell, 2009, 13)

Emergence should not be understood as contradictory to a rhizomatic approach as the rhizome remains key to the types of neurodivergence at play. Emergence is the ever-shifting, dynamic and multiplicitous hyper-dis-traction (the pull towards {the not-known}). The emergent becomes subsumed and is expressed as part of a complex rhizomic interconnectedness. Both the rhizome and emergence lack vertical hierarchy. In emergent systems this is through the ability to be adaptive with the potential to form “*much from little*” (Holland, 1998, 202). Thinking itself, and by extension, any type of rhizomatic thought might be the outcome of an emergent system with “*the implication that consciousness is an emergent systemic phenomenon and not a consequence of just the sum of all the ‘nerve paths and neurons’ in the brain*” (West, 2017, 87).

This is form becoming manifest as complex interactions coming together; Deleuze and Guattari referred to this as art’s potential to harness chaos, as Bird explains: “*This is a real, yet not empirical, undifferentiated reservoir of impersonal and imperceptible forces, simultaneously co-existing in a profusion of indistinguishable orders... art capture the forces of chaos, differentiating them through framing operations, to form compounds or blocks of sensation*” (Bird, 2017, 55). If this Fixation deals with the emergent formless of form it does so in the light and influence of soft matters where “*milkeness draws us to the idea of colloids, sliminess to polymers, pearliness to liquid crystals and the spontaneous formation of soap bubble to self-assembly*” (McLeish, 2020, 135).

Tom Holland in his book *Emergence* shows the alliance between creativity and emergence, explaining that “both the poet and the physicist strive to get beneath the surface of events...” and “...the key to handling this complexity is the discovery of salient patterns” which “...creative individuals exhibit a talent for such selection, but the mechanisms they employ are largely unknown... but worth examining, that the mechanisms of selection in the creative process are akin to those of evolutionary selection, simply running on a much faster time scale” (Holland, 1998, 218-219)

The environment and the context continually feedback into the process of making and the leap forward are all points of continual emergent properties. The rhizome is itself an emergent state. To engage in this type of thinking and use practice to lead is to succumb to the ongoing and processional living of re-search as an embodied and lively ‘thing’ in and of itself. Re-search takes form and becomes manifest.

*-in-forming-*

Fig. 43



Such an in-forming of form then also requires an understanding of the conditions for things to emerge from and thus an exploration of certain mundanities of context and surrounding systems. This is through knowing how a ‘body’

or a ‘material’ may, or may not, intra-act. Materials and their ineffability are communicated in a grasping towards by the artist. In this approach, things do not rest still as outputs but are multi-directional in their emergent possibilities which cannot be reduced to their smaller components. The artwork is not the full stop, but a comma in the ongoing unfolding of creative practice.

In *admin* (Boyd, 2023) ideas of emergence were explored via the mundane example of the commute and the endless piles of academic paperwork. The commute as emergence is borrowed from Nobel Prize winning physicist Robert B.



Fig. 44

Laughlin: *“Collective exactness tends to be a tough concept for non-scientists to grasp, but... there are many familiar examples of it in daily life- for example commuting... The commute condition is a simple, reliable phenomenon that emerges out of complex decisions made by a large number of individuals as they go about their lives...Commuting traffic, like the behaviour of dilute gas, is a collective certainty”* (Laughlin, 2006, 16). Laughlin is not the only one to position the commute as an emergent activity. Berardi paints the ‘swarm’-like activity of human repetition and reproductivity in the face of “techno-linguistic” automativity; *“In conditions of hypercomplexity, human beings tend to act as a swarm. A hypercomplex environment... cannot be governed by the individual mind, people will follow simplified pathways and will use complexity-reducing interfaces... In a swarm it is not impossible to say ‘no’. It’s irrelevant”* (Berardi, 2012, 15-16). Berardi’s dystopic reading of the exhausting mundanity of the commute cycle aligns with *...admin...’s* positioning of the commute alongside labour, scanning and administrative tedium. Berardi, like Philosopher Byung-Chul Han, lean towards a negative view of our technical<>personal emergence, and whilst *...admin...* dwells in this space, the outlook of the practice is of a neurodivergent fictioning; always on the thrust and wave of something hopeful. In-coming, out-going, and always out of, or in reach. By critical extension this reflects the neurodivergent impetus towards any ‘diffractive waving’.

Both the commute and administrative paperwork define emergent situations despite their ongoing dreariness which is enhanced by their technological environment of ‘can’. Han describes the human cost of the positivity of ‘can-ing’ as *“much more efficient than the negativity of Should. Therefore, the social unconscious switches from Should to Can. The achievement-subject is faster and more productive than the obedience-subject. However, the Can does not revoke the Should. The obedience-subject remains disciplined. It has now completed the disciplinary stage. Can increases the level of productivity, which is the aim of disciplinary technology, that is, the imperative of Should”* (Han, 2015, 9). The following excerpt showcases the spoken word aspect of the film which played over the interpolated and animated scanned imagery. The imagery stems from a stop frame of my feet walking towards the train on the daily commute, but amended via AI into images of clay, asemic forms and diagrams.

*“write... scan... store... amend...  
write... scan... store... amend...”*

write... scan... store... amend...  
write... scan... store... amend...  
...  
acts of slow making via “fast” processes...  
...  
under the turgid skies of the mytho poetic doggerland...  
by which... you may or may not...  
interpret a post-brexite...  
post-truth...  
dis-united kingdom...  
beyond the boundaries of the map...  
there stands a point for reflection on fluidity...  
of matter, material, meaning and making...  
of the pull in multiple directions...  
hyper-dis- tractions...  
enhanced by misfiring neurons...  
the effects of an excess of positivity...  
a violence of positivity saturates...  
everything...  
everywhere...  
all of the time...  
...  
forms of mechanical reproduction and assistance tend...  
on the whole...  
to further burden with productivity rather than lessen it...  
“please place you item in the shopping cart...”  
labour becomes distributed...  
often hidden out of sight...  
elsewhere...  
increased...  
admin...  
an infatuation for ever new newness...  
the tale of information  
processed data...  
re-tweet...like...share...cc...prompt...  
write... scan... store... amend...  
write... scan... store... amend...”  
(Boyd, excerpt from *admin*, 2023)

The work developed from (*This excerpt comes from a longer essay documenting the thinking and positioning of these images*) (Boyd, 2023)

(see: Block 4), with an emphasis on the performativity first seen in Beige, but with a poetic criticality of the mytho-technical.

As in *...pink...* (2024) (see: 47-48) the body and the bracelet hover just below the scanned page, ‘jewellery thinking’ as a hauntology. These scans are a distributed practice involving human action, AI text-to-text and image-to-text prompts, data sets of my own images, photocopies, and stop-frame animation. The resulting performance offers an unclear picture of human or machine intention. Feedback loops of process informing new repetitions. In this ‘jewellery thinking’ scans against the screen of the printer become extensions of the body, the hand pressed up against the surface of the screen. Questions of ‘use’ and functionality are at play.<sup>82</sup>

The works are critical of the types of sense we now donate to AI in particular the sense we donate to the outputs of Large Language Models (LLM). In exploring how we make sense of AI the research returned to Deleuze and Guattari’s outline of nonsense; “*nonsense is that which has no sense, and that which, as such and as it enacts the donation of sense is opposed to the absence of sense. this is what we much understand by “nonsense”*.” (Deleuze, 1990, 72). If AI doesn’t sense, although it may contain sensors, then it can be understood and framed as non-sense which we are donating our sense to.

The practice explored LLM’s as having a type of algorithmic palimpsestic logic, entwining (rejecting/rubbing-out) and predicting texts upon texts upon texts. Poetically, this is not the palimpsest understood as strata, i.e. purely a layering. The palimpsest is understood instead in terms similar to Ingold; “*in the palimpsest far from putting one layer on top of another rather... what’s happening is the past is rising up even as the present sinks down*” (Ingold, 2019).<sup>83</sup> LLM’s do not produce the ‘new’ instead they mimic the past on probabilistic expectations. In its making *admin* (Boyd, 2023) utilised AR and ML, via fictioning processes of mythotechnesis, to create a growing and overlapping writing which continually palimpsesticly re-scribed itself.

The work argued that employing methods of literary interpretations such as hermeneutics (Henrikson/Meroño-Peñuela, 2023) miss the point in

---

<sup>82</sup> The work is not without a question towards the exhaustive nature of academia, and the ways in which we use things, and the ways in which the academy (as a concept) uses persons: “*Exhaustion can be a management technique: you tire people out, so they are too tired to address what makes them too tired*” (Ahmed, 2019, 162)

<sup>83</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5ztVBhbO8E>, accessed 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

relation to LLM's, and that creative understandings of the types of Deleuzian sense<>nonsense developed through distributed writings (semantic and asemic) emphasise the necessity to re-turn to the role of storytelling over information, something Walter Benjamin argued for over a century prior. The goal here was to better align Baradian matter and meaning, counter the damage of Han's technological positivity/'canning' and position an asemic turn as a useful tool in the ways we come to navigate meaning and shift the poetics of AI.

This necessity for a shift in the poetics of AI has been outlined by Nora N. Khan who suggested *"In our collective imagination, artificial intelligences are their own kind of alien life form. They are slightly less distant spectres of deep power than aliens, which glitter alongside the stars. Artificial intelligence perches close to us, above us, like a gargoyle, or a dark angel, up on the ledge of our consciousness. Artificial intelligences are everywhere now, albeit in a narrow form – cool and thin in our hands, overheated metalwork in our laps. We are like plants bending towards their weird light, our minds reorienting in small, incremental steps towards them"* (Khan, 2020, 77). Khan offered various new metaphors for our understanding of AI including the Hurricane, Architect, Swarm, Sovereign etc. These strike this author as too dystopic, an enquiry into AI as non-sensing offers a way of approaching its mundanities as well as its tool-functioning.

The artworks offered an opportunity to reflect on the knowing uncertainty of arts practice and its relation to the uncertainty of emergent systems, in ways the portfolio and practice has palpated. As highlighted previously, Fortnum's review of artists' practice reveals that *"The artist's perception of their physical encounter with material is rarely characterised as an adversarial one of mastery these days but artists often describe how the material processes of making art unfold in unexpected ways...artists knowingly use 'not-knowing'. In creative processes, and the statements that emerge from them, there is a productive to-ing and fro-ing between the known and the unknown"* (Fortnum, 2013, 84).

The emergent act of making is an act of uncertainty but one where a "knowing" of output is confidently held throughout the previous engagements with materials and the human<>non-human sharing of knowledge: *"microscopic uncertainty does not matter, because organization will create certainty later on at a higher level."* (Laughlin, 2006, 19).



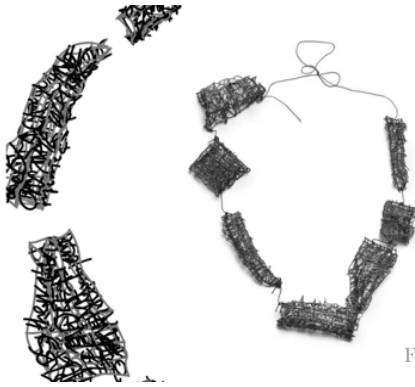


Fig. 45

In *Fossilizations of Gesture* (2021), body, environment, space, and time are channelled through the performative actions, and contexts of the artist to create and in-form form.

In 1966, scientist and philosopher Michael

Polanyi produced a series of lectures that became the publication *The Tacit Dimension*. This text casts a shadow over this research for the explicit way it aligned tacit knowledge with emergence. Borrowing from the lexicon of anatomy he divided tacit by two terminologies *distal* and *proximal*. Of particular interest is the “*proximal...*” which describes personal “*knowledge that we might not be able to tell*” (Polanyi, 2009, 11). In the gestural poetics of these works, “*we see now how an unbridled lucidity can destroy our understanding of complex matters*” (Polanyi, 2009, 18).

In other words, the success of these works hinge not on utterable instructions but instead on the emergent and bodily flow where “*the act of writing justifies poetry... recognizing that you are a flow. The purpose of the flow is to keep on flowing, not looking for a peak or utopia but staying in the flow.*” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, 54). This tacitness in the making<>writing develops through an emergent flow where “*marginal controls... of working principles control the boundary left indeterminate on the next lower level*” (Polanyi, 2009, 34-35). That is, simple rules leading to something more complex that a reductionist analysis would evidence. Within these works A type of proximal poetics is taking place. A proximal poetics is a like a pre-utterance, bodily gurgle, meaning just prior.

Much of this research considered where a body resides, and where we define limits of our own living-ness. Further, it sought to establish a bodily thinking; “*Mind...’is a leaky organ forever escaping its ‘natural’ confines and mingling shamelessly with the body and the world*’ (Malafouris, 2013, 15). In jewellery, the microbiome work of Kexin Liu (see: 47) is a noted



Fig. 46



example of this thinking employed beyond my own research. In *TO SORN* where did apparatus and human sensing begin and end, in the pen tip as it touched the paper, in the eye or the camera lens?

In Material Engagement Theory, Lambros Malafouris, outlines the extension of the mind beyond human skin, introducing Merleau-Ponty's "blind man's stick" as "*more than cross-modal neural plasticity*" and instead argues that the stick has its own "*tactile sensation*" which is "*projected onto the point of contact between the tip of the stick and the outside environment...*" and that "*this extensions in the 'body schema' also means that the brain treats the stick as part of the body.*" (Malafouris, 2013, 5). Back, within *TO SORN's* topophilic sensing of place, where did the 'thinking' end? Especially if real "thinking" is "*the call to be attentive to things as they are, to let them be as they are, and to think them and ourselves together.*" (Gray, 2004, xiv). If "*all the work of the hand is rooted in thinking*" (Heidegger, 2004, 16), the mind extends into and beyond the tool, how can form be separated from any inclination to in-form?

Perhaps then, the research is not in-forming, as this creates in-form-ation, and the goal is not to inform but to story. The question then becomes not how does one in-form form, but rather how do storied forms co-emerge?



Fig. 47

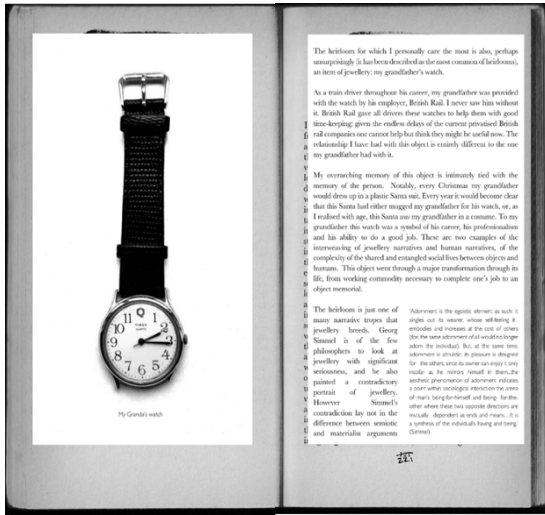
Walter Benjamin's thoughts on the story<>information relation has had a significant impact on recent research, and although written almost a hundred years previously, his words seem increasingly prescient: "*Every morning, news reaches us from around the globe. And yet we lack remarkable stories. Why is this the case? It is because no incidents reach us any longer not already permeated with explanations. In other words: almost nothing occurs to the story's benefit anymore, but instead it all*

serves information... Information is valuable only for the moment in which it is new. It lives only in that moment. It must be completely subject to it and declare itself in that moment... A story is different: it does not use itself up. It preserves its inherent power, which it can then deploy even after a long period of time has passed." (Benjamin, 2019, 35-36).

Byung-Chul Han has built upon this idea and suggested that in our contemporary doom-scrolling thirst for information we are overwhelmed by an increase of virtual non-things (2022). Dismissing the ‘material turn’ as a purely academic pursuit, Han describes us as growing ‘infomaniacs’, and that the proliferation of commercial objects only goes to highlight the increasing indifference to objects. The research agrees with Han’s call to turn to story over information but disagrees with his suggestion that the material turn was a purely academic exercise. It is a lived being-with, like jewellery.

These ideas have grown in importance in this research in the post-*JM* period, where social, political, and material questions have found their edges blurring. Thoughts, like metal, or words, are not solid, nor stable but glimmer with vitality (Bennett, 59, 2010). And in its embodied ever-shifting the re-search has also functioned via a series of continuous feedback loops, each helixical loop of thought gaining momentum and ‘noise’ with each circling.

Fig. 48



These temporal threads can be found in the writings of the *JM* and newer practices, for example the writing of narratives on my Granda’s watch (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 220) and its eventual development into a work (“...it matters what knots knot knots... (or) ...why are you wearing my granda’s watch...”) (see: 51). Both works are explorations of

memory. The temporal span between them evidences a key progression from ideas of narrativity towards rhizomatic emergence over a period of four years.

Such plasticity of approach goes beyond positioning material as metaphor and seeks a plasticity within it's 'jewellery thinking'. Casting of (metal) is an important, yet often undisclosed aspect within this research (Appendix B), but its backgrounding should not imply a lack of significance as the material change of states and the understanding of metal as the non-anthropocentric liquid is aligned to the fluidity of thought. Molten metal, and by extension of process, the amorphous wax<sup>84</sup> (which is lost), are foundational to the projects. They offer a multiplicity of making (even if the wax may be printed it still offers an inherent delicacy and vulnerability for melting, crumbling, morphing). Didi-Huberman offers a strong description of the material qualities of wax, literally and metaphorically; *"...a plasticity of material means a multiplicity of function...plasticity facilitates multiplicity, sanctions it, is its very medium and, (who knows) even invents it...plasticity means instability... plasticity, consequently, need no longer mean passivity... the reality of the material (wax) proves more disturbing: it possesses a viscosity, a kind of activity or intrinsic power, which is a power of metamorphosis, of polymorphosis, of intensity to contradiction (particularly to the abstract contradiction between form and formlessness)"* (Didi-Huberman, 2015, original 1999, 45-49)

Any amorphous wax-like quality within jewellery has literary precedence. Bill Brown in his book *Other Things* (2019) highlights Phillip K. Dick's obsession with the handmade thing as revelatory of worlds beyond surface realities. In his analysis, Brown highlights Science Fiction's potential to fiction our world (Brown's writing on the pot in Dick's work brings to mind Ursula Le Guin's positioning of the vessel as the alternative to heroic, patriarchal narrative structures) whilst also revealing the amorphous qualities of specific jewellery items in the narrative of *The*



Fig. 49

---

<sup>84</sup> Lost wax casting is a process where plaster acts as a container for wax artifacts which are then melted and replaced with molten metal. In lost wax casting what is lost? Material and material meaning.

*Man in the High Castle*. We can conceptually stretch our understanding of jewellery more holistically: “In *Man in the High Castle*... strange, handcrafted jewelry... is at once exquisitely formed and unformed, amorphous... jewelry is ‘plastic art in its most abstract form. Deleuze and Guattari might say that the vital ‘matter-movement’ of the metal overspills form. And you might say of the ‘piece of metal’ that is the thing, not an object, or a things resisting certain object form... The object, in other words, has the form of no form; it is a kind of formless form” (Brown, 2015, 143).

A response might be that the jewellery in this portfolio is highly formed. Texts rotating around in helictical formations. Yes. But two important positions must be considered. Firstly the intra-action of continuous matters where metal continually takes on new form. Jewellery in its wearing continues to be reformed, is already made from recycled metal (on cosmic and commodity scales) and will at some point be re-cast.<sup>85</sup> Secondly, and importantly to this research, jewellery is positioned as correspondent to words. Both words and jewellery in their use they recede from view, become extensions of our becoming they become amorphous parts of our own folding, wobbling, and interacting bodies.



The casting of materials, specifically metal, opens questions of copying and repetition that run deep in the discussion of sculpture and the histories of jewellery. In lesser-known experiments within the portfolio, experimental artworks used multi-layer casting, where various hardnesses, temperature

resistances of metal and wax were utilized to undertake metal cast in metal. That is, silver is cast around steel, aluminium cast around silver and steel. Their variations in melting temperatures allowed a contemplation on the stability of things. These experiments were shown in *Untitled Exhibition* (Boyd & Henderson {2017}) where metallic forms were

---

<sup>85</sup> The reason we have little historic silverware pre-1600 is for the very reason that metal is so re-useable.

positioned on top of a multitude of quickly taken photographs. Molten matters and molten environments.

A discussion on the differences between jewellery and sculpture is aggravated by comparisons where jewellery could be understood as miniature sculpture (Brown, 2019, 145-147). This is a claim that significantly undermines the significance of jewellery, and which is not a consideration grounded in this research. This research instead argues that the tradition of 'sculpture can be anything' cannot be true of jewellery because of its alliance to the ever-oscillating structures of the B/I<>M/D(I)/M dynamic.



Fig. 52, 53, 54 & 55

In *RtD*, this dialogue between the autonomy of sculpture and the four-logic-relational logic of jewellery was expanded upon through wall mounted artworks which represented the vantage from the Doggerland via painted imagery, large (for a jewellery scale) bronze casting and aluminium wall mounted sheets. These works were sculpture but had within them the possibility to be amended, broken and in doing so create jewellery. As a vivid expression of this 'jewellery thinking' the autonomy of the sculpture is ruptured by the beginning of the symbiotic co-yielding from one body into and onto another. To allow the jewellery to emerge it had to be freed from the apparent autonomy of the sculpture, physically rupturing the materiality of the wall work towards the beginning of the symbiosis of thing and person. This is not Glenn Adamson's position that ~~craft~~ is a supplemental, and therefore essential, lack in fine art. It is jewellery as art methodology on its own merits. Art, like craft, like culture is a nurturing of things. Wallowing in its own relations and basking in its own publics, jewellery is not therefore political on its own but a living politics in harmony with other bodies and their shared aspirations. Symbiosis instead of autonomy.

\*\*\*

*“(Art) works are not simply concerned with their formation as material relations; rather it is through their forming that they are equally formative in the manner with which they engage with the world.” (Bird, 2017, 55)*

It follows from the above that the portfolio has set out methods of storying over in-forming and a fluid, waxy and multiplicitous way of storying a form at that. Rhizomatic and emergent approaches have sought artistic methods of not-knowing to harness the chaos of the world and through which ideas pass through the artist in the creation of ‘things’. If the *first* Fixation outlined methodologies, asked about the textualities of things then it might be understood that this Fixation sought to understand what methods achieved, the materialities of the words produced and how these methods they might be harnessed in the complex systems of thinking<>making things.

These methods and methodologies have highlighted that reading and writing is not a straightforward exercise but an embodied sensuous interaction with the trace and différance. Writing has lost its ground and has folded in upon its own linearity and the artefact has lost its oppositional status to the subject leading to the question; what is writing, what is a thing, and ultimately: How Might One Write a Thing?



Fig. b



*“...‘thingness’ and ‘mindness’ are highly unsettled and ontologically fluid states. They remain formless and plastic, waiting to take the shape of our embodied projections, which inevitably vary...” (Malafouris, 2013, 15)*

*“...an asemic text, then, might be involved with units of language for reasons other than producing meaning, as such, the asemic text would seem to be an ideal, an impossibility, but worth pursuing for just that reason...”* (Asemic Writing 3, via Schwenger, 2019, 1)

## ...saccade...

(562 words)

*... all knowledge systems<sup>86</sup> come from dirt<sup>87</sup> ... mingin<sup>88</sup> ... from filth ... not that filth should be understood as disgusting<sup>89</sup> ... but ... instead the diffuse stuff-ness<sup>90</sup> of a being-in-the-world<sup>91</sup> ... liveliness and the shedding of liveliness<sup>92</sup> ... particulates and permeabilities<sup>93</sup> ... yet ... it's the stuff we daren't get on laptop screens ... all knowledge systems come from dirt ... we write with the soot accumulated from fire<sup>94</sup> to make ink to write systems ... the mud that feeds the tree to become the paper which we bleach ... the clay that was used to imprint numeral non-characters in cuneiform process ... palimpsestic overlays ... re-written and rubbed and re-written and rubbed and re-written and rubbed and re-written ... frictional rubbings*

---

<sup>86</sup> In Data Loam, Martin Reinhart details the current paradigm shift in knowledge systems: *"With the help of these new technologies, knowledge and all forms of human expression finally can be recorded, correlated and understood... knowledge systems by their very nature do not have to be instrumentalised or closed... in contrast to the pure knowledge of the enlightenment, these future systems are infinitely impure, compounded as it is by ever proliferating data, whilst simultaneously cohering as a living distribution..."* (Reinhart, 2021, 37)

<sup>87</sup> *"dirt encompasses dust, refuse, excrement, bacteria and soil, and is used to describe unethical, irreligious or obscene behaviour"* (Forde, 2011, 1)

<sup>88</sup> *"Mingin" means "evil-smelling". Dictionaries of slang detect the word from the 1970s, but James Stevenson's invaluable Scoor-Oot (A Dictionary of Scots Words and Phrases) finds "ming" for "smell" from the early 20th century. "Mingin" can also mean "exceedingly drunk" /www.theguardian.com/g2/story/0,3604,652949,00.html, accessed 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024*

<sup>89</sup> *"There is no such thing as absolute dirt: it exists in the eye of the beholder"* (Douglas, 1966, 2)

<sup>90</sup> *"Stuff is ubiquitous, and problematic... The idea that stuff somehow drains away our humanity, as we dissolve into a sticky mess of plastic and other commodities, is really an attempt to retain a rather simplistic and false view of pure and prior unsullied humanity... Stuff is not necessarily a thing we can hold or touch."* (Miller, 2013, 1)

<sup>91</sup> *"being-in-the-world - The compound expression 'being-in-the-world' posits the experience of existing in the world as a 'unitary phenomenon'. Being-in-the-world is the understanding of being itself. Dasein cannot understand itself isolated from the world in which it lives. Dasein's understanding is not derived from abstract theorising, but from the concrete experience of being-in-the-world."* (Bolt, 2008, 172)

<sup>92</sup> *"our inevitable return to dust, is perhaps the most profound and unsettling reminder of how, in the end, everything disintegrates..."* (Forde, 2011, 1)

<sup>93</sup> *"Dust is a boundary-crosser, a transgressor: the philosopher Ate Michael Mardes calls it a breath of matter on the brink of spirit', both solid and yet insubstantial, an element as much of air as it is earth.' Dust is matter at the very limit-point of form-lessness, the closest 'stuff' gets to nothing"* (Owens, 2023, 6)

<sup>94</sup> Lampblack is a heritage pigment traditionally made by collecting soot from oil lamps. As seen in Appendix C, I have utilised this methods of ink production as an undercurrent and practical exercise to discuss the effects of knowledge systems, AI and as well as explore Heidegger's ideas of thingliness. Lampblack is the main method of production for historic Indian and Chinese inks.

*just off of the centre ... turbulent matters<sup>95</sup> and grubby materialities<sup>96</sup> ... knotted flows and folds<sup>97</sup> ... ai knowledge systems require scorched lithium from vast salt flats<sup>98</sup> ... explosive and reactive materialities which we happily carry in our pockets ... desperately awaiting the next like ... ping ... information<sup>99</sup> ... ai requires coal burned<sup>100</sup> ... reprocessed as electricity which fires electric signals down copper wires ... cloud-like lightness with material heaviness accrued from oil<sup>101</sup> ... a type of dirt we would wash from our hands ... the dirt is just out of the way ... just out of sight ... just over there ... some-where else ... it is a no-thing to worry about ... knowledge systems come from dirt ... but the systems they create are diverse ... fluid and emergent .... knowledge systems shoogle ... i ... (aye) ... sit ... i ... (aye) read ... well ... that didn't go in ... looking down there ... yet ... thinking over there ... characters dancing around the expanse of no-thing-ness behind them ... asemic in their dancing if not in their intention ... where do i*

---

<sup>95</sup> "Matter is not moved by an external will or force, but by itself. It is the source of its own motion. Matter by its very nature is not predictable mechanism. It is fundamentally turbulent, disordered, and chaotic." (Nail, 2018, 12)

<sup>96</sup> "Western civilisation has become adept at overlooking the filthy reality of everyday life... our strategies for managing dirt have been the responsibility of an underclass of women and minorities and in our modern throwaway culture the job of sweeping up usually falls to migrant workers..." (Forde, 2011, 1-2)

<sup>97</sup> "The flows of matter are never destroyed, instead they are simply unfolded or loosened... The flows of matter have no beginning or end. They are neither created nor destroyed." (Nail, 2018, 79)

<sup>98</sup> "Our work and personal lives, our medical histories, our leisure time, our entertainment, our political interests- all of this takes place in a world of networked computing architectures that we tap in the world of networked computing architectures that we tap into from devices we hold in one hand, with lithium at their core. The mining that makes AI is both literal and metaphorical. The new extractivism of data mining also encompasses and propels the old extractivism of traditional mining." (Crawford, 2021, 30-31)

<sup>99</sup> "Information by itself does not illuminate the world. It can even have the opposite effect. From a certain point onwards, information does not inform - it deforms. We have long since crossed this threshold. The rapid advance of informational entropy, that is, of informational chaos, pushes us into a post-factual society. The distinction between true and false is erased. Information now circulates in a hyper-real space, without any reference to reality. After all, fake news is a kind of information, and one that is possibly even more effective than facts. What counts is short-term effect. Effectiveness replaces truth." (Han, 2022, 5-6)

<sup>100</sup> "Data centers are among the world's largest consumers of electricity. Powering this multilevel machine requires grid electricity in the form of coal, gas, nuclear, or renewable energy... China's data center industry draws 73 percent of its power from coal, emitting about 99 million tons of CO2 in 2018.6...the lasting impacts of coal-fired power are everywhere, exceeding any national boundaries. The planetary nature of resource extraction and its consequences goes well beyond what the nation-state was designed to address." (Crawford, 2021, 43-44)

<sup>101</sup> "The cloud is the backbone of artificial intelligence, and it's made of rocks and lithium brine and crude oil." (Crawford, 2021, 31)

grasp<sup>102</sup> the meaning of these saccadic fluctuations ... the grasp of the text ... the implementation of meaning so hard to cognise ... perhaps ... a misconstruing of the cartesian histories<sup>103</sup> ... or a more devilish empire of normativity mistakenly informing me that there is something off<sup>104</sup> ... in how i read ... see ... attune ... veer away from a thought that body and mind are separate ... enact an embodied moving ... dirty the page... an act of vandalism of the book ... or ... a temporal co-authoring of the text... a marginalic act ... a palimpsestic reappraisal in the margins ... i prefer to be in the margins ... it is where the eye is drawn ... where control oscillates between hierarchies<sup>105</sup> ... grasp the tool ... press the nib/felt...(never the ball/sphere<sup>106</sup>) against the subtle abrasiveness of the paper ... consider the material<sup>107</sup> ... the roughness of the touch of the paper ... fold its edges<sup>108</sup> ...

---

<sup>102</sup> "For Heidegger: it was all about (1) the 'grasp', both as in comprehending and as in reaching out or being pulled toward 'the there' (and vice versa, 'the there' being pulled toward being); and (2) the fact that the 20th century (for whatever reasons) named an epoch, not unlike had occurred in ancient Greece when, according to Heidegger, this way of 'grasping' (in-)formed the whole of reality and provided its framework." (Golding, 2020, 474)

<sup>103</sup> "It is the most natural thing in the world to think of consciousness as occurring in some sort of Cartesian Theater, and to suppose that there is nothing really wrong with thinking this way. This seems obvious until you look quite hard at what we might learn about the brain's activities, and begin trying to imagine, in detail, an alternative model. Then what happens is rather like the effect of learning how a stage magician performs a conjuring trick. Once we take a serious look backstage, we discover that we didn't actually see what we thought we saw onstage. The huge gap between phenomenology and physiology shrinks a bit; we see that some of the "obvious" features of phenomenology are not real at all: There is no filling in with pigment; there are no intrinsic qualia; there is no central fount of meaning and action; there is no magic place where the understanding happens. In fact, there is no Cartesian Theater..." (Dennet, 1993, 434)

<sup>104</sup> "it is not the neurotypical who oppresses the neurodivergent, but capitalist domination that... creates and harms" (Chapman, 2023, 19)

<sup>105</sup> "We may call the control exercised by the organisational principal of a higher level on the particulars forming its lower level the principle of marginal control... the principle of marginality should make it clear that it is present alike in artefacts, like machines; in human performances like speech; and in living functions at all levels. It underlies the functions of all comprehensive entities..." (Polanyi, 2009, 40-41)

<sup>106</sup> Here, my thoughts almost identically align with Barthes: "there is a pleasure of the text..." and "...an almost obsessive relation to writing instruments. I often switch to another just for the pleasure of it... I've tried everything...except Bics, with which I feel no affinity. I would even say, a bit nastily, that there is a 'Bic style', which is really just for churning out copy which merely transcribes thought." (Barthes, 1991, 178)

<sup>107</sup> "We cannot feel it's (paper's) complex structure because it has been engineered at a microscopic scale that is beyond our sense of touch. We see it as smooth for the same reasons of scale that make the earth seem perfectly round from Space..." (Miodownik, 2014, 34)

<sup>108</sup> "Paper's mechanical properties lend themselves to folding and bending... cellulose fibres of which it is made can be partially snapped in the area... allowing a permanent crease to

*circle what catches ... \*use\* ... \*must use<sup>109</sup> ... although ... who/what/where is being used ... the trace of writing and reading rests in this present absence ... consider the cuneiformic ... the un-stability of the mark made in relation to the instability of the texts ongoing ... underline ... make the mark that sticks the thought ... the mark swings the attention of the saccade back into focus<sup>110</sup> ... it is not a writing ... it is not a drawing<sup>111</sup> ... but a reading<>writing<>doing ... a doing ontology ...*

---

*form while sufficient fibres remain intact for the material not to crack and fall apart..."* (Miodownik, 2014, 42)

<sup>109</sup> In my marginalic reading staring and highlighting accompany the words 'use' and 'must-use' alongside page folding and ripping act as ways of highlighting contextual useful information.

<sup>110</sup> "Perception has traditionally been viewed as a modular function with the different sensory modalities operating largely as separate and independent processes. However, an overwhelming set of new findings has overturned this dogma. Reports of multisensory interactions in various perceptual tasks and settings indicate that these interactions are the rule rather than the exception in human processing of sensory information and there exists a rapidly growing literature of the neuroanatomical, electrophysiological and neuroimaging studies that show that multisensory interactions can occur throughout processing" (Shams & Seitz, 2008, 411-417).

<sup>111</sup> "I am reluctant to regard writing as a practice that supplants drawing. Writing is drawing." (Ingold, 2007, 125)

# GLOSS

## Gloss: Studio

- The studio so vividly described in *JM* has slowly receded from view. Since 2019, research has further aligned to Margetts' description of the post-craft landscape in which making has "*dispersed into a web of nomadism and migratory and virtual networks*" (Margetts, 2019, 50).
- Studio has become a mindset, not a space.
- Studio as physical space limits the potential of studio as a way of being/thinking/creating.
- Studio is a cognitive space of/for/being expression.
- Studio is a space for helixical rumination.
- Studio is the moment when complex ideas, readings, matters, and materials converge.
- Studio is emergence.
- Studio is not defined by physicality but by action.
- Studio is a type of doing.
- Studio offers comforting procrastination. A deferred doing.
- Deferment is doing, procrastination is deferment. Like the endless cycle of the void, procrastination is only the awaiting-action in a process of unfolding: "*...matter and void are only reciprocal expressions of the same kinetic process of folding and unfolding*" (Nail, 2018, 90)
- Studio is undertaken on the train, plane, office, kitchen, 'studio' and various virtual environments.
- A studio-based practitioner is 'one' who re-searches (see:19) through the inhabiting of a studio mindset.
- Studio is not always present, it requires attunement to the matters at hand, in non-teleological experimentation.
- Studio is play.

# GLOSS

## Gloss: Material <> Matter

- Material is physically sensed, helping us make sense of the world.
- That is, material can be embodiedly attuned to(wards).
- Material is touched, smelt, tasted, affected, heard, and seen.
- Material is composed of the flows of matter which are not visible on an anthropocentric scale.
- Material can be solid (the carpenter's or silversmith's material), and not-solid (the material of the comedian/journalist/writer).
- Material requires creative attunement between human sensibilities and skill in order for some-thing new to be-come.
- Material speaks (if not verbally) and can be reasoned/argued/loved with (in poetic and actual sense).
- Matter flows outside of human vision. (Nail, 2018, 12)
- Matter is not physically sensed but is sensed elsewhere, in thought (conscious, embodied, tacit, distributed) as attunement.
- Matter is mischievous, in its indeterminacy.
- It misbehaves just out of view.
- The flows of matter create materials.
- Materials appear stable but their turbulent flows of matter beneath allow creative potency.
- Materials create the thingly qualities of things.
- Things are not defined by material qualities, things are near and far, material, and immaterial.
- To make-with<>encounter material is to embrace flows of matter, attend to what is and be ready to unleash the unpredictable thingness of whatever emerges.
- ...matter<>material<>things...
- Things loop round to become matter.
- Things matter.
- Matters matter.
- Materials matter.
- Jewellery matters.
- They are asemic in their mattering.
- These are not siloed matterings but affected intra-active becomings which mingle and flow.



*“...words, words, words. These words are potent elements of our environment that we readily incorporate, ingesting and extruding them, weaving them like spiderwebs into self-protective strings of narrative...”*  
(Dennett, 1993, 415)

*“Language has infinite potency, but the exercise of language happens in finite conditions of history and existence...” these “limits can be productive, but outside of the space of limitation, infinite possibilities of language persist immeasurably...” (Berardi, 2018, 31)*

## third Fixation

### How Might One Write a Thing?

*“Non-things are currently entering our environment from all directions, and they are pushing away things. These non-things are called information.”* (Flusser, via Han, 2022, 1)

This Fixation moves the text closer towards a conclusionary point where the practice has pushed the letter, the word, even the sentence towards semantic ruin, further stretching what a ‘writing’ might entail. In answering its question, this *third* Fixation will shift through the portfolio via subheadings: write, might, thing≈one<sup>112</sup>.



Fig. 56

A chronological reading of the portfolio would ‘yield’ that what started as an obsession with a personal and ever-evolving/wounding relationship with language<sup>113</sup> developed written forms which acted with reflexivity to their own conditions and intentions. In that, their form took influence/correspondence from their semantic meaning.

A knotted knot, an endless helical winding rant, a linked dialogue.

Over time this analysis further spiralled outwards through more and more complex narrative structures leading towards a recent and generative asemic shift in which the writing no longer

---

<sup>112</sup> A rethinking or folding of the of the subject/object divide. The double tilde ≈ is used as it suitably depicts a material flow between the terminologies whilst embracing the approximation (i.e. not solid or static) of meaning.

<sup>113</sup> *“Books are at once intoxicating and yet, due to dyslexic and hyperactive tendencies which disrupt paragraphs after two sentences (or four words, or after three letters), are also frustrating.”* (JM, Boyd, 2019, 37)

“means” what it says (its signified). Language has productivity yielded to the exploratory processes of making over any semantic authority. In Yield (2016), ‘one’ is drawn to the contradictory nature of that word in relation to language (and the dominant capitalist hauntology of the letter-logo). In this case the ‘gloss-ness’ (see: 18) of the word ‘Yield’ offers an asemic quality in its opening of differing (and the ever-deferred) boundaries between interpretations of meaning. Différance has an asemic quality to its lack of transparency.<sup>111</sup> I yield/surrender to language. I allow it to subsume me. I allow myself to “dwell in it” as Derrida put it.

As a monolingualist, I have no choice but to dwell there. Conversely, my monolingualism yields the ‘new’ through writing, it produces a yield. As highlighted in the previous Fixations, these writings are embodied, and carry a pleasure of the text (and a pain): *“I am interested in language because it wounds or seduces me.”* (Barthes, 1975, 38). Revisiting this thought three years later (YEILD, 2019) highlighted this personal pain-full-ness through its neurodivergent misspelling (embarrassingly {although methodologically sound} not noticed until highlighted by a public audience). It is language finding discomfort in its own co-yielding.



Fig. 57

-write-

The works in this Fixation ask what it is to write in a world becoming increasingly dominated by non-things which through computational functioning produce textual (note, not written) outputs via Large Language Models (LLM). Writing needs to be written, something LLM’s do not do. Writing needs to make sense, not as in a literal coherence, instead writing needs to be sensuously produced through sense making processes.

To make sense of ‘things’, and to make sense of the enmeshed bodily senses, involves a dance with risk. In art, there is the continual risk of failure, that some-thing will not work. In the opening pages of *The Five Senses*, Michel Serres recalls a more serious and life-threatening

---

<sup>111</sup> Mel Bochner’s *“Language is Not Transparent”* artworks (1969-1970) have long served as an influence on the Derridean aspects of this research and is often used as an example of artistic analysis of language in public lectures I have given.

interaction of the senses as he escapes a burning boat; *“The body knows by itself how to say I... This internal sense proclaims, calls, announces, sometimes howls the I like a wounded animal. This common sense apportions the body...”* (Serres, 2008, 19). There is a continuously urgent requirement to make sense of the senses, often with immediacy and great risk.

Machine systems never make sense because there is no risk at play. Even flailing, and sometime feral neurons in the brain play an emergent game of sense making. Reaching out dendric branches of risk and desire, our neurons (distant relations to ever hungry fungi and yeast) are always at *“taking their chances and making the most of the opportunities that comes their way, exploring their plasticity to improve... Brains are more like termite colonies than intelligently designed corporations or armies...”* (Dennett, 2017, 165).

AI can't make sense because there is no risk. This discussion around how things make-sense is not anti-technology instead it considers how we draw on technologies in our creative processing. David Pye explored the role of technologies in making as well as defining the key creative act/~~craft~~ of writing as one of risk. *“If I must ascribe a meaning to the word craftsmanship, I shall say... that it means simply workmanship using technique or apparatus, in which the quality of the result is not predetermined... and so I shall call this kind of workmanship ‘The workmanship of risk...’ in contrast to ‘the workmanship of certainty... The most typical and familiar example of workmanship of risk is writing with a pen, and of the workmanship of certainty, modern printing.”* (Pye, 1968 ed. 2015, 20-21). Art requires risk, AI requires riskless deterministic probabilities. Put in different terms, AI cannot undertake risk, because creative risk and *“consciousness, is not behaviour, but self-perception and self-judgment, self-enjoyment and self-loathing”* (Berardi, 2018, 115). Importantly, risk is not used as a replacement for ‘creativity’ but instead highlights the difference where; *“unlike mimesis, ‘style transfer’<sup>115</sup> is pure mimicry”* (Zylinksa, 2020, 50). Through copying both bodily and machinic process create different types of mimetic ‘noise’. When these interact it is to curious effect (see: 113- 115)

Writing is a sense-making in creative risk. Writing is an attunement to the flows of possibility in an embodied action. The scratchy feel of the paper

---

<sup>115</sup> ‘Style transfer’ refers to AI techniques which involve generating new images via the style of other images.

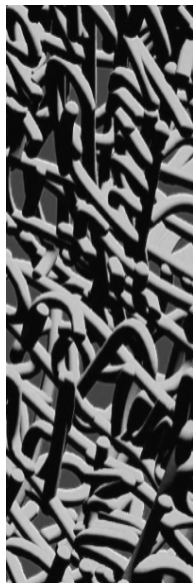


Fig. 58

rubbing against the pen, or the rhythmic tapping of the spring-loaded keys under the fingers. It is an encouraging of slow making<>thinking but fast writing, and the creation of “*a kinetic relationship between head and the hand...where the head does not have direct priority and it may be dictated to by the hand as readily as the other way around...*” (Schwenger, 2019, 36- 37).

Writing is understood as an embodied, gestural forming of some-thing. It is not a method of offering information but a sensuous and generative act where the leakiness of the mind and body create meaning through material and contextually informed, entangled performativities (see: 30; Barad’s discussion co-matter/co-authorship). Art, as a type of writing, can facilitate bringing writing into matter. The practice of writing in the EDofTL, evidences a person writing and reflexively where the writing shapes thought and being, with the functionality of writing is palpated not purely for semantic value but in its weights, rhythms, form, performativity, and embodiment.

LLM’s cannot ‘write’ because they cannot make sense of sensuous performativity, however in a Deleuzian twist, media and academia appear to increasingly “*donate sense*” to this machinic “*non-sense*” (Deleuze, 2015, 72) This ‘donating of sense’ is evidenced through current research which undertakes hermeneutical analysis of LLM outputs. Play is a significant element of any writing, the chance thought, the connection between mind, body, environment, and material, while the algorithm can negotiate, they continue to struggle with creative interpretation; “*...robots are great at following a method, but they get stuck when it comes to play, to the spontaneous and non-methodic*” (Caputo, 2018, 265).

If consciousness is as Daniel Dennett posits it the “*operations of a ‘virtual machine’*” consisting of “*Multiple Drafts composed by processes of content fixation playing various semi-independent roles in the brain’s larger economy*” (Dennett, 1993, 431) then the sense-making qualities of art production in relation to AI, rather than AI versus consciousness, might be a more interesting avenue for analysis and certainly one that aligns with the research of poet<>artist<>philosophers Johnny Golding and Anna Nazo; the latter’s radical performance approach offers a

rethinking of a “*logic of sense from the perspective of quantum entanglement*” (Nazo, 2021, 70). In the development of this “*supra-sensuousness Nazo drone performances challenge notions of selfhood merging: non-conscious cognitive flux and in so doing, re-thinks ‘human’ as always already a plural self, a multiple-singularity, an ecology of selves... a halobiont; that is a morphogenic system of human cells, virome, microbiome...*” (Nazo, 2021, 73). AI and LLM’s cannot make sense, but our own sense-making is a complex intertwined and entangled activity. Whilst not jewellery, it is of worthy note that Nazo’s work incorporates biodata taken from technological wearables aligning it to much of the ‘jewellery thinking’ that is outlined in this text.

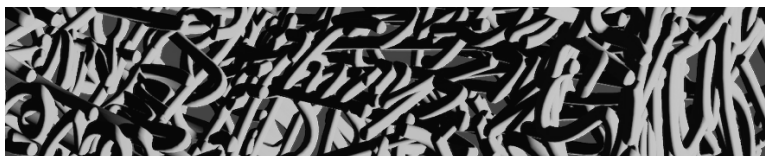
Through new research in hermeneutics, Albert Peñuela and Leah Henrickson ask the right questions, foreseeing the distributed cognition ahead. “*We must redirect attention to how meaning is made, overcoming reductionist views on stand-alone texts, and embracing their increasingly available cultural contexts, interactions, and tools.... Perhaps authorial intention has drifted from the uniqueness of God to the multiplicity of humans, and now to collaborations with machines.*” (Peñuela & Henrickson, 2022, 26). However, the consideration might be differently understood if we take emphasis off sensuous readings and place into sensuous writings. Through its production of non-sense, AI is an ever-proliferating non-thing (information): “*Sense is produced by nonsense. To grasp this thought, we need to bear in mind that nonsense is not a something*” (May, 2005, 108). AI is the non-sensing non-thing.

This framing has created a body of work which palpates these ideas of the non-thing and the flows of meaning that come from it. Contained within the rhizomatic methodology, further building from an emergent processes (and originally hinted at in *JM* pg. 21) a quality of Lucretian kinetic materialism appears within the practice. Philosophical materialism which “*imagined a reality as a three-dimensional space, perhaps finite, perhaps infinite...*” where “*observable phenomena were ultimately composed of atoms.*” (Brown & Ladyman, 2019, 89) cannot be aligned with quantum reality. Carlos Rovelli outlines the ways in which the idea of the atom cannot hold alongside particles that “*do not have a pebble-like reality but are rather ‘quanta’ of corresponding fields... They disappear and reappear...*” (Rovelli, 2014, 30). Thomas Nail argues that in his poem *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius was not, as historically understood, describing discrete atoms which made up objects but instead outlines the ways in which “*being is not cut up into discrete particles, but is composed of corporeal flows that move together and fold themselves in a woven*

*knotwork... things only emerge and have their being within the immanent flow and flux of matter in motion. Discreteness is a product of continuous, uncut, undivided motion and not the other way around.*" (Nail, 2018, 11)

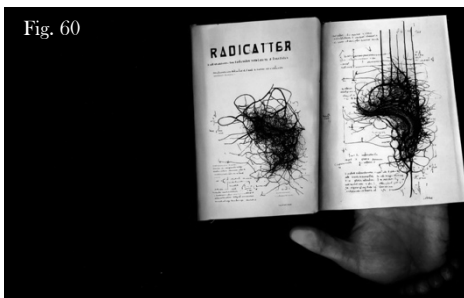
There is a logical link between a Deleuzian rhizomatic approach to Lucretius as highlighted by Ryan Johnston, who states: *"Lucretius' and Deleuze's philosophies share many characteristics... their insistence on multiplicity, their resistance to transcendent forms, their construal of nature as open-ended and nonlinear, their demonstrations of the being of becoming..."* (Johnson, 2017, 3). If Johnston highlighted the similarities between Deleuze and Lucretius it is worth noting that it is Thomas Nail, in his radical re-reading of Lucretius who empathised the importance of motion, movement and kinetics which greatly informs what follows. In creative not-knowing and the generative emergent and sensuous performances of *EDotTL* there is a showcasing of thinking/making/writing where *"matter flows"*, and *"created things emerge... when certain creative material flows, begin to flow together in a certain way...the resulting formation is a kind of open process like a braid or a weave that does not stop or close up but continually opens up to the outside"* (Nail, 2018, 75-76).

Fig. 59



The enacting of this type of writing creates meaning through its outpouring, through its continual opening, folding, and unfolding. Perhaps, then, gestural, sensuous, emergent writings create a meaning which doesn't necessarily require the utilitarianism of the signified and the signifier.

Fig. 60



Following *EDotTL* a poetic<>asemic turn within the practice was cemented through an engagement with AI. It was a meandering turn, that took detours through the diagrammatic as the practice sought to explore



the new possibilities and questions unearthed by an exploration of Machine Learning (ML). In working with text>image translators I underwent the same transitions as most artists; initial amazement followed by a type of boredom by the ease with which ideas could be manifested. An interesting change happened when I started to view the images as sorts of found-things that could be turned into archival ready-mades.

The diagrammatic aspects also allowed an alignment with theory that gave the project some impetus, describing “*diagrammatic arrangement(s) as a specific kind of sign- as an icon of intelligible relations... relat(ing) to... how humans attend to the world.*” (Burrows, 2021, 51). These were pointless diagrams that offered little or no mathematical information but instead carried a type of visual poetics, a chaotic diagramming that felt directly aligned to the descriptions of a rhizomatic methodology in the *first* Fixation. Lines of flight firing in seeming chaotic and complex patterns, hairy monstrous spidering diagrams that said much without saying anything: “*a diagram of motion is less the presentation of a passive state and more a knotting of the ‘already ‘with a ‘not-yet’*” (Burrows, 2021, 53).

This initial exploration of the diagram led towards the utilisation of my own data-sets as my understanding of the systems grew. These datasets employed Runway ML to create groupings of images of my own three-dimensional writings which were aligned and then fed through image-to-image generation bringing forth an asemic shift. Just like the mathematically meaningless diagrams, semantic textual meaning was stripped of its functionality (readability) and instead the asemic offered a “*provocation to thought*” where the “*thinking it encourages is not that of a system or science. It is open-ended based in wonder and wondering... (the asemic) has something to say about an abstract notion of we call writing...*” (Schwenger, 2019, 17). This produces a materially alive textuality in a meta-modernist sense.

If the writing in *EDotTL* moved towards a journey of asemic-ness in gestural formation (whilst retaining partial {if not always readable} sign potential) it is in the feedback loops of *Vol.3* (2023) that a full-blown shift towards asemic territory occurred. Characters lose recognisable shape, instead the formation and structure



Fig. 61

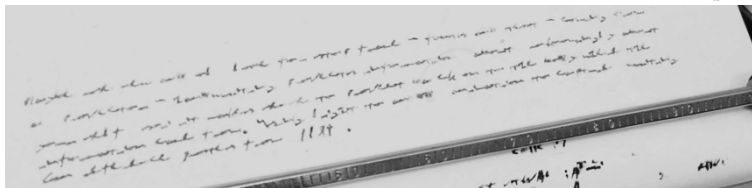
of the narrative, take greater emphasis. Structures of quasi-signs grow, shrink and fold in on themselves in increasingly organic flows.

Fig. 62 & 63



Writing, through its turbulent flows has become a writhing sensuousness. They offer ecologies of turbulent pretextual possibility. The asemic shift notes a move towards something more aligned to cursive writing, marking a swerve from the clarity of the typeface and evidencing a circularity to the research where echoes of works which pre-date this portfolio are referenced, and which used personal (often illegible) handwriting. The Boyd True-type (a typewriter that writes in my own handwriting, 2009) produced a scrawl which was distributed in its mechanical process and illegible due to its strange machine/person textual expression.

Fig. 64



This work predates the asemic typewriter by Jeremy Badius (2013) highlighted by Schwenger in his analysis of the asemic, by four years. Through the Boyd-Truetype and its technological functioning, the sign lost its sign-y-ness and instead, gestural formations grasp for different meanings, not that signs weren't grasping in the first place: "*Signs are grasping: not that they can actually seize that which they claim to stand in for, but, rather, they are grasping's at*" (Schwenger, 2019, 29). An issue with asemic is that in its unfolding it always leads to some form of semantically meaningful critique. What you are reading now for example. It is writing that may ignore the sign but inevitable leads to such an expression as reflection.

If a poetic move already "*reopens the indefinite... exceeding the established meaning of words*" and leads to a "*semiotic insolvency... the*

*disentanglement of language from the limits of symbolic debt*” (Berardi, 2018, 32) as Bifo Berardi describes, an asemic poetics takes this insolvency even further.

An asemic poetic shift creates a type of highly specific vagueness.

That is the knowing/emergent<>becoming, prior to expression.

This emergent quality is of significance and raises questions around Schwenger’s analysis. The issue lies in the static artworks/outputs that sit in relation to his discussion about gestural and formative qualities of the asemic. To better understand the asemic, the research posits that it should be understood as continually emergent and never fulfilling outcome.

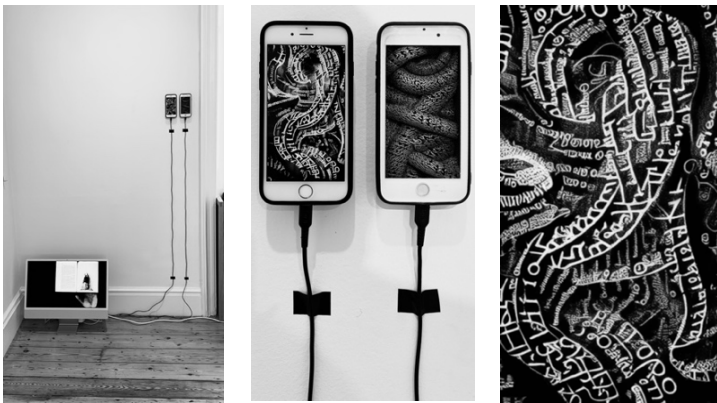


Fig. 65, 66 & 67

The above works (*...presemic utterances...*, 2023) instead consider a pre-semic mattering, knowing that textual analysis is inevitable and thinking about the moment prior to the sign. It is the flow of affective matters, thought and narrative before they become utterances and before they become things. Foregrounding the later discussion on things, Nail explores the Lucretian relation of flows and folds of matter in relation to affect, which he describes as *“the ambiguity between sensibility and the sensed”*, (Nail, 2018, 86). That is, there is a dynamic interplay between the ways we sense and make-sense (often through non-sense), and how our physicality’s interact in the corporeal flow of matter: *“The hand that touches is also touched back by what it touches. At the chiasma of sensation, the flow that actively bends and returns back on itself is also the same flow that receives this folded flow... Things are therefore carried*

*along and kinetically supported by invisible corporeal flows.*" (Nail, 2018, 88).

In these animated work phone-based works, textual forms are irregular and fluid, moving into and out of each other. This asemic flow of meaning can also be understood as an asemic mattering, where flows of matter and meaning lie just beneath the screen, just out of sight, further reflecting the poetic materialisms of Lucretius: *"matter flows, folds, and is woven like a fabric. Its flows are never destroyed but simply refolded and recirculated. The rain of matter falls but does not die...Nature remakes or reweaves things from the endless flows of matter...Things can be seen but matter cannot."* (Nail, 2018, 81-83). The phone can be seen and held, but under its glossy surface a wild undulation of materiality, meaning, data and possibility are fast at action.

In these works, the phone is positioned as a contemporaneous jewellery. A mythic and virtual device that offers a portal into endless narrative ecologies. The smart phone which we now live through, can be understood as jewellery on the following grounds and through the B/I<>M/D(I)/M dynamic. If Byung-Chul Han makes the assertion that: *"The smartphone is not embellished in any way. It is dominated by the smooth and straight..."* (2022, 23). However, this is counterintuitive given any morning's journey on the Underground where the embellishment of phones appears growingly ritualistic, specifically in the ways in which these 'things' are adorned. Fake gems, brilliantly coloured aluminium cases and floppy-coloured silicon's cling to the rigid metallic frames. Cracked screens are a constant, a decorative material memory damaging the pristine delivery of non-thingly information. These non-thinging things become a jewellery-ing of sorts, and they do so by the animalistic necessity to make these monolithic shapes relatable. In their 'decoration' they become displays of difference, displacing their designed sameness.

Taking this line of thought further, in *Are We Human? Notes of an Archaeology of Design* (2021), Beatriz Colomina and Mark Wigley discuss the impact of design on our understanding of humanness. Describing the human behaviour of 'ornament' they describe 135,000-year-old ornamental shell beads (ancient jewellery) as *"a pivotal technology"* that *"create a sense of self and foster ever-wider social networks... crossing demographic thresholds and creating long-distance networks that further increases the odds of technological innovation"* (2021, 65-66). Sounds a lot like the modern technological prowess and social positioning of the iPhone.

In considering materials, and the undercurrent flows of asemic matter not as static a language but as a Lucretian fold and flux of meaning these works explore the idea that beneath the screen (the portal to the oft-cited Internet of Things<sup>116</sup>) asemic (or pre-semantic) undulations of matter and meaning are coming into affect, usually just out the corner of your sight. *“Matter is an active and creative process which one can never see as a whole or in its fundamental state.”* For Lucretius, *“matter is something that can only be known indirectly as the ontological condition of that which is.”* (Nail, 2018, 84). In Nail’s description of matter as a non-static flowing, associations build with the sketchy attempts of Leonardo Da Vinci to capture fluid dynamics. Despite the Renaissance representationism, which placed ‘man’ at the centre of ‘things’, what strikes about Da Vinci’s eloquent silver point sketches is the creative and critical grasping of *what is*.

Like the phones above, his sketches act as portals into a world just out of sight, a momentary insight into being-in-the-world. Sketches have this fleeting affect, they are not pictures of the mind transcribed to the paper, but creative actions of embodied flow, body, mind, and environment coming together to be a some-thing new.

In its asemic-ness these writings have been set loose from a burden of linearity, *“there is no reason, intrinsic to the line itself, why it should be straight...”* (Ingold, 2016, 156). It is a writing that takes pleasure in its environment as much as its tooling. It is not the dreaded Bic which explores through the latency of its ink, scratching the paper with disappointing globularity. It is a sensuous writing, reminiscent of Barthes: *“there is a pleasure of the text...”* and *“...an almost obsessive relation to writing instruments. I often switch to another just for the pleasure of it... I’ve tried everything...except Bics, with which I feel no affinity. I would even say, a bit nastily, that there is a ‘Bic style’, which is really just for churning out copy which merely transcribes thought.”* (Barthes, 1991, 178).

---

<sup>116</sup> Bunz and Meikle described our increasing interaction with a network of thingly non-things as an ‘Internet of things’; *“Through being networked, (things) have gained agency... when connected things... enter a networked reality, the agency of the internet of things becomes twofold. It does not only lie in materiality. By being wired, things are gaining new skills... The distinction between agency and intention is important in addressing the role of technology within networks of social relations... Technology has an effect but no intention. It has agency but does not follow an interest of its own.”* (Bunz and Meikle, 2017, 19). To come back to Dennett, via Pye, is follows with no risk.

To write is not create hermeneutically readable texts, as this can be undertaken by ChatGPT. It is to develop flows of matter and meaning in gestural and bodily acts of meaning-making. Asemic matters flow just out of sight and in our doing we make sense of these, finally in an emergent activity, 'I' write.

Fig. 68



*-might-*

A recent discussion with one of my PhD students resulted in them asking me why I was “*always so reluctant to be pinned down?!?*” The ‘might’ in this Fixation’s question might embody this student’s rhetorical question. The ‘might’ is the enactment of the generative multiplicity of things and a palpating of creative ‘not-knowing’. It is the grasping for potential and also the yearning for jewellery-ish nostalgia. That is, this ‘jewellery thinking’ is active in its temporal processing looking forward, and back, through an activity of ‘now-doing’. It reaches to the past (as the root of poesy<sup>117</sup>) and the future as the ever-emergent ‘and-ing’. The exploration of ‘jewellery thinking’ via the root of poesy is evident in the publication *...this is not a house...* (2024) which accompanied the jewellery artwork of the same name.

---

<sup>117</sup> “Memory... the thinking back to what is to be thoughts is the source and ground of poesy. This is why poesy is the water that at times flow backwards towards the source, toward thinking as thinking, back as recollection... poetry wells up from devoted thought thinking back, recollecting.” (Heidegger, 2004, 11)

Fig. 69 & Fig. 70 (below, right)



In this book, each ‘recto’ page offered a new sentence (semantically written) but with intense repetitions, and feedback loops of meaning. The book, like the artwork (below, left) considered narratives in the format of the undulating, organic and flowing. Each page repeated and grew. In its creation, I *might* write *this*, I *might* write *that*. Environmental attributes enmeshed in emergent possibilities. If not specifically asemic in its

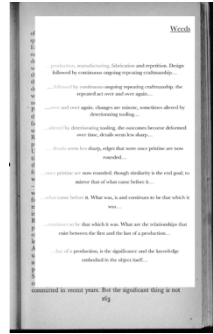


Fig. 71

reading, it does seek to establish a type of asemic (and palimpsestic) logic, that is a rhythmic grasping and a flowing repetition which nullifies the words. The palimpsest is asemic in its ever revealing of the past, and asemic in the way that all dead languages are. The jewellery that accompanied this text had textually readable asemicly-logical text mingle and fold amongst asemic texts questioning where the logics of asemic and its written qualities emerge/fuse/become. The writing of this book had precursors such as the chapter Weeds (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 163) where words greyed and receded from view as the narrative developed.

In its autobiographical re-membling *...this is not a house...* (2024) saw the image of the house shift through temporal states as memories surge on the opposite page turning the house into and out of ruin, reminiscent of Derrida’s thoughts of the self-portrait “*In presenting the self-portrait as a ruin, Derrida acknowledges the indelible materiality of the mortal body, bound to decay. We capture a momentary image, but this image is bound*

*to slowly decay and disappear.*” (Richards, 2008, 94), the house becomes a type of reflection on one-self whilst also relating to the complex absence<>presence that a ‘home’ offers, *“If our experience originates in the houses we were raised in, these houses are structures built in place existing long before we ever came into existence. The house is a structure that makes familiar a location that is otherwise indifferent to us...”* (Richards, 2008, 83). Homes are not certainties but indifferent settings that might come to mean some-thing through extended dwelling (both in material and in memory).

In these works, the *might* becomes a ‘living’ ‘unfolding (and a folding, and a re-folding’ of difference). The *might* is *“alive”* (May, 2005, 24). It defies any determinism or prescriptiveness inherent in the social M/W/V/O dynamic. Many M/W/V/O jewellery artworks, of staggering creativity, now sit in museum collections, they will likely never feel the touch or skin of the W (wearer), the wearer might lead to the viewer which might, in turn, lead to wearing. The ‘might’ outlines a type of fluid indeterminacy. Some-thing is going to be written, but its journey to text, or even gestural writing is emergent. Things come and things go, meanings flux, and environments swerve. What comes from this unfolding<>folding is a type of approach which can be understood as an asemic materialism. It aligns in several senses with materialist poetics as defined by Katherine N. Hayles in her discussion of asemic writing: *“The idea of materialist poetics is simple, although its ramifications are complex: to exist in the world, language must be embodied, and its embodiments matter”* (Hayles, 2021, 174). The asemic is paratextually political.

These ideas build from Hayles’ materialist poetics taking her argument to a logical conclusion that poetics are asemic in nature. That is, not defined or pinned down to semantic value of the signifier. Asemic materialism harks back to Barad’s assertion that *“Language has been granted too much power”* (Barad, 2007, 132), whilst offering an awareness that all things are re-presented as words via analysis. It also speaks to Berardi’s argument that *“What we are accustomed to call ‘the world’ is an effect of a process of semiotic organisation of pre-linguistic matter... This process of semiotic emanation does not reveal a natural given; rather, it unfolds as a perpetual reshuffling of our environment”* (Berardi, 2018, 20). In the works of *...this is not a house...* (2023) helictical pre-semic matters fold and cavort whilst textual/linguistic organisation re-coils over them.

Asemic in this sense is not as Hayles describes as *“parasitic upon writing in the sense that it clearly alludes to writing yet cannot be read”* (Hayles,



2021, 179) as this would indicate a type of writing that withers away at what already has semantic value. ...*pre-semantic undulations...* (see: 116) understand the asemic as the affective value of matters as they come to be, a pretextual and proximal poetics. Importantly in preceding the words rather than devouring words, it keeps a romanticism of words, not in the imperial sense that language (particularly English) takes on a type of colonial enforcement, but in an acknowledgment of the beauty of words and the beauty and importance of the knotted matters that come before them. The pre-semantic pulls the rug from under meaning-ful textual clarity, the type of clarity which will be directly espoused by West Coast American biased LLM models.

As a brief but significant sojourn, and in relation to types of colonial enforcement in language and in things contained within the portfolio, and prior to this pre-semantic shift, a comparison was made between an undermining of the hierarchy of words and the hierarchy of objects through the work *An Heirloom to Heiress to Nae Much But Love* (2016). An autobiographical tiara, it challenged notions that any crown/tiara has a type of inherent textual familial monarchism. Instead, the craftsperson makes a tiara for their daughter, which does not go to them but instead to the public museum collection. The suggested textuality of things was challenged; hierarchies undermined.



Fig. 72

Fig. 73, 74 & 75



Returning to the asemic, *Distributed Knotting's or (...where 'not-knowing' meets 'unthought'...)* (2023), took this asemic materialism and its inherent indeterminacy as its starting point. In the discussion around the stability of flows, the knot has centred itself within the creative practice as an unstable structure which carries an appearance of stability.

*Untying This Knot* (see: 55) is a previous example of the unstable knot where its meaning is always in a capricious process (tightening or untightening), it is forever shifting its entwined fibres.

The difference in *Distributed Knotting's* and *Untying...* is that in their AI outputted multiplicity they offer a kinetic indeterminacy as a “*process understood as a process, not as a change of something else- that is, not as a sequence of changes between static beings. Indeterminacy is not indeterminate relative to something determinate.*” (Nail, 2024, 16). In this work a single line, hand-drawing is processed through an image-to-image generator, creating potentially infinite versions of the same knot then turned into a book and then into an enamelled necklace. The results were entirely process-led, knotting of data and pixels creating re-knotting of the same knot over and over and over and over again. This knot might be the same as the last knot. But it might not. And it probably isn't.

Finally, in relation to the indeterminacy and power of emergent asemic writing, the practice considers the asemics inherently political properties as Hayles describes “*the mere act of abandoning traditional writing in an oppressive era when speech and writing are censored*”<sup>18</sup> *constitutes in itself a political act*” that if “*language is the master, we its servants... the asemic may be positioned as a revolt against languages replicating power.*” (Hayles, 2021, 182-183). These asemic texts, in their lively unfolding, then also create a format of minor asemic literature which are inherently political. Like Deleuze and Guattari's Kafka analysis, these texts articulate with affect and intensity as a priority over clear communicable semantic meaning, a place where “*language stops being representative in order to... move forward toward its extremities or its limits.*” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1975, 23)

*-thing≈one-*

*“we again ask our question ‘What is a Thing?’ we realise that this question is not in good order... the thing is ambiguous in its meaning...*

*1. A thing in the sense of being present-at-hand... all inanimate things and animate things such as a rose, shrub... lizard, wasp...*

*2. Thing in the sense in which it also means whatever is named but which also includes plans, decisions, reflections, loyalties, actions, historical things...*

---

<sup>18</sup> And by extension now non-sensually over produced by LLM's.

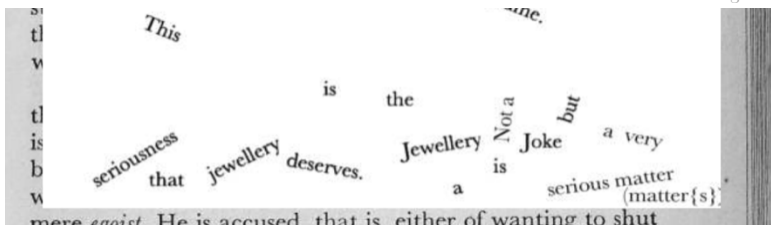
3. All these and anything else that is a something and not nothing.”

(Heidegger, 1967, 6)

If the *second* Fixation focused on materialities then here the works unpick the thingliness of materialities. Martin Heidegger’s descriptions of the possible meanings of a thing highlight their ambiguity. Things are there, in our reach/touch, and but also not. To write a thing is not to write an object, it is to write some-thing in and out of reach. To write is to create some-thing, to actively undertake a plan (even if hastily/immediately drawn) and to reach away from no-thing. The thingliness of a thing has an asemic quality. The thingliness of a thing is asemic in the way that it is a poetic grasping of the ever-evolving nature of things. The stony, the goldish these are not concrete or quantifiable dimensions or qualities or materialities, they are shifting and deferrals within différance. The more we pin something down in words the more aloof it is. Asemic qualities are the ways in which things might mean something or might not.

If the later practice embraces a Lucretian or kinetic materialism via Nail, where it diverges is Nail’s articulation that things are componentially made of object flows. His approach is critical of other object-like (such as object-orientated ontology) approaches which promote static and oppositional objects, where objects remain in discrete bubbles. His critique aligns with my own attempts at an object-ly, realist approach (*JM*, Boyd, 2019, 161) where my arguments literally started to crumble. Beyond a clever visual typographical pun, something substantial happened in this text. Increasingly aware of the limitations of discrete object relations in a social art form like jewellery, the text became increasingly aware that this does not hold water.

Fig. 76



Objects demand objectivity or a research approach which develops “*in the laboratory, in social-science surveys and other modes of research*” where “*beings are transformed into marks in paper – tables, graphs, illustrations... dispensing with complex lived reality. As a re-presentation,*

*Being as what-is set aside. Being becomes technical. The 'picture' we are left with is one of alienation from Being.*" (Bolt, 2011, 149). Within my practice, I understand objects as technical, things as affective.

Like Jane Bennett the words in this portfolio seek a meaning beyond the textual, even if, and when, they are counter-intuitively made of words. Like Bennett the works seek a thing-power when objects become things, *"that is, as vivid entities not reducible to the contexts in which (human) subjects set them, never entirely exhausted by their semiotics"* (Bennett, 2010, 5). And that in the intra-actioning of things, we the artists are part of that thing-power: *"human individuals are themselves composed of vital materials, that our powers are thing-power"* (Bennett, 2010, 11). Importantly Bennett's position of the person is not an objectification but a search beyond the presumptions of the material appearance of a person.

Jewellery resides not in the objectification of the real world but in the symbiotic co-living, intra-activity of matters and bodies, and in the attunement of the workshop, the sticky metals that cling to the file, the wave of the flame over the skin of the metal, and the 'feel' of when something will happen. Soldering for example, cannot be objectively explained, feel, material affect, and attunement need subjective experience, tacit, and embodied material engagement. Proximal poetics are required to teach soldering.

*"Science establishes itself in the object."* (Deleuze, 2020, 289)

*"Science does not think."* (Heidegger, 2004, 8)

*"The (art) work makes publicly known something other than itself, it manifests something other... In the artwork some-thing other is brought into conjunction with the thing that is made."* (Heidegger, 1960, 3)<sup>119</sup>

The research positions things over objects because of the way art practices bring forth some-thing not priorly there, and in the making/wearing/becoming/emergence of jewellery. If the research disagrees with Nail, it is in his assertion that object flows *"create distinct things"*. The research posits and takes as its basis that 'stuff' flows, and 'things' are a grasping at the flows. Stuff is diffuse (see Gloss: 65) and in

---

<sup>119</sup> These three quotes are provided outside of the textual body as provocations within the reading, blunt tools and exclamation marks that providing paratextual texture.

turn the etymology of diffuse is “to pour out...to cause flow”<sup>20</sup>, stuff, aseptic stuff, lies/flows/folds beneath the appearance of things.

In its poetic nature, the research doesn't see memory, and by extension a thingy nostalgia as conflicting as “*Memory... the thinking back to what is to be thoughts is the source and ground of poesy*” (Heidegger, 2004, 11) and further complicated by the temporal questions raised in *...my granda's watch...* (2024) (see: 51) which builds on the ideas that time is a particular perspective, that “*it is a blurring... determined by the interactions that a physical system has with the rest of the world... causality, memory, traces, the history of the happening of the world itself can only be an effect of perspective. Inexorably, then, the study of time does nothing but return us to ourselves.*” (Rovelli, 2017, 147). Poetics offers a landscape that is critical and romantic. Just because the gold molecules that make a ring may have burst from a supernova, it doesn't mean that it cannot re-present a very real<>felt<>sensed love for another person.

The subject of subjectivity in arts research has been a tricky navigation, but theories like Autotheory and Autoethnography have given lived experience further credence in the arts and beyond. Subjective experience means some-thing. But just as subjective experience has become increasingly valued in research so has the difficulty of defining what oneself might consist of. Kexin Liu (see: 47) utilised a “jewellery-thinking” to explore her own biological assemblages, that is oneself as multiple living organisms or as Daniel Dennett positioned, “*Within the walls of human bodies are many interlopers, ranging from bacteria and virus through microscopic mites that live like cliff dwellers in the ecological niche of our skin and scalp, to larger parasites... These interlopers are all tiny self-protectors in their own rights...*” and “*are just as essential team members in our own quest for self-preservation...*” (Dennett, 1993, 414). Liu's portrait, like my own attempts in *...this is not house...* (see: 120) offers that these assemblages of organisms and material and memory are also always shifting: “*The Self is far from timeless, and the self-portrait, a genre purportedly revealing the self, reveals only a Self that no longer is.*” (Richards, 2008, 94).

The one-self that writes in this text and in an artwork like *EDoTL* is not just a unitary being, but a temporally complex emergent assemblages of organisms, matter and flow further complicated by the ideas of Material

---

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/diffuse> (accessed 14th February 2024)

Engagement Theory and Katherine N. Hayles' writing on distributed cognition. Within the practice, these issues further question the discreteness of one's thinking. The 'one' of creative practice holds tightly to subjective experience and the "I". "I" did make these things. "I" did solder the thing. "I" did file the edges with a file with no wooden end, scraping the inside of "my" hand.

Fig. 77



But the "one", this I, has now been dispersed into a myriad of emergent distributed functions and possibilities. If anything, the "I" extends into the file that cuts the hand. The artworks (left) evidence actions in art productions that fluctuate relentlessly

between human intention and the technical operations of ML; co-doing and co-making. In their asemic generation there is a productive convergence of two theoretical positions, Material Engagement Theory where *"...the synergistic process by which, out of brains, bodies and things, mind emerges."* (Malafouris, 2017, 17), and "Unthought".

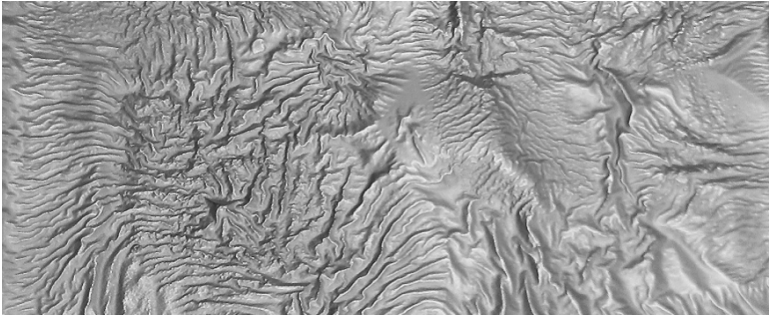
If Lambros Malafouris opened cognition beyond the mind to the materials around, Katherine N. Hayles goes further in her articulation of 'Unthought' exploring the cognitive systems beyond our own, including computational cognition: *"...unthought...names the potent force of conceptualizing interactions between human and technical systems that enable us to understand more clearly the political, cultural and ethical stakes of living..."* (Hayles, 2017, 1-2). These works act as an intersection between the emergent artistic properties of "knowingly, not knowing", of being cognitively entwined in a material world and distributed in a world that enmeshes human cognition, and cognitive computational systems.

Through the enmeshment of creative not-knowing and unthought they visually imagine the flows between these states as a type of asemic materialism.

How might one write a thing? What comes from these loose terms, and this looser question? Things are buoyed by diffuse flows of stuffily asemic matter. Writing is a discretely human activity which cannot be replicated (yet) by any re-presenting non-sense of a neural networked LLM. And this writing doesn't have to make semantic sense. The 'one' writing, previously 'human being', is a 'one' embedded in multiple embodied, material, and digitally cognitive worlds, situated in porous and turbulent flows.

In this exploratory questioning, which requires attuned thinking, an interesting shift in the research has occurred where previously material form and textual meaning were semantically aligned, through this period of the research the materiality of the prose/jewellery became less focused on the materiality of language and instead came to define the materiality of asemic flows of meaning. If my works offer an asemicly textual approach to this the turbulence of things, then this can be contextually placed amongst peers.

Fig. 78



During January 2024, I co-curated the metal art and design symposium *TURBULENCE: Metal Flows in Thinking and Things*, with Professor Michael Rowe at the Royal College of Art in London. The following image is a cropped detail of a work in silver by artist Max Warren used for the poster and flyer. In the work Warren utilises a traditional technique called reticulation. The work navigates material dialogues of meta-modernism and sincerity in applied art practices but an additional rigour stems from his technique (skill<>risk) which here takes its originality and significance from the sheer scale under which this usually fine detail process is being undertaken. *“the texture is self-created in a natural way, except for the provision of heat... in the reticulation process... a surface can be produced on sheet metal that has a texture formed of*

*ridges and depressions... if heating is continued still further, the metal collapses and melts*" (Untracht, 1985, 336).

Warren's careful handling of the material creates a cartography of chaotic tightening's, reminiscent of elbow skin or the view from a plane window. The typically flat and clean surface of sheet silver has buckled and twisted whilst the overall form remains flat and sheety. This is a careful and impressive control of material making, but more importantly, grasps a non-anthropocentric understanding of matters and material. Through the application of skill and heat Warren can see (be attuned to) and bring to life the chaotic flows and turbulence of matter just outside of human vantage.

In spending time with this work, 'one' is reminded of the precious and unlikely conditions in which we live and thrive and which we are disastrously damaging. This cropped detail of Warren's work is not a representation of the earthly forms but *is* what happens in the melting pots of metallic formations. This *is* what takes place out of view and before and after the misplaced human concern for 'objectivity'.

Deleuze and Guattari, and by extension Ingold, are onto something when they highlight the metal worker might be more keenly attuned to matter and things; *"Matter and form have never seemed more rigid than in metallurgy", write Deleuze and Guattari, 'yet the succession of forms tends to be replaced by the form of a continuous development, and the variability of matters tends to be replaced by the matter of a continuous variation' Instead of the concatenation of discrete operations to which analysts of techniques have given the name chaîne opératoire, we have here something more like an unbroken, contrapuntal coupling of a gestural dance with a modulation of the material. Even iron flows, and the smith has to follow it."* (Deleuze and Guattari via Ingold, 2013 26).

Due to this attunement to things, the ~~crafts~~ person should have a strong handle on material aspects of AI. AI is presented as the wipe-clean, designed non-thing, but it is the filth and dirt of the land, the metal and clay of making processes just out of sight (see: 156). All knowledge systems come from dirt: *"Minerals are the backbone of Ai, but its lifeblood is electrical energy. Advanced computation is rarely considered in terms of carbon footprints, fossil fuels, and pollution: metaphors like "the cloud" imply something floating and delicate within a natural, green industry...a single NLP model produced more than 660,000 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions, the equivalent of five gas-powered cars over*



Fig. 79



*their total lifetime or 125 round-trips from New York to Beijing.*" (Crawford, 2021, 42). All knowledge systems then return to dirt in an anthropocentric mirth.

Just under its surface/interface, metal is a turbulent and often violently vibrant and vitalic substance, filled with chaotic flows and shimmering "*polycrystalline edifices*" (Bennett, 2009, 59). This vitality lays in relation to Heidegger who might have defined the thingly as the metal-ly qualities of jewellery. In asking the question, how might one write a thing? This Fixation has reflected on the research's positional

and methodological 'jewellery-thinking' through its material awareness, and its use of asemic writing to uncover and define a visual poetics of something hiding in plain sight just below human awareness and semantic meaning.



Fig. b

*“Truth is not propositional, but rather truth is existence as it unfolds.”*  
(Bolt, 2011, 151)

*“...matter flows, confluxes and folds into things”* (Nail, 2018, 78)

## Conclusion

The rhizome, emergence, the flowing of matter(s) all defy a conclusionary definite, a teleological summation. All are scaling, in and out, over and through, folding and unfolding. 'Conclusion', like ~~craft~~ (JM, Boyd, 2019, 57), must then be written sous-rature. It must be acknowledged and dismissed, there is no better word, but also it cannot fully fulfil its function if a methodological coherence is to be kept.

It is worth noting this research has been undertaken during a period when practice-led arts research has shifted in its confidence. When this period of intensive study into language and jewellery started to flourish around 2010, I undertook a PGCert in PhD Supervision. During initial sessions I was surprised by the rejection of arts research by many of my, mostly more experienced, colleagues. Their rejections ran along the lines that art practices were emergent, not empirical, and often contained subjective methodologies which could not replicate the stability and objectivity of the "Sciences claim to truth" which "lies in its procedures methods and replicability..." and that "creative arts research is often nebulous, unquantifiable and untestable..." (Bolt, 2011, 144). Such an opinion reared its back recently. In early 2024, I was invited to take part in (the most wonderful) arts/science research symposium and exhibition (*sticky cohesions, strange skins, intimate portals*, Radical Matter, Vienna, 2024). During the symposium I was part of a panel discussion where a European politician made two highly contradictory statements. Firstly, that there should no longer be any siloed thinking or approaches in the re-imagining of a more ecological future. And that the Arts shouldn't and can't claim to undertake research.

There should be no siloes.

Except this one.

Given the substantial growth of practice-based and practice-led research and its coherence as a field of enquiry I was taken aback by this discussion. The research in this portfolio embraces the subjective and emergent possibilities of art-research not as any lack but as a type of inhabiting a research, a living re-research (see: 19). It has taken jewellery not as the frivolous or the decorative (the ~~joke~~ (JM, Boyd, 2019, 160), but as a

significant area of art and design practice worthy of critical exploration. It has taken as a given that jewellery is a serious matter, that these are things through which lives are lived through, that it is ripe for interdisciplinary re-research and posits jewellery as a foundational area for enmeshing types of thinking.

It is a rich area to do so as it is undertheorized when compared with other arts like ceramics, painting, or contemporary art. This could be for several reasons, its position in applied art methodologies is unusual in its reduced connection to metal. Jewellery is no longer (and never has been) material specific. Ceramics demands an analysis of ceramic/mud/clay, textile an analysis of fibre/thread/weave, silversmithing an analysis of metal/alloy. Jewellery then by its nature requires a multi-material, multi-technical and, by extension, a multi-theoretical approach.

In the writing of this critical diffraction the *...saccade...* chapters have sought a non-hierarchical text, they have embraced a mantra that creativity can be critical, whilst the three Fixations have in turn answered three exploratory questions that have emerged through the research. The *first* Fixation sought to explore the post-structuralist roots of the research to define a type of wearing words. The *second* Fixation methodologically shifted forward embracing ideas of emergence and performativity in embodied notions of storying form. The final and *third* Fixation saw an asemic turn within the practice which re-positioned the identity of the thing as one in the chaotic flows of the contemporary AI and quantum inflected moment. The progression between Fixations has evidenced a chronologically appropriate development of methods undertaken research within the portfolio. However, the practice has been understood as ever-revelatory. That is, the practical elements of this research continually offer new insights and ongoing re-contextualisation's through shifting interpretations. The scales between intention and interpretation are always moving; *"...history? It's just one fucking thing after another"* (Bennett<sup>121</sup>, 2004, 67)

To ~~conclude~~, the research has explored jewellery as a language in its own right<sup>122</sup>, through a lens which employed literary structures and critique. In this approach the research has contributed a specific methodological,

---

<sup>121</sup> Alan, not Jane.

<sup>122</sup> Significant writing on the alignment of jewellery and Language has been undertaken by jewellery scholar Barbara Schmidt *"In studying how jewellery can be used as a symbol... it becomes clear that jewellery is, in its embodiment of the values... a kind of language... a medium for understanding"* (Schmidt, 2018, 10)

positional, and poetic understanding of jewellery, creating a new type of 'jewellery-thinking'. In this contribution it has revealed something about jewellery and something to, I believe, about the language of words. From Derridean deconstruction which built into Deleuzian rhizomatics which has in turn folded in emergent flows of matter and meaning before exhausting the functionality of the word towards a bodily writing, the practice has suggested that jewellery, like words, disappear from sight in their intra-active-becoming-and-living-with. It has suggested that the embodied actions of writing and developing new forms of critical writing can learn from the embodied actions of making<wearing jewellery. And, in its exhaustion of the word it has yielded an asemic turn which can be applied to new formats of materialism. In its totality it has offered a study of words and writings in their materiality.

There are, of course, limitations in what the research has and can contribute. Firstly, there are temporal questions raised by the length of time the practice covers. Unlike a standard PhD, the diversity of the practice and the different projects have developed a complex approach which has taken time and reflexivity to produce, in this sense some of the research amends, and builds upon, research undertaken prior. In a standard PhD these temporary amendments are edited away, whilst here they are evident. Such an issue however paints a realistic picture of the art-based researcher shifting and evolving through emergent trajectories. Further, confidence in this commentaries approach has been backed by readings of other amalgamative PhD by Portfolio/Published Work such as Ross Sinclair's commentary on 20 years of his social art project *Real Life* (Glasgow University, 2016)

Whilst I hope that the variety of thought and the interdisciplinarity of the research has offered new insights into my own field, arguments could be made for greater investigations into specific disciplines and their impacts on jewellery. This might be a fair claim against a neurodivergent rhizomatic approach which deliberately tasks itself with multiplicities and ever-and-ings. However, the research aligns to recent descriptions of neuro-normativity as a capitalist and imperialist imperative (Chapman, 2023, 159), thus teleological and problematically goal driven. In this sense the research accepts the limitation as a consequence of its breadth of scope.

A final limitation stems from this multiplicity, which is the complexity of language and terminologies from several different fields of philosophy, science, art theory, art practice and social theory. This may make the text

and research complex to understand for a wider audience interested in jewellery; however it has been an aim that the use of glosses, a glossary, and intensive footnotes in the *...saccades...* to support understanding of the terminologies used. It is also important to understand that when the waters of a siloed discipline are agitated, the waters flow and overspill into other pools, mixing and then blending towards new compositions of disciplinary meaning. Circling your own pool with no agitation and no torrent from the hydrological evaporation and downpour of ideas, leads to the same sights, same in-sights, and an unquestioned and problematic comfortability.

The research has developed multiple possibilities and implications for future research and pedagogy. Appendix B explores how the aspects of “jewellery-thinking” have informed recent curriculum and pedagogical development. The interdisciplinarity of this research has further opened possibilities for future study in applied art, developing a complexity in material storytelling and the theoretical contextualisation of material-led study. Perhaps the greatest potential for future exploration, and stemming from this exploration of jewellery and language, is the seed concept of asemic materialism/proximal poetics and how this might unfurl into a wider cross-disciplinary research project in the near future.

Finally, it may be worth returning to the title of this commentary. The title suggests that the author cannot string a sentence together as well as he might string a necklace. However, the densities and intensities of the preceding text would argue against this claim. The researcher (I) has had to find coping mechanisms, the difficulties in reading forging a type of reading activity similar to the stringing of pearls. Multiple sources, hundreds of books and articles all read at once then tied together in endless cross referencing and knottings. Through the diffractive nature of these readings, I have found a way that I can read sentences together leading to an ability to (just about) string sentences together. The research in this portfolio highlights this sometimes-painful textual and material journey.



## Postface

*... jist haud oan ... eir's mair tae ging ower ...*<sup>129</sup>

Over the past five years of this research, another experiment has been taking place which has informed all of this diffraction in subtle and less subtle ways. It is deeply autobiographical but given its context within this research could be understood as autoethnographical due to its revealing of the culture of jewellery and its support in the establishment of many of my arguments. A jeweller making jewellery and wearing it whilst reflecting on the nature of its wearing in further relation to the making and wearing and emergent becoming<>intra-action of the thing and I (B/I<>M/D(I)/M).

Fig. 80



Five years ago, my daughter removed a garish pink plastic bracelet, from the cover of a Peppa Pig magazine and put it on my wrist. *“Promise me you will never take this off”* she asserted. It has remained on my wrist ever since. And, when a plastic bead breaks (they seem particularly susceptible to a summer-time-cocktail of chlorine and sunshine), it is replaced with a reserve (similarly garish) pink bead made by my children and myself. The bracelet now consists of five dented, bashed, and cracked beads from the magazine, and seven polymer clay, handmade beads, of slightly varying shape and size. As the older plastic beads continue to break new handmade pink beads have to be added.

---

<sup>129</sup> Recent research, most specifically *...this is not a house...* (2019) has experimented with the use of Doric (a Scottish dialect from the Grampian region in Scotland, however when writing in Doric, where the ‘wh’s’ are replaced with ‘fs’ takes it on an asemic-ish secrecy. Rhythm and cadence replace meaning to those outside of this broad dialect.

Very soon it will no longer have any beads of its origin. A Ship of Theseus<sup>121</sup>, or perhaps, more closely, a Trigger's Broom<sup>122</sup> conundrum is occurring. Soon there will be no more beads from the original bracelet. However, I will maintain that it is still the same bracelet that my daughter told me to *"never take off"*. This reflection was further developed in the artwork *...pink...* (see: 47-48). Exhibited as part of the exhibition *Colour Made Manifest*, a research collaboration of the RCA *Material Engagements Research Cluster*, the work built upon scanning techniques and interpolated animations to explore the boundaries between two colours of polymer clay and my own fleshy body. The animation slowly mixed and rolled the clay into beads, but the separation between body and thing is never quite assured, and slowly as the colours mix materially, asemic patterns generatively grow and recede.

This is jewellery not as the object, as the material artefact, but as a type of interplay and *'memory(ies) of haecceity'*. That is, whether the ship is still the same ship after all of its boards are replaced, or whether Trigger's broom is still his broom after *"17 new heads and 14 new handles"*, or whether my bracelet eventually has all new beads, it continues to carry a sort-of 'thisness'. The jewellery is not confined to human memory, or to its material properties but also acts as part of an *"entire assemblage in its aggregate that is a haecceity, it is this assemblage that is defined by a longitude and latitude, be speeds and affects... that cease to be subjects to become events, in assemblages that are inseparable from an hour, a season, an atmosphere, an air, a life."* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, 289).

This is meaning in affective ever-changing flux. It doesn't have to be made of its original materials for me to experience its individuation and its interplay with all flows of matterly stuff. It is memory (as nostalgic {why can non-conservative nostalgia only flow in one direction} flux). It is open-ended potential of emergent relations.

---

<sup>121</sup> The Ship of Theseus is a philosophical paradox stemming from Greek mythology. In the myth the Athenians would commemorate Theseus the founder of Athens by sailing a ship on a pilgrimage to honour Apollo. Year after year, the ship would be maintained and parts that had previously broken would be fixed or replaced. The paradox asked whether the ship can still be the same ship after all of its components are replaced.

<sup>122</sup> Famously, the British situation comedy *Only Fools and Horses* (1996) took the ship of Theseus paradox and applied it to the loveable comedic 'fool' character and road sweeper, Trigger; *"This old brooms had 17 new heads and 14 new handles in its time."* *"How the hell can it be the same bloody broom then?"* *"There's the picture. What more proof do you need?"*

(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/comedy/onlyfools/quotes/quote11.shtml>)

Within its wearing, there is also a metamodern narrative at play. The wearing of a cheap pink plastic bracelet whilst holding the position of Head of Jewellery and Metal and Reader in Jewellery at the Royal College of Art, could be understood as an ironic critique of the materialist European Contemporary jewellery scene, as well as those instructional hierarchical roles (this is deliberate and knowingly undertaken), but it is also a secretive, familial, and deeply romantic gesture. It is critical and ironic whilst loving and meaningful.

In its wearing it supports my argument that jewellery recedes from view like text. It becomes part of my body, and when it's very rarely removed (because the cord has snapped) I feel its absence, its absence becomes a startling presence, like a ghost appendage, my awareness of my body being different is increased, my wrist strangely feels heavier without it. This is not a visual feel, but a skinly affect.

This Postface is written as such, because it is not the practice, it is not the research,<sup>126</sup> but this daily/hourly/ minutely rumination on this 'wearing' casts a knowing across this all my other work which may otherwise be absent. It counters the question that (B/I<>M/D(I)/M) relations are not grounded in the symbiotic wearing and start to answer the question, of "but isn't it still just a body wearing a thing'?" It gives a type of living recognition to the ideas that have emerged through practice in relation to the thingly interactions of body <> (im)materiality <> difference (identity) <> meaning (B/I<>M/D(I)/M). It is 'jewellery thinking' in its living-with, that is a shared being/becoming/emergent knowing. It is a 'jewellery thinking' as an onto-epistemological 'thing'ing.

*"...bit thi' hinkin' aat remains, an thi' spikkin inside are nae fit is externalised an like the matters atween a liminality o something or ither is aire present aye deferred bit isnae iver absent..."*

*(...this is not a house..., Boyd, 2024)*

---

<sup>126</sup> A postface has been utilised here due to the epitextual feel attached to this discussion (it sits outside the research, it doesn't foreground it, but is nevertheless influential). It is the postface as servicing a "curative" function as outlined by Genette which "is always both too early and too late" (Genette, 1997, 239).

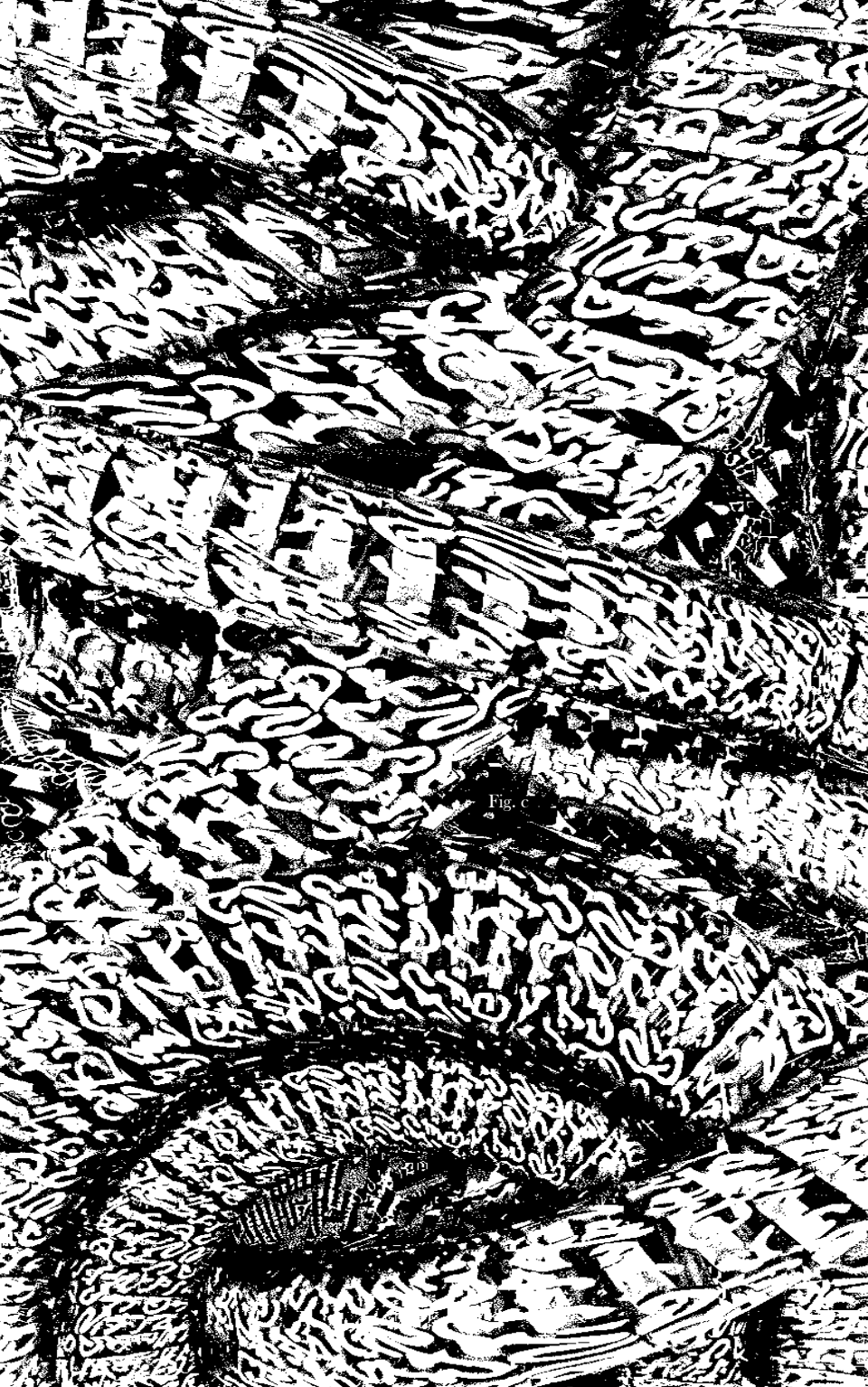


Fig. C

# Appendix A

## Key Terms (*a gloss-ary*)

The following list of key terms differs from the GLOSS sections within the text. Where those sections undertook creative and poetic explorations of key terms the following descriptions present a more objective and contextual set of explanations.

### *Asemic*

Asemic writing refers to acts of writing that do not offer readable semantic meaning. Instead, they offer different gestural and performative characteristics. Recently asemic writing has grown in popularity via internet forums with Kathryn N. Hayles suggesting that this showcases a political turn within a post-print landscape (2021). The research in Blocks 3 and 4 posit the asemic as continually and intra-actively generative, giving rise to the neologism pre-semic.

### *Being/being/ Being-in-the- world*

Martin Heidegger offers two meanings for the term being, with the first letter capitalised Being (Dasein) is the “*isness or essence of being*” (Bolt, 2008, 172) whilst in lower case being defines anything that exists (persons, things, animals). Being-in-the-world posits the dwelling and experience of existing in the world as a ‘unitary phenomenon’. “*Being-in-the-world is the understanding of being itself... not derived from abstract theorising, but from the concrete experience of being-in-the-world*” (Bolt, 2008, 127). These are key concepts in Heideggerian phenomenology.

### *Difference/ Différance*

Difference (and differing differences) can be understood as the major philosophical problem to emerge during the twentieth-century (Cisney, 2018, 3). Within the research, these two differing

spellings denote two different stances on difference. Difference in Deleuzian terms “endeavours to think purely in relational multiplicity” (Cisney, 2018, 277) foregrounding becoming and the productive nature of difference over identity. Différance in Derridean terms refers to the ways in which meaning within a text is dependant on differing signifiers and the endless deferment of meaning throughout a language system.

### *Diffraction*

Utilised by Physicist and Philosopher Karen Barad and coined by theorist Donna Haraway, diffraction offers a methodological shift away from reflection and refraction which Haraway suggested are aligned to the optics of reflection promoting sameness. Instead, diffraction moves towards a methodological approach which “has to do with the way waves combine and overlap...” and the “bending and spreading of waves that occurs when encounter an obstacle” (Barad, 2008, 74). The concept embraces the entanglement of matter and is “attuned to differences” (Barad, 2008, 72)

### *Emergence*

Emergence describes the ways in which complex systems and patterns can arise from seemingly simple interactions. Termite hills, starling murmurations, urban commuting and the neural network of the brain are all highly sophisticated systems which cannot be reduced to the individual actants. The understanding of emergence has evolved throughout research; in Block 1 (*JM*), Hodder’s archaeological emergence is referenced. For Hodder the word is used as the mixing of social patterns and histories, by Block 3 and Block 4 this has developed into an exploration of art practices as emergent in their complexity developed through simple activities, influenced by quantum uncertainties.

### *Haecceity*

Haecceity refers to the ‘thisness’ rather than the ‘thingness’ of something.

*Intra-action* Intra-action is a term coined by Physicist and Philosopher Karen Barad. Differing from interaction it outlines how things (in its broad sense) co-emerge in an entangled coming-into-being rather than the meeting of entities in any interaction; “*intra-action signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies*” used “*in contrast to... interaction... which assumes that there are separate individual agencies that precede their interaction... intra-action recognises that distinct agencies do not precede their interaction, but rather emerge through their intra-action*” (Barad, 2008, 33)

*Lucretian/  
Kinetic  
Materialism* Thomas Nail’s radical re-reading of the Lucretius poem *De Rerum Natura* removed the poem from historic atomist interpretations and instead positioned it alongside many other ancient kinetic concepts of being, and contemporaneously, the theory of quantum physics. In this conception, the world is not made of discrete particles and objects rather it is made of flows of matter; “*kinetic materialism is the belief that matter, and motions are indeterminate relational processes*” (Nail, 2023, 3)

*Marginalia* Marginalia is a paratextual act which refers to the action of annotating books. At different points in history, this has evidenced differing importance. Marginalic acts were significant for historic texts adding visual and myth-defining paratextual meaning to the text. Post Gutenberg press, writing in books is often seen as a disrespectful activity although they often offer an insight into the social contexts of a fixed reading. Within the research, the author has used marginalia as a key method of embodied and rhizomatic reading.

*Mythotechnesis* Taken from David Burrows and Simon O’Sullivan’s 2019 publication *Fictioning*, Mythotechnesis is one of three terms used to

describe how artists undertake acts of fictioning. These include mythopoesis, myth-science and mythotechnesis. Mythotechnesis is specifically utilised to explicitly explore and position technology as a vital component of artistic fictioning practises framing ways in which technology is explored for its myth-making properties.

*Onto-epistemology*

Ontology and Epistemology are two branches of philosophical enquiry. Ontology defines and explores the nature of being whilst epistemology is the study of knowledge. Onto-epistemological approaches suggest that in embodied being there is much to be garnered from an approach that sees being and knowledge as inextricably linked. Karen Barad, Johnny Golding, and Donna Haraway have all utilised methodologies which are onto-epistemological. This can be extended to ethico-onto-epistemology and socio-onto-epistemology to define the ways in which ethical and social implications cannot be separated from discussions of being and knowing.

*Palimpsest*

In historical terms palimpsests were manuscripts that were re-used by washing or scraping previous texts from the material leaving a built-up haunting of previous texts. Palimpsests attended to a time when writing materials such as papyrus and parchment were expensive and necessitated reusing. Metaphorically the approaches of LLM's can be understood as virtual palimpsests in their endlessly differed, layered, and probabilistic textual nature in the ways they bring the past to the surface.

*Paratextual*

From French literary theorist Gérard Genette, the term paratextual refers to all the aspects of the text out-with the text. Paratextual elements include the title, format, footnotes, prefaces, materiality, publication, and promotion amongst other. The research is especially interested in the material



paratextual elements of the text: the paper, the card, the ink, and the metallic apparatus of printing.

*Rhizome*

Deleuze and Guattari first defined the rhizome as a way of understanding the multiple exits and entry points in a reading of Kafka. However, they further defined this methodologically in *A Thousand Plateaus*. The rhizome is defined as an alternative to arborescent (tree-like) knowledge systems which promote transcendent and linear thinking. The rhizome instead foregrounds a horizontal approach, emphasising “and-ing” and becoming as the key to understanding the nature of being.

*Teleological*

Telos is a Greek term defined by Aristotle to refer to the final cause of an entity. It is a term which suggests the ends define the means. Famously the relationship between the acorn and oak tree is used as an example with the tree being the acorn’s telos. This is an arborescent approach. A Rhizomatic or emergent process does not see the goal as the means to the end.

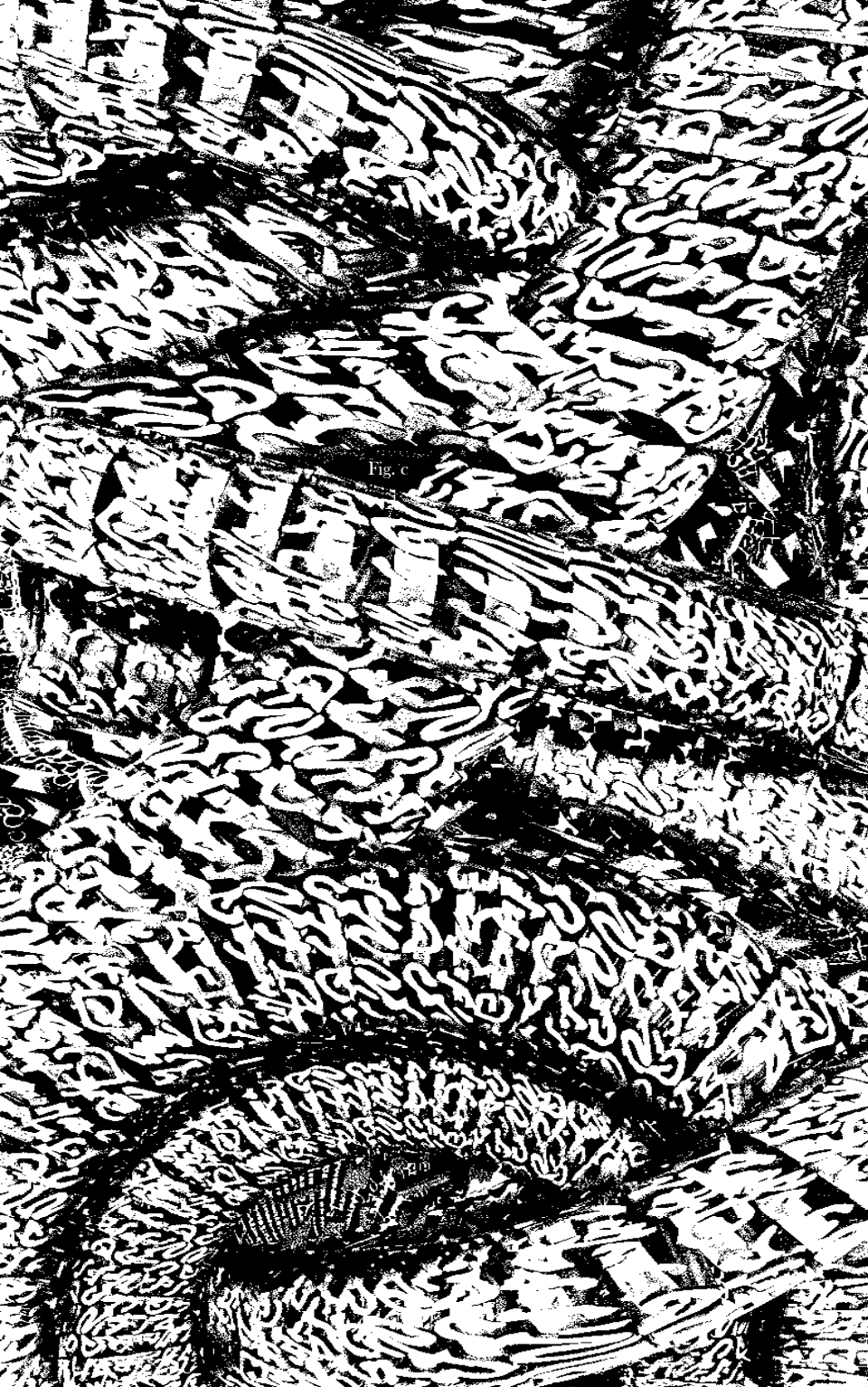


Fig. c

## Appendix B

### The Role of Technology in the Research

Often in art production, “...*technology is addressed as little more than the material support for all important - and all engulfing - process of subject constitution and the movement of thought...*” which “*fail to address the material of machinic complexities of technology - a blindness which protects the idea of the autonomy of intelligence, thoughts and its representation...*” (Burrows and O’Sullivan, 2019, 341). The discussions in this critical diffraction could be said to adhere to this issue, that technological processes are not addressed in the writing. Rather, the interactions of the patheme-matheme assemblage<sup>127</sup> are implicit rather than explicit. This Appendix will address these essential undercurrents within this portfolio. Technical innovations in the portfolio do not directly speak to the research questions instead the technological questions act as supplemental (i.e. essential). Without technical innovation, ideas do not become manifest, yet technical innovation flows from poetic questioning.

The research has worked through technologies at an innovative stage within jewellery. Explored technologies include but are not limited to traditional fine metal working skills (2002>), letterpress (2004>), CAD/CAM (2004>), 3D printing (2007>), digital light projection (2007>), innovation complex casting processes (2010>), photogrammetry (2014>), industrial techniques such as water jet cutting and UV printing (2019>), Scanning (2019>), Virtual Reality (2021>), Augmented Reality (2021>) and AI generative algorithms (2022>). Often works involve complex combinations of these processes. An example of an original combination of technological processes would be: *Out to Sea (RtD)*, Boyd, 2019). This artwork

Fig. 81



---

<sup>127</sup> “...where the conceptual meets other kinds of thought...and non-thought...art practices engage(s) with patheme-matheme assemblages, where the, *mathemic* corresponds to the formal character of subjectivity, and the *pathemic* names an equally abstract - in a different - sense - but more creaturely and affective character.” in (Burrows and O’Sullivan, 2019, 357)

used a combination of large-scale bronze casting, waterjet cutting and UV metal printing to create an artwork that was originally sculptural but became jewellery when physically ruptured/broken.

Many of my artworks falls under the remit of Burrows and O’Sullivan’s outline of mythotechnesis which defines our interactions with technology as potential for narrative and myth building; *“mythotechnesis approaches the fictioning of new modes of existence by specifically attending to future human-machine relations and assemblages through a consideration of the technics of adaptation and cloning, as well as through the technologies of coding, compression and layering, and also editing, scanning, time stretching, copying and pasting... technics produce a machine fictioning which explores the future*



*development of analogue and digital technologies and also modes of embodiment and disembodiment...”* and concerned with *“the different logics of our increasingly technologically mediated reality”* (Burrows & O’Sullivan, 2019, 17). Works like *admin* (Boyd, 2023), *Jewellery Manifest* (Boyd, 2019), *...presemic undulations...* (Boyd 2023), and indeed this material book undertakes types of generative *“compression and layering... editing, scanning, time stretching, copying and pasting...”* Burrows & O’Sullivan, 2019, 17).

The 2019 REF submission *Beyond the Bench* evidenced how technologies offer a supplementary-ness creating new portals of potential through which the research questions flowed. In this sense, technologies are explored in reflexive ways. That is, new technologies offer previously impossible ways of creating artistic potential whilst at the same time moving the boundaries and possibilities that artistic, emergent

The 2019 REF submission *Beyond the Bench* evidenced how technologies offer a supplementary-ness creating new portals of potential through which the research questions flowed. In this sense, technologies are explored in reflexive ways. That is, new technologies offer previously impossible ways of creating artistic potential whilst at the same time moving the boundaries and possibilities that artistic, emergent

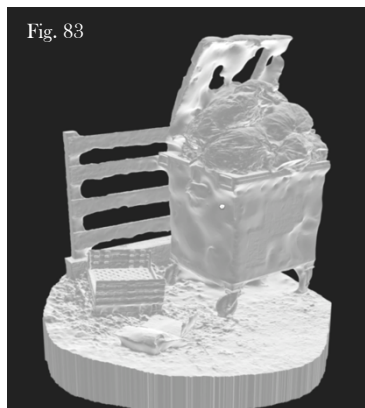


Fig. 83

questions can demand. This REF submission was left out of the weave of the main text as it does not necessarily relate to words/language. However, it is being offered as an appendix as it provides insight into the methodological reflexivity of technological explorations within the practice.

*Beyond the Bench*, spurred on by recent developments in the mobility of digital scanning, “sought to find new and accessible ways of creating jewellery beyond the bench and the studio.... such as telephones and laptops... The significance of this research lies in the development of a mobile production method as well as the process of enhancing topophilic narratives of jewellery... Technical innovations lay in novel combinations of processes not necessarily created for jewellery production. This includes the interaction of mobile photogrammetry, digital modelling, 3D printing and craft processes.” (RCA REF, Boyd, 2019, 10). The project utilised the mobility of this process to collect many meshes of everyday artefacts. In their mesh form, they are not mere re-presentations of real-life things, but they become some-thing else. A new skin, a hollow mimesis made of points with cling-film-like-imagery draped over.



Fig. 84

The use of technology adheres to the poetic nature of the research. *Techné* (from which the word *techno*{craft-logic} stems) acts not as a Heideggerian enframing (such as the M/W/V/O mechanistic alignment) but instead *techné* aligned with *poiesis*: “...*techné*, as a particular form of bringing forth, appears to oscillate between *poiesis* and enframing. Where *techné* belongs to bringing-forth as revealing, Heidegger notes it is poetic. However, when understood as the term for activities and skills of the craftsman, *techné* come to be seen in an instrumental way. It means to an end...” (Bolt, 2011,80-81). Here I find a creative friction between the craft of risk as outline by David Pye (see: 110) and Heidegger’s *techné*. Technologies then are not used to only complete some-thing, they are, in themselves, part of a wider poetic revealing.

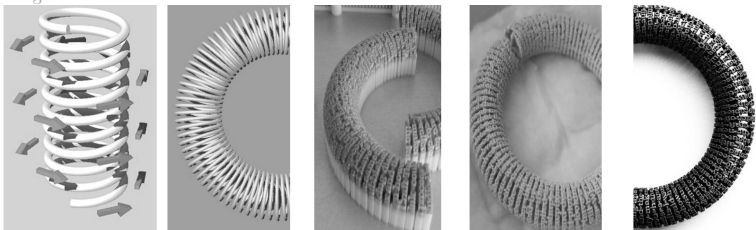
As noted by Bolt there is an oscillation at play in techne and this example sits alongside practical innovations such as the spiral sprue<sup>128</sup>. This sprue<sup>129</sup> structure utilised a fuzzy understanding of fluid dynamics to create support structures which also served as entry points for flowing metal. Unusually the sprues were not removed instead they were integrated into the architecture of the work offering further creative potential.

Contemporary jewellery practices have a history of technical innovation. My initial years as a postgraduate student at the Royal College of Art (2007-09) were undertaken in the shadow of David Watkin's funded research project into 3D printing technologies in relation to fine detail work<sup>130</sup>. Rather than ignore these processes there is, within the practice, an embracing and awareness that working-through technologies can create new immersive and experiential ways of being-in-the-world.

These experiential aspects inform embodied interactions as highlighted by Burrows and O'Sullivan who describe the contributions of Sadie Plant within the concepts of techno-feminism as *"digital technologies produc(ing) synesthetic/immersive zones such as virtual reality environments and the internet, which, contrary to some prevailing ideas about technology and disembodiment, she sees as firmly embodied and, as such, heralding new kinds of digital modes of existence."* (Burrows & O'Sullivan, 2029, 422). In *EDoTL* palimpsestic asemic logics saw the word woven in and out in front of me, text as textile, textile as asemic text pulling the research back into aspects of deconstruction as Derrida

---

<sup>128</sup> Fig. 8.5



<sup>129</sup> *"Sprue: the waste piece on a casting (as of metal or plastic) left by the hole through which the mould was filled"* <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sprue> (accessed 5th March 2024)

<sup>130</sup> *"The department recorded... a successful bid to the Science Research Investment Fund and we acquired a significant range of digital and related equipment, from micro-milling and rapid prototyping to laser cutting and immersive virtual reality capability"* RCA Rectors Review 2014 (file:///Users/jonathan.boyd/Downloads/PUB\_rectors.review04.05.pdf, accessed March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

*“reflects on the deployment of a ‘textile metaphor for the textual {the word text coming from the Latin texere to weave}” (Rooney, 2000, 258)*

The textile connection further evidences an alignment with Burrows and O’Sullivan’s analysis of Plant which links the poetics of weaving with the technics of its creation: *“textiles and weaving ... are especially relevant to computer and internet technology, observing that Charles Babbage, who is often credited with originated the idea of the computer, was inspired by the Jacquard Loom... suggesting that looms and weaving can be thought of as digital processes, emphasising that the interfaces of digital technology are equivalent to the tactile processes and products of weaving...”* (Burrows & O’Sullivan, 2019, 423).

This Appendix intends to briefly highlight ways in which technologies are used as supplemental collaborators in the research portfolio, as well as to emphasise the embodied, mythic, and poetic ways in which technical collaboration weaves in and of the practice.



Fig. d



## Appendix C

### Pedagogical Testing Grounds

It is important to emphasise that the research in the portfolio is not pedagogical, however, it is equally important to articulate that in my holistic approach to practice<>research<>pedagogy ideas circulate and permeate these borders. Specifically, ideas which are developed from my research use teaching and taught sessions as a testing ground. This is informed by a belief that research-informed teaching is the only way to ensure vibrant and innovative education at a postgraduate level.

The impact of my research can be seen in the recent revalidation of Applied Art programmes at the Royal College of Art which allowed me to better distribute new philosophies (and by extension, what I have described as a jewellery-thinking) into traditional object- and craft-centred programmes. This shift in philosophy can be seen in the introductory sections of the programme specifications for Jewellery and Metal (MA 180 credits) and Ceramics and Glass (MA 180 credits):

*“Applied Art disciplines are always at the convergence of things. Whether that’s the cusp of art/design, material/ immaterial, digital/analogue, these are disciplines which demand multidirectional attention and which require empathic, thoughtful, and considered interactions with materials and materiality”* (Royal College of Art, Jewellery and Metal Programme Specification, 2023/24).

*“As we enter a 5th Industrial Revolution, we encounter a dynamic time to be working with and through emergent possibilities that are presented by making, speaking to both studio practice and the rich histories of object-making and the new possibilities presented by technologies and global dialogues”* (Royal College of Art Ceramics and Glass Programme Specification, 2023/24).

Both take conceptual approaches towards material-led study and Applied Art, presenting them as emergent, unbounded approaches, with an emphasis on the possibilities of technological collaboration and a

challenge to the historically hylomorphic mastering of material and teleological artefact focus.

This testing ground for ideas often stems at PhD level where I co-lead a research study group (Material Engagements with Steve Brown). Through this group, we have looked to drive a pedagogically critical return to the group workshop as a co-doing, collaborative and inclusive material-led space for working and communicating through and with materials. This has been in counter to the text-based discussion groups that often-defined PhD collaboration in the school. Through simple material exercises (making ink, writing in clay, waxing, threading, and knotting) we explore new ways to communicate/explore/attune-to deeply complex and difficult theoretical concepts. Groups do not make towards an object, but instead focus on material exploration, plasticity, and multiplicity. It is an approach which sees theory as a type of doing and is implicitly informed by neurodivergence, and which is explicitly onto-epistemological.

These sessions saw students make ink from carbon soot as we discussed mining and extraction in relation to AI, we made inks and explored dust and permeability to outline Heidegger's ideas of poiesis, attunement and thingly-ness. The ink was then further used in a session where students co-read set texts and used the ink to create asemic linkages between them, and in so doing find links between them and their own research.

The doings are always accompanied by visual and poetic lectures outlining important concepts in philosophy, social theory, and material culture. Students are encouraged to attune, in their own way, to these lectures, aligning their concentration through a



Fig. 86,  
87 & 88

sensuous variety of material making, listening, watching or through a combination of these. An important pedagogical imperative that derives here from my research, is that things and words recede and emerge in and out of view/attunement, and that this is ok. We can consider learning in a similar vein as re-search, which *“has agency... is experiential... involves sensing and so this is a sensuous experiencing of the bringing back within the (any) search...”* (see: 19)

Fig. 89 & 90



These PhD sessions are, by design, exploratory. However, they concretise into taught sessions for MA, MFA and MRes students. This results in workshops which foreground the emergent and complex materialities of the “jewellery-thinking” evidenced in this portfolio. The sessions further defined that jewellery (and things) should be understood methodologically rather than as commodity. It is an approach that suggests that you can learn more about a Heideggerian and phenomenological attunement to the material world of clay/dirt/earth/AI with your eyes closed holding/morphing clay for ten minutes (which lowers your heart-rate, concentrates your mind outside of your fingers and changes your general cognitive arrangement) than through sitting in a room looking at pictures whilst a lecturer repeats increasingly complex philosophical propositions. This philosophy emphasises ‘thinking through making’ and a ‘correspondence’ with materials, place, and space (whilst embracing and providing pedagogical support to the ‘not knowing’ of arts-based research).



Fig. d

## Appendix D

### Format of Commentary

The collated research has evidenced an unhealthy obsession with the paperback book. It is an fascination that manifests in the words that lift from the page in *Impenetrable Philosophy* (2009) and in the printing of various critical and poetic reflections. These are artbooks with narrow-ish limits. That is, the books are all dimensionally similar to standard paperback books. The photo-scanning of paperback books to create, or collage, these artbooks is a long-running aspect of the practice. This is clear in *JM*, the publication that accompanied *RtD* and this text.



Fig. 91, 92, & 93

Scanning books is an obsessional habit, stemming from an interest in acts of retro-futuring. There is an allure to the old dusty book, with its yellowed, dried, crusted papers. Any hidden marginalic comments in old books offer temporal echoes, a haunting, of estranged previous readers.

The paperback carries a democratising power in its ability to bring knowledge to a wide audiences. Two ideas seem to permeate this practice of scanning. The first looks to politically link the practice with this wide accessibility and dissemination that paperbacks offer. The second, positions the book as a type of poetic retro-futurism. Something that looks old but speaks of the contemporary. A slightly perverse undercurrent sees the author imagining finding their work in collections from the past. This friction views the practice as both being located in the historical lineage of

Gutenberg materiality whilst also discussing contemporary socio-political-ethical issues through the practice's narratives.

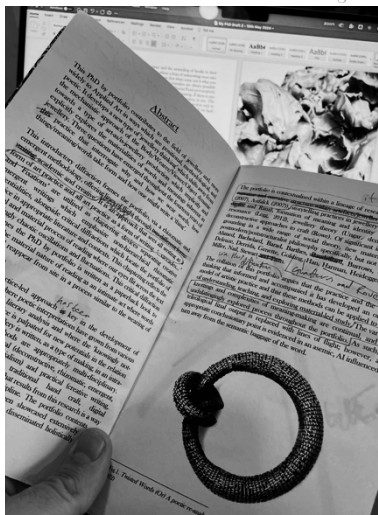
The engagement with the scanner and the amending of books in their scanning is an exploratory process where a leap of 'not-knowing' must take place. Items are laid down and you 'hope' that what comes out is what you had envisaged, scratches, movements and mistakes are always possible when you can't see the activity at hand, or as Chantal Faust provocatively put it: *"There is no known decisive moment in scanning. If there is one at all, this moment is blind to us and only for the machine to see. The eye of the scanner - like the human anus - forms a projection only in excretion. Splayed before this vision machine seen and blind, we bask in its one-eyed glory"* (Faust, 2014, 4).

In its formatting, this text was not designed post-writing. Instead, it was always envisaged and iteratively written as a paperback book. On the screen, it has always presented itself as two pages facing each other on appropriately scaled paper, and drafts have been printed in book form to assess paper feel and quality, gaining a sense of appropriate paratextual qualities.

Although influenced by and pointing towards Penguin and Pelican publishing, the practice does make stylistic choices that stray from their conventions. Penguin often uses Monotype's Bembo as its font of choice, stylistically this text has used Baskerville for several reasons. Firstly it is free, whereas Bembo is not. Secondly, for many untrained readers, their differences would be subtle. However, these subtle differences are important, Baskerville has a more refined quality with a few flourishes which the author finds subtle yet appealing: note the beautiful cursive 'g'.

The format size also slightly differs from that of a Penguin or Pelican paperback. The book is slightly larger although printed in recycled paper to give an appropriate dry and rough feel to its handling. The slightly

Fig. 94



larger size is a nod to the accessibility of the text, a larger page offering an easier and less dense read. Black and white illustrations are peppered throughout the text and reflect the desaturated quality of illustrations found in Pelican books.

As this text has emerged, been edited, rewritten, rewritten and rewritten, it has been printed and read in several ways. These include prints on A4 paper, via PDFs on tablets and finally as draft books printed by a bookbinder. These differing engagements evidence differences in material reading. The A4 bleached page with its white fibres blinds the eye to certain textual errors. The tablet which emits light, tires the eyes, and counterproductively offers a window to the distracting internet. And the book, in its opening, does something that draws you in. The book acts as more than a hinge, it is a passage into a greater entanglement with the matters presented. The book becomes an extension of the body and words recede from view in their functioning. Taking paratextualities and palimpsestic marginalia seriously, the format looks to provoke a reader into a marginalic reading themselves, acting as a co-author, writing and scoring and finding their own embodied reading<making>doing within the text. This book, and its words, are written to be scribbled upon, for lines of meaning and reading to be ever deferred and recontextualised in a materially deconstructive reading.

Lastly, like the format of this text, significant thought has been given to the overall presentation of the portfolio and the bookbinding practices undertaken in the creation of archive boxes (see: 54) are recreated in the presentation of this portfolio with different book cloths and papers. The varieties of book coverings offer differing visual, tacit, and sensuous affects. Each image-folio has been made with a themed colour corresponding to the main project within that Block; dark blue silk covers the folio of Block 2 aligning it with dark representations of the sea in *RtD*. The red image-folio of Block 1 mirrors the 'Penguin red' of the photocopied cover of *JM*. Through the bookbinding processes of folding, cutting, gluing, and scoring the research furthers an investment in the materialities of the book and by extension the materialities of words themselves. Bookbinding processes present a DIY ethos always present in the practice; an ethos of 'make' and 'make-do'. The processes employed here are not merely used for decoration but to further support the claims to originality in the portfolio; that the matters at hand in any reading are sensuously embodied and manifest.



Fig. c



# Appendix E

## Curriculum Vitae

### Education

2023	<u>PhD</u> by Publication, Kingston University (in progress)
2022	<u>Senior Fellow</u> (FHEA), Advance HE
2010	<u>PgCert</u> Ph.D. Supervision, Glasgow School of Art
2010	<u>PgCert</u> , Learning Teaching, Glasgow School of Art
2009	<u>MA(RCA)</u> Goldsmithing Silversmithing, Metalwork and Jewellery, Royal College of Art
2006	<u>BA (Hons)</u> Silversmithing and Jewellery (First Class), Glasgow School of Art.

### Public Collections

U.S.A	Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
U.S.A	Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City
U.S.A	Spencer Museum, University of Kansas, Lawrence
U.S.A	Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts, Little Rock
U.S.A	Mint Museum, Charlotte
U.S.A	Metal Museum, Memphis
Germany	Schmuck Museum, Pforzheim
U.K	Victoria and Albert Museum Collection, London
U.K	Victoria and Albert Handling Collection, Dundee
U.K	National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh
U.K	The Worshipful Company of Goldsmith's, London
U.K	Royal College of Art, London
U.K	Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow
U.K	Glasgow Life Museums, Glasgow

### Employment and Experience

2023	<u>Senior Fellow</u> , Academy of Higher Education, UK
2022-24	<u>Co-Lead Material Engagements Research Cluster</u> , Royal College of Art
2022-24	<u>Senior Research Fellow</u> , AiDLab, AI Real World Narratives, Royal College of Art
2023	<u>Visiting Lecturer</u> , SAFA, Shanghai
2023	<u>Visiting Lecturer</u> , Tsinghua University Beijing

- 2022> Head of Applied Art, (Jewellery and Metal/Ceramics and Glass), Royal College of Art
- 2021> Reader in Jewellery, Royal College of Art
- 2019-21 Acting Head of Jewellery and Metal, Royal College of Art
- 2018 Acting Head of Jewellery and Metal, Royal College of Art
- 2017 Senior Tutor, Jewellery and Metal, Royal College of Art
- 2015-16 Visiting Lecturer, Tsinghua University Beijing
- 2014 Visiting Lecturer, Oslo National Academy of the Arts (workshop week)
- 2009-16 Lecturer, Silversmithing and Jewellery, Glasgow School of Art
- 2008 Teaching exchange, Edinburgh College of Art

#### External Validation/Professorial Progression Reviewer

- 2023 Senior Lecturer Progression Reviewer, Edinburgh College of Art/University
- 2022 External Validation Assessor (BaHons) London College of Fashion (UAL)
- 2022 Professorial Progression Review, Tsinghua University.

#### Publications (Books)

- 2023 Vol.1, Vol.2, Vol.3, Critical AI Artists books published as part of role as Senior Research fellow AiDLab, RCA
- 2022/23 I Can't Even String a Sentence Together, Elegantly Meaningful –Signs and Symbols in Jewellery, Graphic and Printed Works, Arnoldsche publishing, Germany
- 2022 Show Catalogue/Performative Text, Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line, Gallery Marzee
- 2019 Jewellery Manifest; Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts. By Jonathan Boyd  
ISBN: 9781 789722239

#### Papers/Essays (Peer-Reviewed)

- 2023 322 words, The Journal for Radical, Vol.1
- 2023 314 words, Material Engagements, Earthwise, RCA,  
ISBN: 978-1-8383543-4-3
- 2022 I Can't Even String a Sentence Together (Or) Why Wear Words

### Selected Featured-In Publications

- 2023 Vanity Fair, Brutalist Jewellery, by Emily Zak
- 2021 The Brooch Unpinned, Dora Thornton, The Goldsmiths Company  
ISBN:978- 0907814375
- 2019 Brooches and Badges, V&A / Thames and Hudson  
ISBN:978-0500480354
- 2019 Jewellery History Today Issue 36/  
ISSN: 2042-8529
- 2018 The Story of Scottish Design, Jewellery in Scotland, Amanda Game, Thames and Hudson, V&A  
ISBN:978-0-500-48033-5
- 2017 Narrative Jewelry: Tales from the Toolbox by Mark Fenn. Schiffer Publishing  
ISBN: 978-0764354144
- 2017 Crafts -JAN/FEB 2017 - Fleeting Moments Made Solid (Jonathan Boyd on Silver and the City) by Imogen Greenhalgh
- 2017 Bloomin' Jewels by Corine Julius. CAA.  
ISBN: 978-0-906420-30-0

### REF Research Outputs

- 2021 Thoughts Between the Land and The Sea: *Raising the Doggerland*, Gallery SO, London (Submitted REF 2020)
- 2021 Jewellery Manifest; Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts. (Submitted REF 2020)
- 2021 Extending the Studio. Photogrammetry as a mobile jewellery tool. (Submitted REF 2020)
- 2014 Designing the Commonwealth Games Medal. Designing for weight reduction through design (unsubmitted REF 2020)
- 2014 Complex and experimental sculptural casting systems. (GSA. Folio. Submitted REF 2014)
- 2014 Exploring the relationships of language, text, body and object through the production of artefacts. (GSA. Folio. Submitted REF 2014)

### Knowledge Exchange

- 2014 Design and Fabrication of the Commonwealth Games Medals, Pins, Packaging and Ceremony

### Selected Presentations /Public Lectures

- 2024 2<sup>nd</sup> Lisbon Contemporary Jewellery: Political jewellery and Jewellery of Power, Lisbon (TBC)
- 2024 sticky cohesions, strange skins, intimate portals, Radical Matter, Vienna (panel member)
- 2024 TURBULENCE: Metal flows in thinking and things, Symposium, London
- 2023 Major Artist Presentation, This Presentation May Not Make Sense, SAFA, Shanghai
- 2023 Craft and Technology, Lecture with Professor XiaoXin Wang, Beijing
- 2021 “I Can’t String a Sentence Together”, Society for Jewellery Historians, London
- 2021 “Poetic (Re)presentations of the Self Through a Lens of Urban Topophilia”, Glasgow School of Art, Jewellery Symposium, Glasgow, U.K
- 2021 “I Can’t String A Sentence Together (redux)”, China International Metal Arts Exhibition, Beijing
- 2019 Urgency of the Arts, Urgency of the miniature, Royal College of Arts
- 2019 Jewellery Manifest, Glasgow School of Art
- 2019 Thoughts Between land and Sea: Raising the Doggerland, Gallery SO
- 2016 Digital Art and Contemporary Jewellery, Tsinghua University
- 2016 Digital Fabrication and Production Symposium (Keynote), Tsinghua University
- 2015 Pushing Boundaries and Chasing Challenges Symposia (Lecture), Beijing
- 2014 Handmade by Machines Symposium, Lighthouse Museum, Glasgow
- 2013 Subversive Design (Public Lecture), Bright and Hove Museum, Brighton

### Research Supervisions

- 2015-2019 (Completed, Tertiary Advisor/Supervisor) Allison Geremia, PhD,
- 2017-2019 (Completed, Primary Supervisor) Julia Neil, MPhil
- 2017-2023 (Completed, Primary Supervisor), Emily Ohlund, PhD
- 2019-24 (Completed, Second Supervisor) Georgina Izzard, PhD

- 2019-22 (Fourth Year, PT, Primary Supervisor) Amy Peace Buzzard, PhD
- 2019-24 (Final Year, Second Supervisor) Sonia Bernaciak, PhD
- 2020-24 (Third Year, Second Supervisor) Maria Amidu, PhD
- 2022-24 (Third Year, Primary Supervisor) Elizabeth Olukova, PhD
- 2024> (First Year, Primary Supervisor) Ruth Gilmour, PhD

### Selected Exhibitions

- 2024 2<sup>nd</sup> Lisbon Contemporary Jewellery: Political jewellery and Jewellery of Power, Lisbon
- 2024 Radical Matter: When Materialism is no Longer Enough, Vienna
- 2024 Memories are Made of This (Curated by Corinne Julius), Sarah Myerscough Gallery, London, UK
- 2023 PAN Amsterdam, with Gallerie Marzee, The Netherlands
- 2023 ...proliferating materialities..., Material Engagements Research Cluster, Gallery SZN
- 2023 Collect with Gallerie Marzee, Somerset House, London
- 2023 Through the Garden Gates, Dequi Cultural Gardens and Art Centre, Shanghai
- 2022 Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line, Solo Show, Gallery Marzee, The Netherlands
- 2021 China International Metal Art Exhibition, Beijing
- 2021 The Brooch Unpinned, The Goldsmith's Centre, London
- 2020 Jonathan Boyd, Introducing, Gallerie Marzee, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
- 2020 Collect with Gallery SO, Somerset House, London
- 2019 (Solo Show) Thoughts Between the Land and The Sea: Raising the Doggerland, Gallery SO, London
- 2016 Untitled Exhibition, The work of Jonathan Boyd and Adam Henderson, Dovehill Studio Galleries
- 2016 Connected, Glasgow, Copenhagen, Munich Jewellery Week
- 2015 To Sorn, Dovehill Studio Galleries
- 2015 & 2016 SOFA Chicago, Crafts Scotland, Navy Pier, Chicago
- 2016 Chain, Gallery S.O, London
- 2015 Britain 2015, Galerie Elsa Vanier, Paris

- 2015 Digital Dialogues, New Walk Museum, Leicester  
 2014 Collect with Tyger Glyn, Saatchi Gallery London  
 2013 Subversive Design, Bright and Hove Museum, Brighton  
 2013 Beijing International Metal Arts Exhibition, Beijing  
 2013 Eternal Platinum, Platinum Guild, Shanghai and multiple cities within China  
 2011 Collect with Galerie Marzee 2011, Saatchi Gallery, London  
 2011 Not Pretty (Glasgow, London, Sydney,)  
 2010 (Solo Show), Jonathan Mathew Boyd, AU Studios, Glasgow  
 2010-17 Goldsmiths Fair 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 & 2017

### Art Performances

- 2023 admin, Iklectic, None of the Above: Troubling the Story  
2019 Thoughts Between the Land and The Sea: *Raising the Doggerland*, Gallery SO, London

### Judging Panels

- 2023 P&O Makower Silversmithing Award, UK 2023  
 2023 2022 Diamond Jewellery Design Competition for College Students, China

### Selected Awards, Grants and Bursaries

- 2024 Royal College of Art Symposium Fund for Turbulence: Metal Flows in Thinking and in Things  
 2024 Royal College of Art Research Development Grant  
 2019 Royal College of Art Research Development Grant  
 2017 Best New Design, The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths.  
 2013 Silver Prize Beijing International Metalwork Exhibition  
 2012 BKV Young Applied Artist of the year, Finalist. Munich  
 2010 Best New Design, The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths.  
 2010 Scottish Arts Council Development Grant  
 2009 Galerie Marzee International Student Award  
 2009 Theo Fennel Overall Excellence RCA Graduate Show

- 2008 Individual winner, Royal Mint commemorative coin project
- 2008 Sloane Square Award 2009
- 2007-09 Donald Dewar Award/Bursary for exceptional Scottish talent, Scottish Executive
- 2007 New Designer of the Year, runner up, British Design Council

Board Membership

- 2018-2024 Co-Chair Peter Dormer Committee
- 2021> International Arts & Design Experts Committee, Tsinghua University
- 2017-2020 Advisory Board, Craft Scotland



Fig. c



## Bibliography

*(sources include those that have informed the critical reflection and the texts and practice contained within the portfolio)*

Adams, T and Jones, S,H and Ellis, C (2015). *Autoethnography; Understanding Qualitative Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Adamson, G. (2018) *Thinking Through Craft*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts.

Ahmed, S. (2006) *Queer Phenomenology Orientations, Objects, Others*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Ahmed, S. (2010) 'Happy Objects', In *The Affect Theory Reader*. Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, Pp. 29-51.

Ahmed, S. (2019) *What's The Use? On The Uses Of Use*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Albarn, D / Blur (1995) 'This is a Low', *Parklife*. Food.

Astfalck, J. (2007) *Narrative Structures In Body Related Crafts Objects*. Thesis.

Attiwill, S. (2017) *Practising With Deleuze: Design, Dance, Art, Writing, Philosophy*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Bachelard, G. (1964, ed. 2014) *The Poetics of Space*. New York: Penguin Books.

- Baluška, F., Yamashita, F., Mancuso, S. (2021). *Root Apex Cognition: From Neuronal Molecules to Root-Fungal Networks*. In: Mukherjee, S., Baluška, F. (eds) *Rhizobiology: Molecular Physiology of Plant Roots. Signaling and Communication in Plants*. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-84985-6\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-84985-6_1)
- Barad, K.M. (2007) *Meeting The Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics And The Entanglement Of Matter And Meaning*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Barbara, S. (2023) *350 Words For Jewellery*. München: Barbara Schmidt Schmuck.
- Barthes, R. And Coverdale. L. (1991) *An Almost Obsessive Relation to Writing Instruments*. In the *Grain of the Voice: Interviews 1962-1980*, Berkley. University of California Press
- Barthes, R. And Miller, R. (1975) *The Pleasure Of The Text*. New York, NY: Hill And Wang.
- Barthes, R. *Et Al.* (2009) *Mythologies*. London: Vintage Books.
- Benjamin, W., Titan, S. And Lewis, T. (2019) *The Storyteller Essays*. New York, NY: New York Review Of Books.
- Bennet, A. (2004) *The History Boys*. London: Faber & Faber.

- Bennett, J. (2010) *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology Of Things*.  
Durham: Duke University Press.
- Berardi, F. 'Bifo' (2018) *Breathing: Chaos and Poetry*. South Pasadena:  
Semiotext(e).
- Berardi, F. 'Bifo' (2012) *Uprising: On Poetry and Finance*. South  
Pasadena: Semiotext(e).
- Bird, T. (2017) 'Forming', In *Practising With Deleuze: Design, Dance,  
Art, Writing, Philosophy*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, Pp.  
49-86.
- Boden, M.A. (2018) *Artificial Intelligence: A Very Short Introduction*.  
Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bolt, B. (2011) *Heidegger Reframed*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Boyd, J. (2019) *Thoughts Between The Land And The Sea: Raising The  
Doggerland*. London: Gallery SO.
- Boyd, J. (2022a) 'Bildteil Zeitgenössischer Schmuck & I Can't Even String  
A Sentence Together', In *Die Mysterien Der Zeichen, Johannes  
Reuchlin, Schmuck, Schrift Und Sprache*. Stuttgart: Arnoldsche  
Art Publishers, Pp. 176-193.
- Boyd, J. (2022b) *Emergent Dialogues Of The Topophilic Line*.  
Nijmegen: Gallery Marzec/ Independent.
- Boyd, J. (2023) *A Book Of Knots*. London: Independent Print.

- Boyd, J. (2023a) *Radcal Mater*. London: Independent Print.
- Boyd, J. (2023b) *Vol.3*. London: Independent Print.
- Boyd, J. (2024) *...this is not a house...* London: Independent Print.
- Bratton, B. (2020) *The Revenge of the Real; Politics for a Post-pandemic World*. London/New York, Verso.
- Britton, A. (2022). *Seeing Things: Collected Writing on Art, Craft and Design*. London: Occasional Papers
- Brown, R, G and Ladyman, J (2019). *Materialism; A Historical can Philosophical Inquiry*. Oxon: Routledge
- Brown, B. (2003) *A Sense Of Things: The Object Matter Of American Literature*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- Brown, B. (2019) *Other Things*. Chicago: The University Of Chicago Press.
- Bull, KA and Gali, A. (2019) *Documents on Contemporary Crafts No.5 Material Perceptions*. Stuttgart: Arnoldsche Art Publishers
- Burrows, D. (2020) 'Science fictioning singularities: The diagrammatic imaginaries of physics', *Data Loam*, pp. 38-64. doi:10.1515/9783110697841-003.
- Burrows, D. and O'Sullivan, S. (2019) *Fictioning: The Myth-Functions Of Contemporary Art And Philosophy*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.

- Bunz, M and Meike, G (2018). *The Internet of Things*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Caputo, John, D. (2018) *Hermeneutics: Facts And Interpretation In The Age Of Information*. London: Pelican.
- Chalmers, D. (2022) *Reality +: A Philosophical Journey Through Virtual Worlds*. S.L.: ALLEN LANE.
- Chapman, R. (2023) *Empire Of Normality: Neurodiversity And Capitalism*. London: Pluto Press.
- Cisney, V.W. (2020) *Deleuze And Derrida: Difference And The Power Of The Negative*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Coles, A. and Rossi, C. (2021) *EP3: Post-Craft*. Berlin: Sternberg Press.
- Colomina, B. And Wigley, M. (2021) *Are We Human? Notes On An Archaeology Of Design*. Zürich, Switzerland: Lars Müller Publishers.
- Coole, D.H. And Frost, S. (2010) *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, And Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Cox, R. *et al.* (2011) *Dirt: The filthy reality of everyday life*. London: Profile Books in association with Wellcome Collection.
- Crawford, K. (2021) *Atlas Of AI: Power, Politics And Planetary Costs Of Artificial Intelligence*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Crystal, D. (2007) *How Language Works*. London: Penguin Books.

- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2002) *Flow: The Psychology of Happiness*.  
London: Ebury.
- Cunningham, J. (2007) *Contemporary European Narrative Jewellery*.  
Glasgow: PhD.
- Dall'Asta, M. and Holzach, C. (2022) *Die Mysterien Der Zeichen  
Johannes Reuchlin, Schmuck, Schrift Und Sprache*. Stuttgart:  
Arnoldsche Art Publishers.
- Debord, G. (1994) *Society of the Spectacle*. London: Rebel Press.
- Deleuze, G. and Joughin, M. (1990) *Negotiations*. New York. Columbia  
University Press
- Deleuze, G. and Patton, P. (2021) *Difference And Repetition*. London I  
Pozostałe: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Deleuze, G., Guattari, F. and Massumi, B. (2004) *A Thousand Plateaus:  
Capitalism And Schizophrenia*. London: Continuum.
- Deleuze, G., Guattari, F. and Polan, D. (2016) *Kafka: Toward A Minor  
Literature; Foreword By Réda Bensmaïa*. Minneapolis: Univ.  
Of Minnesota Press.
- den Bensten, Liesbeth. (2012) *On Jewellery: A Compendium of  
International Art Jewellery*. Stuttgart. Arnoldsche Art Publishers
- de Saussure, F (2013) *Course in General Linguistics*. London:  
Bloomsbury.

- Dennett, D.C. (2017) *From Bacteria To Bach And Back: The Evolution Of Minds*. London, England: Penguin.
- Dennett, D.C. And Weiner, P. (1993) *Consciousness Explained*. London: Penguin.
- Derrida, J. (1987) *The Archaeology Of The Frivolous: Reading Condillac*. Lincoln, Neb: University Of Nebraska.
- Derrida, J. (1998) *The Monolingualism Of The Other: The Prosthesis Of Origin*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Derrida, J., Translated- Bass, A. (1982) *The Margins of Philosophy*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, J. and Spivak, G.C. (2016) *Of Grammatology*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Derrida, J. (2005) *On Touching- Jean-Luc Nancy*. Stanford, California. Stanford University Press.
- Didi-Huberman, G. (2015) 'The Order Of Material: Plasticities, Malaises, Survivals, 1999', In *Materiality*. London: Whitechapel Gallery, Pp. 42-52.
- Diepeveen, L. and Laar, T.V. (2021) *Shiny Things: Reflective Surfaces And Their Mixed Meanings*. Bristol: Intellect Books
- Dillon, B. (2017) *Essayism*. London: Fitzcarraldo Editions.

- Faust, C. (2014) *The Eye of the Scanner* in *The Negligent Eye*. Liverpool: The Bluecoat.
- Fisher, M. (2009) *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* Winchester, UK: Zero Books.
- Fisher, M. (2014) *Ghosts Of My Life: Writings On Depression, Hauntology And Lost Futures*. Winchester, UK: Zero Books.
- George, C.H. (2020) *How Dead Languages Work*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Glendinning, S. (2011) *Derrida: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Golding, J. (2010) 'Fractal philosophy (and the small matter of learning how to listen): Attunement as the task of art', *Deleuze and Contemporary Art*, pp. 133-149. doi:10.3366/edinburgh/9780748638376.003.0009.
- Golding, J. (2020) 'The Courage to Matter', *Data Loam*, pp. 450-487. doi:10.1515/9783110697841-019.
- Golding, J., Reinhart, M. and Paganelli, M. (2021) *Data Loam: Sometimes Hard Usually Soft; The Future Of Knowledge Systems*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Gregg, M. and Seigworth, G.J. (2010) *The Affect Theory Reader*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.



- Han, B.-C. (2015) *The Burnout Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Han, B.-C. (2024) *The Crisis of Narration*. London: Polity Press.
- Han, B.-C. (2017) *Psychopolitics: Neoliberalism And New Technologies Of Power*. London / New York: Verso.
- Han, B.-C. (2022) *Hyperculture: Culture And Globalization*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
- Han, B.-C. and Steuer, D. (2022) *Non-Things: Upheaval In The Lifeworld*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
- Haraway, D.J. (2016) *Staying With The Trouble: Making Kin In The Chthulucene*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Harman, G. (2002) *Tool-Being: Heidegger And The Metaphysics Of Objects*. Chicago: Open Court.
- Harman, G. (2018) *Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory Of Everything*. London: Pelican Books.
- Harman, G. (2021) *Immaterialism: Objects And Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hayles, K. (2017) *Unthought: The Power Of The Cognitive Nonconscious*. Chicago, IL; London: The University Of Chicago Press.

- Hayles, N.K. (2021) *Postprint: Books And Becoming Computational*.  
New York (NY): Columbia University Press.
- Heidegger, M. (2004) *What Is Called Thinking?* New York: Perennial.
- Heidegger, M. And Gendlin, E.T. (1967) *What Is A Thing?* South Bend,  
Indiana: Gateway Editions.
- Heidegger, M. *Et Al.* (2013) *Being And Time*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Henrickson, L., Meroño-Peñuela, A. *Prompting Meaning: A  
Hermeneutic Approach To Optimising Prompt Engineering  
With Chatgpt. AI & Soc* (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-023-01752-8>
- Holland, J (1998). *Emergence; from Chaos to Order*. Oxford: Oxford  
University Press.
- Huang JH, Chan YS. *Saccade Eye Movement In Children With  
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*. Nord J Psychiatry.  
2020 Jan;74(1):16-22. doi: 10.1080/08039488.2019.1666919.  
Epub 2019 Oct 3. PMID: 31581925.
- Hudek, A. (2014) *The Object*. London: Whitechapel Gallery.
- Ingold, T. (2015) *The Life Of Lines*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Ingold, T. (2016) *Lines: A Brief History: With A New Preface By The  
Author*. London: Routledge.

- Ingold, T. (2019), Lecture. *What on Earth is the Ground*. Central Saint Martins. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5ztVBhbO8E>. Accessed 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024.
- Ingold, T (2013). *Making; Anthropology, Archaeology, Art, and Architecture*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Jackson, H.J. (2001) *Marginalia: Readers Writing In Books*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.
- Johnson, C. (1997) *Derrida: The Scene Of Writing*. London: Phoenix.
- Johnson, R.J. (2018) *The Deleuze-Lucretius Encounter*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Lange-Berndt, P. (2015) *Materiality*. London: Whitechapel Gallery.
- Laughlin, R.B. (2006) *A Different Universe: Reinventing Physics From The Bottom Down*. New York: Basic Books.
- Legg, B. (2008) *Materiality Of Place: An Investigation Into The Makers Approach To Material And Process As A Reflection Of Place Within Northern European Contemporary Jewellery Practice*. Thesis.
- Lindemann, W. *Et Al.* (2020) *Thinking Jewellery: Two*. Stuttgart: Arnoldsche Art Publishers.
- Lyotard, J.-F. and Bennington, G. (2010) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report On Knowledge*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press.

- Malafouris, L. (2013) *How Things Shape The Mind A Theory Of Material Engagement*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Margetts, M. and Rossi, C. (2022) 'The Post-Craft Turn', In *Post-Craft*. London: Sternberg Press, Pp. 41-52.
- May, T. (2005) *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McLeish, T. (2020) *Soft Matter: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- McLuhan, M. And Fiore, Q. (2008) *The Medium Is The Massage*. London: Penguin.
- Miller, D. (2005) *Materiality*. Duke Univ. Press.
- Miodownik, M. (2013) *Stuff Matters: The Strange Stories Of The Marvellous Materials That Shape Our Man-Made World*. London: Penguin.
- Mitchell, A.J. (2015) *The Fourfold: Reading The Late Heidegger*. Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press.
- Mitchell, M. (2011) *Complexity: A Guided Tour*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mitchell, M. (2020) *Artificial Intelligence: A Guide For Thinking Humans*. London: Pelican Books.

- Morton, Timothy (2018) *Being Ecological*. London: Pelican, An Imprint Of Penguin Books.
- Nail, T. (2021) *Theory Of The Object*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Nail, T. (2024) *Matter And Motion: A Brief History Of Kinetic Materialism*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Nail, T. and Carus, T.L. (2018) *Lucretius I: An Ontology Of Motion*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Nazo, A. (2020) ‘Artificial Grief: Distribution of the Sensuous’, *Data Loam*, (Anna Nazo), pp. 65–79. doi:10.1515/9783110697841-013.
- Noble, S U. (2018) *Algorithms of Oppression; How Search Engines Reinforce Racism*. New York: New York University Press.
- Norris, C. (1982) *Deconstruction: Theory And Practice*. London / New York: Methuen.
- Parisi, G. (2023) *In a Flight of Starlings; The Wonder of Complex Systems*. London: Penguin Random House UK
- Patton, P. And Protevi, J. (2004) *Between Deleuze And Derrida*. London: Continuum.
- Phillips, C. (1996) *Jewelry; From Antiquity to the Present*. New York: Thames and Hudson.

- Polanyi, M. (2009) *The Tacit Dimension*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Polanyi, M. and Prosch, H. (1979) *Meaning*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Pye, D (1986, 2015 ed). *The Nature and Art of Workmanship*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Reuchlin, J (2022) *Die Mysterien der Zeichen*. Stuttgart: Arnoldsche Art Publishers.
- Richards, K.M. (2008) *Derrida Reframed: A Guide For The Arts Student*. London: Tauris.
- Roberts, S. (2020) *The Power Of Not Thinking*. London: 535.
- ed. Rogers, L. (2022) *Material Cultures: Material Reform*. MACK
- Rooney, C. (2000). Deconstruction and Weaving. In: Royle, N. (eds) *Deconstructions*. Palgrave, London.
- Rovelli, C., Segre, E. And Carnell, S. (2022) *Helgoland: The Strange And Beautiful Story Of Quantum Physics*. London: Penguin Books.
- Rovelli, C. (2018) *The Order Of Time*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.
- Rovelli, C. (2017) *Reality is Not What it Seems: The Journey to Quantum Gravity*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.
- Rovelli, C. (2016) *Seven Brief Lesson On Physics*. London, UK: Penguin.

- Russell, R. R. (no date) *Gender and Jewellery; A Feminist Analysis*. Independent Publishing.
- Schon, D.A. (1991) *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate.
- Schmidt, B. (2018) *25 Reasons Why To Wear Jewellery*. Munich: Barbara Schmidt.
- Schmidt, B. (2022) *350 Words for Jewellery*. Munich: Barbara Schmidt.
- Schwenger, P. (2019) *Aseptic: The Art Of Writing*. Minneapolis; London: University Of Minnesota Press.
- Serres, M. (2018) *The Five Senses: A Philosophy Of Mingled Bodies*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, An Imprint Of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Sennett, R. (2008). *The Craftsman*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.
- Staten, H. (1984) *Wittgenstein and Derrida*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press.
- Stewart, S. (2007) *On Longing, Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* Duke University Press.
- Sutton, D. and Martin-Jones, D. (2008) *Deleuze Reframed: A Guide For The Arts Student*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Taylor, J.S. (1998) *Poetic Knowledge*. Albany, NY: State Univ. Of New York Press.

- Tuan, Y.-F. (1974) *Topophilia*. Oxford: Columbia University Press.
- Turner, A / Arctic Monkeys. (2009) *The Jeweller's Hands*, *Humbug*. Domino Records.
- Ungar, M. (2019). *Jewellery in Context: a Multidisciplinary Framework for the Study of Jewellery*. Stuttgart, UK. Arnoldsche.
- Untracht, O. (1985) *Jewelry: Concepts and Technology*. The Crowood Press Ltd / Robert Hale.
- Vickers, B. And Allado-Mcdowell, K. (2020) *Atlas Of Anomalous AI*. London: Ignota.
- West, G.B. (2017) *Scale: The Universal Laws Of Growth, Innovation, Sustainability, And The Pace Of Life In Organisms, Cities, Economies, And Companies*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
- Williams, R. (1983) *Keywords: A Vocabulary Of Culture And Society*. London: Fontana.
- Wooldridge, M. (2021) *The Road To Conscious Machines: The Story Of Ai*. London, UK: Penguin.
- Zylinska, J. (2020) *AI Art; Machine Visions and Warped Dreams*. Open Humanities Press.



## WEBSITES

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5ztVBhbO8E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5ztVBhbO8E) (Accessed 28th May 2024)

[www.metamodernism.org](http://www.metamodernism.org) (Accessed 13th August 2024)

<https://neuroscience.ucdavis.edu/news/making-and-breaking-connections-brain#:~:text=The%20links%20between%20neurons%20are,with%20small%20strands%20sticking%20out.> (Accessed Dec 1st, 2023)

<https://www.klimt02.net/forum/articles/gold-mind-pravu-mazumdar> (Accessed 7th April 2023)

<https://www.klimt02.net/forum/articles/gold-mind-pravu-mazumdar> (Accessed 7th April 2023)

<https://time.com/6247678/openai-chatgpt-kenya-workers> (Accessed 7th April 2023.)

[www.etymonline.com/word/diffuse](http://www.etymonline.com/word/diffuse) (accessed 14th February 2024)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/comedy/onlyfools/quotes/quote11.shtml> (Accessed 13th August 2024)

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sprue> (Accessed 5th March 2024)

# Outline of Portfolio

## Block One

1. *Jewellery Manifest; Jewellery, Objects, Language and Other Thoughts* (Critical Reflection, 2019)
2. *Folio of Images: Untitled* (exhibition Jonathan Boyd & Adam Henderson, 2017)

## Block Two

1. *Thoughts Between the Land and Sea: Raising the Doggerland* (Folio of Exhibition Images). Also includes 2 x examples of *Marginalia* (Artwork)
2. *Thoughts Between the Land and Sea: Raising the Doggerland* (Exhibition Text)
3. *Thoughts Between the Land and Sea: Raising the Doggerland* (REF Portfolio, 2019)
4. *Beige* (Performance Visual Recording, 2015)

## Block Three

1. *Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line* (Folio of Exhibition Images)
2. *Emergent Dialogues of the Topophilic Line* (Exhibition Text)
3. *I Can't Even String a Sentence Together* (Published Essay, Arnoldsche, 2022)

## Block Four

1. (*this excerpt comes from a much longer essay*) (Peer-reviewed Journal Article, Radical Matter Journal 1, 2023)
2. *Radcal Mater* (Artbook, 2023)
3. *A Book of Knots* (Artbook, 2023)
4. *Vol. 3* (Artbook, 2023)
5. *...this is not a house...* (Artbook, 2023)
6. *admin* (Performance Visual Recording, 2023)
7. *Folio: Images of Cited Works:*
  - a. *...pre-semic undulations...* (Artwork; Exhibited in London, Vienna, Lisbon, 2023)
  - b. *...this not a house...* (Artwork: Exhibited in London, Munich, and Nijmegen, 2023)
  - c. *...my granda's watch...* (Artwork: Exhibited in London, 2023)

## Appendix Block

1. *Beyond the Bench: Extending the Jewellery Studio* (REF Portfolio, 2021)
2. *...pink...* (Performance Visual Recording, 2023)

...this page has been left intentionally blank...

... just be-cause aye<sup>131</sup>/I<sup>132</sup>/eye<sup>133134</sup> can...

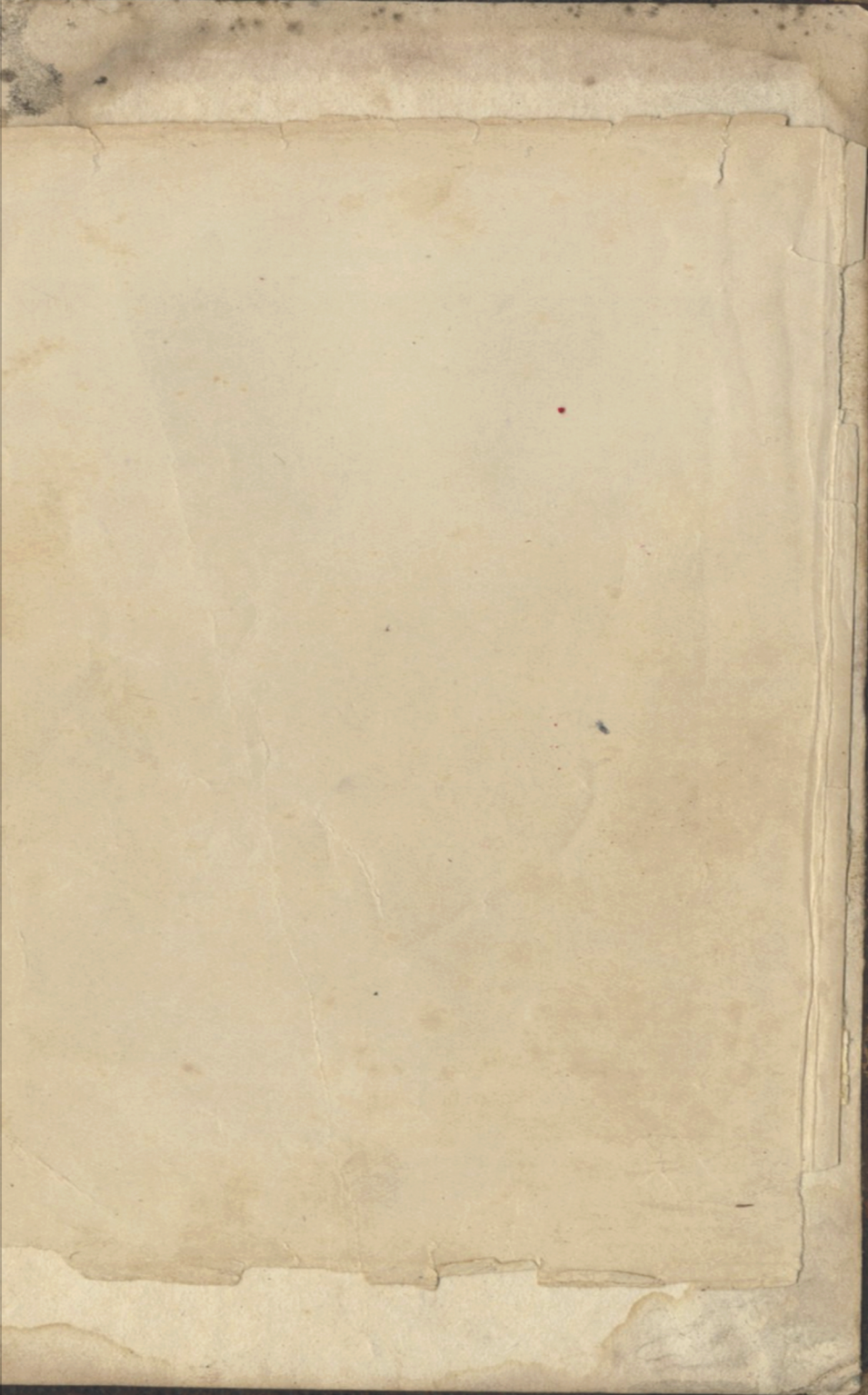
---

<sup>131</sup> ...a positive affirmation of my intent...

<sup>132</sup> ...a personal affirmation of my intent...

<sup>133</sup> ... a sensuous and embodied affirmation of my intent ....

<sup>134</sup> ...homophones of types of *différence* and *différance*...







This PhD by Portfolio collates over 14 years of practice-led research by Jonathan Boyd. It develops a new type of 'jewellery thinking' which shifts away from the mechanistic approach of the Body/Wearer/Viewer/Object dynamic towards a type of art-as/is-jewellery production which implicitly and explicitly explores the materialities of words and meanings inherent in jewellery. The research centred around three emergent questions that ask why or how we wear words, how things take form and how 'one' might write a 'thing'?

This commentary on the portfolio frames the portfolio, via a rhizomatic and emergent methodology, offering lines of flight through academic and creative writing. '...saccades...' and 'Fixations' are utilised as chaptering devices separating creative emergent writings which emphasize non-hierarchical rhizomatic potentialities, alongside critical diffractions which locate the portfolio of practice in appropriate literature and contexts. This chaptering reflects the physical and material process of reading where our eyes flit across the text in seemingly chaotic oscillations and fluctuations.

The collation of this portfolio via this diffraction argues that the practice and the critical thinking that informed and accompanied it has developed an original model of artistic practice and that these methods can be applied to ways of understanding, teaching, and exploring material-led study. The various knottings and complexities of meaning-making within the research are continual, offering densities and intensities. As such, a teleological final output is replaced with lines of flight; however, an appropriate conclusionary point is evidenced in an asemic, AI influenced, turn away from the semantic baggage of the word.