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THE VIEW: GENDERED VIEWS OF OBSERVATION, THROUGH THE CREATIVE
PRACTICE AND INSTALLATION OF PHOTOGRAPHIC AND MOVING IMAGE

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ABSTRACT

**The View: Gendered views of Observation through the Creative Practice
and Installation of Photographic and Moving Image.**

This practice-led thesis investigates how a contemporary female practitioner can provoke thought about the impact of observation on the individual, from a gendered viewpoint. Employing purposeful experimentation and visual discovery, questions emerging from practice are raised and examined through exposition and reflective appraisal. Creatively manipulated situations of observation are instigated, through the installation of photography and moving image, to examine the exchange between artwork and audience and to raise awareness of the presence of observation, surveillance and the panoptical gaze.

Working from a positive and proactive feminist paradigm, relevant theoretical approaches are used to inform the central concepts drawn from a broad base of texts. The discursive account operates within the context of comparative approaches and methodologies used by contemporary artists, shown in major exhibition venues between 2004 and 2016.

The inquiry is investigated through primary research, visual analysis, and direct contact with artists and writers. Selected creative works from both contemporary and historical sources are reviewed, to provide inspiration, methodology and technical detail for particular aspects of content. Through the articulation of practical realisation, a significant contribution of selected and focused work emerges, where the combination of moving and photographic imagery is uniquely fused to create site-specific installation.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

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1.1 General background to the research

In the contemporary world, where society is surveyed and observed on so many different levels, there are strong echoes of the system typified by the description of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon.¹ Bentham developed plans for the Panopticon or Inspection House based on an architectural construction, consisting of a central high tower inhabited by a supervisor, who overlooked a series of cells or rooms. Bentham's model was subsequently used for a number of institutional constructions, such as prisons, hospitals, mental institutions and schools.

Foucault describes the plans, published by Bentham at the end of the eighteenth century, for measures to be taken 'should plague appear in a community or town'.² The system ensured that each member of the community was effectively locked into their own space, with measures put in place to restrict movement and therefore the spread of the disease. An observer, with the authority to inspect the area, watched from a central location to ensure that free movement did not occur. They held the key to each doorway and so controlled the movement of individuals. The surveillance, 'based on a system of permanent registration', required individuals to appear at their windows and be checked by the observer. 'Everyone locked up in his cage, everyone at his window, answering to his name and showing himself when asked – it is the great review of the living and the dead'.³

The term panoptical gaze is used to describe a situation where individuals, who cannot see their watchers are nevertheless aware that they are being watched, and behave accordingly.⁴ The watcher operates from a power position, as 'the figure of authority, turning their gaze on the victim and the victim looking back', a power

¹ Bentham, Jeremy. *Panopticon; Or, the Inspection-House*. Gloucestershire: Dodo Press, 2008.

² Foucault, Michel. 'Panopticism'. In: Foucault, Michel. *Discipline & Punishment: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books. 1975. pp.195-228. Translated from the French Alan Sheridan.

³ Foucault, Michel. 'Panopticism'. p.196.

⁴ See 1.6: Terminology and Concepts. 1.6.1 Panoptical Gaze.

position where the viewed acknowledges the look of authority and conforms, as described by MacCannell and Flower-MacCannell.⁵

The dictionary definition of surveillance is close observation, with the synonyms given as inspection, scrutiny, supervision, and watch. The word surveillance derived from the French word *surveiller*, means to keep watch or to watch over, and as such makes reference to the panoptical activity of control. In this practice-led research, I take up the position of surveiller or occupant of the panoptical tower, to explore the activity of observation, presenting my gaze, the gendered view of a female artist.

The surveillance of individuals has in the modern world, extended to digital and computerised viewing systems far wider than any conceived of by Bentham:

In the twenty-first century, cameras on street corners, in shops and public buildings silently record our every move, while web-based tools such as Google Earth adapt satellite technology to ensure that there is no escape from the camera's all-seeing eye.⁶

We operate under a registered and declared surveillance system; we are watched, filmed and listened to on the street, out shopping or in a gallery. Although not imprisoned in individual cells, we are separated into singular work or dwelling places, where the presence of the contemporary electronic surveillance system operates, both with and without our consent. The concept of a central tower of observation and control has broadened with the development of social media and the worldwide web to a point where every home, social venue and place of work is infiltrated by a network of links and connections, and where in essence, we all are subject to panoptical viewing, '...like so many cages, so many small theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualized and constantly visible'.⁷

Digital technology has developed extensively in recent times, to provide a vast range of accessible observational and recording systems. This has increased the surveillance carried out by individuals, who can now record their direct observations and

⁵ Flower-MacCannell and MacCannell. 'Violence, power and pleasure: a revisionist reading of Foucault from the victim perspective'. In: Ramazanoglu, ed. *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of some tensions between Foucault and Feminism*. London: Routledge. 1993. pp.20 –238.

⁶ Phillips, Sandra S. *Exposed: Voyeurism, Surveillance and the Camera*. London: Tate Publishing. 2010. Extract from Exhibition Catalogue.

⁷ Foucault, Michel. *Panopticism*. p.200.

immediately publish their images across chosen networks, complete with personal comment. If as Vaz and Bruno propose this constitutes self-surveillance, I question if this increases the need, to accede to established patterns of social conformity.

Self-surveillance is usually understood as the attention one pays to one's behaviour when facing the actuality or virtuality of an immediate or mediated observation by others whose opinions he or she deems as relevant – usually, observers of the same or superior social position.⁸

Perhaps this self-surveillance by individuals is to the detriment of our wellbeing, as it widens to the point where we can be seen in our homes, places of work and in remote locations with increasing clarity. The intention behind incidents of watching is important to consider, especially when the observations are more easily retained by electronic systems and when our physical presence in the world can be tracked and located.

Records collected with increasing detail allow us to be more easily profiled and categorised on a range of issues such as racial type, gender, social and economic grouping, but who controls this data and who is the perceived holder of power? What impact does the contemporary panoptical gaze have on our lives and should we worry about how this information is used? Our individual profiles are part of a collective system used to analyse, target and drive society towards a vast range of commercial preferences; does this profiling of data inform and influence any choices we make? Does it guide us towards a prescribed narrative? Can the individual be empowered to depart from this narrative and escape the panoptical gaze, but more importantly does a consciousness of this surveillance encourage us to conform to a perception of normality.

⁸ Vaz, Paolo and Bruno, Fernanada. 'Types of Self-Surveillance: from abnormality to individuals at risk'. *Surveillance & Society*, Vol 1, No 3 (2003): Foucault and Panopticism Revisited. [Online] Available from: <http://www.surveillance-and-society.org> [Accessed 19/5/16].

1.2 The Viewer and the Viewed

Informed by the ‘rhetoric of surveillance’ and contemporary creative practice, I aim to provoke thought about the impact of observation on the individual, the viewed.⁹ Through my practice, I investigate the subject of observation and the activity of observing, examining how this relationship changes according to the variables of situation, space and social convention. I offer my vision or view in two different forms: moving image showing a single observed figure in an interior and photographic views taken from high points, looking out of the interior towards the exterior world.

The digitally produced images are shown in temporary installations and given the name *Theatre of the Observed* a term explained more fully in **Terminology and Concepts: 1.6.8**. Each site-specific construction, structured to mimic theatrical spaces, orchestrates the viewing position of the audience and determines how the moving image or photograph is viewed. **Chapter Two: Methodology** describes in specific detail how the theatre of observation is constructed, together with the methodology and making process.

By sharing my visual observations and constructions through exhibition, I aim to engage the audience in the examination of attitudes concerning, the relationship between ‘the viewer’ and ‘the viewed’, and the interaction between individuals assuming the two roles. For the purpose of this document, the term ‘the viewed’ relates to the female character, who features as a singular figure in my photographs and moving images. ‘The viewer’ is both the audience and also the artist behind the camera.

My gendered views are informed by feminist debate and influenced by critical theory and creative practice, which are further explained in **Terminology and Concepts: 1.6.6**. A combination of film and photography is used, to present imagery in constructed installations that mimic theatrical spaces. In these temporary structures, the observation can take place, gender issues are brought to the debate, with a female perspective of both the viewer and the viewed, presented to encourage my audience to look through different eyes, contesting the view suggested by Laura Mulvey:

⁹ Levin, T.Y., Frohne, U., Weibel, P. eds. CTRL [SPACE]: *Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*. Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press. 2012. This book cites the work of a number of artists, working in the context of surveillance.

In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness.¹⁰

I investigate the subject of observation and the activity of observing, from the gendered position of an older woman, regarded by some as invisible.¹¹ Encouraged by the writing of Anne Friedberg and Luce Irigaray and using a continuation of contemporary feminist thinking, to create experiential scenarios. The work moves away from the outdated position posed by writers such as John Berger:

Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves. The surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female.¹²

It presents the viewer with a female gaze that avoids the format of imagery used by the male gaze, as defined in **Terminology and Concepts: 1.6.3.**

1.3 Reflective Practice and Audience

Audience response has been key to the development of this practice-led research and as a consequence, I have adopted a reflective practice methodology of making work and testing it out at exhibition. The emphasis on using this exchange is in the context of Doris van Drathen's thinking on art criticism:

It is the work of art's momentous appearance as an event and the personal experience of an encounter with it that form the basis of my conception of dialogical art commentary. This is my point of reference when I insist that

¹⁰ Mulvey, Laura. 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema'. In: Wallis, Brian ed. *Art after Modernism: Rethinking Representation*. New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art. 1984. pp.361-374.

¹¹ Hartley, Dori. *Your Tango: Embracing The "Invisible Woman: How I Learned to Age & Stay Sexy*. 2015. [Online] Available from: www.yourtango.com/2013190488/aging-sex-appeal-invisible-woman-effect/

There are many blogs and websites dealing with the subject, although no particularly scientific studies that I found.

¹² Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin. 1972. p.47.

the gaze of the viewer and his response should be included in any analysis of art.¹³

As part of this process I engage the audience in conversation about the work and their reading of the image, to ensure method meets understanding. In light of response and feedback, collected from both individual and group discussions, the work has been reconfigured and refined, to move nearer to intentions by encouraging deeper understanding and exchange between the work and its audience. Samples of the response and comments have been included at appropriate points in the text with further examples included as notes in the PowerPoint Presentations. These can be found on the disc that accompanies this thesis.

1.4 Relationship to existing work

Extracting information from historical and contemporary sources found in painting, film and photography, I investigate existing conventions used in the depiction of people and the spaces they inhabit, analysing their meanings and messages in order to suggest a new direction of thought and interpretation. Griselda Pollock suggests that the production of the image can influence the way it is received:

The space of the look at the point of production will to some extent determine the viewing position of the spectator at the point of consumption.¹⁴

I therefore investigate existing ways of presenting my imagery, in order to develop a new order or space of the look.

Throughout the research process I have maintained contact with related practice, intensely searching for relevant links and connections, drawn from both contemporary and historical sources. This information has provided essential inspiration for the methodology of making and technical detail for particular aspects of content.

¹³ Von Drathen, Doris. *Vortex of silence: Proposition for an art criticism beyond aesthetic categories*. Milan: Edizioni Charta, 2004. p.16

¹⁴ Pollock, Griselda. 'Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity'. In: Broude, N. and Garrard, M. eds. *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*. New York: Icon Editions. 1992. p.252.

Conventions adopted from painting, film and photography are deconstructed and subsequently reconfigured and offered as links, incorporated into the reinterpreted versions. These visual references establish a back history, anticipating what the viewer might carry and bring to their viewing.¹⁵ I tap into tacit knowledge and interpretation, aiming to broaden the viewing experience and enable access to depth of meaning.

One may remember or forget these messages but briefly one takes them in, and for a moment they stimulate the imagination by way of either memory or expectation.¹⁶

In expanding the research, through the making process of this practice-led investigation, a strategy was needed to determine ‘how and in what way’ the installation of photographic and filmic images could be organised, to influence the viewer and their viewing experience. A starting point for the research was to review contemporary visual artworks through exhibitions and publications, both printed and digital. This was to provide a context to the work, to ascertain who was addressing similar issues, and to review their methodology of presenting ideas. Links to some selected contexts can be found in **Chapter Two: Methodology. 2.3: Practice of other artists/practitioners** with further inclusions found in the individual chapters.

The research draws on an analysis of others working in the same field and relevant theoretical accounts that are used to inform content. References are embedded in the visual content, offering the viewer undeclared connections with current debate and cultural relevance. This research methodology allows me to approach subject matter with a clear idea of intention, targeting both imagery and concept, with a web-like approach to the inclusion of appropriate links and overlapping references. For the purpose of this Introduction, I have included links to the most important references as footnotes to each page, but explain the references more fully in the chapters dedicated to each set of work. Information about contextual references and contemporary research,

¹⁵ More details about references used are on the disc that accompanies this thesis in reflective journal and contextual references.

¹⁶ Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin. 1972. p.129.

There are numerous statements that can be found throughout this book that could be cited. In the context of this thesis these statements need to be re-interpreted in terms of the Female Gaze.

detailing the way it was used, to inform my practice and technical knowledge, is also included in these chapters.

1.5 Aims and objectives of the research

The aim of the research was to investigate how as a contemporary practitioner, informed by critical theory and creative practice, I could provoke thought about the impact of observation from a gendered view and question the panoptical gaze. Creating work using the installation of moving image and photography I intended to:

1. Use a practice-led investigation, looking through the eyes of a female artist, to raise awareness of the presence of observation and provoke thought about surveillance and the panoptical gaze.
2. Develop work along two broad routes; the subject and the audience and my role as observer and recorder, informed by contemporary practice.
3. Employ purposeful experimentation and visual discovery, to question issues emerging from practice through exposition, examining how this relationship changes according to the variables of situation, space and exhibition environment.
4. Creatively manipulate situations of observation through the installation of photography and moving image, to examine the exchange between artwork and audience.
5. Operate within the context of comparative approaches and methodologies used by historical and contemporary artists, to investigate the subject of observation and the activity of observing through practice.
6. Work from a positive and proactive feminist paradigm to investigate the subject of observation and the activity of observing, using relevant theoretical approaches to inform central concepts.

1.6 Terminology and Concepts

In this part of the introduction I set out the key terminology and concepts used in the research. This section defines how the terms are used and provides a base for reference, at appropriate points throughout the thesis.

1.6.1 The Panoptical Gaze

1.6.2 Flânerie and the Flâneuse

1.6.3 The Male Gaze

1.6.4 The Female Gaze

1.6.5 The Mobilized Gaze

1.6.6 The Gendered View

1.6.7 Interiority and Exteriority

1.6.8 Theatre of the Observed

1.6.1 The Panoptical Gaze

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) was a social reformer, philosopher and writer whose architectural design for a penitentiary was set out in a series of letters, now published under the title of *Panopticon; or, The Inspection-House*.¹⁷ Foucault has written at length about the power situation instigated by the panoptical gaze, describing the architectural system that allowed this observation to take place as:

... enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point in which the individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded¹⁸

The panoptical system relies on an overseer who operates this control system, by watching over those who are restricted to spaces, that are always subject to the gaze of the power holder. It is presumed that the holder of this panoptical gaze is male, which has caused many to question Foucault on his attitude to power:

¹⁷ Bentham, Jeremy *Panopticon; or, The Inspection-House*. Gloucestershire, UK: Dodo Press, 2008.

¹⁸ Foucault, Michel *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin Books, 1979. p. 197.

Because Foucault defines power as constituted through discourses, his concept of power is very different from that of feminism... Foucault's early work is concerned with domination and physical power, but he moved increasingly to a position, which denied that power was a repressive force, or came from a dominating class.¹⁹

Rather than going into an extensive argument about feminism and Foucault's attitude to power '...be it through discourse or knowledge, where discourse is read as an open and doubtless infinitely describable field of relationship', my practice and resulting artwork, simply assigns the power role to the female character.²⁰ She is placed in the position of observer, adopting her role without consideration of whether she should have any imposed societal restrictions and in denial of conventions that dictate the sex of the protagonist. In doing this I follow the suggestion of Ramazanoglu:

The collapse of the concept of 'patriarchy' frees feminists to pursue specific, local struggles without justifying these with reference to an entirely male system of power and consequent oppositional female powerlessness.²¹

1.6.2 Flânerie and the Flâneuse

Charles Baudelaire in his best-known writing and description of the flâneur says:

His passion and his profession are to become one flesh with the crowd. For the perfect *flâneur*, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite.²²

This poetic account first published in 1863 implies that the *flâneur* is a free spirit who wanders at leisure, is at home in the middle of the city, where he strolls and observes life as a man of the crowd.

Walter Benjamin describes the same character when he emerges in *The Arcade Project* as 'a passive spectator who is as duped by the spectacle of the public as

¹⁹ Ramazanoglu, Caroline.ed. *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of some tensions between Foucault and Feminism*. London and New York: Routledge 1993. p.21.

²⁰ Lemke, Thomas. 'Foucault, Governmentality, and Critique. *A Journal of Economics, Culture & Society*, 14 (3), 2002, pp.49-64.

²¹ Ramazanoglu, Caroline. p.119.

²² Baudelaire, Charles *The Painter of Modern Life and other essays*. London: Phaidon Press, 1964. p. 9

the consumer who is duped by the glittering promises of consumerism'.²³ In this description Benjamin suggests that the flâneur wandering through the arcades of Paris has become part of a system of control instigated by '...the rationality of capitalism and, especially, commodification and the circulation of commodities...' ²⁴

Throughout the research I have worked between Foucault and his concept of the panopticon and Walter Benjamin's flâneur. Both of these concepts are conceived for a male participant and as part of the practice-led process, I have developed an understanding of how a female protagonist operates. This concept was the basis for the development of a specific gaze, the gaze of the flâneuse that could be directed at my subject matter and used when recording imagery, or setting up a staged scenario.

1.6.3 The Male Gaze

In this thesis the male gaze is taken from the writing of Laura Mulvey. In her essay *Visual pleasure and narrative cinema*, Mulvey argued that female characters in cinema were subject to a controlling gaze that was always male. The viewing audience was encouraged to identify with the look of the male hero and the heroine was consigned to the role of passive object of desire.

... in patriarchal culture as signifier for the male other, bound by symbolic order in which man can live out his phantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning.²⁵

This argument was written in the 1970's and founded on the cinematic gaze of Hollywood culture. It still holds true to a certain extent, but alternatives are

²³ Benjamin, Walter *The Arcades Project* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2002. pp.416 – 455.

²⁴ Tester, Keith *The Flâneur*. Oxfordshire: Routledge, 1994. p.13.

²⁵ Mulvey, Laura 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema'. In: Wallis, Brian ed. *Art after Modernism: Rethinking Representation*. New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984. p.747.

available in contemporary cinema with directors such as Andrea Arnold producing a more female perspective.²⁶

The character used in my moving image is not a cinematic heroine, and is not subjected to objectification by my production. She does not form part of an extensive story line, where she interacts with other actors, but is the main and only protagonist, occupying the screen for the full length of the running time.

1.6.4 The Female Gaze

The gaze used to produce imagery is my gaze as a female artist. My work ensures that the conditions under which I present and make imagery supports a system of change. It is essentially female or is generated from a position that defines female identifications. My gaze does not involve making imagery in the same context as historical models of male orientated depiction. It is removed from male-centred definition or societal influences about how a female should be presented and follows the thinking of l'écriture féminine:

The phrases *écriture féminine* (women's writing) and *parler femme* (woman talk) were coined by feminist philosophers Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray respectively. Put simply, both called for female practitioners to express their real, lived experience, and represent themselves, as opposed to being represented.²⁷

According to Margaret Whitford what is needed in Irigaray's view:

... are cultural representations of difference, of a different libidinal economy, so that women are not engulfed in an economy of the same, but

²⁶ *Red Road*. Motion picture. Directed by Arnold, Andrea. Scotland, Tartan Films, 2006

²⁷ Dahn, Jo *New Directions in Ceramics, from spectacle to trace*, London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015. p.119. Dahn cites Anne Rosalind Jones 'Writing the Body: Toward an Understanding of "L'Écriture Féminine"' *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Summer, 1981), pp. 247-263.

'...to the extent that the female body is seen as a direct source of female writing, a powerful alternative discourse seems possible: to write from the body is to recreate the world.'

have available to them symbolisations of their otherness and difference, which can become objects of exchange in the culture at large.²⁸

To do this I approach my subject matter when both theory and image are combined, into a fresh vision or imaginary, and use this mind-set to guide creative practice. I position my model or muse without objectification or sexual overtones, in a conscious effort to present her in the context of the mother child relationship, in a situation that will create change. In the true spirit of change I avoid any categorization that defines women's imagery, or suggests that women might produce similar subject matter or formats, and therefore avoid conditions of production, that would impose limitations on the production of new imagery.

1.6.5 The Mobilized Gaze

Friedberg describes a new gaze that has been introduced into modern society, which she calls a mobilised virtual gaze, a gaze that is fully accessible to everyone regardless of gender.

I introduce this compound term in order to describe a gaze that travels in an imaginary *flânerie* through an imaginary elsewhere and an imaginary elsewhen.²⁹

She argues that with the increase in access to the virtual world, through the Internet, a new version of the flâneuse has emerged. In this world the flâneuse is able to carry out her wandering, across any area she chooses, and can operate from a non-gendered position.

In the context and development of social media, which has exploded over the research period, this would have been a very different route to adopt in my wanderings. In a rapidly changing world of new technology, I could have used virtual systems to view and gather records, unencumbered by the need to walk and wander in the real.

²⁸ Whitford, Margaret. 'Luce Irigaray and the Female Imaginary: Speaking as a Woman', *Radical Philosophy*, Summer 1986. [Online] Available from <https://radicalphilosophy.com/article/lucy-irigaray-and-the-female-imaginary> [Accessed 21 September 2015].

²⁹ Friedberg, Anne. *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern*. Berkeley CA and London: University of California Press, 1993. p.2.

However, my work is concerned with viewing real, not virtual imagery. The photographs and moving imagery are collected from observation; applying the sensibility of a creative artist to the selection and framing of the image.

1.6.6 The Gendered View

My practice position is to make artwork from my experience as a woman, informed by the theories associated with feminist philosophers, Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray respectively, and to adopt the theoretical approach explained in *Writing the Body* by Anne Rosalind Jones, turning ‘... turn to *féminité* as a challenge to male-centered thinking...’³⁰ My approach adopts the position and practice of *féminité*, as a focus on women among themselves, rather than on their divergence from men and their views. I adopt the view voiced by Fresno of ‘building a female context and environment, having female role models and having permission to be ourselves and make art from our experience as women’.³¹

Throughout the research process, I situate myself as a female artist informed by feminist thought and philosophical debate, with an awareness of the ‘male gaze’ and the extensive discursive debate that surrounds the concept, while acknowledging that in many parts of the world the objectification and subjugation of the female is routine.³² I do not delve into the male gaze, but concentrate on developing and explaining my female gaze and the way that it operates. This research therefore avoids the comparative study of equivalent subject matter representing the male view and discussion concerning the differences between male and female representation.

³⁰ Jones, Ann Rosalind ‘Writing the body: towards an understanding of l’écriture féminine’. In: Warhol, Robyn R. and Diane P. Herndl eds. *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press 1981.

³¹ Wilding, Faith ‘Gestations in a studio of their own: the feminist art program in Fresno, California, 1970-71. In: Meyer, Laura. ed. *A Studio of Their Own: The Legacy of the Fresno Feminist Experiment*. Fresno CA: Fresno State Press, 2009.

³² Elkins, James ‘The end of the theory of the gaze’. In: *The Visual: How it is Studied*. School of the Art Institute of Chicago. 2007 [Online] Available from: www.jameselkins.com.

Although conscious of the feminist arguments put forward by writers such as Griselda Pollock, I work from a female-gendered view, as a challenge to male-centred thinking:

To define a subsection of the art world as ‘female’ or to discuss the contribution of ‘women’ artists is now problematic on two accounts: firstly, it assumes that there is a difference between art made by men and art made by women, and secondly it assumes that all women produce the same work, regardless of individual experiences, culture and social background.³³

This practice position although explored by feminist groups active throughout the late 20th Century remains in my opinion an under-represented area, in the context of artistic ‘world view’ and is where I hold centrally to my purpose, of presenting a unique vision and gaze, that has been continually interrogated and informed by philosophical knowledge and understanding.

1.6.6 Interiority and Exteriority

Interiority: the quality of being interior or inward, relating to one’s mental or spiritual being, relating to, or located on the inside, a representation of the inside of a building or room, as in a photograph.

Exteriority: the state of being outside or external, outwardness, externality.

In the simpler understanding of the two terms interiority and exteriority, the work uses the exchange between the interior and exterior, as a division between the viewer and the viewed. In the first route of enquiry, **Chapter Three: Profile Portraits** and **Chapter Four: Netsheds**, the female figure in the moving image work is always seen in an interior space. She looks out towards the exterior, is watched by the audience, and adopts the panoptical position of observer. In the second route of enquiry, **Chapter Five: Windows** and **Chapter Six: Flânerie**, the photographic imagery is of the exterior view, recorded from a position that includes a division between interior and exterior, such as the curtains, window frame or grille.

³³ Racz, Imogen *Female Space in Art and The Home: Comfort, Alienation and the Everyday*. London: I.B. Taurus & Co, 2015. p.56.

On a different level, Levinas in his philosophical work *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* suggests, that exteriority depends on our engagement with a dialogic partner or other.³⁴ Levinas places heavy emphasis on the physical presence involved in meeting the ‘other’. He argues that, only a face-to-face encounter allows a true connection to be made, in this type of interaction. Written words and other words are insufficient, because they have become past by the time the subject perceives them. I therefore position the audience as the ‘other’, a dialogic partner on the exterior of my work.

Doris van Drathen explains this concept as:

...perceiving the work of art as an event that occurs in the interval between the viewer and the observed object, but also considering it as an eventful encounter between myself and what is alien to me, as a meeting with the other ...³⁵

The female figure shown in the moving image work represents interiority, and as having the quality of being self-contained, absorbed in her occupation, as explained in **Chapter Three: Profile Portraits**.

1.6.8 Theatre of the Observed

I use the term ‘theatre of the observed’ to describe the temporary structures, constructed-within a gallery space, to present the assemblage of film and photographic work. The temporary structures are used to investigate the subject and activity of observation, as explained in detail in **Chapter Four: Netsheds**. The temporary structures, made from standard and more elaborate theatre flats, were configured in different ways to investigate the activity of observation. They were used to create installation work that featured a door, window and a screen, on which the moving image of a single female character was shown.

The structures and their different configurations, contributed to the practice-led investigation of a central tower of observation, and the subject of panoptical viewing

³⁴ Levinas, Emmanuel. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969. p.51.

³⁵ Von Drathen, Doris. *Vortex of silence: Proposition for an art criticism beyond aesthetic categories*. Milan: Edizioni Charta, 2004. p.19

‘...like so many cages, so many small theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualized and constantly visible’.³⁶

One early decision taken was that the work would not be about the interplay between a theatrically staged performance and the audience as in the *Theatre of the Observed* by the Fluxus artists.³⁷ Shown at the ICA Auditorium in London on Friday 7th March 2014, the audio-visual performance was a collaborative video piece, lasting half an hour video. They choreographed the behaviour of people watching a performance with a live audience to mimic the screen audience.

1.7 Routes of inquiry

As a method of categorising the research into explainable sections and for the purpose of this investigation, I have chosen to develop work into four modes of enquiry grouped in two broad routes: the subject and the audience and my role as observer and recorder. The work responding to the first route is included in the chapters *Profile Portraits* and *Netsheds*, with the second route under *Windows* and *Flânerie*. The work that emanates from both routes includes a single female character, the first where the character is observed, and the second where her gaze is purposely turned towards the view. In all cases, the imagery presented is either filmed or photographed and installed in a gallery or exhibition space.

³⁶ Foucault, Michel. ‘Panopticism’. p.200.

³⁷ Alberge, D. Theatre of the observed: Dayla Alberge on two artists turning the spotlight on the audience. *The Independent* 2014. [Online] Available from: <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre--theatre-of-the-observed-dayla-alberge-on-two-artists-turning-the-spotlight-on-the-audience-1433575.html> [Accessed 15th March 2014].

1.8 Outline of chapters

Following this Introduction the account is divided into chapters that discuss the approaches and methods used to investigate the research question. **Chapter One: 1.6.Terminology and Concepts** explains the terms used throughout the thesis and sets out the philosophical background to the work. The main text relating to both the literature search and contextual review is integrated into each individual chapter that follows **Chapter Two: Methodology**. Individual chapters focus on specific areas of the investigation where relevant links are made and notes recorded in the footnotes; these can be found at the base of each page.

Chapter Two: Methodology has an introduction and is then divided into two sections, one that explains my practice position and the second a critical review of the research context, and the creative responses developed to support the argument. Each sequence of practice-led investigation has its own dedicated chapter and is categorised under the titles: *Profile Portraits*, *Netsheds*, *Windows* and *Flânerie*. The titles represent key areas of inquiry in the development or response to the research question, where milestones have been reached and practical work realised.

For the purpose of this written thesis, the work produced is explained in sequential chapters in a linear way. However, much of the work overlapped and intertwined with other ideas that did not always result in ‘successful’ or completed outcomes. These valuable interludes informed the practical outcomes, provided critical feedback and audience response, which in turn enabled refinement of the ideas into realisations that could be tested against intention. In the space of this document it is not possible to include all of these asides. The most important have been included, with the remaining examples, assembled into **PowerPoint Presentations** and folders on the accompanying disc, under relevant chapter headings.

At the beginning of the research process, the first body of work grew out of practice developed during the MFA programme.³⁸ **Chapter Three: *Profile Portraits***, investigates prominent female characters shown in historical Florentine Renaissance paintings, combined with imagery that resembles Dutch painting, particularly evoking

³⁸ Completed a Masters in Fine Art: Bath Spa University. 2007.

Vermeer. The characters, reconstructed as contemporary images, adopt some of the conventions found in the original paintings with technical details such as the pose, the tonal quality of lighting or overall appearance making reference to the original. The purpose of using these references is to prompt questions about how the women were portrayed, to ask why the paintings were produced and to re-present the imagery using contemporary methods, but this time from a female view.

In **Chapter Four: *Netsheds*** I explain where the building of temporary structures collided with the creation of filmed characters. It became important to change the emphasis and status of the viewed, and move her away from the status of to-be-looked-at-ness. This changed emphasis resulted in a return to a previous focus, which was to project films onto screens, placed inside large-scale constructions based on theatrical sets. To achieve this tall temporary constructions were used, making direct reference to the Panopticon, where the subject's viewing position became elevated to a remote and removed place, not immediately seen by the audience.

The constructed spaces usually including a window, a door or a division in space were created for the projection of filmic imagery. The structures were made from black serge fabric, stretched over wooden frames and adopted methodology used to produce standard sized stage flats.³⁹ Different variations on these structures were investigated to examine viewing positions, so that both the position of the audience, and the point at which they viewed the film or photograph, could be controlled. This theatricality of engagement between audience and artwork, at first created by the construction and then by the fact that the viewer could move in and out of the structure, also became performative in that it elicited a performance from the viewer, as they participated in the viewing.

What the notion of the performative brings into perspective is the contingent and elusive realm of impact and effect that art brings about both situationally—that is, in a given spatial and discursive context—and relationally, that is, in relation to a viewer or a public. It recognizes the

³⁹ The making process is discussed more fully in **Methodology**.

productive, reality-producing dimension of artworks and brings them into the discourse.⁴⁰

As previously mentioned, the audience was integral to the completion of the work and feedback became an ingredient to the review and analysis of the making process. For example, response to the *Netsheds* indicated that the audience did not have to see the viewed. In the short filmed intervals, when only the moving curtain was shown without a person present, the images proved more potent as a stimulant of the imagination and allowed ‘...the audience the opportunity to invent an unidentified presence’.⁴¹ At this point in the research trajectory, the emphasis shifted towards pieces that excluded the viewed and turned towards the view, with an implied presence of a viewer.

The resulting imagery, a series of photographs, discussed in **Chapter Five: Windows**, moved towards the presentation of whatever was seen by the viewed, as she moved into the position of spectator looking towards the exterior. The term spectator can be used to describe ‘an accomplice of the social system of surveillance’ and when an individual takes on the role of observing the subject, in a restricted space, from a controlled viewing position.⁴² As she was moving into a power position in terms of the panoptical view, it was important to define the character and devise rules of engagement for the development of imagery from her interior viewpoint.

In the concluding series explained in **Chapter Six: Flânerie**, the viewer becomes part of the exterior world. My images, for this area of research, are captured from things that occur all around me. They are generated from watching and observing people, as they participate in ordinary daily life sometimes extended into moving image versions, where the gaze has been influenced by the notion of the flâneuse, informed by new thinking around the subject of flânerie by writers such as Scalway and Parsons.⁴³

⁴⁰ Dorothea von Hantelmann *The Experiential Turn*, Minneapolis: Walker Art Center 2014 <http://www.walkerart.org/collections/publications/performativity/experiential-turn/>

⁴¹ Woodruff, Paul. *The Necessity of Theater: the Art of Watching and being Watched*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2008. pp.19-21.

⁴² Crary, J. *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*. London: MIT Press. 1992. pp.1-29.

⁴³ Both of these authors were pivotal in decisions made about the flâneuse.

Imagery was recorded in London, from the perspective of the roaming, watching, creative artist, during the adoption of an activity known as *flânerie*.⁴⁴ As this activity is historically defined as a male occupation, I had to consider this role from an informed female perspective. To focus the role on the female gaze, I used research references from descriptive writing, and met at conference with an international group of academics from mixed disciplines.^{45 46} The visual research and work presented in this series reflects my adoption of my invented role as *flâneuse*; where I become the female character, previously the subject of the gaze in the *Profile Portraits*. This unique view allows my female gaze to influence all of the imagery produced. In my assumed role, I situate myself as a roaming witness of life collecting and capturing imagery from a single viewpoint, freely inhabiting places and spaces and presenting this imagery for the audience to view.

The chapter that follows this Introduction details the methodologies employed, during the investigation. It focuses on the process of investigation utilised and explains how the critical context /literature search and contextual review are integrated into the individual chapters dedicated to each line of inquiry. Each mode of inquiry is represented by practical outcomes, included as illustrations that accompany this written text. Extra documentation can be found on the disc that accompanies this thesis, where records of the full range of practical work can be found together with records of the work included in the final PhD Exhibition.

Scalway, H. 'The contemporary *flâneuse*'. In: D'Souza, Aruna and McDonough, Tom.eds. *The Invisible Flâneuse: Gender, Public Space and Visual Culture in nineteenth-century Paris*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press. 2006.

Parsons, Deborah. L. *Streetwalking the Metropolis*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2000.

⁴⁴ Benjamin, Walter. *The Return of the Flâneur: Selected Writings Part 1 1927-1930. Volume.2*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press. 1999. pp.26-67

⁴⁵ Tester, K. ed. *The Flâneur*. London and New York: Routledge. 1994.

⁴⁶ Wrigley, R. *The Flâneur Abroad*. Conference Report. Nottingham: 6th -7th July 2012. [Online] Available from: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/art-history/documents/ucn-flaneur-report.pdf>

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction to Methodology

2.1.1 The Process of Research

2.1.2 Reflective Practice.

2.2 My Practice Position

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2.2.2 Development of Imagery

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2.3.2 Ethical Considerations

2.3.3 Viewing Positions.

2.3.4 Development of Imagery: Profile Portraits and Netsheds

2.3.5 Development of Imagery: Windows and Flânerie

2.1 Introduction to Methodology

In the following chapter methodologies that have been employed during the investigation are discussed. The first section relates to the methodology of my own practice position, setting out the critical and theoretical stance that has influenced the making process, subsequently tested out through repeated visual experimentation and exhibition. The second section details the methodologies and approaches adopted from the contemporary practice of other artists/practitioners, used to inform content and outcome.

Practice-based research presents major challenges, as described by Gray and Mullins, a ‘pluralist approach using a multi-method technique, tailored to the individual project’.⁴⁷ In the pages that follow and in recognition of this complexity of activity, I set out the specific approaches used, and explain the studio processes applied. Due to the plurality of practice-led procedures content naturally falls into the category of ‘diachronic’ data, which makes the identification of key stages essential for qualitative methods to be employed.⁴⁸ I therefore include significant outcomes, as exempla to represent content, rather than offering an extensive catalogue of process. Supplementary and supporting examples are referred to in the text, illustrated and where essential further examples assigned to the individual chapter folders included on the disc.

Given the nature of creative exploration, where process is articulated through documentation of visual experimentation and progression rather than through the written word, the research methodology is made both explicit and transparent by explanations of visual manipulation offered as illustrative, diagrammatic, sequential and transitional views of process supported by text together with notes and extracts from my reflective journal. (See *Figure 1*)⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Gray, Carole and Julian Malins. *Visualizing Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art & Design*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2004, p.21

⁴⁸ Gray, Carole. and Ian Pirie.(1995) ‘Artistic’ research procedure: research at the edge of chaos? , 1995. [Online] Available from: <https://design.osu.edu/carlson/id785/ead.pdf>.

⁴⁹ Additional content from the reflective journals can be found on the disc that accompanies this thesis.

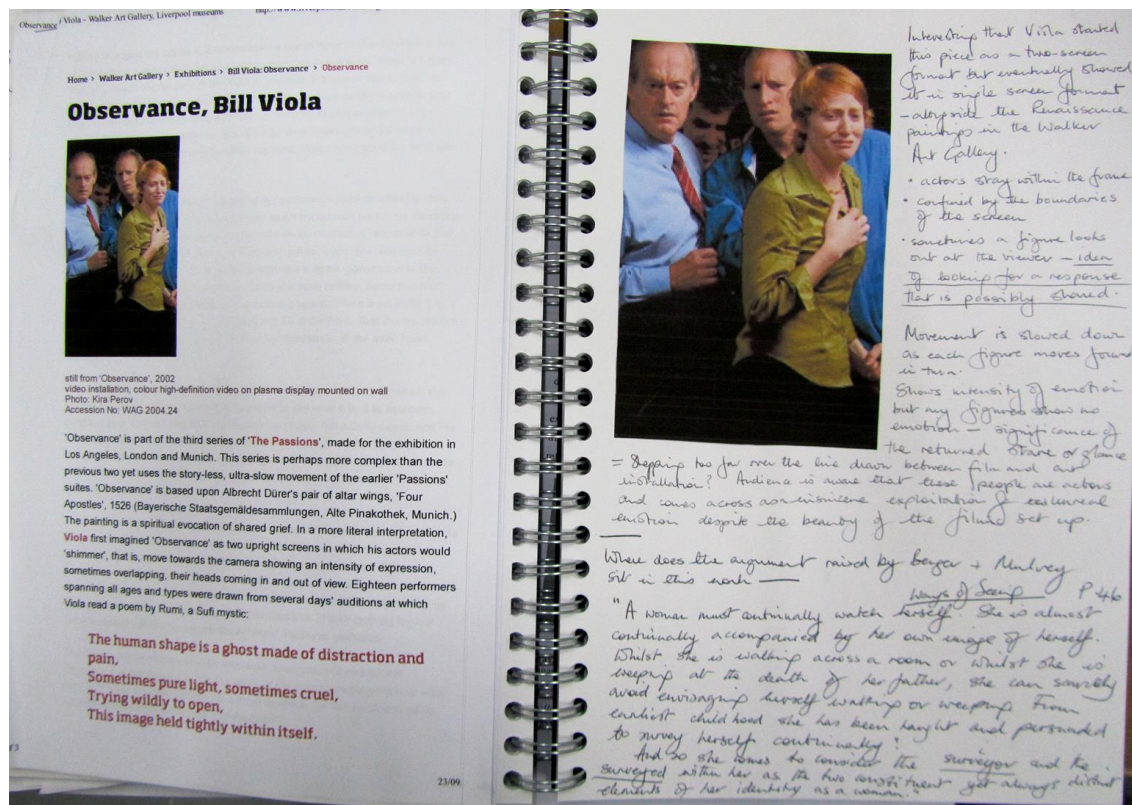


Figure 1.

Extract from reflective journal:

Interesting that Viola started this piece as a two-screen format, but eventually showed it in single screen format – alongside the Renaissance paintings in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Notes:

Actors stay within the frame and are confined by the boundaries of the screen
Sometimes a figure looks out at the viewer – idea of looking for a response that is possibly shared.

Audience is aware that these people are actors and imagery comes across as insincere, exploitation of unreal emotion despite the beauty of the filmic set up.

2.1.1. The Process of Research

Research has followed a rigorous process of investigation as shown below in *Figure 2*, where practical responses have been developed, linked to the literature review, contemporary practice and tested out to evaluate outcome in comparison with aims and objectives.

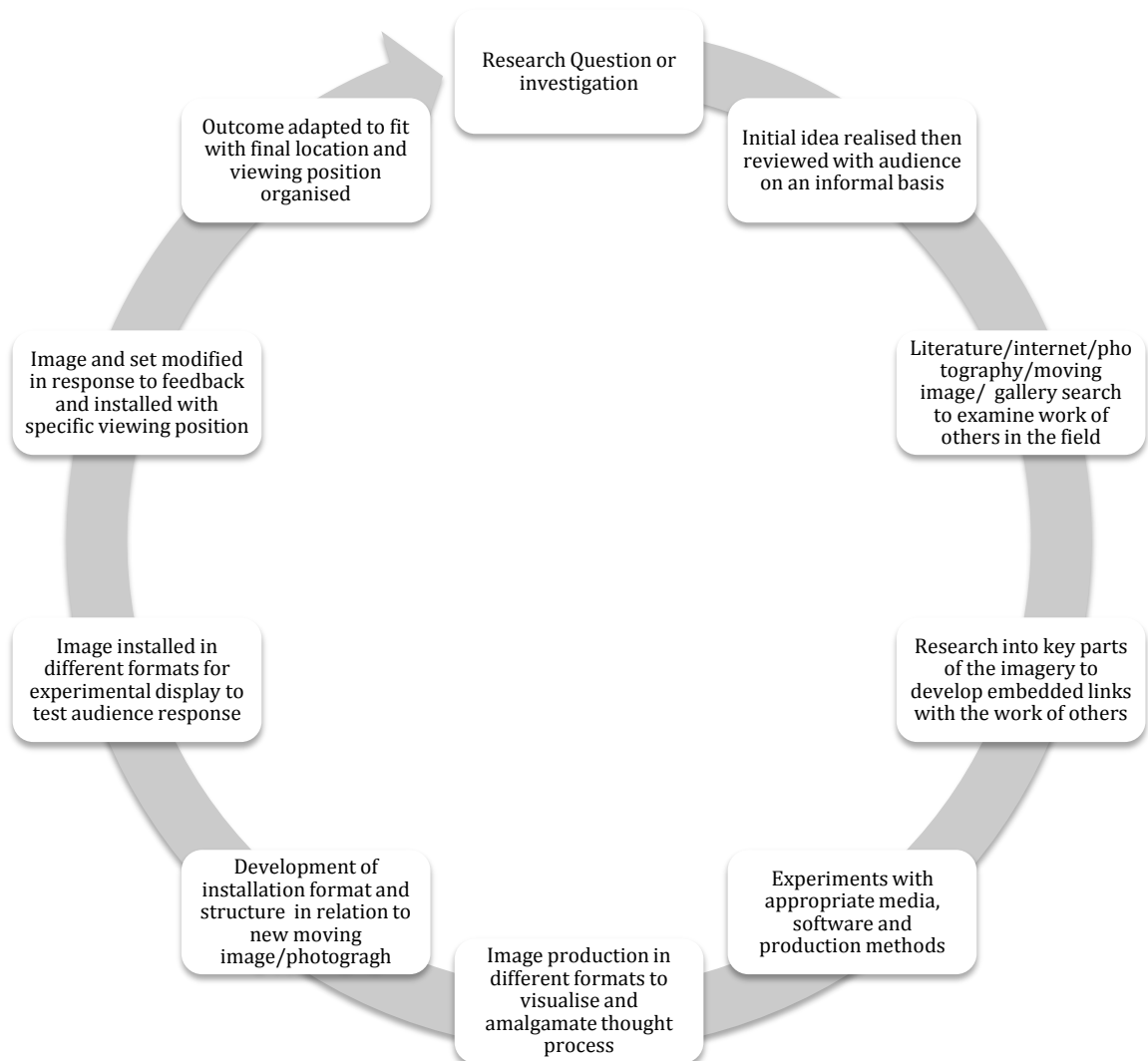


Figure 2.

As explained in **Chapter One: Introduction**, I chose to develop work in two broad routes; the subject and the audience; my role as observer and recorder. This has culminated in four major formats of presentation, all using photography, and/or moving image, which have been investigated as modes of inquiry and explained in individual chapters; *Profile Portraits*, *Netsheds*, *Windows*, *Flânerie*. Under each title a particular aspect of the inquiry is tested out and conclusions drawn through the process of making and visual presentation. Illustrations are included to show examples of work realised as part of the research process. The final PhD exhibition of work showcases related outcomes in concluding pieces that represent each line of inquiry.

2.1.2. Reflective Practice

The research followed a rigorous process as shown in *Figure 3*, where ideas were tested and audience feedback received, before work progressed towards large-scale installation and review.

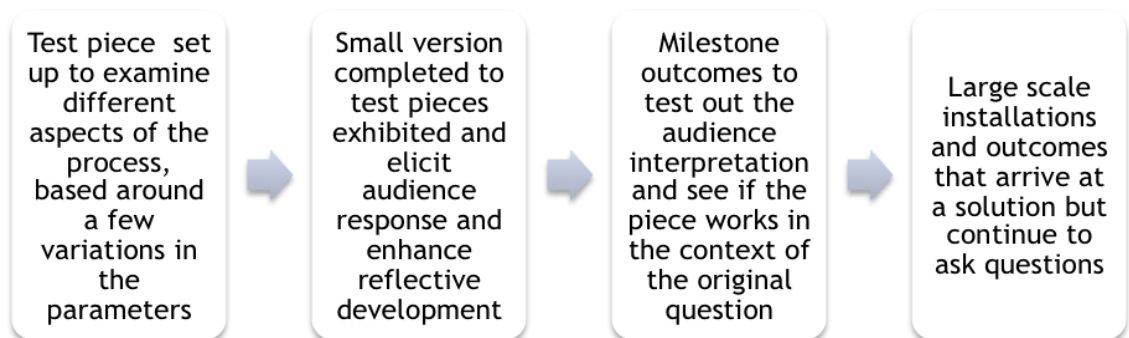


Figure 3

Reflective practice has ensured that the exploration remains centred on the framework of the investigation shown in *Figure 3*. Work was initiated and produced in the context of an artist studio collective, Spike Island, where contemporary practice is routinely discussed, developed and exhibited at a professional level, enabling critique and current comparative practice to be an integral part of new work.⁵⁰ Although this

⁵⁰ Spike Island, Bristol where in addition to a contemporary Art Gallery, Spike has seventy-five professional artists working in studios across the building. Details about individual artists can be found on www.spikeisland.org.uk following the links to Workspace and Artists' Studios.

environment enabled qualitative approaches to operate in the collection of feedback, from those already conversant with the process of interpretation and critique, the limitation was in the familiarity that this audience brought to the process of reviewing artwork. To balance feedback from specialists with subject knowledge, public exhibitions and talks were organised as a method of collecting responses and to provide a greater test of interpretation, especially when the broader audience came from a non-art background.⁵¹

The feedback and conversation with an audience follows Levinas's notion of self in a dialogue with the 'other' as explained by Doris Van Drathen.⁵²

It is the work of art's momentous appearance as an event and the personal experience of an encounter with it that form the basis of my conception of dialogical art commentary. This is my point of reference when I insist that the gaze of the viewer and his response should be included in any analysis of art.⁵³

In practice-led research the making process has the leading edge, and therefore as artwork was realised, a system of installation was developed. The work was installed into different configurations, called theatres of the observed, and in selected locations, to test responses and prompt audience discussion. Through this reflective process change occurred, ideas were consolidated and work refined. The engagement between the viewer and the viewed was regularly reviewed, and as a consequence the communication of embedded meaning between artwork and audience refined.

Exhibition and audience involvement was an essential element of the research, where the audience was considered as the 'other', as explained in **1.6.7 Interiority and Exteriority**. Formal interviews with individuals attending an exhibition, a lecture, or talk were ruled out as impractical and a rigid formula for review was discounted. In its

⁵¹ Lectures, presentations to groups and exhibitions – *Spike Island: Behind the Scenes*, visits by Art Students, general public, *Spike Island: Open Studios* 2008 to 2014, Presentations to: PhD Students, *Artist Teachers Scheme*, Conference: *Doctoring Practice*, Exhibition: *Doctoring Practice*, Bath School of Art & Design, Salisbury Arts Centre, Aberystwyth University 2012. Film on Vimeo: *Doctoring Practice*. Royal West of England Academy: *Annual Open Exhibition* 2014.

Further details can be found on the disc that accompanied this thesis in Presentations.
⁵² See Introduction: Terminology and Concepts. 1.6.7. Interiority and Exteriority where this is explained more fully.

⁵³ Von Drathen, Doris. *Vortex of silence: Proposition for an art criticism beyond aesthetic categories*. Milan: Edizioni Charta, 2004. p.16

place a process of individual and group discussions in front of the artwork and of interviews with particular individuals who had specialist knowledge, which can be found in the reflective journal notes.⁵⁴ This method described as a ‘soft design’ process by Gray and Malins, ‘concerned with improving problem situations and learning from the problem-solving process’, enabled a reflective methodology that was more advantageous to the development and progression of particular aspects of individual projects.⁵⁵

A frequent dialogue and exchange, with a wide range of individuals, was needed to test out scenarios and set ups. This dialogue was sought by engaging in direct conversation with individuals viewing the work; a process of adjusting and honing the installation became routine, until the point when it became sufficiently resolved for exposition. The cycle then repeated itself and moved onto the next stage of development, always holding the understanding that the spectator was ‘... in some way regarded as integral to the completion of work’.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Artist talks at the Tate Modern, Photographers Gallery. Dryden Goodwin, Michael Fried, Pipilotti Rist. These can be found in the Reflective Practice file on disc.

⁵⁵ Gray, Carole and Julian Malins. *Visualizing Research*, p.75

⁵⁶ Reiss, Julie *From Margin to Center: The Spaces of Installation*. Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1999. p. xiii.

2.2 My Practice Position

2.2.1 Routes of inquiry into practice

2.2.2 Development of Imagery

2.2.3 Method of Filming

2.2.4 Method of Photographing

2.2.5 Construction of the Theatre of the Observed

2.2.6 Development of Screen.

2.2.1 Routes of Inquiry into practice

The investigative practice follows four routes that are subdivided into two main themes: the subject and the audience, and my role as observer and recorder. My aim is to engage the viewing audience, in the examination of the relationship between ‘the viewer’ and ‘the viewed’ and the interaction between the two roles, with particular focus on the viewed being female.

In the first theme a single female character, or the viewed, is presented, as explained in *Profile Portraits* and *Netsheds*. The viewed, is presented to the viewing audience, as a short moving image sequence repeated on a loop. My imagery draws on visual qualities appropriated and transposed from paintings, films and photography, using the connections made with the practice of others. I develop new translations utilising the filmic technique of shooting multiple captures, from which a sequence can be selected; the footage is subsequently edited to produce one outcome.

In the second of the two main themes *Windows* and *Flânerie*, the work features observations made by the viewed, an approach to the production of imagery from the viewpoint of observer and recorder. This change of focus presents the female gaze of the viewed, moves the view outside of her internal space, towards an external view. The work responding to this theme was initially moving image, but as research progressed, it became predominantly photographic, and featured single shots of views captured from a high window position onto the street.

2.2.2 Development of Imagery

To construct the female figure, references were taken from the Renaissance portrait, Vermeer, Holbein, as well as some more contemporary influences, which is explained more fully in **2.3: Practice of other artists/practitioners**. The profile portrait in particular was used, showing the figure in side view or three-quarter turn towards the viewer. In the filmic reconstructions these references were re-configured, to exemplify Berger's notion of 'women being born into a confined space', reflecting the fact that the paintings were made with rigid conventions, reflecting the society and times that generated them.

To be born a woman has been to be born, within an allotted and confined space, into the keeping of men. The social presence of women has developed as a result of their ingenuity in living under such tutelage within such a limited space.⁵⁷

The conventional poses extracted from the historical paintings were used to place the model and to define the position, movement and interior space occupied by the character. For example the head was silhouetted against the background, to create a counter-change pattern of light against dark across the image area, while the natural directional lighting is used, to denote a tactile quality to the skin, hair and fabric.

The images of the female figure were produced in collaboration with the subject, a model who was complicit with the process of filming and being recorded. In selecting potential models, possible individuals were filmed to test the way they moved and held the pose. Having tested many models of differing height, weight, age, the most important fact that emerged, was their ability to reflect 'the primacy of absorption' as described by Michael Fried.⁵⁸ In other words the model was and needed to be completely contained and preoccupied with her own presence, looking either out of a window or towards the audience, with no acknowledgment of the viewer. The importance of adopting a strategic refusal to show recognition of the potential audience was essential, to create the atmosphere of watching and being watched.

⁵⁷ Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. p.46

⁵⁸ Fried, Michael *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot*. London: University of Chicago Press, 1990. pp.7-70.

In both the moving image and still photographic work, I avoided imagery that had to be digital manipulated and used the editing process, to extract information from multiple records taken. The camera position was predetermined to control the quality of image, viewing position, atmosphere and mood. This 'look' of the image was set up to reflect and focus on the research question, encouraging and provoking thought about the impact of observation on the female model.

2.2.3. Method of Filming

Before filming started, photographic stills of the imagery were produced, to test both the composition of the figure and the background. At this stage of production, the position of the figure against the background, the effect of lighting on the subject, the overall light balance, colouration and tonality, were adjusted to ensure that the film could be captured in one take, without interruption, to obtain smooth transitions of minimal movement. In this way the appearance of the figure moved slowly, within the camera frame, and maintained the connection with painting as a gentle moving tableau.

As a starting point in my methodology I always filmed myself as the subject. This gave me close contact with the content of the imagery and an understanding of how the figure should look move and feel. This physical rehearsal of the subject gave me an understanding of the emotional response to being viewed, although at this stage by a camera. This method also gave me an opportunity, in pre-production, to look for the type of imagery I wanted to achieve.

The image below was produced as a photograph, taken through a curtain of black silk voile, of a film projected onto a wall. Because this image was recorded from projections it became fragmented and the figure became more mysterious and hidden from direct gaze. Although successful, the resulting image did not give me the detail, definition and transient moments of view afforded by the moving image. However, it did denote a softness of view, implying that a viewer had recorded the image from a distance, and from a position either lower or higher than the subject. This experimental

development of image contributed to the later film, shown in the final PhD exhibition as Netsheds.



Moira Turner

Self-portrait. 2008.

Photograph on Fine Art Paper
40 x 30 cm.

Using a planning method of drawing out sequential imagery on paper or storyboarding, normally used in moving image work, was not needed as I adopted a visual version of notation.⁵⁹ I filmed myself to see how different movements looked on camera and decided from the footage, what lighting and effects were needed. I then choreographed short sequences of activity, that could be memorised by the model and,

⁵⁹ Simon, Mark *Storyboards: Motion in Art.* Amsterdam and London: Focal Press, 2006. This book outlines the methodology of storyboarding and gives examples of different systems used by artists, with illustrations of their work.

as the sequence was never more than seven minutes, this activity could be observed through the camera, capturing the sequence followed, and recording slow, delicate changes in motion.

Film cassettes in a digital video camcorder were used to obtain a softness of image, rather than the sharp definition and clarity of high definition systems. This methodology was adopted to reflect footage found in surveillance imagery and represented my vision, rather than the stark reality of HD where every detail is 'on show'. When editing, the film was transferred into Final Cut Pro, where editing was always minimal and was used to determine the flow of movement, rather than the manipulation of the image.⁶⁰ All of the films are repeated on a loop, so that the film runs without any visible signs of change between takes.

My method of filming in natural directional light, using the single view of one camera, was inspired by Vermeer paintings. To find an equivalent effect to the lighting of these paintings, I reduced the camera aperture to get the same softness of tonality and also allow the low-key colours and low tones to be captured. This meant that when capturing the film footage, the figure needed to be near a window, to allow the soft gentle light to illuminate the skin and face, while the dark clothes prevented lighting on the rest of the body.

2.2.4 Method of Photographing

There has been a dramatic advance in the digital technology used in surveillance systems during the research period, changing the way that observation is recorded. Records of people and events are collected with increasing ease, and the resolution of the imagery on mobile devices now equals many cameras. The mobile camera phone is used by everybody, to present images of everything and everyone that surrounds them and could be seen as part of the surveillance system, certainly making contributions to self-surveillance.

⁶⁰ Final Cut Pro is a post-production software produced by Apple.
www.apple.com/uk/final-cut-pro/

The quality of image found on the camera phone has also increased in clarity over the research period and ease of capture has had an impact on the way individuals present their observations, particularly in terms of technical quality. Types of photographic media have their own appearance, and it is usually possible to see from the image what method has been used to produce the photograph, whether analogue or digital. The majority of viewers are able to tune into this commonly shared knowledge. My method is to use the format of digital imagery, intended for sharing across virtual systems, where the image resolution or dpi is small.

My camera of choice, for photographs taken out of windows from high positions, is therefore a mobile telephone. The resolution of these images, usually at 72dpi does not always allow them to be enlarged, beyond the dimensions of a digital screen, without loss of clarity and sharpness. The images that I record either have a low resolution or use camera systems to mimic the effect, so that when enlarged they maintain the grain of the original format. This method is to make reference to surveillance and make it appear as if it is taken in a glance, rather than a stare of close scrutiny.



Moira Turner

Coram Street. 2009.

Photographic Print on Fine Art Paper. 50 x 65 cm.

2.2.5 Construction of the Theatre of the Observed

The large-scale constructions are assembled from traditionally made theatre flats. Each panel conforms to the size 244 x 122 cm and is fixed at each corner with a triangular support; half panels can also be constructed. The frame is then used as a stretcher for fire resistant black wool serge fabric. The framework ensures that each panel can be easily and uniformly joined with clamps, to create temporary structures easily adapted and reconfigured as site-specific configurations.



The flats were used here to create a labyrinth structure for the audience to walk through. They encountered the moving image work in different parts of the structure, some projected onto screens.

In this configuration (Spike Island Open 2009) the moving image was projected onto a screen that did not hold the image. Consequently it passed through the screen onto the wall behind, resulting in a life-sized image. This created more of an impact than the small image on screen.



In this configuration (Spike Island Open 2010) the flats were used to create a viewing box. The audience were obliged to stand on the outside and look into the construction through the doorway. The plinth was placed at a distance large enough for the audience to move inside. This construction was the most successful in creating a sense of the observer peering into the view.

The advantage of using this system has been that many different configurations have been assessed, through exposition in selected locations, to test responses and determine audience reaction. Through this reflective process, the engagement between the viewer and the viewed has been examined and as a consequence has resulted in a refinement of the communication between artwork and audience.⁶¹

⁶¹ Further details of the different configurations and findings are discussed in **Chapter Four: *Netsheds***.

2.2.6 Development of Screen

In a cinema, film is projected onto a screen with the audience placed at a distance facing the image. The audience is unable to change their viewing position, other than occupying another seat in the auditorium. The view is delivered onto the screen that is in a fixed position and while there is room for interpretation and visual reading of the film, the way that it is delivered is more or less dictated as described by Friedberg:

...the audience is placed on the outside looking into a scene that they cannot access, but where they can try on identities.⁶²

As already mentioned, the constructions made with stage flats create spaces inside the exposition venue. Inside the construction, a screen is set up to hold the moving image: a projected image or monitor screen. The use of film to present the character allows a distance to be created, between the viewer and the performer; when looking at the cinematic version of film presentation, the viewer becomes the reader of the presented work.

The screen sets up a division in the structure, which operates as a window or a door, through which the audience can view a film or photograph. The viewing screen also functions as a dividing point between the interior and exterior. It makes a connection between the interior space, where a female character is virtually present, and the exterior public space of the gallery. The presence of the screen became a tool for investigating the exchange between viewers and viewed and is discussed throughout the following chapters in the context of differing modes of inquiry.

During the research period, a system was developed to review the practice of other artists and integrate aspects of their methodology into my work. In the next section of I discuss how a broad range of practitioners in the field informed process and outcome. Reviewing their work was not to re-invent the wheel, but to study the way that they operated and used concepts and media. In the next part of this thesis **2.3. Practice of Other Artists/Practitioners**, I explain some of the influences that have guided different aspects of the methodology and contributed to the formation of work.

⁶² Friedberg, Anne 'Cinema and the postmodern condition'. In: Williams, Linda ed. *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film*. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995. p.65.

2.3 Practice of other artists/practitioners

2.3.1 Audience and Embedded links

2.3.2 Ethical Considerations

2.3.3 Viewing Positions

2.3.4 Development of Imagery: Profile Portraits and Netsheds

2.3.5 Development of Imagery: Windows and Flânerie

The contexts used in this section and throughout the thesis were taken from current practice and historical sources, gathered between 2004 and 2016. The research was drawn from primary or direct contact with individual artists, galleries and exhibitions, while selected secondary searches were made through publications and digital search systems. This starting point for the research was, to review contemporary visual artworks and provide a context to the work. At the same time it focused on, who was addressing similar issues, how they approached the subject matter, the methodology used and the presentation of their findings.

As a practitioner, my work is produced in the context and knowledge of related contemporary practice and ideas presented in the field of creative arts. This context extends my own practice, informs the decisions I make on key issues and initiates the presentation of new ideas and constructions. Throughout the research period I have maintained contact with contemporary practice through gallery and exhibition visits and frequent participation in talks given by exhibiting artists and professionals. The most relevant contexts have been included in this section, with the bulk of other references integrated into individual chapters. Links to relevant additional work, shown on the disc that accompanies this thesis, are included at appropriate points in the text.

From the examples included in this section, I demonstrate how the research and analysis of selected relevant practitioners working from both historical and contemporary sources are embedded into my practice and methodology, making contributions to content and context. Elements and influences are consciously integrated into the making process, enabling me to make direct reference to undeclared links, while providing selective hooks of recognition for the audience to unravel.

2.3.1 Audience and Embedded links

Engagement with the audience is an important stage in development, takes place at the start of each route of investigation, and continues until the final outcomes are configured. The purpose is to facilitate the identification of relevant links, which can be integrated and woven into the process of production. The audience are not expected to carry an in-depth knowledge of the particular work, or identify the time frames referred to, but make connections in their own cultural language. Baxandall suggests that:

The audience moves with ease and delicacy and creative flexibility within the rules of their culture. Their culture, for them, is like the language they have learned, informally, since infancy: indeed their language is one large articulating part of their culture.⁶³

This method therefore assumes that the audience brings, the language of their culture to the understanding of the work, and have frequently made contributions to the construction of my ideas offering links to further contexts.



Vermeer, Johannes. (c.1664)

Woman Holding a balance.

Oil on canvas. 62.9 x 58.4 cm.

Washington D.C: National Gallery of Art, Washington.

⁶³ Baxandall, Michael *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985. This quote comes from Chapter 4 of the book, but I have changed the 'He' to 'The audience' and adopted the non-sexist they, they and their.

At the time when Johannes Vermeer was painting, Europe was ‘battered by vicious religious and nationalist wars’, but he chose to focus his attention away from the conflicts and produce his imagery described as, ‘the embodiment of calm and introspection’.⁶⁴

Vermeer was not a painter in the epic tradition: on the contrary, his life’s work can be seen, within its historical moment, as a heroic, extended attempt to steer his (and his viewers’) way clear of such a depersonalizing approach to experiencing one’s fellow human beings.⁶⁵

In a similar manner as Vermeer, I wanted to create an atmosphere of calmness for the interior view, while alluding to the outside world. The question was ‘would the audience be familiar with the nuances of meaning ascribed to the imagery and what clues if any would need to be laid for full understanding to take place?’ My consideration was therefore, ‘how should the images recorded utilise the language already recognised by my audience?’⁶⁶

My method was to make the reference and then utilise the feedback system, to see how the audience had responded and consequently adapt the work to encourage greater comprehension as explained in **2.2: My Practice Position**. On many occasions the audience identified embedded links, enjoyed showing recognition of the original source and frequently offered further connections. These connections were woven into the content in a web-like approach, layering and overlapping references to encourage deeper audience understanding and interpretation of meaning, which in turn led to further refinement.

⁶⁴ Higgle, Jennifer ‘The solace of art’. *Frieze*, March 2015, 169, pp.2-3.

⁶⁵ Weschler, Lawrence *Vermeer in Bosnia: Selected Writings*. New York: Vintage Books, 2005. [Online] Available from: www.worldcat.org/servlet/DCARRead. [Accessed 5 March 2015].

⁶⁶ Burris, Val ‘Reification: a Marxist perspective’. *California Sociologist*, 10 (1), 1988, pp. 22-43.

The concept of reification is used by Marx to describe a form of social consciousness in which human relations come to be identified with the physical properties of things, thereby acquiring an appearance of naturalness and inevitability.

2.3.2 Ethical Considerations

Photographing or making film of people in the street raises both legal and ethical issues about gaining permission or invasion of privacy.⁶⁷ None of the recordings I make are of famous people or collected on private property, but they are sometimes obtained without the awareness of the subject. In essence taking a photograph of somebody in a public place is not wrong in itself, but if there was a pattern of persistent and intrusive surveillance, making records over a sustained period, this could be termed as harassment.

Publication of the photograph might be thought wrong if taking it formed part of a pattern of clear, persistent and intrusive harassment of its subject.⁶⁸

Members of the public and the media do not need permission to film or photograph in a public place. However, a photographer can be stopped and searched under the Terrorism Act 2000. To discover whether the images constitute evidence that the person is involved in terrorism, Police officers also have the right to view digital images on mobile devices or cameras and may seize any equipment connected with the search.⁶⁹

In the exhibition *Cast* the artist Dryden Goodwin showed a series of images taken of strangers in public places, photographed while travelling across London. When questioned, the artist was asked if permission had been sought from the individuals recorded and his response was that he found the issue irrelevant 'as nobody to date' had complained about being photographed and included in the exhibition.

⁶⁷ Cram, Ian 'Beyond Calcutt: the legal and extra-legal protection of privacy interests in England and Wales'. In: Kieran, Matthew ed. *Media Ethics*. Abingdon: Routledge, 1998, pp. 97-110.

1. *Trespass*: If somebody enters or remains on land owned exclusively by a plaintiff, an action of trespass can be brought. However, if a photograph is taken using a telephoto lens or other method from a vantage point outside the property no claim can be made.
2. *Private nuisance*: If the conduct of a photographer interferes with someone's enjoyment of their land or can show harm or discomfort they can sue in private nuisance. Taking a single picture does not constitute nuisance but constant surveillance and photographs of every activity would be.

⁶⁸ Archard, David. 'Privacy, the public interest and a prurient public' In: Kieran, Matthew ed. *Media Ethics*. Abingdon: Routledge, 1998, pp. 82-96.

⁶⁹ Metropolitan Police *Photography advice*, 2016. [Online] Available from: <http://content.met.police.uk/Site/photographyadvice> [Accessed 3rd September 2014]

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Dryden Goodwin

Cast

Photograph.

London: Photographers Gallery

25th September to 14th November 2008.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Beat Streuli

Oxford Street, London.

Multi-slide Installation.

London: Tate Britain. 1997.

www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/art-now-beat-streuli.

Beat Streuli in the multi-slide installation *Oxford Street, London*, shown at Tate Britain, makes photographic records without being challenged, of people moving along the crowded pavement in a central shopping area. Known for using a telephoto lens, his imagery could be construed as purposely invading privacy, especially when he captures individuals in close-up, but it is common to see people photographing on the street, so the activity is accepted by default.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Shizuka Yokomizo

Stranger No. 21, 2000.

Chromogenic print 127 x107.95cm.
Collection SFMOMA.

To capture images for the *Stranger* series Shizuka Yokomizo chose ground floor flats at random and sent the occupants letters asking them to stand in their windows, at a given time in the evening, on a set date, when she then took up position with her camera and tripod. Apart from the letter she had no direct contact with the individuals, but did ask by email if they wanted their photographs exhibited.

These three examples demonstrate that there is a disregard in seeking permission for filming and photographing those we do not know. The lack of challenge by individuals being recorded in this way, does demonstrate a level of acceptance and tolerance. As I intend to provoke thought about being seen by an unknown controlling presence, my images are recorded from a high position, where the individual appearing in the shot is not clearly shown. Stopping the camera aperture down softens the semi-distant views, so as to enable the camera to record focused but gentle tonality, like a gentle caress rather than a harsh critical eye. I also wanted to draw parallels with a quality of image that appeared painterly and frequently drew on content articulated by Dalle Vacche in her book *How Art Cinema and Painting is used in Film*.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Dalle Vacche, Angela *How Art Cinema and Painting is used in Film*. London: The Athlone Press, 1997.

2.3.3 Viewing Positions

Audience viewing positions were initially informed by the piece *Working Class Hero* by Candice Breitz. The installation consisted of a series of television screens each showing a portrait video of twenty-five different John Lennon fans, singing ‘Working Class Hero’ to camera. There were two configurations made of this piece in different venues first at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art and subsequently at the White Cube Mason’s Yard. In the Baltic version each of the screens were positioned at regular intervals in the vertical space of the stairwell, a post-industrial concrete construction that resembled a tower. Each individual rendition of the song ran on a loop, to create a chorus of sound, that repeated as it finished. The sound resonated throughout the structure, as the song repeated and echoed through the panoramic vision of sporadically placed filmed imagery.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Candice Breitz.

Working Class Hero (Portrait of John Lennon).

Video installation, with a looping duration of 39 minutes and 55 seconds, matching the length of the original album. 25 x 42" plasma screens.

Gateshead: Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art.

10 October 2006 to 27 January 2007

In this piece the audience could climb the stairway and gradually come face to face with each individual screen, while at the same time hearing and glimpsing all other screens, engaging the audience in active participation of the installation. The same piece was later shown at the White Cube, Mason's Yard, London, but on this occasion the individual portrait videos were shown in a straight line ranging across a single room, with total black out of every other area of the installation.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Candice Breitz.

Working Class Hero (A Portrait of John Lennon)

Video installation, with a looping duration of 39 minutes and 55 seconds matching the length of the original album. 25 x 42" plasma screens.

London: White Cube, Mason's Yard,
25 July to 5 May 2007

The re-configuration of the installation was used in both cases, to create an atmospheric viewing position for the audience. In the White Cube version, the audience was offered a cinematic approach to viewing in a dark room isolated from any other individual. These pieces inspired my method of using the same pieces of work, configured in different ways, to test audience reaction, as explained in **2.2.5**

Construction of Theatre Flats.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Two screen shots taken from:

Caché.

Motion picture.

Directed by Michael Haneke.

Paris: Les Films du Losange, 2002.

Michael Haneke at the start of his film *Caché*, uses continuous single shots, shown in sequence, taken from a static camera position, to create the impression that the person using the camera is observing from one position. The next sequence to these shots in the film is where the owner of the house comes out, to see where the person filming was positioned, by trying to estimate the camera angle. When recording images, either of the figure or from the figure's perspective, I use this inferred camera position, to imply that somebody was watching. This technique ensured that the audience only saw the image from one position, and a frequent audience response was to debate where the photograph was taken, with an attempt at identification of the location.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

The Conversation

Motion Picture

Directed by Francis Ford Coppola

USA. Paramount Pictures, 1974.

In this image Gene Hackman is the subject of observation and aware that he is being surveilled on camera.

2.3.4. Development Imagery: Profile Portraits and Netsheds.

The main influence on development of imagery for the figure used in both photographs and moving image was the Renaissance portrait. The investigation, focused on the conventions used in the depiction of a single female, whose image occupies the major part of a painting of this period. In the translation of visual content and construction taken from the image, I intended to invite the audience to ask about the model, such as who they are, why are they engaged in this activity and why is it shown this way. To further construct this scenario I declare visual connections with Vermeer and in particular with the lighting used in paintings of single figures in front of or near a window. Translating the natural light that falls onto the figure from a window, I retain the softness of low-key colours by stopping the camera down, so that the tonal values recorded have greater depth while the resolution remains soft.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Untitled (#0063)

Hellen van Meene

www.hellenvanmeene.com [Accessed 30 April 2016]

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Untitled – October 1998

C – type print

122 x 152 cm

Hannah Starkey

www.saatchigallery.com/artists/hannah_starkey.htm [Accessed 30 April 2016]

Hellen van Meene and Hannah Starkey photograph single female figures using actors in set up or staged scenarios, recorded to appear as if they are taken from everyday life situations. The images recall freeze frames or stills captured from a moving image, where the contemplative activity has been paused for the camera. They appear as if something has just taken place, or is about to happen, although that could be something mundane or ordinary.

Through the staging of her scenes, Starkey's images evoke suggestive narratives through their appropriation of cultural templates: issues of class, race, gender, and identity are implied through the physical appearance of her models or places.⁷¹

The window that features in both images clearly defines the figures as being inside and the strong lighting that concentrates on the main figure also separates her from everything else in the room, which exists in relative shadow. Isolated from both her surroundings and immediate social interaction this visual device is used to denote self-absorbed interiority. Further details about the construction of character and scene are discussed in *Profile Portraits* and *Netsheds*, where these ideas and constructs were applied to the new work developed.

⁷¹ Ewing, William A., The Saatchi Gallery *Hannah Starkey* 2015. [Online] Available from: www.saatchigallery.com/artists/hannah_starkey.htm [Accessed 25 February 2016]



John, Gwen *A Lady Reading*

Oil on canvas, 15 7/8 x 10 ins (40.5 x 25.5 cm) .

Tate Gallery, London.

Presented by the Contemporary Art Society 1917.

Janet Wolff in her essay *The artist and the flâneur: Rodin, Rilke and Gwen John in Paris*, describes John's work shown at the exhibition at the Barbican in 1985 as having 'a singular focus on women and domestic interiors'.⁷² The work is compared with '... Dutch seventeenth-century interiors. They are small in scale (16 by 10 inches and 12 ½ by 8 ½ inches respectively), delicate in palette and intimate in mood'.⁷³ They are said to reflect John's desire to represent an interior life, spiritual, solitary, private, where images of women are shown alone and self-contained while carrying out their own interests or pursuits.

⁷² Wolff, Janet 'The artist and the *flâneur*: Rodin, Rilke and Gwen John in Paris'. In: Tester, Keith ed. *The Flâneur*: Oxfordshire: Routledge, 1994. pp.111- 137.

⁷³ Ibid.



Vermeer

Girl Reading a Letter at an Open Window c.1657.

Oil on canvas. 83 x 64.5 cm

Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister – Staatliche Kunstsammlungen.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Hunter, Tom

Woman Reading Possession Order. 1998.

Cibachrome print mounted on board.

150 x 120 cm.

This reconfigure image by Tom Hunter, based on Vermeer's painting, records the moment when an exterior event is brought into the picture frame by a letter, and we are told from the title, that the woman is reading a possession order. The context of the image becomes about an exterior event that is impacting on the woman in the interior and I would argue clearly shows the difference between, an image that concentrates on the interiority of the character and one that reflects outside events and the possible repercussions of an exterior event.⁷⁴

As mentioned in **2.2: My Practice Position**, I use a physical object or screen to set up a division in the constructions that I build. Alternatively, I photograph through a window creating a dividing point between the interior and exterior. The presence of the screen also sets up a division the exchange between viewers and viewed and is discussed throughout the following chapters in the context of differing modes of inquiry.

2.3.5. Development of Imagery: Windows and Flânerie.

Rooms with a View, an exhibition shown in New York, focused on paintings of a single person in front of a window or the painter's view from the window.⁷⁵

Responding to these images raised issues of how to present my imagery and the relationship of the photographer/film-maker and the model as previously discussed. Previously, I made the decision to show the model in the window and not the view that the model was viewing.

⁷⁴ Further examples of contemporary remakes of Vermeer can be found on [Online] <http://katieravenscraig.com/vermeer-girl-reading-letter-open-window-archives/> [Accessed 3 November 2016].

⁷⁵ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Exhibition.

Rewald, Sabine. *Rooms with a View: The Open Window in the 19th Century*. (5 April to 4 July 2011). Yale University Press, New Haven and London. Exhibition catalogue.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Paul Winstanley.
Woman at a Window 5,
Oil on Linen. 70 x 56.5 cm. Private Collection. 2003.



Casper David Friedrich.
The Wanderer Overlooking the Sea of fog,
Oil on Canvas. 94.8 x 74.8 cm.
Kunstalle, Hamburg. 1818.

The two pictures above influenced a more powerful image construction, by creating a view from the perspective of the model. Both views in the two paintings above show the back of one singular figure, both figures review a scene laid out before them. The only difference is in the fact that the male figure is outside appearing to dominate the landscape, while the female watches and waits on the inside of a room.

For the work that followed in both the *Windows* and *Flânerie* series, as the recorder/photographer, I alternated between the two positions and used the window frame and curtains to define the position of viewing. This allowed me to capture imagery from the power position of the panoptical tower, but to combine this view with images captured by looking across the crowded city. This play between the interior and exterior views also became a developing theme that became important in defining what constituted my gaze as distinctly female.

In the following chapters, references to others' work and content from the literature search are integrated into explanations about creative development, to explain more directly how they are used to influence and to guide my methodology of production.

CHAPTER THREE: PROFILE PORTRAITS

In this chapter I discuss the first body of research relating to the profile portrait, where threads were picked up and continued from previous work, developed during the MFA programme. This route investigated the image of a single female, captured either as a photograph or film, installed inside a theatrical set.



Moira Turner. *Susannah in the Theatre of the Observed*.

Installation with film. Bath: Hotbath Gallery. 2008.

Originally produced for the MFA programme, this piece was a re-configured in different formats to experiment with audience viewing positions. In this version the viewing position was on the outside of the structure, compelling the audience to view the piece from outside, looking inside through the doorway/window. The audience was excluded from entering the construction, but were able to view the filmed figure through the glass divide.



Moira Turner. *Susannah Observed*.

Film installed in viewing box. Bristol: Spike Island. 2009.

Another re-configuration showed the filmed figure in a viewing box, with the projector in front of the entrance space. This device was to exclude the audience, and enhance their position of looking in or around the edge of a doorway.

The temporary sets became theatres of observation, where entrances and viewing positions were controlled. The images were installed in different configurations, to test audience response. Through this reflective practice, information was accumulated and used to examine the interaction between the viewer and the viewed.

The first source and influence on the configuration of imagery for the female figure was Renaissance profile portraits. Detailed analysis of picture content was obtained through a literature search, but as my reconfiguration of these images was centred on the female view of observation, these sources were only marginally useful as they reflected a conventional and often sexist understanding written from the perspective of the male gaze, centring on the negative connotations of that focus.⁷⁶ The male gaze in

⁷⁶ Pope-Hennessy, John. *The Portrait in the Renaissance*. New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1966. This book contains many quotes about portraits of females in the

this context is the way in which depictions of the world and women are presented from a masculine point of view, as discussed in the **Introduction: 1.2 The Viewer and the Viewed.**

In using Renaissance portraiture, I wanted to show some understanding of the motivation behind the production of these images. While this context did not have any immediate significance in terms a contemporary view of watching and being watched, it did provide a high art equivalent of magazine or newspaper imagery, where the woman is placed solely to be looked at. The composition, format and presentation of the woman in profile, or when the head was bowed avoiding eye contact, added to this look and provided a starting point for an investigation into the viewed and the viewer.

From my literature search of feminist writers discussing the Renaissance profile portrait, a different slant on imagery emerged, a refreshing view that differed from references drawn from purely historical authors. Feminist critique was more important in determining the look of the reconfigured imagery, while evoking an informed view of the period.⁷⁷ The new images had to present the model as self-contained and unadorned by conventions of wealth and status that associated her with being a commodity, an object of display, reflecting male power.

The stories behind the original Renaissance portraits were absorbing and read like ancient soap operas in which the females had little part in directing their own destiny. The new images needed to ‘confront the beholder, making the beholder responsible for the effect of the work, the act of looking and being seen becoming the subject of the work’.⁷⁸ My aim was to find a visual method of drawing attention to issues for consideration, by offering contextual information as embedded layers of content in the reconfigured contemporary images.

Renaissance. It assumes that the portraits were painted for the purpose of the male, to display his possessions.

⁷⁷ Pollock, Griselda ‘Modernity and the spaces of femininity’. In: Broude, N. and M. Garrard eds. *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*. New York: Icon Editions, 1992.

⁷⁸ Olin, Margaret ‘Gaze’. In: Nelson, Robert S. and Richard Shiff, eds. *Critical Terms for Art History*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

These narratives, like all visual-story telling, required complex manipulation of pictorial language and artistic skill. They tell, after all, of dramatic events, which convey emotion and meaning through figures.⁷⁹

Andrea Pearson's book *Women and Portraits in Early Modern Europe: Gender, Agency, Identity* raised questions as to the importance of life stories, and how I could embed a story in the reconfigured image.⁸⁰ The reconstructed characters adopt some of the conventions found in the Renaissance paintings, such as the pose, the tonal quality of lighting or overall appearance. My images are allegorical in the sense that they tell a story about the people depicted. They are not about familial standing and wealth, objects that surround them or the depiction of place instead I present the figure, who adopting the conventions of the profile portraits, filmed against simple backgrounds. The dress, pose, movement are also simple and un-adorned by references to contemporary notions of fashion. The model is enjoyed for her quiet and self-contained presence.

I purposely do not attempt to delve deeply into connections with cultural differences or where the language of communication of another era has to be explained as suggested by Baxandall.⁸¹ These influences are woven into the work in order to touch notes of understanding and prompt the audience to recognise direct references and by doing so make connections with implied thoughts. A particular reference or note will provide a visual clue or link that might unlock understanding of an important issue or provoke intuition on an entirely personal level.

The intention behind the use of these references is to provide access to what Berger calls 'codes' of interpretation and assumes that the audience will by default interpret meaning:

The act of seeing is active; it is an act of choice. We see what we look at and so relate to it. We also become aware that we can be seen, and so are aware we are part of the visible world. This results in the understanding

⁷⁹ Tinagli, Paola *Women in Italian Renaissance Art: Gender, Representation, Identity*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997. p.3.

⁸⁰ Pearson, Andrea ed. *Women and Portraits in Early Modern Europe: Gender, Agency, Identity*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008.

⁸¹ Baxandall, Michael *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972

that others may see things differently. This two-way (reciprocal) nature of vision comes before dialogue.⁸²

Prompted by recognition of links and references, the audience enters into a process of understanding, remembrance and identification. The hope is that by drawing them into the piece the audience becomes engaged in the role of the observer, while at the same time examining their own participation and attitude to watching and being watched.

My research focus has been on Florentine portraits of females, where the original paintings portraying the head, show the model as an object of public display. During this period a virgin daughter, who was often the subject of painting, had a public persona, but as a measure of her class it was important that she was generally unseen in public. As Patricia Simons states:

Only at key moments could she be seen, whether at a window or in the “window” of a panel painting, seen and therefore represented. These centred on her rite of passage from one male house to another upon her marriage ...⁸³

By evoking the Renaissance period, I wanted to replicate the convention where a painting is used to present a potential bride, or to commemorate the death of a wife, rather like keeping a record of a lost or prized possession. The context was also intended to provide a hook or link that allowed me to highlight the commoditisation of the female figure. My reconfigured profile portraits were therefore made in the knowledge that when the image was installed, the model would automatically engage with the audience, as an object of ‘the gaze’, while acknowledging her adherence to social conventions and conformity in the way she presents herself and behaves.

I used the study of Renaissance portraiture with an understanding of the intention of these images, but seeing the images in a different era, they had to be translated into a new visual language of communication. To explain this further my reading of them in another culture and time is enormously different. They are calm presentations of powerful women, not presented in terms of sexual allure, but judged by their dress and decoration as wealthy gentlewomen who are self-contained and show no

⁸² Berger, John *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin, 1972. p.2.

⁸³ Simons, Patricia ‘Women in frames: the gaze, the eye, the profile in Renaissance portraiture’. In: Broude, Norma and Mary Garrard eds. *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*. New York: Icon Editions, 1992 pp.38 – 57.

acknowledgement of the audience. Reflecting this thought, my female protagonist is portrayed to reflect 'the primacy of absorption' as described by Michael Fried.⁸⁴ In other words she is aware of the viewer and the audience, assuming the role as the filmed character, adopts a strategic refusal to acknowledge the audience.



Ambrogio de Predis
Bianca Maria Sforza. 1493.
Oil on panel. 51 x 32.5 cms.

Widener Collection, Washington D.C: National Gallery of Art.

The focal point of this painting is the figure and in particular the face and neck, where the light is centred and counter-changed with the darker background. The background is neutral with detail reserved for the dress, hair and ornamental decoration.

⁸⁴ Fried, Michael *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot*. London: University of Chicago Press, 1990. pp.7-70.



Moirá Turner

Profile Portraits Talhouet 2: 2009

Photograph on Fine Art Paper,
70 x 60 cms.

This photograph reflects my gaze, that of a mother for her daughter. I offer a gentle glance across an interior space, in a moment of calm, rather than the presentation of the woman as a commodity.

From this visual starting point my work develops by reconfiguring these images, using the conventions of pose to represent the female figure. I ask the viewer to read the imagery in a new context, but also to make connections through personal knowledge. The new configurations abandon the identification with wealth and status by adopting a simple dark coloured gown.



Moirira Turner

Profile Portrait 4. 2010

Photograph on Fine Art Paper
60 x 55 cm.

This image was from a series of trial photographs testing out the effects of natural and directional lighting on the figure. The view includes part of the interior with a window to imply the exterior view, which is not seen.

Jane Brettle's images show women dressed in full-length black niqab with only a glimpse of the model's eyes. To record these images she formulates the photographic construction from a previously produced image, making reference to historical photographic imagery and encourages her audience to recall the original image. The

photographic portrait images are of single female subjects, surrounded by black fabric. The black fabric absorbs the light, creating an atmosphere, which is resistant to the gaze of the observer, while retaining the presence of a hidden person.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Jane Brettle.

Beyond Black 2006. (After Duane Michals)

Archival Pigment Print.

80 x 80cms

Available from: www.janebrettle.com [Accessed 3 September 2011].

(This traditional dress raises many questions and topics beyond the scope of the thesis).

My images do not utilise the black fabric in the image itself, and the face, neck and hands remain uncovered. However, when installing the films I used black serge screens placed around the image to concentrate the viewing on the image rather than the surrounding environment. The screens, made as conventional theatre flats, are used to 'set the scene' for the images to be installed. They also construct the viewing position, placing the audience on the outside of the image area. This device allowed the character to move inside her own interior space with the audience separated and placed outside.

The visual information extracted from the conventions of portrait paintings contributed attributes that I wanted for my model, such as the hair bound rather than free flowing to denote a serious and contained appearance. Historical commentary mentioned features such as: the decorous and honest gaze in the eyes, the silent poetry of an upright stance, the lavish presence of jewellery and fine costume. Although I liked the idea of an honest gaze and upright stance to evoke a poetic silence, the lavishness of decorative jewellery introduced wealth and status, which I wanted to avoid, as the context implied an inappropriate identification with familial ownership or making the young woman a commodity of a wealthy family.



Botticelli, Sandro
Portrait of a Young Woman. c.1475
Tempera on panel
61 x 40 cm.
Florence: Palazzo Pitti.

In this portrait by Botticelli, shown above, there is no indication of anybody else being present and the sitter shows no acknowledgement of anything aside from her gaze

directed beyond the picture plane. She is placed against a simple background and does not have the usual embellishment of jewellery and lavish costume. The dress is simple with the light white fabric, pulled through on the shoulder, over the back and covering the hair, is used to signify purity. The background is uncluttered, as the figure stands in front of a frame, to signifying a window or opening and positioning her on the interior. The counter-change pattern of light skin against dark frame is repeated, where the darkness of the dress sits against the skin and fabric.

Some profile portraits according to Tinagli:

.... led some art historians, such as Patricia Simons writing on profile portraits of women from Renaissance Italy, to see certain representations of women as part of a larger, male driven discourse that constructed female sitters according to convention, to be looked upon and subordinated by their male audiences.⁸⁵

This comment initiated a search for images that broke the mould of convention and this I found in the depiction of Sofonisba Anguissola. Tinagli suggests that rather than presenting a ‘constructed femininity...signified by rich clothes, jewellery and ornaments, flowers, marble like skin and elegant elongated fingers...’. The self-portrait, illustrated below, shows a young woman dressed in dark clothes, paint brush in hand and standing at the easel.⁸⁶ Her hair is simply plaited around her head, without prestigious jewellery or ornaments apart from small lace ruffles at neck and wrists, to underline her status as an educated woman of high birth; someone who it was safe to leave your wife and daughters with. This piece encouraged a consideration of the tacit history of the character and how clues could be laid to enable audience recognition.

⁸⁵ Tinagli, Paola *Women in Italian Renaissance Art: Gender, Representation, Identity*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997. pp.49-53.

⁸⁶ Tinagli, Paola p.112.



Anguissola, Sofonisba.

Self-Portrait at the Easel, 1556.

Oil on Canvas.

Lancut, Poland: Museum-Zamek.

The artist's head is turned three quarters towards the viewer, looking straight out of the canvas. Soft lighting falls on the left of her face, which is turned towards the audience. There is a deep simple background colour and a painting on an easel to the left.

Not all Renaissance portraits were produced to present daughters for marriage or their acceptance into prestigious families as wives. Many wealthy families of the Renaissance period were known to educate their daughters in the same way as their sons. Although not born into one of these families, Sofonisba Anguissola became a well-known artist, who produced self-portraits possibly for her father to publicise her talents.

My model who follows Sofonisba's pattern of self-presentation is my daughter, a painter with a sensitive knowledge of lighting and painterly qualities, who brought to the image an appreciation of the 'look'. Dressed in a similar way to Sofonisba, her head is wrapped in a silk scarf, to simplify the head, with plain dark clothes to cover her body

and exclude any significance of wealth. She was chosen as a model to ensure that there was no question of an exploitative nature to the encounter; participate fully with the act of being filmed; avoid the passive objectified use of a subject that would possibly provoke a stereotypical response from the audience. Foucault explains this as creating a situation where:

...the subject is objectified by a process of division either within himself or from others.⁸⁷

The young female who gazes out of the picture space displays her self-contained presence, without a self-consciousness. She moves as she would like and is beautiful, although she does not adopt the conventions of beauty dictated by commercial or social pressures. She does not ask to be observed or gazed at using the conventional understanding of how females are seen and viewed, but with an acceptance and comfort such as that given to a daughter by her mother; as previously mentioned, the model is my daughter.

A series of photographs and films resulted, where the model adopted the conventions used in the researched portraits. For example, the pose generally seen in these images of young females was used to define the position, movement and space occupied by the characters. They were photographed using natural light emanating from one single light source, head silhouetted against a sky or simple background, body slightly turned, and lighting to give a tactile quality to the skin, hair and fabric.

⁸⁷ Foucault, Michel 'The subject and power'. *Cited In: Faubion, James. ed. Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984*. London: Penguin Books, 2000.



Moira Turner.

Profile Portraits: Talhouet, 2009.

Photograph on Fine Art Paper
70 x 60 cm.

I experimented by imposing restrictions on the model, such as that she was only to move within the camera space. I trialled this idea by giving the filmed character a particular profile as described, that could be identified through visual clues or implied links with paintings and painterly formats. For example, although not identical to any particular painting the two films drew parallels with the work of Vermeer using direct natural lighting, and with Hammerström and Gwen John in terms of colouration, as well as adopting the poses found in Renaissance profile portrait.

The films were captured using natural lighting directed from a window that was higher than the figure, to prompt the Vermeer reference: transposing the colour scheme and lighting into film, operating a counter-change system of light against dark and ensuring that detail was picked up from dark areas of the scene. Both single figures wear simple clothing based on the Self Portrait by Sofonisba Anguissola, with the intention of creating an image that presented simplicity and removed notions of social class.

The images are intended to be quiet, reflective pieces that present the posed female in an accessible way, photographed with a gentle touch of directional light. This encourages an imagined touch of the viewer held at a respectful distance from the character, that caresses a resting hand or turned cheek, but never invades the quietness of disposition and manner. In order to achieve this presence or demeanour, the character adopts some of the conventions of Renaissance profile portraits making reference to classical painting and high art. This gentleness and quietness of approach enables the image to be translated into filmic form and exist in the same genre as Rodaway suggests in his reference to reading and the haptic:

This rich touch imagination permits us to experience an intimacy with people and places which may be a great distance from our present location, in time and/or space, or which we have never actually experienced, such as the evocation of tactile experiences in dreams or when reading.⁸⁸

The first film in the series follows the convention of the portraits and shows the model only in profile. In the 15th Century averted eyes would have been a sign of modesty and a virtuous woman would not return a male gaze. In the second film the model starts from the same format, but moves slowly to look directly at the viewer to imply additional strength of character.

In a Florentine profile portrait turning of the head towards the viewer was considered an act of defiance to convention: a male act in terms of portraits of this period. The model in my film starts in profile, and when the head turns she changes from being observed to a new position where she can return the gaze. Maintaining a self-contained presence and an implied defiant strength by looking into the camera lens, she is complicit with the activity of being viewed.

The aim of this representation was to present a contemporary female view, using methodology that purposely breaks with recognised profile conventions. In doing this I raise issues of subjectivity and objectivity without offering set conclusions, to prompt questions about how women are observed and consequently portrayed. At the same time I ask the viewer to question why the original paintings were produced, what effect

⁸⁸ Rodaway, Paul *Sensuous Geographies: Body, Sense and Place*. London and New York: Routledge, 1994. Figure 4:3.

this might have had on the sitters, and whether in a contemporary context this system still operates.

These new images become allegorical in the sense that they tell a story about the people depicted, the way 'the viewed' are dressed, the objects that surround them, the depiction of place and the visual content and construction of the image. The images invite the audience to ask who is 'the viewed', who is 'the viewer', why are they engaged in this activity and why is it shown this way.

Having profiled the characters and produced the films, experimentation with the screen flats in different constructions followed, with the intention of testing out the concepts of watching and being watched. The filmed characters and temporary stage flats were brought together, to determine the manner in which my reconstructions could change the viewing experience, and to allow audience feedback to influence their construction, but only if it brought me nearer to the original intention of presenting the female character engaged in her own subjectivity.⁸⁹

The images at this research stage were projected or installed inside a construction, usually including a window or doorway. The film of the model was positioned so that when viewing the set, the audience was also in a situation of observance, either by the filmed model or by other members of the audience. This introduced another aspect to the viewing encounter, making the viewer or outsider look in, while excluded by the doorway or window. The decisions made during the process of making and showing, led to further visual research using film, photography, projections and screens which in turn gave different visual results.

⁸⁹ Rabinow, Paul. *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*. London: Penguin, 1991. p.7.



Moira Turner

Still images from the two films paired together for *Profile Portrait*.

These images are stills from two films originally made separately shown individually at first but as work developed they were shown as a pair. The reason for pairing them was that they appeared to have an imagined interactive, silent dialogue. Together they present themselves as viewers and not the viewed, subject to 'looked-at-ness'.

In the first showing, the films were projected onto screens inside an enclosed stage set. Viewers actively participated in the installation, moving around the projections, standing in front of projectors to combine themselves with the digital image, acting out a role as if the filmed image was a reality. This was not planned or predicted and would have been an interesting route to explore, but as Bourriaud suggests if the viewers are participating, then I am not engendering active viewing and therefore not encouraging the audience to be the viewer.⁹⁰ In each subsequent configuration or installation, the viewing position became more controlled, with viewers and their physical interaction with the image restricted, so that they were placed on the outside looking into the image. My intention was to make the subject contemplative, contained and absorbed in her own personal world. The viewer could project their ideas onto the image depicted, but it would not change her demeanour or influence her self-containment.

The series *Profile Portraits* investigated the relationship between a single female character, produced as a photographic or moving image, and the audience. My

⁹⁰ Bourriaud, Nicolas *Relational Aesthetics*. Dijon: Les presses du reel, 2002.

methodology was to install the moving images into large-scale constructions, made out of standard theatrical stage flats, in order to test out the effect of different viewing positions on the viewer. However, as the research of this section of work drew towards a close, the large-scale constructions had been temporarily put aside in order to concentrate attention on the subject of observation or the viewed. The outcome from the series was realised first as a pair of moving images projected sequentially onto the gallery wall and then on a show reel.⁹¹ The final versions were shown on televisions mounted in picture frames and installed as a pair amongst paintings in an art gallery and are discussed in **7.3.1: Review of *Profile Portraits***.⁹²

The apposed hanging of the framed video pieces, evoked an imagined dialogue between the two females depicted in the moving images. This unexpected evocation increased my understanding of the complexity of watching: the audience regarded the viewed; the viewed regarded the audience, and also viewed the person in the other moving image piece. This circular exchange of viewing flowed continuously, from one piece of work to the other, to the audience in front of the work, who in turn were viewed by new viewers arriving in the gallery space. This action returned and repeated, much as the moving image returned to the beginning of the looped sequence.

⁹¹ Doctoring Practice Symposium, Bath School of Art and Design, 27 April 2012. Doctoring Practice Exhibition. Shown at: Bath School of Art and Design, Bath Spa University, Aberystwyth University 18 June – 24 August 2012, Salisbury Arts Centre 7 September – 20 October 2012. [Online] Available on <http://vimeo.com/40642256>.

⁹² Royal West of England Academy: 162 Annual Open Exhibition. 12th October – 7th December 2014.



Visitors viewing the *Profile Portraits* as the RWA Exhibition 2014.
A corner can be seen bottom right.

This chapter has outlined the development of imagery that decided the look of the figure used in the still and moving imagery. The following chapter describes the continuation of work that focused attention away from the viewed towards the viewer and the relationship between performer and audience. The concluding pieces offered a new translation of the Renaissance portrait. They took the image out of the original context and reconfigured the concept, presenting the image of a young female illuminated by natural light, standing and being observed by the audience. The use of film to present the character, allowed a distance to be created between the viewer and the model/performer in front of the camera.

CHAPTER FOUR: NETSHEDS

The following chapter describes the continuation of work that focused attention away from the viewed towards the viewer. The research re-engaged with film installed into temporary structures prompted by a concern that, although intending to promote an awareness of being observed, the audience was being encouraged to observe the female model, rather than becoming the subject of surveillance. Resuming the reflective practice position explained in **Methodology: 2.1.2**, my investigation this time focused on the activity of observing, to examine the relationship between the audience/viewer and the viewed through the medium of installation, working from Claire Bishop's understanding that:

... in a work of installation art, the space, and the ensemble of elements within it, are regarded in their entirety. Installation art creates a situation into which the viewer physically enters, and insists that you regard this as a singular totality.⁹³

By making work large enough for us to enter, installation is said to become inescapably concerned with the presence of the viewer. Ilya Kabakov says that in a 'total installation', the viewer is the 'main centre toward which everything is addressed', but does this still hold true when the moving image appears to be participating in the activity of viewing?⁹⁴ Kabakov's statement assumes that the moving image is putting the viewer in a passive cinema position, where the viewer is seated in a dark place. My intention is to encourage the viewer to think about being looked at, participating in looking, while being surveilled by a control system.

In this sequence of work, entitled *Netsheds*, I returned to Foucault's concept of the Panopticon and controlled environments with restricted access, where an individual could be seen to watch from a central location above the audience.

⁹³ Bishop, Claire, 'But is it installation art?' *Tate Etc.* Issue 3: Spring 2005 [Online] Available from: <http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/it-installation-art> [Accessed 24 October 2015]. p.6.

⁹⁴ Kabakov, Ilya, 'Notes on Ilya Kabakov's "on the total installation"'. *Third Text*, 17 (4), 2003, pp. 345-352.

An observer holds the key to each doorway and controls the movement of individuals and watches from a central location to ensure that free movement does not occur.⁹⁵

An investigation of Fishing Netsheds across Europe, including Hastings, inspired the construction of a four metre high structure based on traditional designs. A backstage visit to the National Theatre, Southbank, London, informed simple, but effective methods of making stage scenery for the set and provided advice on set building. As with all other constructions, configured during the research period, the building methodology of using theatre flats continued. For this piece plans and architectural drawings of existing buildings, provided by staff at the Hastings Fishermens' Museum, were used to create a structure resembling the Netsheds.⁹⁶



Hasting Netsheds, The Stade, Rock-a-Nore Road, Hastings.

⁹⁵ Foucault, Michel 'Panopticism'. In: Foucault, Michel *Discipline & Punishment: The Birth of the Prison* New York: Vintage Books, 1977, pp.195-228 translated from the French by Alan Sheridan.

⁹⁶ Hastings Fishermen's Museum, Rock-a-Nore Road, Hastings.

As viewing structures, the Netsheds were also inspired by temporary architectural structures, shown over a period of time at the Serpentine Gallery.⁹⁷

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Serpentine Pavilion. Olafur Eliasson and Kjetil Thorson, 2007.

This pavilion had semi-transparent walls, where the outside viewer was offered shifting visibility of the interior.

Although not on the same scale of the public buildings seen at the Serpentine, where a large audience was anticipated, my structures were aimed at influencing the viewing position of the individual viewer, while at the same time evoking situations of watching and being watched. The structures followed the model suggested by Mike Nelson in his exhibition at Tate Gallery, London:

The installation puts the viewer on the outside of the space while presenting information about the occupant. On the outside looking in as if in the wings of a theatrical moment being acted out.⁹⁸

The notion of a black tower with its high view over any surrounding area became a symbol of power that could be used to infer a glowering presence of an unseen person,

⁹⁷ Serpentine Gallery. *Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2007* [Online] Available from: www.serpentinegalleries.org/search/site/Pavilions. [Accessed 20 August 2014].

⁹⁸ Nelson, Mike *The Coral Reef*. London: Exhibition, Tate Modern Gallery, 2007. Quote taken from the gallery catalogue.

but also to evoke a more romantic idea of longing, reminiscent of the theme that frequently occurs in literature of the woman in the tower.⁹⁹

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

John Smith *The Black Tower*

16mm film, 23 mins, colour, sound.

London 1985-87, Lux.

In addition to the Hastings Netsheds, John Smith's film *The Black Tower* offered inspiration for a structure that had a towering presence.

In the *Netsheds* piece I wanted to build an architectural structure, to stage a moving image in a raised position and involve both inside and outside views. As a tall structure it would be visible from a distance rather like a lighthouse or beacon. Constructed as an installation with more elaborate stage flats than previously used, it allowed the viewer to move in and out of the structure. As in every temporary structure employed during the research period, it included divisions to create distance between the audience and the image: a screen, a door and a window.

⁹⁹ Loo, O. *Rapunzel 1790 A new Translation of the Tale by Friedrich Schulz*. [Amazon Kindle Edition]. 2015.



Moira Turner
Netshed. 2011.
 360 x 122 x 122 cm
 Screen 122 x 110 cm



Moving Image *Lace Curtain* can be viewed on the disc that accompanies this thesis. Follow links to *Netsheds*.

This was the first of the *Netshed* pieces, built in the studio and fixed on one side to the wall. The screen at the top of the tower could be viewed from outside but also the audience could look or enter the inside space to see the moving image on the screen above.

The height of this structure gave me an opportunity to set up a space at the top of the *Netshed*, where the film of a watching figure sitting behind a lace curtain was trialled. In the film, a single female figure is screened by a lace curtain, which moves with a slight breeze, to partially reveal her as she appears and disappears behind the lace. Watching from a high window position inside the constructed space, allowed her to adopt the role of the viewer and denoted the powerful position akin to the occupant of

the panoptical tower, looking out and not always seen by the viewer. Foucault described Bentham's architectural plan of the Panopticon:

“... one can observe from the tower, standing out precisely against the light, the small captive shadows in the cells of the periphery. They are like so many cages, so many small theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualised and constantly visible”.¹⁰⁰

The high position was therefore used to change her 'looked-at-ness' and made a definitive separation between the viewer and the viewed. She became more powerful and self-contained, an observer as well as being occasionally glimpsed.

The film could be viewed from ground level from both inside and outside the structure and provided different viewing experiences for the audience. They stood and gazed, or peeped through gaps, moved in and out of the structure or occupied a restricted private space by closing the door. Wherever the audience moved, they were always watched from behind the lace curtain, and this added a new dimension in the theatricality of engagement between viewer and artwork.

The space around the installation was purposely limited, to create a situation where the activity of viewing the installation was watched by others waiting to see the exhibit. The interior became the domain of the female figure, while all other participants were placed on the outside, looking in from the public gallery space. This division in space allowed the female figure to become the subject of viewing described by Rabinow as '... objectified by a process of division either within himself or from others.'¹⁰¹ Although the female figure was partially seen and therefore notionally the objectified subject of viewing, the audience found the gaze turned towards themselves and they became the main target of the gaze, despite this gaze being virtual.

Architecture divides space for differential experience. It provides an exterior to see and an interior to use.¹⁰²

The division in space created the situation where the audience looked into the structure and re-introduced an unanticipated concept of interior and exterior, which

¹⁰⁰ Foucault, Michel. 'Panopticism'. p.100.

¹⁰¹ Rabinow, Paul *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*. London: Penguin, 1991. pp.3-39.

¹⁰² Glassie, Henry, *Vernacular Architecture*: Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000. p.52.

likened the installation to a doll's house.¹⁰³ I was uncomfortable with this analogy because it returned the power position that was previously reversed, back to the viewer. It implied that the female figure was enclosed in an interior, returning her to the previous position of being viewed as in the *Profile Portraits*. My intention was to step aside from the idea that the interior/domestic/private is generally termed as female and the exterior/industrial/public as male.

If the piece was to reflect the panoptical gaze, the audience did not have to see the observer and consideration was therefore given to the suggestion, from feedback, that filmed versions of the moving curtain, without a person present, might prove more potent as a stimulant of the imagination, and that this would open the opportunity for the audience to invent an unidentified presence.

Domestic interiors containing displayed objects, relate a story to the viewer about the occupants. The story is extended by the recognition of the objects and their sources, where they were bought and by whom. Furniture, textiles, objects are all subject to a transient timeframe of design or style, easily replaced by taste and fashion. The objects do however contain a history of making and culture that help to locate the room and its occupants.

Serbian artist Darinka Pop-Mitic's installation *Manzaralar, Landscapes*, questioned the relationship between peaceful homes and the sites of massacres during the war in Yugoslavia. On entering the installation, the audience found the artist relaxing on an armchair in what looked like a living room decorated with ornate wallpaper and landscape paintings. The paintings depict places where massacres took place during the war in Yugoslavia.

¹⁰³ Stewart, Susan *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*: Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993, pp. 61-69.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Pop-Mitic, Darinka.

Manzaralar Landscapes.

Shown at the 11th Istanbul Biennial, Antrepo No.3, Tobacco Warehouse 1 & 2.
Courtesy of Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade, 2004.

Installation of paintings set in a middle-class living room. When I viewed the piece the artist and another person were sitting in the chairs without making any conversation. They became part of the installation and added their performance to the piece.

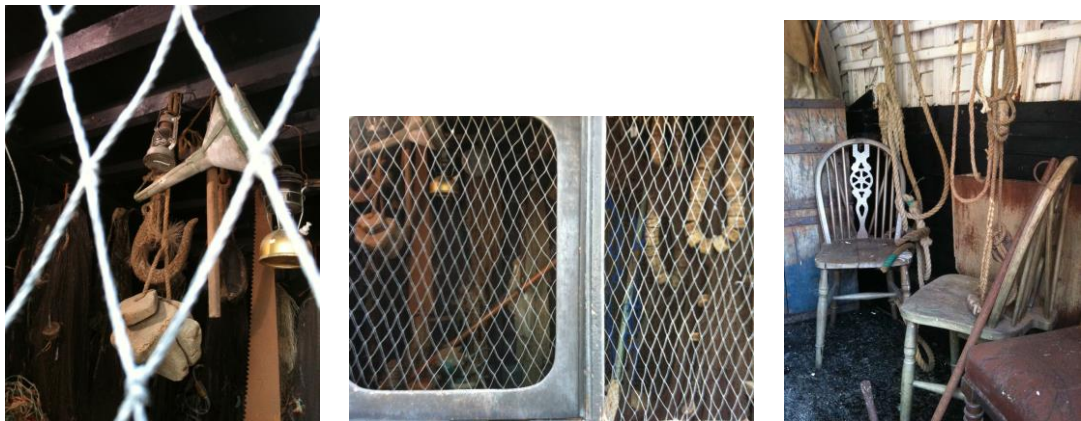
We say that the war in Yugoslavia was constructed from ‘little lies at home’; a space where someone would be ready to share racist comments that would not normally be shared outside the home.¹⁰⁴

The seemingly peaceful domestic interior is loaded with alternative meaning and memories shown by placing significant objects around the installation, to reveal how these spaces served as the incubators of massacres committed during the war. This piece suggested a consideration of the interior and the nature of any content that might

¹⁰⁴ Sîm Esmen, Yasemin. ‘Massacres begin at Home’. *Hürriyet Daily News*, 9 April 2009.

be included. A focus on interiors and particularly of domestically displayed objects followed, to imply function and relate a story to the viewer about the occupants, present or past. Any displayed object would contain a history of making and culture relating information about the occupants of the space and giving clues about the person who owned them. As the Renaissance portraits brought with them embedded histories, could objects also give information about their source, who gave them or where they were bought, the materials used and how they relate to the people that view and occupy the space?

To test out if the construction could be enhanced by the inclusion of objects, a series of single shot photographs of the interior contents of the original Hastings Netsheds were projected, in an animated sequence, inside the new construction. The images



Moira Turner
Series of photographs taken inside Hastings Netsheds.

shown in quick succession, were intended to invoke a history of the original building from which they were captured. As Stewart suggests a photograph used as a souvenir extends ‘an instant of time’:

The silence of the photograph, its promise of visual intimacy at the expense of the other senses, its glossy surface reflecting us back, makes the eruption of that narrative, the telling of its story, all the more poignant.¹⁰⁵

Following Anthony Vidler’s suggestion, in his essay *Homes for Cyborgs*, that everyday, well-used objects could be used to suggest previous ownership by binding people to

¹⁰⁵ Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, The Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993. pp. 132 – 139.

these objects, an old chair was included to provoke a familiarity of content, with the intention of enhancing meaning.¹⁰⁶ This inclusion was intended to follow Walter Benjamin and his statement: ‘The inhabitant left his trace in every spot of the traditional home’.¹⁰⁷ I wondered if they would be seen as photographic records of the real interior, complete with tacit history embedded in each object, or if they detracted from the viewing or influenced the thinking of the viewer. Feedback indicated that the audience did not benefit from the inclusion and that it detracted from the purpose and power of the figure in the window.¹⁰⁸

The inclusion of objects, to represent the inside of the space, proved to be a blind alley that did not add to or answer any questions relating to observation. From this point onwards, the installations became devoid of personal objects or items of furniture, unless they were particularly representational of meaning. What it did do was raise further questions about what features would be needed to imply a gendered space, which led to an extension of research discussed in the next chapter.

The final realisation of the *Netsheds* series, shown in the exhibition, includes a film that makes reference to Christina of Denmark and the portrait painted by Holbein. The character was purposely chosen as a well-known figure whose portrait hangs in the National Gallery, London, often used in advertising and promotion of the collection, a familiar figure to public viewers and a female model with a powerful back-story. In her new configuration she becomes the occupier of the *Netsheds* structure and looks out over the audience from her high physical and implied power position.

¹⁰⁶ Vidler, Anthony ‘Homes for cyborgs’. In: Reed, Christopher ed. *Not at Home: The Suppression of Domesticity in Modern Art and Architecture*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1996.

¹⁰⁷ Benjamin, Walter ‘The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire.’ In: *Selected Writings Vol.4 1938-1940*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2006, p.19.

¹⁰⁸ Feedback can be found on the disc that accompanies this thesis, in folder *Netsheds* and PowerPoint.



Holbein, Hans. (1538)

Christina of Denmark, Duchess of Milan.

Oil on oak.

179.1 x 82.6 cm.

London: National Gallery.

Holbein painted the sixteen-year-old widow of the Duke of Milan, shown in mourning clothes, for Henry VIII as a potential bride. She refused to marry Henry and is quoted as saying that she would only marry him if she had two heads and could afford to lose one. She eventually married Francis, Duke of Lorraine and was widowed again at twenty-three. Following her husband's death she became Regent of Lorraine and ruled successfully, without any further re-marriage until the age of sixty-eight.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Story extracted from information given on the National Gallery website.
[www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/hans-holbein-the-younger-christina-of-denmark-
duchess.](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/hans-holbein-the-younger-christina-of-denmark-duchess)

Pearson suggests that information and discussion about an historical figure can be used to re-present a particular character. This questions the manner of representation and content of visual information given to the audience and how much information or tacit history is needed to delineate or imply a character drawn from historical references in the filmic image.¹¹⁰

Sample of analysis extracted from reflective journal.

- Strong shadows behind the figure, Strong light directed from above right
- Figure standing in front of a blue/green wall
- Quietly expressive face which is self-contained
- Red mouth with an expression of amused interest
- Lowered eyes but looking out at whoever is off stage
- As if on stage and turns to look at someone unseen
- Pose looks as if she has swept in from the right as her clothes are slightly left behind
- Hands held in front of the body, holding the gloves as if they have just been removed or about to be put back on
- Wearing a ring on the left hand which lines up vertically with the eyes
- Eyebrows suggest hair is lighter in tone than the fur trim/lining around the coat
- Stance is proud and powerful.

The image is once again shown against a simple background but, unlike the profile portraits, she looks out at the audience. She has a confident air and despite her young age has an assertive appearance appropriate to the holder of the panoptical viewpoint. The format for her filmed image is taken from notes made in my reflective journal seen above.

As in previous versions of the *Netshed* the screen is placed at the top of the structure to create a place of observation, where the female character is in a position of power and can be seen from below. This structure enabled me to examine, the participation and exchange between audience/viewer, the viewed/filmed image, and to collect feedback

¹¹⁰ Pearson, Andrea ed. *Women and Portraits in Early Modern Europe: Gender, Agency, Identity*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008.

about successful viewing positions.¹¹¹ Audience feedback, recorded at Spike Open Studio 2010,¹¹² made reference to a range of connections that helped to formulate an understanding of the mood and atmosphere created by the piece, some of them unexpected. Parallels were drawn with existing lighthouse structures such as *Lighthouse on Legs, Burnham on Sea*, illustrated below.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

www.burnham-on-sea.com/lighthouses.shtml [Accessed 2 May 2013].

The *Netsheds* structure prompted memories of living in a wooden house in Canada, for one viewer who moved inside to look up through the rafters towards an interior view of the moving image.¹¹³ The most unexpected response was that many visitors wanted to sit inside and close the door, a notion that I would like to return to in future work.

As in previous versions the figure adopted an elevated position above the audience in a place not immediately seen by the viewed. Her image came in and out of shot, so that the character maintained the illusive power of the watcher and her subjects. This

¹¹¹ Friedberg, Anne 'Cinema and the postmodern condition'. In: Williams, Linda ed. *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film*. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995, pp.53-83.

¹¹² Spike Island Open Studios is an annual event, running over four days, when all artists in the building open their studios to show work. There is also a Test Space for trialling major work with a rolling exhibition programme. Information and feedback can be found on the disc that accompanies this thesis. Follow links for Netsheds.

¹¹³ Turner, Moira *Interview with Eilis Kirby* May 2010.

remoteness was to evoke a self-contained interior world, where the figure became solitary and partially protected from the gaze of the exterior. The high structure recalled the panoptical tower, an enclosed space where she could view from a safe place. The tower also resembled the Netsheds to evoke memories of past occupants: longing, waiting, looking out, observing.

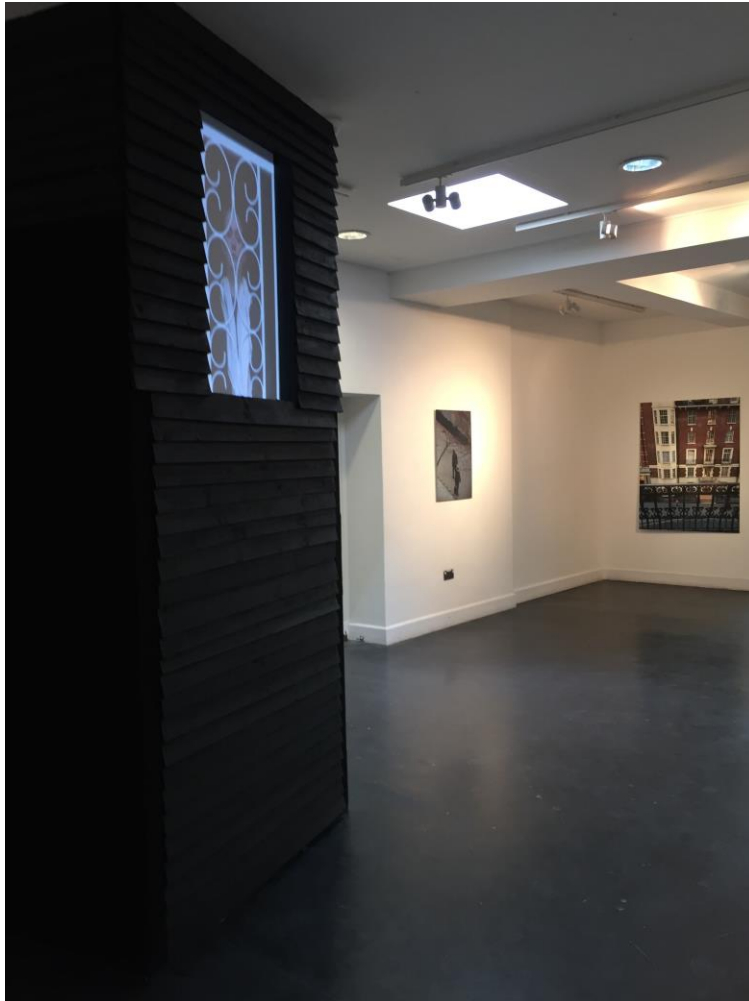


Image taken at the final PhD Exhibition with the Netshed installed in the centre of the gallery space.

Important issues arose out of the feedback for testing out in future work and these were taken into account in the version shown in the final PhD Exhibition. These were: a darkened area around the film screen to facilitate viewing in changing light conditions; a planned manipulation of the position of the viewer in an enclosed space; that the neutrality of the surrounding space should be maintained with the use of black,

white and grey; the screen type should hold the image without the image passing through; the image should show on both sides of the screen.

This chapter has explained how the work moved away from the *Profile Portraits* and expanded on the theatrical structures, named as the theatre of the observed. The development of this work was conceived to avoid putting the female character, shown in the moving image work, into a more proactive position of being the occupant of the panoptical tower.

Work that followed this piece started a moved from Foucault and the discussion about power positions. I became concerned that the occupant of the tower was playing out a stereotypical female role, that of being present in an interior space, that could be termed domestic. In the next chapter I discuss how I the creative artist became the occupant of the tower, looking out towards the exterior and considering spaces from a gendered view.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ The ‘gendered view’ is explained in **Chapter One: Introduction 1.6.6**

CHAPTER FIVE: WINDOWS

In this chapter I set out how practice progressed, through reflective review, together with the influence of feedback and the practical manipulation of the installed structures. Research expanded through the making process with decisions made on how the installation of filmic images could be organised to influence the viewer or the way the viewed is seen. This research position was adopted to question my portrayal of the female model, which although aimed at producing imagery that encouraged a female gaze, might be interpreted as, a passive acceptance and a perpetuation of her 'to-be-looked-at-ness'.¹¹⁵



Netsheds. 2012

View from the ground looking up towards the open window. A film of a female character can be glimpsed, as the lace curtain moves as if in a breeze. The filmed sequence runs on a loop without any fade out fade in. This method implies that the person in the top of the window is always present.

In the *Netsheds* series the viewed was moved to a high position above the audience, to a power position of 'doing the looking'. She gazed from a fixed position of safety, not always seen behind a screen or curtain, removed from active participation and involvement, but still part of unfolding events. Despite this repositioning of the viewed,

¹¹⁵. Mulvey, Laura 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema'. In: Wallis, Brian ed. *Art After Modernism*. New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984. pp.361-374.

the emphasis remained on the female figure being the subject of observation. She was imbued with the power to operate or channel the panoptical gaze and this provoked the audience into making comments reflecting the impact of being viewed, but the space that she occupied remained unexplained.

The consideration of spaces from a gendered view became the new focus as, while the construction made connections with ideas, such as waiting and longing, these interpretations reinforced stereotypical female pursuits. To redress this practice position, the investigation turned towards my own position as photographer/observer/recorder of the view.¹¹⁶ I wanted to identify with the viewed and the role of the lone figure in the window to present my female gaze.¹¹⁷

The work of women photographers during the 20th Century was not always recognised at the forefront of artistic achievement. Martha Sandweiss in her introduction to *Women Photographers of the 20th Century* mentions that it was more difficult to find accessible photographic archives, as much of the work did not appear in major or mainstream collections.¹¹⁸ Many reasons are cited for the under-representation of women's photography, but it also is true to say that photography as an artform was generally under represented or under valued as discussed in Fried's *Why Photography Matters As Art As Never Before*.¹¹⁹

Defining what constituted women's photography and why it would be different in any way from male photography, became secondary to developing an approach that focused or signalled non-gendered representation. It might be argued that with the development of digital photography, photography as an artform has become mainstream, presenting new and exciting areas, and where there is no question that women participate equally as photographers. Making this optimistic assumption therefore, I focus on the content and format of my own photographs to represent

¹¹⁶ Stewart, Susan *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993, pp. 61-69.

¹¹⁷ As defined in Introduction: 1.6.4.

¹¹⁸ Lahe-Gonzales, Olivia and Lucy Lippard *Defining Eye: Women Photographers of the 20th Century Selections from the Helen Kornblum Collection*. St Louis MO: Saint Louis Art Museum, 1998.

¹¹⁹ Fried, Michael *Why Photography Matters As Art As Never Before*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008 .

imagery that is by default particular to my gender. At the same time I work with an awareness of objectification, positively acknowledging that my film and photography avoids a role in which the female is assigned to the passive task of muse or object of desire.

The *Windows* sequence of imagery was captured from a constructed viewing position, a remote or removed space with rules of engagement imposed. The intention was to transport the audience into the position of being the viewer, looking through the eyes of the woman, who now occupied the panoptical view high in the tower. The views had to be recorded through open windows or curtains, from a single viewpoint and a restricted position. Taken from the perspective of the occupant of the panoptical observation tower, it also began to address the question of what defined or constituted the consideration of spaces from a gendered view.



Moirra Turner

Windows: Behind the Scene, Tavistock Square.

Photograph on Fine Art Paper

45 x 55 cm.

This piece marked the point where the image was attempting to show the interior and exterior view in one shot. The view out of the window also includes views of other windows implying possible occupants who may also be observing.

The use of a door or window marks ‘the boundary between private interior spaces and the public world’.¹²⁰ I transgress this boundary or threshold between private and public, to carry out observation of public life as it unfolds. Although not including the figure, this theme recalls many of the contextual links made previously with Renaissance portraits, where the figure is framed against a window and positioned on the interior. The photographer’s position is however identified by the inclusion of the screen or window and the partial view of the room that clearly identifies that the view is from an interior. This has deeper implication as Imogen Racz suggests: ‘...the permeability between the interior mind and the external, material world, with the framed glass panes being the interface between the two’.¹²¹ The idea of the screen being the divider between image and audience could also be utilised to initiate positions and situations of observation.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Antoni, Janine. (1996) *Beatrice Thomas*, abandoned building, paint, drywall, linoleum, extension cord, light bulb.¹²²

¹²⁰ Racz, Imogen *Female Space in Art and The Home: Comfort, Alienation and the Everyday*. London: I.B. Taurus & Co, 2015. p.31.

¹²¹ Racz, Imogen. p.31.

¹²² Antoni, Janine. (1996) *Beatrice Thomas*, abandoned building, paint, drywall, linoleum, extension cord, light bulb.

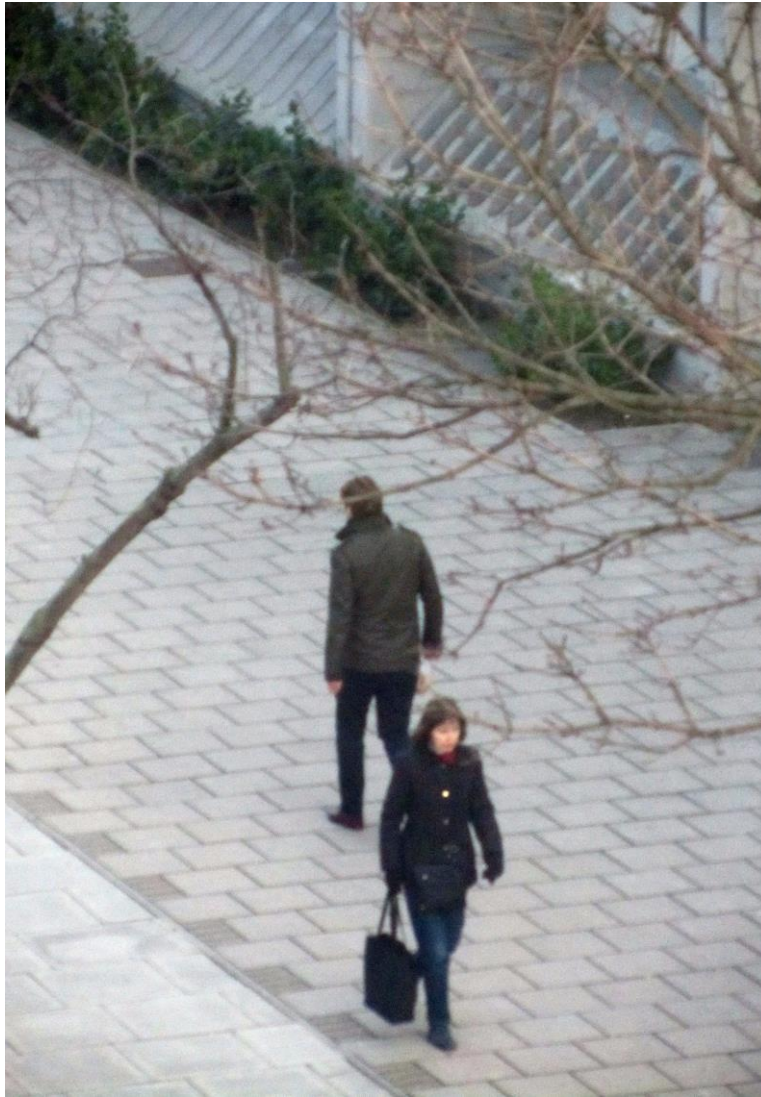
In the piece shown above, Antoni presents a view of an empty apartment, but does not show anything of the person who was the previous inhabitant; instead, Antoni names the piece after Beatrice Thomas, who was the last occupant. The apartment in an abandoned building was restored using forensic clues and scraps, such as paint colour and the remains of wallpaper. No access was given to the apartment and it could only be viewed from a rooftop opposite. Subsequently, the only record of Antoni's artwork is a photograph, a record of an event or a memento that returns the apartment once again to part of the past. Incorporating views of both the interior and exterior, this image successfully creates an interruption of physical space: a division between the viewer and the view.

‘When a photograph is produced it becomes a souvenir or memento of a moment or event that has just passed and as such the method of image presentation becomes part of the meaning and message.’¹²³

A view perceived by the viewer as a single live observational event, recorded with a stills camera, also has the connotation of being a surveillance piece, especially if taken with the intention of capturing the image as if from the blink of an eye.¹²⁴

¹²³ Sontag, Susan *On Photography* London: Penguin, 2002.

¹²⁴ Tate Modern. 28th May to 3rd October 2010. *Exposed: Voyeurism, Surveillance and the Camera*. Room 11: Surveillance. Tate Modern Gallery, London. Exhibition Catalogue.



Moira Turner 2014

Passing By

Photograph on metal

100 x 65 cm

The photographs in this series are captured from a high position looking down at the street view. It uses the technique used in the film *Hidden*. (Referenced in Methodology: 2.3.3) Haneke, Michael, *Hidden (Caché)* France: Les Films du Losange. 2005.

Surveillance camera systems are present on every street in major cities throughout the modern world to facilitate the panoptical role of watching. In the knowledge that society is aware of being watched and recorded, in the series of work that investigated my viewer position, photographs were taken from a position that could be readily identified as surveillance, but purposely avoided the identification of individuals.

At one stage I considered if the photographic image had to be made by me, or whether it could be appropriated from archive material or surveillance records. I started to examine this possibility, but quickly decided that while the reviewing the work of others could inform and aid me in formulating imagery, it could not enable the consolidation of final image that conveyed particular details of intended meaning, especially if it had to reflect my specific female gaze.

A series of pieces followed investigating what methods, processes or formats could be utilised to make visual reference to and portray the differences between the viewer actively engaged in surveillance, observation, 'stolen views' and other situations of watching. The images were produced as if a veil or screen separated the protagonists in a misty softened atmosphere of a glance rather than a stare of close scrutiny.

... using a camera is still a form of participation. Although the camera is an observation station, the act of photographing is more than passive observing.¹²⁵

In the sequence of work grouped under the title *Windows*, each image shows the view through a window, including the window frame and curtains and some indication of the interior position of the viewer. This is to recognise the existence of the person behind the camera and to locate the observer, who stands behind a simple division such as a net curtain, grille or screen. This simple device is used to shield and conceal my position as the female gazer, while allowing an audience to acknowledge the position and angle of the camera. It also allows the interior to be established in the image, without getting involved in the identification of objects and interior style, as decided from the *Netsheds* piece.

¹²⁵ Sontag, Susan. p.12.



Windows: Istanbul in September.

Photograph on Fine Art Paper

45 x 35 cm.

A full view of a grille imparted too much of a restricted view implying 'purdah' and on reflection I decided not to take this route. This focus although interesting, would have extended the research away from the question.



b. *Windows: Bloomsbury Multi-views.*

Photograph on Fine Art Paper

30 x 45 cm

Multiple views of the same subject with slight changes of position, repeated in a grid to resemble a surveillance screen. When tested on the audience, this device did not resolve the issue of identifying the presence of a viewer.



Windows: Coram Street.

Photograph on Fine Art Paper
35 x 40 cm.

The most successful device determined by audience feedback was a lace or net curtain used to separate the view through a window.



Windows: Giverney in October

Photograph on Fine Art Paper
45 x 35 cm.

The four photographic images illustrated above, were what I considered successful in conveying key ideas. They were exhibited as paper prints simply mounted on a white wall to prompt and receive feedback about the differences between formats and photographic representations. Individual responses came from informed professional artists at Spike Island, who were knowledgeable about the film and photography and are extracts from longer conversations:¹²⁶

Films are viewed by a group of people who reach a common understanding of the content, but a photograph requires the viewer to reach behind the surface of the image and understand the relationship between the photographer and the subject.’

The filmic gaze is shared and made to share from a fixed position, because that is the nature of film.

The grille reminds me of Islamic screens especially in style – women behind screens.

The still photograph is recorded with a straight stare from one viewpoint, and therefore more intimate.

The grille in the photograph could have been added graphically, so is not a truthful image. The curtain creates a more intimate look through at the view, which is not shared until the view is shown as a photograph.

In terms of manipulation of the viewer, a photograph can present a controlled viewing position. From my research, the most common audience response to still imagery has been to try and establish where the image was captured, with many individuals gratified by their accurate identification of place. Many of the conversations with members of the public centred on their interpretation of the image and their position as viewer:

I am looking from the inside towards the outside, but my view is interrupted by the curtains. The curtains also stop me being seen if someone looks my way.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Details about individual artists can be found on www.spikeisland.org.uk following the links to Workspace and Artists’ Studios. Artists William Rounce, Jonathan Mosley, Éilis Kirby, Kamina Walton.

¹²⁷ A taped interview can be found on the disc that accompanies this thesis in the folder Windows.

I started to look to the work of other artists in further consideration of the idea of a window or door being the division between the inside and outside, both physically and metaphorically. I found work that was particularly relevant to this idea called the *Stray Man*, 2006 by Roman Ondák at the Victoria Miro Gallery, London.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Roman Ondák (2006)

The Stray Man. Performance/Video, Video: colour, stereo sound. 10:40 min., loop. A man wanders near the windows of a gallery, situated adjacent to the street. He occasionally gazes through the windows into the gallery, but never enters. The performance lasts for half an hour.

In the piece by Ondák, a single screen is presented showing a man looking through a window from outside in the street. As the film progresses the image turns towards somebody filming him on the inside of the glass window. Interviewed for *Art Monthly* the critic Martin Herbert quotes Ondák as saying ‘...thinking about geography and space, how one can be confronted with space in general and the limits of space - what is considered public or private – informs most of my work’.¹²⁸ Representing the inside and outside of a view in one image was a technique mentioned earlier in Janine Antoni’s photographic record of an installation. This piece sent me to look at cinema and how different methods could be used to present the idea of interior and exterior.

¹²⁸ Herbert, Martin. ‘Interviewed by Martin Herbert’. *Art Monthly*, April, 2011, (345), pp.1-4.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Still images captured from the film *Red Road* .

Motion picture. Directed by Andrea Arnold, Scotland, Tartan Films, 2006.

In the film *Red Road*, Jacky is a CCTV security officer, who observes the area in Glasgow, known as Red Road, through monitors. The sequence of images are linked together using a method frequently used in cinema, known as suture. In one shot we see Jacky, the security officer viewing the screen, and in the next the screen she is observing. The surveillance screen is shown in close up, but the resolution of the image is reduced to show that it is from a surveillance camera.

Through this operation, viewers in the auditorium are ‘stitched’ into the subject-positions film constructs for them. They are urged to identify with the gaze of the fictional character and to deny that he/she occupies a separate space: an imaginary unity is created between spectator and screen.¹²⁹

My decision was that the images referencing surveillance, should adopt a lower resolution method (72 dpi) and should be enlarged to create pixilation, but if they referenced a painted image, high definition (300 dpi) should be used.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Chaudhuri, Shohini *Feminist Film Theorists*. London: Routledge, 2006. p.49.

¹³⁰ Dpi is a general computing term for dots per inch and refers to the image resolution. The dots per inch for a given picture resolution differs, based on the overall screen size.



Caillebotte, Gustave (1880)

View Seen Through a Balcony.

Oil on Canvas.

65.6 x 54.9 cm.

Amsterdam: Van Gogh Museum.

Gustave Caillebotte painted many images of figures looking through windows and over balconies. In this painting he looked out over the Boulevard Haussmann in Paris through the decorative wrought-iron curls of his balcony. The focus is on the railing, while passing vehicles and details of the street below are faded into the background. The palette is subtle with black used for the balcony, contrasting with numerous shades of grey used for the street view below. The grille becomes a symbol for the separation of public from private and this began as a developing theme in my work.

The positioning of exterior and interior views was influenced by Asghar Farhadi's film *A Separation* where a glass window, a physical division in space, was used in scenes as a metaphor for emotional division and differences between interior thought and exterior realities. Throughout the film Farhadi draws the viewers' attention to

divisions that imply the difference between the interior private world of the home and the exterior reality of life on the outside.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

A Separation. Directed by Asghar Farhadi,
117 mins. Persian with English subtitles.
Golden Bear Award for best film, Berlin Film Festival, 2011.

The imagery used in this film exemplified the use of interiority and exteriority. Doors, windows were used as divisions between the main protagonists to emphasise their separation both physically and emotionally.

In the *Windows* series images were produced, to show the division of the view through a window, by including the window frame and curtains, to indicate the interior position of the viewer and camera position. A selection of these images are shown in the final PhD exhibition and extra examples can be found on the disc that accompanies this thesis.

In the next chapter I explain how I extended the *Windows* series, out of concern that I was consigning the view, to a stereotypical viewing position. I wanted to move away from the interior space, that could be interpreted as domestic. In order to move away from this enclosed position, the research began to investigate the activity of *flânerie* as described by Walter Benjamin.¹³¹ In the *Flânerie* series my female gaze was directed towards the exterior view.

¹³¹ This is explained in **Methodology 1.6.2**.

CHAPTER SIX: FLANERIE

The trope of flânerie delineates a mode of visual practice coincident with – but antithetical to – the panoptic gaze. Like the panopticon system, flânerie relied on the visual register – but with a converse instrumentalism, emphasizing mobility and fluid subjectivity rather than restraint and interpellated reform.¹³² Anne Friedberg.

In the *Windows* series the imagery put the spectator in the woman's actual viewing position from a high position resembling the panopticon where she adopted the panoptical gaze:

Like the central tower guard, the film spectator is totally invisible, absent not only from self-observation but from surveillance as well.¹³³

Operating from an interior space, that could be interpreted as domestic, I was concerned about adopting stereotypical female behaviour and launched myself onto the street and the exterior/male habitat. I decided to adopt the role of the flâneur and to redefine this role offering a female view or version of the activity. In the next body of work, the woman in the window of the tower became the protagonist and controller of the view, adopting the gaze of the flâneuse; the gaze of the passer-by, with a camera phone.¹³⁴

The emphasis of my activity as a flâneuse is a benign role. I adopt the role, that of the maternal protective female, taking pleasure out of watching and observing people as they participate in ordinary daily life. I situate myself as a roaming witness of life collecting and capturing imagery, facilitated by the perception of myself, as an invisible older woman, unencumbered by the negative connotations of the streetwalker.¹³⁵ I allow myself to freely inhabit places and spaces, observing and capturing imagery from a single viewpoint, that of the self-defined flâneuse.

¹³² Friedberg, Anne. *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern*. Berkeley CA and London: University of California Press, 1993. p.6.

¹³³ Friedberg, Anne. p.20

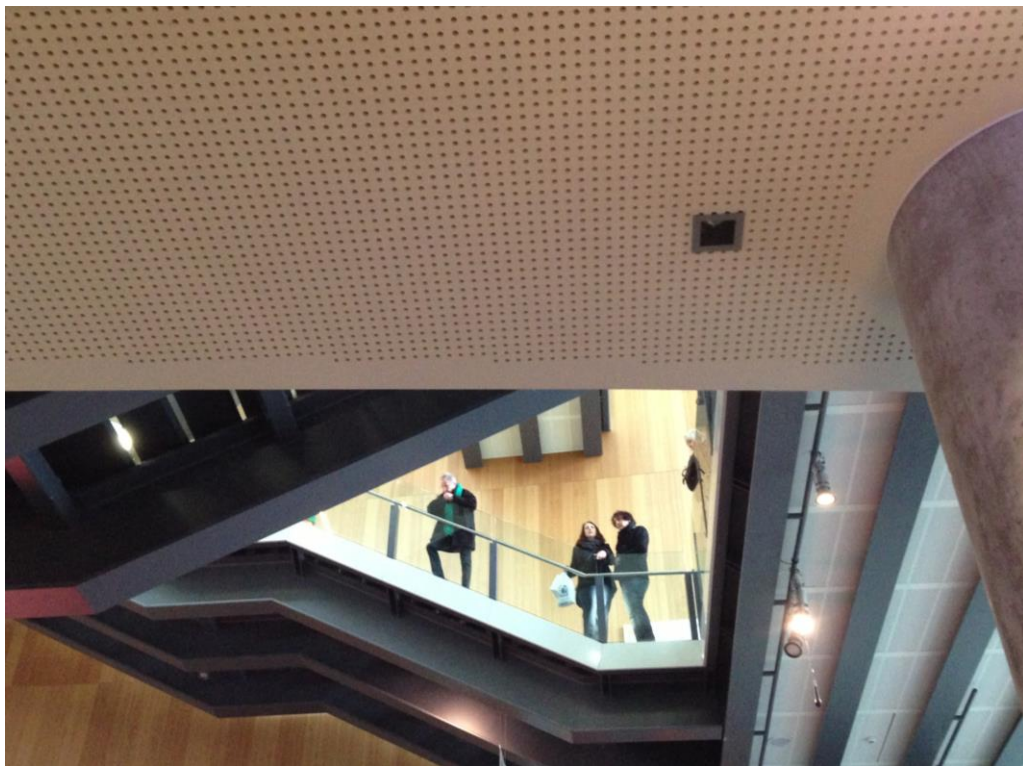
¹³⁴ Definition of the mobilised gaze from Anne Friedberg.

¹³⁵ Gassner, Jane 'The invisible older woman', 2013 [Blog] Available from: <http://midlifebloggers.com/2013/11/04/the-invisible-older-woman/#sthash.IDRH0gvK.dpbs> [Accessed 20 February 2016].
Sally's Trove 'The day I joined the ranks of invisible older women', 2012 [Blog] Available from: <http://hubpages.com/politics/The-Day-I-Joined-the-Ranks-of-Invisible-Older-Women> [Accessed 20 February 2016].

My recording captures brief unfolding moments acted out by those viewed at random, offering a glance at individuals as they go about their own personal existence, uninterrupted by the ever-present control of being watched or monitored. As Scalway observes:

The slowed-down walking, the slow brief instant of bodily tacit, complex awareness of the presences of the city before I am caught up again in the dance steps of its pavements.¹³⁶

The images are captured from events that occur all around me, initially as photographs that extend into a filmic version, where the gaze of the observer has been influenced by the notion of *flânerie*.



Moira Turner 2014

Stairwell

Photograph on Fine Art Paper
45 x 60 cm

¹³⁶ Scalway, Helen 'The contemporary flâneuse.' In: D'Souza, Aruna, Tom McDonough eds. *The Invisible Flâneuse: Gender, Public Space and Visual Culture in nineteenth-century Paris*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006. p.169.

At the start of the chapter entitled 'The flâneur in social theory', David Frisby, writing about Franz Hessel, (*Spazieren in Berlin*) states that:

Flânerie is a kind of reading of the street, in which faces, shop fronts, shop windows, café terraces, street cars, automobiles and trees become a wealth of equally valid letters of the alphabet that together result in words, sentences and pages of an ever-new book. In order to engage in flânerie, one must not have anything too definite in mind.¹³⁷

Janet Wolff argues that there 'is no question of inventing the flâneuse: the essential point is that such a character was rendered impossible by the sexual divisions of the nineteenth century' and Scalway quotes Griselda Pollock as saying clearly that in her view 'there is no female equivalent of the quintessential masculine figure, the flâneur: there is not and could not be a female flâneuse'.¹³⁸

Doreen Massey believes that as a female wanderer, I have to take on issues about when and where I go and at what time of day.¹³⁹ This is because of a perceived vulnerability and notionally to ensure my safety. However, society has moved on from 1994 when this text was written, to a position where contemporary architects design and plan places of the future where women are safe to walk at any time of day.¹⁴⁰

My work focuses on enclosed and protected areas and public environments known for flânerie: the art gallery, the museum, the shopping mall and city centre.¹⁴¹ These places are acknowledged for the presence of surveillance systems, where individuals expect to see and be seen and where female wandering is commonplace. I capture imagery from a single viewpoint, separated from the crowd, but still part of street life.

¹³⁷ Frisby, David 'The flâneur in social theory.' In: Tester, Keith ed. *The Flâneur*. London and New York: Routledge, 1994. p. 81.

¹³⁸ Woolf, Janet 'Gender and the haunting of cities.' In: D'Souza, Aruna and Tom McDonough eds. *The Invisible Flâneuse: Gender, Public Space and Visual Culture in nineteenth-century Paris*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006. pp.18 to 31.

¹³⁹ Massey, Doreen *Space, Place and Gender*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994. pp.185 to 190.

¹⁴⁰ van Nes, Akkelies and Tra My Nguyen, 'Gender Differences in the Urban Environment: The Flaneur and flâneuse of the 21st Century'. In: Koch, Daniel, Lars Marcus and Jesper Steen eds. In: *Proceedings of the 7th International Space Syntax Symposium*. Stockholm: KTH, 2009.

¹⁴¹ Tester, Keith *The Flâneur*. London:and New York: Routledge, 1994. pp.1 to 18.

My adoption of the role has been changed by the development of digital media, which has facilitated an equality of access to the act of flânerie. The biggest change to the role is that I am able to record my observations and not be seen as the observer caught in the act of casual observation. Mobile phones are frequently used to record events, suggesting that the flâneuse would not be remarkable on the street today.

Unlike the previous characters shown in the *Netsheds* or *Profile Portraits*, I do not appear in the imagery, as I am the person capturing the view. I am the viewer and I share these observations with the audience in an effort to provoke thought about who is watching and observing, whenever we venture out of our personal environments.



Moirira Turner 2014

Breakfast Time

Photograph on Fine Art Paper.

50 x 50 cm.

In this piece I have to acknowledge my admiration for the painter Edward Hopper.

As an 'older' woman, perhaps my perception of walking in the city at my leisure is different as I enjoy a certain veil of anonymity which youth does not avail. Others' perception of my loitering to watch is not as readily noticed or maybe excused as a need to pause and gather strength. This does change when I have a camera in my hand, but

developments in technology since the start of this research have made me a further gift of anonymity, in the form of a smart phone camera. My biggest concern about wandering is therefore using my mobile in the city streets and encouraging the attraction of a mugger.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Ruth Orkin. 1951.

American Girl in Italy

<http://www.orkinphoto.com/photographs/american-girl/>

Ruth Orkin Photo Archive

Ruth Orkin's photograph *American Girl in Italy* was created using a reconstruction of an experience that Orkin had witnessed. The image depicts a young woman walking in the street, but having to walk through a group of men, who are obviously commenting on her appearance. The picture was part of a photographic essay about single women travelling in Europe. I did not want to record images of situations that directly addressed the issue of female objectification. However this image can be read from a female perspective, as an image of a strong assertive woman walking through a group of socially inadequate men, who unlike her are loitering without purpose. Instead of regarding her as vulnerable I see her as statuesque, walking with pride in an act of defiance.

Angela Grauerholz has produced a photographic essay of images entitled *La Flâneuse*. Each photograph records a shot taken around the centre of the city and

reflects the wandering of the flâneuse. I find that the individual photographs recorded by Grauerholz do not work on their own and benefit from being grouped into the collection, assembled into the essay. This is possibly because of scale and the amount of detail that is used and where she uses softened areas, blurred to give the implication of movement.

[Image redacted in this digitized version due to potential copyright issues]

Angela Grauerholz

La Flâneuse

Photographic Essay published online

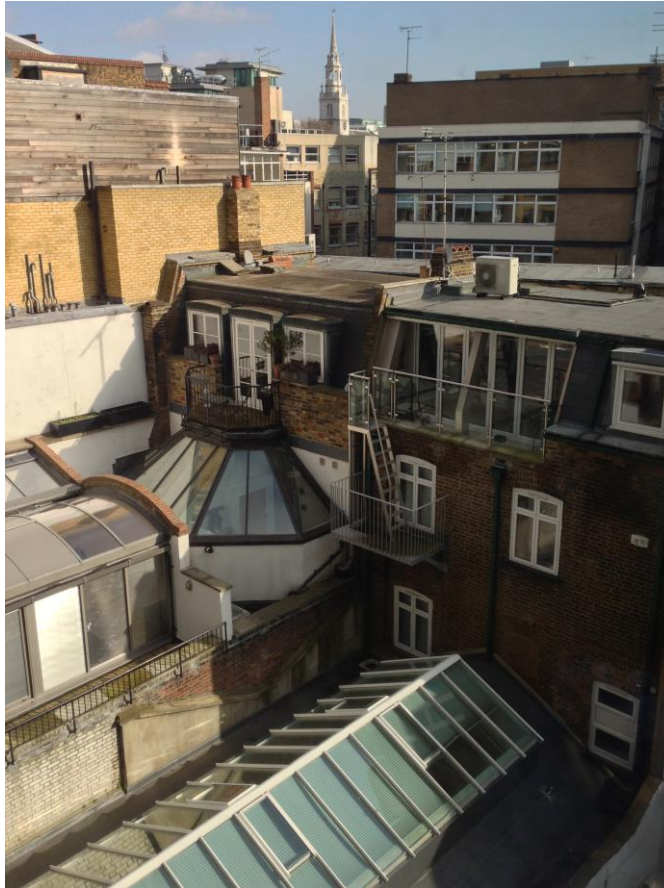
www.Angelagrauerholz.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Flaneuse.pdf.

[Accessed 2 January 2016]

I considered the implications of the imagery and wanted to see how the role of the flâneuse could be adapted to reflect similar concerns raised in the *Profile Portraits*. I began to wonder how I could merge these two roles and become both the woman in the tower and the street wanderer.

When I photograph from behind a screen, a window or a curtain, I purposely remove myself from the crowd and from my lofty position look down to capture the panoptical view of the crowd. I occupy protected spaces and look out from behind a screen to record imagery from a position of retreat, comfort and shelter, which returns to the theme of the panoptical view. I am the insider looking outside, reflecting the interior

view of the exterior, but not from the usual power position associated with panopticism. Returning to Friedberg's statement the approach to capturing the imagery is that of the flâneuse '...emphasizing mobility and fluid subjectivity rather than restraint and interpellated reform'.¹⁴²



Moira Turner

Hatton Garden

Photograph on Fine Art Paper, mounted on aluminium.
180 x 140 cms.

In response to this combination of mobility and view, my adapted role as flâneuse does not see me wandering during daylight or twilight, as the eligible woman depicted in the *Profile Portraits*, as this would add many unintended connotations attributed to the flâneuse. In this role I take advantage of the fact that I am less visible and enjoy the freedom that this affords. The street can be described as the theatre of the real and I

¹⁴² Friedberg, Anne. p.16.

transfer my gaze and report my view to create a new and different theatre of observation, a unique view of life as it unfolds. I capture fleeting moments on the streets or from a window, from a static viewpoint of the watcher.

Decisions made about the viewpoint of any creative image are essential factors and are applied to a broad spectrum of issues, explained in the synonyms: way of thinking, point of view, attitude, interpretation, stance, perspective or position. In order to influence the viewers' experience or viewpoint of a static photographic image or filmed moving image, the points of focus and method of presentation need to be determined by intention. Understanding and reading of the imagery can be anticipated by practical experimentation, but, unless this intention is tested with audience involvement, there will always a distance between the two factions, as demonstrated in the illustrations below.

The two images a. and b. below were taken to test out how the same image could be manipulated by editing and demonstrate how the viewing position can influence the reading of the image. In image b. the view is of a person seen from a distance, sitting at a table in an outdoor cafe. When a zoomed in view of this person is shown, it becomes a surveillance image, except we are not sure who is doing the surveillance, as the man in the shot may be reporting his view into a mobile phone.



Image a. above was taken as part of the series and edited down to produce Image b. When shown together they illustrate how one image can be radically altered in meaning, by changing the framing and position of the view from distant to close up.

Image a. was reported to be the more successful as identifying that a viewer with a camera was watching from a distance. These images are not photographs of someone close up or head on as I consciously avoid the invasion of an individual's personal space.

I capture the moment but leave intact an intensely private space inside the vastness of the city where the individual domain is not breached.¹⁴³

I prefer to offer a glance at people as they go about their own individual existence, uninterrupted by the control of being watched or monitored. I watch and wait to collect images and to absorb life as it passes.



Moir Turner 2015

Great Russell Street.

Photograph on Fine Art Paper, mounted on aluminium.
195x 150 cm.

Friedberg describes a new gaze that has been introduced into modern society, which she calls a mobilised virtual gaze, a gaze that is fully accessible to everyone regardless of gender.

¹⁴³ Scalway, Helen. pp. 164 to 171

I introduce this compound term in order to describe a gaze that travels in an imaginary *flânerie* through an imaginary elsewhere and an imaginary elsewhen.¹⁴⁴

She argues that with the increase in access to the virtual world, through the Internet, a new version of the flâneuse has emerged.¹⁴⁵ In this world the flâneuse is able to carry out her wandering across any area she chooses and can operate from a non-gendered position. This would have been a very different route to adopt in my wanderings and I could have used virtual systems to view and gather records, unencumbered by the need to walk and wander in the real.

My flâneuse does not adopt this route and is uniquely concentrated on presenting the real world and making records of life as it unfolds. Throughout the research period I have avoided producing imagery that utilises systems adopted from the virtual world. I make comparisons and references to the look of virtual systems, but resolutely work with imagery, that portrays an act of observation in real time and space.

The chapter that follows is the final chapter, where I summarise the different modes of enquiry and discuss the outcomes of the research. A significant contribution of selected and focused work emerges, where the combination of moving and photographic imagery is uniquely fused to create a site-specific installation as shown in the Final PhD Exhibition. A record of this exhibition is shown in photographs and moving image on the disc that accompanies this thesis.

¹⁴⁴ Friedberg, Anne. p.2.

¹⁴⁵ The character Jacky in the film *Red Road* (see **Chapter 5: Windows**) is a good example of the virtual wandering of a CCTV security officer.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction and Summary

7.2 Summary of the research and coverage of aims and objectives

7.3 Achievements and range of work in relation to the aims and objectives.

7.3.1 Review of Profile Portraits

7.3.2 Review of Netsheds

7.3.3 Review of Windows

7.3.4 Review of Flânerie

7.4 Research methodology and outcomes

7.5 Contribution to new knowledge

7.1. Introduction and summary

...the artist provides in the work of art a vehicle for the exhibition of the unnoticed, the unknown, or the unimagined. Something unprecedented or unusual is displayed in the work of art. Through revelation human experience is not only communicated or expressed but in some way is enriched or expanded.¹⁴⁶

The aim of the research was to investigate through creative practice, how as a contemporary practitioner, informed by critical theory, I could create work using the installation of moving image and photography, to evoke the condition of being observed. Research centred on the context of everyday panopticism and flânerie from a female viewpoint.

The practice-led inquiry into the viewer and the viewed has been developed along two broad routes: the subject and the audience and my role as observer and recorder. In the first route of inquiry, the viewed female figure was the subject of a photograph or moving image, installed using different methods of construction in the theatre of the observed. The temporary constructions, mimicking stage sets evolved into the *Netsheds*, where the viewed became the viewer, occupying the high position of the panoptical tower; observed by the audience but removed from view, where she could participate in watching and being watched.

In the second route of inquiry, the practice examined my role as observer and recorder. Adopting the panoptical position of the observer resulted in the *Windows* series, a set of photographic images evoke surveillance imagery. The views captured were recorded through windows, including the window frame screened by curtains or blinds. These images enabled the audience to locate the position of the observer/recorder and see the outside view through her eyes. Also in the second mode of inquiry, grouped under the title *Flânerie*, photographic work emerged, recorded during the activity of flânerie, where as the recorder I became the flâneuse or woman of the crowd.

¹⁴⁶ Peterson, N. *Photographic art: Media and disclosure*. Michigan: UMI Research Press, Studies in photography. 1984. p.42.

Aspects of the questions raised have been explored through a comprehensive investigation, appropriate to the subject matter, and has been tested through creative experimentation and outcome. In this final chapter conclusions, or the comparative achievement of intentions are discussed. Given the nature of creative activity, every piece of work is not absolute and different pieces vary in their communication of meaning. This research acknowledges that my artworks represent ‘the experiential part of knowledge which evades conventional communication by verbal or textual means’ as the main vehicle for demonstrating new knowledge.¹⁴⁷ I therefore identify two pieces that encapsulate most succinctly the focus of the research, which are included in the section **7.4 Research methodology and outcomes**.

Following this introduction I offer a summary work, showing where realisation of intention meets the aims and objectives of the research inquiry and include key pieces of significant contribution as illustrations in **7.3 Achievements and range of work in relation to the aims and objectives**. A disc of visual work detailing process accompanies this thesis and includes all major embodiments of the inquiry, as shown in the final PhD Exhibition. Folders corresponding to each Chapter title include supporting information, detailing the development of each mode of inquiry, with additional content included, such as book reviews, presentations and reflective journals.

This comprehensive practice-led investigation constitutes a substantive original contribution to knowledge through the completion of major artwork based on critical analysis and experiment. It relates to the work of other contemporary visual artists and provides a reference for subsequent researchers.

¹⁴⁷ Niedderer, Kristina and Roworth-Stokes, Seymour ‘The Role and use of Creative Practice in Research and its Contribution to Knowledge’. *International Association of Societies of Design Research*. November 2007. [Online] Available from: <http://niedderer.org/IASDR07SRS.pdf>

7.2 Summary of the research and coverage of aims and objectives

(The work continues to be reviewed in more detail later in the chapter).

7. Use a practice-led investigation, looking through the eyes of a female artist, to raise awareness of the presence of observation and provoke thought about surveillance and the panoptical gaze.
8. Develop work along two broad routes; the subject and the audience and my role as observer and recorder, informed by contemporary practice.
9. Employ purposeful experimentation and visual discovery, to question issues emerging from practice through exposition, examining how this relationship changes according to the variables of situation, space and exhibition environment.
10. Creatively manipulate situations of observation through the installation of photography and moving image, to examine the exchange between artwork and audience.
11. Operate within the context of comparative approaches and methodologies used by historical and contemporary artists, to investigate the subject of observation and the activity of observing through practice.
12. Work from a positive and proactive feminist paradigm to investigate the subject of observation and the activity of observing, using relevant theoretical approaches to inform central concepts.

Modes of Inquiry	Achievement of aims and objectives	Range of responses	Concluding piece for mode of inquiry
Profile Portraits	1, 3, 4, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitional stages of image production, working from photographic stills to moving image. • Range of still photographs shown at Spike Open 2011 • Series of moving image works in a variety of temporary structures to test audience viewing position and feedback • Final moving image sequences tested in different formats – projected in an installation space onto screens, a show-reel projected in a gallery space, a show-reel on a television screen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two moving image pieces based on Renaissance profile portraits and Vermeer • The apposed hanging of the two moving image pieces shown on framed television screens. • Shown in a public gallery mounted as and amongst paintings and PhD Show.
Netsheds	1, 3, 4, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used reflective practice to trial different configurations of the temporary structures. • Test built a black tower, based on the Netsheds at Hastings in studio and opened to a public audience. • Used a previous piece <i>Lace Curtain</i> to test how a figure occupying the panoptical position of watching would work. • Projected images of objects found in the original Netsheds inside the structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final <i>Netshed</i> built to the full height of the gallery space used for the PhD Exhibition. • Three sided structure with screen and an open back where the audience could see the wall mounted projector and the inside. • Projection onto a screen that held the image without passing through onto other surfaces. • Viewing possible on both sides of the screen to show on outside and inside.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New moving image based on the character of Christina of Denmark using the balcony as a division. 	
Windows	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous photo-shoots used to collect photographic and moving images in different locations in Paris, Giverny, London, Hastings and Istanbul. • Images printed at different sizes and in combinations as sets, to test the response. Shown as paper copies small and medium to test scale needed. Exhibited as unframed hanging from metal clips. • Moving image pieces scaled up to life-size and repeated onto a loop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final selection of images. Images taken to full-size using software to ensure a small amount of pixilation in window areas. • Images test printed to large-scale. • Shown at Spike Open 2015 to see which images worked. • Given titles to locate the positions that the photographic record was made. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Windows: <i>Coram Street</i> 2. Windows: <i>Hatton Garden</i> 3. Windows: <i>Bloomsbury</i> 4. Windows: <i>Rooftops</i>
Flânerie	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series of walks in the centre of London to photograph and film with a mobile phone. Moving image and photographs taken at the same locations. • Imagery collected both inside buildings and outside. • Trial of imagery printed directly onto metal and mounted onto metal. • Exhibition of three moving image pieces running alongside each other – Street View 1, 2 and 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two images printed to large-scale and then mounted onto metal and spray sealed to patinate the surface. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Passing By</i> 2. <i>Great Russell Street</i> • Hung in the main gallery space at key positions to provide window views near the Netshed and in the approaching corridor of the exhibition space.

Routes of inquiry	Achievement of aims and objectives	Range of responses	Concluding piece for route of inquiry
The subject and the audience	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two moving image pieces based on Renaissance profile portraits and Vermeer. Shown on two framed television screens. Final <i>Netshed</i> with moving image based on Christina of Denmark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two moving image pieces, shown on televisions, framed in the style of Dutch paintings. Apposed hanging to create dialogue between the two pieces. Large-scale <i>Netshed</i> with moving image. Image held on the screen to be viewed from the interior and exterior.
My role as observer and recorder	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changed the scale to large format and experimented with how large the image could go without the image breaking down – pixels showing and becoming fuzzy. Some pixilation used to show that the images related to surveillance and observation records Large format photos printed with smallest dimension 1.5 m. Most successful selected for exhibition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selected from Windows series for final showing. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Windows: <i>Coram Street</i> Windows: <i>Hatton Garden</i> Windows: <i>Bloomsbury</i> Selected from <i>Flânerie</i> for final showing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Great Russell Street</i> <i>Passing By</i> printed directly onto aluminum surface to create a textural surface on the metal. Selected to work together as a total installation and with <i>Profile Portraits</i> and <i>Netshed</i> work.

7.3 Achievements and range of work in relation to the aims and objectives.

7.3.1 Review of *Profile Portraits*

The investigation initially involved large-scale constructions, made from theatre flats, which included a viewing area. A projected moving image of a female figure was shown as a central focus to each installation, to create different situations of watching and being watched. Having profiled the characters, produced films and photographs, the resulting imagery was installed into different situations, to determine what features were needed to provoke thought about surveillance and imply a gendered view. Reflective practice, as described in *Methodology* (see p.16. Figure 3), was used throughout, utilising critical analysis and experimentation, in a rigorously applied process of continuous inquiry. This process of exposition and review engaged the audience as the ‘other’ as defined by Doris van Drathen.

... perceiving the work of art as an event that occurs in the interval between the viewer and the observed object, but also considering it as an eventful encounter between myself and what is alien to me, as a meeting with the other....¹⁴⁸

As a result of this exchange, the work went through transitional stages, as single photographic pieces, shown in groups before the two moving image sequences were developed and finalised.¹⁴⁹ My aim was to present the subject of observation, using my female gaze, to manipulate the position of the audience, and set up a situation where the audience was aware of their own observance.

The least successful showing was when the two moving image pieces were assembled onto a show-reel and delivered to the audience sequentially on a television screen. This showing failed to prompt the audience beyond the consideration of anything other than, the viewing of interesting moving image work. They also identified the show-reel with the cinema screen, which put them in a situation of being outside looking into a scene that they could not access, but where they could try on identities in

¹⁴⁸ Von Drathen, Doris. *Vortex of silence: Proposition for an art criticism beyond aesthetic categories*. Milan: Edizioni Charta, 2004. p.19

¹⁴⁹ Further images can be found on the disc in the file marked *Profile Portraits*.

true cinematic style, a situation that Friedberg equates with the shop window.

From the middle of the nineteenth century, as if in a historical relay of looks, the show window succeeded the mirror as a site of identity construction, and then—gradually—the shop window was displaced by the cinema screen.¹⁵⁰

The idea of trying on identities worked as it encouraged the audience to imagine themselves as the female figure in the moving image this prompted individuals to explain their reactions to the pieces. There were many incidents where individuals stood in front of the screen and talked about how they felt and interacted with the imagery. I therefore decided to take this cinematic positioning further, by showing each piece on a separate screen as in Candice Breitz's *Working Class Hero (Portrait of John Lennon)*.¹⁵¹



The final work shown as two heavily framed television screens, with frames referencing Vermeer paintings. The two images of equal size are placed so that the single female figures face each other and appear to have a dialogue with each other, while the audience watches.

¹⁵⁰ Friedberg, Anne. 'Cinema and the Postmodern Condition.' In: Williams, Linda ed. *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film*. USA: Rutgers University Press, 1995, pp.59-76.

¹⁵¹ Illustrated in 2.3.3 Viewing Positions. Video installation, with a looping duration of 39 minutes and 55 seconds, matching the length of the original album. 25 x 42" plasma screens. Gateshead: Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art. 10 October 2006 to 27 January 2007

One of the most successful occasions when the work was shown was at the Royal West of England Open Exhibition 2014, where the two pieces were hung in the main gallery. They were placed on a wall amongst paintings and raised issues about the status of moving image, compared with the ‘high art’ of painting.

The apposed hanging of the framed video pieces, evoked an imagined dialogue between the two females depicted in the moving images. This unexpected evocation increased my understanding of the complexity of watching: the audience regarded the viewed; the viewed regarded the audience, and also viewed the person in the other moving image piece. This circular exchange of viewing flowed continuously, from one piece of work to the other, to the audience in front of the work, who in turn were viewed by new viewers arriving in the gallery space. This action returned and repeated, much as the moving image returned to the beginning of the looped sequence.

7.3.2 Review of the *Netsheds*

The *Netshed* series went through the same rigorous development methodology as the *Profile Portraits*. As the series progressed the emphasis moved away from the framed television screens and resumed the building of temporary structures. The newly configured installation provided a place where a moving image of a female, the main protagonist in the act of viewing, could be shown at the top of a tower. As a tall structure, it was visible from a distance rather like a lighthouse or beacon. Constructed with more elaborate stage flats, it allowed the viewer to move in and out of the structure, although as before the window and screen created a division between the audience and the image. The intention was to arrive at a power position, where the panoptical gaze of the female protagonist could operate in the direction of the viewing audience.

For the final realisation of this series, references and were drawn from influences such as the film, *Black Tower* by John Smith, where the black tower moves around multiple locations and seems to follow the viewer, implying that it is actively involved

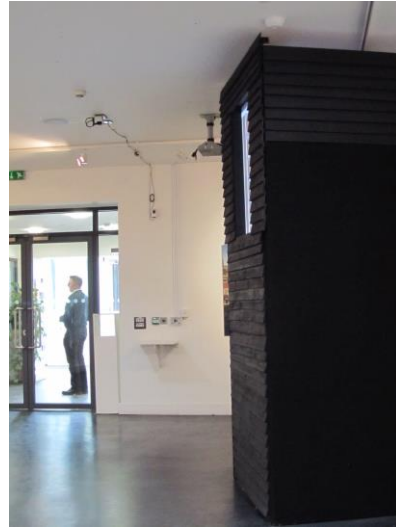
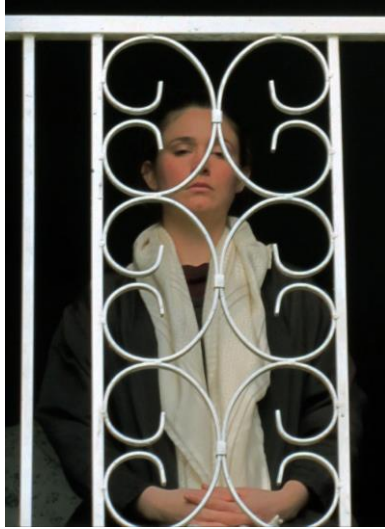
in surveillance and watching.¹⁵² The top part of my structure is partially modelled on the black tower that features in the film, with other references made to the Hastings *Netsheds*, as explained in **Chapter Four: *Netsheds***. The notion of a black tower with its high view over any surrounding area became a symbol of power that could be used in different ways to infer a glowering presence of an unseen person, but also to evoke a more romantic idea of longing, reminiscent of the theme that frequently occurs in literature of the woman in the tower.¹⁵³

The *Netsheds* also allowed the viewer to look from the outside and see the projection on the inside. This manipulation of the viewing position brought forward comments about reminiscence and the memory of other similarly built structures. One of the most interesting parallels was drawn with the traditional doll's house, where it was possible to peer through small windows and doors. A further reading of Susan Stewart has encouraged a possible future investigation of the idea of a scaled-down enclosed space resembling a doll's house.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Smith, John *John Smith Films*. 1977 [Online] Available from <http://www.johnsmithfilms.com/selected-works/the-black-tower/> [Accessed 23rd March 2009].

¹⁵³ Loo, O. *Rapunzel 1790 A new Translation of the Tale by Friedrich Schulz*. [Amazon Kindle Edition]. 2015.

¹⁵⁴ Stewart, Susan. *On Longing, Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993. pp. 61-65.



This piece was the final resolution of the *Netshed* series. The temporary structure measured 120 cm width x 120 cm depth and was built to take up the complete height of the gallery space. The structure consisted of three walls with an open back, where the audience could view the inside. The film, projected from a wall mounted high lumen projector, directed the image onto the screen. The screen was designed to show the moving image on both sides of the screen without the image passing through onto other surfaces.¹⁵⁵

By making work large enough for us to enter, installation is said to become inescapably concerned with the presence of the viewer. Ilya Kabakov is quoted as saying that in a ‘total installation’, the viewer is the ‘main centre toward which everything is addressed.’¹⁵⁶ Kabakov’s statement assumes that the moving image is putting the viewer in a passive cinema position, where the viewer is seated in a dark place, but does this still hold true when the moving image appears to be participating in the activity of watching and where the audience is able to move in and out of the structure?

¹⁵⁵ More images of this piece can be found on the disc that accompanies this thesis in the folder PhD Exhibition.

¹⁵⁶ Kabakov, Ilya, ‘Notes on Ilya Kabakov’s “on the total installation”’ *Third Text*, 17 (4), 2003, pp. 345-352.



Important issues raised in previous showings were addressed; a darkened area around the film screen to facilitate viewing in changing light conditions; a planned manipulation of the position of the viewer in an enclosed space; neutrality of the surrounding space maintained with black, white and grey used; the screen type to hold the image without the image passing through; the image should show on both sides of the screen.

My intention was to provoke the viewer into thinking about being looked at, participating in looking, while being surveyed by a control system. The high position was used to change her 'looked-at-ness' and made a definitive separation between the viewer and the viewed, increasing the participatory activity of looking-at and into the installation. The watching figure became more powerful and self-contained; an observer as well as an observed and this comparison made reference to the Foucault figure in the tower. My intention was to develop a non-threatening and gently aesthetic vision to set the viewer in a situation of observance. This moved the work towards the second route of inquiry and a focus on my role as observer and recorder.

7.3.3 Review of *Windows*

In the *Windows* series I adopted and used the language of fine art, applying this mode of expression to the photographic imagery. The final versions of the images were produced as large-scale photographs showing the view through a window, a view that put the audience in my viewing position; a static watching position on the interior.



The net curtain in this piece created a division between the viewer and the view. It ensured that the viewer or camera holder was obscured from those who were being photographed. It implies a watching presence without the inclusion of a viewer, a still and quiet record of a moment. The view is minimal and unadorned; an interior view looking towards the exterior.¹⁵⁷

The activity of observation crosses many different planes, both virtual and real, but was considered in terms of: photographer/recorder, filmmaker/storyteller. The crossing of different planes between the virtual and real is an extension of inquiry, outside the focus of this thesis. To consider ‘the mobilised gaze’ and how it operates, using the

¹⁵⁷ Further work in this series can be found on the disc in the folder *Windows*.

complex language of communication, would I believe have taken me too far from the nominated objectives and initiate active research into Lev Manovich's world where:

We are witnessing the emergence of a new cultural metalanguage,
something that will be at least as significant as the printed word and cinema
before it.¹⁵⁸

The images adopted some of the techniques or appearance of surveillance footage, with a slight pixilation of image to reference the digital methods used in surveillance where many new '...techniques that are relocating vision to a plane severed from a human observer.'¹⁵⁹ In other words reminding the viewer of the ever present watching and monitoring of computerised systems.

This sequence of imagery was captured from a constructed viewing position, a remote or removed space with rules of engagement imposed, such as views had to be recorded through open windows or curtains, from a single viewpoint and a restricted position.¹⁶⁰ In the knowledge that society is aware of being watched and recorded, this series investigated my viewer position, photographs were taken from a position that could be readily identified as surveillance, but purposely avoided the identification of individuals.

Surveillance camera systems and personal camera phones are present on every street in major cities throughout the modern world and facilitate the panoptical role of watching. In appropriating this technology and look, my intention was to transport the audience into the position of being the viewer. Taken from the perspective of the occupant of the panoptical observation tower, it also began to address the question of

¹⁵⁸ Manovich, Lev. *The Language of New Media* Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 2001. p.92. Metalanguage is a form of language or set of terms used for the description or analysis of another language.

¹⁵⁹ Crary, Jonathan. *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge MA and London: MIT Press, 1992. p.1.

¹⁶⁰ This is in the spirit of Situationist thinking. Debord, Guy. 'Preliminary Problems in Constructing a Situation.' In: Knabb, Ken, ed. *Situationist International Anthology* Berkeley CA: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2006, pp.49-52

what defined or constituted the gendered view, discussed later in this Chapter.



This piece and angle of shot made reference to *Rear Window*. At the start of Hitchcock's film the blind goes up to reveal the view from the main character's apartment. The view is of neighbouring apartments where the viewer is able to see activities that are enacted in the space of the window frame.

My concern over these images was that I was consigning the view presented in the photographs to the stereotypical female position of occupying the interior of a domestic space. I therefore decided to transgress this boundary or threshold, between private and public, to carry out observation of public life as it unfolded and to become the woman in the crowd, photographing from public buildings.

7.3.4 Review of *Flânerie*

In the *Flânerie* series, the second route featuring my role as observer and recorder, my gaze was directed towards the exterior view. I adopted a high window position overlooking the street view, to maintain a fixed position. This position removed me from active participation and involvement in the activity on the street, but still enabled

me to be part of the unfolding events. From this position the images captured encapsulated the notion of myself as a watcher or flâneuse, capturing moments as my eye roamed across the city.

In many ways the work in this series does not differ from the *Windows* series, with the exception that the images are taken from and include distant views of people, on the street viewed from the inside. Moving image work that was produced under this title was not shown in the exhibition. A triptych shown on three screens, identified individuals in the crowd too clearly, and I considered this to be crossing the line between provoking thought and taking part in surveillance.¹⁶¹ This is an area of the research that will go forward with further exploration, to find a method of showing moving image footage of people on the streets without identifying individuals.

My flâneuse imagery does not adopt the mobile virtual gaze suggested by Anne Friedberg and is uniquely concentrated on presenting the real world and making records of life as it unfolds.¹⁶² Throughout the research period I have avoided producing imagery that utilises systems adopted from the virtual world. I make comparisons and references to the look of virtual systems, but resolutely work with imagery that portrays actual situations of watching.

Social media, a phenomenon that has rapidly expanded over the research period, allows 'virtual flânerie' to take place, without individual viewers showing their presence. Using Facebook for instance, I can wander through different lives at will looking at what others have done, or want to draw my attention to. This is a new dimension beyond the remit of this thesis, although this new reality could offer a completely different perspective. Using a camera phone I realised that I no longer had to hold it to my eye. Seeing something and taking a photograph is completely different from viewing something in the real through social media.

¹⁶¹ Further work in can be found on the disc in the folder *Flânerie*.

¹⁶² Friedberg, Anne. *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern*. London, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993. pp.15 to 37.

7.4 Research Methodology and outcomes

The multiple showings and different configuration of imagery were set up to creatively manipulate situations of observation, through the installation of photography and moving image. The exchange between artwork and audience was achieved by purposeful experimentation, visual discovery, and questioning of issues emerging from practice through exposition. Reviewing how this relationship changed, according to the variables of situation, site and exhibition environment, contributed to the formation and refinement of the practice.

In these constructed works a combination of elements operated: the model, the characters, the photograph, the moving image, the maker, and the audience. The exchange between my artwork and audience was facilitated by the constructed spaces, the theatre of exchange between the image and manipulation of the viewing position. The question being which of these constructed scenarios achieved the most in terms of developing a female gaze and raised awareness of observation, while provoking thought about the panoptical gaze.

In a similar manner as Vermeer, I created an atmosphere of calm for the interior view, while at the same time alluding to the outside world. My imagery assumed an interior viewpoint, of interiority looking out at the exterior, engaging the audience as ‘other’ in their exteriority. The question was ‘would the audience be familiar with the nuances of meaning ascribed to the imagery and what clues if any would need to be laid for full understanding to take place?’¹⁶³ My consideration was therefore, ‘how should the images recorded utilise the language already recognised by my audience?’¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Burris, Val ‘Reification: a Marxist perspective’. *California Sociologist*, 10 (1), 1977, pp. 22-43.

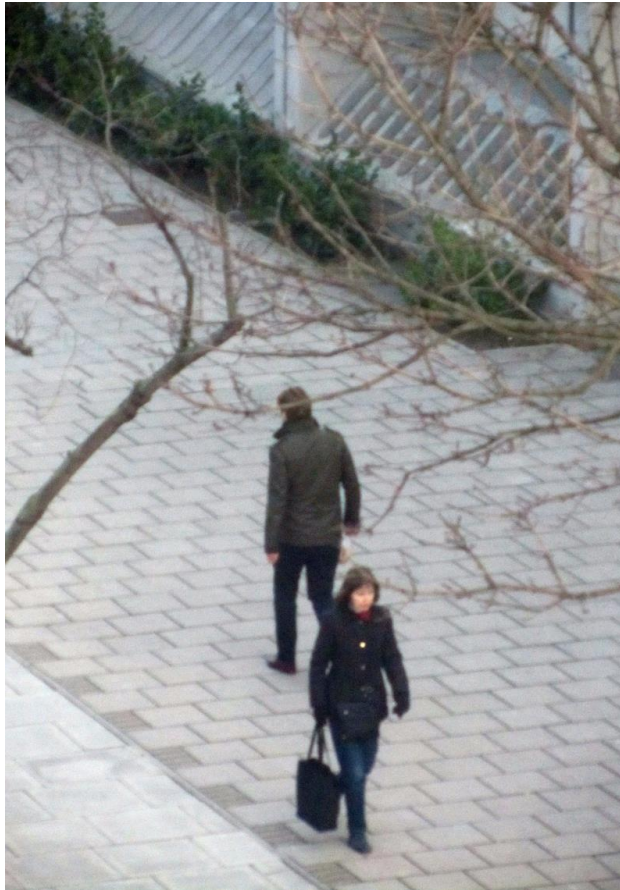
The concept of reification is used by Marx to describe a form of social consciousness in which human relations come to be identified with the physical properties of things, thereby acquiring an appearance of naturalness and inevitability.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 22-43.

In summing up the work and how it represents achievement of aims;

- The two apposed video presented a female gaze that moved radically away from any notion of the male gaze, but still encouraged looked-at-ness.
- The *Netshed* succeeded in presenting the panoptical gaze of the female protagonist. This viewing operated in the direction of the viewing audience.
- The *Windows* photographic series uniquely concentrated on presenting a female gaze at the real world, making records of life as it unfolded. It avoided imagery that utilised systems adopted from the virtual world and resolutely produced imagery that portrayed actual situations of watching.
- The photographic series grouped under Flanerie saw my role as flâneuse adopt a female gaze, which concentrated resolutely on imagery that portrayed actual situations of watching.

The two pieces that most successfully satisfied the aims and objectives of the research are; *Passing By* and *Great Russell Street* illustrated below:



Moira Turner 2014

Passing By

Photograph on metal. 100 x 65 cm

Passing By unlike any of the other in this sequence was printed directly onto a polished metal surface to take advantage of the textural pattern. The detailed patterning of the pavement area created a surface that enhanced the appearance of the image and moved it nearer to the referencing of surveillance imagery. Similar to the Profile Portraits final outcome, the two passing figures offered an imagined dialogue a silent conversation that nobody could hear.



Moira Turner 2015
Great Russell Street.
Photograph on Fine Art Paper, mounted on aluminium. 195x 150 cm.

Photographed from a balcony overlooking a street in London this piece makes reference to the Gustave Caillebotte painting *View Seen Through a Balcony* mentioned in **Chapter Five: Windows**. The final presentation of the image was positioned, so that the audience could stand and look down at the figure, and up at the building. The slight pixilation around the windows made reference to surveillance footage.

The large-scale photographic pieces were wall mounted, putting the audience in a position of observation, from the same viewpoint as the female photographer, using her female gaze. When standing opposite the image the viewer could look around the view. The perspective of the image allowed them to look both up and down, as the central viewpoint was placed in the middle of the image. This feeling of looking around enhanced the experience of observation and drew the viewer into the scene.

7.5 Contribution to new knowledge

The final exhibition of work brings all of the explored areas of inquiry together installed into the exhibition space, so that each individual piece relates to another.

An installation of art is secondary in importance to the individual works it contains, while a work of installation art, the space, and the ensemble of elements within it, are regarded in their entirety as a singular entity.¹⁶⁵

Different aspects of the investigation that resulted in both moving image and photography work have previously been shown as individual pieces of artwork or in the case of the *Profile Portraits* as a pair. In the final PhD Exhibition they are brought together, in a unique combination and juxtaposed in layout utilising the cinematic method of 'suture' as mentioned in **Chapter Five: Windows** (see page 97).

Viewers ... are 'stitched' into the subject-positions films construct for them. They are urged to identify with the gaze of the fictional character and to deny that he/she occupies a separate space; an imaginary unity is created between spectator and screen.¹⁶⁶

As a contribution to new knowledge, the installation is designed for a defined audience, the individual visitor to an exhibition, rather than a cinema or theatre audience, where a collective is held in a restricted position, seated in the dark.

The essence of Installation art is spectator participation, but the definition of participation varies greatly from one artist to another, and even from one work to another by the same artist. Participation can mean offering the viewer specific activities. It can also mean demanding that the viewer walk through the space and simply confront what is there.¹⁶⁷

The work positively contributes to an awareness of control systems that monitor our movements. The imagery has provoked numerous conversations, about viewing and being part of the view, encouraging people to discuss their feelings and responses. The most in-depth of these conversations has been with small groups of two or three people, often women, who identify with the work and have chosen to stand or occupy a space

¹⁶⁵ Bishop, C. *Installation Art: A Critical History*. London: Tate Publishing, 2005. p.6.

¹⁶⁶ Chaudhuri, Shohini. 'The Female Voice.' In: *Feminist Film Theorists*. London: Routledge, 2006. p.49.

¹⁶⁷ Reiss, Julie *From Margin to Center: The Spaces of Installation Art* Reiss, Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1999. p.xii.

near or next to the moving image depictions, to quietly observe and reflect on the implied meaning.

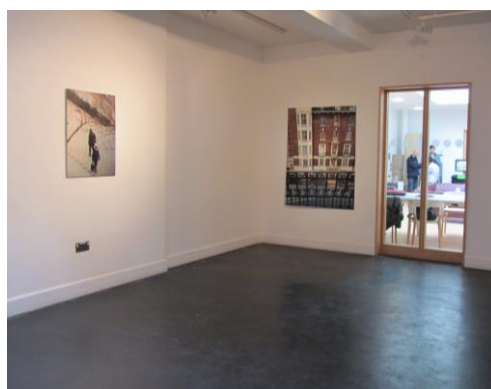
Accumulated knowledge has shown that building the installation into an enclosed space allows the audience to become involved in each aspect of observation. In the final exhibition I chose to combine the photographs and moving image into one area to increase the intensity of the experience and build tension between the activity of viewing, the viewed and the view.

During the research period I have maintained contact with the production of contemporary fine art through exhibitions, Internet search systems, contact with practicing artists and by participating in the artist community at Spike Island. My investigations have covered a broad area of investigation and including visits to New York, Paris, Istanbul, London and Liverpool in order to investigate the field of installation art, photography and moving image work. I recognise that this search has also a limitation, as it has not addressed cultural and religious issues, outside of the western world that influence the female viewer and the manner in which she is viewed.

Reflective feedback has been regularly sought throughout the research process and this methodology of production has emerged through practice. The cycle of making and review shown in **Methodology** (*Figure 2* and *Figure 3*) is a model particular to my process of production and one that makes contributions to new areas of knowledge. If as the research group RANE state that new knowledge is ‘generated by a combination of artefacts and reflection they engender’ this work succeeds in generating reflective thought.¹⁶⁸ Research through artistic practice has the ability to reveal aspects of knowledge that would otherwise remain hidden or simply be unrepresented. The work that emerges from this practice-led investigation is based on a process of continuous research and reflective practice. It represents focused questioning of the subject matter to facilitate the developed visual format, which is uniquely configured to occupy the exhibition space.

¹⁶⁸ Bioglyphs. ‘Research through creative practice’ *Research in Art Nature & Environment*. Falmouth University. Undated. [Online] Available from: <http://rane.falmouth.ac.uk/pdfs.bioglyphs/chapl.pdf>. [Accessed 3/11/16].

Final PhD Exhibition



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9. Disc of Work to accompany thesis

Folder 1: Research Work

- 2.2. Practice of other artists/practitioners
- 3. Profile Portraits (including notes and feedback)
- 4. Netsheds (including notes and feedback)
- 5. Windows
- 6. Flânerie
- Book Reviews
- Doctoring in Practice – Images
- Sample Recordings of feedback
- Samples of Reflective Journals

Folder 2: Final PhD Exhibition

- 1. PowerPoint Presentation of Final PhD Exhibition
- 2. Film shown in Netshed
- 3. Two films for framed Profile Portraits
- 4. Photographs shown in Final PhD Exhibitions