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The Museum: An Exploration of the Self Within Contemporary Art(Within the Context of Everything Else)

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Portfolio of Works

October 2009 – September 2010

Georgia Boniface

MA by Research

The University of Huddersfield

February 2011

October 2009

Portrait Series
(Masks)



John I
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)



Christoph I
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)



John II
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)



Joanna I
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)



Cynthia
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)



Georgia
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)



Edie
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)



Joanna II
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)



Christoph II
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)



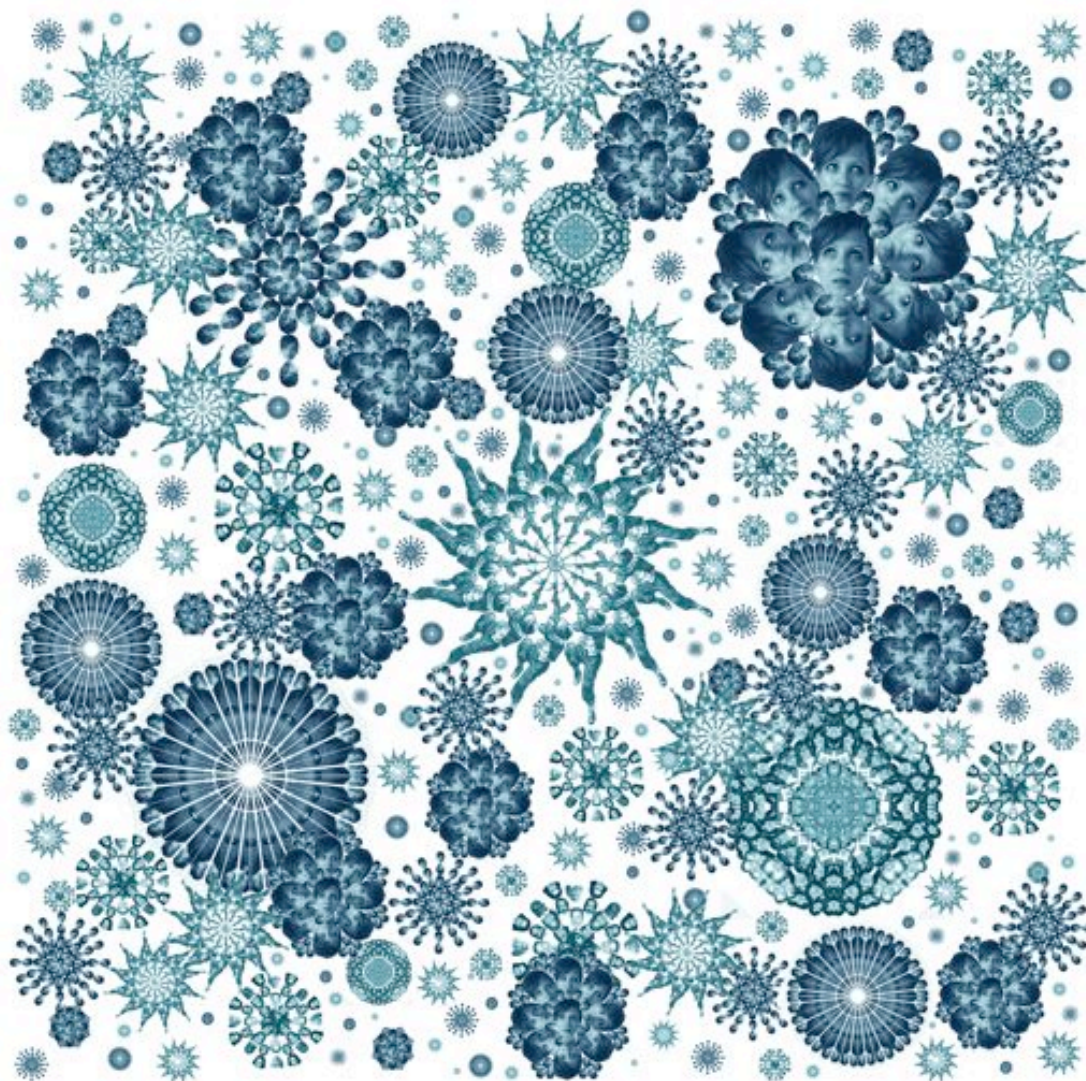
Kevin
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)



Molly
Photographic print (42 x 29.7 cm)

November – December 2009

Kaleidoscope Series



Constellation (2009)

Laser Print (90 x 90 cm)
Digital Photoshop collage



Stars 3 (2009)

Laser Print (118.9 x 84.1 cm)
Digital Photoshop collage



Wallpaper

Laser Print (118.9 x 84.1 cm)
Digital Photoshop collage

March 2010

Radio Local



‘A local radio broadcast will be transmitted which can then be transmitted in other locations but must always remain local. Artists Georgia Boniface and Edward Cotterill will conduct a protracted conversation with the aid of a selection of their respective record collections. The gallery will be transformed into a working studio where a one-off broadcast will take place. The broadcast will be for the local population of all visitors to the gallery space. The broadcast will be transmitted via the vibration of sound waves stimulated by the vocal chords of each artist and music will be transmitted from a domestic record player via a pair of speakers. Like other radio broadcasts, invited guests & listeners will be invited to participate in the transmission. In accordance with broadcast laws the transmission will be recorded.’ (Boniface and Cotterill 2010)¹

This work is a collaboration between Edward Cotterill and myself. The performance took place at Limoncello Gallery, 15a Cremer Street, London E2 8HD, on Sunday 14th March 2010 1 – 5 pm.

¹ Boniface, G & Cotterill, E *Radio Local* 2010



This performance was recorded in video, audio (real time) and photographic formats in order for footage to be edited and manipulated subsequent to the event. This footage will then be exhibited as *Radio Local* (2010). The live performance will be repeated in a site-specific manner.

Photographic prints 42 x 29.7 cm
Photography: © Genna Cotterill (2010)



Photographic prints 42 x 29.7 cm
Photography: © Genna Cotterill (2010)



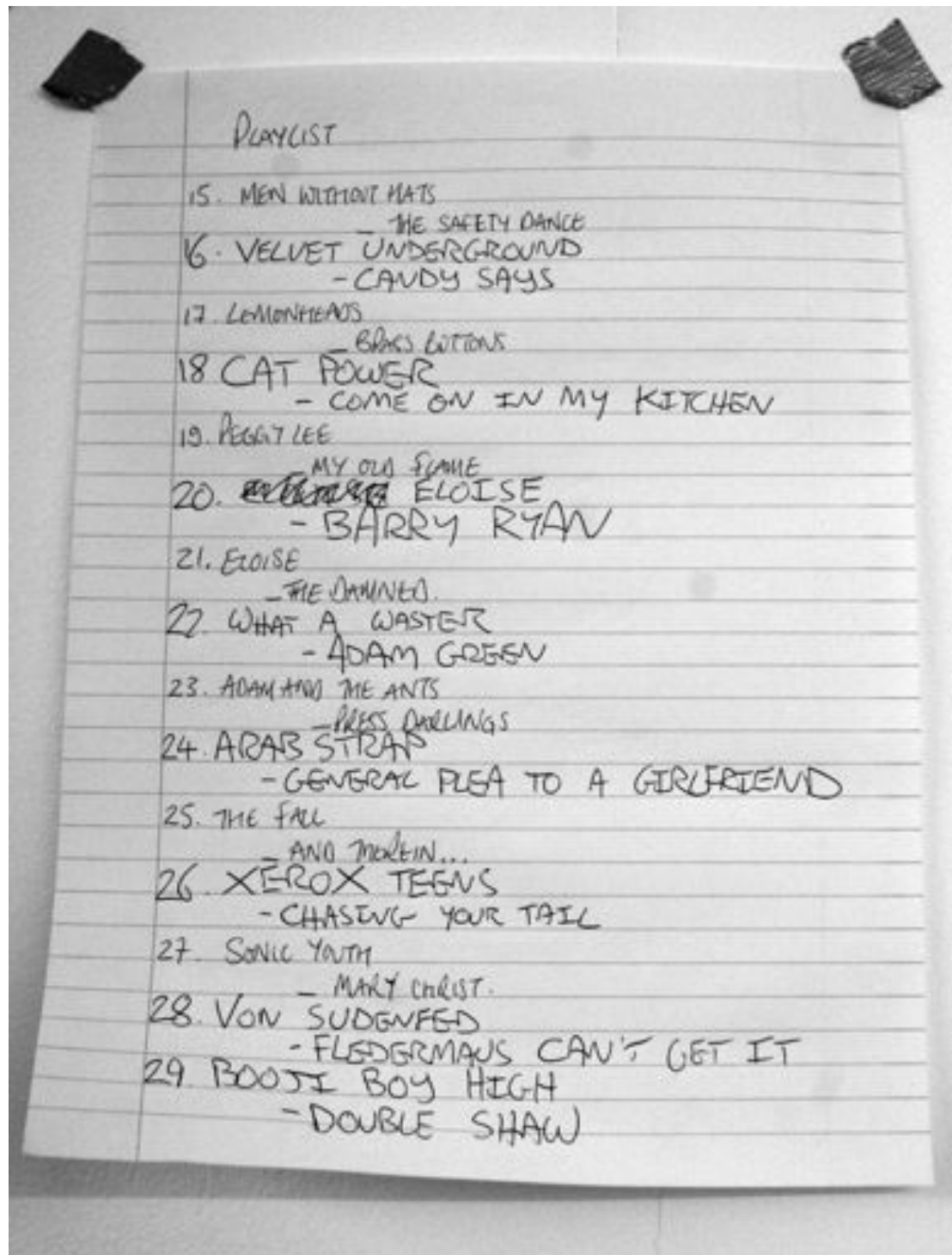
Photographic prints 42 x 29.7 cm
Photography: © Genna Cotterill (2010)



Photographic prints 42 x 29.7 cm
Photography: © Genna Cotterill (2010)

PLAYLIST

1. DAVID BOWIE
→ DIAMOND DOGS
2. ADAM + THE ANTS
- CLEOPATRA
3. ELASTICA
- THE BITCH DON'T WORK
4. THE JAGS
- BACK OF MY HAND
5. PINK GREASE
- SOUL PACO
6. TAO
- JACK PERSI
7. CICCONE YOUTH
- INTO THE GROOVY
8. DESCENDENTS
- CLEAN SHEETS
9. TWO LOVE SWORDSMEN
- KICKING IN PART 3
10. NICK CAVE featuring THE BAD SEEDS
- CABIN FEVER
11. COMMON HEADS
- DIFFERENT DRUM
12. ADAM ANT
- WHY DO GIRLS LOVE HORSES
- ~~12. ADAM ANT~~
13. ROY ORBISON
- DOMINO
14. TENOR TOWER
- THE SARKOS OF A THOUSAND MEN



Photographic prints 42 x 29.7 cm
Photography: © Genna Cotterill (2010)

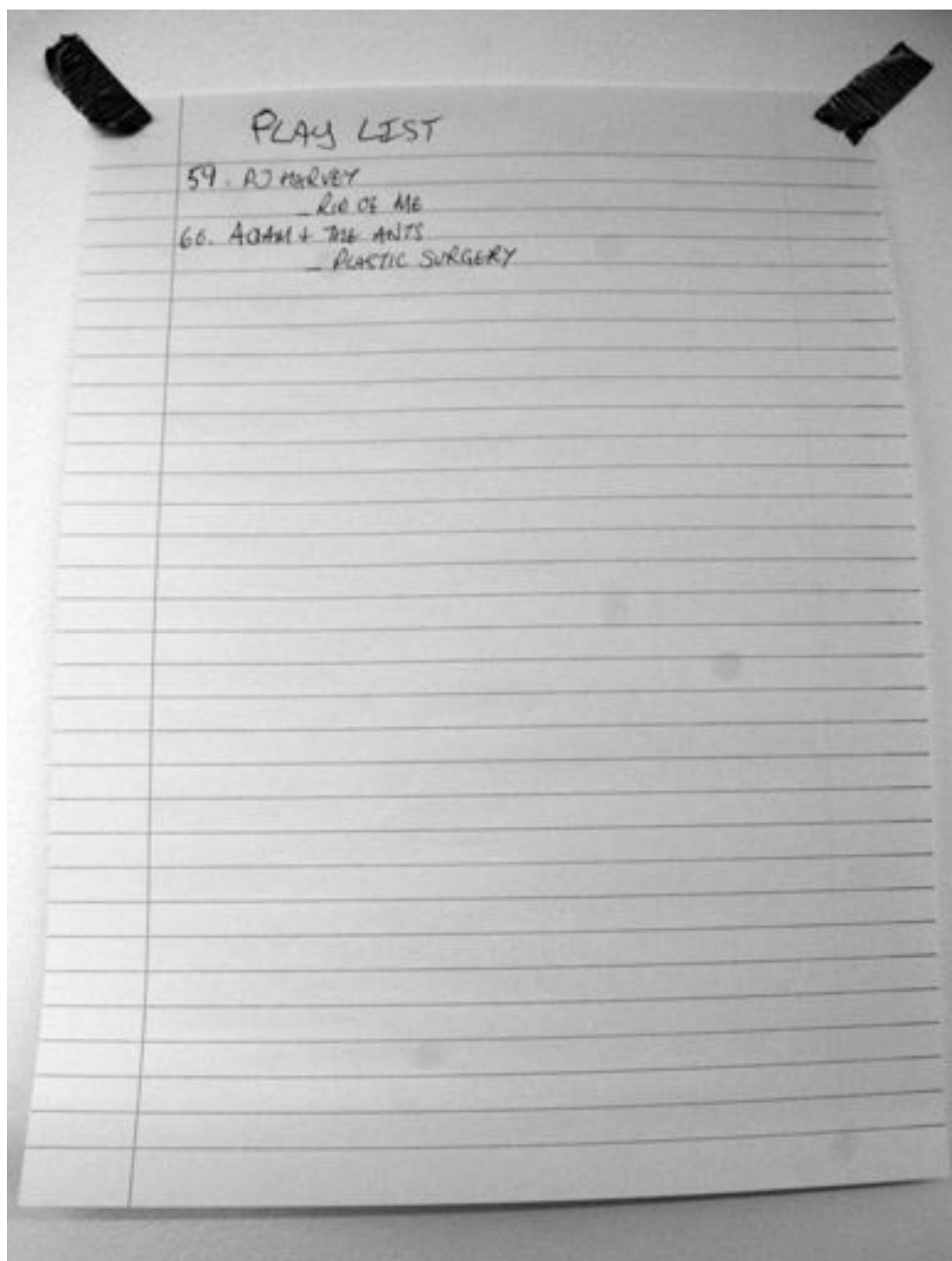
PLAYLIST

30. LES RITA MITCHOUKO + THE SPARKS
- SINGING IN THE STREETS
31. THE BS2'S
- ROAM
32. VERUCA SALT
- AMERICAN THIGHS
33. THE FALL
- LOST IN MUSIC
34. DURAN DURAN
- COME UP AND SEE ME MAKE ME SHAKE
35. RELAXED MUSCLE
- SEXUALIZED
36. FUGAZI
- NICE NEW OUTFIT
37. GIORGIO MORODER
- CALL ME
38. PJ HARVEY
- DRESS
39. THE FALL
- CONTAGIOUS DRIVERS
40. SNUFF
- NOT LISTENING
41. ANON
- EXERT FROM SOUND OF DEATH LP
42. JUDY GARLAND
- THE TRILBY SONG
43. PLAZA
- (GOT MY) DANCING SHOES
44. GUNS N ROSES
- NIGHTMARE



PLAYLIST

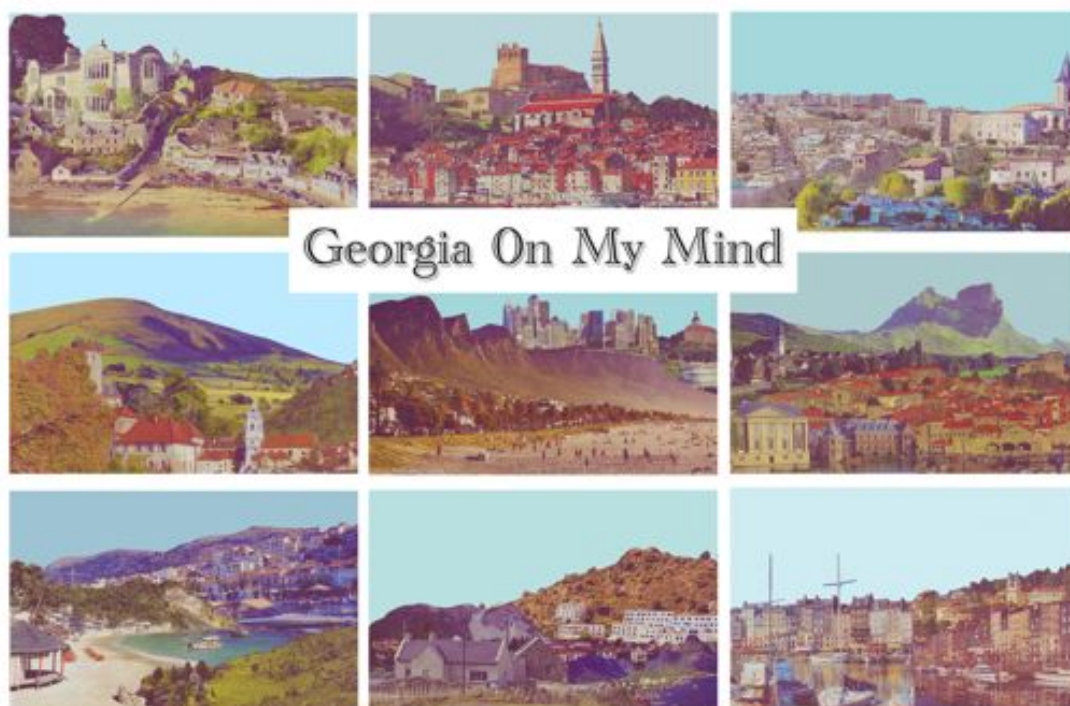
45. HAWKWIND
- SILVER MACHINE
46. DINOSAUR JR
BREAK SCENE
47. RYE RYE
- BANG
48. SPARKS
- THE NUMBER ONE SONG IN HEAVEN
49. SOFTCELL
- TAINTED LOVE
50. BRONSKI BEAT + MARK AMOND
- I FEEL LOVE
51. DEMIS ROUSSOS
- WHEN I AM A KID
52. THE CRAMPS
- HUMAN FLY
53. EXUMA
- DO WAH NANNY
54. CAT STEVENS
- ROOSTER
55. ANANDA SHANKAR
- RAGHUPATTI
56. VIOLENT FEMMES
- ADD IT UP
57. DR. FESSGOOD
- MILK AND ALCOHOL
- ~~58. ASHLEY~~
- ~~58. THE DETROIT COBRAS~~
58. THE DETROIT COBRAS
- I WANNA HOLLER (BUT THE TOWN'S TOO SMALL)



Photographic prints 42 x 29.7 cm
Photography: © Genna Cotterill (2010)

May 2010

Postcards

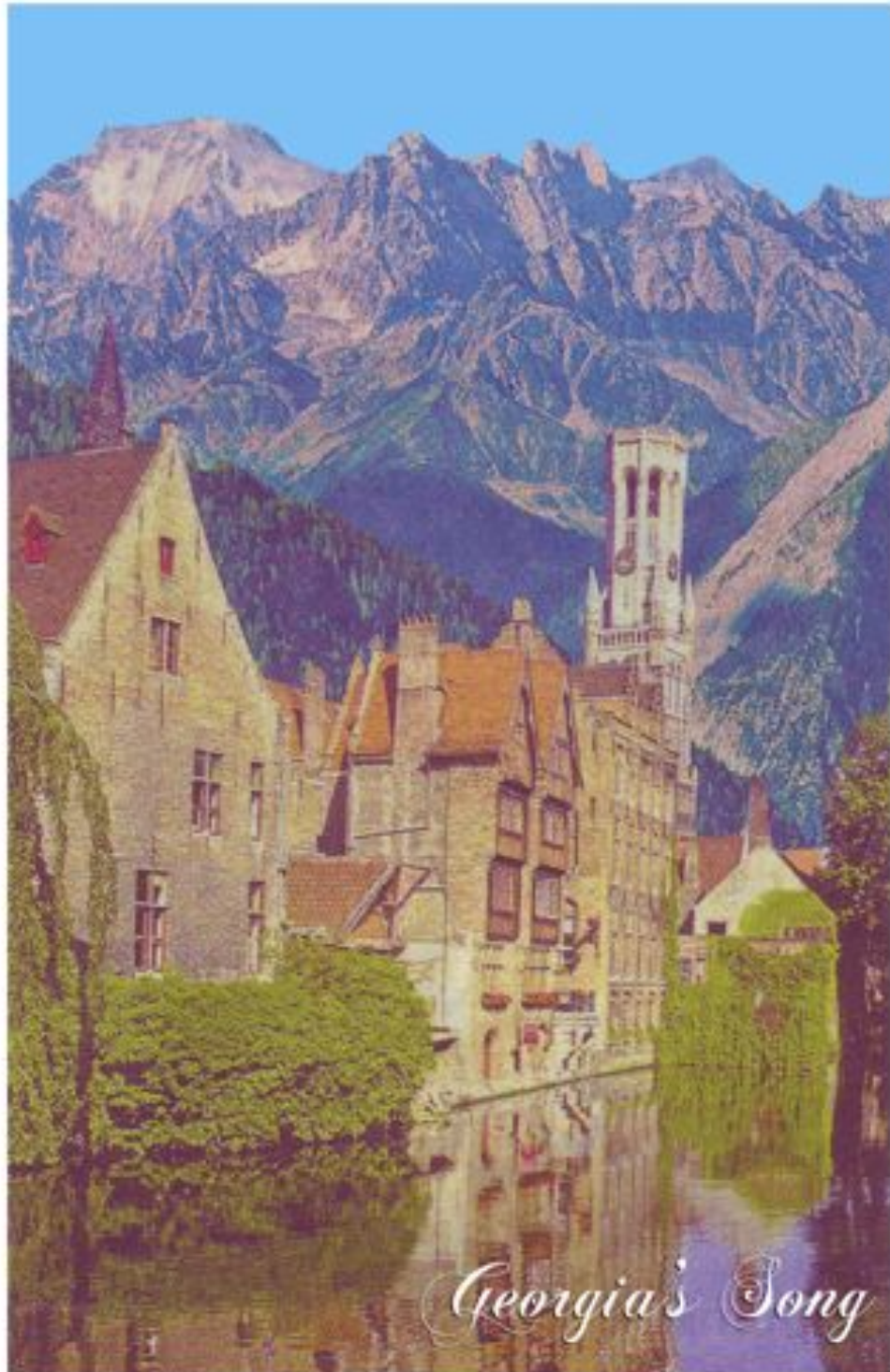


1. *Georgia on my Mind*

(*Postcards* (2010))

20 x inkjet printed postcards (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop



2. *Georgia's Song*

(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop

Watermelon Time in Georgia



Glory Glory to Ole' Georgia



3. *Watermelon Time in Georgia*

4. *Glory Glory to 'Ole Georgia*

(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop



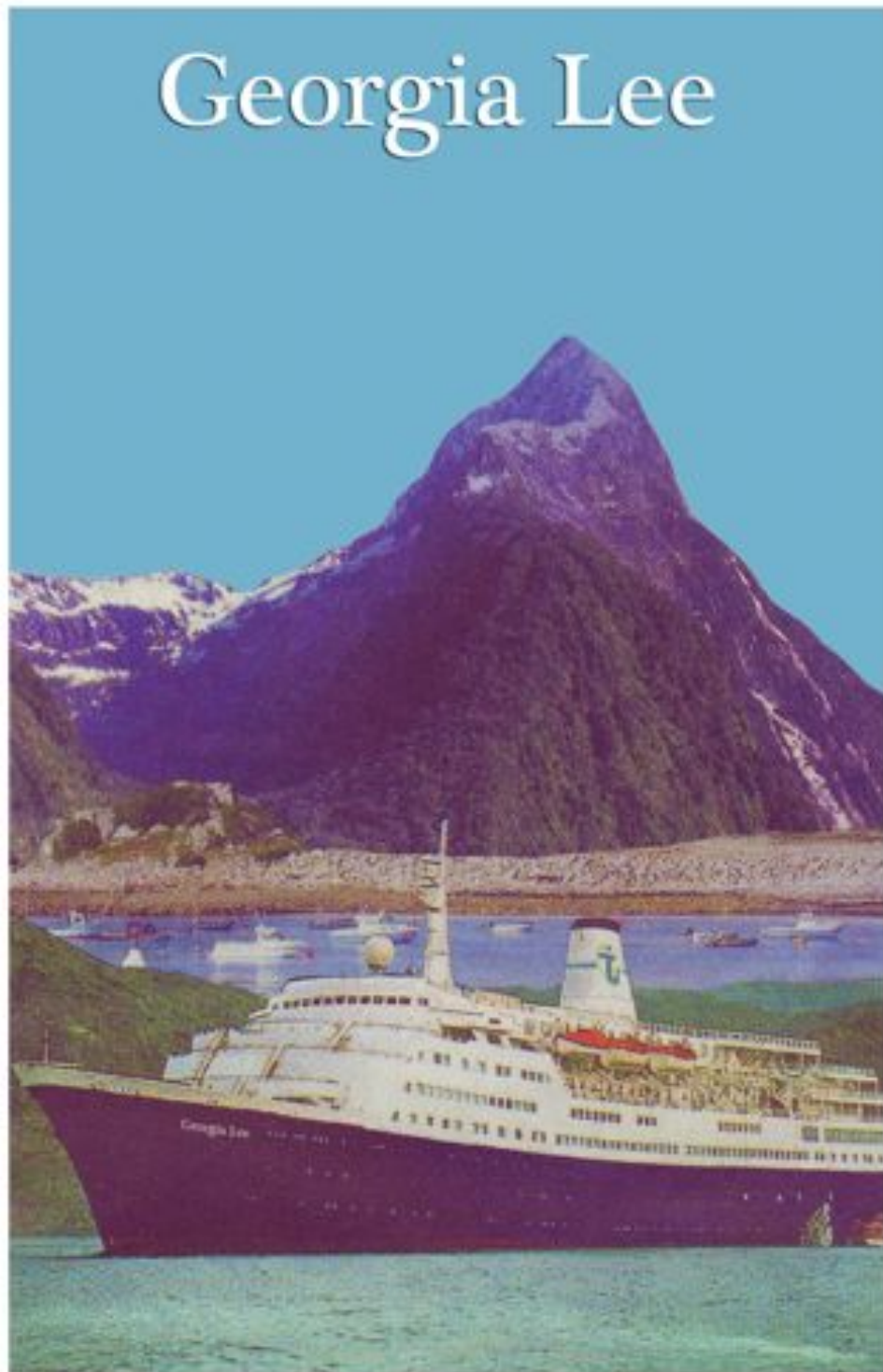
5. *A Rainy Night in Georgia*

6. *I'm Goin' To Georgia*

(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop



7. *Georgia Lee*

(*Postcards* (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop



8. *Georgia Overdrive*

(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop



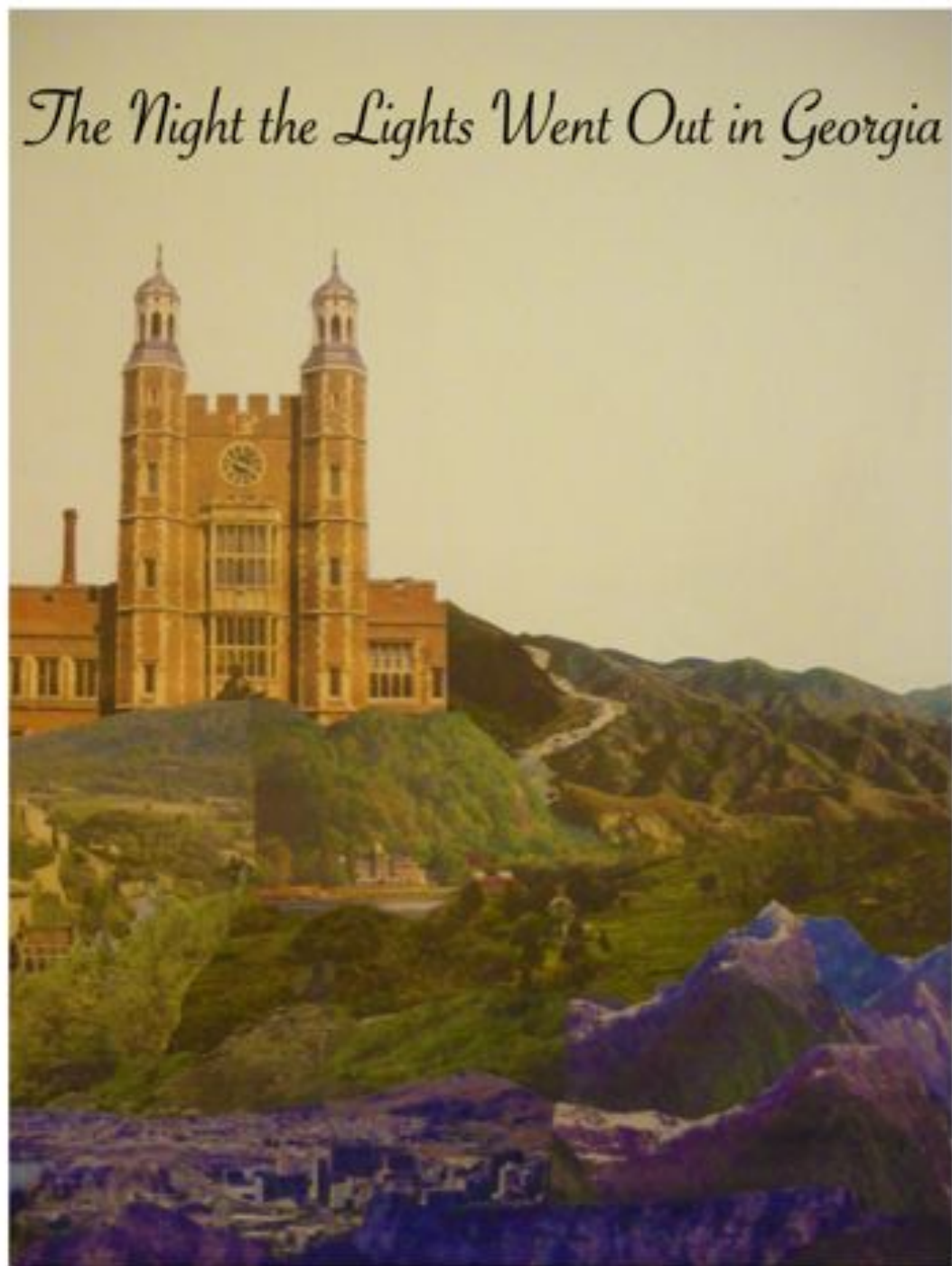
9. *Peach Pickin' Time in Georgia*

10. *Going Back To Georgia*

(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop

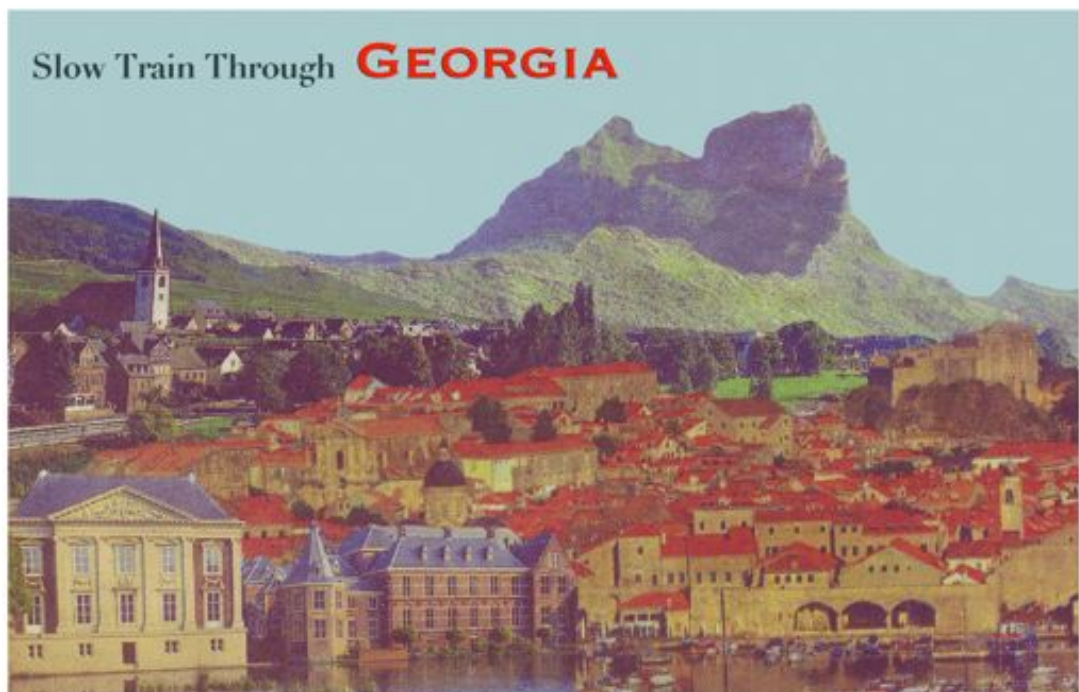
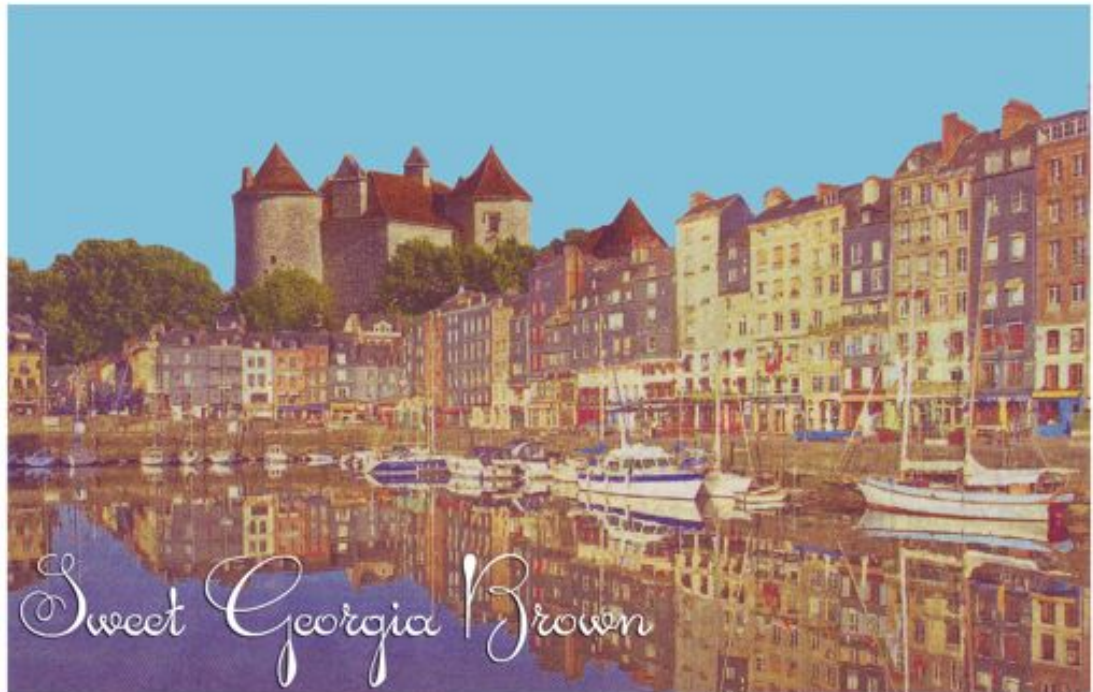


11. *The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia*

(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop



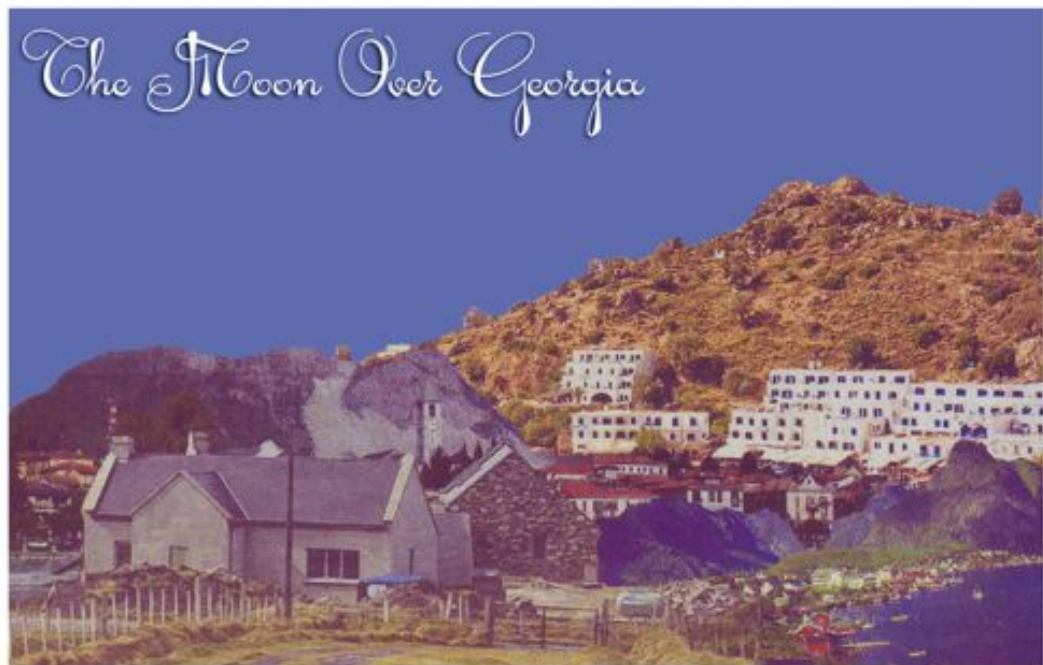
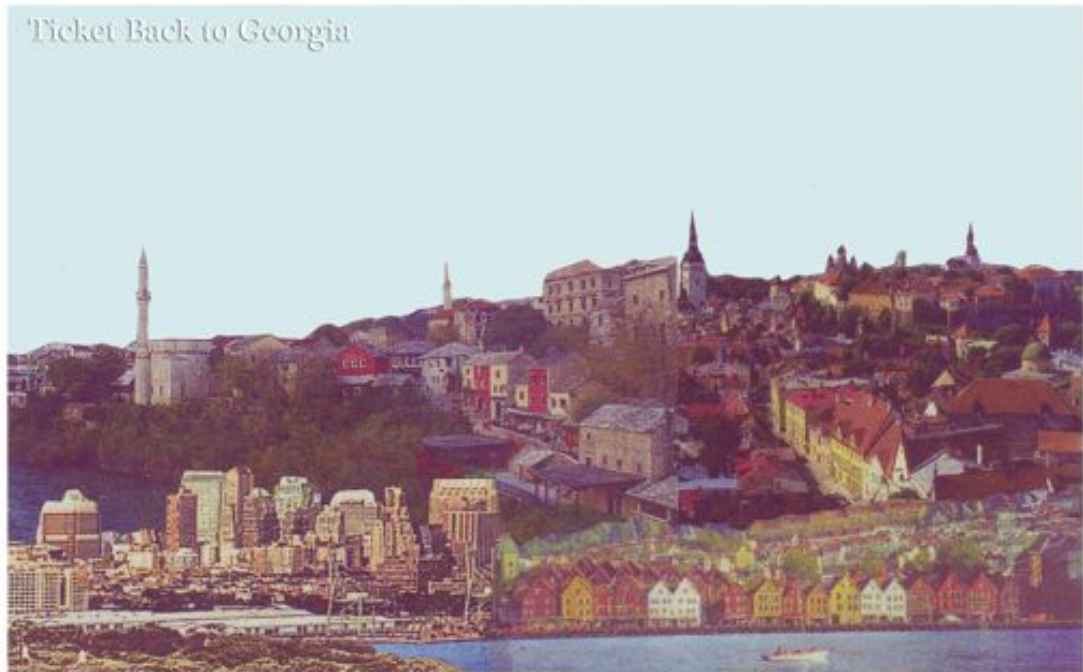
12. *Sweet Georgia Brown*

13. *Slow Train Through Georgia*

(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop



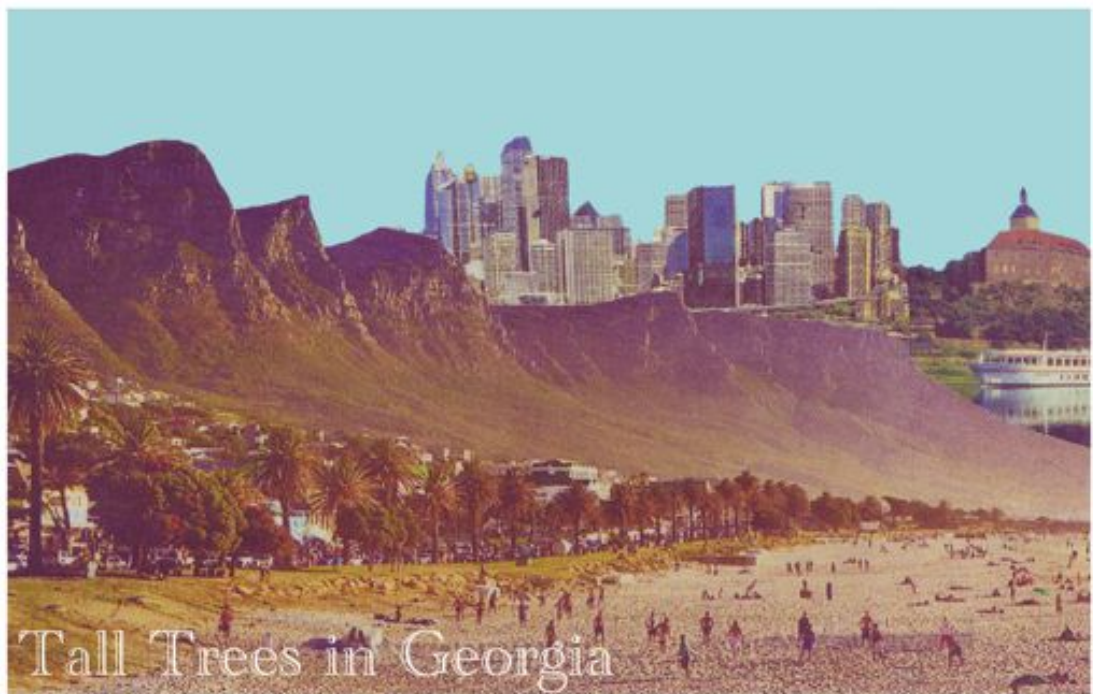
14. *Ticket Back to Georgia*

15. *The Moon Over Georgia*

(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop



16. *Georgia Rhythm*

17. *Tall Trees in Georgia*

(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop

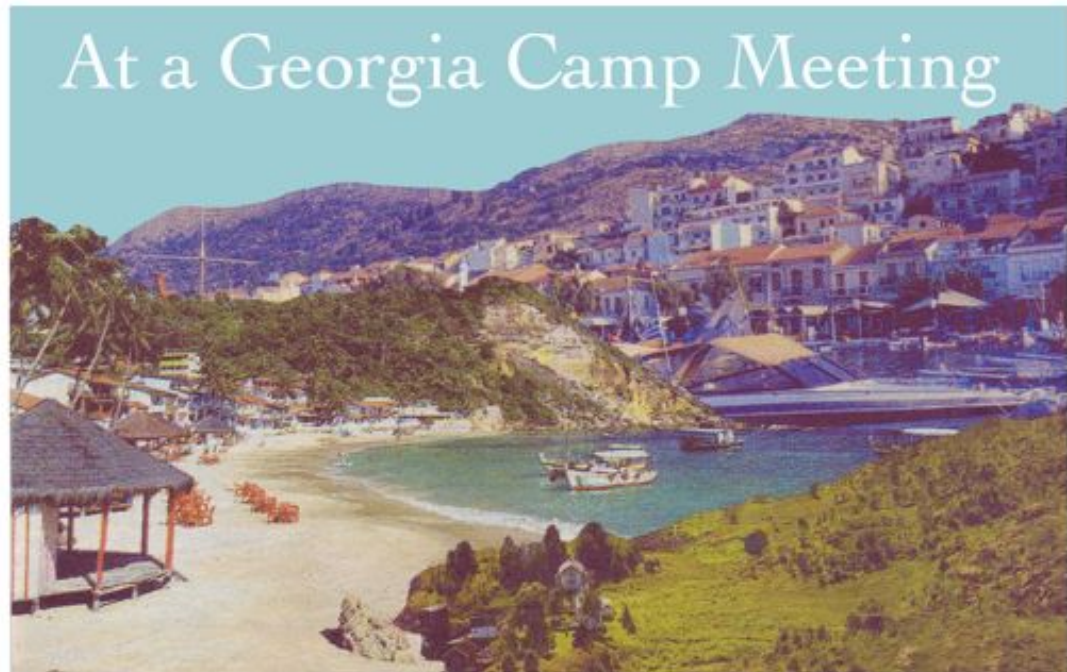


18. *Walking Back to Georgia*

(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop



19. *At a Georgia Camp Meeting*

20. *Bringing in the Georgia Mail*

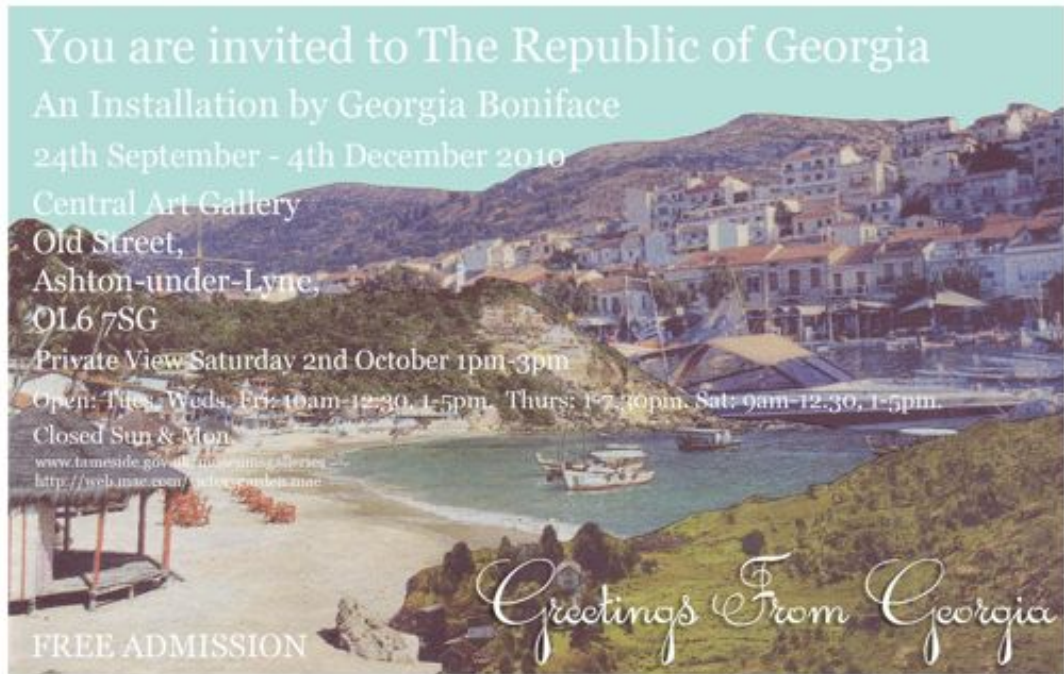
(Postcards (2010))

inkjet printed postcard (10.5x14.8 cm)

Hand collaged newsprint, digitally manipulated in Photoshop

June – December 2010

The Republic of Georgia



Exhibition poster and invitation (2010)
Digitally manipulated newsprint collage (Photoshop)

The Republic of Georgia (2010)



Installation, Central Art Gallery, Ashton-under Lyne, 24th September – 4th December 2010. Photographed by Shaw & Shaw © Shaw & Shaw (2010)



National Costume (2010)

Hand-dyed linen bodice, Cotton skirt with Peacock feather train, Peacock feather cape, display mannequin and acrylic wig. 190 x 100 x 100 cm



National Costume (see above), *Festive Street Bunting* (80 metres cotton tape, hand-dyed linen flags) and *Albert Edward Garfoot (The Day He Left for the Homeland)* (Duratrans print, metal-framed lightbox. 89 x 64 x 14 cm)(2010)

Flag (2010)

Hand-dyed linen, brass eyelets. 100 x 200 x 0.5cm



Travel Posters (2010)

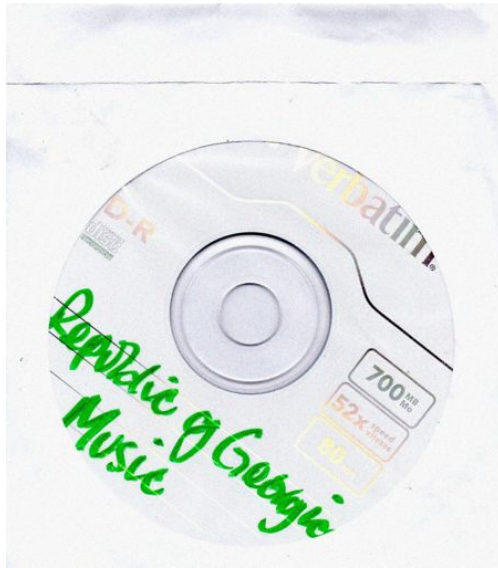
3 x laser print poster collages on mdf backing board (100 x 70 x 0.5 cm)



Postcards (2010)

18 x inkjet printed postcard collages (10.5 x 14.8 cm), wooden-framed, felt-lined, glass-fronted display case. 121 x 73 x 8.5cm

Georgian Music (2010)



Georgian Music (CD)

(Track Listing)

1. *Sentimental Gentleman from Georgia* (New York, August 17, 1932) – Baron Lee & The Blue Rhythm Band
2. *Georgia On My Mind* – Billie Holiday
3. *Rainy Night In Georgia* (Remastered) – Brook Benton
4. *Watermelon Time In Georgia* – Carl Mann
5. *I'm Going to Georgia* – Carolina Tar Heels
6. *Bringing In the Georgia Mail* – Charlie Monroe
7. *Georgia Lee Brown* – Jackie Lee Cochran
8. *Sweet Georgia Brown* – Ken Johnson's Rhythm Section
9. *Going Back to Georgia* – Mance Lipscomb
10. *Georgia On My Mind* – The Quintet of The Hot Club of France featuring Django Reinhardt & Stephane Grappelli
11. *At a Georgia Camp Meeting* – Sousa's Band
12. *Georgia On My Mind* – Toots Thielemans
13. *Peach Pickin' Time Down In Georgia* – Various Artists - JSP Records
14. *At a Georgia Camp Meeting* – 52 Key French Gasparini Carousel Organ

Audio compilation to be piped into *Republic of Georgia* Installation

The Dressing Up Box (2010)

The Dressing Up Box is an interactive performance where gallery visitors are invited to dress up in the clothes on display.



Still images of video footage shot during a spontaneous performance of *The Dressing Up Box* by visitors to the installation of *The Republic of Georgia*, Central Art Gallery, Ashton-under-Lyne. December 2010.



The Dressing Up Box (2010)

Clothes to fill; a traveling trunk, suitcase, wooden-framed glass display cabinet, wooden coat pegs and wooden hat stand. Mirror. Variable size



Albert Edward Garfoot (The Day He Left for the Homeland) (2010)

Duratrans print, metal-framed lightbox. 89 x 64 x 14 cm



The Lace Heirlooms (The Red Book, The End is Just the Beginning & The Other Side) (lace heirlooms) (2010)

Antique cotton, lace and beaded artefacts. Variable dimensions



The Umbrella Stand (Catholics Asthmatics & Stringed Instruments)
(2010)

Wooden umbrella stand, wooden walking stick, two shooting sticks.
70 x 100 x 33 cm



The Rabbit and the Hen (The Amateur Taxidermist) (2010)

Taxidermy rabbit and hen

THE MUSEUM

An Exploration of the Self Within Contemporary Art
(Within the Context of Everything Else)

Georgia Boniface

MA by Research

The University of Huddersfield

February 2011

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Introduction

Entrance to the Museum

The concept of the museum is a metaphor for the composition of this thesis. The proposal for research was *An Exploration of the Self Within Contemporary Art (within the Context of Everything Else)*, and the notion of the museum arose from the need to build a structure in which to ‘house’ the research. The nature of my practice is to explore modes of being and the complexity of the human experience. The specific theme of this research being theories of identity. I also wanted to explore the idea that the act of making art work comes directly and essentially from the self – that it is a subjective act. Therefore, it was my hypothesis that for my work to have integrity and validity, my subjectivity must be acknowledged – that I must produce work directly from my own experience, knowledge and research, and that this must be rigorously tested in order for my practice to evolve effectively. Thus the research aims to examine the idea of the *Self*, whilst maintaining continual access to *Everything Else*.

I visualised the structure of a museum; with galleries in which to isolate and explore specific theories and ideas relating to my work, a vast store room containing the universe or ‘*everything else*’, and corridors, as the main arterial routes through which the constant channelling of research ideas, from store room to galleries, can flow.

This museum is a metaphor for the artist Georgia Boniface. It is a document of my research, and the discoveries subsequently made within my own practice, exhibited as the art work that I have produced. Also, it is important to state that I approach the writing of the thesis as an artist, thus the writing itself is performative, part of the structure of the museum and integral to the overall concept of The Museum of Georgia Boniface. My work has come to be dependent on such a structure; it needs the galleries and the corridors, in order for the experiment, that is my practice, to achieve its results. So, I have come to visualise the thesis as a physical structure which facilitates a comprehensive reading of my research. There are two main reasons for this; firstly, the nature

of the research proposal and secondly, the initial location for *The Republic of Georgia* installation¹.

fig. 1

The fundamental paradox, was the knowledge of the impossibility of the task I had embarked upon, whilst being unable to see a way in which to narrow my field of vision and scope for the notion of academic research. Therefore I had to conceive of some sort of structure in which to compartmentalise specific elements – such as, identity and subjectivity – to be studied in isolation. Similar constructs are utilised by other artists, notably Georgina Starr; whose collected works are stored in her ‘Brain’ (*fig. 1*), and the Boyle Family whose *World Series*, (1968 – present). The Boyle Family acknowledge that this idea:

1 *The Republic of Georgia* exhibited at Central Art Gallery, Ashton-under-Lyne. 24th September – 4th December 2010

subjective role of the artists and creators is re-designated to that of ‘presenters’. Boyle Family seeks to present a version of reality as objectively and truthfully as possible, calling this process ‘motiveless appraisal’.’ (Boyle 1986)²

Everything is potential subject matter. All experiments and results can be stored within the structure of Boyle Family’s *World Series*.

2. The Initial Location for *The Republic of Georgia*



fig. 2 *The Republic of Georgia* (2010) Central Art Gallery, Ashton-under-Lyne

This second reason, however, confirmed the formal structure in my mind. *The Republic of Georgia* was to exhibit at Central Art Gallery, Ashton-under-Lyne in September 2010: a Victorian gothic building, housing the municipal art gallery and library. I was carrying out the planning for the exhibition and the MA research simultaneously, and I believe the physical appearance and ambience of the gallery became a part of the conception of ideas for *The Republic of Georgia* installation. Thus it became a site-specific study in a museum-like setting.

² Boyle Family <http://www.boylefamily.co.uk/boyle/about/index.html> 24/01/2011)

The museum has subsequently become the metaphor through which to tackle the research. It allows an ordered place to study, view, review and analyse the isolated aspects I am working on, (themes of identity and the subjectivity of the artist-self), and I have access to a metaphorically limitless storage capacity for future development. As Boyle states, *everything* is ‘potential subject’³.

The metaphorical museum has many rooms, and the function of these rooms can be changed as required; from studio to gallery to laboratory to theatre to lecture theatre to class room or store room. In this way I am able to retain the notion of flux. The concept and context of the museum stands for, and allows for, a collection of work and ideas to be gathered together, maintaining an unrestricted and boundless cycle of research and making of artwork. Therefore, in this framework, concepts and theories can be continually added, developed and re-developed, like the moving of the furniture to change the function of a room. Indeed the vision of the museum itself has changed since the beginning of this stage of the research. In the beginning, I imagined the museum to be Victorian, gothic, grand and imposing. This vision, undoubtedly influenced by the location in which I was making the installation *The Republic of Georgia*, has given way to a more functional, industrial space; an interconnecting structure of functional rooms and corridors that house a comprehensive and chronological documentation of the research. It has become a more complex structure, less formal, with a reliance on the interconnecting rooms – possibly signifying the more interdisciplinary, experimental approach that I am now able to have towards my practice. Thus, the museum archive remains a work in progress and is subject to development.

³ ibid

The Museum and its Contents

An Introduction to Two Research Routes

The research was carried out in two distinct phases. The first being predominantly a literature review, with the intention of locating the research and practice within the contemporary art field. The second phase was practice based research, where the studio practice and subsequent results have been examined (by a process of compare and contrast with the work of other artists), reviewed and exhibited, and now form a consolidated whole that can form the basis for future development.

The proposal for research was developed from a desire to understand my own approach to art practice; wanting to review and re-order concepts and methods, and investigate the role of the subconscious self within it. The progress of my studio work had, over a period of time, become blocked. I wanted to re-assess my conceptual approach to practice, and rigorously research the themes of identity and individuality that continued to prevail in the work itself.

Initially, by approaching the research as a practice based study, questions about (personal) integrity and validity arose. I felt I needed to establish how much of the *self* inhabits the work. Can I make work accepting that it will be subjective without becoming self-referential or autobiographical? There was a need to re-locate myself as an artist and re-contextualise my practice alongside particularly, those who question and embrace complex modes of being. Those whose work is not autobiographical, yet contains reference to (their own/ personal) identity, or subjectivity, as a basis, platform or 'starting point' for their concepts, such as; Jeremy Deller (*Life is to Blame for Everything: Collected work and projects 1992-99*, 2001), Sophie Calle (*Double Game* 1999), Mark Wallinger (*Credo* 2000) and Cindy Sherman's photographic portraits. It was through this comparison and literature review that I began to sense the necessity for a separation of the *autobiographical/personal*-self, from the artist-self. A distancing of everyday, domestic, lived-experience from the studio practice.

To answer the question *how much of the Self inhabits the work?* there had to be a qualification of the notions self and identity within an academic framework. This necessitated an approach towards defining themes of identity, autobiography and the ‘constructed’ Self; Foucault (*Technologies of the Self*)⁴, Butler (*Giving an Account of Oneself*)⁵, Griffiths (*Feminisms and the Self : The Web of Identity*)⁶, Bauman (*Identity*)⁷ and Irigaray’s questioning of performative language.⁸ However, this approach became increasingly problematic, (explained further in *First Research Approach: Dead-Ends, Blind-Alleys and Wrong Turns* P.24). The difficulty arose in the definition of identity.

Within the first stage of research, the literature reviewed deconstructs identity to reveal the multiple voices of the self. Thus identity is defined as a construction of ascribed societal roles against the force of individual autonomy (freedom of choice)⁹.

In acknowledging this definition I felt a disconnect between what I knew to be true *about myself* and what I was trying to achieve through my art work. Although I now see, that through this, I was *beginning* the process of separation, or distinction between my perception of myself (lived experience) and the more objective approach my art practice is able to take towards human experience.

⁴ Foucault, M (1988) Technologies of the self. In L H Martin, H Gutman and P H Hutton (eds) Technologies of the self. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, page 18 (in Hall, S ed. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications In association with the Open University. 1997 p. 322)

⁵ Butler, J *Giving an Account of Oneself*, 2005, Fordham University Press

⁶ Griffiths, M *Feminisms and the Self: The Web of Identity*, Routledge, London & New York, 1995

⁷ Bauman, Z, *Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, Malden, USA. 2004

⁸ Irigaray, L <http://www.iep.utm.edu/irigaray/print/#SH4c> 03/12/2010

⁹ P. 1 Griffiths, M *op cit*

I was wrangling with the notion of objectivity and how to apply this to the study of self and identity through the studio practice. Thus I concluded: I may desire to apply objective judgement and appraisal, but in this desire I am acting subjectively. I accept that the universe is judged from my own individual vantage point, through my own eyes, my own microscope or using my own set of stereotypes to inform my theories. From the review of relevant literature (Foucault, Butler et al.) I understand that I cannot be scientifically objective unless I use this objectivity accepting human caveats.¹⁰ Each brings to his/her own research the weight/wealth of past experience, knowledge and individual preferences and prejudices. In short: The Self. It is therefore my argument that objectivity can only occur as a temporary state and should only be regarded as such – that is to say; a ‘truth’ can be revealed, but this truth is momentary, as further research supplements, advances or displaces the original perception of the ‘truth’. Indeed for the artist this is a very useful position to take, to allow for a period of reflection and repose before subjective desire for new research and discovery inevitably changes the former view.

I believe this conflict is resolved in the construct and function of the museum, and body of art works contained within *The Republic of Georgia*. As Hall states:

‘It is the exhibition context which seems to provide us with the best forum for an examination of the creation of meaning.’ (Hall 1997)¹¹

As with Georgina Starr and the diagrammatic use of her *Brain*¹², I am able to order and compartmentalise multiple voices and roles of the self, past experiences, memory, knowledge, individual preferences and prejudices. Thus, I am able to isolate these individual aspects, analyse them more objectively by placing them within the galleries of the museum. The museum, for me, provides such an environment; as Boyle questions:

¹⁰ Hall, S ed. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications In association with the Open University. 1997

¹¹ P. 168 *ibid*

¹² figure 1

‘ “to what extent is it necessary to isolate in order to examine?” ... If you study how it is somewhere, sometime, maybe you are better able to begin to know how it is, anywhere, anytime. Maybe it’s only by way of isolating anything, that you can begin to cope with the concept of isolating everything...’ (Boyle 1987)¹³

This again illustrates the necessity for access to *everything else*. Attempting to isolate and analyse, but conceding that in doing so one is interfering with the constant flux of the universe. Accepting that it is also useful to do so, so long as it is never claimed to be the ‘whole truth’, merely a passing truth for a moment in time. ¹⁴

¹³ Boyle, M P. 8 *Beyond Image: Boyle Family* Hayward Gallery, London, 1 November 1986 – 26 January 1987, Arts Council of Great Britain

¹⁴ *ibid*

Gallery 1

First Approach to Practice

I had a tacit knowledge and understanding,¹⁵ through my studio work, of the area in which the re-development of my practice would occur, and a general awareness of the themes to be explored – identity, self, belonging, social relationships and consciousness. So the research evolved out of a sense of re-assessment of the artist-self and has been conducted by way of recovery; previous practice had felt to have reached a plateau and become static. The work had become too formulaic and design-oriented, without the impetus of experimentation and a rigorous conceptual foundation. For instance since graduating from my first degree, my work had gravitated more specifically towards fashion design and textile based works, that maintained a more functional approach to dealing with the ideas of identity that I was interested in – exploring what we wear and how we live, for example. Thus the objective of taking a new approach was to force my practice out of stasis by developing a more critical framework in which to work (see *figures 3 – 8*).



fig. 3

¹⁵ Polanyi, M. *The Tacit Dimension*, 1966, Library of Congress, Reprinted: Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass, USA. 1983



fig. 4 & 5



fig. 6 – 8

At the beginning of the research project I was unsure of how to disengage from this mode of practice. At this stage the work was a series of trial and error; an attempt to disrupt methods and scrutinize my thought processes. I developed a series of portraits (*fig. 9*), incorporating an element of collage, which explore issues of identity and may also inform a sense of self, or perhaps displacement of self. This use of collage *and* the notion of identity being comparable with the work of John Stezaker: (*fig. 10 – 12*)



fig. 9 Portrait Series (Masks) (2010)

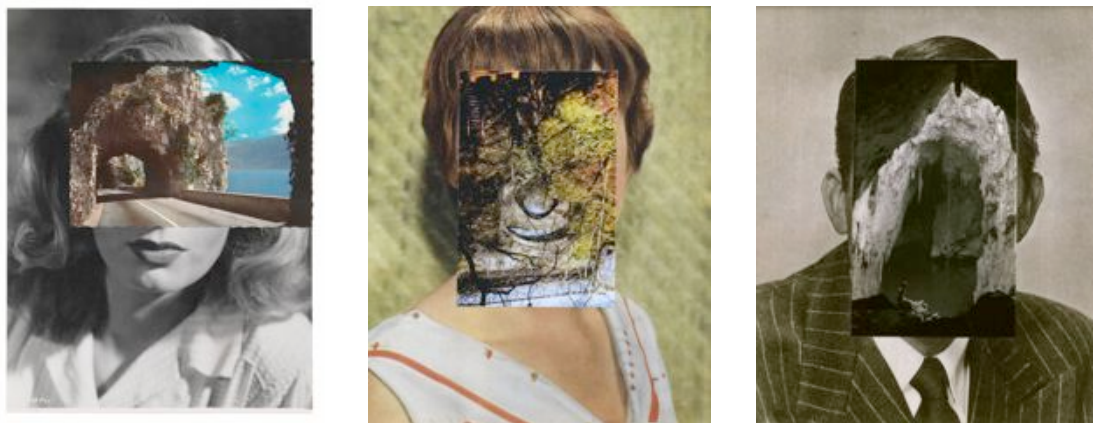


fig. 10 – 12 John Stezaker Mask XCI, II & IV

However, the use of portraiture led to areas of difficulty, in terms of dealing with the notion of identity, as subject matter, (as addressed in *An Introduction to Two Research Routes*, above). I did not want to make self-portraits or specifically portray the individual likeness of others. Through making this work I began to understand that this difficulty arises because of the concern with

wanting to accept my *subjectivity* as an artist, whilst wishing to discover the particular as a researcher; what I *know*, as opposed to what/who I *am*.

Working from a position of subjectivity should, therefore, define the intention of the work to be *of* the self, not *about* the self. This is to be *self-aware*. In this sense I am able to take a more objective view of identity, or the universe – accepting my place/role within it and *describing this position* rather than purely *depicting the view* of myself.¹⁶ This position is comparable with the portrait work of Cindy Sherman (*fig. 13 – 16*), in the sense that her portraits are not about Cindy Sherman: they are not *Self-portraits*. Sherman is the vehicle through which the subject of the portrait appears:

‘The photograph’s sole protagonist is sometimes referred to here as “the subject”, a descriptor indicating that we should not necessarily always interpret the images as representations of the artist herself (a straightforward psychological or autobiographical interpretation would be limiting indeed).’ (Durand 2006)¹⁷

Sherman’s work highlights an ambivalence to notions of identity. It appears to be navigating the complex technologies of self-portrayal, self-betrayal and even the removal of the self in the appropriation of disguise (see *Clowns* 2003-4). Although every photograph is of Sherman, through her disguise we learn about *types* of others. Exploring the roots of identity; its historical, political and personal origins.¹⁸ The notion of disguise is interesting in terms of dealing with the subjectivity of the artist-self. It allows a certain distance to be placed between the artist and the work, even when examining what may be the artist’s own experiences *through* the work.

¹⁶ See also Mark Boyle’s reflections on his own position with regard to the subjective and self-awareness Pp. 7-8 Mark Boyle *Beyond Image: Boyle Family* Hayward Gallery, London, 1 November 1986 – 26 January 1987, Arts Council of Great Britain

¹⁷ P. 230 Durand, R. *A Reading of Cindy Sherman’s Works 1975–2006* in *Cindy Sherman*, Flammarion Jeu de Paume, Paris, 2006)

¹⁸ *ibid*



fig. 13 – 16

My following series of work developed the *Portraits Series* further, and is perhaps an attempt at the idea of distancing the image of the Self. The kaleidoscopic images work as if to refract the portrayal of the Self and produce *multiple* reflections (*fig. 17 – 19*). This series also consciously begins to involve the initial idea of the *everything else*. The ‘subject’ or ‘personal identity’ is no longer the sole focus, and the *Constellation* (*fig. 21*) suggests how it is impacted upon by external forces (*fig. 20 – 23*).

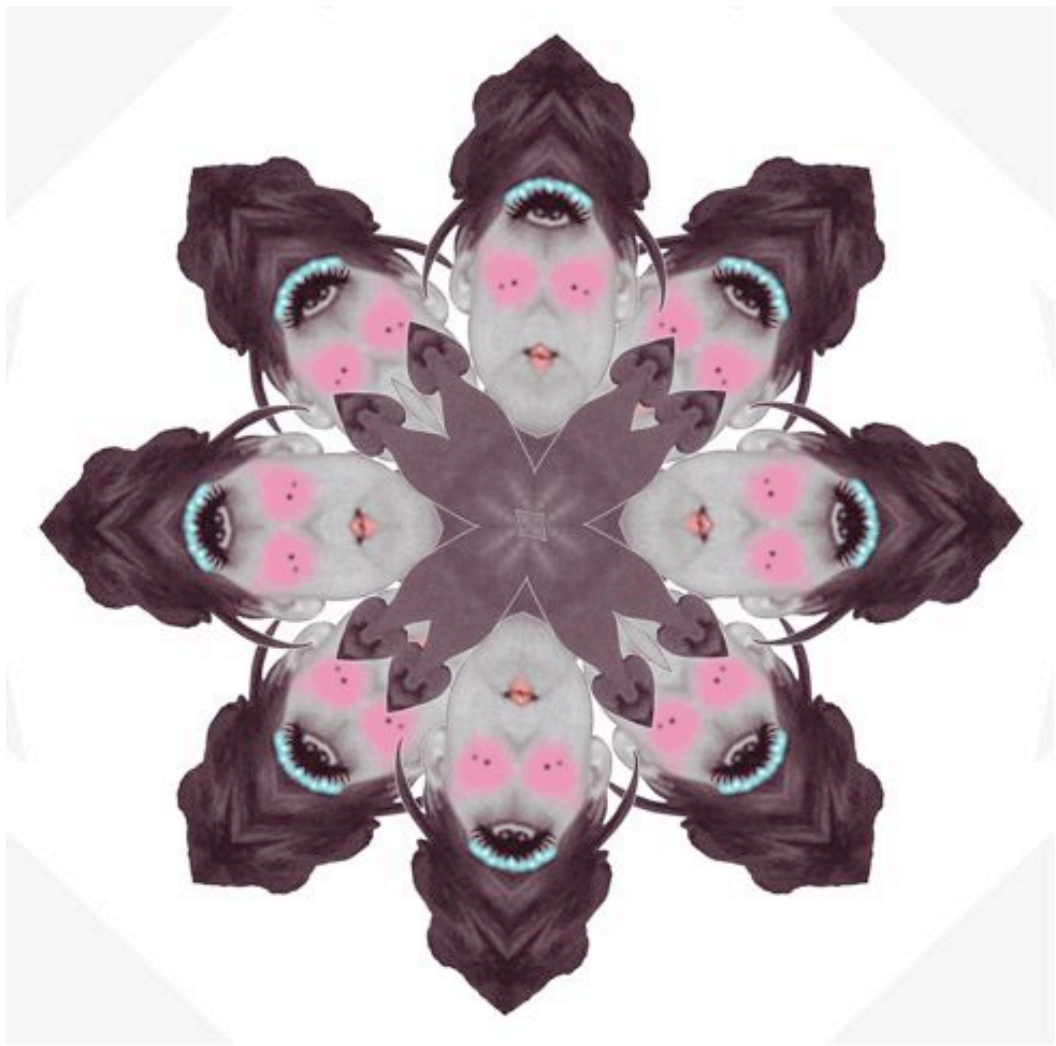


fig. 17

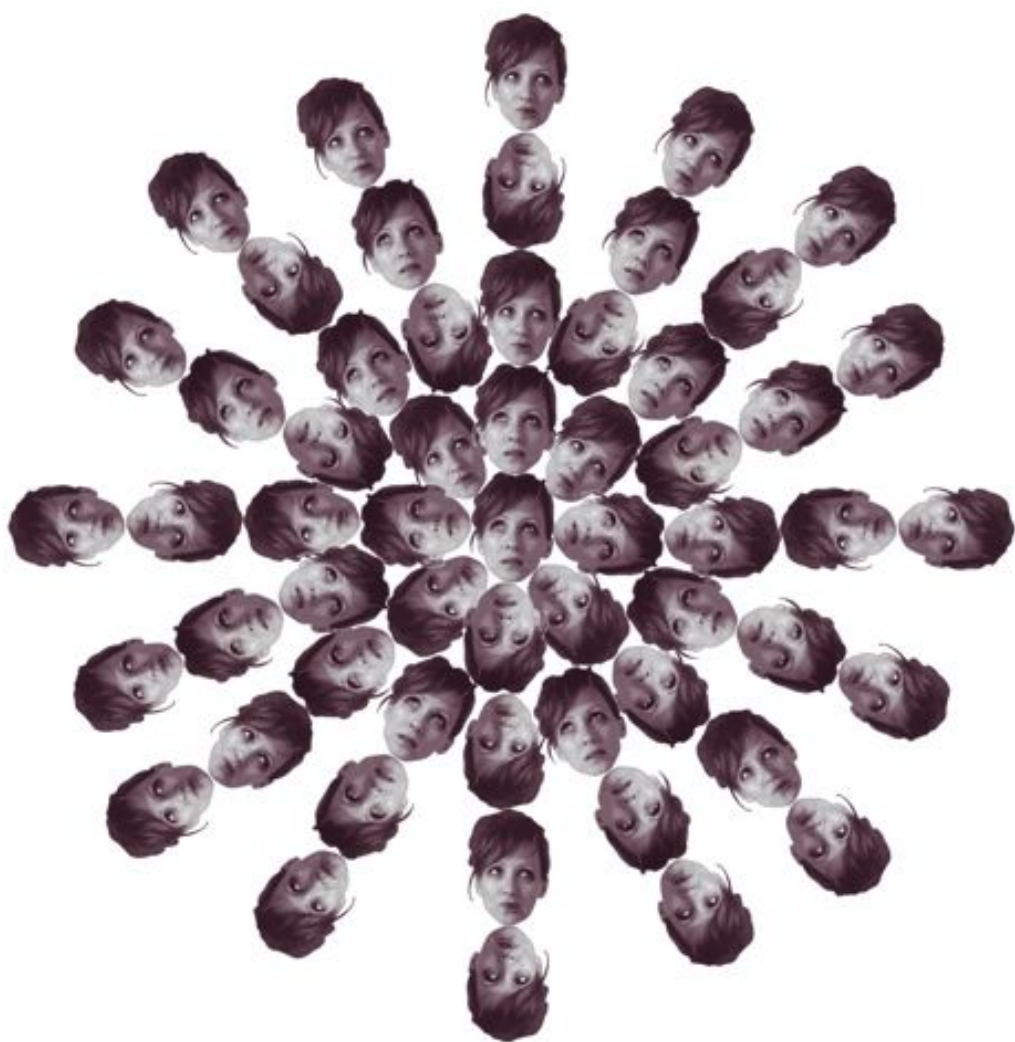


fig. 18

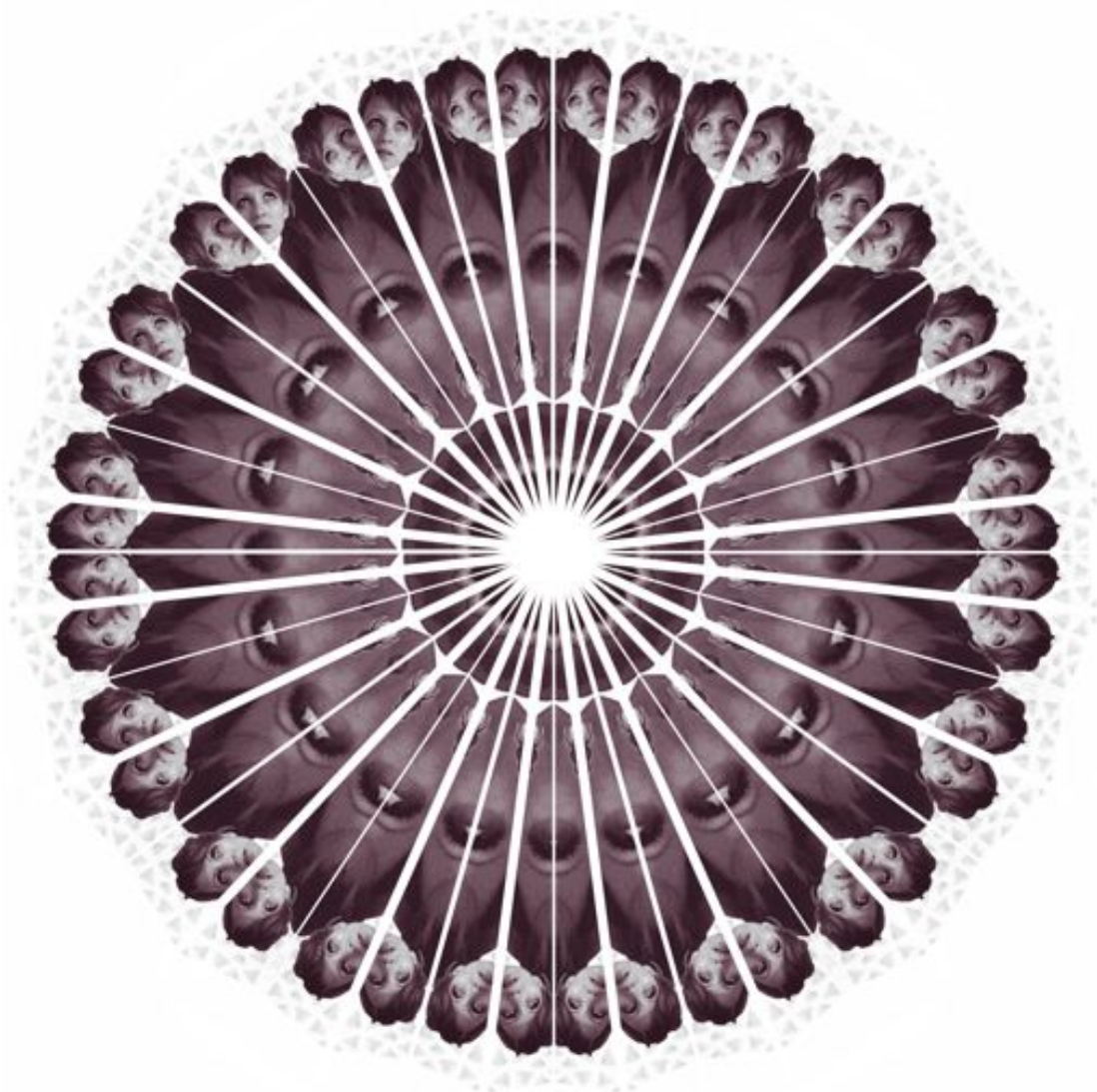


fig. 19

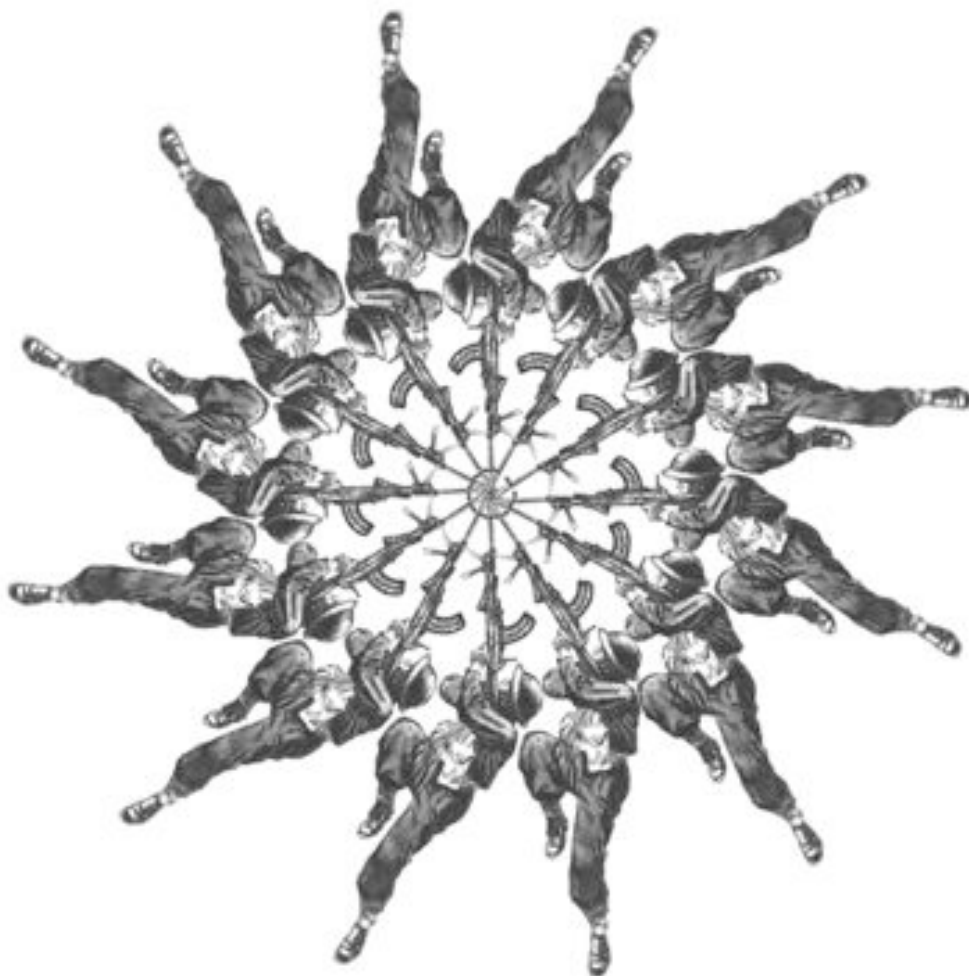


fig. 20

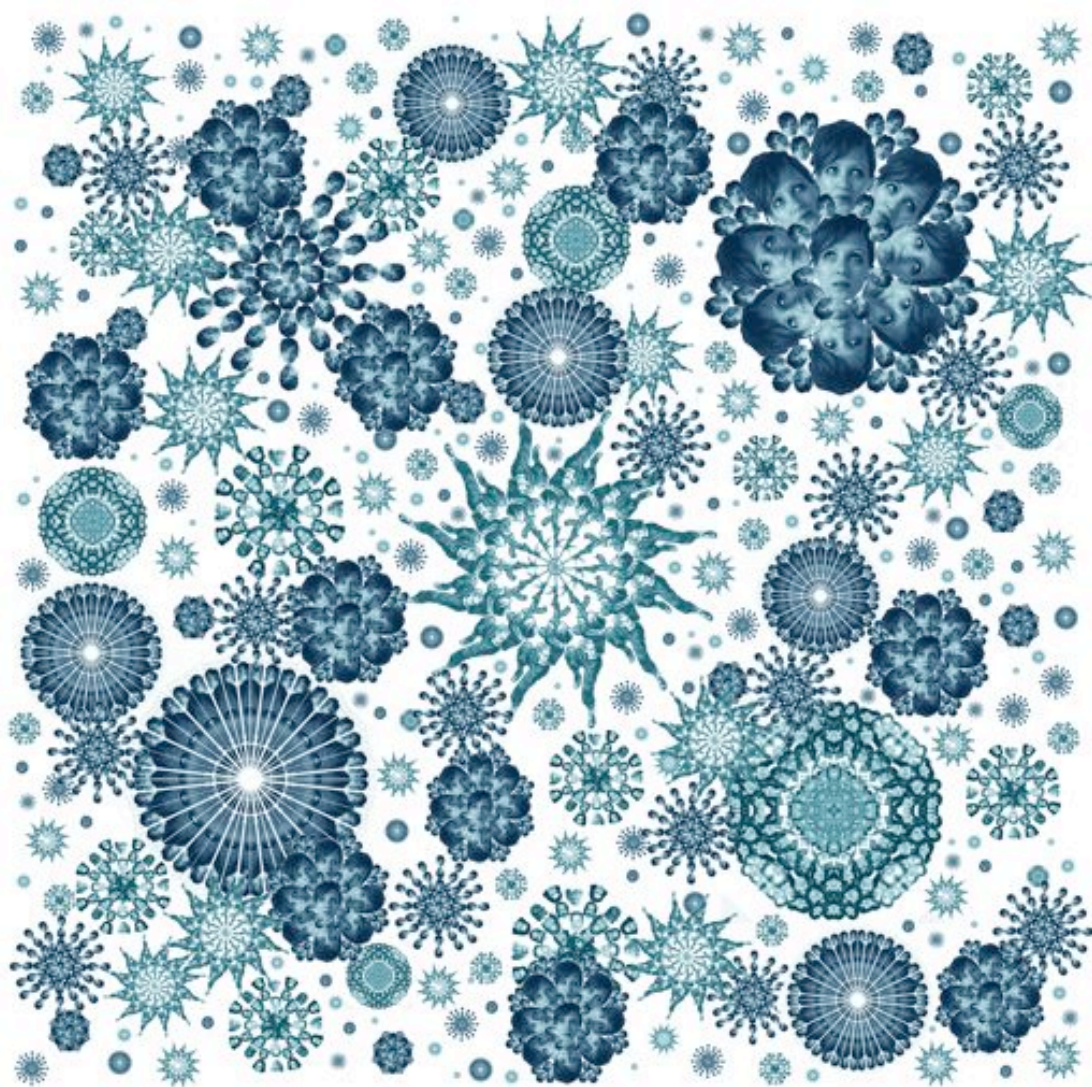


fig. 21



fig.22 & 23

I was aware that the nature of the self and a subjective approach was an inevitable theme in the *Exploration of the Self within Contemporary Art*, but my mistake was to look at *myself* rather than the construction of my identity, (for the purpose of developing my art practice). Looking *at* myself rather than through *myself*, my eyes, my knowledge and experience. From the outside *in*, as opposed to the inside *out* – where the self is analysed accepting and employing the constructs considered as social norms and judging with sociological definitions of self: gender, race, class, education, social mobility, rather than observing this theme as an artist. This felt to be a disempowering process. The findings result in a distorted perspective that does not represent a recognisable image. The view obtained by this method of analysis is constricted, and leads to relatively little insight. It is a static, scientific portrait, *based* upon identifiable truths, but without emotion, ambition and the evidence of a continual fight for individuality. The following chapter explores this issue in relation to how I began to navigate the research, the routes I felt compelled to take, and the outcome of this approach.

First Research Approach

Dead-Ends, Blind-Alleys and Wrong Turns.

The initial decision on commencing the research was to study the work of other artists (Sherman, Deller, Wallinger et al. as mentioned previously), and thus locate myself and my practice by comparison and contrast. This also involved an in depth literature review around the theories of identity, critical autobiography and performativity; specific subject areas suggesting a comprehensive method of approaching the idea of the self, subjectivity, self-discovery and of how the artist-self is motivated to produce art. The first body of research was documented as a result of this enquiry; addressing issues of a constructed self arising from external social variables and the performance of these constructs or 'roles', as outlined below.

In *Feminisms and the Self: The Web of Identity*, Morwenna Griffiths introduces the theory of 'Critical Autobiography' stating;

'The self I am – the identity I have is affected by the politics of gender, race, class, sexuality, disability and world injustice. In other words, the feelings I have, the reasons I recognise, the wants I act upon – they are all deeply political. Feminist theory and feminist politics have been responsible for my coming to understand that my individuality is shaped by political forces and that what I feel as deeply personal is affected by public systems of control. Equally, I know that such shaping and control are not absolute, fixed or deterministic. The individual I am and the identity I have is mine, and I shape and control it in so far as I am capable of doing so.' (Griffiths 1995)¹⁹

I recognised this outline of identity as a position that I inhabit personally and politically, and at this point in the research process, it was an enquiry I felt should be pursued. It seemed useful in the acknowledgement of my current location as an artist, which was suspended precariously between a domestic,

¹⁹ P. 1 Morwenna Griffiths, *Feminisms and the Self: The Web of Identity*, Routledge, London & New York, 1995

everyday life and a desire to make conceptually valid art. This position gave rise to a feeling of disorientation, and frustration with how to continue. Thus it felt an academic obligation to acknowledge feminist theory and to adopt a post-structuralist feminist approach through theories of critical autobiography and the constructed self.

At this point I acknowledge the work of Tracey Emin. A large proportion of her work could be regarded as critical autobiography. She is often her own subject matter. But is she dealing with absolute truth or a myth of what we believe truth to be? Is she *really* revealing herself or conforming to the stereotype that she tells us she is? In *How it Feels* (1996) Emin explains:

‘This is a true story, but it is my personal interpretation of events which took place during spring of 1990’. (Emin 1996)²⁰

In *The Interview* (1999)²¹, Emin is interviewer and interviewee. She addresses the notion of the multiple voices of the self. The artist is the subject whilst also adopting the role of psychoanalyst, therapist and adversary. She shows that she is all of these things, administering her resources to herself. She is self-contained, yet desperate. Perhaps *My Bed* (1998) (*fig. 23*) is a purely visual version of this. A silent, static frenzy of the same confused defiance with the tangible mementos of attempted self-reliance. It is examples such as these, that show the worth of critical autobiography as a valuable research strategy.

²⁰ Pp. 62–67 *Tracey Emin*: Carl Freedman, Rudi Fuchs, Jeanette Winterson, edited by Honey Luard and Peter Miles. Rizzoli International Publications, inc, New York, 2006

²¹ Pp.194–198 *ibid*



fig. 24 *My Bed* 1998

In *Giving an Account of Oneself*, Judith Butler discusses the ‘act of self-making or self-crafting ... which always takes place in relation to an imposed set of norms.’ (Butler 2005)²² She argues that ‘one invariably struggles with conditions of one’s own life that one could not have chosen’, (Butler 2005)²³ so I conclude that this tension will always exist, and must remain an area of vigilant negotiation. That our chosen identities must be defended from the influence of external forces. Irigaray maintains that we must vigorously reinforce control over our own ‘subjectivity’²⁴ in the face of the performative language that binds us to proscribed societal norms, so that, for example, (and I refer to my own circumstances), ‘taking on’ the role of ‘mother’ should not preclude the role of ‘artist’.

²² Pp.18–19 Butler, J *Giving an Account of Oneself*, Fordham University Press, 2005

²³ *ibid*

²⁴ Irigaray, L <http://www.iep.utm.edu/irigaray/print/#SH4c> 03/12/2010

Louise Bourgeois Part 1

The work of Louise Bourgeois became a significant influence on myself and my practice as I progressed through the research. Her writing in particular has compounded, validated and enhanced my own perspectives on themes of art and identity, and her work has stretched my perception of possibilities and is an encouragement. Bourgeois' volumes of autobiographical writing, sketches and body of art works explore her relationships with the world. She examines herself as artist, daughter, mother and wife in an endless pursuit of her *self*. There is a sense of the artist standing alone in her work; sometimes she is at the centre, sometimes to one side, but often just outside the door, watching. The feeling is that she is trying to orientate herself, negotiate her location in the midst of other things outside of her control. But the important point is that Bourgeois is making work from her experience, it is channelled through her –*via* herself, not by looking directly *at* herself. I believe her work often to be an observation of the compromise necessary in the balancing of multiple human roles and relationships, acutely memorialised in *I Do, I Undo, I Redo*. (1999-2000). Bourgeois' doubts and fears have been validated by the art world: it has become the place to voice her dislocation and uncertainty.

Bourgeois describes *I Do, I Undo, I Redo* (1999-2000):

'I DO is an active state, it's a positive affirmation. I am in control... The UNDO is the unravelling. The torment that things are not right and the anxiety of not knowing what to do... The REDO means that a solution is found to the problem. It may not be the final answer, but there is an attempt to go forward.' (Bourgeois 2000)²⁵

I believe this work to be as much about a process of making art as it is about human relations. It is an epic, concrete and tangible reminder of the transient and precarious systems encountered by the artist-self whilst engaged in making art. It is a monument to the fluctuating cycle of uncertainty, doubt and resolution. I believe the art that I am making currently operates in this arena

²⁵ P.158, *Louise Bourgeois* edited by Frances Morris Tate Publishing London 2007

and has been established as an outcome of this period of research. It incorporates my own sense of uncertainty, doubt and cyclical patterns of behaviour into my work. Thus, my practice has become a repeated enquiry and a positive force towards development.



fig. 25 I Do, I Undo, I Redo 1999–2000

Although the study of Bourgeois' work was extremely constructive, by this stage the research felt to have become increasingly gendered, which was uncomfortable and unhelpful as this is not the emphasis of my practice. This approach revealed nothing new, that hadn't already been acknowledged. It was perhaps, too concerned with the *social self*, by looking at specific areas of identity such as gender,²⁶ which located me as viewed through my domestic, day-to-day roles, but did not locate me as an artist. However, even though this gave rise to frustration and anxiety in relation to how to progress, by evaluating what I learned from this process I understand it to have been the pivotal point in the development of the research and practice. It was after this period of tension that I managed to re-gain the freedom that I had been searching for within my work. The flow of the practice resumed, as I separated the view of my *own* self from my research into self and identity as concepts with which to work – to acknowledge my subjectivity without the work being autobiography or self-portrait.

²⁶ Hall, S ed. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications In association with the Open University. 1997

Second Research Approach

The study of identity continued to be a focus and took precedence as the predominant theme. Working specifically with the theory of identity put forward by Zygmunt Bauman in his *Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi* (2004),²⁷ (discussed in *Identity and The Self: A Thematic Approach* P. 51) I was led to a new strategy; art practice as research, and through this approach the preliminary works for *The Republic of Georgia* installation began to evolve. By resuming art practice as the primary route back into the research, I was making the discovery that this more responsive approach is ‘driven by the requirements of practice and its creative dynamic’,²⁸ explained by Grey and Malins in *Visualizing Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design* (2004) This approach allows me to deal with the complexity of studying the subjectivity of the artist-self that is informed by ‘real experience’. It also acknowledges the flaws of previous methods as a valid and informative part of the research process. Thus I returned to a purely practical response to the research. This was to work as ‘practitioner-researcher’²⁹. Generating the research material through practice, and as Grey and Malins continue further to state:

‘With regard to epistemological issues, the practitioner is the researcher; from this informed perspective, the practitioner identifies researchable problems raised in practice, and respond[sic] through aspects of practice ... In the role of ‘practitioner-researcher’, subjectivity, involvement, reflexivity is acknowledged; the interaction of the researcher with the research material is recognized. Knowledge is negotiated – inter-subjective, context bound, and is a result of personal construction. Research material may not necessarily be replicated, but can be made accessible, communicated and understood. This requires the

²⁷ Bauman, Z., *Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, Malden, USA. 2004

²⁸ P. 21 *Visualizing Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design*, Grey, C. and Malins, J. Ashgate Publishing Ltd. Aldershot, UK, Burlington, USA. 2004

²⁹ *ibid*

methodology to be explicit and transparent (documentation is essential) and transferable in principle (if not specifics). (Grey and Malins 2004)³⁰

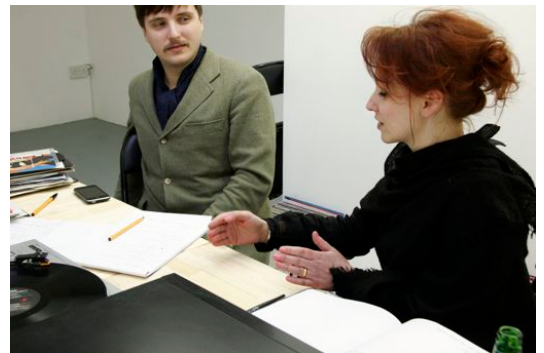
The first piece of work produced from this period was *Radio Local* (2010), a collaboration between the artist Edward Cotterill and myself:

‘A local radio broadcast will be transmitted which can then be transmitted in other locations but must always remain local. Artists Georgia Boniface and Edward Cotterill will conduct a protracted conversation with the aid of a selection of their respective record collections. The gallery will be transformed into a working studio where a one-off broadcast will take place. The broadcast will be for the local population of all visitors to the gallery space. The broadcast will be transmitted via the vibration of sound waves stimulated by the vocal chords of each artist and music will be transmitted from a domestic record player via a pair of speakers. Like other radio broadcasts, invited guests & listeners will be invited to participate in the transmission. In accordance with broadcast laws the transmission will be recorded.’ (Boniface and Cotterill 2010)³¹

I had started to see my practice as much more experimental, and with this piece was able to test this new approach and attitude to my practice. I also wanted to test the nature of the gallery as a setting for my work; the possibility of performance and the ability of my work to be more site-specific. *Radio Local* (2010) was designed to test the gallery environment in relation to notions of performance and the communication of ideas with an audience. It was performed at Limoncello Gallery, London E2, Sunday 14 March 2010, 1 – 5pm. Although essentially a live performance, I was interested in the idea of producing documentary evidence of the work that could be worked on after the event. Therefore the performance was filmed and an audio recording made in real time alongside photographic documentation. *fig. 26* (Over leaf)

³⁰ P.20–21 *ibid*

³¹ Boniface, G & Cotterill, E *Radio Local* 2010



It is my intention that the concept becomes performative and the work becomes a performance. Nicolas Bourriaud discusses this style of working in *Altermodern*³². Stating that the 'compositional principle' of such works is reliant upon this chain of events:

'the work tends to become a dynamic structure that generates forms before, during and after its production.⁴ These forms deliver narratives of their own production, but also their distribution and the mental journey that encompasses them' (Bourriaud 2009)³³

This new body of work can therefore be located within the notion of the *Altermodern*. The theory acknowledges that recording of processes and networks of events, alongside form and structure, are analogous for the global connections and influences that artists are currently working with. Embracing a nomadic sense of globalisation, interconnection, multidisciplinary and the recording of the personal as political. Artists such as Georgina Starr, Jeremy Deller, Bob and Roberta Smith and Marcus Coates, for example, are working within this framework. Artists within whose work I see similarities to my own, where I am interested in directly testing human responses to societal norms. Creating within the gallery the environment of a laboratory in which these experiments are undertaken.

Much of Deller's work revolves around this type of performance and interaction; where the audience are participants in an orchestrated event which in turn becomes the final outcome and art work. Most notably perhaps are; *Folk Archive* 'an investigation and collection of UK folk/popular/vernacular art'³⁴, or *Procession* 'a procession on Manchester's Deansgate, Sunday 5th July 2009 for the Manchester International Festival'.³⁵ In *Bexhill-on-Sea OAPs*, Deller

³² *ibid*

³³ Pp.14-22 Bourriaud, N *Altermodern* : Tate Tiennial , Edited by Nicolas Bourriaud, Tate Publishing, London 2009)

³⁴ <http://www.jeremydeller.org> (13/01/2011)

³⁵ *ibid*

‘invited retired locals with an interest in music to come and try out the equipment with a view to making a record of some sort. I was interested in the interaction between an older generation and equipment that is essentially the preserve of the young.’ (Deller 2001)³⁶



fig. 27

I also returned to the use of collage during this period, creating a series of twenty postcards, which developed into *Postcards From Georgia* (fig. 24 – 27). These pieces began and evolved through the instinctive act of making. The Postcards are collages of newsprint onto blank postcards. Beginning with the collaging together of landscapes, physically cut and pasted from the travel sections of newspapers, then scanned and digitally embellished (and given titles – song titles containing the name *Georgia*). This approach allowed the creation of new, fictitious landscapes that were an amalgamation of real places, though various and disparate. They are still recognisable as ‘real’ places, although sometimes the scale is incongruent so there is a slight jarring that alerts the eye to something being perhaps not quite as it would seem. As postcards they are records/documents/mementos of a place: *The Republic of Georgia*. I am interested in their association with the idea of *locating* the Self. Thus the development of the installation *The Republic of Georgia* began to materialise in a tangible form, (discussed in *The Republic of Georgia: A Museum Exhibit*).

³⁶ P. 55 Deller, J. *Life is to Blame for Everything* Collected work and projects 1992-99 Gordon Nesbitt, Rebecca ed. Salon 3, London, 2001

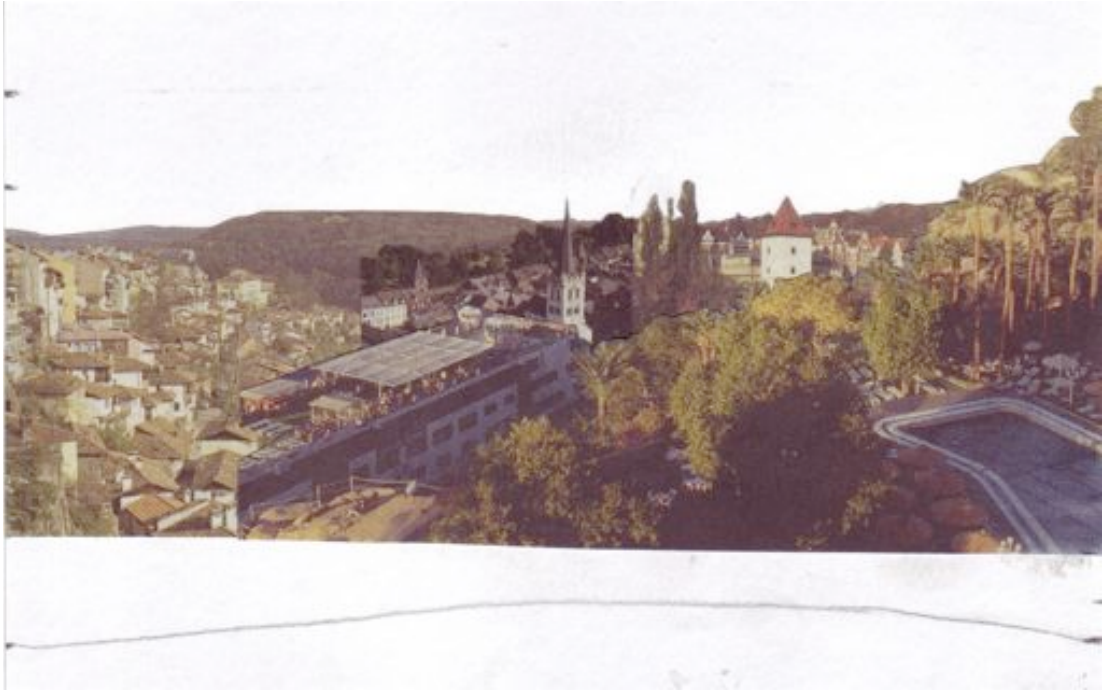


fig. 28



fig. 29



fig. 30



fig. 31

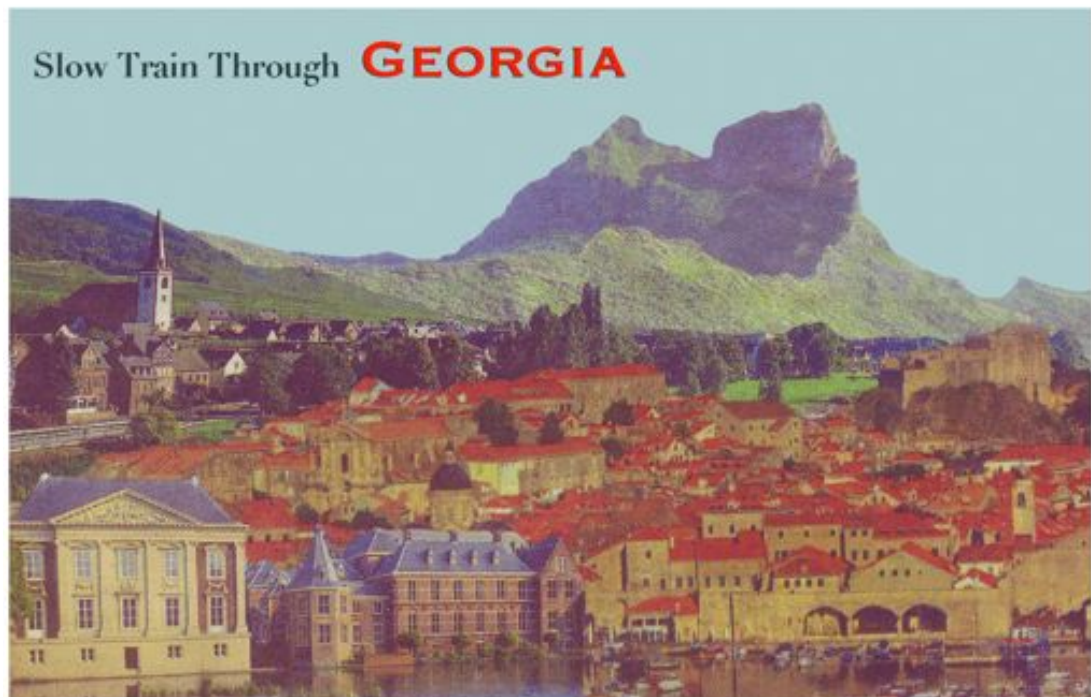


fig. 32

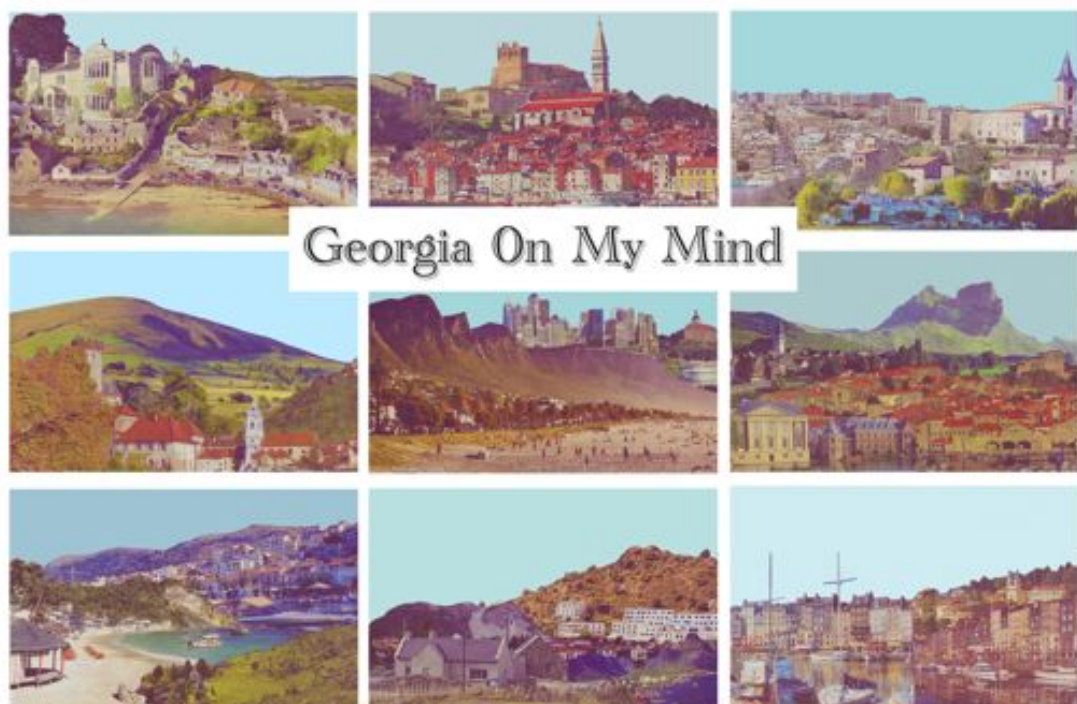


fig. 33



fig. 34

The Tacit Dimension

And the Role of the Artist-Self

It is this approach – the act of making art, as above – that has enabled me to better understand the role of the practice based works as valid and crucial components of the research. The theory of *tacit knowing* ³⁷ enables me to describe the way in which the research problem or proposal has developed, and a solution found through the making of art works. Michael Polanyi, in *The Tacit Dimension* (1966) explains the theory of tacit knowing as knowledge acquired through experience that cannot necessarily be measured or explained. It is knowledge based on instinct, experience, desire and emotion. For my own work, and the pursuit of answers to the research question, tacit knowledge forms the basis for the beginnings of an art work. In this sense, tacit knowing firstly provides ‘a valid knowledge of a problem’: (Polanyi)³⁸ so, in this instance, the problem is, that I am unclear about the notion of the *self*, and my subjectivity as the artist in the context of the universe, or how I *apply* this notion of self to make art. However, I have an understanding of what *self* is: a store of knowledge and experience incorporated into *identity*. Secondly: tacit knowledge is the ability to approach this problem guided by an innate understanding of how to pursue a solution: I know I can pursue a solution, through making artwork as a research strategy and combining the understanding of my *own* identity with academic *theory of identity*. Thirdly, is the belief and expectation of new and unforeseen discoveries that are implied by or within the solution to the problem³⁹. Therefore through the act of making the art works the solution is arrived at; by gradually piecing together conclusions and discoveries in a tangible form. In this respect *The Republic of Georgia* installation can be seen as a collection of discoveries, solutions and developments around this theory of identity. *The Republic of Georgia* has become a consolidation of disparate factors that can be placed together in the gallery as the outcome of the research.

³⁷ Polanyi, M. *The Tacit Dimension*, 1966, Library of Congress, Reprinted: Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass, USA. 1983

³⁸ P. 24 *ibid*

³⁹ *ibid*

Out of this solution other avenues for research and discovery continue to arise, allowing the theories and concepts to be developed further. An example of this can be explored in the work of Sophie Calle. Calle's *Double Game* (1999) explores the notion of her own identity juxtaposed with a fictional character, *Maria*, based upon herself but re-invented and embellished upon by author Paul Auster in his novel *Leviathan* (1992). Calle explains how the rituals employed by her artist-self are acted upon by the character *Maria* alongside additional rituals invented for *Maria* to enact by Auster⁴⁰:

‘The rituals that Auster “borrowed” from me to shape Maria are: *The Wardrobe*, *The Striptease*, *To Follow...*, *Suite Vénitienne*, *The Detective*, *The Hotel*, *The Hotel*, *The Address Book*, and *The Birthday Ceremony*. *Leviathan* gives me the opportunity to present these artistic projects that inspired the author and which Maria and I now share.’ (Calle 1999)⁴¹

Through this twist Calle is able to see her works from a different perspective, developing and curating them into the new collected work that is *Double Game*.

It is by immersing ourselves in a work of art that we come to understand what it is the artist is communicating about their individual view of the universe.⁴² This does not mean that the work is inevitably *about* its creator: the work is *of* its creator and this relates back to the initial concerns of the research about wanting to relate what I *know* as opposed to *who I am* through my practice. Thus the work can become representational of the creator's mind and research undertaken, *not* necessarily autobiographical or self-referential. The mind of the artist can be thought of a repository for everything pertaining to the artist's existence, and the storeroom for his/her knowledge to be drawn upon as required.⁴³ I refer to this in relation to my renewed understanding of my art practice as separate from an autobiographical understanding of my self.

⁴⁰ Calle, S *Double Game*, Violette Editions, London, 2007

⁴¹ P. vi *ibid*

⁴² P.17 *The Tacit Dimension*, Michael Polanyi, Gloucester, Mass. Peter Smith, 1983

⁴³ Popper, K and Eccles, J, C. *The Self and its Brain*., Routledge, Oxford, New york, 1977 P. 3

A current work-in-progress: *The Adam Suite (Lessons in History: Ancient and Modern, For an Eight Year Old, The Betrayal of Adam and Adam! (The Musical))*, evolves from childhood memories, influences and obsessions. It begins with a personal intrigue with *Adam and the Ants* and particularly the 1979 album *Dirk Wears White Sox* (Do It records). However it is perhaps an exercise in literary criticism, a discussion on the role of music and musical influence and of artistic license. But ultimately it is about the continual questioning of what is believed as truth. What can be trusted as being ‘the truth’? What is true and what is desirable to be believed as the truth.

‘*Lessons in History: Ancient and Modern, For an Eight Year Old* – will be delivered as a lesson or written as a lesson plan with accompanying literature in the form of handouts, worksheets and guidelines for follow up work, compliant with current lower key stage 2 national curriculum guidelines. It will follow the structure of the record *Dirk Wears White Sox* (Adam and the Ants 1979) working with the general and specific themes featured in the contents of the songs.’ (Boniface 2010)⁴⁴

Jeremy Deller references autobiographical detail, often as a starting point for a series of work. A snapshot of personal taste or interest that he then takes to the audience and allows, or invites them to join him in his research and making of the art work itself, as in, for example, *The uses of Literacy*. Deller explains;

‘This was a project that I put together with a group of fans of the Manic Street Preachers. It comprised writing, drawings, paintings and an audio interview. The band’s allusions to literature, art and politics ensures that for some of their followers they serve as an alternative form of education. This was borne out by one contribution by Donna Marshall of all the books that the band had referenced that she had subsequently read.’ (Deller 2001)⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Boniface, G *Lessons in History: Ancient and Modern, For an Eight Year Old* (2011)

⁴⁵ Deller, J Pp.59-61 *life is to Blame for Everything* Collected work and projects 1992-99 edited by Rebecca Gordon Nesbitt, Salon 3, London, 2001

This series of smaller projects led eventually to huge democratic curatorial projects such as *Folk Archive: Contemporary Popular Art from the UK* (2005) and *Procession* (5th July 2009).⁴⁶ In this way Deller initiates a collective celebration of different cultural identities and societal norms, exhibiting on a grand scale our collective and disparate identities, and is, for the purpose of this research, of particular interest in relation to Bauman's theories of the interaction between the personal, political and social Self⁴⁷ and its influence on the development of *The Republic of Georgia*.

Mike Nelson and *The Coral Reef*

Again developed through the concept of the museum setting, my current art practice ultimately aspires to a spectacular theatricality. I am beginning to view my work as the creation of interventions/spontaneous performances, installations and spaces with a specific ambience through which to encourage thoughts about identity, individuality and the complexity of being. I am inspired by the work of Mike Nelson, and specifically *The Coral Reef* (2000/2010), which is almost anthropological in its examination of human habitats that are explored through staged environments. It is art representing the idea of 'real' conditions through the use of fabricated scene-setting, theatre and cinematic reference. Nelson re-contextualises these conceits by placing them in an art gallery. *The Coral Reef* is constructed within the body of the gallery, (*Matt's Gallery* 2000, *Tate Britain* 2010), as if it were part of the actual structure of the building:

‘a disorientating network of fifteen interconnecting, claustrophobic rooms ... a warren of shabby, inhospitable spaces’ (Delaney 1010)⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Jeremy Deller <http://www.jeremydeller.org> 25/05/2011

⁴⁷ Bauman, Z, *Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, Malden, USA. 2004

⁴⁸ P. 2 Delaney, H. *Mike Nelson: The Coral Reef*, Tate Publishing, London, 2010

The viewer almost stumbles upon it by accident, as if having taken a wrong turn, or gone through a wrong door: the gallery ends and something else begins. A tour through *The Coral Reef* provides an example of the gallery as theatre set, in tune with the subconscious of the artist and audience.

‘The movement from one room to the another produces a kind of filmic ‘cut’ between one scene and the next, allowing narrative possibilities to proliferate without coalescing into anything fixed.’ (Delaney 1010)⁴⁹



fig. 35 & 36

This creates an environment where fact and fiction are given equal merit and consideration. But that ultimately it is about suspending disbelief long enough for the salient point of the work to be absorbed by the audience. The merging of fact and fiction is an understood prerequisite on the part of artist and audience alike. These are themes that begin to emerge in my own work: *The Republic of Georgia* installation is presented as a pseudo-ethnographic study of a place called Georgia. The environment in which it was initially situated, (a Victorian art gallery), allowed this presentation to appear authentic, thus complicating and confusing fact and fiction. As I develop this concept further this confusion over authenticity will become more pronounced. As the museum archive grows – as artefacts are made and collected, fact and fiction begin to merge and become interchangeable. For example, the original collection of artefacts

⁴⁹ P. 4 *ibid*

displayed in the Ashton-under-Lyne installation, as symbolic references to (The Republic of) Georgia, (the portrait, the umbrella stand, the lace heirlooms, the rabbit and the hen), have developed into characters from the book *Five Georgian Folk Tales*, and it is as if they always were – as if this is why they exist at all.



fig. 37 & 38

When lost in the maze of Nelson's *The Coral Reef* we know we are in a gallery, but the power of the fiction that he creates makes it appear that we are witnessing stark reality. Objective fact. The detritus and ephemera do not appear to be fabrications, or even found objects. The smells smell authentic. The feeling of disorientation and claustrophobia is real, though conjured up by the viewer, believing in the myth, the fiction. By isolating this experience, putting it into the gallery context, the work reveals its implications. We, the audience, ask: Who are the spectral beings that inhabit these environments? What are the political overtones? What is the context and where do we place ourselves within it?

‘It was a contract, says Nelson, to accept his invitation into a fictional world, the same contract a reader makes with a novelist. If you do this, what Nelson offers ... is total immersion in a work of art.’ (Jones 2001)⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Jones, J. *Welcome to my worlds* The Guardian 04/09/01

Nelson's work is not trying to be wholly objective in its representation of the world, although we are not aware of this having been constructed from the artist's imagination either. But as Polanyi points out, in totally immersing ourselves we are 'entering into a work of art and thus dwelling in the mind of its creator'.⁵¹

Polanyi states: '*we can know more than we can tell*' (1966)⁵². If it is true that one is driven to research/make art works in the pursuit of knowledge, or to communicate a view of the world, a language must be found through which to achieve it. Polanyi continues; 'we can communicate, after all, ... provided we are given adequate means for expressing ourselves.'⁵³ I have discovered, that for myself, this is essentially through art practice, which is:

'... the active shaping of experience performed in the pursuit of knowledge. This shaping or integrating I hold to be the great and indispensable tacit power by which all knowledge is discovered, is held to be true.' (Polanyi 1966)⁵⁴

In this respect, this research is as reliant upon the visual, three dimensional, gallery and portfolio based outcomes as with the written document. Indeed an element of the final outcome cannot be realised without the intervention of the audience upon the work, as in *The Dressing Up Box*, included in *The Republic of Georgia* installation, where gallery visitors are invited to dress up in the clothes provided.

This could be seen as a *Theatre of the Self*. It is a platform for testing the view of the Self. Clothes/mirrors. Exterior/interior. Public/private. As with Warhol's *Screen Tests* (1964-6) the continued act of *observing* someone/oneself, causes and assessment to occur which amalgamates the public and private view. The

⁵¹ P.17 *The Tacit Dimension*, Michael Polanyi, Gloucester, Mass. Peter Smith, 1983

⁵² P.17 Polanyi, M. *The Tacit Dimension*, 1966, Library of Congress, Reprinted: Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass, USA. 1983

⁵³ P. 5 *ibid*

⁵⁴ P. 6 *ibid*

exterior representation of an identity can be analysed/scrutinised, thus revealing something of the interior self.



fig. 39

The Dressing Up Box emerged from early research into identity and representation (through an initial reading of Bauman's *Identity: Conversations*

with Benedetto Vecchi⁵⁵ and Hall's *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*⁵⁶. Firstly exploring the notion of *choice* in relation to *having an identity*. Bauman, believes that identities are *chosen*, and must be developed and maintained. Adopting an identity (negotiating *wanting* to, or *needing* to), is a struggle for the individual as they attempt to resolve their reasons for doing so, (be it to fit *into* or stand *out from* the majority)⁵⁷

‘... ‘Identity’ is revealed to us only as something to be invented rather than discovered; as a target of an effort, ‘an objective’; as something one still needs to build from scratch or to choose from alternative offers and then struggle for’. (Bauman 2004)⁵⁸

The Dressing Up Box is an experiment in gauging personal attitudes to self, self-expression, choice, decision making based on these choices, and freedom. A subjective act, (dressing), that is tempered by social convention. I was interested to observe how readily an audience would be willing to alter or ‘swap’ their (exterior) identity (if only briefly), to see for themselves how it could be another way, and to see if this could be done within the gallery setting. The explanation given here is simplistic in comparison to the resulting performances which have produced amusing, subtle and interesting reactions. There is a sense of the theatrical – a *performance* takes place. There appears to be an eager willingness, almost compulsion, on the part of the audience to participate and enact.

This was a return to a more experimental style of working which had been tested previously in *Radio Local* (2010). I intend to develop *The Dressing Up Box* into a more exaggerated and extravagant piece, incorporating the idea of costume and therefore, disguise, alongside that of representation and the purpose and functionality of the clothes themselves. This will, perhaps

⁵⁵ Bauman, Z, *Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, Malden, USA. 2004

⁵⁶ Hall, S ed. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications In association with the Open University. 1997

⁵⁷ P.15-16 Bauman, Z op cit

⁵⁸ ibid

inevitably, become ‘a *dressing room*’ in the museum, that can be regarded as much an exhibit, in it’s visual aspect, as it is an interactive performance.

Louise Bourgeois Part 2

As part of this chapter on *The Tacit Dimension*⁵⁹ and the role of the artist-self, I must include a more specific examination of the work of Louise Bourgeois who writes very clearly on the position of the artist-self engaged in making art work, (mentioned previously in relation to *I Do, I Undo, I Redo* (1999-2000)). Bourgeois’ reflective writing deals directly with the complexity of feelings towards her own research methods, medium and materials, expectation/anticipation and the resulting art work, and she remains ambivalent. Her published writings, (for example: *Louise Bourgeois: Deconstruction of the Father Reconstruction of the Father: Writings and Interviews 1923 – 1997*⁶⁰) deliberate these processes, revealing her continual anxiety surrounding her chosen subject matter – familial relations (paternal, maternal, love, sex, motherhood), self and artist-self – and how this is subconsciously translated into art works. She writes:

‘An artist’s words are always to be taken cautiously. The finished work is often a stranger to, and sometimes very much at odds with what the artist felt or wished to express when he began. At best the artist does what he can, rather than what he wants to do. After the battle is over and the damage faced up to, the result may be surprisingly dull—but sometimes it is surprisingly interesting... The artist who discusses the so-called meaning of his work is usually discussing a literary side-issue. The core of

⁵⁹ Polanyi, M. *The Tacit Dimension*, 1966, Library of Congress, Reprinted: Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass, USA. 1983

⁶⁰ *Louise Bourgeois: Deconstruction of the Father Reconstruction of the Father: Writings and Interviews 1923 – 1997*, Edited and with texts by Marie-Laure Bernadac and Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Violette Editions London 2007 (Louise Bourgeois, ‘The Artist’s Words’ first published in 1954 by the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, in *Design Quarterly*, no. 30, P. 18.)

his original impulse is to be found, if at all, in the work itself. Just the same, the artist must say what he feels'. (Bourgeois 1954)⁶¹

Bourgeois speaks of the act of *sublimation* in approaching the making of artwork – the practice of accessing the subconscious and disseminating the discovery through making art works, often dealing with psychologically challenging material and finding an appropriate and more communicable form for it to take – as the accessing and channelling of the sub-conscious. It is for this reason I believe, as an artist, I must accept my own subjectivity as a valid and important route to establishing new knowledge. This has been the primary, and most productive route to carrying out this research and gaining knowledge and understanding. In summary, the process being:

1. An awareness of the location of the self within a universe of infinite possibility; i.e. the pursuit of a discovery could begin anywhere, (discussed in relation to Boyle Family – *Introduction* P. 5 ⁶²)
2. Making the art object. Within this process the research is taking place. Filtering and refining the discovery. ⁶³
3. The discovery is made upon completion and findings exhibited, (as in *The Republic of Georgia* installation).

It is my belief that my work as an artist is a communication of my perception of the world/reality. But it is the art work itself that communicates the artist's perception of the world, and this is *An Exploration of the Self Within Contemporary Art, (Within the Context of Everything Else)*. It is the consideration of the 'everything else' that allows the work to evolve.

Thus, we bring to any area of research our own subjectivity built from a store of tacit knowledge, experience, personal taste, (ways of) understanding, fears,

⁶¹ P. 66 (Louise Bourgeois, 'The Artist's Words' first published in 1954 by the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, in *Design Quarterly*, no. 30, P. 18.)
Louise Bourgeois: Deconstruction of the Father Reconstruction of the Father: Writings and Interviews 1923 – 1997, Edited and with texts by Marie-Laure Bernadac and Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Violette Editions London 2007

⁶² Boyle Family (<http://www.boylefamily.co.uk/boyle/about/index.html> 24/01/2011)

⁶³ Bourgeois, L P.64 op cit 'The Genesis of Work of Art; or in what circumstance is a work of art born' (From a panel discussion April 1950, moderated by Robert Motherwell)

doubts and uncertainties that inform *everything*. We are stores of knowledge. The Self is a repository – a museum.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Popper, K and Eccles, J.C. *The Self and its Brain*, Routledge, Oxford, New york, 1977

Identity: A Thematic Approach

In the reading of Bauman's *Identity*⁶⁵ I discovered an approach that I could work with, (in terms of studio practice), in reaching solutions to the research proposal. This was to use analogy – to see the *individual self* in the context of Bauman's theories of *national identity* – where the deconstruction of individual identity can be understood within the same framework as that of a whole nation or society. The effects of the same human constructs can be seen on a macro or micro level: the individual idiosyncratic character of the self, or the social self who functions as a part of society. Personal identity becomes synonymous with social, cultural or national identity, as they all have at the root, essentially, human nature. In short, my identity is made up of all the things that I am, all the roles that I enact and all the voices I use: I am a nation in one brain and body and I must govern and negotiate the characters I play. Bauman continually stresses that identities are human constructs. *We* construct our personal identity, we choose who we are (to a reasonable extent), or who we are to become. Our *social identity* is constructed by the society of which we are a part. I am able to visualise myself as a functioning unit within wider society, isolating my exact position, analysing my surroundings and all the social variables that impact upon my individual state that prompt me to act, react or enact, physically or emotionally, and how these outcomes are perceived by myself and others. I ask 'who am I and why am I here?' 'How do I operate in the environment in which I find myself, some of which is by choice, some of which is not?'. Bauman summarises this state of uncertainty thus:

‘To be wholly or in part ‘out of place’ everywhere, not to be completely anywhere (that is without qualifications and caveats, without some aspects of oneself ‘sticking out’ and seen by others as looking odd) may be an upsetting, sometimes annoying experience. There is always something to explain, to apologize for, to hide or on the contrary to boldly display, to negotiate, to bid for and bargain for; there are differences to be smoothed over, or glossed over, or to be on the contrary made more salient and

⁶⁵ Bauman, Z., *Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, Malden, USA. 2004

legible. 'Identities' float in the air, some of one's own choice but others inflated and launched by those around, and one needs to be constantly on the alert to defend the first against the second; there is a heightened likelihood of misunderstanding, and the outcome of the negotiation forever hangs in the balance.' (Bauman 2004)⁶⁶

As established, I can only contextualise my own existential experience, my subjective point of view, however, I feel this is a position of personal *and* political uncertainty, and it is from this complex position that my research and practice are currently motivated and have begun to evolve. Through a development of the understanding that the idea of identity can be pursued via two routes: 1. The Personal, and 2. The Political. The point at which these routes cross is where a clearer view of identity begins to emerge. Through constructing the installation *The Republic of Georgia* this discovery was made. It's theoretical basis in my understanding, that Bauman discusses both elements – personal and political – as two separate elements, inextricably linked. Personal identity coincides with national identity, suggesting the birth of a national identity results from the needs and wants of the individuals who make up the nation. Then, speaking of the *Nation* as an autonomous agent, which coerces the development of the personal identity of it's subjects in line with the development and advancement of the nation. It is these symbiotic relationships that *The Republic of Georgia* attempts to explore.

The Personal Aspect: Exploring the notion of choice.

'After all, asking 'who you are' makes sense to you only once you believe that you can be someone other than you are; only if you have a choice, and only if it depends on what you choose; only if you have to do something, that is, for the choice to be 'real' and to hold.'
(Bauman 2004)⁶⁷

⁶⁶ P.12 Bauman, *Z op cit*

⁶⁷ P. 19 *ibid*

As discussed previously, *The Dressing up Box* attempts to question this notion of choice. It is developed from particularly personal observations, but involving circumstances that are universal, historical and current and ultimately *human*. It is in such an example as this that we see the 'human individual' standing alone yet 'embedded in the larger context of life... acting and evaluating in full control of the powers of his soul and linked to his fellow human beings in collective action and feeling.' (Bauman 2004)⁶⁸ This leads to the consideration of the political aspect.

Political Aspect: Nationhood

So the individual identity is incorporated into the identity of the community which is then incorporated into the national identity – the idea of establishing the nation as a homogenous group of consensual individuals. It is here that Bauman introduces the revelation that, of course, this is *fiction*, and this is *The Republic of Georgia*. The national pride swells with stories of heros, emblems, morals, religion, language, history, legend, battles fought and lands conquered. Human creativity on a massive scale, stating:

'The idea of 'identity', and a 'national identity' in particular, did not gestate and incubate in human experience 'naturally', did not emerge out of that experience as a self-evident 'fact of life'. That idea was *forced* into the *Lebenswelt*⁶⁹ of modern men and women - arrived at as a *fiction*. It congealed into a 'fact', a 'given', precisely because it had been a *fiction*, and thanks to the painfully felt gap which stretched between what the idea implied, insinuated or prompted, and the *status quo ante* (the state of affairs preceding, and innocent of, human intervention). *The idea of 'identity was born out of the crisis of belonging* and out of the effort it triggered to bridge the gap between the 'ought' and the 'is' and to lift reality to the standards set by the idea - to remake the reality in the likeness of the idea.

⁶⁸ P. 15 *ibid* (referring to Kracauer's observation of Simmel)

⁶⁹ Lived experience

Identity could only enter the *Lebenswelt* as a task, as an *as-yet-unfulfilled, unfinished task*, ...Identity born as fiction needed a lot of coercing and convincing to harden and coagulate into a reality (more correctly: into the sole reality thinkable)'. (Bauman 2004)⁷⁰

These revelations led to the establishment of *The Republic of Georgia* through which I am able to draw my conclusions.

⁷⁰ P. 20 *ibid*

The Republic of Georgia

A Museum Exhibit

‘It is the exhibition context which seems to provide us with the best forum for an examination of the creation of meaning. Exhibitions are discrete events which articulate objects, texts, visual representations, reconstructions and sounds to create an intricate and bounded representational system ... the practice of producing meaning through the internal ordering and conjugation of the separate but related components of an exhibition.’ (Hall 1997)⁷¹

In *The Republic of Georgia* identity is explored as a ‘floating’ construct⁷², within the context of the museum. It is an *pseudo*-ethnographic study of identity. Like Sherman’s portraits, I use own identity, (Georgia), as a vehicle through which to represent what has been established through the research. Examining the view that we make choices about who we are or more specifically ‘how we represent ourselves’, alongside what we *inherit* or are socialised into. This then incorporates the role of; society, religion, geographical location, knowledge (what we know) and the Universe. It is about locating oneself with the consideration of *everything*, isolating certain ‘facts’ within the gallery/museum context.

The Republic of Georgia is currently a composition of eight elements:

1. *National Costume*
2. *Flag*
3. *Festive Street Bunting*
4. *Postcards*
5. *Travel Posters*

⁷¹ P. 168 *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* edited by Stuart Hall. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications In association with the Open University. 1997

⁷² Bauman, z, *Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, Malden, USA. 2004

6. *Georgian Music* – cd (to be piped into the installation)
7. A collection of artefacts relating to the book *Five Georgian Folk Tales*
 - i) *Albert Edward Garfoot (The Day He Left for the Homeland)*
 - ii) *The Umbrella Stand (Catholics, Asthmatics & Stringed Instruments)*
 - iii) *The Lace Heirlooms (The Red Book, The End is Just the Beginning & The Other Side)*
 - iv) *The Rabbit and the Hen (The Amateur Taxidermist)*
 - v) *The Significance of Peacock Feathers*
8. *The Dressing Up Box*

Flag, National Costume and Bunting

These artefacts were designed to make a spectacle. A dignified and elegant show of national pride and unity. A further response to Bauman, translated in physical, tangible, tactile form and colour. Again exploring the idea of national identity being analogous for the complexities of personal identity. It is about marking territory – on behalf of the nation – or winning personal ground.

The Flag declares an identity and establishes the theme. It symbolizes the values and shared destiny of a cohesive whole.

Festive Street Bunting adds embellishment to the idea and employs the theatrical conceit of scene-setting⁷³, creating the ambience in which the exhibition should be viewed.

⁷³ See Nelson and *The Coral Reef* (2000/2010) P. 42



fig. 40

The National Costume represents the individual as a part of the whole. Personal governance over one's multiple roles and voices. It also portrays togetherness and a celebration of the union of state and individual. It shows consensus, a participation in the unity of the whole nation that is generous to its subjects granting scope for (limited) self-expression. It is an exhibition of opulence, elegance, beauty and pride; personal/political, state/self, national identity/personal identity:

'The state sought the obedience of it's subjects by representing itself as the fulfillment of the nation's destiny and guarantee of its continuation... a nation without a state would be bound to be unsure of its past, insecure in its present and uncertain of its future, and so doomed to a precarious existence. Were it not the state's power to define, classify, segregate, separate and select, the aggregate of local traditions, dialects, customary laws and ways of life would hardly be recast into anything like the postulated unity and cohesion of a national community... claiming – loudly, confidently and effectively – a shared destiny.' (Bauman 2004)⁷⁴

⁷⁴ P. 21 Bauman, z, Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, Malden, USA. 2004



fig. 41

Postcards, Posters and Songs

This element of the installation articulates a sense of place, and involves a play on the name *Georgia* as person and place. This allowed for various themes to be approached; 1. That I am Georgia, I am *identified* as Georgia. 2. Although I did not chose this aspect of my identity, I have accepted that it is, to some extent, *who* I am. 3. That I share with this name with various geographical locations, but most notably, the dichotomous locations of Georgia (former soviet state) and Georgia (*The Peach State*, USA). In this context acknowledging the capacity for comparison as well as the sense of unease, anticipation of potential conflict and dislocation, or disorientation: east/west, capitalism/communism, the state vs the individual, and the perception of ‘freedom’.

Using my name continually, through conceits of language or location has enabled me to regard *Georgia* as an anthemic emblem of a fictional construct and has, ironically allowed me to create a necessary distance between myself and my work, the catharsis required to begin new modes of practice developed after the first period of research. (See P. 29)

The collages evolved into the creation of physical documents of a fictional place. Transforming ‘facts’ into fiction, thus creating a visual record of *The Republic of Georgia*. In the same respect this was done by adding the musical element of the songs. In the place of a national anthem *Georgia Music* or *Songs of Georgia* are piped into the gallery. They are emotive and evocative songs about places named Georgia or people called Georgia, or people from places named Georgia. Merging this with the fictional postcards further evokes memories of people and places, alongside the *Festive Street Bunting*, contributes to creating the ambience and enhances the theatricality of the museum.



fig. 42

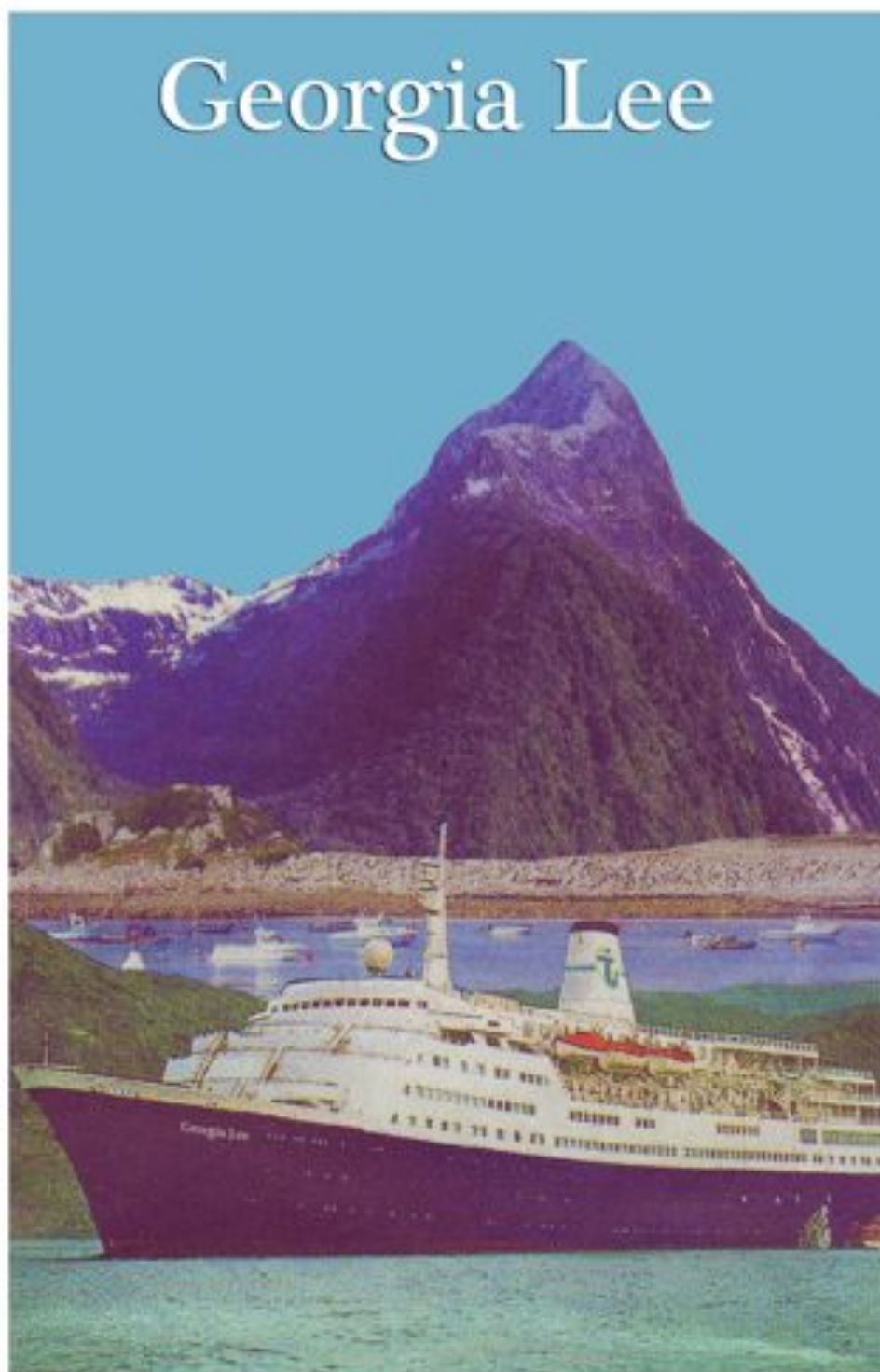


fig. 43

Georgian Music (CD)

(Track Listing)

1. *Sentimental Gentleman from Georgia* (New York, August 17, 1932) – Baron Lee & The Blue Rhythm Band
2. *Georgia On My Mind* – Billie Holiday
3. *Rainy Night In Georgia* (Remastered) – Brook Benton
4. *Watermelon Time In Georgia* – Carl Mann
5. *I'm Going to Georgia* – Carolina Tar Heels
6. *Bringing In the Georgia Mail* – Charlie Monroe
7. *Georgia Lee Brown* – Jackie Lee Cochran
8. *Sweet Georgia Brown* – Ken Johnson's Rhythm Section
9. *Going Back to Georgia* – Mance Lipscomb
10. *Georgia On My Mind* – The Quintet of The Hot Club of France featuring Django Reinhardt & Stephane Grappelli
11. *At a Georgia Camp Meeting* – Sousa's Band
12. *Georgia On My Mind* – Toots Thielemans
13. *Peach Pickin' Time Down In Georgia* – Various Artists - JSP Records
14. *At a Georgia Camp Meeting* – 52 Key French Gasparini Carousel Organ

Artefacts

The artefacts, or 'found objects', included in the installation are an extension of the use of collage, as mentioned above. Initially, perhaps considered as theatrical dressing (of the space/gallery), working in a 'site-specific' context, to create the mise-en-scene. Appropriating the appropriate elements to formalise and 'finish' the environment. However, after installation it became clear that these are important works in their own right.

These objects relate to *Five Georgian Folk Tales*:

- i) *Albert Edward Garfoot (The Day He Left for the Homeland)*
- ii) *The Lace Heirlooms (The Red Book, 'The End is Just the Beginning' and The Other Side)*

- iii) *The Umbrella Stand (Catholics, Asthmatics and Stringed Instruments)*
- iv) *The Rabbit and the Hen (The Amateur Taxidermist)*
- v) *The Significance of Peacock Feathers*

They are the myths, fairy stories, morality tales, invented from the ‘facts’ known about *The Republic of Georgia* that provide a sense of cohesion in a shared history. They represent the transmitting of a moral code and a consensus of belief. They deal with inherited ‘truths’ and how to negotiate them. They contain and preserve the collective history. They characterize the nations legendary heros and heroines, models of citizenship and ideals. Although they are eccentric and out of date they cannot be dismissed or forgotten.



fig. 44



fig. 45



fig. 46



fig. 47 & 48

The Dressing Up Box

An interactive performance, where gallery visitors are invited to dress up in the clothes on display explores ideas of representation, choice and performance.



fig. 49

This concept is linked, in the research, with the position documented at the beginning, with regard to the idea of the Museum. Artist as creator and curator. The human desire to create and curate its own identity. The continual process of sculpting, modelling, displaying and re-working. The merging of fact and fiction and the acceptance that truths are transient and bent to suit the purpose. That this is accepted on a universal scale that begins with the individual construct of the self.

To conclude, I do not necessarily attempt to represent *my self* through art, but identify, for the sake of integrity, that the subjectivity of the self must be acknowledged as the motivation for the quest. It must be acknowledged that everything presented as research 'fact' has been filtered through the self, and that these 'facts' are not necessarily universal, but one point of view in, and about the universe, and even this is in flux. This extract from Popper's *The Self and its Brain* (1977) summarises the argument for the importance of a subjective, self-aware approach to art and research, whilst also re-iterating, for

the construct of my current body of work, the significance of the portrayal of self as a museum:

1. Kant's Argument

Two things, says Kant near the end of his *Critique of Practical Reason*,¹ fill his mind with always new and increasing admiration and respect: the starry heavens above him, and the moral law within him. The first of these two things symbolizes for him the problem of our knowledge about the physical universe,² and the problem of our place in this universe. The second pertains to the invisible self, to the human personality (and to human freedom, as he explains). The first annihilates the importance of a man, considered as part of the physical universe. The second raises immeasurably his value as an intelligent and responsible being.

I think that Kant is essentially right. As Josef Popper-Lynkeus once put it, every time a man dies, a whole universe is destroyed. (One realizes this when one identifies oneself with that man.) Human beings are irreplaceable ... They are selves; they are ends in themselves, as Kant said.⁷⁵

At the entrance to the Museum it was introduced that such a construct is an effective metaphor through which the various themes can be discussed, but also of the concept, that the museum is the temporary 'objective' gallery housing a specific area of research. The contents of which have undergone specific, concentrated analysis and come together as a temporary, objective and scientific study of a particular portion of the universe. However the notion of objectivity is extremely problematic. I do not believe, as sentient beings we have the ability to be truly objective. We may desire to apply objective judgement and appraisal, but in this desire we are acting subjectively. Perhaps then, there is a desire for an *objective* view of the self. The point being; I believe the *self* to be the vehicle for any thought, work or research. The subjective choice or drive to discover

⁷⁵ p.3 *The Self and its Brain*: Karl Popper and John C. Eccles, Routledge, Oxford, New York, 1977 (1 Immanuel Kant [1788], *Beschluß* (pp. 281–285) 2 For Kant, this knowledge was summed up by astronomical theory: by Newtonian mechanics, including the theory of gravitation.

anything about anything begins with the Self. Even the most seemingly objective, positivist, scientific, response is born of subjective choice of where to begin. This is not a 'self-indulgence', it is a necessity: to find the artistic language and commence the research. Drawing upon the stores of knowledge and experience in order to create art. To convert from the self, through communicable means, the discovery, the representation of many small and isolated aspects of the universe.

Illustrations

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27. *Bexhill-on-Sea OAPs* (2001) Jeremy Deller P. 55 Deller, J. *Life is to Blame for Everything* Collected work and projects 1992-99 Gordon Nesbitt, Rebecca ed. Salon 3, London, 2001
28. Preliminary sketch for *Watermelon Time in Georgia* postcard (2010) Georgia Boniface. Newsprint collage, pencil on card 8.9 x 14.1 cm.
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39. *The Dressing Up Box (Republic of Georgia)*(2010) Georgia Boniface
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