Connections to the Earth

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Research Question

My research asks how explorations into my intuitive and emotional understanding of nature and the landscape can be expressed through the use of material earth as medium and as object. The creation of the works in my practice involves an investigation into the use of earthen materials as an emotionally cathartic process. I will do this through studies in my studio practice, which will explore the relationships that exist between myself and the media I use and the way they materialise in the context of contemporary art. This exegesis will focus on how personal emotions are connected to my understanding of emotions in the landscape and the influence broader art historical discourses has had in the materialisation of my works.
Introduction

From a young age, I have always been fascinated by the environment that surrounded me. I grew up with nature in abundance, with native bush land right up to my door step; it was something that I came to understand as being powerfully beautiful, engaging and ever-changing, all at the same time. I felt a connection with the environment that compelled me to seek an intuitive understanding of it. Witnessing the way the land was shaped by extreme forces of natural elements such as fire, wind and floods fostered a great respect for nature and the land on which it stood.

Nature exemplified an energy for life that was like no other I had experienced before. Emergent trees with their gnarled roots would cling onto bare cliff faces frantically searching for support and vital nutrients, all the while their surging canopies rushed towards the sunlight in search of life-giving energy. I came to understand that the environment and indeed planet Earth was in a constant state of flux, an attribute of both natural and man-made forces upon nature and the land.

While I remained in great appreciation of natural phenomena, I grew quite disdainful for what I saw as the raping of the land by humans. Human societies desire for industry and the rapidly expanding urban sprawl would, as I see it, infringe on and eventually engulf everything in its path, denying nature its own right to exist unblemished by the wants and needs of humans. The tensions and futilities of humans’ inability to co-exist sustainably with the environment would latter provide fuel for my creative practice, inspiring environmentally thematic approaches to my practice that would draw on my love and appreciation of the land as well as my own wishes for it not to be destroyed.

Witnessing the exquisiteness and unrelenting power of nature and planet Earth shaped my emotional perceptions of the landscape. I remember as a child damming up creek beds with clay and sticks only to watch what I had constructed consumed by the surging flow of water behind it. It was instances such as these that taught me about the energetic nature of the land and how it will insist on not being altered from its endemic state of flux. The witnessing of
moments such as these transcended my way of thinking and allowed me to experience the fact that no matter how fragile nature and the land may seem, as humans we are still vulnerable to its extremes.

Signs of human dominance over nature are evident in the distress caused to the environment by events such as mass land clearings and mining. I feel nature evokes a certain emotion as a consequence of these actions and what I feel I understand as the emotion of the landscape. It is this evidence of emotion to which I feel immensely connected as it parallels feelings within my own personal life; the environment which I observed portraying instances of great sorrow in nature’s entropy as well as immense joy in its eventual re-growth. I experience nature as a cathartic medium through which I can connect the emotions felt in the landscape to emotions that exist within me. This bond with nature has become an increasingly important factor in my life, the emotional attachments I formed with the landscape helping fill the emotional and physical void I felt present between my mother and I.

I translated the environment around me into detailed drawings, a response that was intuitive and therapeutic. It was these formative sketchings of my surrounds that provided an insight into my relationship with nature and illustrated my first perceptions of the struggle between humanity’s quest for survival and nature’s need to exist. The powerfully symbolic dynamic that existed between the two gave me an endless source of inspiration that spurred on my creativity. I was engaged with the landscape in such a way that it provided me a safe place away from the monotony of life that existed outside of it. My experiences with nature made me feel at one with the land. The tranquility that transpired became indicative of the freedom I felt and reinforced my philosophy that humans should not exist in a hierarchical relationship with the land, rather humans should belong to planet Earth as a matter of co-existence.

It is my understanding that as humans, we often forget that we are part of the world in which we exist, the constituents of the earth on which we tread. We share familiar attributes, carbon and iron, that are fundamental building blocks of life. Our dependence on Mother Earth is intrinsic to our basic survival, without
it, we would not exist. This is what I readily try to stress through my works with juxtapositions of carbon charcoal lines and iron-rich soils, such juxtapositions reiterate primal metaphors of life and death and of the impermanence of the two.

The use of earth as material in my practice came about as a way of resolving emotions that had arisen from my experiences with the land and my own personal life. The dry, barren surfaces of my works cracked, warped and buckled in the same way that I experienced the landscape, metaphorically implying a sense of movement, of nature reclaiming its own. This reclamation, this sense of energy in nature materializes in my works by representing what one might experience in the land. The effect of the sun’s hot rays on a dry clay pan is not dissimilar in its changes to the cracks that appear slowly through the drying earthen media I use. The powerful emotion that might be stirred within us from witnessing the dry clay pan is subject to the ever-changing motions in the environment surrounding us. This is indicative of the emotion I feel within the landscape and that I wish to reinforce within the body of my works.

My understandings of minimal art and its theoretical disposition of the material being the body of the work have inspired me to use material earth as a means of art production. In this exegesis, I will explain the use of natural media as objects within my practice, its use as a cathartic medium and its relationship to contemporary art practice through the works of Andy Goldsworthy and Robert Smithson. I would like to present the triangulated argument of where in the field of contemporary art my object-making is situated by analyzing the writings of Donald Judd, Michael Fried and Robert Morris in an effort to establish theoretical grounds for the object-like nature of my works.

The focus of my attention in relation to the object nature of my works will be on Judd’s seminal essay *Specific Objects* and how his understanding of the object in current practice is linked to my own understanding of the object in my own studio work. Judd’s view of the object in relation to the repetitive dynamics apparent in Frank Stella’s ‘stripe’ paintings echo sentiments of the use of repetition and line through the use of natural media in my own works. In similarity to Stella’s stripe paintings, my works offer very few inter-relational
components, the dynamic between the carbon charcoal line and the earthen surface of my works being the only real components visible. The line corresponds closely to the form of the work, the conviction and unity of shape,¹ as Michael Fried would suggest, is fundamentally important in determining the object-like nature of the works I create.

In other pieces, the body of the work is made up of separate entities, comprising solely of raw earth, ground pigments, crushed charcoal or dried leaves. The combinations of these separate material entities materialize in certain respects to what Robert Morris describes as the ‘gestalt’ or unitary form. These materials are presented in a way that offers no inter-relational components as they stand alone (some may take into account the plinth on which the raw earth or dried leaves stand as being somewhat of an inter-relational component, elevating the subject matter from being humble materials on the floor to something of a sculpture, this I will explain further in my exegesis). In doing so, these materials offer themselves to the viewer as objects.

Through further investigations, I would like to examine modalities of theatre in my works. I will address Michael Fried’s essay Art and Objecthood to discuss how physical aesthetics such as scale function as theatrical motivations behind my works. I would also like to make prevalent the purpose actual space has in eliciting a certain theatrical sensibility with the viewer through what Morris describes as the physical and psychical ‘distancing’ between that of the viewer and the work itself.²

The demand I make for my works to be reconciled as objects in the curatorial space is to reconcile their connection to the land and nature; the object can be viewed much the same as a tree on a hill is an object. The objectivity of my works creates a rhetorical situation that can be read variably upon its apprehension, each observation by the viewer offering a different perspective each and every

time the work is examined. The object’s connection to nature and the land through metaphor-rich narratives is unmistakably present.

It is through the explanation of my work as object and medium, as well as its functioning as a cathartic device, that this exegesis justifies my intuitive response to my emotional understanding of nature and planet Earth through the use of earthen media. I wish to demonstrate my close connection to nature and the environment and demonstrate why it is such an important part of meaning within my creative practice.
Chapter 1

Emotions in the Landscape

Movement, change, light, growth and decay are the lifeblood of nature, the
energies that I try to tap through my work. I need the shock of touch, the
resistance of place, materials and weather, the earth as my source.3

The essence of my work involves what I have come to understand as my innately
emotional relationship with both nature and the land. I feel a great deal of
emotion in the landscape, twists and folds in the earth, the concrete scars left by
civilization symbolizing a sense of change and struggle. My practice allows me
the opportunity to be able to keenly express through the use of earthen media
both the struggle for dominance I see apparent between nature and humanity
and the personal emotional and psychological struggles in my own life due to my
experience with the mental illness of depression.

I use my practice as a cathartic means for expressing thoughts and feelings
associated with grief, isolation and loneliness, all of which are symptomatic of
having depression. These emotions materialize visually as cracks and fissures in
the undulating earthen material, instilling a sense of mourning as the drying
medium evolves then slowly expires. Emotive representations such as these are
present in works such as Taken (Fig 1), where the eroding earthen surfaces are a
metaphor for natural materials slowly relinquishing its hold in the battle against
the elements and mankind, in effect, losing control. The gentle decay of the
works are metaphors for the loss of control I have felt in my own personal life
(which I will refer to later in this chapter). The symbolic nature of the exfoliating
medium corresponds to the narratives of personal loss and despair.

3 Andy Goldsworthy, “Philosophy,” accessed July 27, 2011,
In this chapter I will extend connections made between my own personal life and the struggle between mankind and nature. I will emphasize the importance that both music and drawing has on my practice and I hope that by exploring such connections that I will establish links reinforcing my deeply emotional understanding of nature and the land. In demonstrating these connections, I also wish to reflect upon the emotions that have been central to the motivation behind my works.

*Nature*

Nature became an escape for me ever since I was a young child, Mother Earth was an emotional and physical surrogate to the maternal connection that I felt I had lost very early in my childhood years. I felt a great sense of security being at one with nature as it was my protector against the negativity and abuse that surfaced in the family home. Nature became my sanctuary, it revitalized me and allowed great opportunities to explore and be free of the restraints that held me back in life. Some of my fondest memories as a child were of my friends and I exploring the local bushland environment. We would find much pleasure in
creating earthen micro-landscapes in creek beds only to have them consumed entirely by the imminent surge of water behind them. It was here that I learned to appreciate the overwhelming power and strength of nature in all its glory. I remember rushing home to draw what I had witnessed on to scraps of paper, documenting what would be my first perceptions of nature and the land.

I view both nature and the land with utmost admiration and respect, the child-like play that comes with creating from nature is inspirational in the materialisation of my works. Land artist Andy Goldsworthy’s work elicits a sense of the natural; as Goldsworthy says, his ephemeral pieces “manifest, however fleeting, a sympathetic contact with the natural world.” I feel a sense of connectedness to Goldsworthy’s works, their innate bond with nature and the land something that I strive for in the creation of my own works. Similar to my practice, Goldsworthy draws on the emotion and energy of nature for inspiration, his works materialising as natural-like forms that are reminiscent of objects and marks witnessed in the landscape. Goldsworthy remarks on his connection to nature in the Thomas Riedelshiemer documentary Rivers and Tides – Working with Nature, his philosophy underpinning those of my own practice:

I want to understand that state and energy that I feel in me that I also feel in the plants and in the land.

Like Goldsworthy, I want to understand the energy that flows through the landscape, that same emotive energy that I feel inside me. Understanding this energy allows me to “look into the heart of nature,” to experience the emotional core of the landscape. My work responds to changes in nature, the transfer of energy created by the elements in the environment. It is through creating works that I come to fully appreciate the enigmatic power of nature and the effect the elements have on the land.

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Drawings

As a child, drawing became a way that I could communicate what I experienced in nature and became primary in documenting the landscape. I spent hours on end tracing locations, creeks and rivers from topographical maps to gain sufficient knowledge of the surrounding landscape. Land forms such as mountains and hills were a curiosity to me and I studied and surveyed the local terrain, each buckle and fold in the landscape pulling and pushing with such emotive force it was simply breathtaking. Diligently, I tried to emulate the emotion I had taken from the landscape in my drawings, the land becoming an aesthetically-laden vessel from which I could draw for inspiration again and again.

Drawing reflected my reverence for nature and the land and became an intuitive way that I could best interpret my own thoughts and emotions. Tectonic forces presented themselves in the landscape as cathartic moments that I could channel my own feelings through, the emotions that I experienced in my own life mirrored in the evolution and eventual entropy of nature. Nature provided the catalyst for me to purge myself both emotionally and spiritually; I felt a unique connectedness with nature as it nurtured a maternal bond for which I had yearned all my life. Nature’s struggle for control over human dominance echoed the desire for control in my own life. This sympathetic relationship I fostered with nature would undoubtedly become paramount in conceiving ideas related to my own emotive understanding of both nature and the land.
*Music*

We chase misprinted lies  
We face the path of time  
And yet I fight, and yet I fight  
This battle all alone  
No-one to cry to  
No place to call home.

Excerpt of *Nutshell*, Alice In Chains, 1993

From a very young age, music has played an important part in providing me with an emotional release from what I experienced in life. Music has helped shape the way that I have come to understand my emotions and has been in part responsible for creating emotive backdrops to various works in my practice. In the past, I have tended towards music when I have been in situations where being in close contact with nature was not an option.

While I listen to a great variety of music, I am most drawn to music such as that by Alice In Chains and The Butterfly Effect, whose lyrics mainly deal with emotions of isolation, grief, loneliness and despair. The lyrical content of these artists have inspired me to create works that symbolise the despondent feelings associated with the mental illness of depression. I want to connect these feelings to the landscape through the use of earthen media in my practice, as a way of sorting through and dealing with my own emotional state.

The confluence of nature and music materialises itself in a number of ways within my practice, one of which is in the titles of my individual works. Titles of my works are commonly derived from the lyrical content of songs I listen to while I am in the midst of creating new works. Pieces such as *Alone (Have I run too far to get home?)* (Fig 2) was named after the sombre lyrics found in the Alice In Chains song *Would?*, a dark wash of emotions that deals with various notions of desertion, emptiness and despair. The vastness of *Alone*... is spread over four panels, eliciting a brooding sense of solitude: I like to give the impression with

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works such as *Alone*... that the viewer is a million miles away from anything and anyone. It is my intention through the body of this work to connect the viewer to emotions attributed to loneliness and alienation that I feel within. The work is therapeutic in the way that it draws out these emotions rather than letting them manifest inside.

Music creates aesthetic relationships within my works that have allowed me to deal with circumstances in my life that largely are out of my control. It has become a way of mitigating the pain and negativity I have encountered through patterns of abuse and family separations. *Always with me, Always with you* (Fig 3), named after the intricate Joe Satriani instrumental, is one such example where the hostilities of separation are laid to rest in order to reconcile positivity within my own life. The diptych is adorned by a spermatozoa-like motif on each board travelling in opposite directions to each other. The circular shape of the motif corresponds closely to the cracked earthen surface, referencing the ever-changing momentum of nature and life, while the dynamic created by the two oppositional motifs symbolises the separation I have experienced between my family and myself (of which I will address later in this chapter). Works such as
Always... demonstrate how I use music in conjunction with earthen materials in an effort to resolve difficulties I am confronted with in life.

Fig 3. Always with me, Always with you.
I’ll throw one straight stone at a time
at this fearful reflection of my face in front of me
I’ll change, its grown hard now to breathe
will learn and I will find a new way.

Excerpt of This Long Hour, Dead Letter Circus, 2010

Of the difficulties that I have encountered in my life, none have been more
difficult to understand and overcome than my ongoing battle with depression. Statistically, depression is very common in Australia, with around one million adults and 100,000 young people living with depression each year. Symptoms characteristic of depression include moodiness that is out of character, increased irritability and frustration and a general loss of interest in pleasurable activities. In my experience, this illness has touched just about every facet of my life, affecting the relationships I have formed with other people and dictating how I perceive the world around me. Depression has been in some ways responsible for the way that I recognise the land, the loss and despair I feel within myself is symbolised by the gradual entropy witnessed in the landscape.

Depression has been part of my life since early childhood. It was the collateral damage of an abusive upbringing and an unstable relationship with my own mother. I turned to nature for the comfort and safety I longed for from my mother, nature providing me with the sanctuary to be able to sort through my feelings without the negative criticism that surfaced in the family home. Psychologists have argued for a link between mental illness and the problematic relationship between mother and child; for example, John Bowlby argues that
“attachment was a protective biological mechanism that serves to ensure the survival of the individual.”¹¹ Inge Bretherton similarly argues that:

To grow up mentally healthy, the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with his mother (or permanent mother substitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment."¹²

This suggests that one’s mental health is impacted by the accumulation of many experiences between mother and child, and it is the quality of these experiences that dictate how as adults we eventually perceive life around us. Without this relationship, the child may become maladjusted, often exhibiting signs of frustration, anger, separation anxiety and low self-esteem. These emotions are, as Inge Bretherton explains, symptomatic of a fractured bond between mother and child:

If the attachment figure has acknowledged the infant’s need for comfort and protection while simultaneously respecting the infant’s need for exploration of the environment, the child is likely to develop an internal working model of self as valued and reliable. Conversely, if the parent has frequently rejected the infant’s bids for comfort or for exploration, the child is likely to construct an internal working model of self as unworthy or incompetent.¹³

The mother acts as the regulator of the child’s feelings and reactions, the child being (as Bowlby exclaims) totally dependent on the mother or maternal substitute for their sense of self:

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It is not surprising that during infancy and early childhood these functions are either not operating at all or are doing so imperfectly. During this phase of life, the child is therefore dependant on his mother performing them for him. She orients him in space and time, provides his environment, permits the satisfaction of some impulses, restricts others. She is his ego and superego.\textsuperscript{14}

From Bowlby’s findings, I extrapolate that the unstable relationship between my mother and I has been influential in dictating my own perceptions of self as well as my ability to maintain control of my impulses. Depressive, erratic behaviour as modelled by my mother in my formative years became the framework on which I built my life around, the instability creating waves of anxiety and panic that I still experience to this day.

\textit{Addictions}

Patterns of self-abuse surfaced as ways of being able to manage the negative emotions that I experienced, the repercussions of “the intense depression that humans feel as a result of hating the person they most dearly love and need.”\textsuperscript{15} Addictions became a way of shielding myself from the memories of abuse I encountered at the hands of my mother and were effectual in deepening the downward spiral into major depression. As my addictions grew, so did the feelings of isolation and despair. Narcotics were initially a way to stem the flow of what I was experiencing but in turn exacerbated the negative emotions that I was trying so hard to escape from.

Addictions have affected just about every facet of my life, alienating me and destroying the relationships I have with other people. I felt as if I could control and influence change within myself through the use of narcotics. The reality was quite the opposite. After years of self-inflicted abuse, my life came crashing down around me at the start of my Masters degree when I was admitted to James Fletcher Hospital Mental Health Unit suffering major depression. My family had

\textsuperscript{14}Inge Bretherton, “The Origins of Attachment Theory,” 761.
\textsuperscript{15}Inge Bretherton, “The Origins of Attachment Theory,” 767.
disintegrated under the pressure of my addictions and I was left without a home to go back to. I had finally hit rock bottom, there was nothing to hide the pain and I was surrounded by chaos, madness and depravity. It was one of the scariest experiences of my life, one of which I would not for the life of me want to relive again. When I was released I literally had nowhere to go, there was no family to welcome me back, no loving partner to reconcile with. I was literally on my own.

I found a new place out of sheer necessity; I needed somewhere in which I could take respite before re-integrating myself with the world around me. Without having anything there to shield me from the memories of my upbringing, the past became painfully real and unavoidable. What I had tried in vain to hide from all these years was now flooding back to me and there was no way that I could stop the surge of emotions building up inside. I felt abandoned and scared, I had never been this alone in my entire life and the feelings I felt were soul-destroying.

Determined not to let the prevailing circumstances get the better of me, I regained my composure and focused on my Masters degree. I had every reason to keep going and my practice became the fertile ground to reconcile emotions that had manifested due to my experiences. The feelings of depressiveness, loss, alienation and loneliness that I experienced through the demise of my family and my institutionalisation became the catalyst for my Masters body of works. My practice had become therapeutic as it provided me with the outlet to purge emotions that were trapped deep inside. I started to return back to nature for inspiration, spending as much time as possible being immersed in its presence.
Rejuvenation

I took leave from my Masters degree to attend Mayumarri, a retreat for those victimised by the trauma of childhood abuse. The program specialised in reconnecting victims with themselves, putting them in touch with their emotions calming their fears. Most of those who attended had been through similar patterns of abuse and had histories of self-abuse that mirrored my own experiences. I found the week incredibly rewarding and it gave me the confidence to be who I felt I could be.

I remember walking to the top of the hills that surrounded Mayumarri and feeling a sense of connectedness with the land on which it stood. This place had become a sanctuary in the face of such adversity. I felt that I had been living in circles up until this moment; now it was time to break the cycle. I felt that the experience of being at Mayumarri had released me from the abuse of the past and taught me that I was something, someone special, not the insignificant person that I had grown to understand as being me. I would return to Mayumarri to collect materials for future works as it held a significant place in my heart; it was a place of healing, a place of rejuvenation.

Works as Therapy

As mentioned, the creation of works in my practice is a therapeutic process in which I deal with a variety of personal emotions ranging from feelings of depressiveness through to total elation. I feed off the emotion of the land, witnessing the ebb and flow of nature’s growth and decay which symbolises a sense of change, a show of resilience against the plight of human interventions in the landscape. I am sympathetic towards this struggle, the relationship between nature and humans effectively mirroring the dysfunction between my mother and I. Being in close contact with nature allows me the chance to be able to synchronize these feelings with emotions corresponding in the landscape, the cathartic function of nature helping quell traumatic emotions that connect me to my childhood.
Using my practice as a method of dealing with trauma and loss allows me to articulate emotions visually that would otherwise remain suppressed. Symbolising trauma through earthen media has become a way that I can ‘visually theorise’ my understanding of my experiences. Jill Bennett argues in her study *Empathic Visions* that “literary theorists, after all, have been major forces in trauma studies, so why not visual theorists?”\(^\text{16}\) Bennett’s inclusion of the visual into the theoretical domain of trauma studies argues for the potential of the visual arts to tell us something new and interesting about the emotions associated with tragedy, loss and despair.

![Fig 4. Silence.](image)

Engaging the visual as a means to express trauma is particularly important to my practice. I like to mitigate associated feelings that manifest within through my work as a way to resolve the conflict and turmoil I see both in the landscape and in my personal life. *Silence* (Fig 4) from my *Haema*\(^\text{17}\) exhibition is one such example of using my art as an experiential mode of expressing past traumatic events. The title implies a sense of tranquillity in the aftermath of violence and


\(^{17}\) *Haema*, Watt Space Gallery, Newcastle 2009.
abuse, a place far away from the conflict and aggression endured at home. The earthen surface of *Silence* is broken in the middle by a jet-black charcoal line, symbolising the void left in my life by the broken relationship between my mother and I. Works such as *Silence* are integral in freeing myself from the overly critical subordination I experienced as a child, the externalisation of these emotions allowing me to move forward in my life. In striking resemblance to my works, Bennett concurs that in the trauma works of artists Zarina Bhimji, Tony Chakar and Steve McQueen:

> These works are often inspired by real events, and they sometimes manifest the trace of the person or narrative.\(^{18}\)

My works materialise as a result of what Bennett describes as ‘real events’, and become intrinsic in documenting experiences both past and present. The motivation to use earthen materials in an effort to express these experiences binds my personal emotions to similar events I experience in the landscape, instances of mankind’s destruction of nature paradoxically symbolising feelings stemming from the destruction caused in my own life. This intuitive response to grief that I experience both in the landscape and my personal life inspires me to create works that are symbolic of the two, demonstrating the innate bond I feel between the land and myself. Bennett describes the affect that circumscribing the events trauma through art has, situating her argument in the idea that these works are not merely just informative, but an expression of trauma through aesthetics:

> They are not didactic images, mediating a message, but incline towards the expressive in the way they play on a certain affective quality of space and objects to evolve modes of subjective experience, and specifically of loss.\(^{19}\)

Emotions relating to grief, loss and despair are central to my practice and are the motivations behind my works. Often, these feelings are resolved as a result of creation, an example of the symbolisations of these emotions materialising in the

\(^{18}\) Bennett, *Empathic Visions*, 151.

\(^{19}\) Bennett, *Empathic Visions*, 151.
gestural earthen flows of Hope (Fig 5) from my Heartworks\textsuperscript{20} exhibition. This work exists as an exclamation of tenacity, of never giving up in the face of adversity. Inspired by the persistence of nature against the peril of humans, Hope is a celebration of existence, instilling positivity and a sense of meaning within my own life.

Fig 5. Hope.

In summary, my practice has allowed me to express emotions poignant to my understanding of both myself and the surrounding landscape. Investigations of emotional experiences through my childhood have helped in establishing links between how I perceive the land and my own upbringing. It is my desire through these observations to demonstrate a theoretical framework within which my work can exist, reinforcing my practice as a cathartic means of expression through which I deal with trauma and depression.

\textsuperscript{20}Heartworks, Watt Space Gallery, Newcastle, 2010.
Chapter 2

Earth As Object

The use of earth as art material within my practice is important. It functions as a conduit between the emotions I experience in the landscape and the resulting body of works I create. Utilising repetitions of geometrical objects in my studio work enforces a sense of simplicity and order, circumscribing both the human need for conformity as well as symbolising the hierarchy of nature. I insist on elevating the object from mere hollow form into one of profound meaning through the use of earth as its main material constituent. Discourses of life and death and the permanent flux of nature’s energy result from the interplay between materials that I use in the overall body of my works; the object becomes a vessel in which these materials can co-exist.

I observe nature as a series of familiar objects that can be understood as landscape. Natural flora such as trees and geographical formations such as mountains and valleys are object-like in their presence, shaping the landscape and creating an emotive backdrop that I try to emulate in my own works. The desolate earthen surfaces in my works translate the outpouring of emotion that I experience in the landscape, the object becoming an important device in extolling narratives intrinsic to the survival of nature and planet earth. The works of artists such as Andy Goldsworthy and Robert Smithson play an important part in explaining this connection between the materials they use and their relationship to nature, all of which I wish to explain further in chapter three of this exegesis.

Elements of minimalism play an important role in the materialization of the object in my practice and in the way that the object is articulated in the curatorial space. The arrangement of my works, the composition of the object in actual space corresponds similarly to the arrangement of works by certain Minimalist artists. Donald Judd’s arrangement of plexiglas and steel geometrical shapes (Fig 6) is echoed in the compositional arrangement of *Always* (Fig 7) from my 2010 *Heartworks* exhibition.
Fig 6. An example of Donald Judd's work *Ten Units, Stainless Steel, Amber Plexiglass.*

Image has been removed for copyright reasons.
Figure 6 sourced from [www.eikongraphia.com/?p=381](http://www.eikongraphia.com/?p=381), sourced 3rd April 2012
The configuration of each separate piece of *Always* works to exemplify unity through materiality and shape, something that is in common with Judd's geometrical forms. The way that these individual objects work together as what Robert Morris describes as a 'gestalt' (of which I shall explain further in this chapter) further exemplifies the common approaches my practice has with those of other Minimalist artists. Whilst the composition of my works aligns itself with elements of Minimalism, my works convey a sense of emotion through the materiality of the object, something that Minimal art avoids doing at all costs.
Frances Colpitt explains this rejection of expression in Minimalism in her conclusion to *Minimal Art: The Critical Perspective* stating that:

Its objects were industrially produced in rigid materials without any trace of the artist’s hand. Its forms were those of an idealistically conceived geometry, rather than intuitive self-expression.  

Colpitt’s observations here show little concern for the interpretation of emotive expressionism in Minimalism, with the removal of the subjective artist’s hand practically eliminating any trace of emotionality. Colpitt reinforces this suggestion, going on to state that Minimalist sculpture was categorized by the ‘non-figurative, non-referential and non-narrative… even the remotely geometric.’ Donald Judd’s use of industrial materials exemplified the approach of Minimalism’s rejection of emotionality, his emphasis in creating his works focusing on how specific the materials were to a given object rather than their use as an expressive tool:

Materials vary greatly and are simply materials – formica, aluminium, cold-rolled steel, plexiglas, red and common brass, and so forth. They are specific. If they are used directly, they are more specific. Also, they are usually aggressive.

Judd concerns himself with what he suggests in his 1964 essay *Specific Objects* as ‘simply order’ (which I shall explain later in this chapter in relation to my own work), the specific nature of which is defined by ‘the shapes, the unity, projection, order and colour.’ It is here that Judd’s rejection of emotionality within the materialization of his works is evident, his motivation behind his works defined through set physical attributes related to materiality and its object-like nature rather than being centred around expressiveness and emotion. Judd explains further that ‘painting and sculpture have become set forms. A fair
amount of their meaning isn’t credible.’

This statement suggests that Judd sees limitations in the expressiveness of painting and sculpture, so in as much he has created objects that exist purely on their materiality alone, often leaving his objects as ‘untitled’ and rendering them devoid of any subjective meaning.

My works, whilst sharing similar attributes to Judd’s objects in their specific nature to materiality differ by eliciting a sense of emotion that connects the object in the curatorial space to how I experience objects found in the landscape. I find that appropriating the object in such a way conveys emotions through my work in the most simple and direct way possible. The object becomes a vehicle for self-expression in my practice, denying what can be seen as the clinical status it holds in the realm of Minimalism. My connection to emotion in both nature and the land reflects emotional states that I feel within and these feelings are best demonstrated in my practice through the use of materials such as raw earth and charcoal as objects. These materials have a rich emotional connection and signify places that are of great importance to me, the use of these materials is my way of defining important moments in my life and addressing the emotions felt in these particular moments.

Using natural media within my practice to create objects of emotional significance is reflective of how I feel about the land, the synthesis of materials and emotion the result of experiencing life, both spiritually and physically through nature. I use the object in my practice in similar ways to artist Andy Goldsworthy and I find that a lot of his works relate in similar ways to Minimalism as my works do in relation to scale and their object-like presence. His works differ from Minimalism as my works do by focusing on emotion through the use of natural materials. The materialization of Goldsworthy’s works exemplify the evolution of the object as a method of expressing the emotion experienced both within and in the landscape. Hand-built stone cairns that dominate the landscape, melting summer snowballs and cavernous log domes with in-built voids as seen in his ‘Rivers and Tides’ DVD align themselves in a similar context to Minimal art aesthetics. The shape, scale and presence of these works combine to function as what art critic and theorist Michael Fried describes

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26 Killein, Donald Judd, Early Works 1955-1968, 93.
as objecthood – securing the identity of a work of art that is neither painting nor sculpture.

**Object in Practice**

Firstly, I wish to establish the theoretical dimensions of the use of certain materials in my practice, particularly through the writings of Donald Judd. I also address notions of minimal art and the status of the object in relation to my practice through the writings of Michael Fried (*Art and Objecthood*),\(^{27}\) Frances Colpitt (*Minimal Art – A Critical Perspective*)\(^{28}\) and Robert Morris (*Continuous Project Altered Daily*).\(^{29}\)

I relate to my works as objects because in my understanding they are neither painting nor sculpture; they fall somewhere in between and insist on being seen almost autonomous of both disciplines. It is in these instances that assemblages of my works are often referred to as installations, a label that has been applied to my works by fellow students and academics because they seem to not qualify as either painting or sculpture. My works’ autonomy, this need for them to be read neither pictorially or sculpturally, gives conviction to their justification as objects. Donald Judd paper *Specific Objects* enquired about the object nature of art from around 1946 onward, stating:

> Half or more of the best new works in the last few years has been neither painting nor sculpture. Usually it has been related, closely or distantly, to one or the other. The work is diverse, and in much in it that is not in painting and sculpture is also diverse. But there are some things that occur nearly in common.\(^{30}\)

My understanding is that the relational dynamics in painting and sculpture have aspects in common, but are not ultimately intrinsic to the object in art. In my works, pictorial illusionism and part-by-part sculptural aesthetics have been replaced by the use of material earth and other naturally-occurring elements. The materials determines the shape of the object, thus removing it further from

the realm of pictorial illusionism. The object becomes more definitive; its ability to maintain presence of shape and form essentially stemming from the plane on which the work exists and the material constituency from which the work evolves. As Judd suggests:

The plane is also emphasised and nearly single. It is clearly a plane one or two inches in front of another plane, the wall, and parallel to it. The relationship of the two planes is specific; it is a form. Everything on or slightly in the plane of the painting must be arranged laterally.31

The form, as Judd suggests, is clearly defined by the relational dynamics that occur between the rectangular plane and the plane created by the offset of the wall. The rectangular plane becomes a ‘Specific Object’, and is heightened by not only the relational dynamics that occur between the rectangular plane and the wall, but by the relational dynamics that exist on the rectangular plane itself:

The elements inside the rectangle are broad and simple and correspond closely to the rectangle. The shapes and surfaces are only those that can occur plausibly within and on a rectangular plane. The parts are very few and so subordinate to unity as not to be parts in an ordinary sense. A painting is nearly an entity, one thing, and not the indefinable sum of a group of entities and references.32

The elements that exist within my works in a sense correspond to Fried’s argument that for an object to be viewed as whole, it must have very few, if any, parts. Metaphor of Existence (Life) and Metaphor of Existence (Death) (Figs 8 & 9) from my 2009 Haema exhibition have very few parts. Like the majority of my works, they comprise chiefly of earthen material and hand ground carbon-rich charcoal. Both pieces consist of three object-based works on the wall that are covered in cracked earth and lined along the bottom by the ground charcoal. Both Metaphor of Existence (Life) and Metaphor of Existence (Death) are reciprocated by plinths that are located on the floor in front of each work, one plinth holding a flattened square of earth, while the other a mound of dead,

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31Killein, Donald Judd. Early Works 1955-1968, 89
decaying leaves. The charcoal line at the bottom of each piece corresponds closely to the square plane and parallels the majority of the work.

Fig 8. Metaphor of Existence (Life).
Fig 9. Metaphor of Existence (Death).

that is covered with earth. Both pieces contain little more than two to three reciprocating parts (earth and charcoal in *Life*; earth, charcoal and leaves in *Death*) therefore strengthening its resolve as an object-based installation.
Line and Repetition

Fig 10. Frank Stella *Portrait of Michael Fried Standing on His Head far above Cayuga's Water*, 1959.

The use of the charcoal line to define form and shape closely relates to the line work of Frank Stella. An example of this can be found in Stella's *Portrait of Michael Fried Standing on His Head far above Cayuga’s Waters* (Fig 10). The ink
rectangles are divided purposefully by lines that emphasise the rectangular plane on which the work is composed; everything on the rectangular plane is relational to the overall shape of the object. Judd comments on the object-ness of Stella’s line paintings:

Stella’s shaped paintings involve several important characteristics of three-dimensional work. The periphery of a piece and the lines inside correspond. The stripes are nowhere near being discrete parts. The surface is farther from the wall than usual, though it remains parallel to it.33

The utilisation of the line as a repetitious form within my work demonstrates Judd’s before mentioned notion of “simply order... one thing after another”. This same notion of order also extends itself to the repetition of objects found within my works. The wall-based objects found in Metaphor of Existence are repeated in multiples of three, while works such as Divided Minds within a Heart of Solitude (Fig 11) and Hope (both from my Heartworks exhibition) occur in multiples of two. Seldom do they occur in any greater multiples, with exception to Alone (Have I run too far to get home?), which occurs in multiples of four rectangular planes.

There is an inherent symbolism with using repetitious forms within my works. Primarily, they function to represent nature's corruption by human society; the order they symbolise acting as reflection of our human capacity to impose our own sense of structure and rationalisation on nature's order. The multiple forms also represent a mechanisation of nature by humans, the production-line quality exemplified by having one object occur after another works as a metaphor for human's insistence to have nature subservient to our own needs rather than living in co-existence with each other.

**Unitary Forms**

It is through these observations and others mentioned earlier that Judd asserts that a work must stamp its conviction both through shape and materiality to be considered an object, more importantly, a ‘specific’ object. Alternatively, Robert Morris believes that an object, or as he prefers unitary form, is the product of a ‘gestalt’, or the unmistakable wholeness of shape. According to Frances Colpitt:

> Morris preferred to call his objects unitary forms, a term that had fewer ontological implications than did specific objects. Unitary forms are "simple regular and irregular polygons." Cubes and pyramids are simple regular polygons. Irregular polygons include "beams, inclined planes, (and) truncated pyramids." Shape (form) is much more crucial to Morris than it is to Judd.  

Whilst my works are devoid of cubes, pyramids (both regular and truncated), beams and inclined planes, there are some works that I feel function in certain ways as to what Morris perceives as ‘unitary forms’. *(If) Forever Exists* (Fig 9) and *Taken* from the *Heartworks* and *Haema* exhibitions respectively substantiate themselves as unitary forms, the sum of their parts unifying to produce

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quadrilateral polygons. The experience of visualising objects such as these in the curatorial space is justified by Morris:

One sees and immediately ‘believes’ that the pattern within one’s mind corresponds to the existential fact of the object. Belief in this sense is both a kind of faith in spatial extension and a visualisation of that extension. In other words, it is those aspects of apprehension that are not co-existent with the visual field but rather the result of the experience of the visual field.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{35}Morris, \textit{Continuous Project Altered Daily}, 6.
The occurrence of the object in the curatorial space can be understood variably depending on the viewer’s apprehension of it. One may view a work such as *(If)* *Forever Exists* as the gestalt of many quadrilateral polygons or simply as a holistic quadrilateral polygon. At whatever rate, the object is secured by its emphasis on shape, whether it may be under the premise of what Judd experiences as ‘specific objects’ or Morris’ ‘unitary forms’. I do not prescribe
whole-heartedly that all my works fit one predilection or the other; instead, I see that my work sits at the crossroads of the two, while still being able to assert itself as an object simply through its shape and materiality. It is my belief that conviction of shape is the primary concern when justifying my work as an object. The overall shape of the object removes any concern for pictorial illusionism or part-by-part sculpture, thus creating a new clear vantage point from which my work can be observed; “The shape is the object: at any rate, what secures the wholeness of the object is its singleness of shape.”36

**Plinth**

In various object-based installations, the plinth has been used to elevate materials off the ground and in a sense giving them relativity to surrounding objects placed on the wall. This is done in an effort to create a dialogue between the wall-mounted objects and the materials placed on the plinth and to instil a metaphoric relationship between the two. The materials placed on the plinths act as objects and are chiefly reflective in their material elements to the materials used in their corresponding wall-mounted objects. The material objects on the plinths are arranged so that they correspond closely to the overall shape of the plinth; as most plinths I use are generally square, the shape of the material elevated by the plinth is also square. The composition of the elevated materials is also reflective of the composition and shape of their corresponding wall-mounted objects.

The dilemma that I am faced with when using the plinth for floor-based objects is this: the plinth can be perceived as being relational to the object that it is trying to elevate, thus placing it in the realm of part-by-part sculpture. Initiating the use of a plinth to elevate the object it beholds is also intrinsic to the value of sculpture, it is something that the viewer has become accustomed to when witnessing such pieces in the curatorial space.

The relational dynamic between the materials on the plinth and the plinth itself, the correspondence of material’s shape to that of the plinth is in striking

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similarity to the relational dynamic that occurs between the wall and my wall-mounted objects. The horizontal plane of the plinth becomes intrinsic in elevating raw materials into object status just as the wall is imperative to the vertical rectangular plane in wall-based objects. The floor-based objects are objects on any account as it is their shape or presence of shape and form that justifies their existence as objects. Judd’s assertions reinforce my particular views on floor-based objects by stating:

Obviously, anything in three dimensions can be any shape, regular or irregular, and can have any relation to the wall, floor, ceiling, room, rooms, or exterior or none at all. Any material can be used, as is or painted.  

Judd’s comments exemplify the notion of the floor-based object within my practice by rationalising the materialisation of any given three-dimensional work in the curatorial space. The fact that my work has a relationship to the wall or, in this case the plinth, should not in any way detract from the fact that it is a three dimensional object, and on any account should be viewed as such.

The Modality of Theatre

Finally, I would like to take into account the function of my objects in the curatorial space through the modality of theatre. In summary, theatre exists in minimal art as a culmination of aesthetical responses by the viewer in relation to the scale of a given object. The scale of the object creates a comparison of size between that of the viewer and the work, exuding a sense of presence through sheer magnitude of scale and the reciprocation of surrounding space. The

37 Killein, Donald Judd. Early Works 1955-1968, 94.
conscious awareness of scale in comparison to the viewer determines the aesthetical responses of that viewer; larger scale objects predominantly invoke a more consummiate response than intimate objects due to the spatial relationship they have with the surrounding curatorial space. The dominance of space in larger pieces creates a certain sense of presence within the work and declares that it should be taken seriously. The function of size and space when determining the theatricality of an object is evident in Morris’s conclusion:

The awareness of scale is a function of the comparison made between the two constants, one’s body size, and the object. Space between the subject and the object is implied in such a comparison. In this sense space does not exist for intimate objects. A larger object includes more of the space around itself than does a smaller one. It is necessary literally to keep one’s distance from large objects in order to take any one view into one’s field of vision. The smaller the object, the closer one approaches it, and therefore it has correspondingly less of a spatial field in which to exist for the viewer.\(^{38}\)

Morris’s declaration emphasises that the scale of a work and its direct correlation to space is important to the theatrical motivation of the object. It is these two elements that influence the encounter one has with the object; the viewer becomes subject to the apprehension of the object in space. It is this apprehension that determines the viewer’s aesthetical inclination:

The theatricality of Morris’s notion... seems obvious: the largeness of the piece, in conjunction with its non-relational, unitary character, distances the beholder (viewer) – not just physically but psychically. It is, one might say, precisely this distancing that makes the beholder a subject and the piece in question... an object.\(^{39}\)

Silence and Hope are two object-based works within my practice that fundamentally subscribe to Fried and Morris’s notions of theatricality. Both


pieces are large in scale (Hope being a diptych) and demand that the viewer encounter them as objects in the curatorial space. The size of the works insist that the subject, in this case the viewer distances themselves in order to fully participate as Fried would assert both physically and psychically. Although the size of such works is intrinsic to their object nature and theatricality, an excess of size can overstate the piece, leaving it to be experienced monumentally rather than theatrically:

Beyond a certain size the object can overwhelm and the gigantic scale become a loaded term.\textsuperscript{40}

It is here that Fried suggests that Morris prefers presence achieved through the object nature of the work and its scale rather than size alone. It is on this premise that my works remain relative through the scale of the object and its spatiality to the size of human anatomy. Anything beyond this size, as I see it, would contradict the object-ness of my work and therefore negate the sense of theatre the situation extols.

While it can be argued that my works have a sense of theatricality, this is not the express motivation behind creating the objects. I create objects to symbolise a sense of order through repetitions of geometrical forms such as circles, squares and rectangular structures. The earthen materiality of these objects plays an important part in forming narratives relevant to my emotional connection to the land. It is through the exploration of materials and creation of these objects that I can express emotions of despair and desperation, the same emotions I feel as I witness nature's eternal struggle over mankind's need for dominance.

\textsuperscript{40}Morris, Continuous Project Altered Daily, 15.
Chapter 3

Earth as Art Materials

My practice revolves around the use of earth as material. Using earth as a medium, I feel, connects me physically and spiritually to nature and the land; a bond that is fundamentally important when creating my works. This is because I must feel my way through my works when I create; the tactile nature of the earth I use instigates a multitude of physical and emotional responses that sentimentalises my close associations with the land.

For example, works such as Silence exemplify my bond with the land in many respects. Silence implies a sense of peacefulness through the gestural flows of earthen media, a Zen-like moment that illustrates my desire to be at one with nature. Nature is my sanctuary and it has provided me with a shelter away from the monotony of life, at the same time garnering my appreciation with its immense size, power and beauty. Nature has been a great teacher, allowing me to understand the sheer capacity of the land and captivating me in such a way that I only see it fit to use earth as the reciprocating medium for such occurrences.

Historically, the use of earth as an art material dates back to prehistoric times when humans would grind up stones to make ochres that would then be used to communicate messages through the use of paintings and drawings on cave walls. This is particularly evident in Australian Aboriginal culture, which is a culture intrinsically connected to the earth. Red ochre ‘crayons’ found in the Lake Mungo lunette area of the Australian outback have been uncovered at ancient Aboriginal burial hearths and have been estimated to be around 32,000 years old. In more modern times, these primitive ochres have been refined into commercially viable paints and, in my view, have lost their archaic resonance to the land from which these ochres have originated. Using raw earth as an art medium within my work insists on a sense of the natural, as if it the earth medium and work were part of the earth. The use of traditional mediums such as oils and acrylics frustrated me

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in this sense as they didn’t achieve the desired natural effect that the medium of earth inherently exemplified, and being manufactured it had lost its naturalness through the process of being overly refined. The process of using earth as an art medium seems therefore more natural, and I feel a real connectedness with the land and nature when I engage with such materials.

**The Discovery**

My first foray into using earth as a medium in my practice materialised late in my undergraduate degree. Disappointed with the lack of progress with one of my encaustic works, I dragged the piece outside the studio before covering it with mud, clay, sticks and debris. The result a few days later was spectacular and rewarding. The earthen material had dried to form fissures and cracks in its surface; something that I found very reminiscent of forms I had experienced in nature before. This instance changed the trajectory of my practice and had come full circle in connecting the experiences of nature I had as a child to my understanding of nature as an adult. I had finally found something that connected to the child within and my exuberance was palpable.

I quickly began to understand that by using earth as the medium, I was creating works that were rich in metaphor and symbolism. Earth to me exuded a sense of energy and time; the way the drying medium cracks, folds and buckles mirrors natures insistency to be ever-changing rather than static. I was intrigued how time and the elements played their part in determining the final outcome of my works, irrespective of how successful they were or not.
My first series of earthworks, titled the *Accelerated Momentum* series (Fig 13), was actually a combination of using earth with traditional acrylics and oils. By this stage, I was primarily using earth as a ground for my works in much the same way gesso is traditionally applied to canvas. The earth provided a rich textural background on to which I could compose my paints, the clash of the natural and man-made media powerfully illustrating what I have come to understand as the eternal struggle for dominance between man and nature. The metaphoric use of earthen media in the *Accelerated Momentum* series would prove to be pivotal in my practice, the inherently impermanent quality of the medium suggesting notions of time and decay, life and death. Each work represented a state of flux, of energy in a state of transformation. The evolution of such change in my work excited me and solidified my approach to using earth as an appropriate medium within my practice.
**Refinement**

I continued to develop methods of using earth as a medium and had refined my techniques by the time I had entered my Honours degree. I refrained from complicating my works with drastic amounts of unneeded materials as I had in the *Accelerated Momentum* series, choosing instead to simplify and let the medium of earth speak for itself. Earth was no longer relegated to the background, it had become ultimately more functional within the work, almost entirely dispensing of the need to use traditional mediums and methods. Random spatterings of earth, debris and paints were succeeded by orderly geometrical patterns that referenced the seemingly organised chaos that ensued in nature and the environment. Embossed grid-like patterns became a common feature within my works; the dried, buckled geometric figures my way of demonstrating man’s inability to restrain the ever-changing forces of nature.

![Transition](image)

*Fig 14. Transition (from the *Tales of a Scorched Earth* series).*

*Transition* (Fig 14) from my *Tales of a Scorched Earth* series best exemplifies the use of grid-like patterns in the development of my works. Here, the dark oil-stained earth materialises in a mesh of extruded squares, each sitting
uncomfortably against the other in a state of ordered imperfection. The warped, uneven surfaces of the squares give the impression that the shapes are jostling for space, wanting to be set free from the authoritarian rule of the rectangular plane. This aspiration for freedom symbolised by the earthen material parallels my own experiences of nature’s need to be free from the demand from humans. By the end of my Honours degree, the use of geometrical shapes and objects had become a prolific part of my practice.

**Contemporary Artist Inspiration**

While I find that a majority of my influences stem from my experiences in nature, some inspiration comes from experiencing and understanding the works of other practitioners. Artists such as the American Robert Smithson and especially British artist Andy Goldsworthy, motivated me to create works that were akin to the natural evolution and entropy of nature and the land. I have focused my attention on these two artists in particular because both reflect a mutual passion for the land within their practice. Each work they produce is a statement about our co-existence with nature and the surrounding environment. In striking similarity to the underlying ethos of my own practice, Amy Dempsey notes Smithson’s philosophical approach to his art-making, demonstrating his penchant for natural phenomena:

Smithson was fascinated with the physical concept of entropy, or ‘evolution in reverse’, the self-destroying as well as self-regenerating processes of nature and the possibilities of reclamation.42

Similarly, I share Smithson’s fascination with nature and the land and using natural materials to express this. Smithson’s iconic work *Spiral Jetty* (Fig 15), constructed at Great Salt Lake, Utah was one of my first encounters with ‘earth’ art. I remember being mesmerised by the sheer scale of the work and entranced by the naturality of the piece, how it appeared as if it belonged to nature. The giant basalt rock swirl reminded me of the many constructions I made in nature

as a child and it also reminded me of the joy of creation, of materialising ideas with my own hands. I was also captivated by how time shaped and reshaped *Spiral Jetty*. When the work was first constructed over forty years ago, the black basalt stones used to make the jetty appeared dominant over the brine shrimp red water. Over the years, the Great Salt Lake consumed the piece, leaving only traces of the original work behind. As of 2004, *Spiral Jetty* has been visible again due to droughts in the Great Salt Lake area, only this time the black basalt stones have been left encrusted with white salts, giving the spiral causeway a white ice and snow appearance. The icy aesthetic of *Spiral Jetty* seems to contradict the hot, barren desert that surrounds the work, permeating the work with a surreal aesthetic that is captivating and awe inspiring.

Fig 15. Robert Smithson *Spiral Jetty.*

Image has been removed for copyright reasons. Figure 15 sourced from [www.diacenter.org/sites/main/spiraljetty](http://www.diacenter.org/sites/main/spiraljetty), 3rd April 2012
**Time-based / Temporal**

Enthused by the naturalness and impermanent nature of Smithson’s piece, I was motivated to create works that instilled a sense of time. Using earthen materials seemed to convey a sense of history, each crack and fold of the drying medium indicative of time passing, of energy in a state of transition.

I started to understand that my works have a lifespan, chiefly because of the non-archival nature of the earthen medium. This was something that I wanted in my practice as it complimented my understanding of the effects time had on nature.

![Fig 16. Haema.](image)

A recent example of this within my practice is *Haema* (Fig 16) from the 2009 exhibition of the same name. A large-scale diptych, *Haema* imposes itself on the curatorial space because of its size. A large circular motif adorns the surface of each work, the red earthen rings cracking and expiring over time as they dried. These changes, characteristic of using earth as medium, reinforced the sensibility that each work indeed has a lifespan. From excavating the raw materials to showing in the curatorial space, each work has a sense of history that is
seemingly undeniable. I was impressed by the fact that I was taking something seen as quite inanimate to most people and bringing it to life within my practice. I got a great deal of joy from witnessing the changes in the natural progression of my works, from the experience of digging up the earth to the eventual demise of the work (I have a ritual of burning my works after awhile; I observe it as being a symbolic gesture that relates wholly to the suggestion of impermanence intrinsic to my work and practice).

**Natural Vs Non-natural**

While I do stand by the notion that my works have a definite life-like quality to them, I refrain from the personification or the giving of human qualities to each work. My work is made from nature and therefore it insists on the aesthetical qualities of nature rather than the industrialised matrix that humanity has evolved. I like the fact that my work seems devoid of the artist’s hand, something that traditional painting and sculpture has seemingly failed to do. The quest for naturality and denial of human intervention in my work, in my opinion, determines the overall degree of success of a given piece. It is not my desire to create works that indulge in the proficiency of the maker’s mark; rather, I want to have my works suggest the notion they have been made from nature themselves.

As an Honours student, the works of British land artist Andy Goldsworthy caught my attention. Like Smithson, I was mesmerised by Goldsworthy’s close association and appreciation of nature and the land. In striking similarity to my practice, Goldsworthy’s works materialised from the land; sticks, mud, stones and fibres formed an abundance of natural materials from which Goldsworthy could pick and choose at will. I admire the freedom that Goldsworthy has working collaboratively with nature and I admired his tenacity in creating works that, like mine that followed, insisted on a sense of time and impermanence. Judith Collins echoes this sentiment in her introduction to Goldsworthy’s *Midsummer Snowballs*:
Goldsworthy shares... concerns with time and space, the ephemeral quality of natural materials, and the nature of their deterioration. Goldsworthy often works alone, using only natural materials found on site, making work that has only a minimal and temporary impact on its surroundings.\footnote{Andy Goldsworthy, \textit{Midsummer Snowballs}, (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 9.}

I was inspired by Goldsworthy's relationship with the land and its surroundings and the ephemeral character of his work. It inspired me to work in closer with nature. I admire the way that Goldsworthy understands the land, elements and materials that he uses, it is as if this understanding is innate.

Not unlike my works, a majority of Goldsworthy's works have an expected lifespan, his pieces are born from the surrounding environment and deteriorate under natural elements of that environment. I find it captivating to witness a work evolve then undergo a measure of entropy as if a part of nature itself. It is a very satisfying feeling to observe the remarkable changes that occurs when natural media is used. The ephemeral existence of the media is an example of the persistence of time and the elements.

\begin{figure}
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\caption{An example of Andy Goldsworthy's \textit{Midsummer's Snowballs}.}
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\item Image has been removed for copyright reasons.
\item Figure 17 sourced from \url{www.sneakerheadvc.com/tag/midsummer-snowballs/}, 3rd April 2012
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Many of Goldsworthy’s works exemplify notions of time and transformation and a great example of such notions can be found in his *Midsummer Snowballs* series (Fig 17). Here, Goldsworthy (with the help of assistants) made a series of fourteen large snowballs, each snowball containing elements such as sheep wool, metal, chalk and crow’s feathers found in the area where the snowballs were made. The snowballs were then arduously transported into urban locations and galleries where they would complete the rest of their short-lived lives. The snowballs would melt over time in their given locations, each melting layer of snow revealing the history of the piece, each melting layer a metaphor for the passing of time. Goldsworthy says of his interest in the phenomena of time:

I am interested in the dialogue between two time flows. A snowball melting amongst the river of people who run through the city... the ebb and flow as people arrive for work, have their lunch, then leave to go home in the evening. Set against all this activity, the snowballs may appear almost permanent as they slowly disappear. They will become markers to the passing of time – slow and deliberate like the hour hand of a clock – appearing hardly to move.\(^{44}\)

Like Goldsworthy’s snowballs, my works metaphorically imply the continuum of energy, symbolising narratives pertaining to birth, growth, death and decay. These narratives are important to my work as they describe what I understand as the natural evolution and entropy of all things.

**Works and Practice**

While I find many of those things in common between my practice and that of Smithson and Goldsworthy, there is one major difference that sets my works apart. I will explain this through exploring specific examples of my work. Unlike the site-specific land art that forms a majority of Smithson and Goldsworthy’s works, I bring raw elements of the land directly into the curatorial space where they materialise as object-based forms. I find that displacing nature in my works, I can heighten the viewer’s emotive response to the work. I like the way that my works permeate the curatorial space with a sense of the natural, in essence creating a push-pull effect with the man-made structure of that curatorial space.

As I mentioned before, a majority (if not all) of my works exist as ephemeral markers of time, exfoliations and deteriorations in the surfaces of works such as *Taken* (from my *Haema* exhibition) stand testament to the passing of time and the transformation of energy. Works such as *Creation* (also from my *Haema* exhibition) confronts notions of time with a subtle, less aggressive style. *Creation* (Fig 18) materialises in the form of four small dishes, each a vessel for different ground pigments and found seeds. The seeds themselves represent the formative beginnings of life, their germination a metaphor for our ever-changing existence. The ground pigments metaphorically imply a sense of transition, of raw earth turning into stone then back into raw earth. *Creation* embodies the life cycle of the stone, standing as a metaphor for the existence of everything we know and witness.
My *Heartwork* exhibition in 2010 saw a brief departure from using earthen materials, a move I made in an attempt to expand my repertoire of media. *Alone (Have I run too far to get home)* (Fig 19) was my most successful effort to date in using alternate media to earth materials and it was one of my first serious attempts at using concrete as a medium.

Again I chose to use a material this time the non-natural material of concrete in a metaphoric sense. This is because it asserted a man-made aesthetic to the four-panelled piece of *Alone...*, the cold, clinical surface of the dried medium a
Fig 19. Alone... (Have I run too far to get home?) Detail.

metaphor for the slow suffocation of nature at the hands of our urban sprawl. This piece, however, did not go to plan. In contrast to the structural strength of the concrete, its fragility on the four panels caused it to break and exfoliate away, leaving behind beautiful feathery remnants that denied the inherent heaviness of the parent medium. The remnants appear cloud-like against the stark charcoal
black line that borders the bottom of the work, paradoxically creating a dynamic within the work that is simultaneously as delicate as it is powerfully strong.

While my foray into using alternate media was successful in terms of eliciting a sense of the natural and natural forces, I still chose to use earthen materials as my primary source of media within my practice. This is because the use of iron-rich red earth expresses my close connection with nature, the iron present in the red earth correlating directly with the iron that makes our blood red. This close bond between nature and all living things was something that I wished to portray through the use of earthen media within my works. I experience this connection as our bond to mother earth, our connection to maternity, our only provider of life and energy.
Chapter 4

Process in Practice

Over the duration of my practice, I have had to develop processes in order to create media unique to my art-making. As I have suggested in Chapter Three, abandoning traditional media such as oils and acrylics enabled me to overcome certain limitations inherent in using manufactured synthetic media, thereby liberating me from expressive obstacles. It enabled me to pursue new methods of sourcing and creating media that would facilitate my understanding of nature and the land. I wanted a medium that would reflect natural processes such as the erosion and decay I witnessed in nature, something that would be raw, unrefined and somewhat aggressive. Using raw earthen materials responded to this desire; the iron-rich medium opulent in its ability to transcend notions of time and impermanence, vitally important factors in expressing my philosophical concerns in regard to nature and the land.

In the previous chapter I discussed specific examples of my work in relation to the work of recognised artists in the field, particularly Andy Goldsworthy and Robert Smithson. In this chapter, I wish to outline the processes involved in the creation of my own earthen media as well as providing an explanation for other alternative natural materials (such as charcoal and pigments) used in the development of my object-based pieces. Through these observations, I wish to demonstrate how experimenting with these processes has affected the characteristics of the earthen media I use and how these same processes have cultivated new practical approaches to the materialisation of my works.
**Sourcing Materials**

Because of the nature of my practice-based research, an important part of my practice over the last few years has involved sourcing certain earthen materials in order to create my works. Initially, I used recycled store-bought clay to materialise works; however, through the experience of making the work I came to realise that the refined, manufactured nature of the material left a sense of hollowness about the work, as if it had been displaced from nature. Although the recycled clay was easier to use and was more resilient than raw earth, it had lost its ostensible connection to the earth. The recycled clay seemed clinical and unfertile in comparison to the iron-rich red earth that I currently use in my practice. I found the transition between using manufactured clay and using raw earth comfortable as the inherent naturalness of the unrefined medium best illustrated my own spiritual connection I have with the land.

Sourcing materials became a fundamental part of my practice at the beginning of my Masters degree (see Fig 20). In previous works, materials were not difficult to come by as I had surplus amounts of manufactured clay ready to use at will. When I began using raw earth, I found the visceral experience more satisfying as the medium was more pertinent in extolling narratives of life and death, time and impermanence than the white refined raku medium. I understood through my experiments and observations that there was also a heightened element of risk associated with using raw earth as opposed to manufactured clays, the unpredictable nature of the unrefined medium as well as its inherent fragility making it more challenging to use.
Fig 20. Sourcing materials at a local beach.

*The Importance of Place*

The significance of the materials and their places of origin are extremely important in the materialisation of my works. The places I choose to excavate are carefully selected because of their resounding emotional connotations to my own personal life. I choose to keep the exact locations of my excavation sites secret to preserve the sanctity of the land and the emotions I experience being part of that land. I primarily excavate red earth from roadsides and creek beds in and around the Quorrobolong area of the Hunter Valley because I have a rich, personal attachment to that land as it has provided me with sanctuary in times of immense personal turmoil. The locations I have chosen in this area are places of rejuvenation and nourishment, places where I can directly involve myself, in a tactile manner, to the surrounding environment. I need to have this close, physical and visceral response to the land, otherwise I feel a sense of disconnection with nature and what I am trying to create.

Logistically, finding materials is often a strenuous task and usually involves having to negotiate steep grades and thick bushland. Whole days can be spent looking for that perfect seam of red earth, the discovery of which creates an
overwhelming feeling of excitement and fulfilment within. Discoveries such as these remind me of my childhood experiences, where I would explore the rainforest surrounding my grandparents place in the Byron Bay hinterland. I remember vividly the rust red soil caking the soles of my shoes, making the slippery terrain more difficult to traverse with each footstep. Recollections of such memories are invaluable to me as they emphasize a sense of freedom and oneness that I feel only nature could evoke. It is this sentiment that I diligently try to protect in the materials transition into a workable medium; I want to preserve the integrity of the earthen materials as so it can replicate in the curatorial space the same attributes found naturally in the landscape. In an ecologically sustainable sense, I try not to be invasive when sourcing material in these natural environs, as to do so would contravene my whole philosophical view of the importance of the natural.

Additional Natural Materials as Media

While a majority of my expeditions involve sourcing earth as the primary expressive constituent of my works, some expeditions have centred on locating other naturally-occurring materials, such as charcoal and unusually coloured stones. Outings such as these hold significant meaning to me as they usually involve my children, their innocent fascination with the surrounding environment re-igniting the child within me. Extinct volcanic outcrops, such as the Sugarloaf Ranges west of Newcastle, provide me with a seemingly endless source of material inspiration. Burnt out trees present ample amounts of naturally-occurring charcoal, while slowly-eroding conglomerate rock shelves make available rare nuggets of blood-red ironstone. Being in such close contact with nature is comforting; it revitalizes me spiritually and provides me with the impetus to continue exploring and creating.

On occasions I choose to visit the yellow oxide sandstone cliffs that line the coast east of Newcastle. These expeditions offer yet another opportunity for me to explore, this time outside of the bushland setting. Accessibility and the soft stones on offer make the beach one of my most favoured places for collecting
materials for my works. I feel a certain sense of tranquillity when I am at the beach, it is the same feeling I get when I find myself immersed in favoured bushland environments. The beach, in my experience, offers itself as a contradictory phenomenon - the peaceful repetitiveness of waves crashing on the shore belies the extreme force of the ocean behind it. Evidence of nature’s fluctuations is visible in the wind-worn cliff faces, the inevitable struggle against time and the elements transpiring in the erosion of pocket-like hollows carved-out in the brittle sandstone. Tell-tale signs left by the natural elements in places such as these reinforce the element of temporality I address in my work, of what I perceive to be historical indicators, each undulation and movement of the landscape capturing a moment in time passed.

**Stone, Ochres and Pigments**

Massive boulders and rocky outcrops provide me with ample opportunity to collect stones that have been eroded by the elements over time. A majority of the stones I collect are found at the beach (see Fig 21) and are generally sand or limestone. I choose these particular types of stone as they are easier to work with and come in a variety of colours from white to deep iron oxide red. Unlike stone excavated from the bush, beach stones are generally cleaner and need much less preparation when it comes to refining them into pigments and ochres.
Although less prolific than beach stones, exploring and finding bushland stones can be a rewarding task. Unearthing rare, mineral-rich materials takes time and a lot of patience, sometimes many hours are spent searching just to uncover little more than a handful of unusually coloured stones. Only a small amount of the stone I collect from the bush makes it to the stage of being refined as I find most bushland stone is too hard to be ground into finer pigments. I tend to choose iron-rich stones that range in colour from bright red to brown and black because of the physical connection iron inherently has to our own blood. This is especially important to me as it reinforces what I experience as our own evolution from mother earth.
Creation of Art Materials

In the time-honoured tradition of artisan-crafted materials, collected stones are taken back to my studio when they begin their transition towards becoming a pigment then eventually a crude ochre-form of paint. I initially start the refining process by classifying each stone by the stone’s type (whether it is sandstone, limestone or ironstone) and by the stone’s colour and texture. I take these measures to limit the chances of any confusion when it comes to grinding the stones into pure pigments and also to restrict the event of pigments becoming cross-contaminated with one another. I prefer to keep my ground pigments separate as I would with any traditional oils and acrylics, only allowing them to combine when I mix them into ochres and various other earthen materials.

The next step of the process involves crushing the stone into more manageable pieces using a small sledge-hammer. Once the stone is at a small enough consistency, it is put through a series of sieves in order to extract the fine powdery pigment. The larger particles of stone sifted from the ground pigment is further refined in a mortar and pestle to extract the last of the stone’s pigment. I find the process of refining earthen materials connects me both physically and spiritually to the earth, the tactile process of grinding stones allows me opportunities to understand the nature of the stone, to experience its strengths, weaknesses and history.

Refined pigments are used chiefly in two ways in my practice: either to make ochre-like paints or to be used as an oxide to colour the earthen grounds that make up the majority of my works. The process of making ochres out of the ground pigments involves using traditional media such as impasto, acrylic calcite and acrylic emulsion. Using the palette knife, equal quantities of raw pigment, impasto and calcite are carefully mixed together with small amounts of acrylic emulsion added to give the ochre a liquid-like consistency. The mixture is folded and crushed with the palette knife until the granular texture of the ochre becomes smooth. I rarely use ochres in the major body of my works, choosing instead to refine the practice of creating the earthen paints through various
process studies. These studies allow me to determine the success of the media I create, permitting me to make adjustments to the ochre where necessary.

**Earthen Paints**

A majority of the media I use are ‘earthen paints’, derived from the red clay soils found in and around the Quorrobolong area. The process of developing media from earthen clays starts back at the studio, where the excavated materials are laid out on the floor to dry. Similar to the ochre making process, the dried earth is crushed with a sledge-hammer breaking each clump of earth into smaller pieces. The dry earth is then roughly combed through to eliminate any large stones and debris (although small amounts of grasses and roots are left in as I feel they add to the visual aesthetic of the earthen medium). The dry earth is then mixed in a bucket with water, shredded paper for reinforcement and exterior grade PVA glue. The mixture is combined by hand, with water added where necessary to maintain the semi-liquid like consistency that I desire. The medium is then applied by hand directly onto gessoed boards where it begins its radical transformation.

As mentioned, I also use ground pigments as oxides to colour my works. *Haema* is one such example where Quorrobolong Ironstone pigment has been used chiefly to embellish the red earthen surface of the work. Other elements such as ground rust (iron oxide) and small amounts of ground sandstone pigment make up an assortment of differently coloured media that materialise within *Haema*.

Ground charcoal, a prominently featured material within my practice, is refined in much the same way as the stones. The process of grinding a sifting suits the medium of charcoal very well as it is a relatively soft material to work with and makes an exceptional carbon-black 'paint' that I use in conjunction with ochres in my studio studies. Using the black stripe on my works is an extremely powerful device, black symbolising emotions deriving from feelings of nothingness and abandonment. The action of going out into the bushland and sourcing materials such as charcoal helps to counteract such emotions, absolving me of the negativity associated with being depressed.
By exploring and refining the process of making my own pigments and ochres, I am not only gaining practical knowledge in how to handcraft my own media, but I am opening up a variety of opportunities for further research in relation to the process of using earthen materials as art media. It is my intention to extend my knowledge in creating methods of developing new media sourced from the land in an effort to express emotions I experience both in nature and in my own personal life. My desire to connect emotionally to the land through my practice is especially important to me as it compels me to continue creating, the synthesis between practice, land and personal emotions the crux of my works. Andy Goldsworthy summarises this best in the Thomas Riedelshiemer documentary *Andy Goldsworthy: Rivers and Tides*, declaring that “art (for me) is a form of nourishment, I need the land.”

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**Conclusion**

In this exegesis, I have outlined through my body of research various theoretical and practical approaches that have motivated the materialisation of my works. My emotional connection to nature and the landscape has informed my understanding of the Earth on which we exist and has shaped my desire for a mutual co-existence between human society and Mother Earth. It is my belief that through understanding the emotions felt in the landscape, the emotions stirred within us by the devastation caused by humans, that we will come to appreciate the massive impact we have on the environment. Nature’s contrasting resilience in the face of such adversity plays an important part in what I have come to recognise as the lifecycle of the land, the constant change happening in nature something that I like to symbolise through various earthen media used in my studio work.

I experience the land as a place of energy, of things transforming from one state to another. The natural forces from within the Earth that create the mountains, valleys and hills in the landscape are seemingly incomprehensible in their power and strength. Engaging with this energy has allowed me to connect emotionally to nature and in the same respect has inspired me to use it as a cathartic means for deciphering personal emotions that exist due to my battle with depression. Through this research, I have found that by using earthen material I can express the emotions of grief and despair, feelings that are symptomatic of this mental illness. My practice has, in effect, become a place where my experiences of natures emotion and that of my own converge. The materialisation of stark, barren works mirrors my own perceptions of the landscape and symbolises the dark, brooding emotions experienced at the depths of despair.

Connections to emotions felt in my childhood play an extremely important part in creating thematic approaches to my work. Psychologists suggest the importance of the mother-child relationship and that healthy physical and psychological attachments between the mother and child promote a healthy
sense of self within the child. The absence of a healthy bond between my own mother and myself is something that I have had to come to terms with in my own life, the emotions with which I deal through different methods of artistic creation. Through this research I have explored the relationship between my mother and I, and the ways that this still affects my emotions and how such feelings have materialised in my works.

In particular, I have focused on my use of earth as an art medium and the potential in my practice for material earth to be used as a therapeutic device that I connect to physically, mentally and spiritually. Jill Bennett, looking at the affect trauma has in art and culture, encourages visual artists (like their literary theorist counterparts) to regard their practice as ‘visual theory’\textsuperscript{46}, as thinking through practice. The effect trauma and abuse has had on my life has shaped my perceptions of the world around me. In my research, I have found that by using earthen media as art materials in my practice, I can evoke a multitude of emotions with various tactile gestures of the material. Personal and emotional responses to the medium enact a purging of thoughts and emotions from the painful experiences in my childhood. My work can be seen in this respect as a series of biographical accounts, marking emotional events that have happened in my life.

The use of the object in my practice reflects my understanding of the object in the landscape. I recognise all shapes and forms in the landscape as objects and they are all connected to the Earth in some way or another. My work to attempts to articulate my understanding of the object in the environment through line, repetition and scale, both familiar attributes of what Donald Judd calls ‘Specific Objects’.\textsuperscript{47} Judd’s theoretical approach to the object in contemporary art has laid ground for my approach to the creation of the object in my own practice. The use of earth as art material demonstrates Judd’s theory that for an object to be deemed ‘specific’, its materials must be specific to the form (Judd’s plexiglass cubes are an example of this). I want to use earth, charcoal, cement and stone

\textsuperscript{46} Jill Bennett, \textit{Empathic Visions} (Stanford, California : Stanford University Press, 2005), 150.
because they correspond closely to the shape of the objects I create and they are specific to their form.

Robert Morris’ recognition of the object as a ‘unitary form’ has influenced my understanding that objects are made up of a union of corresponding parts. This theory is articulated in my studio work, where the repetition of certain corresponding parts come together to make what Morris calls the ‘gestalt’ or unitary form. My research into the object in my practice demonstrates that my works neither strictly align themselves with either Judd or Morris’ notions of the object: my objects are not all specific and neither do all fit the theoretical standpoint of the unitary form. This creates a unique vantage point for the object in my practice.

This exegesis has examined my use of the object in the curatorial space. Michael Fried and Robert Morris, in looking at the object and the modality of theatre, suggest that scale, space and the viewers’ distancing from the work are key factors the viewers’ experiences the object. I carefully consider the size of my works. Through scale, I attempt to create a theatrical relationship between the viewer, the object, and actual space, which Fried describes as “basically a theatrical effect or quality – a kind of stage presence.” I draw on the theatrical in the installation of my works in the curatorial space, to allow the viewer to experience and interact with the object. The intervention of the object in the curatorial space is aesthetically different with each encounter. Using elements of theatre in my practice relates to my understanding of the land and how encounters with natural objects can offer different perspectives each time they are experienced.

My discussion of the work of Andy Goldsworthy in relation to my own demonstrates a shared admiration that Goldsworthy and I hold for nature and the land. Elements of time, growth and decay are central to the ephemeral nature of Goldsworthy’s works, processes that occur naturally in the environment. I wish my work to reference time and change in the same way as Goldsworthy’s

work does. The natural evolution and entropy of things in nature are symbolised through cracks and movements in the drying earthen media I use. Goldsworthy's use of natural materials inspired the use of earth within my own practice. The impermanent nature of material earth symbolises the transformations I witness in the broader landscape. I understand this change as the emotion of nature, and I can describe this emotion visually in my works through the use of earthen materials.

Through my research into the use of earth as art material, I have investigated the importance of natural materials, their origins of place and the significance these materials have to my art-making. To me, the land symbolises elements of death and decay, life and rejuvenation. It is a place of healing that will always remain greatly important to me. I have chosen emotionally significant places when sourcing my materials, as I feel this is imperative in establishing my strong connections to both nature and the landscape. Earthen media collected from these sites instils a sense of place within me and I revisit these sites frequently for inspiration.

This exegesis shows my practice to be very much process-oriented. I use hand-crafted media from natural materials instead of traditional media because they are inherently connected to nature and the land. I prefer the process of collecting, grinding and refining stones into ochres and pigments over the use of more archival materials, such as oils and acrylics, because I am thus involved in the ritual of creating the media I use. I feel an immense sense of joy in creating my own art materials. The emotion that I experience compels my further exploration into the creation and uses of natural media in my practice.

In summary, this exegesis has explored my emotional connection to the Earth and the ways in which this resonates through my practice. This is an important cathartic process for me. It helps me understand and alleviate the symptoms of depression. The therapeutic nature of using earth as an art material helps me resolve periods of emotional instability my life.

I have attempted to explain in this exegesis the reasons for my close affiliation with the land: nature is a place of comfort, a place where I feel safe. I want others
to be able to connect to the Earth in the same way as I do, to feel the emotion and experience the enigmatic force of the elements on the landscape. Using materials from nature extends this emotion into my own practice, invigorating me with new practical and theoretical ideas in the materialisation of my works. For me, my art practice is an important way of documenting and making sense of my emotions, and I have found that the best way for me to describe these feelings is through the use of earthen media.
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http://www.psychology.sunysb.edu/attachment/online/inge_origins.pdf


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Figure 14 courtesy of Andy Devine.

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Figure 10 sourced from Fried, Michael. *Art And Objecthood*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1998.

Figure 15 sourced from www.diacenter.org/sites/main/spiraljetty, 3rd April 2012.

Figure 17 sourced from www.sneakerheadvc.com/tag/mid-summer-snowballs/, 3rd April 2012.
Appendix

Copies of photographic permission from Chris Brown, Caelli Jo Brooker and Andy Devine.

Photo approval
chris brown [e99plant@yahoo.com.au]
Sent: 17 May 2012 16:01
To: Neal Booth

To whom it may concern

I wish to express my consent for the masters student Neal booth to use the photographs which I (Chris Brown) have taken.

I give my consent freely for Neal to use my images of his exhibition in any form of publication, be it electronic, video, web, multimedia, email, or print.

Regards
-Chris Brown
e99plant@yahoo.com.au
0431263841
Hi Neal,

Just to officially acknowledge that unrestricted permission is given for your use of any images I have photographed of your work, now, for your Masters paper and in perpetuity!

Congratulations on leaping final hurdles!

Best wishes, Caelli

xx

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Hi Neal,

Permission has been granted to use photographs that I took of your work. Very well done on the finishing of your Masters.

Cheers,
Andy Devine
Hi Neal,

Permission has been granted to use photographs that I took of your work. Very well done on the finishing of your Masters.

Cheers,
Andy Devine