CHAPTER 1
CHANGE IN SOCIO-POLITICAL PROCESSES & VALUES OVER TIME.

Through my reading of biologist, Rupert Sheldrake I became aware that it is possible to explain the change of socio-political processes over time by ‘morphic resonance’.

Sheldrake explains morphic resonance as the process by which the past becomes present through the “transmission of .... cumulated memories through time and space”4. In this process our reality becomes a “complex mixture of substance and thought overlapping the present and the past”5. This realisation has allowed me to use the temporal depths, common in the writing of Isabelle Allende and Virginia Woolf, to show intergenerational responses to change in value systems.

I have used photo-historical reference from various sources, including family albums, professional and historical photography and artworks. These, combined with imagery from my previous work and observational drawings, have enabled me to show the impact of social processes, such as materialism and rationalism, on common values in different generations. The behaviours individuals display in relation to these processes are isolation, betrayal, social dislocation, despair and confrontation.

Throughout my research in 1999 I began to utilize reference to other artists' work that emphasized psycho-sociological concerns in their work. I borrowed technically, compositionally and stylistically from artists such as Fischl, Counihan, Giacometti, Daumier and Caravaggio.

In my painting The Betrayal of Lady Wisdom (Plate 1) I have directly used compositional and subject matter from Caravaggio and Bosch. I have juxtaposed historical context through the reference to figures from Caravaggio’s “Last Supper”, Bosch’s “Carrying of the Cross” and Daumier’s “Scarpin and Sylvestre”. The artists I have embraced focus on change in their interpretations of social processes and psychological impacts.
I felt, however, that I had appropriated rather too heavily from their work. In my 2000 work, such as "Faith, Hope and Enmity" (Plate 10) and Family Heirloom (Plate 22) the references to subject matter, stylistic qualities and compositions of other artists have been less overt. By late 1999 my work began to evolve more from personal subject matter.

Contemporary American artist, Eric Fischl, used "Film stills... fragments of psychic plots that tell of the pangs of parental estrangement, adolescent rebellion, and emptiness of the suburbs" in his paintings of post-war suburban life.

His work has encouraged me to use family subjects as a method to express the social impact of Economic Rationalism and The Great Disruption since the Second World War. Fischl explores the motivations and behaviour patterns of intimate relationships through narrative painting by using ambiguity to elicit multiple interpretations of his paintings. His figures are always involved in a dramatic interaction that makes us analyse their motives and suspect their behaviour. He stimulates our curiosity to question what is actually occurring in his paintings.
Through my research I intend to show the affect of The Great Disruption on intimate relationships through a narrative about my own family. Like Pierre Bonnard,

I am trying to represent the “Every day transmuted to the archetypal”7, to express the impact of social change on the individual.

The impact of early C20th industrialization on my own family was used as a source of images. I used photographs of specific, often estranged, relatives who have dysfunctional relationships and display deception and deceit. The stigma of such themes as unwed teenage mothers, broken families and lifelong loss is examined. In a sense, even at an early stage of my research, the everyday genre became a stage on which socio-political concerns were transposed with personal behaviour and decision-making.

I was surprised with the film style of Mike Leigh in “Secrets and Lies”, 1996 by the way he places his characters in “situations in which their ways of feeling and thinking are compared”8. Similarly to Leigh, the juxtapositions of viewpoints in my work are reflected through the characters’ interactions, gestures and expressions.

In Leigh's "Abigail's Party" the character, Beverly gives her identity to play a "role" in both her public and private life. Her private inner experiences are portrayed as clichés. The film leaves us questioning the authenticity of interactions we experience in our own post-modern lives.

Similarly to Leigh, I invite my audience to empathize and react to the patterned behaviour of my figures. I want to send my audience away with questions they must answer themselves.

As film historian, Ray Carney has said of Leigh:

"The point is to force the viewer into a personal, active relationship with the material, necessitated because there is unfinished emotional work to perform. [They] must work through it even after the film is over, grappling with it emotionally." 9

As my paintings are instigated by personal experience, the process of painting becomes an essential reflection for me of my immediate changing world.
Giacometti had an early influence on my treatment of figure and form during 1999. I was adamant that my subject matter should express the dehumanizing aspects of the contemporary industrial world and its resultant social ills. Angela Schneider best explains Giacometti’s concern to give his subjects dignity where human life has become so dispensable:

"Giacometti restores a nobility of being to a humanity controlled by its century, battered by society, brutalized by the crowd, subjugated to the cult of the state and established religion, terrorized by police, tortured in prison and ravished by psychoanalysis." 10.


The empathy Giacometti feels for his model and Leigh for his characters is a quality sadly missing in the work of Eric Fischl. Like Giacometti and Leigh, I attempt to give my figures some of the dignity denied them in life.
It is as if, in an illusionary sense, I am trying to reinvest them with their dignity through the art process.

Early in my research, my works had overt political reference as I felt we are all subject to political machinations in our personal lives and in the communities and families around us. I became particularly interested in Social Realist artists and filmmakers such as Noel Counihan and Mike Leigh because of their preoccupation with social conditions and behaviour, and in how they reduce the barrier between the artist and viewer. I pursue the same intentions in my work, making it more accessible to both the informed and less informed art audience.

My work, *August Moon Over Colonial Sunset, 1999* (Plate 5) was a critical attempt to deal with regional concerns and Global economy and their affects on personal lives.

*Plate 5: August Moon Over Colonial Sunset, 1999.*

I wanted to show the impact of the *level playing field* and *global economy* upon working class peoples, which subsequently created a two-tiered local economy and shrinking middle class. Social mobility was frozen and
government spending on education, health and welfare was gradually phased out. From the 80’s, global interests replaced regional interests in the arts, unless these interests were attached to a global ideology. Global interests emphasized materialist concerns at the expense of social condition or spiritual concerns.

Elitism has been reinforced by art theory becoming inaccessible to those who are not initiated into the correct intellectual circles. As art critic Jurgen Habermas has stated:

“The gap between expert cultures and the public at large grows wider ... uses highly coded activities, which require a high degree of complexity before any substantial exchange can take place.” 11.

In art, theory and rationalizations now intervene in the artwork/artist/viewer interaction, which has now become dependent on critics, theoreticians and investment to direct interpretation of meaning. This is not new capitalist society.

Anthony Bond speaks of how in elitist C19th French society Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres used “strategies to distance the viewer from the subject” 12. such as the use of traditional exotic, mythological, historical or classical ideals.

The “cool eye”, the modern manifestation of Ingres’ classicism, is embodied in Marshall McLuhan’s “The Medium is the Message”13. The prioritization of medium and analysis at the expense of subject matter or audience response has become a rationalization of vision. The analytical, rational “cool eye” acts to distance viewer and artwork/artist. An audience should respond to an artwork before having it analyzed for them. Spiritual, social and material concerns are intertwined, and inseparable, and are communicated at the point of viewing an artwork.

The Australian writer and psychologist, Ronald Conway emphasizes in his “Rage For Utopia” how our society has developed an “obsessive need to rationalize” and a “constant drive for order, security and certainty as part of our prevailing worldview in empirical science, dogmatic religion and social structures” 14.
Through the influence of Australian social realist painter, Noel Counihan my “family” paintings began to incorporate aggression, alienation, isolation, ostracism and betrayal. I began to challenge my social condition by combining temporal references with layering and juxtaposing events, social contexts and values in my painting. I engaged my audiences emotively to allow them to elicit messages from the work.

*Plate 6:* Noel Counihan: The Wife.

Marcuse explains how an artist can use art to not only reveal social impact on the individual and families, but also challenge the reality of the controlling social condition:

“For Marcuse art is a .... psychic location - a place in the mind where one allows for a recombination of experiences, a suspension of the rules that govern daily life... it challenges the monopoly of the established reality by creating fictitious moulds”. 15.

In my “Celtic Dichotomy”, 2001(Plate 7) the painting connects historical, political and personal transactions in an interwoven fictitious narrative.
The concept of “totalized time” 16 of Marcel Proust and the stratification of memory in this work lends itself to the historical references creating threads of philosophy and ideology through time. The work was inspired by Conway’s “Rage for Utopia” and attacks rationalist philosophies. It focuses on how rational thinking is often associated with civilized behaviour and pious religious beliefs. Ultimately this equates with status in society.

![Plate 7: Celtic Dichotomy, 2001. Acrylic on Canvas.](image)

I try to show that industrial society’s need to dominate nature and other people through rationalization is the obsession that has created our present ailing social systems. Conway believes obsessives show “delight in efficient structures... otherwise they are filled with anxiety and confusion...” 17.

Conway’s explanation about our society’s tendency toward obsessional behaviour is mirrored in some of my family paintings.

My colleagues, family, community members and I constantly display obsessional traits generated by the need for assurity, security and certainty and punctuated by envy, disdain and manipulation. In “Dividing the Spoils” I hoped to demonstrate these characteristics in the instance of family
bereavement. During grieving, characters argue over material possessions they hope to inherit from the imminent deceased. It's as if the possession of objects owned by the deceased preserves their memory.

Plate 8: Dividing the Spoils, 2000. Oil on Canvas.

My paintings challenge universal systems of philosophy rooted in the rationalist-materialist thinking which has dominated elitist societies in European history such as Descartes’ “measurable knowledge” and “unchanging universe” 18.

These concerns are thus now reexamined in personal and individual contexts in my present painting.
Footnotes for Introduction and Chapter 1


   “. Truth..hinges on ...the host of deductions and divinations that surround a visual experience with invisible aura of significance”.


   “Societies have always been shaped more by the nature of the media by which men communicate than by the content of the communication”.
CHAPTER 2
CHANGE IN FAMILY VALUES, MORALITY AND BEHAVIOUR.

Disintegration Of Kinship And Social Capital

Relationships, both working and intimate, have become subject to a form of “Contractual Organization” in our society. “Contractual relationships” aren’t moral ones and either party can break them provided the terms of the contract are fulfilled. They are not based on status or age-old obligations or duties. American Biologist, Francis Fukuyama speaks of how we have lost the “Art of Association”1. that aids a self-organizing society - a civil society!

According to Fukuyama The “Great disruption” of the post-war period created income inequality, growing wealth of limited sectors, bureaugamy, decline of religion and promotion of individualistic, self-gratification over community obligation. In Australia we have experienced the loss of certainty of employment, confidence in Australia as an egalitarian society and the expectation of lifetime employment since the advent of “Economic Rationalism”.

We need to rebuild our social capital by changing the way we interact and things we value: by emphasizing virtues like truth telling, the meeting of obligations and reciprocity. A healthy society creates a “Positive Radius of Trust”2, with informal values and norms shared by a groups permitting cooperation.

Trust is something missing from the relationships (family, collegiate or communal) that I refer to in my painting “Sibling Rivalry”. I try to show how trust is decimated by petty jealousies, greed and self-interest compounded by the affects of rationalist justifications. The kinship and hopes of previous generations appear diminished by changes of values concocted by Economic Rationalism.

In “Sibling Rivalry”, the first painting of this series, I have used a carved chair that was used as a prop in the photographic studio that photographed
my mother at eighteen months. Not long after the photograph she was made a ward of the state and fostered out several times over her childhood. I wished to express thorough the use of remembered furniture, carpeting, light fittings the "pathway" of despair which passed to the next generation through the memories stored in my mother’s house. The death of my father and the subsequent institutionalization of my demented mother drew out old sibling rivalries, jealousies and reprehensible behaviour. This painting is an attempt to revisit the causative pathways that resulted in unsatisfactory endpoints of behaviour.


Personal Family Changes

I came from a family that had lived in inner Sydney for several generations and a community that had become fractured by demographic expansion. The city became gentrified after the 1960's, forcing children of
residents to move out of Sydney for housing. The population of Sydney grew exponentially. Parents and Grandparents had great belief in Menzies, The Queen, Industrialization and the American Global way; blissfully unaware of the changes this was wreaking upon their families and descendants. Nuclear family, distances between relatives, change in employment, education differences and change in value systems buried old family and community ties for inner city dwellers. The fracturing of communities since the 1970’s brought with it a fragmenting of values. My work seeks to reflect the change in value systems between generations; the impact of social change on family and community relationships and how the individual deals with social fragmentation or what Sociologist Francis Fukoyama considers "loss of Kinship".3.

The family home became a symbol of instability in a fractured Post-Modern community. Sibling rivalry, arguments over inheritance, unequal educational and financial opportunity, divorce, jealousy and isolation became symptoms of change in family structure. A change desired by multinational industrialization. The social capital of the neighbourhood in which I grew up became impoverished by Sydney’s economic and demographic growth.

Since the 1970’s a pseudo-family condition evolved. In my generation there occurred what Conway has described as-

"... the relegation of child-bearing process to an afterthought. The future offspring now must contend with the house mortgage, automobile and labour-saving devices, to say nothing of both spouses maintaining full-time careers."4.

In an attempt to understand these social changes, the earliest paintings in this series focused on photographic records from the early and mid part of the twentieth century of my family and their homes. In “Sibling Rivalry” a chair on which my mother (as an infant) is standing is placed in a 1960’s context with her grown children within the family home. These images enabled me for the first time to juxtapose values from over several generations. I was able to reflect upon changes in values and community as
the juxtapositions unfolded associations I had not previously consciously understood. This work made me acutely aware of Bachelard’s theories about homes and houses:

“Each House relived in retrospect is both lens and magnifying glass on that organism family life whose growth in memory it maps.” 5.

“Faith, Hope and Enmity”, 2000 (Plate 10) is a work in which I have intended to address the issues of family behaviour, morality and social change.

Plate 10: Faith, Hope and Enmity. 2000. Oil and Acrylic on Canvas.

This painting was the first time I referred to the experiences of other people’s families in an attempt to gain a broader community reference for my subject matter in 2000. The figures are placed in juxtaposed spaces from various houses where immediate families have lived. The individuals, separated by time, are forced into a conflict of values in one moment of time.

Each separate time reference is painted in a varied mode from glazing to alla fresco, from imprimatura and chiaroscuro through to linear impasto and
scumbled wet on wet. It is the variance of mode that creates the disjunction of sensorial experience, yet the figures and spaces are fused by the spatial relationships into one space.

It is with this disjunction that I have intended to express the impact of social change on values and behaviours over time. The psychological conflict between figures within the painting emphasizes the loss of Social Capital and Kinship people I know have suffered personally. I also refer to my own experience of psuedo-families. The painting, like the illusionary spaces it contains, becomes a magnifying glass on the family organism.

The Role Of Children And Parenting In My Work

Before the C19th a child was considered as a small adult growing up rapidly to assume social responsibility. Since the C19th there has been a “delegation of moral authority to the enclosed nuclear family in ever-enlarging industrial cities.” 6.

Ron Conway has explained how De Mause outlined historical changes in the way we have viewed children over 1600 years. 7.

My “Our Little Princess”, 2001(Plate 11) was an attempt to address these issues surrounding the family organism reflecting upon the Victorian value system of my father, his war babies and baby-boomer children. This work addresses the different child rearing philosophies of these various generations.

There was, also, very much a different style of rearing that occurred with my “Federation Father” and “Victorian Grandfather”(My Grandfather having been born in 1860). Both my father and myself (partially) experienced what De Mause calls “The Socialisation period” of child rearing, where “the raising of children made them vehicles of the parents own wishes and responsibilities” 8.
Yet my own children experience a “Helping style” of child rearing popular since the 1950’s where the child’s material needs and wants are paramount. The post-World War 2 disintegration of extended family resulted in greater maternal indulgence of children due to greater affluence.

In “Our Little Princess”, 2001 (Plate 11) I refer to the adoration often directed at children in nuclear families where, as Conway says, “comfort-bearing solicitude, intense brainwashing [and] the removal of the father to the perimeter of moral and domestic influence [has] an enriching and warping consequence for each new generation”. 9.

The placement of the central doll-like child figure as the centre of focus for the surrounding family emphasizes this point. The small boy seated on the floor symbolizes the de-emphasis of male rearing in family life in more recent Economic Rationalist times.

Child rearing becomes a political event where doubts about social
worthiness make the child “A future conscientious servant who [feels] worthy through constantly achieving rather than being merely [a] pleasant, diligent person” 10.

Narrative For Understanding Values And Moral Change

The use of narrative in my artwork has enabled me to evolve a more complete sense of self in relation to relatives, colleagues and adversaries. As Lynne Tyrrell says:

“...telling a story is a sort of self-examination by self-exposure....telling stories helps us find out who we are..”11.

This has helped me to justify my decisions about change in morality, ethics and values witnessed around me.

“One cannot author one’s deeds unless one makes judgements about oneself, one’s place in society and in the world..... The authority one assumes to be a moral agent requires the artist to justify to the community through some shared conceptions about family, institutions, what is moral behaviour and what is beneficial for society”. 12.

As my works are about synchronising separate times and spaces; and the juxtaposition of separate connecting stories; they require an attempt by the viewer to experience empathy for different contexts. This occurs without them requiring specific knowledge of history or sociology. This empathy becomes inseparable to historical and social frameworks that act as a background for the personal and family experiences in the paintings.

Like Australian Social Realist, Noel Counihan I feel political concerns are inseparable to intimate family and personal experience:

“Our trend at present is to endeavour to reach the most important, most comprehensive, most suggestive social subject-matter by digging into the depths of our intimate individual experience... to reveal the social relations involved in our most intimate experiences.” 13.
This approach is also common to the work of Fred Cress, whose sardonic judgements about human morality and behaviour belie a cynicism about marriage, the art world and the motivation of human relationships. My work also displays a deep-rooted sardonic humour that indicates a subconscious need to resolve moral dilemmas.

For me, to be able to make some moral judgement about change of values in family and institutions, I needed to evolve a style of painting which was personal and connected to my emotional and cognitive responses to that change. In my paintings, by juxtaposing different actions from different contexts and times, I allow my audiences to slip between social and temporal states, to have them experience something of how I respond to familial and institutional change. This is facilitated by the "mobility of the human eye" of the viewer to which I refer in "Morphic Fields" in Chapter 3.


When my audience connect with a painting and its subject matter I intend that they should, when returning to their own concerns, see them against a broader background. The storytelling beckons the audience to
enter into the sentiments of others. The audience is encouraged to imagine the relationship between disparate emotions and philosophical points of view; to enter into a realm projected by the imagination between the illusion on the wall and the viewer's space.

This provides my audience with the opportunity to test themselves against a variety of viewpoints and experiences surrounding the subject. It also provides an opportunity to reexamine their moral understanding.

*Van Gogh's "The Potato Eaters" demonstrates how*
*.. artworks may extend or deepen our understanding of the values and commitments, which underlie our actions and desires. Furthermore, artworks may thus shape our moral understanding in terms of what we value by showing us how to act and desire in morally fruitful or harmful ways."* 14.
Chapter 2 Footnotes.


2. Ibid, Page 11.


8. Ibid, Page 123.


10. Ibid Page 133.


CHAPTER 3

AURA AND MORPHIC RESONANCE.

American art historian, Walter Benjamin explains this non-material phenomenon of “Aura” as the artwork’s “[unique] presence in time and space...[its] most sensitive nucleus-namely its authenticity...[its] essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning...to the history which it has experienced...[and] the traditional value of cultural heritage”. 1.

The Aura or Morphic resonance I refer to in my painting is what Biologist, Rupert Sheldrake believes to be ‘Rhythmical oscillations’, ‘vibrations’ and ‘periodic movements or cycles’ 2. in nature. It manifests itself in morphic fields. In my painting I refer to such oscillations and vibrations through the linear application of paint on canvas, manifesting them in picture space. In painting, morphic resonance can be shown as aura when the pure sensation of tactile surface is combined with fluid linear energy. Such aura is evident in the work of Boccioni, Giacometti and Dobell.

My 90’s landscape paintings evolved the technique of paint plasma and linear webs applied mostly by syringe to maintain a steady fluid linear energy reminiscent of Boccioni’s (1882-1916) ‘Dynamic Sensation’ 3. The surface of Boccioni’s painting emphasizes the pure energy in the form he is representing. We are conscious of the affect on our retinas caused by the broken brushstroke technique derived from Divisionism. The contour of the figure is vague, further suggesting the aura of which I speak.

American Art Historian, Walter Benjamin’s theories would support Sheldrake’s argument about Morphic resonance, which enables memory to be drawn from the past through a “collective unconscious” 4., and to be embodied in an artwork as aura.
Morphic Resonance or Aura does not involve a transfer of energy from one time to another but rather a non-energetic transfer of information. This process, called "Formative Causation" 5., sees inheritance occurring through morphic fields containing inbuilt memory in the same way that an artwork has an inbuilt aura and authenticity.

My present series of paintings [1999-2001] such as "Diane at Putney" (plate 14) used interlocking fine linear webs reminiscent of Giacometti and Dobell to suggest energy and aura. This technique was reminiscent of how art theoretician Lucius Grisebach has defined Giacometti’s painting.

"...[his] manner of painting was a continuation of the extension of his drawing...Giacometti never followed the path of generalization... he proceeded like a draughtsman." 6.

Using linear webbing enabled me to build up a compositional scaffold, layer by layer, which extended structural lines into open space. The use of these compositional scaffolds allows the viewer to retrace my actions as the painter, creating the perception of subject matter as much by spatial relationships as symbolic gesture.
Plate 14: Diane at Putney, 1999. Oil and Acrylic on Canvas.

The great difficulty I found with my earlier landscape work that used “aura” or “plasmas of eddying paint” such as in “Mammon” 1999, (plate 16) was the overall surface affects which resulted from the impasto application with syringe. An architect, John Funston, referred to this as Pantheism 7. This process allowed me to create relationships between objects and figures in the picture plane using strokes and lines that are not always used to delineate objects or create contours. The space and the fields of energy within it link the objects and figures in a relationship of the material world with intangible “aura”.

I was seeking something similar to the psychological intensity and vibrant energy in Bonnard’s paintings. The painting of Marthe’s form in the bathroom seems to contain emotional charge due to the subtle yet intense use of colour and tactility of brushwork. The evenness of his surfaces creates a unified atmosphere or aura but don’t have the intense relationship between form and space present in Giacometti’s figures.

In “Diane at Putney” 1999, by incorporating a fine linear overdrawing above the linear structural compositional scaffolding I was able to bring in darker,
more theatrical chiaroscuro which enabled the use of illusionary 3D form and retain spatial relationships through linear web work.

William Dobell's vigorous rhythmical lines became an influence here. I implemented his use of softened edges, which began to heighten the psychological tension in my paintings. Dobell often scratched back into the wet paint with the handle of his brush to create a wispy and frail effect on his edges, not the traditional oil painting 'sweetening' common in more classical forms especially in portraiture.

![Plate 15: William Dobell: Woman in a Salon.](image)

I began to implement this surface treatment once I commenced to use *imprimatura* technique as *under painting*. In my early work the overall [Pantheist] treatment of surface *alone* didn’t allow for use of varied modes of paint application which has now become so important for me in conveying juxtaposed time and space.

The fine linear work in the landscape “Mamma” 1999 was juxtaposed with expressive brushstrokes to enhance emotive response to surface. This linear web allowed for a simultaneous use of structural line and more lyrical expression.
Plate 16: Mammon, 1999, acrylic on Canvas.

The perception of forms within the work are determined by spatial relationships and the under drawn compositional scaffold. The structural backgrounds of Giacometti, however, erode the figures, relegating them to a timeless presence or effigy. But, whilst I wanted to achieve a physical representation of time passing, I wanted my figures to simultaneously have identity and the capacity for active power over the spaces in which they were placed.

As a dramatic departure from the linear web work, in 'Visit to the Home', (Plate 17) I used structural and lyrical line overworking rather than a compositional scaffold of line. Lines run through objects painted in alla prima, covering the surface with a less dense network of marks and line, providing what Robert Hughes referred to as a 'psychological and moral weight to colour' as in the work of Van Gogh. I felt greater freedom of expression by allowing underpainting to influence overdrawing with "Grisaille" (a word often used to describe the linear web work Giacometti uses).

By allowing brushmarks or linear syringe work to 'act upon the nervous system' of the viewer, I am trying to reflect my inner world and touch the viewer's, intimately connecting the viewer to the subject matter. I have attempted to link the phenomena of pure energy with social condition through the material, tangible, visible world of human society.
The isolated ‘effigies’ Giacometti uses are too iconographical and stylized for me. For me the interaction between figure, objects, and ground was essential. The here and now quality of Giacometti’s work could be achieved, but the relationship between the here and now and other times and spaces required the forms and figures in my work to be less universal and more socio-specific.

Though the suggestion of energy fields in Giacometti eroded his figures in linear webs, isolating the figures from the space I preferred to link the figures to their psychological spaces using the line as much for creating implied form as enmeshing space and objects.

In early 2000, (at the suggestion of my supervisor Graham Marchant) in the painting “Dividing the Spoils” 2000, I commenced for the first time to use underpainting over which I used layers of glazing with Daemar Varnish, stand oil, turpentine and “Liquin” to obtain greater depth of surface. This underpainting allowed for the use of grisaille webbing as energy in space, to emphasize certain gestures and to add weight to directional line.

Also, when Sgraffito is employed the underpainting comes through to give greater surface depth, accentuating the concept of temporal depths in
my subject matter. I intend my audiences to equate illusionary surface depth with conceptual temporal depth. I found this approach useful when I began to paint in oil instead of acrylic. Because of longer drying periods my works in 2000 employed more *alla prima* work at first, which maintained the immediacy and tangibility of the paint surface.

With the additional use of *Imprimatura* technique acquired from *Rubens and Rembrandt* and the use of early glazing allowed the overlay of webbing and linear scaffolding to co-exist with chiaroscuro, increasing picture depth and creating greater tactility and tangibility.

This can be seen in "Grieving" 2000 (Plate 18), which commenced with imprimatura but had varied layers of linear syringe work and further glazing interspersed.

*Plate 18: Grieving* 2000, Oil on Canvas.

Working from dark to light and with *imprimatura* produced even more dimensionality and more opportunity to suggest other times and spaces and non-material regions of influence through a greater range of paint effects. I began to see a relationship between the painting/drawing of Dobell, Daumier and Boccioni’s early figurative paintings.
These 'universal dynamics', 'auras' or 'morphic fields' provide a kind of fullness of sensation that literature or visual language alone cannot achieve. 

*Baudelaire* has shown that the instantaneous response of a viewer to an artwork is the most effective connection between artist, painting and viewer. It allows subconscious, emotional and spiritual concerns to be untainted by theory.

"...spirit is embedded in matter... reality is a complex mixture of substance and thought and art is rooted in physical sensation". 11.

The work of Sydney narrative painter, Fred Cress similarly uses what Edmund Capon describes as "spirit resonance". He says that Cress' paintings "express reverberating layers of human experience...often the most base but thus the most powerful of human instincts" 12. As in my work, his "Strangers Before" (1991) displays layers of meaning that are synonymous with the layering of transparent paint media and charcoal underdrawing. In this way he achieves what I intend in my work: a reality that is a complex mixture of substance and thought.

**Psychological Space, Tactility And Tangibility**

Painting occupies real and psychological space, as well as illusionary space. Its tactility demands full sensory engagement. The work of classical artists such as Ingres “obliterated the hand of the artist” 13. His work is solely an idea. In a sense the immediate sensorial experience of his art has been subordinated to the process of encoding and analyzing, which reflects the analytical process of its production.

Art Historian, Ann Landi quotes David Hockney as believing Ingres uncannily accurate realism was assisted by the implementation of a “camera lucida”(14). This device was a prism on an adjustable stand that allowed exact copying of an object.

The way for me to see beyond this rational view of the world was to implement aura, morphic fields or universal dynamism to embrace change in emotions, values, times and spaces. The paint strokes, sgraffito, syringe linear web work and nuances of imprimatura and glazing reveal my presence as the artist in the art object and something of my inner world. The linear syringe work acts upon the nervous system of the viewer through the mobility of the viewer’s eye and its tactility and “Because of the tactile interference (of brush marks) we are unable to gain a seamless illusion of reality.”(15).

It is often said of my work that they function as “conversation pieces”, the work inevitably leading to “conjecture”. I feel the painting technique aids this process by demanding this full sensory engagement. This preoccupation with tactility, aura and its non-material qualities can be traced to the Renaissance. Whilst the Florentine art historian, Vasari believed that the proper way to go about painting was to start sketches on paper; then to work out every detail of a composition in carefully studied drawings; he did acknowledge the importance of Titian’s more gestural approach.
Titian sketched in paintings with large masses of colour that formed the foundation for the composition, mood, atmosphere and overall impression. Vasari says:

"If he [a viewer] gets too close to the painted surface, the picture will dissolve in blots and smudges... broader strokes with a heavily loaded brush mask out the individual figures which seem to vibrate in the flickering torch light.... his very brushstroke broad, thick and freely applied bespeaks the directness of his approach. It melts and scatters solid form so as to produce the wavering, supernatural glow that encircles spiritual vision" 16.

It has been with this in mind that I have used more alla prima underpainting in my work of late 2000 such as "A Class Act" (Plate 20). Using a white surface instead of imprimatura I felt that underdrawing became underpainting allowing me to then follow up with layers of imprimatura scrubbed on with rag and scratched back with brush end. This also allowed me to compose on the surface with less interference from preconceived composition in drawing book or preliminary collage (which had previously dominated).

I found it still possible to achieve the quality of cut out collage of spaces present in "Sibling Rivalry" without the canvas space being limited by prior compositional decisions.

The immediacy of "A Class Act" and the versatility of using imprimatura, glazing, alla prima application and grisaille web work in less defined sequences gives a greater range of emotive links between artist, work and viewer. The alla prima application of paint emphasizes immediacy, tactility and tangibility of my subject but it also confronts, engages and causes a bodily response in the viewer.
I, like Baudelaire, believe art was rooted in physical sensation and spiritual reality and was "not a grand abstraction but is everywhere present under the surface of daily life" 17.

The spiritual presence I wish to imbue my canvases with is a reaction to the rationalised thinking of our obsessive society. The viewer identifies more specifically with the artist's process and thus intentions.

Helen Gardner explained well the difference between the rational-classical and sensorial-spiritual views of the world in her comparison of Delacroix and Ingres:

"Delacroix's "Paganini" presents a likeness not of the virtuoso's form but of his performance ... Paganini yields himself completely to the whirlwind of his own inspiration, which envelops his reed like frame, making it vibrate in tune to the quivering strings of his instrument..... Ingres gives us the outward aspect of his subject (in
his portrait of Paganini, Delacroix the inner substance. With Delacroix, the musician is transformed by his music as Delacroix himself is. Ingres tries to perfect the form given to the eye, Delacroix tries to release the truth as given to the imagination." (18)

Matthew Fox in ‘Natural Grace’ has spoken of an “...outward movement of the mind to touch that which is perceived, [and] perhaps ...affect things or people just by looking at them.”(19).

My work seeks to convey this outward movement of the mind, to imbue the painting with a means to look at its audience. This is the means by which I hope to connect social condition to the everyday personal experiences and to make judgements about values and morality.

**Theatrical Spaces & Dramatisation**

My most recent work [2001] has been strongly influenced by Virginia Woolf’s descriptions of spaces in ‘To the Lighthouse’. In combination with temporal depths the book allows the reader to make the same juxtapositions of values in different time frames that I use in my painting.
“the profusion of darkness which, creeping in at keyholes and crevices, stole round window blinds, came into bedrooms, swallowed up here a jug and basin... there the sharp edges and firm bulk of a chest of drawers... certain airs... crept round corners and ventured indoors... breathe and bend over the bed itself... descending, blanched the apples on the dining room table, fumbled the petals of roses, tracing the picture on the easel, brushed the mat and blew a little sand along the floor”

My work tries to bring the audience into the illusionary space. In most of my paintings the human subjects used often appear to be “struggling to claim personal space within boxed-off rooms” much like the plays of Pinter. The portrayed yet archetypal figures appear driven by intense rivalry. They are in effect going through behaviours that will lead to end-points in their lives. Mike Leigh adopted this approach in his films.

The objects in my paintings have traces of conventional use and functionality yet also have particular signification for the family history to which it refers. Baudrillard terms this “a system of functionality” with “acculturated functions”.

Behind the object lie cultural frameworks and a ‘network of instrumentality’ that reflect human intention and needs. In Leigh’s “Secrets and Lies” the function of props is to signify the socio-economic differences between the characters.

In my painting, objects are detached or juxtaposed with contexts from different time spans. This recontextualisation links the human forms and our space to objects over different times with different associated acculturation.

In “Family Heirloom” 2001, objects are selected from memory of the family home, their placement seemingly out of context or unrelated. My figures, as in Pinter’s plays, seem to display certain vulnerability. The “props” are important only in their relationship to the figures. Viewers of my painting should find a resonance in the objects I employ, like props in a play, that reflect some feeling or understanding of such objects from their own memory. I intend my work to act as a “talking point”, so that audiences don’t react in a passive manner and are likely to find my work accessible. Observers have noticed that people and spaces in my paintings reminded them of friends, relatives and houses from their own experience.
Chapter 3 Footnotes


CHAPTER 4
PICTURE SPACES AS PATHWAYS

*Illusionary* depictions of people, times and places evolve in pictorial pathways in the process of painting through my responses to accumulated memory. Memories of personal interactions from previous time-spaces affect our responses to interactions in present time-space. Our reality is as much a function of accumulated memory as our actions in the present. The artist is *present* in a painting by the action of creation, but also has a residual presence through *morphic resonance*. The audience resonates with the work at the moment of viewing. The picture space becomes engaging or confronting for maker and viewer. They have both projected themselves by an *"...outward movement of the mind "*(1).

The timelessness of *Giacometti*, the intimate picture space of *Bonnard*, the theatrical settings of *Mike Leigh*, the voyeuristic *'candid camera'* paintings of *Fischli*; all connect their audiences to spaces beyond their reality.

*Morphic resonance* is the connection a viewer feels for these artists’ works. It is ultimately present in pathways of memory and stored energy; and exists in picture space as much as it does in real space.

I found that there were spaces firmly implanted in my memory that had associated atmospheres, easily conjured up by objects and spaces in the present, by virtue of morphic resonance with past events. When I began to paint "*Mammon*(Plate 16) I began working from old life drawing and found, when I arranged these figures, [beach] spaces from my childhood memory filled the vacant illusionary space prompted by the figures.

My paintings contain memories and scenarios from a variety of juxtaposed times/places/events, which are restructured to extract meaning and a sense of change in values and philosophy.

The use of Morphic Fields as *"non material regions of influence extending in space and continuing in time"* (2) links these disparate scenarios in one
unified space, moment and atmosphere. The viewer can therefore choose their entry time/space to the works meaning. One time/space will resonate more than another with the viewer’s own experiences, beliefs, and emotions.

Sheldrake’s explanation shows here how I have attempted to express, in illusionary form, the ways in which ‘wiring’ (of me as artist and viewer) and the existing ‘morphic fields’ (psychological spaces) from remembered events act together to form “pathways”. Pathways can lead both artist and viewer to definite conclusions. It is with these conclusions that artist’s and viewer’s intention, judgements and justification culminate. I have chosen multiple visual pathways of entry and exit in my paintings, as I view the series of works as an evolving unit where the viewer will pass from one painting to another on the gallery wall.

![Plate 23: Reserve Price, Oil on canvas.](image)

In my painting “Reserve Price” the combined scenarios become a symbolic representation of behaviour in different people from different times. These extract the essential behavioural characteristics and make them the final “endpoints”. This is because “pathways”, remembered and illusionary, direct
the viewer through various times, spaces and events. I have intended the
work to bring the viewer to a concentrated endpoint with conflicting social
conditioning and cultural memory. It emphasizes the contradictory natures
of tribal memory and religious doctrine and how contradictory philosophy
can coexist in cultural practice.

I leave escape routes through doors or windows within the composition as
avoidance of the conflicts in the painting. The painting gives the impression
that this amalgam of times/spaces is the personal or imagined experience of
the artist, but hopefully these amalgamated experiences resonate with
similar experiences of the viewer.

In Virginia Woolf’s “To the Lighthouse” one gets the sense and
comprehension of a character/ figure moving through a “pathway” by the
vivid descriptions of objects and motion in time and space.

“With her foot on the threshold she waited a moment longer in a
scene which was vanishing even as she looked, and then, as she
moved ... and left the room, it changed, it shaped itself differently,
it had become, she knew, giving one last look over her shoulder,
already the past.” (3).

Psychological Spaces

The relationships of objects, figures and spaces in my painting are a
process towards understanding my place in family and society over
generations. As Richard Etlin has said in “Aesthetics and the Spatial Sense
of Self”:

“Our aesthetic response to... works of art... is a composite sentiment that
involves a bodily sense of self, which also has its spatial dimension.” 4.

In “Faith, Hope and Enmity” (Plate 10) for instance, the viewer links the
diverse bodily characterizations with disjointed spaces and objects. The
photo studio scene, which sits sombrely in the background, is symbolically
reminiscent of mid C20th expectations.

The middle ground group is thrust into the foreground scene implying the
enmity felt between two age groups. One bodily senses the hostility, and
relates to the conflicting compression of the spaces within the work.
“In painting ... the artist imparts significant information about the nature of human relationships by manipulating the distances between figures on a canvas, or can engage the viewer directly through compositional features that seem to thrust a depicted person, out of into the viewer’s personal space or alternatively to draw the viewer’s personal space deeply into the scene” 5.

This is the prime objective in my painting “Avarice”. Four colluding (Bosch inspired) old maids huddle in a bottom corner of the painting. They are squashed into this corner by a crowded middle ground, including the main figures painted to look particularly artificial like Barbie and Ken dolls.


A Constable inspired sky, resplendent with cupids, looms heavily over the tense scene. The memories of the false sentiment commonly expressed at weddings and engagement parties, creates a picture space jammed with conflict.
The viewer is drawn into the scene by the placement of figures and a centrally located table, which slices through the picture space. The use of collaged wallpaper integrated with oil paint maintains the ambiguity between illusion and reality, further creating a link between the viewer's real world and the illusion of the painting.

I wish my presence to be felt in the work. As Hyman has noted, Bonnard's painting "Let it be felt that the painter was there" 6.

My intention is that "the gap between us and the subject is reduced until we are almost part of the physical and psychological environment" 7.

The viewer has a greater empathy for the painting because it gives an immediate link to the way I painted the work. I noted that Bonnard worked often on a similar scale to myself. The scale of Bonnard's work, around 4ft to 6ft was not of a public scale nor was it like that of the impressionists. It doesn't often fit into still life, landscape, nude and interior genres.

In Bonnard's work "...we are led by the construction of the space to experience the world through his own eyes..." 8.

The scale of his painting, where the figures are slightly smaller than life size, creates a psychological relationship between viewer and work.

Plate 25: Bonnard: The Box (1908).
This choice of scale in my painting satisfies my need to create the feel that the illusionary space and the real space of the viewer are linked. The illusion in paint and its mimetic function has a very important part to play in engaging audiences in the same way humans find fascination for Madame Tussaud's.

As Delacroix has said:

"The type of emotion peculiar to painting is TANGIBLE, poetry and music cannot give it. You enjoy the actual representation of objects as if you really saw them." 9.

When Bonnard worked on the anarchist 'theatre de I' Oeuvre', Timothy Hyman believes he received a "sense of pictorial space as a stage, [with] the placing of figures actors, puppets, within each space as a kind of staging" 10.

It was suggested that the scale of figures in my painting allow for a direct bodily response to them. This affect was immediately recognizable in my earlier performance art; performer-audience interaction was essential.

The advantage with illusionary figures in paint is the audiences' ability to imagine first, rather than to respond passively to the performer (like in a Hollywood action movie), or to intellectualize before experiencing and sensing. Above all, I feel it is essential for my audiences to respond to my work instinctively in order to understand the conglomerate of values, emotions and memories in my painting. Strangely, because of the initial instinctive responses, the viewer is then able to make rationalizations from their own responses.

"Minkowski argued that the spatial sense constitutes one of the primary aspects of a human being's experience of the self, which precedes and makes possible a more abstract and scientific knowledge of space" 11.

The advantage of painting over performance for me was the permutations of space that could be juxtaposed in one illusionary space.

As in Bonnard's painting I have used peripheral vision, bringing picture space to an accentuated edge; implemented flattenings that are reminiscent of my previous collage work; employed shifts of angles that allow the clash of disjointed spaces and times.
Compositional Devices

“One of the great pictorial inventions of Caravaggio was to thrust pictorial space outward to the viewer” 12.

This produced a totally new relationship between paintings and the spectator, and affected the spatial direction of his paintings. Space constructed according to the laws of Renaissance perspective was conceived as developing from the first picture plane into the background. Caravaggio reversed this direction. He screens off all those engaging vistas into depth, and constructs a movement directed onto the picture, towards the spectator. The spectator is meant to be involved.

Plate 26: Caravaggio: “Supper at Emmaus”. (1596-1603).

There would appear a contradiction here between Caravaggio and Vermeer. Vermeer separates us from the illusionary space of “A Maid Asleep”; Caravaggio spills his composition into our space.

The use of spatial discontinuities, foreshortened doors, compressed spaces and skewed spaces in “A Maid Asleep” to distance the viewer from the
subject, but Caravaggio has shown such techniques can just as easily engage us in a paintings space.

Art Historian Madlyn Millner Kahr has noted that in "A Girl Asleep" by Vermeer that in:

"tilting the carpet and drastically changing the size and forms of its detailed pattern, Vermeer creates a disjunction between the viewer and the girl... the disruption in spatial continuity places her in a realm of beyond our own.... " 13.

Plate 27: Johannes Vermeer; "A Maid Asleep". (1656-57).

Caravaggio's use of space had a marked influence on my painting of "Avarice" and "A Class Act", where the main figures appear to encroach on our real space. The mechanism by which the viewer becomes involved is through an engagement of his or her personal space. My paintings require that my audience respond in a non-passive way. Interaction between artwork and viewer is essential. The work must be interpreted to resolve its ambiguity, which requires time and hopefully discussion between viewers. Like Vermeer, I sometimes employ the breakdown of spatial unity to elicit this response.
"The sense of spatial unity is broken so that the entire scene cannot be understood at once. The eye jumps from group to group, and because of this part-by-part reading the work can only be seen in time." 14.

I have attempted to create the concept of differential spaces in "Faith, Hope and Enmity" (Plate 10) by using Caravaggio's thrusting forward of the foreground figures and Vermeer's reversal of expectation in middle and background spaces which creates a disjunction of time frames in our perception and comprehension.

The placement of figures in my painting changes an audiences response to the subject matter through their proximity to juxtaposed figures and spaces.

Edward T.Hall conducted studies that determined that people carry with them "a spatial bubble which contracts or expands according to the intimacy or formality of the relationship with another person". 15.

Our sense of self is not restricted to our bodies, but extends beyond to the spaces that we occupy and objects within those spaces. Marcel, in Proust’s "Rememberance of Lost Time"(p.1913-22), says "the objects in my room in Paris troubled me no more than... appendages of my organs, an aggrandisement of myself" 16.

'In Degas': 'The Glass of Absinthe', 1876 the sense of alienation would be lessened had the painter placed the couple either further apart or closer together. In "Faith, Hope, Eternity", "Sibling Rivalry" and "Family Heirloom" figures are placed at varying distances and with varying bodily gestures to emphasise an intended relationship, even though they may not exist in the same remembered time/space.
Chapter 4 Footnotes.


CHAPTER 5
CUMULATIVE MEMORY,
TEMPORAL DEPTHS and INSIGHT.

With the need for my work to be “read” part by part, the meaning emerges over time, in the same way the events, subjects and spaces in my painting occur over time. The approach could be compared to the art criticism approach of Wollheim, who “treats painting as a psychoanalyst might treat a person, gradually letting meaning emerge at its own pace over time”. 1

The literary works of Marcel Proust, Virginia Woolf and Isabelle Allende explore the ‘temporal depths’ of psychological health, relocation, family disintegration and grieving by allowing this gradual emergence of meaning. I have sought to reconcile similar social aspects of my experience through the use of time and space in painting.

My work seeks to explain family and social behaviour manifested over time as habitualism, cumulative memory and heredity. Memory is portrayed as cumulative and passes through time in morphic fields and involves observation of habitual behaviour.

The capacity of our grandparents to adapt to their socio-political environment is inherited by us, and we must in turn adapt to a new environment with inherited and evolved responses. I see heredity as a form of “unconscious organic memory” which is coupled with evolving habitualism, where behaviours often become more commonplace due to their repetition.

The concentration on domestic and intimate spaces in my work has intensified the focus on habitualism and hereditary factors. Pierre Bonnard and Edouard Vuillard studied Dutch C17th interior painters in establishing intimacy and interiority in their work.

Hyman has said: “In raising up the domestic, into a kind of transcendence, [they] were pushing...into a new territory of feeling, that prefigured the novels of Proust, or later, of Virginia Woolf and Robert Musil” 2

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Temporal Depths and Cumulative Memory

The use of temporal depths in my paintings facilitates the expression of a bigger picture of change in values through time. Similarly to Proust, by using everyday objects, spaces and experiences, I create reference points for an audience to access these changes.

In “The Eternal Celebration” I have adapted the earlier drawing “August Moon over Colonial Sunset” to reflect upon the change in city life over generations. Unrelated events from fragmented memories are juxtaposed to make sense of the bigger picture of this change. I intend the audience should leave this work with the need to reconcile the temporal events contained in this work.

Plate 29: The Eternal Celebration. 2001. Oil on canvas.

American art historian, Lee McKay Johnson has stated that “Proust is trying to establish the significance of the fragments and its ability to reflect a larger, whole... hint(ing) at the existence of a ‘universe insoupconné’ from which it [the whole] derives. This unknown ‘country’ is the spiritual reality which is the source for all his endeavours at realisation.” 3.
Proust is referring here to what Sheldrake has defined as morphic fields or Jung as collective unconscious. The only difference being that Jung thought, "The contents of the collective unconscious have never been in consciousness...but owe their existence exclusively to heredity..." 4. Proust's "Universe Insoupconne", like Sheldrake's morphic fields would suggest that conscious thought can be passed through time.

Proust is able to express simultaneous layers of time as one totalized time, confirming that life is not experienced in lineal time:

"When his voluntary memory operates, it is to superimpose a present sensation over a past moment... The 'moments' are not lost, but actually exist and can be resurrected to form a single substance with the present... outside the boundaries of time" 5.

In my painting, I have a similar intention of combining scenarios from different time spans. It allows a viewer the opportunity to relate experiences of different times, spaces and events in one moment. At the point they first sight the canvas surface, the viewer can consciously access and interpret conscious and subconscious memories.

Isabelle Allende harnesses subconscious memories, from a Proustian universe insoupconne, to create formative chronicles of a remembered childhood. As in my painting, the chronicles are transformed into fictitious stories, but maintain roots in real experience.

Her character Eva Luna reflects this:

"She maintained intact her memories of her childhood... she retained all the anecdotes she had heard and those she had learned in her readings. She manufactured the substance of her own dreams, and from those materials constructed a world for me - she sowed in my mind the idea that reality is not only what we see on the surface; it has magical dimensions as well...reality was transformed" 6.

Allende's approach partly inspired my resolve that reality could really be transformed through using what she has described as "magical dimensions", 51
but could more appropriately be described as “cumulative memory” from a “morphic field”.

**Ebauche, Epiphany or Insight**

I have tried to express the sensations of experiencing the overlapping of the present and past through aura, collaged time references, varied modes and spaces in paint. When these elements culminate in one moment, one can experience a “vertiginous plunge into a new and richer space” 7. Proust often referred to this experience as “Epiphany”.

Baudelaire called these moments “ebauche”, Bonnard “sudden involuntary heightenings of experience”. In each case they are the culmination of habitualism, cumulative memory and inherited characteristics applied to a new circumstance in the present. Jumps in learning or insight are in fact the very process by which artists use what is commonly called intuition coupled with cumulative memory.

Materialist scientists, like Descartes would have believed that human memory exists only in the brain (that is the control centre of the body), yet it is commonly known by contemporary science that the brain does not control much of our body.

Sheldrake explains that memory depends on morphic resonance from the patterns of activity of the brain itself in the past:

> “We tune into ourselves in the past, we do not carry all our memories around inside our brain...” 8.

I have used moments of insight in my painting as a commencing point for an evolution of imagery. As a result each work is an independent cumulative moment related in time and space to other moments. The ebauche or epiphany brings a whole new pattern of organized behaviour into being in my painting, derived from previous patterns, but evolved. This can be regarded as a new morphic field. Without cumulative memory, habitualism and acquired characteristics this does not occur. I want my paintings to have
this moment of sudden involuntary heightening of experience because I feel closer to the roots of my behavioural inheritance and how we are adapting to social change.

Allende also describes epiphany in her writing:

"But as I remain with the text in the daily exercise of writing, something happens; it is as if the fog starts slowly to lift and I can see clearly what's going on. The story has always been there but it's in a dark place. It began as a family chronicle and it shifted rapidly. I knew it was fiction but it had this basis in reality of my own family." 9.
Chapter 5 Footnotes


Conclusion

The community and family disintegration I have sought to express have led to increasingly intimate and personal content in my painting at the expense of art historical references. Yet, the depiction of the everyday becoming universal has meant that my subjects are also becoming less like biographical portraiture. Early works, like “Sibling Rivalry” (1997-98) had very biographical connotations. My own responses to events are becoming expressed in my painting because the meaning and form are now simultaneously evolving on the canvas surface. Figures, spaces and objects that originate as observation drawing, documentary photographs or direct memories now evolve, through the painting process, into fictitious fables and narratives. My narratives are becoming more fictional whilst commencing as a chronicle. Preconceived compositional ideas no longer inhibit midstream changes to my canvases. This allows my painting to form broader associations for the viewer, not limited by obvious appropriation or biographical specifics.

My early work was heavily guided by preliminary drawings in a lineal progression of production: from conception, to sketch, to collage, to painting. For me the moment of insight, ebauche or epiphany has become a cumulative statement that is performed with the instantaneous brushstroke. In allowing evolution of composition to evolve, cumulative memory, temporal depths and values form more intuitive imagery. It has allowed me to discover subconscious responses to remembered events and behaviours, and better understand my own judgements and the actions of others.

The uses of particular visual devices, such as the (Caravaggio like) thrusted pictorial spaces have confronted my audiences more since they have evolved on the paint surface. The difference of scale between sketch and painting meant compositions needed to vary on the different sized surfaces.
I found, like Bonnard, paintings with human scale had a special psychological significance for viewers. Audiences appear to have more intimate responses to this scale in my work. Emotive experiences of remembered events and spaces seem to carry more weight. The scale creates a tension between the illusionary picture space and the real space of the viewer. The psychological space has therefore a major factor in my compositions and reflect my spatial sense of self through the painting process: The picture space as extension of the self. Three-dimensional ambiguity has enabled me to suggest the psychic locations or pathways that Sheldrake believes carry intergenerational memory.

The development of varied modality in paint application has allowed me to suggest differences between time and space references and thus an essence of change. It also provides juxtaposition of sensibilities. Sensibility has a great formative causation on values and behaviour. I found that different time-spaces manifest different aura or morphic resonance. Despite the obvious association to aura in my earlier pantheistic approach to paint application and composition, it did prevent the usage of illusion. Illusionary form has become simultaneously prominent with sensual and tactile surface treatments by the implementation of glazing, layering and imprimatura juxtaposed with alle fresco syringe and brushstroke techniques. Illusion and aura together have provided a means for the specific to coexist with the immaterial, to achieve Baudelaire's "Spirit embedded in matter".

There is a contrast of three-dimensional illusion and atmosphere with flat cut out forms and tactile surfaces. This makes the line between the reality and illusion even more ambiguous. This now reinforces an audience engagement rather than detachment with my painting. This reflects a drawing on Social Realist and Romantic heritage (rather than Classical) in my work. This produces greater audience empathy with the subject matter and a reduction of any barrier between artist and audience allowing the illusionary object: painting to communicate change in social values.
Objects have become more ambiguous in my painting, more illusionary and less descriptive. This has allowed me to see objects as symbol. As (Proust’s) appendages of the self they have now become objects of encapsulated memory. Objects have become cues to the audience about social change.

In my work, like Giacometti, I have battled against materialist/rationalist philosophy in attempting to re-humanise the subjects of my painting. That my art works are functioning as conversation pieces for my audience indicates that associations from their own experience are more successfully being elicited. Whilst a performance artist, I found that audiences were able to detach and see performance as entertainment, much like the Hollywood movie. My paintings, like the films of Mike Leigh, do not have formular plots and behaviours, or comfortable and predictable solutions. My paintings have become imperfect stories with open-ended possibilities. They do not suggest that competition leads to success. They have become less overt in meaning and now ask the audience to make judgements or discuss the content at a later time. Audiences now appear to reflect more on their own similar experiences. The illusionary object has enticed them to express in their own words how values have changed.
Bibliography


Reference Texts

“Can an illusionary object such as a painting express the essence of change in values of the artist and their society?”

by G. L. Cliffe.
PLEASE NOTE

The greatest amount of care has been taken while scanning this thesis,

and the best possible result has been obtained.
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I would gratefully like to acknowledge the support of my supervisor, Mr. Graham Marchant. The wisdom of art practice and theoretical rigour he has shown me throughout my 3 years of Part-Time studies has been a great source of encouragement. Graham’s vast knowledge of the painting medium has been instrumental in many changes I have made in the evolution of my artwork. His practice as an artist has been a fine example for a mature student to follow.

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I wish, also, to thank my family: Diane, Eleanor and Cameron for their endless support and sacrifices during my three-year part-time study.
Declaration

The work submitted in this paper, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due knowledge is made in the text. This thesis has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

Signed:

Date:
CHAPTERS

1. Change in Social Processes; Philosophies, and Values.

2. Change in Family Values; Morality, and Behaviour.

3. Aura and Morphic Resonance.

4. Pictorial Space and Pathways.

5. Cumulative Memory; Temporal Depths and Insight.
PLATES

1. *The Betrayal of Lady Wisdom*, 1999. Acrylic and oil on canvas. 1220mm x 1680mm


5. *August Moon Over Imperial Sunset*, 1999. Ink and acrylic on paper. 750 x 1100 mm.


7. *Celtic Dichotomy*, 2001. Oil on Canvas, 1220 mm x 1680 mm.

8. *Dividing The Spoils*, 2000. Oil on Canvas. 850 x 1020 mm


10. *Faith, Hope and Enmity*, 2000. Oil and Acrylic on Canvas. 1220 x 1680 mm .

11. *Our Little Princess*, 2000. Oil on Canvas. 1220 x 910 mm.


14. *Diane at Putney* 1999, acrylic and oil on canvas, 600 x 760 mm.


17. Visit to the Home, 2000. Oil on canvas, 500 x 600 mm.

18. Grieving, 2000. Oil on canvas. 1080 x 1310 mm.


20. A Class Act, 2000-2001, oil and mixed media on canvas. 1680 x 1220 cm.


22. Family Heirloom, 1999. Acrylic on Canvas, 1220 x 1680 mm.


29. The Eternal Celebration, 2001. Oil on Canvas. 1680 x 2750 mm.
Summary

“In the houses, the little pianos closed and the clock strikes,
All sway forward on the dangerous flood
Of history, that never sleeps or dies,
And, held one moment, burns the hand.”

W.H. Auden

My initial intention of the MA research was to amalgamate two distinct tendencies that evolved in my work over 24 years from 1975 through to 1997. In 1997 I began to combine flat cutout forms describing 3D space, which I had previously used in my installations, with the flowing linear energy of my wire sculpture and early painting. The illusionary and corporeal qualities of my painting and sculpture are now amalgamated with social concerns, which emerged from my installation and performance work (1975-85).

I became particularly interested in the affect of social condition on family behaviour and relationships. I felt a great need to reflect on personal family and community relationships due to death, and community and family disintegration I had been experiencing. The written works of Ronald Conway (Rage for Utopia), Francis Fukuyama and Umberto Eco led me to question how philosophy and values pass down through generations and whether circumstances repeat themselves, or whether we evolve our behaviour and adapt to socio-political dislocation.

As a result, the making of judgements about my life experiences is for me derived from the evolution of my painting media. It is the expression of temporal depths about my self and my world, coupled with the creation of the immaterial in painted form. The very moment at which I make a gesture on a painting surface is the culmination of memory, the immaterial and the corporeal. That moment expresses my judgement about myself, and the world in illusionary form.
By bringing together of the self and one's worldview, the corporeal and the immaterial, the past and present, an artist is provided with the authority to make judgements and to change themselves and their surrounding community. These factors enable them to effect change through the evolution in their medium and simultaneously through the response to their surrounding society. By using cumulative memory of events from my life, and the lives of others, a range of juxtaposed time references will provide insight into changes in values in my surrounding community and family.

"Aura", the physical manifestation of the spiritual or sublime in paint surfaces, will be used to express reference to passage of time. I will use spatial devices to link the illusionary space conceptually to the viewer's space, encouraging the viewer into an intimate relationship with the subject matter and time references. The use of aura had been inspired by what Robert Hughes described (in Van Gogh's work) as "plasma of paint eddying along linear paths" 1. This prompted the development of a painting process similar to the wire sculpture and ink drawing (of human and natural forms) I made between 1975-78. In the 90's I implemented the use of syringes to apply long continuous lines of colour paint reminiscent of my early wirework. The affect I was seeking in the 70's sculpture and 90's landscape was the "aura' present in the work of Giacometti and the painting of Dobell where the pure sensation of tactile surface is combined with fluid linear energy to suggest ambience, atmosphere and the spiritual. 2. ("Aura" is explained further in Chapter 3)

I became concerned with the amalgamation of the spirituality I was exploring through my painting and the socio-political concerns I had been exploring in performance/installation. The 70's and 80's performance work involved game structures as metaphor to systems and used audience participation to create statements about the affect of those systems on everyday life. These were elaborate structures often like a stage location with an open-ended plot, props, lighting, and sound production. They had a kinship with experimental theatre where the everyday was recontextualised to question how the everyday is systematised. The line between reality and
illusion was always being questioned, a similarity I liken to Sam Shephard's plays 3., where props change functionality and are disconnected from their normal "structured milieu".

My masters painting series has drawn on these earlier performances in presenting a theatrical interpretation of my social concerns in painted media. I have, however, become more concerned with the patterned behaviour and human interactions within social systems, recently drawing on the films of Mike Leigh as inspiration. As a result the emphasis of the everyday in my painting has become an expression of universal social issues.