THE SPACE BETWEEN MOURNING AND MELANCHOLIA: THE USE OF CLOTH IN CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICE TO MATERIALISE THE WORK OF MOURNING

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of Brighton for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

September 2016

The University of Brighton and the University for the Creative Arts, Farnham

Abstract

This research project examines the language of grief in textile art practice. It takes as its starting point the idea that, as individuals with experience of bereavement, we may carry with us an element of unresolved mourning. This is not the pathological condition of melancholia or complicated mourning, nor the fully resolved, completed state where mourning is over, but is a space between; a set of emotions which continue to be felt and may be brought to the surface by an event, situation, set of circumstances or encounter with, for example, artwork which may bring back feelings of grief and loss long after the death of someone close. This project investigates how cloth can be used in textile artwork to make a connection with this unresolved mourning and thereby contribute to the progression of the viewer's work of mourning. The aims of the research are to explore how textile art can be used as a metaphor for grief and mourning and to consider how the staining and mending of cloth in contemporary art practice has been used in my studio practice as a way of understanding and expressing mourning.

This is a practice based research project, the outcomes of which consist of a written thesis and a body of artworks created through studio practice. The dialogic relationship between the practice and the written research is integral to the outcomes of both the written work and in the studio practice. The written thesis builds on existing research into the psychoanalytical interpretation of mourning and melancholia; the development of the understanding of the process of mourning, trauma theory and the material culture of mourning to establish a rationale for the use of cloth in textile art practice to materialise the work of mourning. The thesis and body of studio practice make an original contribution to knowledge by bringing together the sociological and cultural use of cloth with psychoanalytical theory and the consideration of the affectivity of artwork.

The overarching approach of the thesis is a two-part focus on the use of cloth and how it can be used in textile artwork. The first chapter sets out the context of the research both in terms of previously published written work and the studio practice of other artists. Chapter 2 examines the methodology of the research and how the work has been shown to viewers and the means by which any responses have been obtained. Both written and verbal responses to the work by viewers have been used to substantiate the proposal that textile artwork can connect with the viewer in such a way as to allow a progression of their work of mourning. Chapter 3 considers the materiality of cloth; its manipulation and transformation using processes such as staining and mending, and the utilisation of metaphor and metonymy in the creation of artworks in cloth. The final chapter 'Connecting with the Viewer' explores the affectivity of artwork and how it is able to facilitate an emotional connection with the audience.

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Preface

Like most people, I have experienced bereavement, grief and loss. This has included the deaths of family members, friends and acquaintances. This research project is not centred on a specific death or incident but is about my response to the grief and loss I have experienced during my lifetime.

Two particular moments have informed much of my studio practice:

My father was a Royal Marines Bandmaster and many years after he died I wanted my children to see the band play in a concert rather than on television, so that they could experience it at first hand. They had never met my father and I was excited and looking forward to hearing the music and introducing them to his world. As the band marched in, in their colourful uniforms and white helmets, playing a familiar march, with their traditional drum introduction, I was suddenly completely overwhelmed. In an instant, with those sights and sounds triggering memories, I was back in the moment when my mother told me my father had died. Grief as raw as that first day surfaced again, and although it was not the same as the first time, it still affected me deeply and it took weeks to go back to the accepting emotional state I was in before the concert. At that time, I realised that my mourning was not over, would never be over and really, did I ever want it to be? Why would I want to completely forget and move on?

In 2009, over a period of around two months, seven people I knew died. Some of them I didn't know very well, or were the elderly parents of friends. But some of them were relatives and some were close friends. The number of deaths in such a short space of time resulted in a difficult time for me.

Bereavement and the feeling of grief is a common experience but it is devastating to those who go through it. They carry that experience with them and it contributes to who they are. The experience of bereavement informs my practice and it is my hope that it will resonate with those who see my work.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors, Professor Lesley Millar and Dr. Victoria Kelley for their very generous help and support.

Thanks also to the staff at UCA for their calm help and reassurance in all things technical particularly Tipu Miah, Tom Gilley and Louise Anderson. Also to all the library staff who have been so helpful in getting material to me and helping with my bibliography, particularly Ian Badger and Nick Turner.

I am grateful to other artists and tutors for their help and advice particularly Rozanne Hawksley, Jane Wildgoose, Pennina Barnett, Peter Bray, Aparajita Nanda and Julian Hicks, to Richard Brayshaw for his support and help with photography and to Ethan Roberts for his patient instruction with video editing.

I would also like to thank my fellow members of the Textile Research Forum, especially Kay Swancutt, Catherine Dormor, Gail Baxter, Carol Quarini, Gavin Fry, Maxine Bristow, Peta Jacobs, Lynn Setterington and Alison Harper for their support and encouragement.

I am grateful for the support of Professor Simon Olding and Dr Mark Little in setting up the 'Trauma. Grief. Loss: The Art of Bereavement' project.

I would like to thank all those who have made exhibitions during this research project possible particularly Keiko Kawashima, Dr Jennifer Harris, Ann French, Howard and Roberta Ahmanson, Ann Hirou, Lesley Sutton, Richard Hylton and Hannah Davies.

I am grateful to Koichi Kawashima and to Mary Murata for their patient translations of my work into Japanese and of the correspondence from Japan into English.

I would also like to thank the staff of the Research Office at UCA, particularly Mary O'Hagan, Sian Jones and Elizabeth Baxter.

I would also like to give my thanks for the generosity of my correspondents for their words in response to the artworks in exhibitions during the course of this research.

And my deepest and heartfelt thanks must go to my family for their unfailing patience, support and love.

Declaration

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree, and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Signed:

Dated: 29th November 2016

Introduction

> 'Art is a form of communication that is simultaneously privileged and outside the conventions of everyday language. This vexed relationship to discourse arguably allows it to articulate or, at least approach, death in a way that can't be sustained in everyday discourse' (Webb and Webb 2004, cited in Beattie, 2013:146).

In the last twenty years the topics of death, dying, bereavement and mourning have emerged from the shadows to be addressed in newspapers, magazines and on the broadcast news media almost on a daily basis. The death of celebrities is documented in detail in the tabloid press and the long period during which this country has been at war means that, particularly in the early stages of this research, the announcement of the death of soldiers serving abroad has become a regular occurrence. Over the same period of time, the general public have increasingly demonstrated feelings of grief by leaving flowers at the roadside at the scene of an accident or the creation of online condolence books and Facebook pages for celebrities who have died. The display of grief and mourning by the public for people who they have never met was increasingly criticised in the press, with the creation of new phrases such as 'mourning sickness' and 'recreational grief'. These were first used after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997 and can probably be attributed to Ian Jack writing for 'Granta' magazine in December of the same year (Jack, 1997:16) but they have since passed into more common usage.

Rituals of mourning have re-emerged and developed within contemporary social practice in the last twenty years and the importance of talking about death and loss is being recognised. Even as recently as the 1960's family members would often wash the body of the deceased and 'lay them out' in the family home where friends and relatives would come to pay their respects (Gore, 2001:213). In the 1970s and 1980s, the development of hospice care for those suffering from terminal illness meant that death and dying were taken away from mainstream family experience and the home (Howarth, 2007:138). This, together with today's reduced infant mortality, means that many people in the UK will never see a dead body and may reach adulthood before any any members of their family die. However, despite this, the social scientist Glennys Howarth suggests that 'a rich fusion of beliefs' is now emerging that is 'resurrecting death and beginning to embrace mortality as central to life' (Howarth, 2007:266) and Honorary Professor of Death Studies at the University of Bath, Tony Walter, has observed that there is a 'revival of interest in death and dying particularly in relation to the care of dying and bereaved people' (Howarth, 2007:252). Edith Stein has written that the way most people 'face the fact of death through the death of others' and so 'dying and the death of others is fundamental to our … understanding of our own

being and of the human being' (Stein, 2006:77). It would be so much harder to believe in the ending of our own lives if we have not experienced the death of others.

Academic initiatives reflect the trend of discussing death more openly – there are now centres offering courses to study the social aspects of death, dying and bereavement. The Centre for Death and Society is a part of the University of Bath and undertakes

> 'academic research as well as research commissioned by the government, charities and businesses with concern for end-of-life issues … and we promote co-operation between organisations that deal with end-of-life issues and act as a communication gateway to others working in this field' (CDAS, s.d).

At Durham University, the Centre for Death and Life Studies exists to 'foster and conduct research into life-values, beliefs, and practices that relate to living and dying' (CDALS, s.d). Together with the Radbould University Centre for Thanatology and Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies in Nijmegen, Netherlands, these schools hold the annual Death, Dying and Disposal conference. Courses are offered at these centres at varying academic levels, which suggests that the interest in this field is increasingly active in an interdisciplinary exchange.

Similarly, events open to the general public on the subject of death and dying are becoming more prevalent. The Southbank Centre in London held a 'Festival of Death' in January 2012 over two days and included poetry, film, music, comedy as well as information events aimed at planning funerals. Some workshops were aimed at children from 8-15 years, whilst other sessions discussed how to talk to children about bereavement. Talks included how war has changed our attitudes to death, differences in death rituals around the world, as well as writers giving moving presentations about their experience of grief and how they have coped in the aftermath. [1]

In recent years Death Cafés have started to appear in many towns and cities. Based on the Swiss tradition of the 'Café Mortel' they are informal, totally inclusive, non- profit making events where people gather to sit and talk over anything to do with death. For example, where to be buried; whether to have a burial or cremation; what sort of funeral to have. There are many established death cafes in the UK and the phenomenon has spread to the US, Canada and Australasia. Since 2011 there have been over 3,000 Death Café's, evidence that

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[1] The majority of the events were not ticketed but with limited seating, places were on a 'first-come first- served' basis with many of them, in my experience, full to capacity.

death is something people are willing to discuss.[2] (Death Cafe, s.d) This would indicate that this research is timely and reflects an interest in this area both academically and by the general public.

BBC Radio 4's mainstream news programme 'Today' featured a report on 6th November 2012 on whether grief can or should ever be resolved, and in 2015 Eddie Mair and Robert Peston devoted an entire programme to discussing grief with the novelist Julian Barnes (*The Robert Peston Interview Show (with Eddie Mair): Julian Barnes,* 2015). These examples would suggest that although talking about death and dying is still often described as morbid or taboo, it is gradually becoming a subject for open discussion and conversation.

Mourning the death of someone close is a common experience and grief, we are told, is the 'price we pay for love' (Parkes, 2010:6). But the unique circumstances of each relationship mean that it is different for each individual person. There is a general acceptance that bereavement and mourning have various stages which take time to go through, but that eventually the feelings pass and daily life and routines resume. Mourning is generally considered to be a normal process, one that will eventually pass and life continues. In contrast, melancholia has a much more sinister overtone of chronic unresolved grief and possible mental illness which requires medical treatment**.** Although the bereaved individual may eventually come to some accepting state, this thesis argues that it is possible to still be in mourning for a long period of time but not in state of melancholia. It is this space, the space between mourning and melancholia that is explored in this research. Many people experience the sensation I described in the Preface where, in an unguarded moment, an unexpected event will plunge the bereaved back into the depths of the first overwhelming sensation of grief and loss. If their mourning was truly complete would this happen? Would it be possible to look back at the life and death of the person who has died and not feel anything at all?

This research project questions whether it is possible to use cloth in contemporary art practice as a metaphor for the emotions experienced after bereavement, and whether it is possible to use that artwork to make a connection with the grief of the viewer and so enable them to 'move on' in their mourning towards acceptance and resolution. The research examines how this may be possible, by investigating the materiality of cloth and how this can be exploited and used as a metaphor for mourning, grief and loss. Processes such as the mending and staining of cloth are examined in order to determine ways in which they can be used in contemporary art as a way of understanding and expressing

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[2] The Death Café I took part in during June 2016 had around 30 attendees. It was the first in the area where I live. The meeting lasted for around 2 hours and discussions ranged from how to talk about funeral arrangements with relatives, to thoughts on assisted dying and euthanasia.

mourning and to materialise that work of mourning. This thesis examines whether individuals who react to artwork in this way do in fact occupy this 'space between' and whether to a greater or lesser extent we all do.

The research project as a whole consists of a body of studio artwork created by textile practice, which addresses the question of why cloth is such an important material to be used in different ways to create artwork that connects with the unresolved mourning of the viewer and how this can be utilised through various processes and manipulations to generate responses from the audience. This body of studio artwork is accompanied by the written thesis, which not only documents the studio practice, but shows how the studio artwork has been informed by the written research and vice versa and demonstrates the symbiotic relationship between the writing and the studio practice. The post-doctoral artist and researcher, Gavin Renwick, writing in 'Decolonising methods: reflection upon a practice-based doctorate' states that researching in a creative field makes one 'conscious of limiting oneself to a particular convention and means of communication' and therefore questions the dominant role of the written component in traditional research (Renwick, 2006:173). James Elkins proposes three types of thesis or dissertation – that it is research which informs the art practice; that it is equal to the artwork; or that the dissertation *is* the artwork, and vice versa (Elkins, 2009:147). In this research project the thesis is seen as being equal to the artwork in that each informs the other and together provides new insights into the role of contemporary textile art practice as a materialisation of mourning.

This is an interdisciplinary investigation employing a range of theoretical areas. Chapter 1 examines the existing literature and art practice to situate the research within the theoretical framework of psychoanalytical theory, models of dealing with grief and trauma, and the material culture of mourning. These areas of research enable an understanding of both the historical and the current thinking on mourning and melancholia and the processes and stages individuals go through after the death of someone with whom they had a close relationship. It also examines the importance of objects in the grieving process with particular reference to cloth and the clothes of the dead. Within this chapter a number of artists have been referenced whose work responds either in an autobiographical way to the death of someone close or a more generalised way to the unfolding of traumatic events. This is used to locate my own practice in this area as I create work not *about* me but using my experience to inform how I think about, contextualise and conceive artwork about loss and grief.

The methodology of the research is examined in Chapter 2 (Approaching and undertaking the research) and outlines the way in which the different stages of research-as-practice / practice-as-research flow and move between each other and how the processes and techniques used have integrated to create an emergent methodology. Central to the

methodology is the role of the viewer and how 'the act of seeing is conditioned by the viewer's own life' (Smith 2012:4).

The difficulty of obtaining responses to art work from viewers in a gallery setting is well known to artists and has also been the case in this research project. A number of strategies have been employed to overcome this but inevitably the number of responses is small. However, despite their low numbers, the way the viewers have expressed their feelings and thoughts on the work has been a valuable and valued contribution to analysing the way the work has been received and assisted with the exploration of the importance of the viewer's own experience in completing the art work.

Chapter 3 (Materiality and the use of cloth) looks at the materials used in the making of textile artwork and questions the way cloth functions that makes it suitable to be used as a substrate for emotion and to generate a response from the viewer. Our daily experience and interaction with cloth means that we have an intimate, but usually unspoken knowledge and range of emotions associated with it. After someone dies, clothes are often kept to remind the bereaved of the deceased and to comfort them. The fact that they may be worn through use, mended, patched and pieced back together does not detract from their worth. In fact, it may add to their appeal as they bear witness to our lives, our experiences and the events which may have been shared with family members. Cloth can be used as a metaphor for loss and the two processes of mending and staining as metaphors for significant events that mark and damage and become part of the fabric of life are explored in this chapter.

Chapter 4 (Connecting with the viewer) explores the psychoanalytical interpretation of the creation of artwork when the artist may be mourning. Once the artwork is made, the way it is shown to the public is important as the venue and the atmosphere created in the exhibition will impact on the work's reception by the audience. The nature of the interaction of the work with the viewer is explored in this chapter in terms of affectivity and the evocation of emotions such as empathy and sympathy. The investment of emotional energy is described by Sigmund Freud as a cathexis or the concentration of psychic energy on a single goal (Freud, S. 1926 cited in Paul, 2005). The use of cloth in textile artwork provides a medium through which both the artist and the viewer already have an emotional connection, to invoke emotions of grief and loss and may allow the viewer to form a cathexis and so progress in their work of mourning.

The aim of contemporary art is to 'foster the discovery of new ways of experiencing and thinking about reality in such a way that artistic activity might allow continuous mental transformation and growth' (Abella, 2010:177). The importance of cloth in textile artwork is that it has the ability to communicate thoughts and emotions to the viewer. Victoria Mitchell has written that by the gesture of stitching the cloth is imbued with a way of communicating - 'a manner and matter of speaking though stuff' (Mitchell, 2013:316).

Chapter 1. Situating the research

The title of this thesis positions mourning and melancholia as two different discrete entities with a space between to separate them. The use of the two terms 'mourning' and 'melancholia' invites an investigation of how Freud defined them in relation to psychoanalytical theory and how more current thinking in trauma theory and the different models of the process of grief enables an understanding of the important role that material objects including textiles and textile art have in the resolution of mourning.

The definitions of both mourning and melancholia have changed over time and so this chapter begins with a review of the meanings of these terms and how their history influences the way in which we think of them today.

Understanding mourning and melancholia

Mourning

The term 'mourning' has been defined by Professor of Psychology, Lynne DeSpelder as 'the process of incorporating loss into our ongoing lives' (DeSpelder, 1992:234). The term also contains within it a sense of time, a period of mourning, during which grief and sadness are present. In the context of this research mourning is defined as processual; a set of behaviours exhibited after bereavement whilst internal adjustment is made to the loss.

The psychiatrist Professor Beverley Raphael writes extensively on mourning and the aftermath of trauma, grief and disasters and has written in her book *The Anatomy of Bereavement*, that mourning is 'the period of time during which signs of grief are made visible,' a definition also used by the anthropologists Hockey, Katz and Small in their book *Grief, Mourning and Death Ritual* (Hockey, Katz and Small, 2001:20). The sociologist Clive Seale describes it as 'the behaviour socially prescribed in a culture as appropriate for those who have been bereaved' (Seale 1998, cited in Howarth, 2007:195). Freud, in his essay *Mourning and Melancholia*, written in 1917, defines mourning as 'the reaction to the loss of a beloved person or an abstraction taking the place of the person, such as fatherland, freedom, an ideal and so on' (Freud, 2005:203). This essay was written during the First World War, at a time of the overwhelming and unprecedented numbers of casualties together with the overturning of national ideals and beliefs in Europe. He defines the process of mourning by explaining that 'in mourning, the bereaved gradually removes emotional ties of their libido to the deceased object by the "testing of reality" - taking each memory and severing bonds with it, accepting that the object no longer exists' (Clewell, 2004:44). The

remembering, repeating and working through of memories continues as the mourner replaces the lost person with an imaginary presence. This 'magical resurrection allows the mourner to prolong the existence of the lost person' (O'Neill, 2007:98) until the mourner eventually comes to realise that the deceased person no longer exists. Only when all bonds are severed can the work of mourning be completed and 'we rely on it being overcome after a certain period of time, and consider interfering with it to be pointless, or even damaging' (Freud, 2005:204). This is work which is painful and requires emotional energy and so may result in some lethargy and 'loss of interest in the outside world' on the part of the bereaved. Because this is tiring and demanding both physically and mentally, Freud terms this *Trauerarbeit*, translated as grief-work or the work of mourning. Freud states that this will eventually pass and the mourner will be free to make new attachments. The shared experiences with the deceased are examined and repeatedly remembered - music listened to together, places visited and everyday common experiences are all mentally held up to reconfirm that the person is no longer here. This can often be observed in bereaved people as they go through old photographs, look at old clothes and possessions, reminiscing but also re-confirming their loss. It would seem that these definitions point to mourning as being processual with several recognisable stages through which the bereaved pass.

Freud's views on the spontaneous end of mourning expressed in the essay changed after he had experienced bereavement at first hand. His daughter Sophie died in 1920 from influenza and in 1923 his grandson Heinerle died from tuberculosis. In his later work, *The Ego and the Id* (1923) Freud concludes that mourning may, in fact, never end and it may go on for ever. In a letter to his friend the psychiatrist Ludwig Binswanger in 1929, around nine years after the death of his daughter, on learning that Binswanger's son had died, Freud still appears to be in mourning:

> 'Although we know that after such a loss the acute state of mourning will subside, we also know we shall remain inconsolable and will never find a substitute. No matter what may fill the gap, even if it be filled completely, it nevertheless remains something else. And actually, this is how it should be. It is the only way of perpetuating that love which we do not want to relinquish' (E. Freud, 1960: 386).

In order to understand this change of view, it is necessary to 'examine the dynamics of mourning using a more nuanced view of ego formation' than that offered in *Mourning and Melancholia* (Clewell, 2004:47).

As described in *Mourning and Melancholia* the bereaved person has an internal struggle between wanting to live by relinquishing ties to the deceased and wanting to die in order to continue those ties. The overcoming of the desire to die by the will to live is ensured by 'the

subject's narcissism' (Clewell, 2004:46). When the remembering stage takes place in the mourning process, the bereaved person is trying to 'reclaim a part of the self that has been projected onto the other … Losing a loved one therefore threatens to shatter the mourner's imaginary psychic integrity (Clewell, 2004:47). In melancholia, the connection to the lost object is not severed but instead the ego of the mourner identifies with the lost other and internalises it as part of the self. This then sustains their relationship in all its facets of love and hate, producing two results. The first is that 'the ego is then established as if it were an internal surrogate for the other and enabling the id to love the ego as if it were the original object' (Clewell, 2004:60). The second result is that a 'critical agency is created which then attacks the ego for failing to live up to the original object leading to the internalisation of aggression characteristic of melancholia' (Clewell, 2004:60).

Later, when writing *On Transience* Freud began to challenge his previous understanding of mourning and admitted to being puzzled by it.

> 'But we are at a loss to understand why this removal of the libido from its object should be such a painful process and we have at present no hypothesis to explain the fact. We see only that the libido clings to its object and does not wish to abandon those which are lost even when a substitute is ready and available. That, then, is mourning' (Freud, 1917:199).

When writing the *Ego and the Id*, Freud suggested that the important part of subject formation and mourning is that of identification and that it is the 'sole condition under which the id can give up its objects' (Clewell, 2004:61). He then 'makes melancholy identification integral to the work of mourning' (Clewell, 2004:61). This would suggest that in normal mourning the taking of the lost object into the self by identification prolongs the bonds between the mourner and the lost other and means that mourning never ends, that it never really goes away.

 But it must be questioned whether we can ever return and be fully restored, are we not always marked in some way? This would seem to be supported by Judith Butler's statement (writing in *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence*) that 'one will be changed, possibly for ever' (Butler, 2004:21).

Melancholia

The term melancholia has a long and diverse history. The philosopher Jennifer Radden has collected key texts on melancholia and in her chronology *From Aristotle to Kristeva* tells the history of how thinking about this state has changed. She discusses the

importance of each text to our current understanding of melancholia and its recent association with medical conditions and depressive states.[3]

The meaning of the term melancholia has changed over the centuries from the Aristotelian tradition of being the 'world weariness of the sensitive and creative person' (Radden, 2009:62). Robert Burton, tutor and librarian at Christ Church College in Oxford, writing in 1621 in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, whilst acknowledging that the main symptoms of melancholy are 'sadness and fear without a cause', also described its more positive attributes as wit, wisdom and inspiration (cited in Radden, 2009:62). At the time when Aristotle was writing it was thought that the balance between the four humours of the body:- bile (yellow and black), phlegm, choler and blood, determined a person's temperament. A person suffering from melancholy was thought to have too much black bile in their body - an idea deriving from the idea that 'if there was a black mood there must be a black substance' (Simon 1978, cited in Radden 2009:63). Aristotle questioned the association between brilliance and achievement and the diseases of melancholy stating that black bile can have two effects on the body, too hot leading to 'cheerfulness with song, and madness' and too cold causing despondency and fear (Aristotle, cited in Radden 2000:58).

The state of melancholy is associated with pensive sadness and having a gloomy character, but melancholia has a much more destructive connotation. Whilst authors such as the German psychiatrist Griesinger writing in 1867 described the darker side of the state of melancholia as being the predominant affect, it was not until the publication of Freud's *Mourning and Melancholia* in 1917 that the psychoanalytical interpretation of the emotion was fully explored. Freud's view of melancholia is that it is a state one is in, rather than being processual and that it includes a large element of self-loathing and self-accusation. Radden describes these emotions as 'a form of rage redirected from the loved object to the self.' She also suggests that Freud draws on previous definitions of melancholia by stating that it 'is characterised by loss of an object of which its subject may be unconscious' thereby characterising melancholia as a state of fear or sadness without cause. Radden suggests that Freud allows that 'melancholia may have a glamorous aspect' because he admits that someone suffering from melancholia may 'have a keener eye for the truth than others who are not melancholic' (Radden, 2002:283). Judith Butler suggests that Freud can be interpreted by drawing the distinction between mourning and melancholia: mourning as 'knowing what one has lost' and melancholia as 'not knowing' (Butler, 2004:22). She argues that when mourning 'one accepts that by the loss one undergoes one will be changed,

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[3] Where Radden is cited as the reference this publication is being used as a secondary source.

possibly for ever.' If we are unconscious of what we have lost, then there is an enigmatic element to the loss - not knowing - echoing Burton's characteristic trait of melancholy, which is sadness without reason.

The psychoanalyst Melanie Klein, writing in 1939, developed Freud's ideas and in her essay 'Mourning and its relation to manic-depressive states,' she connects her idea of the infantile depressive state with normal mourning, whenever this may occur. The infantile depressive state is the depression felt by the child at weaning when the breast is taken away and the baby mourns its loss. The child is also convinced that the breast has been lost because of his own greed and 'destructive phantasies and impulses against his mother's breasts' (Mitchell, 1986:148). Whilst Freud states that in mourning the ego is cut off from the loved object, and the mourner 'reinstates the lost loved object in the ego' Klein suggests that the mourner not only reincorporates the lost person but also the loved parents and so these seem to have been 'destroyed whenever the loss of a loved person is experienced' (Mitchell, 1986:156). The subject therefore relives the loss of the parents whenever another loss is experienced and so therefore the pain of loss can be triggered again by other, unrelated losses.

However, abnormal mourning - and melancholia - is a result of the mourner not having overcome the infantile depressive position in childhood and so never establishing the placement of their lost loved objects internally. They therefore do not feel secure in their inner world and when they experience loss this reinstates their infantile depressive position and leads to the self-hatred of melancholia. Judith Butler, when writing about the death of the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, stated that

> 'the act of mourning thus becomes a continued way of 'speaking to' the other who is gone, even though the other is gone, in spite of the fact the other is gone, precisely because the other is gone' (Butler, 2004).

The space between

In her article 'Freud and Barthes: Theorizing Mourning, Sustaining Grief', Kathleen Woodward suggests that a discourse on mourning is needed that is 'more expressive than psychoanalysis allows' (Woodward, 1990:94). She writes that one of the failings of *Mourning and Melancholia* is that Freud describes the two states as separate entities – that if one is in mourning then at some point one must recover from it when it comes to a 'spontaneous end' and be out of mourning. But if mourning does not end, the bereaved may descend into the state of melancholia. Woodward argues that there is another place – between 'a crippling melancholia and the end of mourning.' It is this space, when one

is suffering from an interminable grief that is not actual melancholia as defined by Freud, but a grief that 'is lived in such a way that one is still in mourning but no longer exclusively devoted to mourning' (Woodward, 1990:96) that is examined in this research.

Roland Barthes writes about mourning the death of his mother in *Camera Lucida*. He describes how for him, the work of grief does not help to remove the pain of mourning, only to reduce the emotions involved 'I do not weep, that is all' (Barthes, 2000: 75). Woodward suggests that he is 'theorizing the possibility of sustaining the in-between of mourning and melancholia' (Woodward, 1990: 98). The middle position suggests that the bonds with the deceased have not been completely severed and so the process of mourning is not complete. This has resonances with the 'continuing bonds' theory developed by Professor Denis Klass of the process of mourning which will be discussed later in the chapter.

Woodward chooses to focus on the way Freud describes dealing with the death of people rather than for ideals such as freedom or fatherland and criticises Freud's essay for concentrating only on the mourning that is felt for members of the immediate family. This, she asserts, does not allow for mourning for those we know only temporarily and, I would suggest, for public figures and those we have never met at all. Woodward concludes her article by suggesting that grief (or psychic pain) can 'also give us strength, and there are times when we do not wish to, and should not, willingly yield it up' (Woodward, 1990:106). Would one ever want the deceased to be remembered with no emotion at all?

Judith Butler (2004) questions whether it is possible to know when one has fully mourned another person. In her own interpretation of Freud's work she states that she does not believe that 'successful grieving implies that one has forgotten another person or that something else has come along to take its place, as if full substitutability were something for which we might strive.' She describes the way in which we are changed by loss – 'the transformative effect of loss – which cannot be charted or planned' (Butler 2004:21).

Butler also suggests that a hierarchy of grief could be described quite easily. She questions the idea that if individuals deserve the acknowledgement of their death in the obituary columns the general public must perceive them to rank higher than those whose death goes unmentioned. Similarly, those whose deaths are surrounded by circumstances that mean that they are acknowledged by a minute's silence before a football game or the silence marked by a president on the Whitehouse lawn must be seen to have a higher ranking than un-named victims of a shooting in a foreign country. Butler questions whose lives are real enough that

they are marked when their life ends, and comments that the 200,000 Iraqi children killed in the Gulf war have been effectively dehumanised.

> 'There are no obituaries for the war casualties that the United States inflict, and there cannot be. If there were to be an obituary, there would have had to have been a life, a life worth noting, a life worth valuing and preserving, a life that qualifies for recognition. Although we might argue that it would be impractical to write obituaries for all those people or for all people, I think we have to ask again and again, how the obituary functions as the instrument by which grievability is publicly distributed. It is the means by which a life becomes, or fails to become, a publicly grievable life, an icon for national self-recognition, the means by which a life becomes note-worthy. …The matter is not a simple one, for if a life is not grievable, it is not quite a life; it does not qualify as a life and is not worth a note. It is already the unburied, if not the unburiable' (Butler 2004:34).

This may be why the ceremonies commemorating the loss of life such as that on September 11th 2001 always include the reading out of the names of the victims – to reinforce the idea that these were 'real' people with 'real' lives and families who continue to mourn them.

It would seem from reviewing the different interpretations of the words mourning and melancholia that mourning contains within it a sense of being a defined process with a series of stages through which the bereaved must go, whereas melancholia is a state with connotations of an illness. However, there may also exist a space between these two conditions, where mourning is not fully resolved but has not developed into melancholia. The way in which the medical profession and psychologists have come to understand the process of mourning developed in the twentieth century. Considering mourning and melancholia in terms of trauma theory and the approaches used in grief counselling to understand how the bereaved are feeling, can also aid the understanding of how it may be possible to create artwork to connect with the unresolved grief of people in mourning.

Dealing with Grief and Trauma

The areas of grief counselling, grief therapy and trauma theory have developed since the Second World War as a result of the acknowledgement of, and understanding that, for some people the process of mourning takes a long period of time and may lead to conditions such as unresolved or complicated grief. This section builds on the definitions used in psychoanalytical theory discussed earlier in the chapter and shows how the condition of melancholia or unresolved mourning has been incorporated into modern medical thinking and how it is now considered by those who deal with grieving

people who ask for help. This will assist in locating the area of research being addressed and enables a greater understanding of the interaction of the viewer with the practice research created and shown to the audience as part of this research project.

Understanding the process of mourning

During the Victorian era social etiquette demanded a set of rites and customs that would be followed after the death of a member of the family. Clocks would be stopped at the time of death, curtains drawn and social behaviour would be changed for a certain period of time depending on the closeness of the relationship to the deceased (Morley, 1971). From the late 19th century onwards mourning rituals had decreased because of certain influences. Between 1870 and 1918 there was a significant rise in the interest in cremation as a means to dispose of the dead. Supporters of cremating the dead suggested that 'cremations for all with everyday clothes should replace funeral gloom and all its dismal rituals' (Jalland, 2010:251). A decline in Christian belief, resulting in part from the publication by Charles Darwin of 'Origin of Species' in 1859 and the growing acceptance of his ideas, was followed by the passing of The Cremation Act in 1902. The number of casualties and fatalities resulting from the First World War meant that such a large proportion of the population were affected by bereavement that it was not practical to observe the complex and lengthy mourning rituals previously observed. There was also the complication that in many cases there were no bodies to bury.

It was then, in 1917, during the First World War, that Freud wrote the essay discussed earlier, describing mourning as a 'normal' process that had a finite duration and melancholia as being failed or 'abnormal' mourning. Sociologist Peter Jupp and Professor Tony Walter describe how the Second World War 'lifted the pall of death' (Jupp and Walter, 1999:257) and more of the population felt that loss and bereavement were 'more widely shared'. Historian Pat Jalland described how the Blitz spirit had an influence on the way the British response to loss and grief changed during this time.

> 'Death, loss and grief were inevitable parts of the experience of the Blitz that did not fit the paradigm and had to be minimized or concealed … At the heart of the myth of the Blitz then, were countless individual lives which were directly destroyed by it and numerous families wounded by sorrow that could not be expressed: grief at the loss of loved ones had to be internalised, sometimes for years. … Individual bereaved people were left to grieve privately, displaying outward stoicism and courage' (Jalland, 2010:124).

This was compounded by the loss of the social rituals of mourning. The fading of the tradition of wearing mourning dress for a period after bereavement meant that those who had experienced loss were not easily identifiable by other members of the public.

It wasn't until 1944 that the psychiatrist Eric Lindemann published a system of management of grief symptoms which could be accomplished in a short period of treatment involving discussing the patient's grief work with them and helping them to process it – sharing their work of mourning (Lindemann, cited in Parkes, 2002:370). This could also be done by non-psychiatrists and therefore it was possible for non-professional advisors to be involved in what became known as 'grief counselling'. In the UK this has developed into the establishment of volunteer organisations such as Cruse Bereavement Counselling, established in 1959, which trains non-professionals in grief counselling. In the USA however, there was more emphasis on teaching people about death which led to the formation in 1976 of the 'Association for Death Education and Counseling' who describe themselves as

> 'an international, professional organization dedicated to promoting excellence and recognizing diversity in death education, care of the dying, grief counseling and research in thanatology' (ADEC, 2010).

The recognition that the work of mourning follows a set of stages or phases was documented in 1961 in the research of Colin Murray Parkes and John Bowlby who first published a list of three stages of grief bereaved people go through after the death of a loved one; this was later revised to a four-stage model (Bowlby and Parkes, 1970). The three stages were adapted by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross to include stages of grief which she had observed in patients who had been given the diagnosis of a terminal illness (Kubler-Ross, 1969). The idea that both those with a terminal illness and the bereaved had to undergo stages in their mourning was progressed by the further research of Parkes who described 'phases' of mourning including numbness; yearning and anger; disorganisation and despair; and reorganised behaviour, where the bereaved person goes back to their everyday life, but a life restructured to accommodate the fact that the deceased is not there to take part; (Worden 2010:38) and also that of Sanders whose phases include shock; awareness; conservation/withdrawal, where the bereaved feel they have little energy and need to conserve their strength, both physically and emotionally by not interacting with others, not returning phone calls, not going out etc; healing and renewal (Worden 2010:38). As with those described by Kubler-Ross in patients with a terminal illness, individuals may experience some or all of these phases, not necessarily in the order described and may experience each phase for varying amounts of time.

This idea was then developed by the psychologist William Worden who proposed that

in order to progress the work of mourning, certain tasks had to be undertaken by the bereaved (Worden 2010:39). The first of these is to accept the reality of the loss of the person who has died. The second is to process the pain of grief. The third task is to adjust to a world without the deceased. This needs to be done in three ways:

1. externally, e.g. living in an empty house or managing on one's own;
2. internally, e.g. developing one's sense of self without the deceased; and
3. spiritually, e.g. searching for meaning in the loss and questioning one's faith in a God that allowed this to happen.

The degree to which the work of mourning is successful in some people rather than others is explained by Worden as depending on what he defined as 'mediators of mourning' (Worden, 2010:57). These include the relationship or kinship with the deceased; the strength of the attachment to the deceased; how the person died; previous experience of bereavement; the bereaved's personality, age and gender; social variables e.g. the extent of social support; and other life stresses happening at the same time (Worden, 2010:75).

Trauma Theory

Grieving is often described as a kind of trauma and the research into the trauma associated with stress and loss and that associated with grief have overlapping areas. For an event to be described as a trauma, there are certain criteria that clinical psychologists Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun suggest should be fulfilled. Firstly, the term trauma indicates that the event comes as a shock such that the person has not had the time to prepare themselves psychologically for the event. The perceived lack of control over events is also more likely to make the person feel traumatised and change their psychological well-being, as does the event being 'out of the ordinary' - the loss of someone close through old age is less likely to be deemed traumatic than suicide or other sudden death. The creation of long lasting problems for the bereaved, the issue of blame and the time of life at which the event occurs are all factors which determine the extent of psychological difficulties created by the event in the short and long term (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 1995:17). All these criteria can be met by the experience of bereavement and the accompanying grief and mourning.

Similar to the argument of Judith Butler that being bereaved may increase one's sensitivity to the vulnerability of others (Butler, 2004:30), Tedeschi has found that those who suffer from trauma may be more likely to offer support to others in return. Bereaved parents in particular share their grief with other bereaved parents and this

'promotes a sense of having completed a substantial portion of the healing process' (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995:37). Later, in Chapter 3, the use of interaction and the use of tropes such as metaphor in the language of bereavement counselling groups will be discussed.

One of the newer models of grieving proposed is that devised by the clinical psychologists Professor Margaret Stroebe and Dr Henk Schut of Utrecht University. Their model, called the Dual Process Model of Coping with Bereavement, states that during the first stage of bereavement people have two modes of focus. In one they are focussed on thoughts of loss and in the other they are less distressed and look forward to the future. They term these 'loss orientation' and 'restoration orientation' (Stroebe and Schut, 2010:277). Further, some people may become fixated on one orientation and these can then become 'chronic grief' or 'avoided grief' respectively. The Dual Process model does, however, have some resonance with the writing of Kathleen Woodward and her question of whether it is possible to be in a grief that 'is lived in such a way that one is still in mourning but no longer exclusively devoted to mourning' (Woodward, 1990:96).

The question of whether one would ever want to completely recover from bereavement and allow the ego to make new attachments is supported by the work of Professor Dennis Klass in his theory of continuing bonds. In this he described how in some cases attachments to the deceased are maintained rather than relinquished and that 'letting go does not mean forgetting' (Parkes, 2002:380). The continuing bonds research found that for children whose parents had died it was beneficial for them if in the first years after the death they developed a set of memories and feelings which kept them connected to their dead parents: 'Rather than letting go they seemed to be continuing the relationship' (Klass, Silverman and Nickman, 1996:xvii).

An example of a successful, culturally specific, element in the processing of mourning is that shown in Japan. In the Japanese culture, one of the goals of mourning is to maintain a link with the deceased. The psychiatrist Joe Yamamoto and his colleagues, researching the prevalence of depression in widows of different religions discovered that Japanese widows were less likely to be depressed and anxious and suffer from melancholia because of their belief in the presence of the deceased husbands as ancestors. After death in Japan, the ceremonies and rituals associated with the funeral continue for much longer than in the UK. Typically, ceremonies are held every seven days until forty-nine days after the death and then again at one hundred days. After this, ceremonies occur annually until 33 or sometimes 50 years after the death. Many Japanese people have a 'butsudan' or Buddhist altar in their home which is where memorial tablets to the deceased are placed. After 50 years, the commemorative tablet

of the dead person is taken from the 'butsudan' as the soul of the dead person is thought then to join that of the collective ancestors (Suzuki, 2013:17). Yamamoto concluded that the 'Japanese custom of ancestor worship serves an important adaptive function in the work of mourning' (Yamamoto et al. 1969:1660). One Japanese person, corresponding with me about his experience of these ceremonies wrote that

> 'On each occasion, we remember my grandfather, and at the same time we are aware of the passage of time since his death. Once each ceremony is over, there is almost an obligation to feel that a milestone has passed – being supported by this environment, I believe, helps us get over his death' (Correspondent C).

Klass, writing in *Continuing Bonds* also discusses the idea of ancestor worship (*sosen suhai*) as a way of maintaining close personal emotional bonds with the deceased. In this way, the dead remain a continuing presence in the life of the family and are accessible to the bereaved (Klass, 1996:64). This is also reported in the comparative studies between UK and Japanese societies undertaken by Christine Valentine (Valentine, 2010:290).

Silvermann and Klass conclude that bereavement needs to be considered as

> 'a cognitive as well as an emotional process that takes place in a social context of which the deceased is a part. The process does not end, but in different ways bereavement affects the mourner for the rest of his or her life. People are changed by the experience; they do not get over it, and part of the change is a transformed but continuing relationship with the deceased' (Klass et. al., 1996:19).

Material Culture

An additional area to investigate is that of the material culture of mourning. Derived from sociological and anthropological methodologies, material culture 'consists of not merely "things" but also of the meanings they hold for people' (Gerritsen and Riello, 2015:2). In contrast to the psychoanalytical world of internal thinking and individual emotions of mourning, sociological and anthropological approaches examine cultural and national behaviours in relation to rituals, social relations and objects. This has particular relevance to the study of the importance of textiles which were owned by the deceased which may have emotional significance to the bereaved. Objects such as clothes and other personal

possessions take on a special significance after death and serve both as comforter and to keep the memory of the deceased alive.

Material culture examines the objects and items which matter to people. In the context of this project, the main focus has been on the way material objects evoke memories of the dead and facilitate the mourning process. After the death of a loved one, the bereaved begin the process of deciding the fate of the material objects, or belongings, of the deceased. At some point after bereaveavement, there comes a time when family members will sort through the personal possessions and send some to charity shops, sell some and decide to keep those things which hold the most meaning for them. These become 'metaphors and symbols of love and identity' and we 'remember, hold on to or let go of the deceased through their material possessions' (Gibson 2008:3).

In their book *Death Memory and Material Culture* anthropologists Elizabeth Hallam and Jenny Hockey discuss how many people take comfort in the rituals of mourning. They also commend the creation of memory spaces where objects and photographs of the deceased can be displayed. The use of ordinary everyday objects in the creation of art as a focus for grief is also discussed. They state that 'the recovery of discarded objects and the reinterpretation of those things that are overlooked, devalued or remain "invisible" from dominant social, economic or political perspectives, has been an important strategy in artistic discourses of the twentieth century' and that employing 'used material fragments' resonates with those who have been bereaved. This allows memories to 'flood forward through marginal materials or objects so ordinary that they once commanded no special attention' (Hallam & Hockey, 2001:12).

There is a wide range of material objects, places and things that are used in emotional responses to bereavement, both in the public and private spheres. As well as keeping the possessions of the deceased, the bringing of objects such as cards, candles and flowers to the site of a death is also part of the material culture of mourning. The increase in public displays of grief and mourning is often attributed to manipulation of the public by the media, particularly after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997 although much earlier instances of this behaviour have been recorded. When the Cenotaph was first unveiled in 1919 many people laid flowers at the foot of the monument, not only during the inaugural military parade, but also for a long time afterwards. By 1921 over 30,000 cards and ribbons attached to flowers and wreaths had been collected by officials. These were then offered to the Imperial War Museum but they declined to take them, with a spokesman stating that they were of no interest (Williams, 2007:46). In 1989, when 95 Liverpool football fans died in the Hillsborough stadium disaster, many people visited and left flowers and messages at the home ground at Anfield. Susanne Greenhalgh suggests that this, along with the increase in roadside memorials (dating from the beginning of the twentieth century) is a way of

expressing private grief in public 'in a manner which deliberately solicits the attention of passing strangers' and that it 'signals a desire deliberately to break free of conventional boundaries to the representation of grief or anger at unnecessary death' (Kear and Steinberg, 1999:45).

Critics of the increasing trend for leaving flowers at the roadside and of public displays of grief, comment that this should be a privately, not publicly, displayed emotion (*Don't get me started: Rosie Boycott on False Grief,* 2005). Walter suggests that the 'British way of grief' is one of emotional reserve, (Walter 1997, cited in Hallam and Hockey 2001:99) with words such as 'respectful' and 'dignified' being used to describe traditional mourning and funerals which celebrate the life of the deceased rather than focussing on the loss of life. The scenes of public grief and mourning after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales were unusual for the British public. Writers in the media were, at the time, accused of manipulating the emotions of the public over her death. Some years later, when public displays of emotion were seemingly becoming more commonplace, newspaper columnists such as Carol Sarler began a cry to stop this 'pornography of grief' (Sarler, 2007). Patrick West, writing for Civitas suggests that such displays of empathy 'do not help the bereaved' and that our 'culture of ostentatious caring, concerns rather, projecting one's ego and informing others what a deeply caring individual you are' (West, 2004:1). The reason for this according to the American sociologist Stjepan Mestrovic is because 'we live in a post emotional age - one characterised by crocodile tears and manufactured emotion' (cited in West, 2004:2). West himself would seem to endorse this by stating that we have become 'addicted to showy displays of empathy because we are a lonely and unhappy society' (West, 2004:7). Darian Leader in his book *The New Black* suggests that this is missing the point entirely - he argues that no-one can 'seriously argue that these tears are for the dead figures themselves. Rather it is precisely the public framework that allows people to articulate their own grief for other, unrelated losses.' In this way the 'public facilitates the private' (Leader, 2009:77).

The material approaches to the demonstration of grief and mourning continue to be evident in contemporary society in the UK, particularly in relation to the deaths of soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan in the last fifteen years. Informal rituals created by the public involving the material elements of flowers, coffins, flags etc. are supplementing formal rituals of mourning such as Remembrance Day, for example the Holocaust Memorial Day which was established comparatively recently in 2001. The spontaneous creation of a ritual in the marking of the journey of the coffins of soldiers from RAF Lyneham through the village of Wootton Bassett (now Royal Wootton Bassett) is one such contemporary informal ceremony that has became a ritual. Coffins containing bodies of soldiers repatriated to the UK after being killed in action in Afghanistan or Iraq passed through the town and local residents marked the journey by standing by the roadside in silence This continued until 2012 when the repatriation of

bodies moved to RAF Brize Norton. Whilst this has been criticised as 'recreational grieving' by Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Fry, who also described it as 'mawkish sentimentality,' (Coghlan, 2010) he failed to acknowledge that this ritual was originally created by the residents of the town of Wootton Bassett themselves. This new willingness to openly and publically acknowledge the deaths of soldiers was manifest in the 100th anniversary year of the beginning of the First World War by the creation of 888,246 ceramic poppies, one for each soldier who died, and their installation during 2014 at the Tower of London.

The bringing of flowers to a grave and including them in funeral rites is a long-established part of the ritual of burying the dead. The use of flowers in roadside memorials has become an important part of the grieving process. Hallam and Hockey suggest that the 'resilience of flowers as expressive materials of memory may be explained, paradoxically in terms of their fragility,' (Hallam and Hockey: 2001:5) and that it is the ephemeral nature of flowers 'their rapid discoloration and premature putrefaction which relate them to human life', (Camporesi, 1994 cited in Hallam and Hockey, 2001:5) and is a form of representing the way the body physically decays and returns to the earth. A text written in 1580 on an interior wall of a house in East Sussex contains the line 'fleashe as flower dothe vade awaye' bringing to mind the 'memento mori' idea of constant reminders of mortality. This text suggests that the linking of flowers and decay is a sentiment long-held in the British psyche (Hallam and Hockey, 2001:133) although this would seem to be a curious reason to give flowers to a bereaved person. Recent years have seen the emergence of the more elaborate floral tribute. Florists now make 'floral toys, vehicles, books, cushions, footballs, animals' and Professor Tony Walter suggests that this is because to the British 'giving someone a flower means 'I love you' and so to lay a flower on the coffin is to make a last statement to the deceased a statement that the reserved British might not be able to say in public in words' (Walter 1994:183).

Textile and art practice

There have been many occasions where a traumatic event has caused artists to create work that acknowledges the impact of the trauma on the immediate community or society. Langlands and Bell have commented that 'creating work in response to living history is possibly the greatest challenge for an artist and one of undeniable responsibility' (Tate Britain, 2004). Also the idea of personal, private grief being made public could be illustrated by any number of artists who use their own experience of loss and specific bereavements to inform their work. This experience may have resonances with the viewer and may allow a connection to be made. The artists discussed in this

section have been selected as their work directly reflects on traumatic events that have occurred in their own private lives and to which they have responded with artwork shown to the public. These are examples of textile artists using cloth to materialise their work of mourning or to memorialise people who haved died, but there is little evidence of textile artists undertaking practice-based research into creating artworks to evoke the emotions of grief and loss in the viewer which this research addresses.

As an example of a private emotion made public, the artist Doris Salcedo created a spontaneous work of art as an act of mourning in 1999, after the murder of the Colombian humourist Jaime Garzon. Salcedo and her fellow artist friends made 'a ritual act of mourning' by pinning 5,000 roses on a 150-metre wall in Bogota in front of the house where Garzon had lived (which was already the focus of mourning by the public who had pinned messages on it). The roses were left to wither and die and became 'an ephemeral site of memory'. Salcedo explains her involvement in the action as a manifestation of her pain as Garzon had 'played an important role in giving Colombians some sense of identity'. Later that year when a professor at the National University of Colombia was murdered on the campus, the students spontaneously covered the walls of the campus with flowers. Although Salcedo describes her initial action as an act of homage rather than the creation of an artwork - 'when someone dies, one brings flowers' – it was this that 'operated in the social sphere' and prompted the students to act in a similar articulation of mourning (Basualdo, 2000:33).

Another example of private grief made public is the work of Sarah Sudhoff. Sudhoff is a photographer who has created a body of work documenting the textile surfaces on which people have died. Her work, called *At the hour of our death* is influenced by having seen a 'clean-up crew' at the house of a teenaged friend who had committed suicide. The cleaning of the house and the removal of all traces of the event that had just occurred reaffirmed the comment by Philippe Ariès that 'society no longer observes a pause; the disappearance of an individual no longer affects its continuity' (Ariès, 2008:560).[4] The photographs show bedding, carpets and upholstery 'marked with the signs of the passing of human life' (Sudhoff, s.d). Her large-scale photographs focus on small areas of textile with stains - of blood and other body fluids. (Figure 1.) Their vivid colour and staining patterns are in stark contrast to the absence of the body to which they once belonged.

The immediate nature of the removal of the evidence of her friend's death prompted

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[4] The impact of the staining of cloth and the reasons for its use in textile art practice will be discussed later in Chapter 3.

Sudhoff to meticulously document the moment of the death of others and to present them in such a way as 'to allow what is generally invisible to become visible, and to engage with a process from which we have become disconnected' (Sudhoff s.d).

This image is unavailable due to copyright restrictions

Figure1. Sarah Sudhoff *Illness, female, 60 years old* (2010)

The creation of art would therefore appear to have a role in the materialisation and facilitation of the work of mourning. This has been described by Peter Sacks with reference to the writing of an elegy (Sacks, 1985). The act of writing removes the bereaved from grief and loss and allows consolation to occur. In describing the loss of the person, a distance is created between the lost object or person and the means by which he expresses this loss and so it may be that this could be applied to any artistic practice or creative process in which the sense of loss is conveyed.

The use of cloth has a particular ability to convey feelings and emotions. Our familiarity with cloth in every-day life means that we have a vocabulary not only of words but also

of experience in the sensation of seeing, touching, handling and encountering cloth. We can therefore draw upon this vocabulary to think about the involvement of cloth in containing and processing thoughts and emotions. The use of such a ubiquitous substance in artwork involves a transformation from a basic common material into an artwork by exploring the poetics of its materiality.

Clothing in particular can evoke memories of the deceased and keeping clothes can assist in dealing with loss. The fashion historian Juliet Ash, in her essay 'The tie: presence and absence' in the book *The Gendered Object* (Kirkham, 1996) examines the idea of the sensation of absence and questions whether feeling close to a person through an item of clothing trivialises the deceased person. Hallam and Hockey question whether using objects such as clothing as a resource for meaning-making might be considered as sentimental as 'disparate fragments which reside in a female domain of excessive emotion and irrational possessive impulses' (Hallam & Hockey, 2001:19). However, the fact that cloth maintains an intimate association with the body means that on bereavement the clothes of the deceased do take on a special significance. At the end of life, textile objects such as clothes can become a link to the deceased in a similar way to how young children retain a link to their mother through a transitional object.

Described by paediatrician and psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott, (1953) transitional objects are typically textile objects such as blankets, pieces of cloth, or soft toys. They provide an intermediate developmental phase between the psychic and external reality at a time when a child is beginning to understand the separation between itself and its mother. Until this time the child sees the mother and itself as a whole. Understanding this separation causes the child to feel that it has lost something and the object is used to represent all types of mothering. The transitional object is the first 'not-me' possession that the child owns and is particularly important at bedtime and as a defence against anxiety. Later in life when a person dies, their clothes are often kept by the bereaved as a way of keeping the person close, of maintaining a connection with them. Most importantly, cloth will retain the smell of the person and may come to substitute for the person themselves. Margaret Gibson states that transitional objects 'express the anguish and militate against the mother's absence as a primary figure and corporeal site of absence and loss' (Gibson, 2004:288). She also suggests that transitional objects can work in this way in grief, as they become 'both a means of holding on and letting go.' The garments or fabrics of the deceased chosen to be kept are then associated with the first moments of mourning and so signify the memory of that devastating and overwhelming feeling as well as the memory of the deceased person. These become what she describes as 'melancholy objects' which act to memorialise the intense immediate mourning period and signify the incomplete nature of mourning - that it

never really goes away. John Bowlby documented this when interviewing grieving adults. One of the widows he interviewed claimed that 'Mourning never ends. Only as time goes on, it erupts less frequently' (Bowlby, cited in Hallam and Hockey 2001:102). This is echoed by the American author Joyce Carol Oates who stated in a newspaper interview that 'Grief is an obsessive state. The feelings never vanish' (Teeman, 2011). This feeling of unresolved but not complicated grief is what is explored in this research. The creation of artwork, using textiles, when shown to the public may make a connection with this unresolved grief and so assist the viewer in progressing their work of mourning. The showing of the work created as part of this research and the responses obtained by members of the viewing public will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Hallam and Hockey describe how the image of a painful memory of the death of a loved one is often likened to 'breaches in the skin which defy the supposed healing power of time' (Hallam and Hockey, 2001:36). In his essay *Mourning and Melancholia* Freud suggested that melancholia could be thought of as an 'open wound' whereas mourning is a healing process but one which marks us forever, leaving an emotional scar. As the poet Elizabeth Jennings wrote in her poem *Words about Grief*

> 'Time does not heal,
> It makes a half stitched scar
> That can be broken and you feel
> Grief as total as in its first hour' (Hallam and Hockey, 2001: 36).[5]

Textile artist and writer Nancy Gildart has documented work created as an act of mourning in response to deaths from terrorist attacks. She argues that the use of cloth as a material gesture responding to public trauma provides 'a space for actual and metaphysical conversation and made those participating feel that they were part of a bigger whole' (Gildart, 2007:251). Those who make, wear or participate become part of a conversation and community by publicly sharing a private act of mourning. The textile artist's response to such a psychic hole would be to patch, or sew up, embellish, hide or make beautiful and these efforts hold open the space for grieving by the meditative qualities of a focused repetitive action. This idea is also present in the creation of *kesa* by Japanese Buddhists.. *Kesa* are sometimes made to honour the memory of a deceased person and are traditionally made from rags. Relatives of the deceased may donate fabrics to be made into a *kesa* and these can sometimes be valuable fabrics to show the

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[5] The use of skin as a metaphor for containing traumatic memories will be discussed further in Chapter 4. 'Connecting with the viewer'.

status of the deceased. The creation of the *kesa* is undertaken in a meditative atmosphere, reciting a prayer mantra with each stitch.[6]

In contrast to the positive emotion generated by creating what Gildart describes as 'textile actions', the journalist Karal Ann Marling wrote that 'fine art takes too long to serve a useful purpose in a crisis' (cited in Gildart, 2007:252). Yet textile based actions which spontaneously occur following a personal or public loss are a response to people's basic needs to deal with loss immediately, and start to grieve. 'Loss must be marked and it cannot be represented' (Butler, 2004:467). This is about immediacy of expression rather than good design and as such acts as a channel for outrage, fear, doubt and sorrow. The results often lack aesthetic appeal, but the need to do something means people reach for what is close to hand for materials that allow them to express solidarity and grief. As artist Jessica Stammen has written 'bearing witness to this disaster … allows someone to claim this disaster as their own … so that the way is made for hope' (Stammen cited in Gildart, 2007:244). After the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York in 2001, tributes to the police officers who had died were written on an American Flag which had been hung outside the building Number 2, World Financial Center, one of the buildings near the destroyed World Trade Center. The flag, thought to have been donated to boost morale, was initially signed by officers to pay their respects to their colleagues who had died. Relatives of the victims then signed the flag as well as people working near ground zero. The names of the 23 deceased New York police officers were eventually written on the flag together with tributes to the emergency workers who entered the building immediately after it was hit by the planes. David W. Chen reported in the New York Times that eventually there was no space left on the flag as 'in cursive script and block print the messages capture cathartic expressions of grief and gratitude in language that veers from the personal to the political' (Chen, 2001). Interestingly this 'impromptu, communal, memorial cloth' has now been sent to Afghanistan as an 'inspirational and emotional memento' to the American troops fighting there. This specific piece of textile, the flag, is able, in its initial form, to inspire and encourage feelings of nationhood and identity in the population. Then, after a traumatic event, it has been doubly imbued with a sense of commemoration and emotion, and goes on to have a third life in transmitting a sense of pride in soldiers serving far from home. This cloth with all its symbolism and semiotics works as a powerful tool in communicating emotions, memorial and memory.

Whether as a result of terrorism or natural causes, the experience of bereavement is universal and the work of mourning is undertaken by us all. However, if mourning is

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[6] The fabrics used in the construction of the kesa will be discussed in Chapter 3.

never fully resolved and we are all in some way marked by the trauma of bereavement, viewing art that has at its core the communication of the emotion of grief may allow the viewer to progress their own work of mourning. Leader argues that it is not the content of works of art that have been made as a result of loss which is the significant factor. He states that it is simply the fact that they have been made 'from an empty space, from an absence' and he suggests that creating something ourselves will allow us 'access to our own grief and to begin the work of mourning' (Leader, 2009:207). Gildart echoes this by stating that 'in this place of making, the real work of mourning can take place' (Gildart, 2007:253).

As Sue Prichard has written: [7]

> 'The process of making can … be a challenge, forcing the maker to admit and face up to stark truths and harsh realities, particularly those associated with the untimely or tragic death of a loved one. In this case, the creation of a tangible memorial to a lost family member or friend provides succour in the aftermath of a personal tragedy; the physical act of stitching also acts as a lynchpin on the therapeutic road to emotional recovery' (Prichard, 2008).

Drawing on this it would seem that the current location of this research project is the investigation of the space between mourning and melancholia which, as discussed earlier can be a space in which one is suffering from an interminable grief - a grief that is 'lived in such a way that one is still in mourning but no longer exclusively devoted to mourning' (Woodward 1990:96). As the playwright Robert Anderson wrote, 'Death ends a life but it does not end a relationship which struggles on in the survivor's mind toward some resolution which it never finds' (Troup, 1974:77).

This chapter has identified the literature from a number of relevant fields of enquiry and the art of a number of practitioners to locate the spaces in which this research is situated. The combination of psychoanalytical theory, trauma theory and the understanding of the nature of mourning has shown that in acknowledging the importance of cloth in the lives of the deceased and the bereaved there is a conceptual foundation for the development of this research. This has focussed on the ways in which the use of cloth in contemporary art practice can materialise the work of mourning; make a connection with any unresolved mourning in the viewer and so progress their work of mourning. Building on this theoretical research, studio work has been undertaken to see whether the viewer can make any emotional connection with it and relate in written or aural responses how it may contribute to their emotional state and feelings about the deceased. This project focuses on the long

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[7] While curator of textiles at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

association of cloth with the body throughout life and afterwards in death and argues that this makes it uniquely placed to be used as a metaphor for grief and loss.

Chapter 2. Approaching and undertaking the research

This research project uses an interdisciplinary approach to research the emotional states of mourning and melancholia. The research aims to explore the space between mourning and melancholia, a space which most people who have experienced grief inhabit; where the emotional bonds that tie us to the deceased are not completely severed and the work of mourning is 'infinitesimally slow' (Woodward, 1990:94).

The project examines how textile art can act as a metaphor for grief and mourning; and how processes such as the staining and mending of cloth in contemporary art practice can be used as a way of understanding mourning and may be able to connect with any unresolved grief of the viewer and so progress their work of mourning. These questions have been investigated through three different areas: psychoanalytical theory, trauma theory and the material culture of mourning. These have all been considered in conjunction with and informed by contemporary textile art studio practice.

The understanding of the way practice and theoretical research can work together to produce new knowledge is a changing and developing field. This chapter will discuss previously published justifications for this approach, strategies for documenting the different stages of research and will set out how these apply to this research project. Using the key texts such as *Practice as Research* edited by Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt (2010), *Art Practice as Research* by Graeme Sullivan (2010), *Visualising Research* by Carole Gray and Julian Malins (2004), *Material Thinking* by Paul Carter (2004) and *(Re)inventing Artists' Research* by Robyn Stewart (2003), this chapter will discuss how practice based research is able, through the intertwining strands of practice and theory, to address issues and concepts, resulting in the creation of new knowledge.

Practice as Research/Research as Practice

This is a practice-based, interdisciplinary investigation, as defined by Graeme Sullivan, who has written about the conjunction of theoretical research and practice research, where 'theories and practices are teased apart and meanings disclosed' (Sullivan, 2005:111). In this research project, however, the use of the term interdisciplinary can be defined in a broader sense in that not only are different theoretical disciplines combined, but studio practice is also integrated into the research process. The simultaneous investigation of theory, objects and practice work together to inform each other. Sullivan suggests that using the image of a braid can 'capture the dynamic complexity and simplicity of art practice as research'(Sullivan, 2005:111). The 'infolding and unfurling form that disengages and reconnects with core themes while continually moving into new spaces'

acts as a metaphor for the way in which areas of research can inform each other and create new knowledge (Sullivan, 2005:112).

Irit Rogoff has described interdisciplinarity as 'a place of being "without"' (Phelan & Rogoff, 2001:34), a space of active participation where it is discovered that 'previous methodologies are not sufficient while simultaneously resisting the formation of specific criteria to replace them' (Springgay, Irwin & Kind, 2005:898). Stephanie Springgay has devised a way of thinking about the methodology employed by the **a**rtist/**r**esearcher/**t**eacher in their inquiry through the process of art making and writing and proposes the use of the term 'a/r/tography'. She describes this as 'a methodology of embodiment…never isolated in its activity but always engaged with the world' (Springgay, Irwin & Kind, 2005:899). Rogoff has described how encounters with artwork are not analytic of each other.The art and the text 'do not work as separate discourses… but that they are interconnections that speak in conversation with, in and through art and text such that encounters are constitutive rather than descriptive' (Springgay, Irwin & Kind, 2005:899). In this research project the text and the artwork work together and both of them address the research questions. The role of viewers is also considered in the notion of a/r/tography in that they 'figure into the process of meaning making, so that each informs and shapes the other in an active moment of lived inquiry' (Springgay, Irwin & Kind, 2005:900). This has a resonance with this research project where the role of the viewer in the receiving of the artwork plays such an important role.

In this research the knowledge obtained from the different areas of psychoanalysis, trauma theory and the understanding of the different models of grief have informed the studio practice and the artworks created. Likewise the studio practice outcomes have caused consideration and examination of the theoretical inputs of the research to enable a refining of the areas investigated to create a braid of knowledge. This braid brings the sociological and cultural use of cloth together with psychoanalytical theory and a consideration of the affectivity of artwork.

Barbara Bolt, discussing the role of the written element of practice based research, refers to it as an exegesis, a critical explanation or interpretation, and states that 'rather than just operating as an explanation of the practice, the exegesis plays a critical and complementary role in revealing the work of art' (Bolt, 2007:31). She also states that 'through the vehicle of the exegesis, practice becomes theory generating' (Bolt, 2007:33). Similarly, Estelle Barrett states that the

> 'dialogic relationship between studio practice and the writing of the creative arts
> exegesis is crucial to articulating and harnessing studio methodologies for

further application beyond the field of creative arts so that the practice as research extends the general field of research and is validated alongside other more traditional forms of research' (Barrett, 2007:143).

Stewart, writing in her paper '(Re)inventing artist's Research' (Stewart, 2003) suggests that, in arts practice, theory and practice become 'inextricably linked and mutually dependent' because of the way artists 'position practice and the acts of production to embody and express theory' (Stewart, 2003:2). She calls this a hybrid practice as although the research is based in qualitative methods, its practices 'blur the boundaries of aesthetics and experience in an effort to capture and reflect the complex dynamics involved in the phenomenology of artistic practice'. Graeme Sullivan writing in *Art practice as research* states that the 'artist is the key figure in the creation of new insights and awareness that has the potential to change the way we see and think' (Sullivan, 2010:70); and that the studio is 'a site where research can be undertaken that is sufficiently robust to yield knowledge and understanding that is individually situated and socially and culturally relevant' (Sullivan, 2005:78). So it would seem that practice as research has a unique position in being able to address issues and ideas with a different perspective and to present findings in new ways.

Estelle Barrett, in her exploration of practice-based research, turned to the ideas of Michel Foucault to develop her ideas of how practice and research can work together to create new knowledge. Foucault tries to move away from the idea of the artist and his work as separate identities in his idea of 'author function'. He extends the idea of discourse from one only using language to 'language and practices that operate to produce objects of knowledge' (Barrett, 2007:136). He argues that the idea of 'man-and-his-work' refuses the idea of 'the art and art practice as an interplay of meanings and signifiers operating within a complex system'(Barrett, 2007:136). He states that the work should operate as 'a mode of existence, circulation and functioning of certain discourses within society'(Barrett, 2007:137). In this project the resulting artworks reflect not only on the position of the artist with regard to bereavement and grief but also on the theoretical inputs into the research. They therefore come together, as Estelle Barrett states, and 'allow researchers to reflect … on how practice operates as knowledge production and how the outcomes of studio enquiry emerge in relation to established knowledge and broader institutional discourses' (Barrett, 2007:138). The practice elements of the research result from a consideration of all the theoretical research inputs and together with reflection on previous practice outcomes have been created as a contribution to the discourse on grief and mourning in a wider context.

Irit Rogoff derived the phrase 'art as interlocutor' to describe the change in position of the viewer from that posited by theories of spectatorship as critical analyst to that of an active

participant in which 'we transform that which we are taking part in' (Rogoff, 2002:46). This acknowledges the performative aspect of the relationship between the artwork and the viewer and as such suggests an active conversation or dialogic relationship in thinking through art. This area will be explored further in Chapter 4 (Connecting with the viewer) where the relationship between the artist, the art and the completion of the art by the viewer will be explored.

Practice-based research relies heavily on the idea of the reflective practitioner, that the learning takes place through action and 'intentional, explicit reflection on that action' (Barrett, 2009:5). Barrett also states that many practice-based research projects are motivated by 'personal interest and experience, rather than the scientific model of objective 'disinterestedness' but that this can lead to a 'more profound model of learning' which not only supports the acquisition of knowledge but also allows for the production of new knowledge. Unlike the usual accepted model of academic neutrality, it is this very personal connection with the subject matter which is one of the most important and distinct features of practice-based research.

Bringing an element of the personal to research also means that it is subjective, and brings into question the role of tacit knowledge, and reflective practice in the research process. The term 'tacit' comes from the Latin word 'tacere' meaning 'implied or inferred without direct expression' (Allen, 1994:1245). Michael Polanyi, describing the idea of tacit knowledge described it as 'one can know more than one can tell' (Polanyi, 1966:8). This has been interpreted by Tim Ingold, writing on making, as

> 'ways of knowing and doing that grow through the experience and practice of a craft, but which adhere so closely to the person of the practitioner as to remain out of reach of explication or analysis' (Ingold, 2013:109).

In art practice there can be difficulty in articulating the knowledge of practice beyond simply explaining technique. Michael Jarvis suggests that the tacit nature of art practice is 'the binding together of theory and practice so that one cannot be distinguished from the other' (Jarvis, 2007:204).

Donald Schon writing in *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* (Schon, 1983:52) suggests that reflective writing allows greater access to tacit knowledge and distinguishes between 'reflection-in-action' and 'reflection-on-action'. The former is a way of assessing why certain decisions were made during the creative period and the latter is used to assess the benefit of those decisions after the work has been made. These analyses allow for a certain amount of objectivity to be developed in the evaluation of art work made and can be used to inform decisions about how to progress practice. In this research project, reflective journals have been maintained throughout, in order to give consideration to how

the practice develops from the theoretical research and how the practice outcomes influence and inform the direction of the written research. Thus there is a way to engage with the relationship between the exegesis and the practice so that each informs the other and together they provide new insights into the role of contemporary textile art practice as a way of materialising mourning.

The development and constant refining of the research questions and processes is another feature of practice-based research. Pierre Bourdieu defines this as an 'emergent' methodology and argues that 'reflexivity in such research involves not only a focus on the validation of data and outcomes but also the positioning of oneself in relation to other fields in order to reveal the character and sources of one's interest' (Barrett & Bolt, 2007:6). The term emergent was used in the UK Council for Graduate Education document in 1997 and was defined as the way in which 'decisions and directions within the project are determined by the development of the project' (UK Council for Graduate Education, 1997:16). In this research project, changes were made to the proposed paths of enquiry after the presentation of preliminary findings at conferences and symposia. The examination of different models of grief and trauma theory was found to be a relevant research area in the exegesis, and experimenting with materials and processes which were new to my way of working, such as chalk and the making of video as creative outcomes, were also discovered during the course of the research. Chalk was used in a studio artwork when considering the more ethereal nature of mourning. Created from prehistoric marine plankton, chalk can be powdered and blown into the air, settling onto surfaces and giving them a sense of time, memory and loss. The importance of the authenticity of the materials used in each piece of studio practice has also emerged during this research. For example, the use of Second World War hospital bed-sheets link both with history (they were intended to be used in the nursing of the injured and the wrapping of the dead in France in the Second World War) and with family (a family member was one of those injured in Northern France in 1944). These sheets were discovered alongside other emergency hospital supplies stored in a cave in Northern France after the end of the Second World War. The sourcing of these sheets during the course of the research and finding out about their story meant that they became, for me, the most appropriate material to be used in work for this project.

The use of many different methods and approaches in practice-based research has been described by Stewart as a 'bricolage' of methods (Stewart, 2009:127). In this way artists appropriate whatever field and methodology is apposite to their research and by adding it to the methods used previously generate a new approach.

This eclectic approach also reflects the position of the viewer who brings their own mixture of experiences and knowledge to the work. Stewart describes this as a 'hybrid practice' and explains how the bricoleur

> 'appropriates aspects of research methodologies which best suit the task in hand, travelling between various research disciplines in an attempt to build the most appropriate bridge between aesthetics and experience through processes of production, documentation and interpretation' (Stewart, 2009:128).

The idea of using a hybrid practice is illustrated in this research, not only by the use of insights from different theoretical disciplines such as material culture, trauma theory and psychoanalysis, but also by the use of different practical approaches to the studio research as evidenced by the different types of studio output. As a textile artist I am not restricted to the use of any one material, method, process or technique but am able to use the most appropriate way of working to convey the effect required. In this research project the practical outcomes have included print, stitch, photographs, and video as well as installations and wall-hung artworks.

Defined stages of research

Many of the authors dealing with the subject of practice-based research outline different stages of a research project. The staged model which most closely allies with the methodology used in this research is that described in the book *Visualising Research* by Gray and Malins. Five stages of the research process are described:

1. 'Idea organisation, planning and preparation
2. Data acquisition and generation
3. Information management and use
4. Information evaluation and analysis
5. Information synthesis, presentation and dissemination' (Gray and Malins, 2004:100).

Whilst this is a very simplistic model, it provided a platform from which to develop my own diagrammatic representation of the methodological process of the research. In order to analyse the structure of the methodological approach, all stages and processes involved in undertaking the theoretical research and studio practice were listed and attributed to one of the stages of research described by Gray and Malins. (Figure 2) This revealed that there is little complex information to manage in the research and so it was not necessary to include stage 3.

5. Information synthesis, presentation & dissemination

public outputs   exhibition
                  papers
                  conf. presentation etc.

- coherent arguments

Theory.   Practice

Brainstorming.   Exhibiting solo

Writing   exhibiting to other artists

                    Peer review

presenting papers   networking

                                     Exhibiting in Groups

         Coherent develop argument

                    Website & publicity

         writing catalogue statement

         Practice - video

Figure 2. Processes in information synthesis, presentation and dissemination stage of research.

Examination of the different methodological processes and the order in which they were undertaken revealed that, in both theory and studio based research, rather than being a linear progression through the different stages, stages one and two together make up the management of any information obtained and the ideas generated from the interaction of

idea organisation and data acquisition/generation then feed into the cycle of creative practice, giving public studio outcomes of the research including artworks, written papers and the exegesis itself. This is not a closed system as any outcomes are then fed back to the beginning and cycle through the process again. (See Figure 3.)

The way in which planning and organisation interact and integrate with data acquisition and generation to create ideas for both writing and making can be described by several techniques and methods. In his paper 'Thinking at the edge: developing soft creativity' Professor Guy Claxton describes a process based on the idea of the Philosophy of the Implicit developed from the work of the American Philosopher Eugene Gendlin (Claxton, 2006:352). A number of steps are followed to enable thinking from a sense of 'implicit knowing' to generate fresh ideas and concepts. The technique known as 'focusing' is used as a form of personal problem solving in psychotherapeutic counselling sessions but can also be used to develop creative projects. Participants focus on the observation and experience of their 'sensory and visceral experiences'. This is known as the 'felt sense,' a bodily sensation of 'not-yet-articulated knowing' rather than an emotion and 'an intuitive feeling of rightness (or wrongness) guides the process' (Claxton, 2006:357). The words used to express the felt sense are verbalised to a listener who can then repeat them back, enabling the participant to refine the words and to obtain fresh insights. It is possible to use this technique to explore creative processes and to distil key terms that define ideas and concepts.

This way of working is similar to one that was used in this research project and in my previous studio work. Working with an analytical partner, the current aim of the work is described verbally and this is recorded in written format and is interrogated repeatedly to distil the essence of the concept. Taking place away from the studio in a neutral, open and supportive environment, it is documented in the reflective journal or sketchbook, either as a list of key words or in diagrammatic form for future reference. The process is then repeated a number of times in order to distil the idea or to develop one aspect further. In this way a range of concepts, techniques and materials and different approaches to studio practice can be explored and can be applied to practical outcomes both at the sampling and reflection stage of making as well as with artwork that have been completed. This allows for an analysis of what is successful in the work and why and how this can be built on in future samples or work.
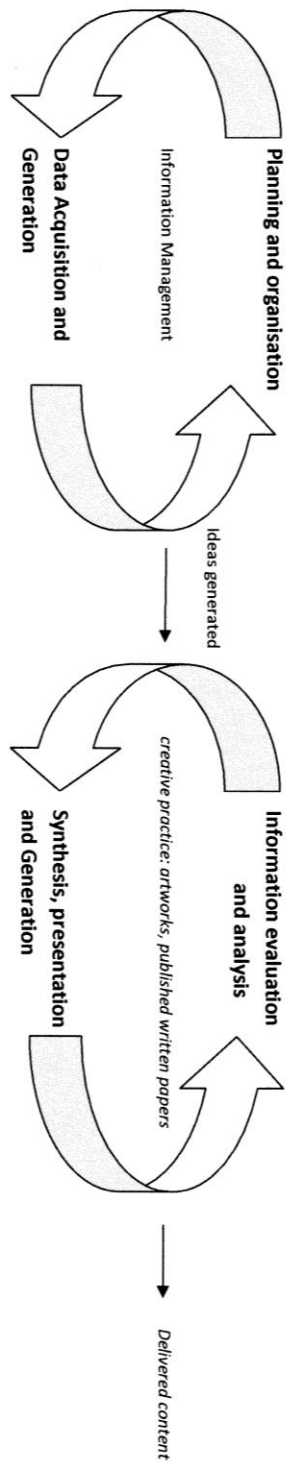
Figure 3. Diagram of methodology.

The practice in this research project is more than simply an illustration of the thinking in the written research but rather acts as a synergistic combination with, or reaction to, the consideration of the ideas in conjunction with the haptic experience of the various materials; be they paint, cloth, brushes or needle and thread. Anton Ehrenzweig, suggests that there are three stages of creativity that bring the artwork into being: commencing with an initial 'schizoid' stage where fragmented parts of the artists self are projected onto the artwork. These are unacknowledged and appear to be accidental, fragmented and unwanted. The second phase is the 'manic' phase, where the artist unconsciously scans the work, seeking to 'integrate art's substructure but may not necessarily heal the fragmentation of the surface gestalt', but the elements of the artwork are bound together to create a pictoral space, and the fragmentation is resolved. The third phase is the 're–introjection' phase which is when a 'part of the artwork's hidden substructure is returned to the artist's ego on a higher mental level'. This phase also results in similar anxieties to the first phase of fragmented projection but is mixed with a 'sober acceptance of imperfection and hope for future integration'. It is in this phase that the work of art seems to take on a life of its own and 'functions like another person' (Ehrenzweig, 1967:103). Whilst these stages are not followed consciously, on reflection, revisiting some works after completion there would seem to be some truth in Ehrenzweig's assertion that artists study their work in detail as though it were the work of someone else.

The development of ideas for this research project has included techniques such as 'focusing' and 'felt sense' previously described, as well as using brainstorming and mind maps. Studio practice is also evaluated and reflected on in a journal. In practice the journal is used as a way of documenting any textile experimentation and sampling as well as notes on the development of work. Images of work and samples are contained within the journal as well as mind maps and thoughts on future work. Probably as a result of my science background as a microbiologist working in research and also in public health laboratories the journal resembles more of a workbook/experiment book than a sketchbook with evaluation notes and written ideas being more predominant than drawing or sketching. As described previously this is an example of reflection-on-action; a retrospective reflection, whereas reflection-in-action occurs during the making process as ideas are refined and changed while making.
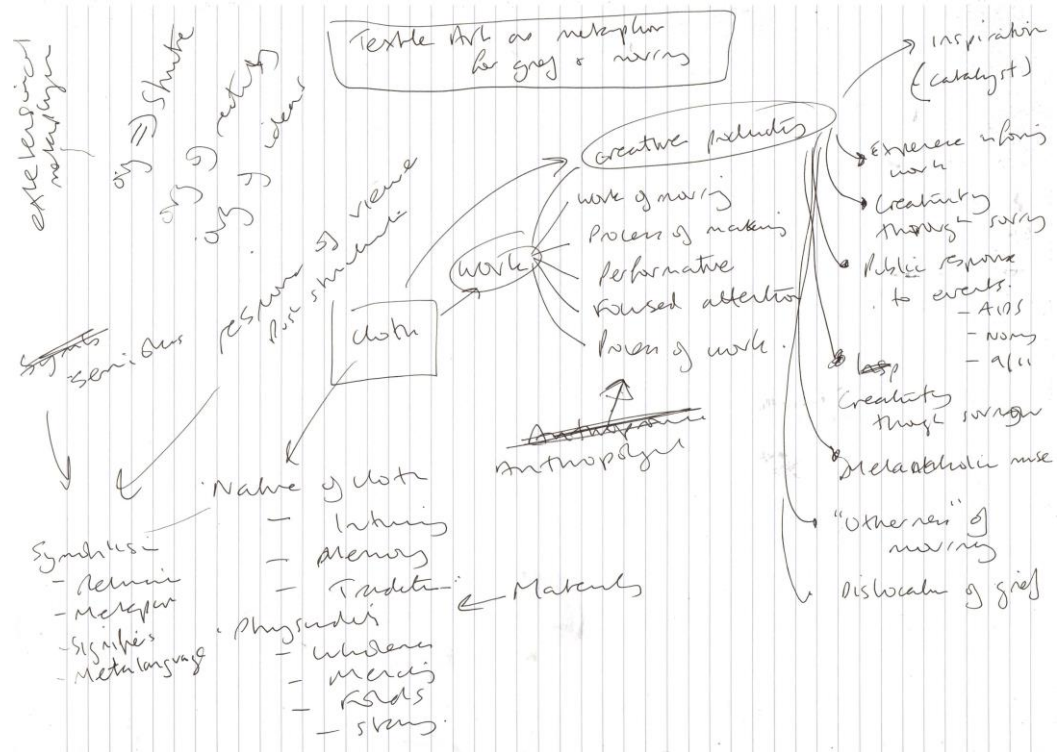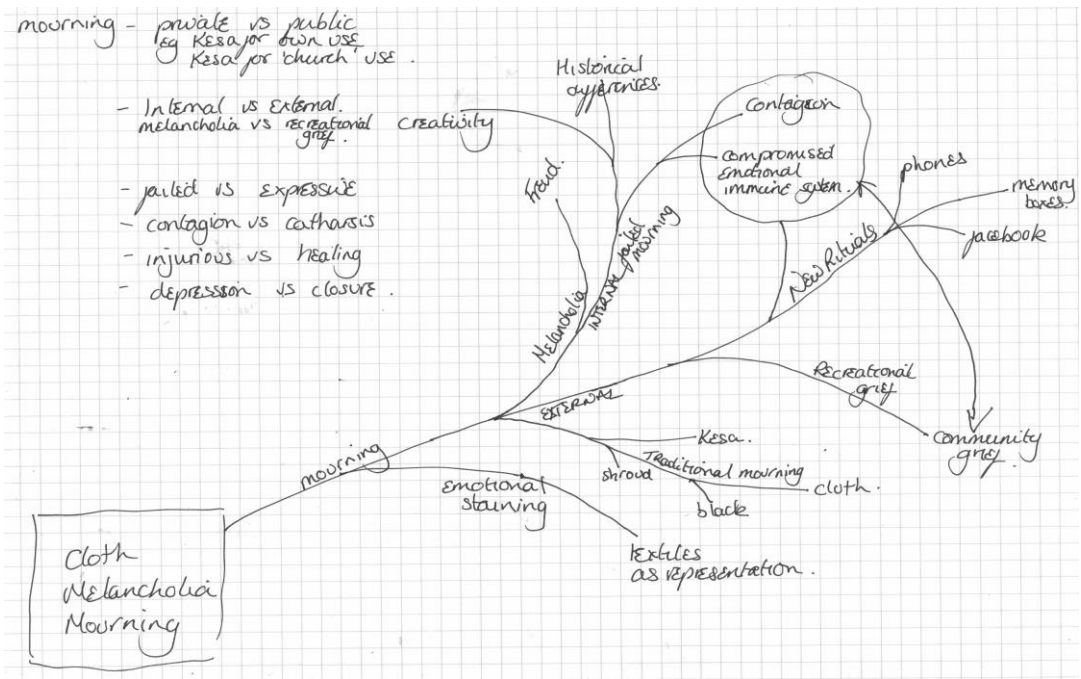
Figure 4. Examples of mind maps

Figure 5. Mind map

Stewart describes the gathering of information and stories as 'neonarratives.' These are defined by Stewart as a process for 'analysing what actually happened according to the people involved'; the telling of their stories and their experiences (Stewart, 2009:130). In this instance this refers to the audience, as, whilst I can seek to create work which connects with any unresolved mourning of the viewer, I can only determine the success of this aim by finding out the reactions of the audience. This is particularly pertinent to this research project if viewers of the artwork seek to relate their own stories of grief and bereavement. Whilst in the context of a thesis this is anecdotal evidence, I feel that it is still of tremendous value. There are perceived problems with the documenting of anecdotal experiences, as they do not conform to the accepted standards of academic writing and referencing. Usually, in scientific writing the term anecdotal is qualified by the word 'only' or 'merely' suggesting an inferior, untestable quality to the response. Given the intimate and personal nature of the experience of bereavement and loss, within this research project the relating of anecdotal evidence has been reclaimed as the giving of a gift. These responses are treasured accounts that the visitor wants to impart, and it is a privilege to receive them if, as has often been the case, the work allows them to

remember, reflect and move on in their work of mourning. They also represent evidence of an engagement with the artwork and function as a bearing witness to the communication of affect. This need to communicate in the gallery space or afterwards is also a measure of the 'success' of the artwork, that it has communicated enough of itself to the viewer to prompt a response.

The methodology of collecting responses has been threefold. In one exhibition, response cards were printed asking the viewers to write down their thoughts about what the work brought to mind. Although one hundred cards were printed and left at the venue, only a few were returned to the exhibition organisers and then forwarded back to me. During an exhibition in Kyoto, Japan, I gave a talk about the work shown at two venues: the Kyoto University of Fine Arts and Music (Kyoto Gedai) and the Kawashima Textile School. After the talk the students were asked to write down their experiences of death and their feelings relating to the artwork. Other responses have been obtained by personal communication in the gallery space, found in exhibition reviews, on blog entries and through unsolicited email communication.[8]

The emergent methodology described in this chapter has been used to create an intertwining body of research with both written and practice outcomes which have been informed by each other. Through the use of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action both written and practical outcomes have arisen from the integration and intertwining of research strands to create a braid of knowledge which has also been informed by the reaction of the viewers and readers.

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[8] Email communication has been anonymised and only relevant parts of each email have been quoted in the text. Ethics committee approval has been obtained for the use of email communications.

Responses to work by Beverly Ayling-Smith – 'Rose petal shroud' and 'Burial'

What did this work bring to mind?

'Rose petal shroud': "We see only dimly, but then we shall see face to face." The sun's light shining through

'Burial': points to a glorious resurrection!

What is the role of artwork in the processing of emotion, particularly following bereavement?

-- a wonderful medium to lift you out of the darkness -- to see things differently -- to take you to a safe place   THANK YOU.

What did this work bring to mind?

'Rose petal shroud': Sombre, remembrance ... amongst many crosses 7 stood out; had deeper significance + meaning

'Burial': Fragility of life, though the ragged + broken parts the brightness of the sun shone through There is always a sense of hope

What is the role of artwork in the processing of emotion, particularly following bereavement?

I'm not alone in my feelings though I may feel alone
Creativity comes from the rawest & darkest of places.

What did this work bring to mind?

'Rose petal shroud': around the fact that darkness; solidity that something has gone. someone

'Burial': beauty that comes to so many things with time

What is the role of artwork in the processing of emotion, particularly following bereavement?

touching emotion in a way that words cannot express. a release from emotions in a deep/safe/ meaningful way.

Figure 6. Three response cards

Chapter 3. Materiality and the use of cloth

How cloth functions in textile artwork is fundamental to this research project. The way cloth is structured, how it hangs and can be manipulated is central to the way it is used to act as a substrate for emotion. Our familiarity with cloth in everyday life means that we have a vocabulary not only of words but also of experience in the sensation of seeing, touching, handling and encountering cloth with which we can think about its involvement in containing and processing thoughts and emotions.

The research questions addressed in this chapter are 'how can the staining of cloth and the use of rags in contemporary art practice be used as a way of understanding and expressing mourning?' and 'how does textile art act as a metaphor for grief and mourning?' By examining the materiality of cloth and its effects in everyday experience it is possible to see how it can be imbued with meaning and act as a metaphor for grief and loss. This chapter will examine how cloth is used in the studio practice of textile artists and in my own work; and how the properties of cloth are used to achieve the aims of the research focussing on materiality and the ability of cloth to be used to express metaphors of the pain of loss and feelings of grief.

The use of such a ubiquitous substance as cloth in artwork involves a transformation from a basic common material into an artwork by exploring the poetics of its materiality. As Lia Cook has described, the importance of cloth is such that 'it becomes both the subject matter and the material object in itself' (Doy, 2001:202). Our attachment to textiles as clothes and comforters in everyday life enables an investment of interest or energy. Freud described this as a cathexis, where the mental energy of the person is concentrated on a particular object, person or idea. This term is defined in the Collins English Dictionary as the 'concentration of psychic energy on a single goal' (McLeod and Makins, 1994:175). The use of cloth in textile artwork provides a medium with which the viewer already has an emotional connection to invoke emotions of grief and loss and therefore allows the viewer to continue their work of mourning.

Materiality

This section addresses the research questions of how the staining of cloth and the use of rags in contemporary art practice can be used as a metaphor to enable the understanding and expression of mourning. It is therefore important to define what is meant in this context by words such as cloth, materiality, fabric and textile.

There are several different terms in common usage to describe cloth, such as material, fabric or textile, which are often used interchangeably. The word cloth itself comes from the German word *Kleid* meaning garment, and the Dutch word *Kleed:* both of these terms are thought to have derived from the root *kli-* meaning to stick or cling to. Cloth then comes from 'that which clings to the body or that which is pressed or felted together' (Kuryluk, 1991:179). The French word *étoffe* can also be translated as cloth or the more general term 'stuff' an all-encompassing word for things or belongings.

The term material to describe cloth is thought to come from the Latin term *materialis* which refers to any form of matter, and came into English usage through the Norman (French) use of the term *materiel.* It was in the seventeenth century that it came to describe something basic 'that could be worked upon or elaborated such as a document … and many documents were made from cloth' (Kapp, 2013:68). The word fabric can be used to describe both hard and soft materials. In ancient Rome the term *faber* was used to describe someone who worked with wood or stone and *fabrica* was the place where he worked. This developed in the French term *fabrique* which eventually led to the English words fabricate and fabric. The use of the term fabric as a synonym for textile started in the eighteenth century (Kapp, 2013:37).

The words textile and text have a common Latin root in the terms *texere* and *textum* which mean 'to weave, construct or compose' (Kuryluk, 1991:179) They are also related to the Greek word *Techne* which is used to refer to craftsmanship or the method involved in the production of an object. Roland Barthes has confirmed the importance of techne in the making of text

> 'Text means tissue; but whereas hitherto we have always taken this tissue as a product – a ready-made veil, behind which lies, more or less hidden, meaning (truth), we are now emphasizing, in the tissue, the generative idea that the text is made, is worked out in a perpetual interweaving' (Barthes, 1973:64).

The relationship between text, textile and techne has been well documented particularly in the writings of Victoria Mitchell but it is the conjunction of these three elements that is so crucial to understand 'what it means to create forms through materials' (Mitchell, 1997:325). The very textile nature of these statements leads to the understanding that textile, or cloth, is the ideal medium through which we can consider meaning and making, meaning-making and thinking.

Throughout the written part of this thesis the terms cloth and textile will be used when referring to textile art works. In my own practice, and when considering other artists' work, the term cloth implies an honesty and authenticity, and the term textile allows for an inclusion of the ambiguity of the substrate and the liminal status it occupies as boundary,

second skin, and holder of emotions, memory and metaphor. The etymology of the words may reveal an explanation for this because of the Germanic and Latin roots of the respective terms. In English, Anglo-Saxon/Germanic-derived words are often more basic, earthy and practical whereas the Latin derived synonym is usually more complex, formal and conceptual (Gramley & Patzold, 2008). The term *cloth* is of Germanic derivation (via Anglo-Saxon) and so conveys the basic honesty and authenticity and simplicity of the material. The Latin-derived conceptual term *textile* allows for consideration of more ambiguous and complex issues. Within this chapter the term fabric will also be used specifically in reference to the use of cloth in the particular technique of grief counselling and self-help therapy where the life of the bereaved is seen as torn fabric and the visualisation of the mending process by stitching or embroidery is seen as a way of healing.

The word materiality in the context of this chapter is used to describe both the physical properties of cloth (which I will term *functional materiality*) but also its ability to contain within it layers of meaning to convey complex ideas and emotional states (which I will refer to as *materiality*). Rather than just a description of its functionality it is this materiality that allows for the properties of the cloth and its associated appearance and the way it works, acts and feels to enable emotional connections to be made.

The functional materiality of cloth includes properties such as its weave structure, or in the case of non-woven textiles its pattern of fibres, its colour, its surface pattern and texture. All these contribute to the way the cloth drapes and folds and the way in which it can be manipulated. Its fragility and susceptibility to decay and degree of impermanence inform the artists choices as to which cloth is chosen to be used in which work - how its performance relates to the outcome. The sensory experience for the user visual or tactile (scopic or haptic) creates an interaction, an emotional value. Be it through structure or texture, odour, temperature or weight each and all inform the way in which the viewer interacts with and responds to the textile.

> 'Light, portable and flexible, cloth is ideal for picturing the flow and
> ruptures of inner life. Cloth, as it is folded and unfolded, stored away
> and unrolled, seems suitable for representing memory, both as a texture
> woven in a laborious process, and as a sequence of images and words
> impregnating the fabric with mercurial speed' (Kuryluk 1991:180).

The very nature of cloth and its associations with the body also has sensual aspects as described by Germano Celant writing about the use of cloth in the work of Louise Bourgeois

> 'A tactile and substantial element that can be taken as epidermis, as carnal
> epiphany of a fluidity or a rigidity ... a weave that in its colours expresses

emotional and mental states and in the combinations of its volumes condenses energy and delight. In addition, fabric always implies something that lies beneath, alluding to a substance that looks to be veiled, if not shadowy. A subterranean almost always carnal world, one linked to suffering and pain, to joy, and to physical and concrete memories that appear through the outlines of the woven surface' (Celant, 2010:13).

It is in this way that cloth can evoke the sensuous and more complex layers of meaning by the interweaving of technique with culture, references and narrative when used in the creation of artwork. As Janis Jefferies has described, 'the materiality of cloth…lies in the way it receives the human imprint; cloth smells of mortality as much as it carries the signs of sweated…labour' (Jefferies, 2007:284). Cloth can also reference the absent body - cloth receives us, as Peter Stallybrass writes, 'receives our smells, our sweat, holds our shape' (Stallybrass, 1993:28). And when someone dies their clothes live on in our lives reminding us of who has gone.

Textile, or cloth, has been described as a second skin, a metaphor for the layer between ourselves and others. Clothes have also been likened to a dynamic, looser new skin that moves with the body and that frames the body and insulates 'private fantasies from the Other' (Cavallaro and Warwick, 1998:pxvi). The manipulation of fabric in textile art has its own vocabulary as curator Julia Curtis has written '…fold, drape, stretch, stain and tear - it signifies an emotional range from intimacy, comfort and protection, to more disquieting states of restriction, fragility, loss and impermanence' (Curtis, 1999:2). The first word Curtis mentions in this vocabulary of textile art is 'fold'. The idea of folding textiles contains within it a sense of time - folds can be unfolded or ironed away. Folding can also be seen as a repetitive action, constant in the care of fabrics, washed, mended, ironed and folded - the process of taking care, of meditative rhythm in its action. Folding also gives us the word enfold to envelop, sheathe, swathe, swaddle, cocoon; all textile, all comforting.

In contrast, the placing of textiles in the gallery environment immediately removes one of the most important elements of their materiality from the viewer - how they feel when touched. In the 1980s it was fashionable to have handling samples with textile work as it was thought to be too difficult for the viewer to imagine what the textile would feel like. But as we are in connection to textiles all the time through the clothes we wear we have an intrinsic knowledge of how it feels to be in intimate contact with different sorts of cloth. Descartes suggests that it is possible to have a bodily memory and that 'nerves and muscles can serve memory too' (Leder, 1990:109). Muscle memory in repetitive action is a familiar concept and this is similar to the bodily memory of remembered touch. We see the cloth, bodily memory informs us, and we know what it will feel like. There is therefore an interplay between the imagined sensory tactile response to textile artwork in the gallery

space as well as a cognitive emotional response to the visual appearance of the work. This brings to mind the notion of handlablity (or equipmentability) described by Martin Heidegger in his book *Being and Time* first published in 1966. In this he describes how we can only come to know the world theoretically when we have experienced it equipmentally. That is, 'it is only through active use that we can establish original relations with things'. Barbara Bolt, writing in *Art Beyond Representation* interprets this as a 'mutual reflection between practice and theory which becomes central to the rethinking of the relationship of theory and practice in creativity'. In practice it is this involvement with the materials and equipment of the making process that causes the work of art to emerge, not just a 'representation of a ready-formed idea' (Bolt, 2004:65). In my own practice, the physical engagement with the materials and the making process is informed by the theoretical aspects of the research project, which, together with the meditative atmosphere of making allows the work to develop from an initial idea into a work informed and directed by all aspects of the research project.

As already discussed, the clothes of the dead are especially important in the process of grieving and are often used in textile artwork. They are particularly redolent with emotion and have the ability to evoke feelings of grief and loss in the bereaved. This is exemplified in the work of the Australian weaver Liz Williamson who creates garment-like pieces that have worn areas in places equating to knees and elbows that 'bag' to suggest that they have been worn for a long period of time, bringing to mind the absent body.

As mentioned in Chapter 1 (Situating the research), the melancholy objects of the dead such as their clothing, serve to keep their memory in the mind of the bereaved and allow for a continuation of the work of mourning. The possession of the objects acts as a simultaneous presence and absence of the deceased other. So with Williamson's weavings, viewing these as artworks in the gallery space allows for the memory of the deceased to be brought to mind by the bereaved viewer (Bond, 2009:43). The artist Celia Pym states that she enjoys wearing other people's clothing 'it's not just the touch against my skin but imagining how another wearer must have felt in it' (Millar, 2013:89).

In my studio practice, cloth is used that has particular relevance to death, burial and mourning; this is usually linen, from its association with burial, or white cotton and silk from the white saris worn by widows in India. Bed-sheets are also used because of their use as winding sheets in medieval times and also because they have an intimate connection with the body in sleep. In the Victorian era death was often described as sleep and a 'good death' involved the gathering of the family members round the bedside of the dying person who would confess their sins and then 'fall asleep' - in other words die (Jalland, 1999:233). Graves in this era were often depicted as beds. This may have derived from *The Iliad* by Homer who described Hypnos (Sleep) and Thanatos (Death) as twin brothers and the sons of

Nyx (Night) and Erebos (Darkness). At a time of day when we are wearing little clothing, or perhaps none at all, the bed-sheet is in contact with the body for many hours every night, soaking up sweat and bodily fluids to create a very personal cloth impregnated with the identity of a person.

Figure 7. Part of *Seven* (2012) at 'Cloth and Memory', Salts Mill, 2012

The bed-sheets used in my textile practice are Ministry of Defence hospital single bed-size bed-sheets found, along with other hospital supplies, after the Second World War in a cave in France and now sold in the UK. Using these sheets is significant to me as they have a history and, additionally, a connection to my family as one of my relatives was hospitalised in France during the Second World War. These sheets were used in the installation piece *Seven* where they were hung from the ceiling to echo the form of the shroud worn by John Donne in his memorial statue in St Paul's Cathedral. The piece consisted of seven white empty shroud-like sheets suspended from the ceiling, suggesting the presence of the absent body. (Figure 7.) The number seven was chosen to reference seven people of my acquaintance who died over a short period of time. For the viewer, they could suggest anyone known to them whom they have lost. Next to the hanging shrouds were piles of freshly ironed and laundered sheets neatly stacked as though in preparation for use - perhaps giving the viewer a sense of their own mortality and a reminder that we all, one day, will need a shroud.

Edmund White, writing about the bed-sheets used by the artist Ewa Kuryluk lists the different functions of the bed-sheet

> 'to cover the sick, the operable, the dying, the dead. They are soaked in night sweats, fever sweats, death sweats. They conceal the emaciated or wounded body in a toga of modesty and expose its most shameful details in a clinging chiton of intimacy … the sheets thrown over the corpse in the morgue; the sheets the lover draws over the exposed shoulder of his sleeping partner; the sheet the child wets and that must be stripped, carried off, changed; the sheet shredded into tourniquets, dressings, sanitary belts; the sheet that reminds the wife of her virginal past; the sheet that suggests to the virgin a future, of lust' (White, 1987:17).

Much of my studio practice uses cloth that has been torn into smaller pieces to create rag-like fragments. For me, the torn edge of a fragment of a larger piece has particular qualities; it is the edge of forgetting, the physical evidence that this fragment that remains was once part of a bigger whole. The whole cloth contains the memory that we are trying to retain, but it continues to fray and fragment as we continue to forget with the passing of time. Torn cloth, eventually discarded as useless rags is like a fragment of that memory, the only remaining reminder of events and relationships that serves to trigger what has otherwise been forgotten. The use of rags is also evident in Japan in the remembrance of the deceased in the creation of *kesa*. As will be discussed (on page 81) the sort of rags that can be used to make the Buddhist robe are specified in the *Shōbōgenzō* (Dōgen, 2007:965)[9].

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[9] The *Shōbōgenzō* (or *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*) is the collection of works written in the 13th Century by the Japanese Buddhist monk and founder of the Sōtō Zen School, Eihei Dōgen.

As Pennina Barnett has written

> 'The poetics of cloth are composed of folds, fragments and surfaces of
> infinite complexity. The fragment bears witness to a broken whole; yet it is
> also a site of uncertainty from which to start over; it is where the mind
> extends beyond fragile boundaries, beyond frayed and indeterminate edges,
> expanding in the fluidity of the smooth. The surface is a liminal space, both
> inside and out, a space of encounter' (Barnett 1999:32).

As has been described, the materiality of cloth is fundamentally important to how it can be used in textile artwork to work as a medium for conveying ideas thoughts and feelings and a rich site of /source of metaphor in many cultures. The way it is perceived in the gallery is mediated by our own day-to-day experience of wearing and handling cloth as garments and household textiles. This makes it a unique substrate to contain, hold and represent emotions and the potential to make a connection with the viewer.

Metaphor and metonymy

For many years metaphor and metonymy were considered solely as a feature of language, figures of speech and an area of study for linguists and philosophers. In recent years metaphor has become recognised as also being a mode of cognition – a way in which we think and ascribe meaning to thoughts and emotions. This section will examine the idea of metaphor and metonymy with particular reference to visual metaphors to make visible internal or private trauma and to use these to make connections with the unresolved experience of mourning of the spectator or audience. It will also question how the work of art functions and what it produces in terms of the effects it has in the world. This chapter will also consider the understanding of metaphor and metonymy in art to communicate emotions such as grief and loss using the concepts of post-structuralism and phenomenology in the analysis of both the artwork and the reaction of the audience/viewer. It should also be considered that there might be different types of audience viewing the work – those members of the public responding in an intuitive way and those who may be engaged in a more critical deconstruction of the work.

Metaphor

Metaphor is a commonly used linguistic tool that enables the understanding of a concept by the use of more familiar concepts or imagery. The term metaphor comes from the Greek *metaphora* which means to transfer or transport. In using metaphor there is a transfer of meaning from one domain of knowledge to another (Modell, 1997:106). Zoltán Kövecses

defines this as 'understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain' (Kövecses, 2010b:4). This is true not just in language but also in our thought processes as well, as the 'human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 6). Arnold Modell has stated that 'metaphor is central to the imagination' and that 'metaphor (is) the currency of the mind' (Modell, 2009:6). Typically, metaphors are used to enable the understanding of vague concepts by using concepts that are more clearly defined in our experience. Common metaphors include the idea that LOVE IS A JOURNEY. This can be illustrated by phrases such as: this relationship isn't *going anywhere*; their marriage is *on the rocks*; *where are we* in this relationship?

Complex concepts such as time and love, which are difficult to describe, are explained using more commonplace and everyday concepts and notions. Metaphors concerning death include referring to death as the END OF THE JOURNEY, DEATH IS NIGHT, DEATH IS REST. and so on.

Common phrases used when talking about illness, death and dying include the GOOD/HAPPY IS UP, BAD/SAD IS DOWN orientational metaphors. For example, *dropped* dead, *fell* ill, health is *declining,* he's *going downhill*. Julia Kristeva's statement that melancholia is the '*abyss of sorrow*' is a good example of this type of metaphor (Kristeva, 1989:3).

Although common in everyday speech, metaphors are particularly prevalent in poetry and literature. Poets and novelists particularly use image based metaphors employing techniques such as extensions, elaborations, questioning and combining of metaphors to create 'a novel and unconventional language' (Kövecses, 2010b:53). The use of metaphors is particularly useful for understanding and discussing emotions. An emotion that is as complex as grief requires figures of speech such as metaphors and similes to enable the understanding and communication of the feelings being experienced. Modell suggests that translating feelings beyond our control into metaphors 'provides us with a schema that enables some degree of organisation and control' (Modell, 1997:107).

The use of the particular definition of metaphor as one thing standing in for another has echoes of the symbolic. Psychoanalytical theory has emphasised the importance of symbolic imagery and in *The Interpretation of Dreams* first published in 1900, Freud posited that the images in dreams act as a carrier of meaning where, as Modell describes, 'something objectionable is replaced by something that is less objectionable' (Modell, 1997:106). Symbols can be thought of as impersonal metaphors whose meaning is derived from myth. Freud proposed that symbols in dreams have fixed meanings which can be decoded. Freud did not use the term metaphor in *The Interpretation of Dreams,* instead using the term 'condensation'. Mark Staff Brandl defines a symbol as something representing something else in an arbitrary fashion, 'an emblem, token or sign' which may be a colour or something immaterial. For example, a dream about teeth falling out is not a metaphor for concern about

physical deterioration but is a symbol for apparently unrelated trauma. Whilst symbols are a one to one sign for something, metaphor is an 'implied indirect comparison between two, often unlike things' (Brandl, s, d). Modell suggests that dreaming generates visual metaphors and that metaphor can be thought of as a thought process, a 'fundamental and indispensable structure of human understanding, a basic and irreducible unit of mental functioning'. This would suggest that metaphors are used to understand the interactions of our body in the world. Our internal thoughts and feelings are 'projected outwards as metaphoric categories applied to the real world, while at the same time the interaction with the real world can be categorized metaphorically' (Modell, 1997:109).

We therefore have a way of thinking about emotions and traumatic events through the use of metaphors that are internal or private. These metaphors can be used by an artist to express feelings and emotions within the artwork itself and 'offered to the viewing public to be shared' (Modell, 1997:109). Placing works of art in the public domain, which have been created from traumatic private experience and expressed by the use of private visual metaphors, may mean that it is not immediately apparent to the viewer what the work is about. But the common visual imagery shared by the individuals of a culture may resonate with the private metaphors of the viewer. Culture plays an important role in the formation of metaphors but Kövecses acknowledges that some conceptual metaphors are common to different languages whether because of the simultaneous development of the metaphors or because 'languages borrowed the metaphors from each other' or because 'there may be some universal basis for the same metaphors to develop in the diverse languages' (Kövecses, 2010:199). Kövecses gives the example of the container metaphor for anger such as 'he was bursting with anger' and 'when I told him he just exploded' also occurring in Hungarian: 'anger was boiling inside him' and 'his head almost burst' and in Zulu 'he was so angry he burst/exploded' and 'when I told him he inflated' (Kovecses, 2010b:199).

He concludes that some conceptual metaphors do seem to be near universal and that they develop from 'certain commonalities in human experience' (Kövecses 2010:217). The common experience of interacting with cloth and the encounter with the clothes of the deceased, either to keep as a reminder or to sort through before disposal, means that the creation of artwork using cloth as a metaphor for life is immediately accessible across cultural boundaries. Modell also states that

> 'Metaphor is central to the communication and interpretation of unconscious
> meaning. One therapeutic effect of making the unconscious conscious is the
> creation of new meanings that expand the sense of the agency of the self. There
> is then a synergistic effect: with an expanded sense of agency there is also an

expanded awareness of the complexity of metaphor, which, in turn, can recontextualize the traumatic memories' (Modell, 2009:10).

When discussing painting, Virgil Aldrich proposes that there are three components needed to create a visual metaphor; the materials, the subject matter and the content. This could be applied to textile art, with the colours, textures and fabrics used as the materials. The subject matter is also equivalent and the content is the outcome of the interaction of the material(s) and the subject matter. Aldrich describes the interaction of the components as a 'transfiguration of the material and the subject matter in the content or emergent meaning' (Aldrich, 1968:79). Carl Hausman explains how the use of metaphor works in relation to visual metaphors and works of art.

> 'Art shares with verbal metaphors the incorporation of meaning units from the world as it is apprehended literally, that is, in terms of standard, conventional contexts. Meanings are brought together in contexts that are strange in relation to the literally understood world, and they are transformed through a kind of interaction that is constituted by internal relations, just as the elements or terms of a verbal metaphor understood as antecedently significant have their significance changed when they interact internally with the other terms in their constitutive functions' (Hausman, 1989:142).

The fact that metaphors can convey ideas that are difficult to put into words has been used by grief counsellors in group therapy creative writing sessions to allow the bereaved to acknowledge and express their feelings of loss and also to decrease their sense of isolation. Bereavement groups help individuals to show their feelings in a safe and supportive environment. Naming their emotions by writing about them gives the bereaved a sense of being able to control them (Yalom, 1995). Using the creative writing method developed by Pat Schneider (2003) the group focus on the writing as fiction rather than as direct experience so that the identity of the writer is protected and the participants feel supported and not exposed. Metaphors that emerge from this creative writing enable communication of difficult emotions and identification of common experiences between members of the group.

Elizabeth Young (2007) described two metaphors for death that arose in a bereavement-writing group: one equated death with breakage, the other with erasure. Breakage metaphors included a 'ripped page, a constellation with fallen stars missing, a light bulb burst by a drop of water, a door blasted open, and a bare foot shredded as it is dragged along a road by a moving car' (Young, 2007:362). Erasure metaphors included 'empty houses and empty chairs, fading clouds, smoke and a sand sculpture washed out to sea by the tide' (Young, 2007:363).

In this same writing group there were also three types of metaphor for grief: these focussed on natural forces, technology and 'fiber arts'. (The term 'fiber arts' here is quoted from the US published paper where it is used to describe what practitioners in the UK would term textile practice.) Whilst the metaphors of natural forces (quicksand, whirlwinds and storms etc.) and technology (inability to communicate, unanswered messages and old messages from the deceased on answering machines etc.) were focussed on the way one is overwhelmed by grief, the third category of metaphor, that of fibre arts or textile practice was used as a way to describe the positive aspects of attending the bereavement group itself. The connections felt between the members of the group were likened to cobwebs or quilting. Spinning was also used to describe the transformative effect of grief, making something destructive - death - into something useful, the integration of the deceased and the bereavement into the life of the group member (Young, 2007:364).

One Japanese correspondent wrote that they felt, on the death of their grandfather, as if a

> 'hole had opened up in the connections between people… like a seam coming undone. This tear is slowly beginning to get repaired, but there is still a huge gap in the space formerly occupied by my grandfather' (Correspondent D).

Textile artists also use metaphor to create work which conveys a feeling or emotion. For example the textile artist Michele Walker has created work as an act of mourning for her mother who died from Alzheimer's disease. Called *Memoriam,* it is a made from layered plastic sheeting and wire wool. Made in the tradition of a commemorative quilt, the stitching of the clear plastic surface layer is based on the crease patterns of Walker's own skin. The wire wool is used as a metaphor for decay but is subject to decay itself over time - the pain Walker experienced in creating the quilt using wire wool was a physical manifestation of the emotional pain of losing her mother to the disease. The border of the quilt is of knotted wire wool is a fringe and references the way her mother used to continually twist her hair in the latter stages of her Alzheimer's disease. The quilt is traditionally an inherited item passed from generation to generation, retaining memory, but Walker's quilt is used instead to mark the loss of that memory through disease.

In my own work, the series of pieces *Fragmented Memory* uses the image of a child's dress printed on cloth to act as a metaphor for the loss of childhood. The series was made to focus on the idea that over time our view of the deceased is distilled into selected memories but some will be lost, some may be inaccurate and some will become cherished fragments of shared experience. This work consists of a series of children's dresses printed onto fabric using a devoré technique and then cut up in a random way, the pieces reassembled with stitches holding them together. (Figure 8.) As the series progresses the coherence of the image of the dress is fragmented, with some fragments inserted in the wrong place in the dress, some are of the wrong fabric and some are missing altogether.

Figure 8. *'Fragmented Memory I'* (2012)

Similarly in the work *Healing Series,* the use of red paint functions as a metaphor for the blood and bruising around a wound, the lead wire is used as a metaphor for the brutal stitching in an autopsy wound (Figures 9, 10 and 11). The embedded stitching is used as metaphor for the healed wound forming a scar in the fabric of our being. After showing this work in Japan and speaking about the use of textile art in the processing of the work of mourning, one Japanese respondent described how he visualised the emotion of sadness as a square block of clay that has a chunk torn off by hand which eventually is smoothed over.

> 'I visualise the emotion of sadness as being like a square block of clay that has had a chunk torn off by hand. Immediately after someone has died, the pain of sadness is very sharp, and keeps coming back to you, like flashbacks. At first, even if you don't want to remember, it is constantly inside your head. You have to make a constant effort not to think about it, or to think of other things. Eventually, the broken off section of clay begins to lose the sharp edges as if being rubbed by someone's hand. This occurs because there are new things going on in your everyday life and time simply passes, taking the edge off the pain. After a lot of

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time has passed, the square block of clay regains its original shape, and each time you think back to your feelings of sadness, it is as if you are adding a layer of black glaze. This does not mean that you are covering over your feelings of sadness, but rather it is part of the healing process. Inside the glazed clay block, the scar is still there, just as it will always be in your heart' (Correspondent K).

Figure 9. *'Healing Series'* (2012)
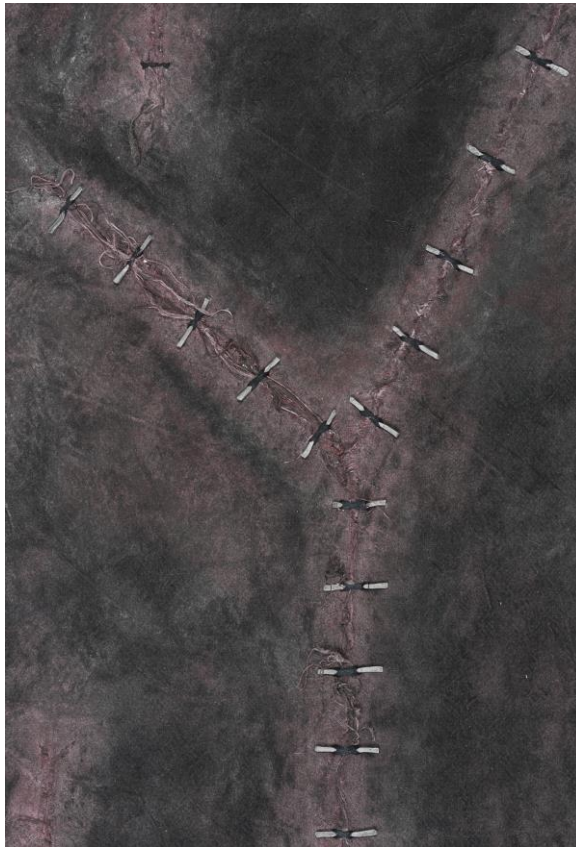
Figure 10. Detail of *'Healing Series'* (2012)

Figure 11. Detail of *Healing Series* (2012)

Similarly in the work *remembering, repeating and working through* created for the 'Cloth and Memory' exhibition at Salts Mill in 2012, the size of the work and the blackness of the linen was used as a metaphor for the overwhelming nature of mourning. (Figures 12. and 13.) A visitor to the exhibition understood this metaphor and wrote this unsolicited response:

> *'remembering, repeating and working through* was made from scraps of thin black cloth sewn together and I don't know if it was because of its overwhelming size, or its own attempt to hold itself together, but it instantly drew out something very dark, visceral and all consuming, it *was* bereavement' (Correspondent F).

Figure 12. *remembering, repeating and working through* (2012) at 'Cloth and Memory' Salts Mill, 2012

Figure 13. Detail of the surface of *remembering, repeating and working through* (2012)

One viewer wrote reflecting on this piece:

> 'There was no symmetry to the black patches or groups of patches, nor any
> sense of order to the tearing revealing the white beyond the black surface,
> whilst a network of threads criss-crossing the piece appeared to be
> constraining impending breakup. A metaphor for my grieving, for my state of
> emotional destruction and my efforts to find my 'way through'. I saw myself
> on that black wall. It spoke to the bruised and raw ME within me, wallowing
> in the damage to that mutual love of sixty years; love that had been
> obliterated' (Hallam, 2012).

This demonstrates how a private metaphor was immediately intelligible to a particular
viewer who made this interpretation without having any prior knowledge as to the intention
in the work or the subject matter with which it was concerned. In this and other work I have
created pieces which use cloth as a metaphor for life experience and processes such as
tearing, mending and patching to convey the emotions of grief and loss. The use of black
cloth acts as a metaphor for deep despair and overwhelming grief. The patches of cloth in
the piece were stitched together with a covering web of threads acting as a metaphor for the
barely-holding-together feeling of those first early days of mourning.

Figure 14. *Mendings II* (2014)

In the subsequent piece *Mendings II* the small repairs on pieces of stained cloth act as a metaphor for the step by step emotional mendings as we make our way towards completing our work of mourning.

This work (Figure 14.) consisted of 333 small pieces of cloth, torn to be approximately 22mm x 25mm. Each piece was damaged in some way and then repaired, either by darning, patching or piecing. Each was then mounted on a square of laser cut MDF and placed on another sheet of MDF measuring 1.68m high by 0.45m wide. Each small mend acted as a metaphor for the mending and healing process of the work of mourning making a person whole again - in this instance the size of the piece was based on the measurements of my own body.

These works use individual material components or processes that act as metaphors but, as Aldrich states, it is the 'transfiguration of the materials' together with the subject matter in the emergent meaning that makes the entire work a metaphor for emotional healing (Aldrich, 1968:79). This layering of metaphor is evident in the works the *Healing Series*. The red colour around the tear in the fabric as a metaphor for blood and bruising, the lead wire as a metaphor for the stitching in an autopsy wound are basic and fairly clumsy metaphors but together with the stitched mends and the suggestion that they are a metaphor for the wound left by bereavement creates a second layer and a more complex metaphor.

Metonymy

In contrast to the use of metaphor, metonymy is a linguistic tool where the name of an attribute is substituted for the name of the thing itself. An example of this would be in expressions such as 'I don't approve of the Government's actions' or 'Downing Street isn't saying anything' rather than the Prime Minister (or the members of the government) is not saying anything. It is a substitution through connectedness or contiguity. Mark Staff Brandl and Daniel Ammann describe how the most common forms of metonymy in art 'are when details stand in for whole, the particular for the general or the concrete for the abstract' (Brandl and Ammann, 1993: 99). This allows for attention to be drawn to peripheral elements of a domain of knowledge and creates a network of new senses around the original meaning. In artwork this can result in more enigmatic pieces than when using a straightforward metaphor of allowing one material or technique to stand in for or represent another. Bredin (1984) states that metonymical relations exploit 'simple relations between objects,' rather than between words. In the *vanitas* paintings of the seventeenth century, objects such as skulls and hourglasses, candles and rotting fruit were used as metaphors and metonymies of death. Within the domain of the bereaved mourner in the twenty-first century however, with fewer common rituals of burial and the absence of mourning dress, the substitution of a part for the whole in terms of an object used in mourning is more difficult to identify. Margarita Saona, writing on the mourning of the families of 'the disappeared' in Peru, gives the example of an elastic band used as a pony-tail holder from a mass grave being a metonym for the absence of the girl who wore it (Saona, 2014:73).

The use of metonymic chains in a mind map exercise can reveal new words and phrases that can inform work. An example of an artwork in which this technique has been used is Cornelia Parker's work *The Negative of Whispers* in which she made earplugs form the fluff gathered in the Whispering Gallery in St Paul's Cathedral. This shifts attention within closely related things and expands ideas beyond their original meaning. The Whispering gallery is a well-known space where, because of the acoustics of the rounded shape of the dome, the whisper of a person one side of the gallery can be heard on the other side. The dust and fluff Parker collected act as an 'inverse manifestation of the act of whispering'. Made from the ephemeral fragments shed by people from all over the world who visit the cathedral, the dust is made into a 'token or relic whose value is only generated by the memory of a specific place projected onto it' (Nichols, 2011).

Victoria Mitchell has written that the act of stitching can be viewed as 'commensurate with both metaphor and metonymy' (Mitchell, 2013:317). The visible surface in 'continuous dialogue with the hidden workings of the needle'. In this way Mitchell suggests that the act of stitching is able to 'embody metonymic actions' and by the gesture of stitching the cloth

is imbued with a way of communicating – 'a manner and matter of speaking through stuff' (Mitchell, 2013:316) She states that

> 'stitches might pattern, metonymically, as a chain of signifiers, but they need to be held down at certain points, anchoring a relationship to the shifting terrain of meaning. Thus this stitch signifies to this maker, in this culture, at this time' (Mitchell, 2013:316).

So any stitching in which layers of cloth are held down and secured to each other by stitch (the holding stitch or quilting point described by Lacan) gives 'consistency to the way in which subjective experience is structured, acting to secure the metonymic chain to the wavering activity of the signified' (Mitchell, 2013:317).

This project has focussed on the use of the relationship between objects as metonymic rather than as literary substitutions, following the definition of Bredin that it is the objects themselves which stand for the whole, the absent person, the deceased (Bredin,1984:52).

Mending

The Collins English Dictionary defines the verb 'to mend' as 'to repair something broken or unserviceable' (McLeod and Makins, 1994:709) and The Oxford English Reference Dictionary gives a definition of the noun as 'to darn or repair in material' (Pearsall and Trumble, 1995a: 902). The resurgence in the popularity of mending in recent years will be examined and the application of mending in artwork to convey a sense of emotional repair and healing will be explored. As discussed previously in reference to the psychoanalytical approaches to this project, the sociologists Hallam and Hockey describe the image of a painful memory such as bereavement 'as a form of physical damage – a scar or wound can come into play with regard to memories of responses to death' and can often be likened to 'breaches in the skin which defy the supposed healing power of time' (Hallam and Hockey, 2001:36). In his essay *Mourning and Melancholia* Freud suggested that melancholia could be thought of as an 'open wound' whereas mourning is a healing process but one which marks us forever, leaving an emotional scar (Freud, 1917:212). The presence of a visible scar on the body is an indication of life experience - a textile analogy for this would be the visible patching and mending of fabrics, giving a sense of being damaged in some way and then making whole, repairing, healing and mending. In my own textile practice, the different techniques of mending have been explored as a way of expressing the metaphor of mending as emotional healing. The tear that has been stitched over, darned or patched not only repairs, but also reinforces and strengthens the cloth.

The process of mending garments has been in existence for as long as there have been garments. In times when the production of cloth was costly and clothes had to last a long time, mending was a practical skill required to extend the functional life of garments. In recent times there has been a move away from repairing items as production costs are lower and replacement items of clothing are easily available. Repair techniques such as darning are no longer taught in schools and society today is known as 'throwaway'. In the last few years however there has been a resurgence of mending movements in which people are encouraged to mend items and take pride in prolonging the life of a garment. The notion of 'Make Do and Mend' has seen a resurgence in popularity in recent years. Originally this was the title of a pamphlet issued by the Ministry of Information during the Second World War in 1943. At the time, strict rationing of food, clothing and household items was in place and the pamphlet was issued to encourage housewives to be thrifty and reuse old clothing in stylish ways. Mending has been resurgent in recent years as the financial problems associated with the economic recession that started in 2008 has seen a revival of the philosophy of 'Make Do and Mend'. An updated version of the original pamphlet was published by the Imperial War Museum in 2007 with revised information for the current times and the use of modern materials.

Textile artist Jacy Wall runs a project called *The Nature of Mending*. The projects stated aims were to 'explore layers of meaning, cultural and emotional, that are evoked by mending, repair and re-use.' The long-term aim is 'to contribute to a growing critical debate around the subject of mending' (The Nature of Mending, s.d). As well as an exhibition of work, the project website also has a page where visitors are encouraged to share mending stories. These are many and varied, but often include an analogy to relationships or how to cope when something goes wrong in life, referring to mending as a way of thinking about healing. This is echoed in the book *Mending the Torn Fabric* (Brabant, 1996) a self-help book 'for those who grieve and those who want to help them' (Brabant, 1996:i). Conceived as a way of visualising grief, the metaphor of life as a piece of fabric with holes and tears in it is used in detail throughout including deciding what type of fabric represents one's life and what sort of needles and thread will be needed to repair it. It includes fabric based affirmations to be repeated at the end of each chapter such as 'If I am hurting there is a tear in my fabric', 'if my fabric is very tattered, it may take me a long time to do my mending', and 'I do not have to complete all of my mending to embroider my fabric' (Brabant, 1996:7, 58, 117). Although an entire book of this metaphor becomes tiresome very quickly, it serves to show how accessible this metaphor is to people to enable them to explore feelings of grief and loss and find a way to recover from the trauma of bereavement.

Repair cafes are a new phenomenon where volunteers with skills in repairing help members of the public to mend their items such as small electrical goods, bicycles and also give

advice on mending clothes and household textiles. Started in 2009 in the Netherlands by Martine Postma who wanted to improve sustainability on a local level, the movement provides the opportunity for skills to be passed on in a social atmosphere, where tools and materials for repair are freely provided. (Repair Café, s.d) Over 400 repair cafes now exist in 14 countries. One of the volunteers in the Brighton repair café is Tom van Deijnen, known as Tom of Holland. Originally from the Netherlands Tom, a self-taught knitter, also runs the 'Visible Mending' programme which highlights repairing garments by exploring the stories behind the garment and the repair to reinforce the relationship between them.

The group exhibition *Mending at the Museum* arose from the research group Stitch and Think at the University of the West of England. Focusing on hand stitch as a signifier of value, the group leaders Janet Haigh and Dawn Mason invited makers from different craft disciplines to a workshop to share skills and ideas and to question their practice. The outcome was the realisation of 'the wide range of uses stitch has as a visual language' (Haigh and Mason, 2012:6) with a common theme of the use of darning and mending and 'the emotional connection with stitch as a meditative or reflective process' (Haigh and Mason 2012:6).

The Nature of Mending and the Repair Café approach to mending are community based projects encouraging the participants to engage in public, or on a public online forum and share their experiences of when mending has been a beneficial process in their lives, using mending as a metaphor for healing themselves emotionally, spiritually or physically as well as mending as a practical and economic/environmental strategy. Most mending, however, is done in the domestic environment, as everyday items wear out or are damaged in some way. Mending clothes and linens in twenty-first century 'throw-away' society implies a level of taking care and cherishing that makes items more treasured. When it would be so easy to throw away worn, holed items and buy replacements, mending takes on a particular significance.

The mending of fabric through patching and darning, a practical method of making whole can also be seen in the *Boro* textiles in Japan. These garments were made by the poor, who had little access to new fabrics. They therefore repeatedly mended and patched and added layers to the garments to keep the family warm – made from love and a need to protect. Traditional Japanese work-wear for farmers and fishermen were made from bast fibres (made from the inner bark of plants such as hemp, jute or flax) until the introduction of cotton into Japan in the sixteenth century. Even then cotton was available only as scraps or rags, clothing and bedding were made using '*sashiko*' techniques - the joining of scraps of cloth together using running stitch and then layering them for warmth and to increase their durability; or by weaving shredded strips into cloth using '*sakiori*' - a term derived from the

Japanese for 'to tear' and 'to weave'. The resulting fabrics were hardwearing and warm and were repaired, pieced and patched to extend their life and eventually repurposed when their original use could not be continued. Seen as a type of textile for the very poor, they were rarely exported to the West because of their association with Japan's impoverished past but in recent years they have been the focus of collections and exhibitions particularly in the US and UK. Victoria Kelley, discussing the use of artificially worn textiles in current fashion, suggests that the interest in frayed and worn textiles rather than in pristine new ones is partly because the wear and tear, in our affluent society, no longer signals poverty and abjection, only a memory of it, and so these textiles can become aestheticized and sanitized (Kelley, 2009:222). She states 'it is only in a society in which nobody needs to be ragged that raggedness can be detached from shame, and used instead as an aesthetic strategy' (Kelley, 2015:196). Once only possessed by the poor, these *boro* textiles have become collector's items selling at high prices as the beauty of their wear, tear and repair appeals to current fashions and aesthetic. According to books such as *Practical Home Mending Made Easy* (Brooks Picken, 1946) and *Mending Men's Suits* (Scott and Hagood, 1958) mending cloth, clothes or textiles falls broadly into the practical categories of binding, darning, and patching. The author of *Make do and Mend* states that binding is generally used for the frayed edges of fabrics, whereas darning replaces areas of cloth that are worn away or damaged by using new threads to replace those missing. Patching uses another piece of cloth to cover a mark, stain or damage. Patching can be done so as to be invisible or can be decorative (Ministry of Information, 2007).

Darning is a method of mending that is less fashionable today than years ago because of the ease with which clothing items can be replaced rather than mended. The laborious construction of grid like stitches to reinforce a hole used to be done exclusively by hand but now is often achieved by machine stitching. The basket of mending to be attended to in the evenings often consisted of stockings and socks, the hole isolated over a darning mushroom and stitched so that the mend was as invisible as possible. This is a technique that Tom of Holland champions while he also states that he prefers that menders make their mending visible and wear their darn proudly as the fact that they have spent so much time and skill in mending the item increases its value to the owner. This notion of adding value by repair echoes the technique in the Japanese tradition of mending ceramics with lacquer and gold, making the mend both stronger and more valuable than that with no mendings. Known as *urushinaoshi*, denoting lacquer repair, the lacquer used in the mend (*Kishomi urushi* or pure lacquer of the highest quality) is sprinkled with gold (*kinshugi,* meaning to patch with gold or *kintsukuroi meaning* to repair with gold) or sometimes silver powder and is used to express the esteem felt for the damaged object by repairing it with a material which was exclusively available to the nobility in Japan. The pieces of ceramic used to make the repair are either 'original patches' (*tomotsugi*) or 'borrowed patches' (*yobitsugi*). The lacquer and

metal are then polished to bring out the lustre of the materials and to prevent damage to the repair, highlighting the 'desire to lengthen the lifespan of the ennobled appearance created through restoration with gold or silver powder as a material reflection of the esteem in which the artefact is held' (Iten, 2008:19).

Patching by laying a piece of cloth over the top of a damaged area could be interpreted as a covering up or concealment of what has happened, whereas patching from the back, placing a piece of cloth behind the area that has been damaged, serves more to reinforce the area and make it stronger whilst keeping the evidence of what has happened visible. Mending in this way implies a linear passage of time - a progression from the time when the cloth was perfect, to the moment that it was damaged and then to the time after it was changed in this way and finally to a time afterwards, when the necessary treatment, the mending, made it strong again. The mend is not invisible but can still be seen. The layering of pieces of cloth in this way also allows for a layering of meaning and memory, imbuing the cloth with a history and a story of its associations and experiences when in contact with the wearer. In my piece *Mendings II* (Figures 14. and 15.) seven different sorts of mending were used to repair damage to the small, torn, fragments of cloth:

- patching from the front with stitches over the patch edge,
- patching from the front with stitches contained within the patch,
- patching from the back,
- stitching torn edges together with straight stitches,
- stitching torn edges together using cross stitches,
- darning into the surface.

Each one of these strategies acts as a metaphor for the distinct small steps in mending and resolution of the incidents such as bereavement that happen during the course of life.

Figure 15. Detail of *Mendings II* (2014)

In contrast to these methods, Celia Pym is an artist who mends by knitting; darning patches of knitted wool into place where holes occur, usually in sweaters but also in other types of clothes belonging to other people. She believes that this sort of darning is a good way to understand an object – how it works and where its strengths and weaknesses lie, how it was used and loved. The work she made for the exhibition 'Cloth and Memory{2}' in Salts Mill, 2013 (Figure 16.) consisted of a jumper she had

> 'knitted, cut up and then stitched back together again, re-knitting patches to fill
> the cut away holes, darning them in place. Slowly the original sweater was
> replaced and put back together again' (Millar, 2013:86).

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Figure 16. *Stop Looking Like a Sweater* (2013)

Her sweater ceased to be a functioning wearable sweater, but carried with it the marks and stitches of her 'tender' attentions. Her notebook from the time of working on it contains the phrase 'a thing but not a thing' containing the memory of its original function (Millar, 2013:88). In this way, by the mending of the sweater Pym creates something new, something other that carries with it a new message of creation and making new rather than of preservation and repair. Her actions deliberately move the garment on, away from being a functioning garment, to become a container, vessel or vehicle for the memory of her actions rather than the actions of wear and tear through use.

The Norwegian artist Kari Steihaug also uses textiles such as knitted garments and everyday household items in her work but instead of mending them she unravels them, revealing the 'wavy traces of the stitches' which hold the memory not only of how they were made but also of the events and dramas they have witnessed. When Steihaug collects the discarded garments she not only has the item but she has also acquired its history. When unravelled, the threads are wound onto spindles or bobbins creating the possibility of remaking, of starting over. Steihaug 'liberates and rematerializes a metaphorical potential that was latent in the old product from everyday life. She continues where unknown hands

left off' (Jorveit, s.d). Remaking using the reclaimed threads allows for the possibility of 'transition between remembrance and expectation', the possibility of taking those memories and moving on with them to form something new, not forgetting the experience of the past but incorporating it.

The textile artist Anne Wilson uses hair to repair holes in traditional household linens. (Figure 17.) The mending of linens with hair echoes the tending and mending processes undertaken by the family who owned the cloths. Repeatedly used, then washed, ironed and mended, time and time again, these cloths, used for celebrations and family gatherings, hold the memory and history of the family. Stitching with hair onto these cloths to mend the holes recalls the painstaking labour of mending, and creating a new cloth, like a shroud to hold the memory of the family.

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Figure 17. Anne Wilson *Mendings (*1995)

Wilson uses a combination of the pure and the abject in her work. The pure is represented

by the use of white cloth, linen, and the patient labour of women in the laundering and repair of the cloth. This is contrasted by the use of hair – a reminder of the abject absent body, the holes suggesting the orifices and wounds rife with disease or decay. Writing in the Telos portfolio collection monograph on Anne Wilson, the writer and critic Tim Porges suggests that like other artists of the 'Art Fabric movement' such as Eva Hesse and Claes Oldenberg, her work stands in an in-between space, 'between abstraction and depiction'. He suggests that work which 'intercedes between mind and body' tends to a profound sadness (Porges, 2001:20).

In the work of all these textile artists, and in my own practice, both the functional materiality, the materiality of the threads, which make up the cloth and the cloth itself are intrinsic to the ability of the cloth to carry the metaphor of memory and healing through mending. Using cloth as a metaphor for life experience is fundamental to many people and so is accessible to them when considering textile artwork as a way of connecting with traumatic life events such as bereavement and mourning.

Staining

The creation of a stain is either an intentional or unintentional occurrence. Either something is being purposely changed, for example wood for protective or aesthetic reasons, or it is being accidentally marked to its detriment. For the purposes of this research the staining referred to is not the aesthetic or positive change, but that which marks or alters the substance in a negative way. It is this negative stain which is able to carry the metaphor of traumatic life experience such as bereavement and mourning. In my own practice therefore, the negativity of the stain is used as a transformative process to alter and change the fabric into a positive exploration of the emotions of grief and loss which are easily accessible to the viewer.

Definitions of stain include to mark or discolour with patches of something which dirties; and 'to sully, blemish, spoil or damage (a reputation)'; as well as 'to discolour or be discoloured by the action of liquid sinking in' and 'a discolouration, a spot or mark caused esp. by contact with foreign matter and not easily removed' (Pearson & Trumble, 1995b:1408).

The origin of the word stain is from the 14th Century Middle English term *steynen* and from the Anglo -French *desteindre,* meaning to take away the colour from something (dis-colour). The German word for stain is *das Mal*, meaning sign, mark or spot. The Latin word is *macula* which is also used in theology as the word for sin (Kuryluk, 1991:180). This gives

rise to the notion of sin being a stain on the soul, and is the origin of the term for the (im)maculate conception of Jesus.

The accidental spillage of food or drink on clothes is embarrassing but nothing more. The stain of sweat on clothes under the arms is more than embarrassing; it is a source of shame as is any leak of urine or blood that other people can see; a humiliation by the self or by the critical other. Mary Douglas states that it is at the margins of ideas that the most vulnerable areas lie, and that 'we should expect the orifices of the body to symbolise its specially vulnerable points' (Douglas, 1966:150). She lists bodily fluids such as blood, milk, urine, sweat, faeces and tears as marginal and therefore dangerous. The book of Leviticus in the Old Testament of the Bible lists the ways in which the Israelites constructed their eating and cleansing habits in such a way as to protect themselves from bodily fluids such as blood, semen, urine, faeces and pus (Leviticus 15). The stain is a record of the time when the staining substance was expelled from the body, whether involuntarily or as a result of violence. Stains therefore represent a substance that is on the border, both inside and outside the body, a liminal substance that disturbs and unsettles. As Jefferies has described 'through their odour, stain and smell, clothes carry traces of another life, embedded with stories of the migrant limbs that were once housed within their folds' (Jefferies 2001:4). Barnett describes stained cloth as ambiguous and indeterminate as it consists of elements that are from the inside of the body but that exist outside (Barnett, 2008:203). It is this ambiguity which she states 'confounds, disturbs, yet also fascinates' (Barnett, 2008:203).

The Japanese artist Chiyoko Tanaka used ink to stain the fabric she used to create a *kesa* - the Japanese Buddhist robe, in memory of each of her parents.

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Figure 18. Chiyoko Tanaka *Sange, Lotus Petals #97-1* (1997)

The use of stained fabrics and rags follows the Buddhist tradition of not owning anything of intrinsic value. The Dōgen, the Japanese Zen Buddhist teacher and founder of the Sōtō Zen School in Japan, lists in the *Kesa-Kudoku* the ten sorts of rags suitable to be used. Those chewed by rats, rags scorched by fire, rags chewed by an ox, rags soiled by menstruation and childbirth, rags offered at a shrine or left at a graveyard, rags offered in petitional prayer or brought back from a funeral and rags disregarded by the king's officers (Dōgen, 2007:965). The Buddhist writer Taigu describes how

> 'The kesa is made of rags. Just like our lives. Rags-like. Patches, shredded stories, cuts of various nature...Rags are best. What collects fabric is a broken life, a life in pieces, what is collected is just rags' (Taigu 2006).

If new fabric is donated to the temple for a *Kesa* to be made in memory of a deceased family member, once the *kesa* has been made there is a staining ceremony to make the kesa 'not new'. The Sanskrit term for *kesa* is *keyasha* translates as 'turbulence' and is used to describe the dyeing of fabric. *Keyasha* also has meaning in terms of colour, referring to earth colours or neutral tones, which in turn 'suggests impurity and uncleanliness' (Millar, 2002:12). Although not created to the Buddhist robe pattern, Tanaka's *Kesa* were created while she was mourning her parents and so she named them accordingly. The staining of the *Kesa* in this case was a decision made by Tanaka herself rather than using stained cloth

and she used a Chinese ink to do this. The way Tanaka's *kesa* were created was informed by the structure of a Kimono sleeve which differs according to the gender of the wearer. Tanaka's *kesa* were made from used fabrics - from old kimonos. (Figure 18.)

In her article 'On cloth, stigma and shame' Jenni Sorkin argues that stains elicit the idea of shame, and she draws the distinction between self-staining - nosebleeds, vomiting, bedwetting etc. with staining of another. 'To stain another is to mark. To be marked is dark. This darkness is constant foreboding and permanent grief' (Sorkin, 2001:79). Yet the stain is one which is used to represent emotional experience and trauma - for example the stain of rejection and the lifelong grief it caused in the work of Louise Bourgeois. Pennina Barnett argues that 'as cloth clings to the body so it becomes a second skin, a metaphor for the layer between ourselves and others' (Barnett, 2008:203). In her essay 'Stain', she associates the idea of stain with Kristeva's concept of the abject - the bodily fluids 'such as blood mucous, saliva, semen, excreta attract our attention and curiosity, yet elicit horror and disgust' (Barnett, 2008:204). She also asserts that the abject represents an in-between, as these fluids are not quite separate from the body but at the same time are not actually part of the body.

The exhibition in 2013 of five years' worth of menstrual blood on stained cloths by Chilean artist Carina Ubeda in Quillota, Chile caused consternation and disgust. Hung in embroidery hoops and interspersed with blackened apples to symbolise her ovulation, the stained cloths were embroidered with words such as 'destroyed', 'production' and 'discard'. Some viewers called the exhibition 'filthy' and 'disgusting' whilst some women visiting the exhibition adopted a more feminist viewpoint and were more inclined to celebrate the making of a work of art from something that 'makes women blessed and unique' (Chile, 2013). Making art using menstrual blood is not new and as a movement comes under the name '*menstrala*', a term adopted by the menstrual artist Vanessa Tiegs from a combination of the words menstrual and mandala. Artists using their blood often use it as a type of paint and create images and patterns, or use it for feminist installation works, the most notorious of these being Judy Chicago's installation *Red Flag* which showed a bloody tampon being removed from a vagina. The interest in Ubeda's work as far as this research project is concerned is the way in which she has left the cloths as an honest recording of the staining event rather than using the blood as paint.

Given the reaction to Tiegs' and Ubeda's work and to that of other *menstrala* artists it is unsurprising that the reaction to tears is not as strong or extreme and although they are still a bodily fluid they do not elicit the same feelings of disgust. Tears are a much more commonly witnessed than menstrual blood and tend to bring about feelings of sympathy or empathy than revulsion. Photographer Rose-Lynn Fischer has created a collection of

landscapes of 100 different sorts of tears which range from 'tears of grief', 'tears of timeless reunion' to 'onion tears'. Fischer states she is using the tears to express her inner state as 'tears are a primal human act of communication' (Jones, 2014).

One of the physical properties of a stain is that it soaks into the fabric and becomes an intrinsic part of it. It integrates itself into the threads of the cloth and remains there as a part of the canvas or cloth. Ed Ruscha made a portfolio of 75 prints called *Stains* in 1969. He used substances such as beer, turpentine, and egg yolk to make the stains and the final print in the portfolio used his own blood. Ruscha described the portfolio as 'a little treasure chest of overlooked things' (Temkin, 2008:135) and cited his rationale for the work as

> 'Stains have always been scorned I guess, and it evolved out of my concepts of painting. I've always painted with a skin on a support, like paint on a canvas. And finally I got sick of doing it, and staining something, letting a wet material sink down into the fabric of the support - in this case paper - was the effort here and was my interest' (MoMA, s.d).

Staining has also been used to represent emotional experience in the work of Shelly Goldsmith. In her work *Outpourings 1 and 2* she 'explores the 'imprint' of our lives and thoughts on the surface of the garments we wear - making visible psychological emotions thoughts and memories' (Goldsmith, s.d). She uses clothing found in charity shops and imagines stories of what happened to the previous owners. The clothes are used as 'a medium for narratives of flooding, staining and seepage' (Millar, s.d) as she uses the textile garments and by using processes of staining, printing and marking them makes them a metaphor for 'imagining how psychological states, emotions and memories associated with human fragility and loss can be made visible in cloth' (Millar, s.d). This focus on the imagined stories of the individual item of clothing contrasts with the work of Christian Boltanski who, in his work *No Man's Land* (2010) (Figure 19.) used vast mountains of clothes reminiscent of the clothing piles in concentration camps to highlight the 'mute testimony to human experience and suffering' (Franzke, 1990), as well as the continuing focus in his work on memory, identity and loss.

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Figure 19. Christian Boltanski *No Man's Land* (2010)

The difference in the numbers of items of clothing between Goldsmith's work and Boltanski's serves to reinforce the scale of the atrocities Boltanski is marking. Each individual item of clothing represents a person whose story is forgotten and goes unremarked and the scale of the installation acts as a reminder of the number of lives lost, whereas Goldsmiths work marks the imagined stories of single lives and events.

My own work has used bitumen diluted with white spirit to stain cloth (Figure 20.). The choice of bitumen, usually used to seal flat roofs and protect wood from water damage, came from its viscosity and the association I made with the stickiness of the paint as a metaphor for the inability to escape from the emotion of grief. This sticky viscosity is akin to the muck and sewage described by Kristeva as defilement (Kristeva 1982:2). Like the stain, viscosity also has an attraction but when it is described as slimy rather than viscous it also has the power to disgust and to feel powerless. As Sartre describes 'to touch the slimy is to risk being dissolved in sliminess' (Sartre, 1956:777). The first *Mendings* piece shown in Figure 19 was , after reflection, developed into a series of pieces which were informed by the idea of staining and mending. These works called *Mendings* as described above (pages 68, 74, 75 and shown in figures 14, 15, 20 and 26) used torn bed-sheets stained with different dilutions of bitumen paint. In *Mendings III* the torn and mended cloth has again been painted with bitumen paint and treated with white spirit to increase the appearance of stains within the fabric of the cloth. (Figure 26.) The size of the piece references the size of the body acting as a metaphor for the shaming and staining of life experiences, making the work appear abject and a container of hurts and traumatic events.
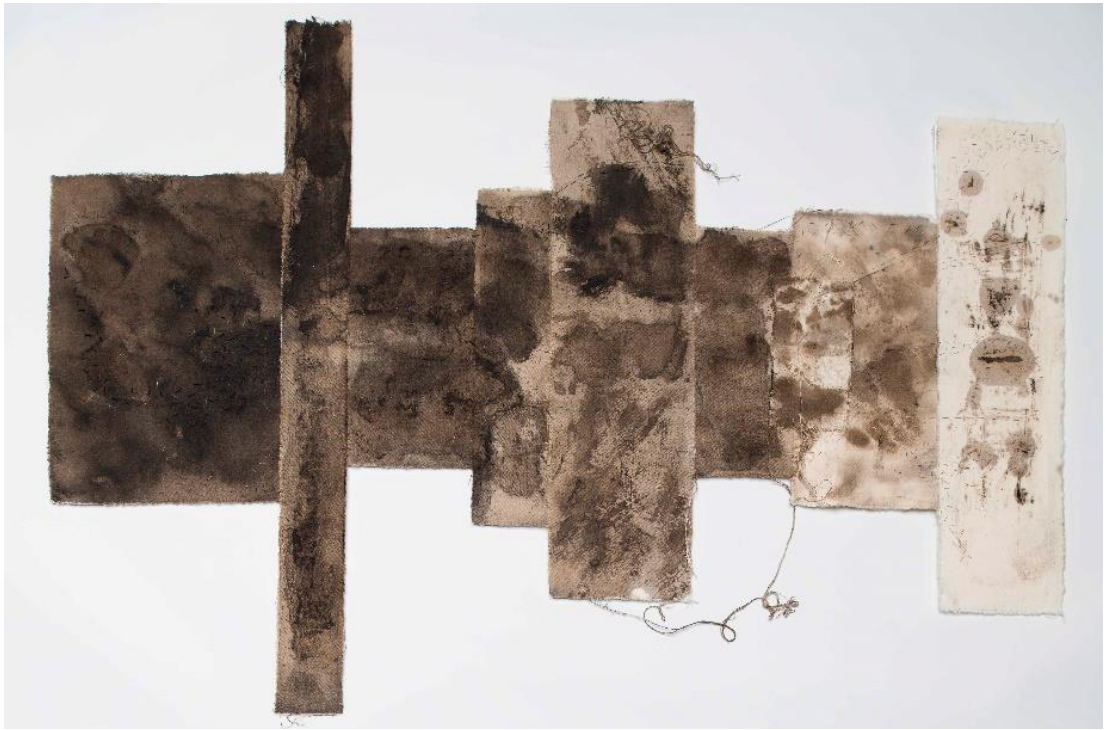
Figure 20. *Mendings* (2013)

Bitumen as a metaphor for staining was continued in the work *Rose Petal Shroud* (2013), this time in its undiluted state giving a black, slightly shiny surface to the 8 feet by 5 feet constructed textile background. Into this surface were pressed rose petals which had been dyed black and stitched in place with black silk. The velvety, matte smoothness of the petals contrasted with the surface of the cloth. Seven of the rose petals had lead wire stitched in place of the silk. These seven reference the seven people mentioned in the preface.

Figure 21. Detail of *Rose Petal Shroud* (2013)

Figure 22. *Rose Petal Shroud* (2013)

Staining has also been used in the work *Continuing Bonds*. The name references the theory developed by Dennis Klass that suggests that keeping a bond with the deceased, as the Japanese do with the presence of the ancestors in everyday life, is a healthier way to process grief. In this work, a child's dress was printed onto muslin using a dye made from St John's Wort (Figure 23.). This plant is a traditional herbal remedy for depression thought to have mystical healing powers . It has also been used in exorcisms and against witchcraft, and was used to treat battle wounds in the medieval period as it also has some antibacterial properties. It has a long history of being used in the treatment of melancholy and disorders of the mood and temperament (Nelson, s.d). Making successive prints from the same painting of the dress with the dye meant that some areas of the dress did not print completely, until eventually only small areas of the dress were present to stain the fabric. Embroidered details within these areas were stitched and long lengths of thread were left connecting the prints. The thread from the last print was left to drape onto the floor referencing the way some of our memories os the deceased persist for a long time whilst others fade and are lost.

Figure 23. First print from *Continuing Bonds* (2013)

Similarly, in the work *The Resonance of Loss* (Figure 24.) the image of the child's dress seeps through the painted surface of the work, suggesting memories which return unbidden at different moments in life to cause the work of mourning to continue. This re-surfacing of grief suggests that the bereaved are in the space between mourning and melancholia, that mourning is still continuing and has not been fully resolved without becoming complicated grief.

Figure 24. *The Resonance of Loss* (2011)

C.S. Lewis, writing in *A Grief Observed* records that often one can find oneself thrown back almost to the first moment of bereavement and be back in a state of deep grieving (Lewis, 1961:49). In order to explore the idea of the resurfacing of memories, the work *The Persistence of Loss* incorporated the image of a child's dress which was used as a vehicle for expressing the loss of childhood, which is the focus of mourning for this series of work. (Figure 25.) The dress was used to print on both fabric and paper. Some of the prints were torn and mended and some layered with plaster on the surface to appear embedded in the surface allowing the stain of the memory of grief to seep through to the top layer, becoming visible, almost tangible again.

Figure 25. *The Persistence of Loss* (2011)
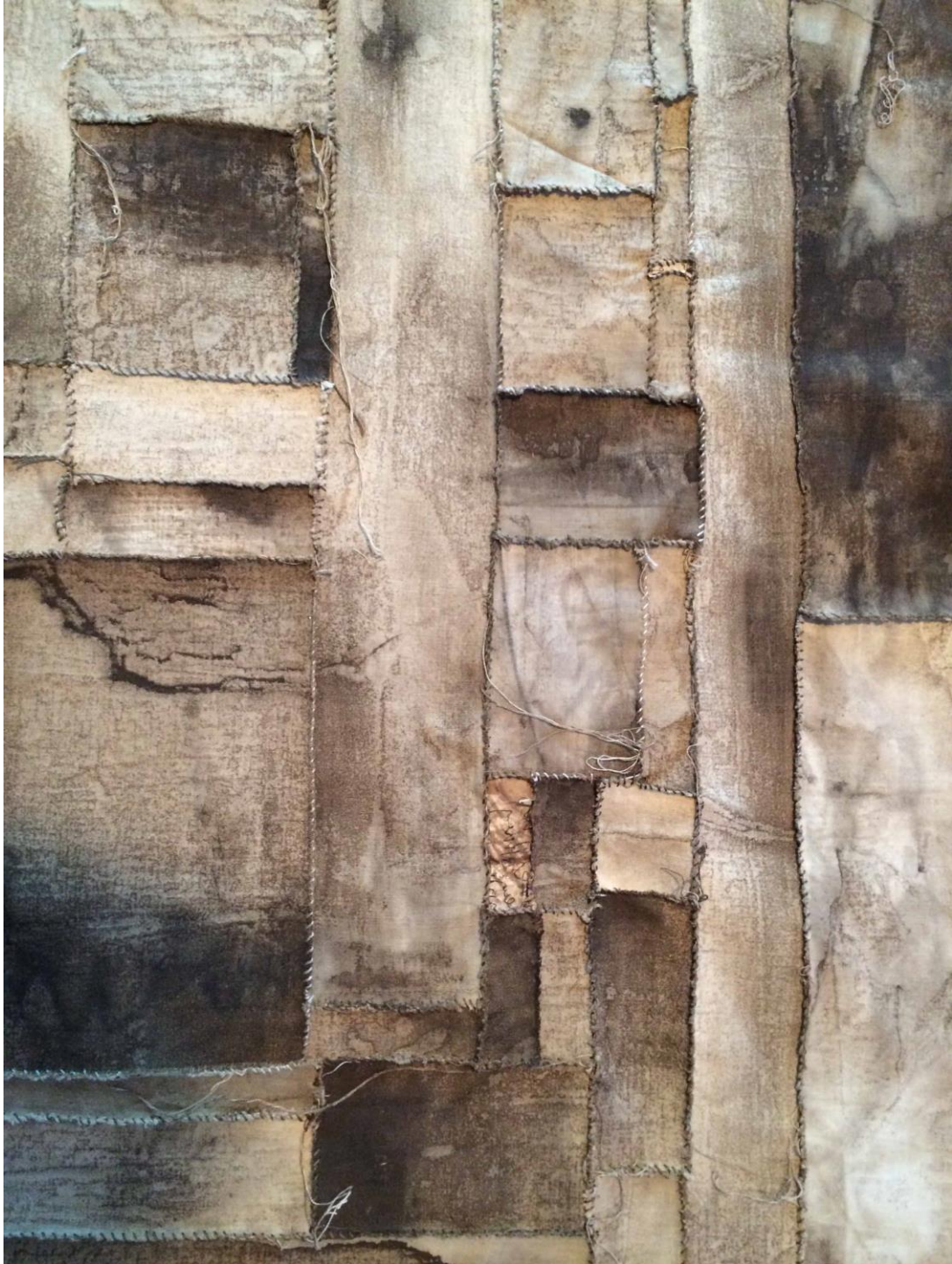
Figure 26. Detail of *Mendings III* (2015)

In contrast to the focus of work on the seemingly never ending , unremitting nature of mourning, some studio work has also been made which looks at the resolution of mourning and the ethereal nature of that resolution. Chalk was selected as a medium to use in this instance as it is formed from the microscopic skeletons of marine plankton, colourless and pure, collapsed and compressed, over millions of years. Powdered chalk can fill the air and be blown onto surfaces, covering and impregnating them with a sense of time. The fact that chalk is made from ancient dead organisms can also mean that it carries with it a sense of loss, not morbid and heavy but ethereal, light and full of hope. The chalk in this video

artwork was blown into the air and onto an extant constructed cloth artwork titled *Holding On* (2012) and previously shown at the Cloth and Memory exhibition at Salts Mill, Saltaire. This work consists of patches of cloth that are barely held together with stitch. Some of these have been printed with fragments of letters from some of the seven people of my acquaintance who died in a short period of time, mentioned previously.

Figure 27. Still from video *Dust of memory* (2015)

Figure 28. Still from video *Dust of Memory* (2015)

In summary, this chapter has explored the importance of textiles and their use as a metaphor for mourning and as a container and vehicle for the expression of emotions such as grief and loss. By referencing the work of specific artists the materiality of cloth has been shown to be fundamental in the carrying of meaning by its use in contemporary textile art practice. In addition, the use of processes such as mending and staining and the use of torn fragments has also been examined to assess how they can imbue textile art with the feelings of grief and loss and act as a lens to focus on the work of mourning in the viewer. The mending of damage to the cloth to suggest healing and repair of emotional trauma and the use of staining to indicate life experience has also been discussed. It is clear that the ubiquitous and commonplace nature of cloth in our everyday lives continues to reinforce its importance in the communication of emotions, thoughts and feelings in works of art. To echo Celant's writings on cloth, textiles represent an 'almost always carnal world, one linked to suffering and pain, to joy, and to physical and concrete memories that appear through the outlines of the woven surface' (Celant, 2010:13).

Chapter 4. Connecting with the viewer

The aims of this research project include the creation of artworks which make a connection with any unresolved grief of viewers and allow them space and time to remember and reflect and so progress their work of mourning. This chapter will discuss what happens after the artwork is made and is shown to the audience; how the setting of the exhibition and the type of gallery space may contribute to the way in which the work is received; and how the viewers have responded. Susan Best, writing in *Visualizing Feeling* states that 'the arousal of feeling is one of the experiences art is expected to deliver' (Best, 2014:1) and this chapter will examine the theories that attempt to explain how this may happen. This arousal of feeling may be achieved through evoking an affect or mood change in the viewer, both through the work itself and the way in which it is shown; arousing an empathic response in the viewer; enabling the viewer to form an emotional investment in the work or an identification with the subject matter; or by the reliving of a bereavement as a catharsis. The documentation of responses to the artwork when shown in exhibition to the public has been described in the chapter 'Approaching and undertaking the research' and in this chapter, the responses will be discussed as evidence that a connection with the viewer has occurred and that a contribution has been made to the progression of their continuing work of mourning.

Psychoanalytical interpretation of making art

Sigmund Freud's essay *Mourning and Melancholia* (1917) described the psychoanalytical approach in defining and explaining the differences between successful and unsuccessful mourning, that is, melancholia. Freud also interpreted artistic creativity and the reception of art by the audience in terms of the development of his interpretation using psychoanalytical theory. Examining Freud's thinking in this area of psychoanalysis is therefore a useful starting point in examining the interior processes involved in the creation of the artwork before moving on to interrogate the interaction of the work with the viewer. The development of Freud's work in this area by other theorists, providing alternative ways of describing how the viewer receives the artwork, will also be discussed.

This chapter will also examine some of the psychoanalytical thinking around how the artist is able to draw on their own experience to inform work created to express and communicate the emotions of grief and loss; the idea of private grief made public. It will also discuss the development of psychoanalytical thinking by Adela Abella and Julia Kristeva that, because of their incomplete and unsuccessful separation from the mother, artists tend towards the depressive state of melancholia.

Writing in *Three essays on the theory of sexuality* (1905), Freud understood artistic activity (in which he included literature as well as visual arts) as a sublimation of sexual desires and Abella states that therefore 'sexual dissatisfaction can work as a motor for artistic creativity' (Abella, 2010:164). Freud compared art to 'dream, children's play, hysterical fantasies, neurotic symptoms, daydreaming and masturbation' (Abella 2010:166). Hanna Segal developed Freud's rather negative psychoanalytical interpretation of art and questioned what 'specific factors … enable an artist to produce a satisfactory work of art' and why the public is 'touched by some works of art while not by others' (Abella, 2010:167). Segal however, unlike Freud, focuses on the idea of art being a reparation of loss; that the artist acknowledges their depressive anxieties and rather than letting them become manic states (as described by Melanie Klein) they can overcome them and allow them to be a creative stimulus.

Julia Kristeva discusses the link between art and melancholia in her book *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*. Her interpretation of melancholia is that of an unsuccessful separation from the mother.[10] This discussion begins with the supposition that 'artists tend towards the melancholic pole of the psychical spectrum' (Lechte 1990:35). Kristeva suggests every artistic work 'even those geared to provoke a strong emotional response, is executed with a certain detachment.' She describes the continuity between the artist's life and his work as 'comportement', not that the artist's life is represented in the work but that 'the work is *part* of the artist's life.' The artist then 'evokes the attachment to the mother through the semiotic dimension of the signifying process, where the transposition of affect becomes rhythm, alliteration, intonation etc.' Kristeva concludes that the 'the work of art is the possible mark of a 'vanquished depression' (Lechte, 1990:36). The result is the creation of a physical manifestation of the artist's work of mourning - the work of art itself which is outside the body and can then be viewed by the spectator. It is unlikely that artists experience bereavement any more than others or that they feel the loss more intensely but they do have the ability, over and above that of others, to make work which communicates that pain and makes the private public.

Artist and theorist Bracha Ettinger describes the artist as a patient, so that the 'artist loses her mind and spirit to the work, which the viewer analyses.' But she then goes on to argue that the artist is also a doctor, with the artwork becoming 'both the illness and the remedy' (Ettinger, 2002:215). When the artwork is shown to the public, the 'doctor-and-patient borderspace finds its echoes in the viewer; its vibrations impregnate the viewer's psychic

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[10] In contrast to Freud's theory that the melancholic person directs the rage against the deceased onto their own ego - an object relation, Kristeva states that the relation fails to materialise at all. No object is able to replace the mother 'no sign can express the loss, and desire fails to emerge' (Lechte, 1990:34).

borderspace' (Ettinger, 2002:218). These echoes make a connection with the viewer and allow a possibly unarticulated remainder of grief to surface and be relived.

The idea stated by Segal that the artist allows their depressive state to become a creative stimulus would seem to agree with the description by Anton Ehrenzweig of how an artist creates any work of art. Ehrenzweig, like Freud, suggests that art 'is a dream, dreamt by the artist, which we, the wide awake spectators, can never see in its true structure' (Ehrenzweig, 1967:79). He proposes that an artwork 'functions like another person, having an independent life' (Ehrenzweig, 1967:102) echoing Segal's assertion that the artist has to acknowledge that the work of art is 'created by the self, … different from the self and thus being apt to be freely used by the self' (Segal, 1978 cited in Abella 2010:169).

Thus the artist is not necessarily always in a state of mourning to create art, but because of the artist's naturally melancholic and depressive state, they themselves may occupy 'the space between', the space between their natural melancholy as artist, and any personal experience of mourning which they may have been through, which is then used to inform the artwork either unconsciously or consciously in reference to a specific loss or bereavement.

Affectivity and the transmission of affect

With the artwork completed, the moment may eventually come for it to be shown to an audience. Mikel Dufrenne, writing in *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience* states that it is only when the work is shown to the public that it is truly completed and that it is 'through the spectator that the work finds its *own* reality' (Dufrenne, 1973:47). As Mark Staff Brandl has written, the interpretation of the artwork should 'seek the transformative through two questions: What does the act of interacting with this work allow me to discover in life? How does this change and improve experience i.e. reality?' (Brandl s.d). For this, consideration needs to be given to the way the work of art produces bodily responses in the viewer or 'affects' - that is 'moments of intensity, reactions in/on the body at the level of matter' (cited in O'Sullivan, 2001:125). There is much debate in the literature on the nature of affects, from the definitions of how they differ from drives, emotions and feelings to how they function within the body and how they are brought into play in the reception of art.

Jonathan Flatley, writing in *Affective Mapping* (2008) attempts to distinguish between 'emotion' and 'affect'. He argues that 'emotion suggests something that happens inside and tends toward outward expression whereas affect indicates something relational and transformative' giving the example that 'one *has* emotions; one is affected *by* people or things' (Flatley, 2008:12). An affect therefore needs an object to enable its manifestation.

Best suggests that affect is best described as 'a collective term that encompasses both emotions and feelings' (Best, 2014:5).

In 1962 the American clinical psychologist Silvan Tomkins described nine distinct basic affects: shame/humiliation, interest/excitement, joy/enjoyment, surprise/startle, anger/rage, fear/terror, distress/anguish, 'dissmell' (elicited by bad smells) and disgust (elicited by bad tastes). Flatley proposes that these work in constant flux with each other, in that

> 'affects are always amplifying, dampening, or otherwise modifying some other affect, or drive, or perception or thought process, or act or behaviour, resulting in a well-nigh infinite number of combinations between different affective microsystems and their feedback mechanisms in interaction with their environments' (Flatley, 2008,16).

Deleuze describes this interaction of different states as processual, that it occurs both as an action by the affecting body and a response to that action by the affected body. *Affectio* refers to

> 'the state of an affected body and implies the presence of the affecting body, whereas *affectus* refers to a passage from one state to another, in relation to the correlative variation of the affecting bodies' (Deleuze 1981 cited in Tygstrup, 2012:199).

Therefore, when experiencing distress and sadness at the death of someone close, the result of the distress/anguish affect has come to predominate in the complex of affects in operation at that time and it is a process/synthesis/interaction between the affector, that is whatever is causing the affect, and the affected. In the case of my own work, the affector being the combination of cloth and stitch coupled with the use of devices such as metaphor. In contrast to affect, emotion 'can be distinguished as the result of the interaction of affects with thoughts, ideas, beliefs, habits, instincts and other affects' (Flatley, 2008:16). That is, they are a complex of affects and other factors which all contribute and interact to make up the emotion. Clare Hemmings, writing in *Invoking affect* describes affects as 'states of being rather than their manifestation or interpretation as emotions' (Hemmings, 2005:551). In psychoanalysis, affects are the qualitative expression of our drives' 'energy and variations' (Giardini, 1999 cited in Hemmings, 2005:551). Tomkins distinguished between affect and drives because of their independence from how long they last and what invokes them. As an example Tomkins states that someone who experiences suffocation is not panicking because of the dwindling supply of oxygen, as the lack of oxygen makes one drowsy, but that the panic 'is the result of the amplifying effects of fear' (Tomkins, 1995 cited in Flatley, 2008:13).

The psychoanalytical processes by which affects work has been analysed extensively but here the focus will be on the psychoanalytical interpretation of affects when the viewer encounters a work of art. Leo Steinberg draws the parallel between the psychoanalyst's dispassionate but engaged mode of listening known as 'evenly spaced attention' and the engagement with works of art by the viewer. His suggestion is that 'the first response to new art should be to suspend judgement … to give the intentions of the new work the space to emerge and become perceptible' (Best, 2014:7). The aim is to 'feel along with it as with a thing that is like no other' (Best, 2014:7). Freud used the term 'transference' to describe how in therapy the patient transfers their feelings resulting from traumatic events in childhood and their affects onto the analyst and plays them out by talking about them. This has been described by Best as a way of processing feelings about a work of art that is consistent with the work of Freud, by describing the encounter as not only transferential, with the thoughts and feelings associated with bereavement and loss being transferred to the artwork, but also informed by the personal and idiosyncratic circumstances of each individual viewer and 'refracted through the particularities of the viewing subject' (Best, 2014:39). That is, the individual experiences, thoughts and emotions that each person has act like a refracting prism through which the work of art is perceived and will make a difference to the way in which they see the work of art and how they make a connection with it. The different experiences of grief and loss each individual viewer undergoes will determine the way the work is received.

Deleuze and Guattari describe a work of art as a 'bloc of sensations, waiting to be activated by a spectator or participant' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994 cited in O'Sullivan, 2001:126). It would seem that Dufrenne has a similar view of the way the aesthetic object interacts with the public as he states 'It is through our body, … that we remain in touch with the object' and 'our body submits to the object, allowing itself to be moved by the object' (Dufrenne, 1973:57). Therefore, as the bereaved spectator, with their previous experience of mourning and grief comes to encounter the work, so they are able to connect, via the artist's use of materials and devices such as metaphor with the emotional affect of the piece. 'The witness is not a pure spectator but an involved one - involved with the work itself' (Dufrenne, 1973:56).

As an example of this, textile practitioner and writer Janis Jefferies responded in a physical way when encountering the work of Soon Yul. Yul's ash drawings were created by burning letters from her mother and 'translating' them into ash drawings by echoing her memory of the circular movements her mother made with her hand on Yul's stomach when she was unwell as a child. Jefferies describes how 'the haunting quality of the ash drawings, produce a physical 'sensation,' a tingling of bodily nerves which still cut the flesh, wounds us as if experiencing a loss for the first time' (Jefferies, 2000:66).

Similarly, the following is a record of a physical bodily response to my piece *Mendings IV* in the 'Trauma. Grief. Loss: The Art of Bereavement' exhibition in May 2015 which was sent to me by a viewer. This description is an example of both the way art is described by Deleuze and Guattari as sensations being activated by the viewer and of Dufrenne's view that the 'spectator is moved by the object'.

> 'For me, this piece has such power and I responded to it physically as well as emotionally. It certainly hit me in the gut, right at the heart of my being. It took my breath away, which made me breathe with shallow breaths, using only the top part of my lungs causing me to be physically still, and quiet, to contemplate it. I continue to reflect on it, some time after having seen it. It was such a valuable experience responding to a piece of work physically and emotionally' (correspondent G).

This very physical, as well as emotional, response to the work evidences the connection made with the viewer.

Exhibitionary affect

The fact that affects are described as something one is 'in' rather than something one 'has' ascribes spatial qualities to the affective. The way the work of art is shown in exhibition, whether in a white cube space, crypt, library or derelict building, and the ambiance, or affectivity of the space, will have an impact on the way the work is perceived and the reaction of the viewer. The influence of the curatorial vision on the way the exhibition is presented has the ability to change the way in which the work is able to connect with the audience. Curator Jennifer Fisher describes the possible engaged positions of the curator as 'fan, provocateur, midwife, opportunist, or cultural activist' (Fisher, 2006:28). By changing the lighting, the colour of walls and floor, the flow through the exhibition, the curator is able to set the ambiance of the exhibition, allowing a transmission of the desired affect. As Teresa Brennan has written 'is there anyone who has not … walked into a room and "felt the atmosphere?"' (Brennan, 2004:1). Brennan defines this transmission as a way of describing a process 'that is social in origin but biological and physical in effect'. She states that affects

> 'do not only arise within a particular person but also come from without…via an interaction with other people and an environment. But they have a physiological impact … I mean that the emotions or affects of one person, and the enhancing or depressing energies these affects entail can enter into another' (Brennan, 2004:3).

With this emphasis on the environment, the possibility for the viewer to connect with the artwork created throughout this research project can be maximised by carefully considering the curatorial or exhibitionary affect in the way the work is shown to the viewer.

The affects achieved through showing work in different gallery situations can be demonstrated by the example of the work *Seven* shown in Gallery 2, Salt's Mill, Saltaire and in The Crypt Gallery, St Pancras Church, London. (Figure 29.) Here the colour of the walls, the lighting and the height of the ceilings and the anticipated passage of the audience through the exhibition, all contribute to the 'atmosphere' and allow for the viewer to spend time with the work and to offer the opportunity for them to understand and connect with the work. These non-representational elements work in conjunction with the representational elements such as the labelling and information panels which are used to communicate the intention of the exhibition and individual artworks.

Figure 29. *Seven* shown in different venues (2013)

The exhibition of work for the final submission of this research project was envisaged in response to the venue as a white cube space. It was planned as an immersive experience of the overwhelming depths of grief, of resolution and of acceptance - from darkness to light. There are obvious limitations for showing large scale work; for example the dimensions of the gallery to allow access , the availablity of lighting and the positioning of video screens. However, the aim was to create an exhibition that gave a sense of being touched by the work and by the space. The experience gained from showing some of the works in other exhibitions during the course of the research project was useful in understanding that the

pieces needed to have a certain amount of space between them. This allowed for the large sized pieces of work to 'breathe' and be seen by themselves and the intended impact to be felt and understood by the audience.

Sympathy and empathy

The communication of affect from the artwork and the way it is displayed to the viewer with their uniquely personal and idiosyncratic experience may cause a feeling of empathy in the viewer.

Empathy has been defined by the American psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut as 'the capacity to think and feel oneself into the inner life of another (Kohut, 1984 cited in Cartwright, 2008:2) and the 'capacity for concern' (Pajaczkowska, 2005:79). Contrasting with sympathy (I feel sorry for how you feel), empathy has a more personal connection with the other whilst still acknowledging its otherness (I know how you feel). Film theorist Lisa Cartwright suggests that empathy is a moral perception.

> 'In my empathy with you, in thinking I know how you feel, I do not need to know about you or identify with you … I do not see from your position … I may not necessarily know about or share your experience, much less your grief. I may even acknowledge that I cannot know what you feel from my own experience, even as I "feel for you"'(Cartwright, 2008:24).

The term empathy is a translation of the German word *Einfühlung*, first used by the German philosopher Robert Vischer in 1873 as an attempt to 'theorize the viewer's relationship to a work of art' (Saona, 2014:74) as he tried to describe the source of aesthetic pleasure (Jahoda, 2005:154). Although the term *Einfühlung* was originally translated as 'aesthetic sympathy', it was later extended in meaning by the German philosopher Theodor Lipps to include 'visual illusions and interpersonal understanding' (Jahoda, 2005:151). Edward Titchener emphasised the meaning of *Einfühlung* as being applicable to interpersonal relations and 'only occasionally noting it's near-identity with sympathy' (Jahoda, 2005:161). This interpretation of the term 'empathy' may be a reason for the seemingly insensitive comments made by members of the public to the parents of the murdered schoolchildren Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman in Soham in the UK in 2002. Visitors who came to Soham after the murders made comments such as 'I feel your pain' to the parents of the children. These were people not known by members of the Wells and Chapman families, but were visiting because of the notoriety of the murders and they were heavily criticised for their insensitivity in the media (*Don't Get Me Started: Rosie Boycott on False Grief*, 2005). It is questionable whether the visitors meant it literally. It would seem more likely that they

were expressing empathy because they too were grieving for their own losses which had not been fully resolved. This empathy with the parents, as well as calling to mind the visitor's unresolved grief, also allowed them to locate their feelings and offer an 'intimate understanding of the pain of others' (Saona, 2014:74).

Dominic LaCapra, writing on the representation of the experiences of the Holocaust, emphasises the need to distinguish between arousing 'empathy in the spectator' and 'the primary experience of trauma' (LaCapra cited in Bennett, 2005:8). The two experiences are entirely different and cannot be thought of as equal. One is entirely personal and directly experienced, whereas the empathy of the spectator can only be a sympathetic imagining of the pain of others. Art theorist Jill Bennett, writing in *Empathic Vision* interprets LaCapra's concept of 'empathic unsettlement' as describing 'the aesthetic experience of simultaneously feeling for another and becoming aware of a distinction between one's own perceptions and the experience of the other' (Bennett, 2005:8). Looking at the artwork draws the viewer's attention to both the similarities and differences between their, and the artist's, experiences. The extent of the aesthetic pleasure of the viewer therefore 'derives from their identification with the internal world of the artist and with the reparative processes embodied in the work of art' (Abella 2010:170). Freedberg and Gallese, whose investigations have been into the neural processes involved in the empathic understanding of artwork, state that 'most spectators of works of art are familiar with feelings of empathetic engagement with what they see' and that these feelings 'might consist of the empathetic understanding of the emotions of represented others or, … of a sense of inward imitation of the observed actions of others in pictures and sculptures' (Freedberg and Gallese, 2007:197). Their research discovered that artwork with marked traces of the artist's action in creating the work was more likely to elicit an empathetic engagement in the viewer. This is confirmed by the fact that a noticeable element of the written responses I have received to the work *remembering, repeating and working through* is the reference to the stitch marks on the surface of the work. This is noted as a 'way in' for the viewer to connect with the work.

Concern has been expressed by writers in the field of trauma theory and the treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder that the viewing of artwork that brings to mind the memory of traumatic events may expose the viewer to an additional trauma. Psychologist William James has argued that whilst we can remember feeling specific emotions we cannot remember exactly how they felt. However, emotions are revivable in that 'we don't remember grief or ecstasy, but by recalling a situation that produces those sensations we can produce a new bout of emotion' (cited in Bennett, 2005:22). This has been the subject of research in the field of Holocaust studies, that any graphic imagery used in the representation of the atrocities that occurred during the Holocaust may itself be traumatising. As the representation of these events cannot, by their nature, be as severe as those experienced first-

hand, Geoffrey Hartman has suggested the term 'secondary trauma' is used to describe any detrimental effect on the viewer, whilst LaCapra has used the term a 'muted dose' (Bennett, 2005:9) rather than suggesting that this is a retransmission of the trauma. LaCapra warns against the viewer identifying with the victim of trauma to such an extent that makes them a surrogate victim. Instead he states that the empathic unsettlement of the viewer (or secondary witness) involves 'a kind of virtual experience through which one puts oneself in the other's position while recognising the difference of that position and hence not taking the other's place' (LaCapra, 1999:722).

Bennett's discussion of the understanding of the nature of trauma-related art is useful in the understanding of the way in which artwork created during this research project operates for the viewer in the exhibition space. She suggests that trauma related art should be thought of as 'transactive' rather than 'communicative'. That it can reach the viewer emotionally, but 'does not "communicate" the secret of personal experience', nor, I would argue, does it need to. To understand the transactive nature of the work, the affect it engenders needs to be examined and consideration given to how the work is experienced by the viewer, as the affective responses are not 'born of emotional identification or sympathy; rather they emerge from a direct engagement with sensation as it is registered in the work' (Bennett, 2005:7).

The nature of the trauma of mourning and grief is not the same as that of a physical trauma such as a wound from a stabbing or the violation of rape. It is the pain of loss, informed by personal experiences and circumstances that make it unique for each individual. The memory of that loss and its associated feelings and emotions will be unique and will change with the passing of time - perhaps fragmenting and dissolving. In an echo of the way Freud describes mourning as a wound that heals with time, Charlotte Delbo, writing about her experience in the Holocaust, stated that 'her Auschwitz self was encased in the skin of memory so that it could not touch her now. But the skin of this memory is not only 'tough and impervious, but also broken, ruptured and scarred'(Delbo, 1990 cited in Bennett, 2005:41).

She writes that in dreams

> 'sometimes … it bursts and gives back its contents … I see myself again … just as I know I was … and the pain is so unbearable, so exactly the pain I suffered there that I feel it again physically … it takes days for everything to return to normal, for memory to be "refilled" and for the skin of memory to mend itself' (Delbo, 1990, cited in Bennett, 2005:41).

This permeability of the skin of memory is like a wound opening up to bleed again. The return to the being-in-the-moment of new pain is like the trigger for the return to the first days of grief - a chance encounter with something familiar or the finding of a possession of the deceased can plunge the mourner back into the initial stages of bereavement, starting the

process from the beginning again. This can happen through any number of experiences and each will be specific and unique to the individual bereaved person. My own experience as described in the Preface is but one example of an unexpected reawakening of mourning.

As described above the resurfacing of memory like a persistent stain, seeping through to the surface is the idea that informs the work *The Persistence of Loss II* (2011) This piece was created when considering my own personal losses, particularly that of the loss of childhood, not only when children become adults and leave home but also the loss of the inner child that happens as we grow older (Figure 30.). Whilst the work achieved its aim in that viewers understood it was about bringing to mind the resurfacing of memory (particularly as it used plaster on the surface, reminiscent of a wall in a house); viewers of the work mistakenly assumed that it referenced the death of a child or a miscarriage. The use of the child's dress in my practice was therefore discontinued and other techniques and processes were used as a method of expressing loss.

The way memories are used to recall the emotions of the past is described as 'affective memory'. Initially this was developed by the actor and theatre director Constantine Stanislavsky as Emotional Memory, which was a process to enable an actor to have a 'genuine emotional memory as a character in a play' (Wayth, 2014:32) rather than imitate the feeling or pretend to experience it. By recalling the emotional memory of an event similar to that being depicted in the play repeatedly during rehearsal, his theory is that during the performance the emotion will be recalled and utilised.

In contrast, sense memory is also used and requires the actor to recall the physical sensations associated with an emotional event in their 'real' lives, but not the actual emotions, in order to allow them to access those emotions and relive them, not just remember them, in their role. This echoes Proust's iconic use of the tea-soaked madeleine cake in *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (originally published in 1913) to allow his narrator to involuntarily remember experiences of his childhood.

The recalling of emotions in this way may also, however, bring about a recall of any trauma experienced. Reliving, repeating and experiencing again may have a beneficial effect in externalising and reducing the impact of such strong emotions and feelings. Aristotle defined catharsis as the 'purging of the spirit of morbid and base ideas or emotions by witnessing the playing out of such emotions or ideas on stage' (Aristotle, cited in Powell, s.d). Aristotle proposed that by viewing tragic plays, the viewer's own anxieties are externalized and purged in a socially harmless way. The spectator is then released from negative feelings such as fear or anger. Richard Chefetz, writing in 1997 defines catharsis and abreaction as 'the verbal or non-verbal expression of intense affect associated with a coherent narrative of experience that provides relief of chronic anxiety states' (Chefetz, 1997 cited in Mathe,

2001:2). It is the reliving of past experiences which cause distress or dysfunction that allows an emotional release. It would seem therefore, that viewing an artwork that brings to mind the negative emotions from experiencing bereavement may have a cathartic effect on the viewer.

Figure 30. *The Persistence of Loss II* (2011)

This is evidenced by a communication I received from a viewer after seeing *remembering, repeating and working through* at an exhibition in 2015:

> 'From a distance of over a decade later, [after several bereavements] and as an orphan (and unable to have children), I saw my experience of grief in *remembering, repeating and working through*: a huge engulfing "wailing wall"

that captured perfectly the discontinuity and mystery of the process. The indistinct edges - both of the entire piece and its component parts - spoke to the lack of defined boundaries. When does grief end? What "compartment" does it belong in? The assemblage of dark "moments" (not only representing the sharp sad ones, but also those kept out of the mind's eye for years afterwards) allowed me to visualize how large my losses were. It somehow made it okay *to grieve*. These deaths, after all, were NOT small things, even though one feels pushed to make them small, to get on, get up, get over it.

Standing closer, I was reminded of Japanese Hikeshi-banten, the pieced protective firemen's jackets, and was overwhelmed with a sense that my "patchwork" of loss could also be a protective covering, a new re-purposing of experiences that might -- just -- become a cloak of wisdom. I saw the small white shards as emblematic of those rare and wonderful insights that the death of a loved one provides: the privilege of seeing this transformative stage, of helping to make a passing less painful, of participating in honouring a good life. And that made me content' (correspondent H).

This demonstrates a remembering of the losses they had experienced and an acknowledgement that it was important to take time to grieve. Having acknowledged this the correspondent then realizes that these experiences could actually be turned into positive outcomes. Reliving the emotional experiences through the artwork enabled a release from the negative emotions providing a sense of renewal and restoration.

Experience and autobiography

The question remains, what happens when the viewer sees the work of art and is moved to remember the death of someone to the extent that it brings to mind their feelings of grief and makes it possible to progress their work of mourning? Each person or individual viewer brings their own recollections, memories and experiences of bereavement and grief. Whilst grief is an emotion experienced by us all at some part of our lives, the individual details are inevitably different and unique to each person.

Art historian Norman Bryson writing in the introduction to Mieke Bal's book *Looking in: the art of viewing* suggests that the notion of the inward process of spectatorship was first developed in the field of film studies and has since been applied to the viewing of artworks in general. This field acknowledged that viewers brought to 'their experience of visual culture much more than iconographical knowledge' but also that 'they brought with them

their deepest desires and anxieties, their whole history of having been socialized according to the specificities of gender and sexuality' (Bryson in Bal, 2001:7).

The idea that the viewer brings their own experiences of mourning and bereavement to the artwork and that this informs their viewing also suggests that Post-Structuralist theory may be useful in trying to understand the viewing process. Post-Structuralist literary theory states that the authors intended meaning is secondary to the meaning that the reader perceives. First described by Roland Barthes in his essay of 1967 *The Death of the Author*, Barthes rejects the idea that a text has a single meaning and states that every reader of the text creates a new and individual meaning and existence for the text (Barthes, 1993). This would also be true of the reception and interpretation of the meaning of works of art. Umberto Eco posited in *The Open Work* (Eco, 1989) that contemporary works of art have an undefined meaning and that these works then have to be completed by the interpreter according to the knowledge of that individual interpreter. I believe that this applies to the artwork I have shown in a gallery setting. Visitors will often seek me out to tell me their interpretation of the work in the light of their own experience of bereavement. Whilst I can attempt to imbue the piece with meaning and to convey ideas of mourning and grief, it is not until the viewer encounters it and brings their own unresolved mourning into the way they look at the work that the work can connect with them and allow a step to be made towards the resolution of that mourning, as evidenced by the response obtained to *remembering, repeating and working through* on page 67.

As Catherine Dormor has written

> 'As the artist creates meaning out of the material of their own practice, controlling signifier and signified within their own subjectivity, the viewer is brought into transitional relationship with that subjectivity and thus is enabled, through the cultural and physical materiality of textile to weave a generative space of signification for themselves – a process of cathexis' (Dormor, 2012:82).

Whilst it can be seen that the act of the viewer encountering the work enables its completion, the role of the artist's experience is also important in the initial creation of the work and its ability to convey the intended emotions. Although not necessarily following the expressive theory of art, which understands a work of art as being an expression of the artist's feelings, the work may not relate to a specific incident in the artist's life. However, the experience of emotions such as those felt after loss and in grief enables the artist to draw on that memory, for example, in my practice, stitching in silence in a meditative atmosphere, thinking about the people I know who have died and the feelings associated with that experience, gives, as Jefferies writes, the ability to 'mediate works of mourning, through a 'translation' of their

psychic (or inner reality) and a process of an 'ecstatic solace of communication' to produce a 'sharing community of representable worlds' (Jefferies, 2000: 66).

One approach in the making of art which is responds to an emotional experience, is to make it in the narrative genre, totally autobiographical in nature i.e. made as an account of the artist's life, and created by that artist. Smith (2012) describes this as 'relational viewing' and suggests that when the viewer encounters this type of autobiographical work, it 'functions as a powerful catalyst for memory, whereby viewers draw upon their own life stories to connect with the work' (Smith, 2012:2). Smith also states that 'autobiographical art relies on viewers for meaning because it allows for the projection of lived experiences into the recorded history of the artist' (Smith, 2012:4).

The communication between artist and audience was evaluated by Nicolas Bourriaud in his book *Relational Aesthetics*. He suggests that relational aesthetics characterise a 'set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space' (Bourriaud, 2002:113). This would suggest that artworks interact with, and allow for exchanges with the audience to address shared experiences in the world. As Janis Jefferies has written

> 'The possibility of a shared solace may be achieved by identification via a sense of sight and physical sensation. Each of the senses may be activated by a circuit of interwoven memories, triggered and registered by and in the body or bodies of both the artists and the viewer' (Jefferies, 2000:66).

By finding common shared experiences or emotions from their own lives, the artwork then acts as a catalyst for the viewer to remember and so 'find a better understanding of the self' (Smith, 2012:11). This would seem to be borne out by the popularity of autobiographical memoir, particularly those of grief, the earliest of these is probably C.S, Lewis's book *A Grief Observed* published in 1961 and later volumes such as Joan Didion's *The Year of Magical Thinking* (2005) and Joyce Carol Oates's book *A Widow's Story* (2011). Although these books have been criticised as 'nouveau solipsism' or 'moi-ism' (Patai, 1994, cited in Miller, 2000:421), it is a genre that has a large readership particularly in the US. Feminist writer and author of memoir Nancy Miller, suggests that

> 'the memoir craze feeds the hunger for a different, or at least a more interesting life through literature … however hellish the lives, told in memoir they give you … a narrative through which to make sense of your own past' (Miller, 2000:430).

However, when encountering work in this genre, I find it difficult to relate it to my own experience. I am too distracted by the differences between what happened to the artists or authors and what happened to me. It eventually becomes distanced from me to the point of irrelevance in making any emotional connection. Whilst this becomes a barrier for me when encountering this type of artwork, as the differences in experience overwhelm the similarities, I draw on my own experience of grief and loss when creating my studio work, but I utilise that experience in an abstract way. I use my own system of references, metaphors and signifiers developed throughout the period of time I have been creating textile artwork of this subject matter to allude to the relevant experiences I have had. For example, the use of the number seven is important in many works I have made during this research project; seven hanging sheets in the work *Seven*; seven types of mending in *Mendings III*. This number references the number of people of my acquaintance who died in a short period of time while I was undertaking this research (see Preface, page 7).

Many artists use metaphor, as discussed in Chapter 3 (Materiality and the use of cloth), as a way of engendering a connection or emotional response to the work without personal narrative acting as an obstacle to the way the work is perceived. It is not uncommon for contemporary art to be not always obviously open to an interpretation of being related to the artist's own (autobiographical) experience. The affective responses to these artworks therefore do not come from identification with or sympathy for the artist, but from a 'direct engagement with sensation as it is registered in the work' (Bennett, 2005:7). It is the transactive nature of artwork which I am drawing on in the creation of my artwork. Using my own personal experience of grief and loss I can inform the work and make it without recourse to direct autobiographical detail. This then serves as a catalyst for the viewer to remember their lived experience of grief and loss and to generate affect. Deleuze uses the term 'encountered sign' to describe something that is felt rather than recognised. The sensuous sign, he states 'does us violence; it mobilizes the memory, it sets the soul in motion' (Deleuze, 2000:101) and it is the sign that forces us to think.

> 'The work of art is born from signs as much as it generates them; the creator is like the jealous man, interpreter of the god, who scrutinizes the signs in which the truth *betrays itself*'' (Deleuze, 2000:98).

Without doubt, grief is a profoundly felt emotion, which may effect an individual for many years, sometimes to the extent of it being described as a trauma. But what is a deeply felt emotion? When feelings are described using terms such as 'despair' and 'sorrow' they are taken to mean a greater depth of feeling or emotional intensity than sadness or unhappiness. Similarly, the term 'in' is applied to emotions to stress the severity of the feeling, for example 'in mourning' or 'in love'. This response was written after a viewer saw *Mendings*

IV in the exhibition 'Trauma. Grief. Loss: The Art of Bereavement' demonstrating that a profound level of emotion had been conveyed by the work.

> 'The piece brought a feeling of stillness and sadness, a memory of warmth but a visual of stillness, death and melancholia. Texture showed levels and a depth of feeling, the marks on the cloth following the rivers of life. The thread held taught by pins created the sense of the fragility of life and that the thread could break at any moment, and when it did it would fall onto cloth as the body falls on the ground when dead. The tones and colour were of earth; we came from the earth and we return to the earth' (correspondent J).

The correspondent here shows that the work communicated not only a sense of mourning and sadness but engendered a recognition of their own mortality and sense of the inevitability of death.

In *Being and Time* Heidegger argues that in order to understand what it means to be an authentic human being (here 'authentic' is defined as a human being demonstrating its true potential through acting in the world) it is essential that we project ourselves on to the 'horizon of our death' (Critchley, 2009). The true self can therefore only become what it really is by confronting death. As Robert Stolorow explains: 'death always already belongs to our existence as a central constituent of our intelligibility to ourselves in our futurity and finitude' (Stolorow, 2011:38). This would call into question whether the artwork is allowing that projection of ourselves onto the horizon of our death and allowing a realisation of our own mortality. However, comments from the viewers of my studio practice in the gallery usually reflect on the renewing of memories of the death of someone close, and the grieving process; the viewer is not preoccupied with thoughts of their own death. But Heidegger also states that we cannot fully experience the death of another, not in the same way as we experience our own death, meaning that the only truly authentic death is one's own. The disinterested knowledge that eventually life ceases, which Heidegger terms 'one dies' is replaced with anxiety and sorrow when experiencing the death of a family member or someone close. As Simon Critchley has written, 'the relation to death is not first and foremost my own fear for my own demise, but my sense of being undone by the experience of grief and mourning' (Critchley, 2009).

This chapter has presented and discussed the different systems and mechanisms by which an artwork can enable a connection with any unresolved mourning in the viewer and allow time to remember and reflect and progress their work of mourning, which can happen in several ways. Initially the artist draws on their own experience to imbue the work with their feelings of grief and loss, by the use of metaphor as encountered sign in the work. This may include the utilisation of their own autobiographical details and experiences to a greater or lesser

degree. Once completed, the way in which the work is shown to the public in terms of the way it is hung, displayed or exhibited including the influence of lighting, signage and exhibition identity contributes to the exhibitionary affectivity of the work. The viewer then brings their own set of experiences, feelings and emotions when they encounter the artwork and this, combined with their aesthetic experience of the work can engender the possibility of the creation of a cathexis - an investment of emotional energy in the work which allows for a time and space for remembering, a space between the healing process of mourning and the never-ending melancholia when the empathic engagement with the work will enable a progression in their work of mourning. As Alan Firth wrote, remembering his feelings and emotions on encountering *remembering, repeating and working through* for the first time:

> 'I recognised that your large artwork filling that wall, both mirrored and addressed for me the utterly intense feelings in a small space deep within ME. I knew that 'it' knew what was going on, and in no small way it acted like the Underground map, allowing me to find my 'way through'. That overwhelmingly intense experience lasted for a couple of seconds... it was as if nothing in this world existed other than the wall and me ... then came the clarity, bringing a flow of understanding. It was as if a key had been turned in a lock, and that I was going to pass through...!' (Firth, 2015).

This unsolicited response demonstrates clearly the affectivity of the artwork engendering an emotional response in the viewer, a cathexis, which allowed for a recognizable and acknowledged progression in his work of mourning.

Conclusion

There is a story which is told in different ways in different cultures, which facilitates the understanding of the inevitability of death. In one version, it starts with the Buddha who is approached by a woman who cannot make her newborn son wake up. The Buddha tells her to take his begging bowl and to bring him a fistful of mustard seeds from any household that will give it to her. His one condition is that she can only accept the mustard seeds from a household which has not experienced death. So the woman takes the Buddha's begging bowl and goes to the first household. She asks for some mustard seeds so that the Buddha can perform a ritual to wake her son. The old lady at the first house wants to give her the mustard seeds but says that her husband has just died and so the woman cannot accept them. At the second house the beautiful young woman living there tells her that her mother has died and so the woman cannot accept her mustard seeds either. At another household they say 'our son died last month' and at another 'my daughter died two years ago', and so it goes on. Eventually the woman returns to the Buddha having found not one single household which had not experienced death. She finally understands the inevitability of death and is able to accept that her son is not merely sleeping but has died.

This simple story serves to illustrate the point that everyone experiences death at some point in their lives. What interests me is the way in which we deal with the grief that ensues from that death, what processes we go through in order to accommodate that grief into ourselves and how cloth can be used as a medium to materialise those processes. This practice-based research began with the realisation that, as adults, it is likely that we have had some experience of bereavement and that the mourning process is a continuing presence in our lives that does not come to an end but contributes to the very fabric of our daily being.

An examination of the work of Freud and his description of the different states of mourning and of melancholia prompted further investigation into how we think of these states today. Understanding how counsellors and clinicians model the ways in which grief and loss are processed has led to a greater conviction that we all carry with us an element of unresolved mourning and that we may exist in the space between mourning and melancholia; *in* mourning but not *exclusively* devoted to that mourning. This knowledge, together with the experience that sometimes specific incidents can take us back to the beginning of the mourning process, to leave us feeling bereft and overwhelmed anew, prompted an investigation into what happens when the bereaved viewer encounters a work of art which precipitates this response and how artists use materials and processes to imbue works with feelings of grief and loss.

The aim of this interdisciplinary research was to investigate, through the three-fold prism of psychoanalytical theory, different models of the processing of grief and the material culture

of mourning, the way in which it is possible to continue to be in a state of unresolved mourning without being in a state of melancholia or complicated grief. The research questions specifically focussed on whether it was possible, using materials such as rags and processes such as the staining and mending of cloth, to create a body of artwork which was able to connect with any unresolved grief of the viewer and so enable a continuation of their work of mourning.

In identifying the need to understand the differences in the terms 'mourning' and 'melancholia' as central to the investigation it was necessary to investigate Freud's ideas and his contribution to the understanding of the psychoanalytical approach to these conditions. Freud described unresolved mourning as a 'failed' process resulting in the pathological state of melancholia. However, this research shows that there is a space between mourning and melancholia and positions mourning as a life-long process for some people. This research is discussed in Chapter 1 (Situating the research), together with an exploration of how this is seen in the light of more modern theories and models of grief. The way in which we grieve today is also discussed in order to to understand how contemporary society behaves in the face of bereavement and loss both in the private sphere and in the public arena. The studio practice of some textile artists is also explored, in order to contextualise and situate my own studio practice in this area. Although there is some evidence of textile artists using cloth to show their own work of mourning for a specific person, there is little in the way of practice based research that evokes the emotion of mourning and grief more broadly through contemporary textile art practice. This is the subject matter which this research project addresses.

The development of the research methodology involved a recognition and formalisation of the processes and stages undertaken during the research and this has been discussed in Chapter 2 (Approaching and undertaking the research). The identification and documentation of all the stages in the research process were important steps in the understanding of how the research was being undertaken. The importance of reflection was identified at an early stage both during the creation of work in the studio practice and also in the written outcomes from the theoretical research which was disseminated through conference papers and peer review. Both the theoretical and the practice sides of the research had a common methodology identified in this way. The documentation of these processes allowed for a unique map of the methodology to be constructed. This allowed for both the reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action described by Schon and provided the opportunity for the practice and theory to inform each other and provide a means where there could be a 'knowledge transfer of mutual benefit between different "worlds" of practice and research' (Gray and Malins, 2004:105).

Chapter 3 (Materiality and the use of cloth) examines the fundamental nature of the substrate of cloth, with particular reference to its materiality and the relevance of its use in art practice to materialise the work of mourning. The way cloth can be used as the carrier of tropes such as metaphor and the emotions of grief and loss were examined with particular reference to the use of processes such as mending and staining. The importance of textiles is such that it is a fundamental presence in our lives. The clothes of the dead take on a particularly poignant significance and enable a connection to be maintained with the deceased in the lives of the living. These act as comforters and can be cherished for many years or discarded when the mourning of the bereaved has been resolved and they are not needed any more.

Chapter 4 (Connecting with the viewer) addresses the psychoanalytical interpretation of the making of work by an artist in mourning and the affectivity of the work. Having made the artwork, how it is received when it is exhibited is an important element in measuring the relative 'success' of the piece both in connecting with the viewer and communicating feelings of loss and grief to them in such a way as to enable them to progress their work of mourning. Once completed by the artist the artwork is presented to the audience in an exhibition setting. The exhibiting conditions such as the type of space being used, the lighting, the colour of the walls, and the signage used can all contribute to the atmosphere or exhibitionary affect. The impact this has on the viewer may encourage a connection with the work. Exhibiting the same work in different venues, illustrated in Figure 29 (page 99), demonstrates how the different conditions contribute to the overall tone of the exhibition.

Practice outcomes and dissemination

The outcomes of the research have been presented in the thesis and a body of studio practice disseminated in a number of exhibitions. Feedback from the presentation of the research at different stages throughout the research process at conferences and symposia has assisted in the development and refinement of the fields of research and has helped in both focussing the research and obtaining new insights. The responses of the audience/viewer have also been fundamental to the evaluation of the studio work produced. The individual responses and narratives obtained, although quantitatively few, have been of great value and have served to demonstrate the success of some artworks in connecting with viewers both in the UK and Japan.

The development of the research into practical applications has included the use of *remembering, repeating and working through* as a way to engage the membership of the Art and Health group of bereavement counsellors at the Whitworth Gallery in Manchester, UK. In Japan it was also suggested that the *Healing Series* could be used as a tool to facilitate the discussion of the feelings which had arisen in a school for pupils under the age of 12, when a classmate had died. The children found discussing their feelings difficult and the teacher

suggested that if they had been able to have the *Healing Series* on display at the school it would have facilitated discussion and enabled the children to have a greater understanding of how they could process their feelings, that how they were feeling would eventually get better, but would still remain with them to a lesser degree throughout their lives.

Presentation of aspects of the research at academic conferences has consistently produced a positive response. Whilst many presentations at conferences demonstrate a depth of knowledge of a niche specialisation, presenting research into grief, loss and mourning through the medium of textile practice has a resonance that audiences find accessible. There is a universality in the expression of emotions through textiles, particularly relating to bereavement. This common experience enables a connection with the audience in a conference situation, which, despite language barriers, can be communicated through the medium of images of the textile works themselves. This is a truly inter-disciplinary area of research that is able to elicit common responses throughout the audience.

As part of the research, a conference and exhibition was hosted at UCA, Farnham titled 'Trauma. Grief. Loss: The Art of Bereavement' (May 2015). This was an interdisciplinary event, which attracted participants including writers, academics, creative practitioners and grief counsellors. The accompanying exhibition, (Crafts Study Centre, UCA, Farnham) showed works by artists working in different media, including photography, textiles, glass, and mixed media (Images from the exhibition and the conference programme and abstracts can be seen in Appendix A.). Feedback from the exhibition and conference demonstrated that there is a desire to hold more such events to talk about grief and loss and to maintain and encourage a link with a multidisciplinary art practice. The conference enabled the identification of an audience of researchers and artists who would be interested in continuing this type of approach. The formalisation of this into a proposal for a publication on the proceedings is in progress. Future events using this audience as a starting point will develop this group into a research hub under the framework of the International Textile Research Centre at UCA, Farnham.

Contribution to knowledge

The contribution to knowledge evidenced in this research has been enabled by its interdisciplinarity and practice-based approach. The thesis and body of studio practice brings together the sociological and cultural use of cloth with psychoanalytical theory and the consideration of the affectivity of artwork. This new combination of areas of research enables new connections to be made between the different strands and offers new insights. The research has encouraged 'knowledge transfer of mutual benefit between worlds of practice and research' (Gray and Malins, 2004:105) by bringing together in unique

combination the areas of research into the understanding of the mourning process, the material culture of mourning, the materiality and the use of cloth in artwork and the interaction of the viewer with the artworks created.

The practice outcomes in the body of work created and shown in the final exhibition weave together the strands of theoretical research with the studio practice. Using a unique methodology that allows for cloth to act as the ideal medium I have facilitated the consideration of meaning and making, making-meaning and thinking. More conventional approaches to thinking about art and mourning have resulted in the creation of 'art as therapy' groups where art such as painting or collage is made by the bereaved to try to create meaning from their loss in the immediate aftermath of the event. This research however, focusses on the connection with the grief of loss at some time after it has occurred. This area is under-researched and approaches the subject of the association of art and mourning in a novel way.

Through the dialogic relationship between the artworks and the written thesis, this practice based research examines the continuing relationship of cloth with mourning to materialise the work of mourning. This relationship is an ongoing process which enables an articulation of the space between mourning and melancholia in which many people find themselves. This is not pathological, complicated or completely unresolved mourning but a state where the work of mourning is not yet completed and still affects the bereaved. The responses to the artworks that have been received during the course of this research project are evidence that some of the artworks – particularly *remembering, repeating and working through* and the *Healing Series* are successful in making a connection with those who inhabit the space between mourning and melancholia and enable a progression of their work of mourning.

Evaluation of research outcomes

The evaluation of the studio artwork made as part of this research and shown in exhibition has largely been by the review of responses which have been sent to me afterwards. The initial use of the vehicle of a child's dress to signify the loss of childhood was discontinued after some viewers thought that this work referenced the death of a child. Whilst the audience correctly deduced that the work was to do with loss (and despite artist's statements and information labels stating it was referencing loss of childhood) it was thought too misleading for this interpretation to continue and so other ways of alluding to loss were pursued.

The works most mentioned in correspondence to date have been *remembering, repeating and working through,* the *Healing Series,* the *Mendings* pieces and the *Rose Petal Shroud.* It is these works that have most clearly demonstrated that it is possible to make a connection

with unresolved mourning in the viewer and the comments received suggest that they have enabled a progression of the work of mourning of the viewers. One Japanese correspondent commented

> 'death is a subject that affects everyone of us in one way or another, and because of this the pieces were not simply expressing [the artist's] feelings, but touched each viewer in different ways and said something to each of them' (correspondent E).

Those who have been through the experience know that in some cases mourning never ends. The memory of the deceased person will always bring feelings of sadness and loss as we inhabit the space between mourning and melancholia. However, as has become apparent during the course of this research it is possible, many years after the event of bereavement, to progress one's work of mourning towards resolution. As Dominic LaCapra has written 'Mourning brings the possibility of engaging with trauma and achieving a reinvestment in, or recathexis of, life that allows one to begin again' (LaCapra, 1999:713). This research has demonstrated that through the use of cloth in contemporary art practice it is possible to make a connection with the viewer and, through the materialisation of loss, enable them to move forward and progress their work of mourning.

Dissemination of research

Conference Presentations

2016   '*The materialisation of loss in cloth'* at 'Care, Loss and the End of Life' Conference, Budapest, Hungary.

2015   *'Prism - a personal perspective'* at 'Living Fibers: revisiting global textile art' Irvine California, USA.

2015   Video presentation of book chapter *'Cloth, Memory* and Mourning' to staff and students at Santa Clara University, California, USA.

2014   *'The language of grief in textile art practice'* at 'Grief. Language. Art.' Conference, University of Liverpool, UK.

2014   *'Mend. Patch. Piece. Physical processes in the development of textile practice'* at 'and where do we go from here? Rethink. Reconfigure. Reflect' Research Student Conference, UCA Canterbury, UK.

2013   Research presentation, Kyoto Gedai University, Kyoto, Japan and Kawashima Textile School Kyoto, Japan.

2013   **'Cloth and Mourning'** CREST conference, University of Chichester, Sussex, UK.

2012   '*Cloth, Memory and Mourning'* 2nd Global Conference, 'Trauma: Theory and Practice', Prague, Czech Republic.

2012   *'Cloth, Memory and Mourning'* 'Process, Perception, Phenomena'. Student Research Conference, UCA Canterbury, UK.

2010   *'Material, Mourning and Memorial.'* 'Material Evidence' Symposium. Bath Spa University, UK.

Exhibitions

2015   *'Warp and weft, chain stitch and pearl: Textiles in the Ahmanson Collection'*, Irvine, California, USA.

2015   '*Art Bridges'* University of Adam Mickiewicz, Faculty of Pedagogy and Arts in Kalisz, Poland.

2015   '*CHALK'* 10days Winchester, UK.

2015   '*Lines of Communication'*, Prism exhibition, Hoxton Arches, London, UK.

2015   *'Trauma, Grief, Loss: the Art of Bereavement'* Crafts Study Centre, Farnham, UK.

2015   Society of Designer Craftsmen, Mall Galleries, London, UK.

2014   *'The Red and the Black'* World of Threads Festival, Oakville, Ontario, Canada.

2014   *'Coded: Decoded'* Prism Exhibition, Mall Galleries, London, UK.

2014   PassionArt Trail, John Rylands Library, Manchester, UK.

2014   Society of Designer Craftsmen, Mall Galleries London, UK.

2013   *'Time: Place: Space'*, Research Student Exhibition, James Hockey Gallery, UCA, Farnham, UK.

2013   *'Liminal'* Prism Exhibition, Mall Galleries, London, UK.

2013   *'The Fabric of Memory'*. The Crypt Gallery, St Pancras Church, Euston, London, UK.

2012   '*Cloth and Memory'* Gallery 2, Salts Mill, Saltaire, Yorkshire, UK.

2012   '*Process, Perception, Phenomena'* Research Student Conference Exhibition, Herbert Read Gallery, UCA, Canterbury, UK.

2012   *'Hidden Places: Hidden Spaces'* Prism Exhibition, Mall Galleries, London, UK.

2011   '*Context and Concept in Practice'* Research Student Conference Exhibition, James Hockey Gallery, UCA, Farnham, UK.

Awards

Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation for 'Trauma, Grief, Loss: the Art of Bereavement' exhibition and conference.

Inclusions in collections

Rose petal shroud, Fragmented Memory and *Mendings II*, Howard and Roberta Ahmanson Collection, USA.

remembering, repeating and working through Whitworth Gallery, MMU.

Articles published

'Cloth, Memory and Mourning' in *The Strangled Cry: The Communication and Experience of Trauma*. Edited by Aparajita Nanda and Peter Bray. Interdisciplinary Press 2013. pp235-255.

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Textile Research Forum

In undertaking this research project I have identified a need for textile practice-based and practice led PhD researchers to meet and discuss aspects of their research. This has been supported by the International Textile Research Centre at UCA. The group of researchers from a number of HE institutions in the UK meets twice a year and encourages discussion in all aspects of textile based research.

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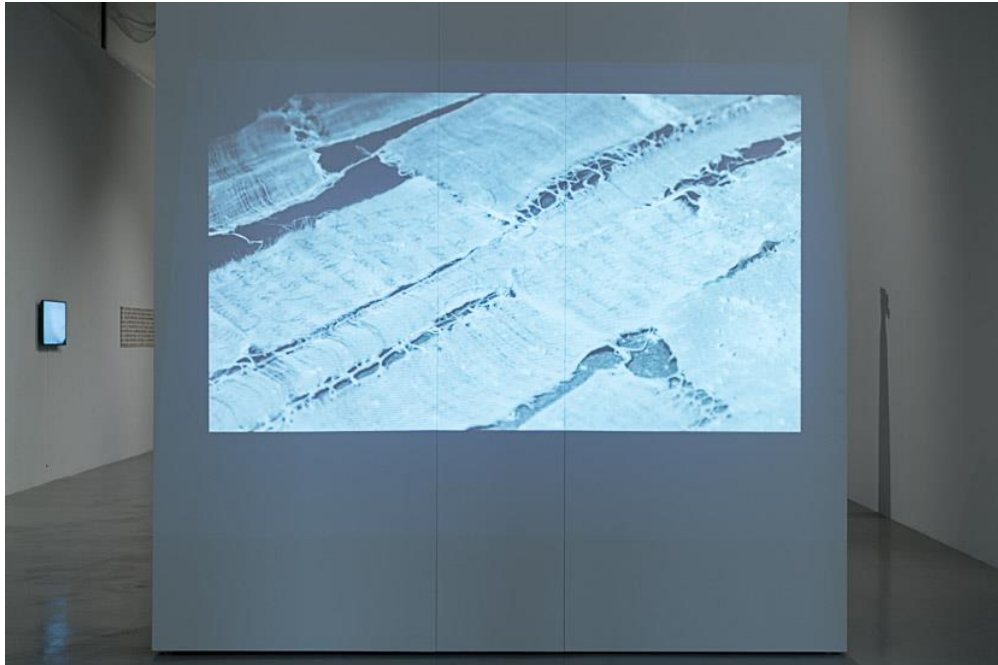
Dust of Memory (2015)
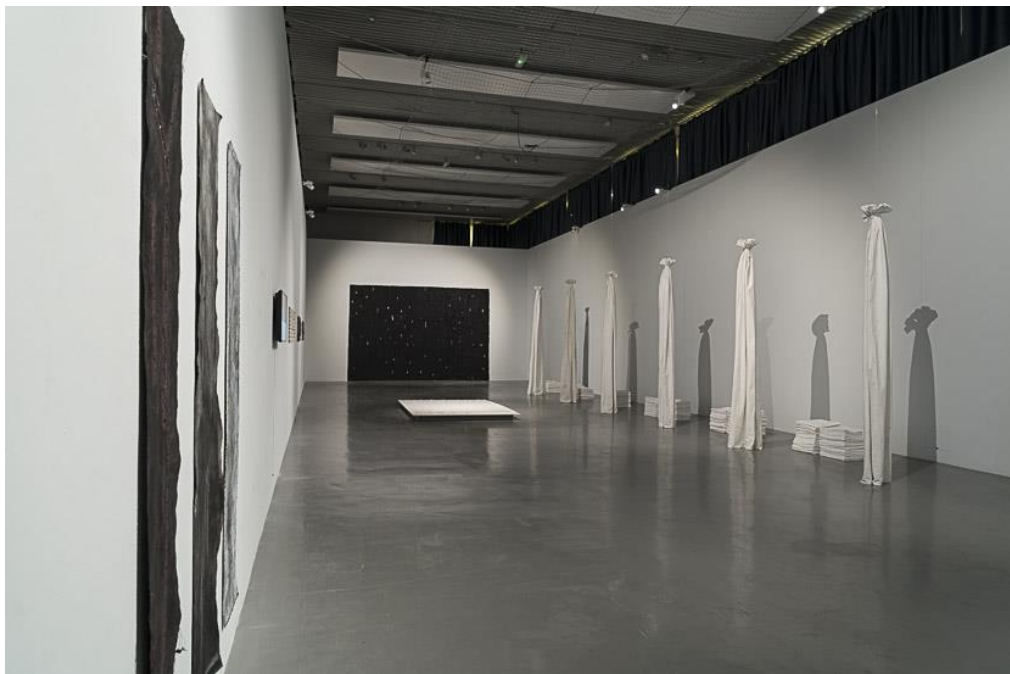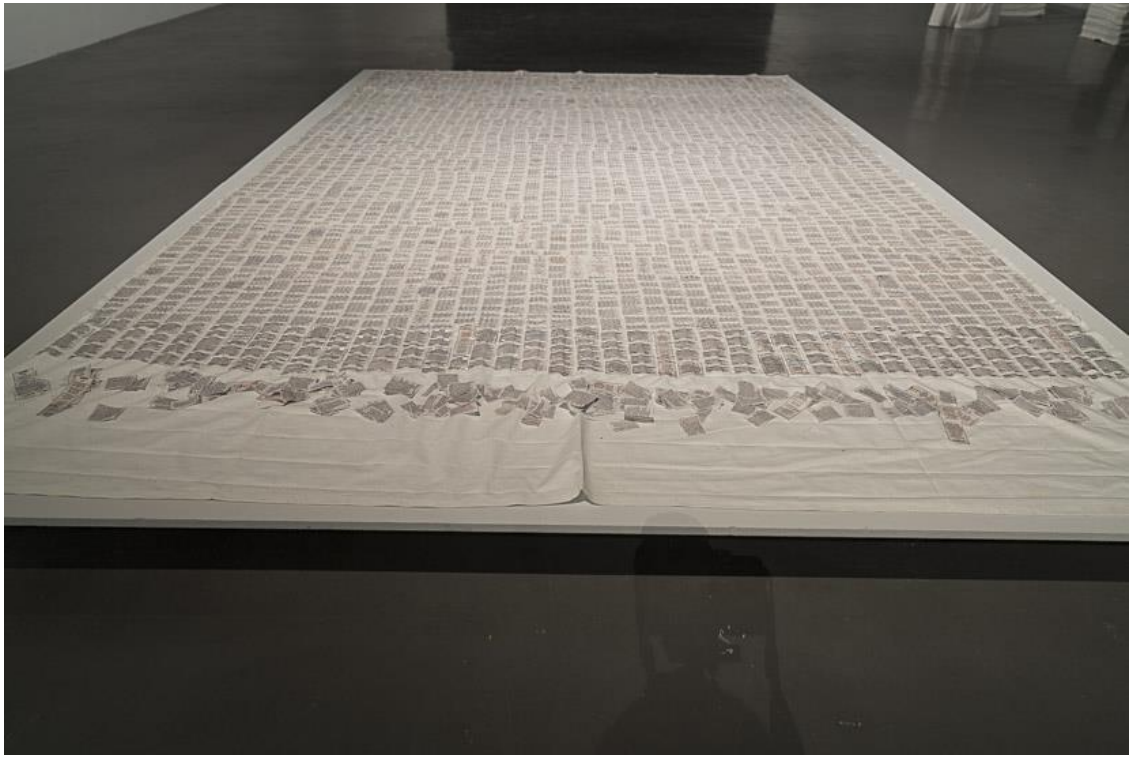

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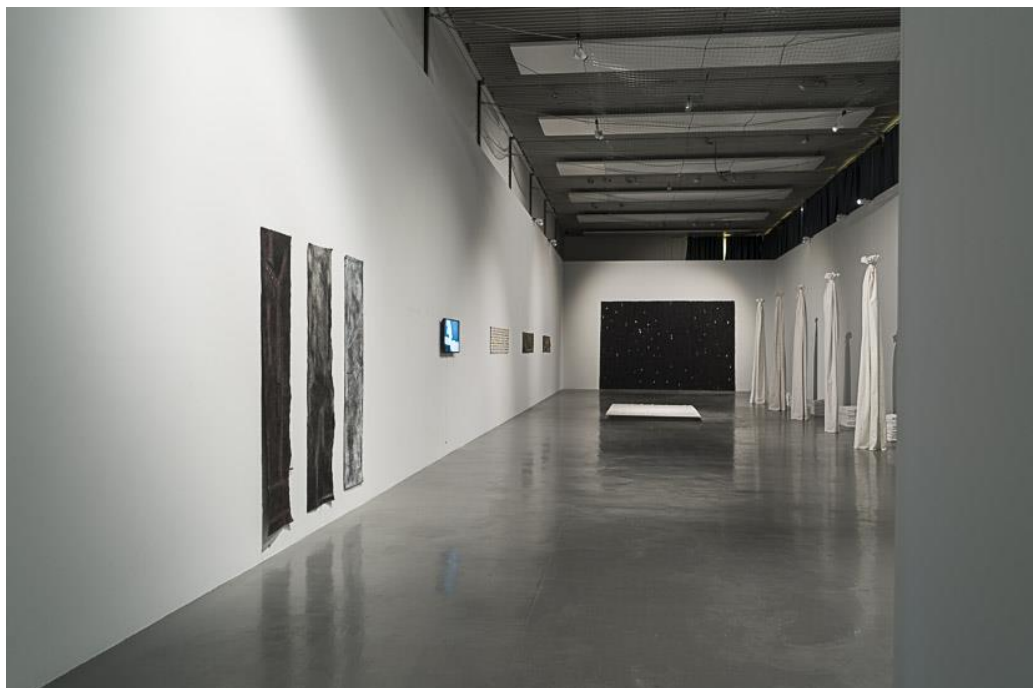
Healing series (2012)

one day at a time (2016)

Mendings III (2015) and *remembering, repeating and working through* (2012)

Rose petal shroud (2013)

Gallery view

Appendix B

'Trauma. Grief. Loss : the Art of Bereavement' Exhibition and Conference

Exhibition - Crafts Study Centre, UCA, Farnham

8 - 30 May 2015

As part of this research I co-curated (with Prof. Lesley Millar) the exhibition 'Trauma. Grief. Loss : the Art of Bereavment' and organised the one-day conference.

The text below shows the text about the exhibition from the Crafts Study Centre brochure, and the images are from the exhibition.

Artists: Chiyoko Tanaka, Jane Wildgoose, Sarah Sudhoff, Shelly Goldsmith, Rozanne Hawksley, Keiko Mukaide, Lynne Setterington, Megan Bostic and Beverly Ayling-Smith

Marking a death by the creation of art is a common practice in many cultures; from collective memorials of those who die in wars such as the Cenotaph memorial; to the private memorialisation of individuals through the creation of AIDS quilts and cloths embroidered with names. This exhibition develops the themes of bereavement, death and mortality through the work of artists who are addressing these ideas, often from a highly personal standpoint.

The exhibition will contain significant works of contemporary international textiles by makers including Rozanne Hawksley, Jane Wildgoose, Chiyoko Tanaka, Keiko Mukaide and Beverly Ayling-Smith.

Trauma. Grief. Loss: The Art of Beravement has been curated by Beverly Ayling-Smith and Professor Lesley Millar for the International Textile Research Centre, University for the Creative Arts.

The exhibition is a collaboration between the Crafts study Centre and the International Textile Research Centre.

Images from the gallery

Works by (left to right) Chiyoko Tanaka, Beverly Ayling-Smith, Rozanne Hawksley and Jane Wildgoose.

Works by (left to right) Megan Bostic, Shelly Goldsmith and Chiyoko Tanaka.

Works by (left to right) Beverly Ayling-Smith, Shelly Goldsmith, Sarah Sudhoff.

Works by (left to right) Jane Wildgoose, Lynn Setterington and Keiko Mukaide.

Works by (left to right) Megan Bostic and Chiyoko Tanaka.

Trauma. Grief. Loss: The Art of Bereavement Conference 15th May 2015

10.00	Registration and coffee	
10.30	Welcome	Lesley Millar
10.35	Introduction	Beverly Ayling-Smith.
10.55	Brian Dillon	*'Time she stopped' — photographs, mourning, autobiography*
11.40	Questions	
11.50	Mark Little.	*A Haunting: what is silent and what speaks in the representation of loss.*
12.10	Charles Lambert.	*The changing art of the obituary writer.*
12.30	Dr Myna Trustram	*Finding a form to enact grief or how I picked flowers for a year.*
12.50	Questions	
1.00	Lunch	
1.45	David Slater (not present - video presentation)	*Incurring Debt; Picturing Death: Japanese Family Albums Washed Away in Tsunami Waters*
2.15	Paul Grace.	*Spectral Material*
2.35	Kathryn Beattie	*Unveiling the Corpse in the 21st Century*
3.05	Dr. Paivi Miettunen.	*Leonardo Bistolfi's funerary monuments: love poems in marble on death.*
3.25	Questions	
3.30	Tea and coffee break	
4.00	Scott Ramsay Kyle	*For all those born into the wrong family, I could weep for my broken Mother but no tears can come*
4.20	Lise Bjorne Linnert	*A Heap of Apricots*
4.40	Questions	
4.50	Closing remarks	Beverly Ayling-Smith
5.00	Visit exhibition and reception	

Conference Abstracts

Dr. Brian Dillon
"Time she stopped" — photographs, mourning, autobiography.

I'm interested in exploring the very different practices of reflection and writing that produced the two texts I'll refer to: my 2005 memoir *In the Dark Room* and a new essay for *Cabinet* magazine, "For the simple reason is". The first approaches photographs of my parents, who died when I was an adolescent, as mementoes or relics, very much influenced by the modes of thinking and writing I found in Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida* and the works of W. G. Sebald — the photographs were both portals to memory and objects of attachment and attention. The second deals with photographs taken by an aunt of mine in the course of a decades-long feud with her neighbours in Dublin: these are evidence of her mental state as well as memorial objects. They demand a new and in some ways more fraught kind of writing, despite the fact that my relationship with her was of course very different from those in *In the Dark Room*. I will try to draw some lessons not just about how one writes about grief and photography, but about modes of thought and style that may be translatable to other art forms.

Mark Little

A Haunting: what is silent and what speaks in the representation of loss

This image is unavailable due to copyright restrictions

I write without seeing. I came. I wanted to kiss your hand... This is the first time I have ever written in the dark…. Not knowing whether I am indeed forming letters. Wherever there will be nothing, read that I love you.

Diderot, letter to Sophie Volland, June 10, 1759

Here, in his letter to Sophie Volland, Diderot touchingly affirms the presence of love in the spaces between his blind words. Similarly in The Work of Mourning (2001), Jacques Derrida seeks to find an appropriate mode of address in which the dead might reside as he oscillates between expressing and failing to express his grief at the loss of his friends. To mourn, to be bereft, is to both receive absence and to experience the reassertion of all that which is present. This traumatic dislocation haunts us through the singular failure of traditional modes of response to bereavement at a historical moment characterised by the mediation of events of death on a societal scale.

This paper will focus on the efforts of that trauma to manifest itself in an age which is structured by the impossibility of representation; Adorno's famous dictum that it is barbaric to write poetry after Auschwitz; Wittgenstein's assertion that that of which nothing can be spoken should remain unrepresented; the tendency within Modernism toward the anti-representational characterised here by Rauschenberg's *Erased de Kooning drawing 1953*.

Charles Lambert

The changing art of the obituary writer

This paper proposes to examine the artistry of traditional, objective obituaries and to explore the shift in the style of obituary writing during the past 20 years. Finally, it seeks to locate this development within a wider change in society's attitudes to death and to grief.

Obituaries were introduced into national newspapers by John Thaddeus Delane, who edited the Times from 1841 to 1877. Conventions soon began to evolve. The subject's greatest achievements would be listed in the first few paragraphs, followed by a summary of his or her date and place of birth and parental occupations. The piece would end with a list of the deceased's "survivors". Most importantly, the obituary would be unemotional; in keeping with the strictest interpretation of the journalistic code of objectivity, the writer would appear to be unmoved.

This objective straight jacket made obituary writing something of an art form. A great obituarist, generally anonymous, could gently direct readers' feelings through careful selection of facts. An obituary's power lay in its lack of overt emotion.

This style changed very little in more than a century. But , in recent years, The Independent and Guardian have experimented with new ways of telling life stories, often employing well-known writers or close friends of the deceased to produce much more personal accounts than had been the case in the past. Even traditional outlets such as the BBC and the Daily Telegraph have relaxed their strict conventions. The deaths of Stephen Gateley and Amy Winehouse produced online obituaries that expressed grief openly and unashamedly.

This paper seeks to explain the changing nature of the obituary with reference to changes in British culture and technology. It draws research within Journalism Studies that suggests that the death of Diana Princess of Wales in 1997 encouraged writers to experiment with more personal and emotional forms of writing.

Dr Myna Trustram

Finding a form to enact grief or How I picked flowers for a year

She do the bereaved in different voices
For the point of this address is to prod
And shepherd you back within range
Of my strained ears; extort your reply
By finding any device to hack through
The thickening shades to you, you now
Strangely unresponsive son, who were
Such reliably kind and easy company,
Won't you be summoned up once more
By my prancing and writhing in a dozen
Mawkish modes of reedy piping to you
– Still no? Then let me rest, my dear.

From *A Part Song* by Denise Riley (*London Review of Books*, 9 February 2012, p.14)

I search for *the point of this address*, the point of *my prancing and writhing*. Perhaps it is to find the *rest* that Denise Riley asks for in her poem about the death of her son. But then, I don't really believe that consolation or solace are anywhere at hand.
 This performative paper will analyse one device I created in order to *hack through / The thickening shades* to our daughter. I call this project, 'Each Day at a Time'. For a year I picked a different flower each day and described it in a diary. I now have a diary, photographs, a recording, a performance and a collection of flowers.
Can I more easily fathom my own drive to drill down into my sorrow by imagining an other's purpose in writing of the loss of their child? The paper will call on Freud (1917) and Butler (2004) to analyse my mournful and melancholic actions. And the poetry and fiction of Riley (2012), Grossman (2014) and Heaney (2006). These wretched people have all beat me to it. How can I make my own address, tell myself that I've survived, when others have already told the story of family grief?

And if I strip it down too niftily, this grief, what then will I have lost?

Dr David Slater

Incurring Debt; Picturing Death: Japanese Family Albums Washed Away in Tsunami Waters.

The triple crisis of Tohoku Japan was probably the most minutely documented disaster in history. But some images were also lost, including the hundreds of thousands of family photo albums that were washed away by the tsunami. Almost immediately, photo collection and restoration projects emerged all over Japan. Professor David H. Slater (Cultural Anthropology and Japanese Studies, Sophia University) will addresses the various issues that have been raised therein, including the anxiety, ambivalence and obligation that surround the uncontrolled circulation and handling of other people's photos; the pictures' role in the formulation of loss, creation of hope and discharge of duty; and more speculatively, the interpretive challenges these pictures pose to representing a rural imaginary now very much gone.

Paul Grace

Spectral Material.

A photograph is always both an image and a thing. It fuses the fleeting, fugitive and evanescent, with a material base that is subject to creation and destruction.

The paper *Spectral Material* examines this photographic duality in recent artistic practices which deal with trauma, collective memory and mourning.

It is a common trope in photographic discourse, to describe the photograph as an index of absence loss, and death. This paper focuses on photographic strategies that foreground and augment the material presence of the photograph in this index.

The paper investigates the relationship between the traumatic properties of image content, and the way distressed, torn, broken, and fractured surfaces of the photographic support, echo and amplify this content.

The paper also considers the cathectic, augmentative and disruptive roles of the 'fabric' of the photographic support or accompaniment, in the process of mourning, where the use of this support is magnified in contemporary photographic works. The potential of the material base of the photograph as an apparent repository of memory and traces will be explored.

Artists whose work relies on the interplay of material object and photographic image will provide reference points, and these will include, Isa Genzken, Gustav Metzger, Miroslaw Balka and Teresa Margolles.

The paper draws upon a psychoanalytics of photography, mourning and trauma as they are applied and developed by Judith Butler, Ulrich Baer and Julia Kristeva.

Paivi Miettunen

Leonardo Bistolfi's funerary monuments: love poems in marble on death.

Background: Expression of grief following death has engaged artists through centuries. Leonardo Bistolfi (1859-1933) was one of the finest sculptors in Italy and developed new symbolist funeral iconography. His exquisite marble monuments have been referred to as "Love Poems on Death".

Objective: To explore how the theme of love was expressed in Bistolfi's funerary monuments.

Methods: Selected monuments were included from the following Italian cemeteries: Staglieno (Genova), Cimitero Urbano (Borgo San Dalmazzo) and Cimitero Monumentale (Turin.) Bistolfi's funeral monuments are referred to by their explanatory titles that they received when displayed as independent works of art during the artist's life.

Results: Four themes of love emerge: 1) motherly love, 2) passionate love, 3) transformation of death into beauty and 4) comforting role of love through memories. Mother's love is expressed in "The "Mater Dolorosa" (1888) and "Resurrection" (1906)" "Mater Dolorosa" consists of a sole figure by a cross, with thematic similarity to grieving Virgin Mary. In the "Resurrection" a mother is kissing her son at death. This gentle kiss can be interpreted either as an awakening one, or as bringing "sweet death". The "Brides of Death" (1894) expresses the continuity of spirit at its most passionate: in love, a theme that is also depicted in "The Lovers" (1884)" which shows a young couple, gazing deeply into each other's eyes. "The Beauty of Death" (1895) celebrates the "Ideal of Beauty", even in death. Finally, "Grief Comforted by Memories" depicts the personification of Grief reliving the memories and the passions of life.

Conclusions: Bistolfi's exquisite aesthetic and social understanding was reflected in his monuments. Love was one of the major themes in his funerary monuments and ranged from mother's love to passion felt by lovers, to view of Death as the welcoming groom, and finally, to gentle love evoked by memories.

Scott Ramsay Kyle

For all those born into the wrong family, I could weep for my broken Mother but no tears can come.

This image is unavailable due to copyright restrictions

In 2011 I started messaging on a linen cloth, the erratic scribble of words inspired me to take my own expressive thoughts to the blanket with stitch, I found this a way to exhaust emotive energy through my hand, needle and fabric base.

In this paper, I aim to draw on subtleties from Merleau Ponty's initial ideas of perception as well as considering visual gesture and movement. Describing Louise Bourgeois' *Maman* sculpture and parental experience to Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* in speaking *to the tarantula* of *revenge* and *justice* (1961: 123).

In response to *the art of bereavement,* I reminisce as a child my own perception of my Mother as similar to the alluring villainess Selena in Super Girl (1984). Actress Faye Dunaway resembled my Mother, the same colouring, Slavic high cheekbones and almond eyes, beautifully stylish and theatrically animated. In-actual fact this was a caricature. As an adult today there is now no relationship remaining with her. She came from a dysfunctional family with a tough background, my younger memories of her often laboriously referring backwards, her blurred subjective identity; she had little self-esteem and loss of control with traits of neurosis, depression, delusion and I can now identify that with the franticness of Woody Allen's depiction of Blue Jasmine (2013).

Practice approach - 75-second film LINEN MESSAGE included inspired by,
 "Oh Mother, I can feel the soil falling over my head" (*I Know it's Over,* The Smiths: 1986)

Lise Bjørne Linnert in collaboration with Harald Gunnar Paalgard

A Heap of Apricots

What is your story?

It´s all in the telling. Stories are compasses and architecture, we navigate by them, we build our sanctuaries and our prisons out of them and to be without a story is to be lost in the vastness of a world that spreads in all directions like arctic tundra or sea ice. To love someone is to put yourself in their place, we say, which is to put yourself in their story, or figure out how to tell yourself their story.

Rebekka Solnit, "The Faraway Nearby", p 3

A pile of apricots is lying on Rebecca Solnits bedroom floor. They are coming from her mother´s tree, from the home she no longer lived in. Instead of looking rich and abundant, they looked like anxiety, maybe because every day a new was rotten… The reason for the pile of apricots was complicated…

Grief has no distance. Grief comes in waves, convulsions, sudden anxieties, that weaken the knees and blind the eyes and eradicate the dailiness of life…As days pass – as January becomes February and February becomes summer, certain things will happen. The image will become less immediate, less raw. The senses of the other more remote, even "mudgy", softened, transmuted into whatever best serves life without…(from "The Year of Magical Thinking", Joan Didion)

"A Heap of Apricots" combines spoken words with video. The text performed refers to Rebecca Solnits books: "The Faraway Nearby" and "A Field Guide to Getting Lost", Joan Didions "The year of Magical Thinking", in addition to Bjørne Linnert´s own observations and thoughts. Cinematographer Harald Gunnar Paalgard confronts longing, mortality, loss and mourning through his camera.

Linnert and Paalgards two voices form "A Heap of Apricots"

Kathryn Beattie

Unveiling the Corpse in the 21st Century

Twenty-first-century American culture finds itself in the midst of a paradigm shift regarding social attitudes toward death, and art presents us with an invaluable window onto this timeless theme. The works of contemporary artists explored in this paper provide a measure of insight into this fragile relationship between visual culture and mortality.

Mass media consumption in the 20th century decoupled representation from reality – perhaps even the corpse from the body – and culminated in what Hans Belting has observed in the 21st century: "Though our image consumption today has increased to an unprecedented degree, our experience with images of the dead has lost its former importance altogether."[i]Working outside this image overload pathology are a number of contemporary artists exploring their own relationships between the corpse, mourning, loss and denial, on the one hand, and art practice, aesthetics and public presentation on the other. The photographs of corpses by Sally Mann, for example, offer a personal approach and insight into 'our changing journey to the end'. The viewers 'exhume' their own meanings from images discussed in the paper, recognizing an emerging twenty-first-century attitude toward death and acknowledging Julia Kristeva's words, "But what use is art if it can't help us look death in the face."[ii]

[1] Hans Belting "Image, Medium, Body: A New Approach to Iconology," *Critical Inquiry* 31.2 (2005): 307.
[ii] Julia Kristeva, *Possessions,* Trans. Barbara Bray (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998): 9.

Appendix C.

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Ethics **C**ommittee

Research Information Sheet   Version 1.2   March 2015

Project Title: Email correspondence.

Part of the PhD research project 'The space between mourning and melancholia: the use of cloth in contemporary art practice to materialise the work of mourning.'

Data Controller: Beverly Ayling-Smith

Supervisors: Prof. Lesley Millar, Dr Victoria Kelley

Nature/ Purpose/ use of Data:
This correspondence is a part of a research project to explore how cloth can be used in contemporary art to connect with the mourning of the viewer and to facilitate a continuation of the resolution of that mourning.
The findings of the study will be disseminated in a document appended to the thesis. The findings will be used to examine whether there is any evidence of a material based evocation of mourning and whether the use of cloth in contemporary art practice can materialise the work of mourning.

The Use or potential benefits of the study:
My investigation will contribute to my wider research project 'The space between mourning and melancholia: the use of cloth in contemporary art practice to materialise the work of mourning.'

Likely duration of the project and Location:
The email correspondence will continue during the duration of the research project currently due to finish in 2016.
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Obligations and commitments of the participant during the study:
You have been asked to take part in this study as you have visited an exhibition in which work was shown which was created as part of this research project.

The rights of the participants:
This correspondence is voluntary and you (the participant) are free to decide whether or not you wish to contribute the correspondence. If you decide to withdraw from the study, there will be no penalty and any records regarding you or your contribution to the project will be destroyed so that no future use of records of your participation may be used. Withdrawal of participation may occur at any time during the correspondence or afterwards without prejudice.

All personal data relating to volunteers is held and processed in the strictest confidence, and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).

In consideration for the research nature of the study participants shall not receive any reimbursement, payment or rewards.

Information for further concerns or complaints:
Any concerns or complaint about any aspects of the way you have been dealt with during the course of the research will be addressed; please contact Beverly Ayling-Smith, PhD Researcher, University for the Creative Arts – Farnham (UCA); Tel: 0118 9735189 and email: baylingsmith@ucreative.ac.uk

Ethics Committee

Consent Form

Project title: Email correspondence

Data Controller: Beverly Ayling-Smith, PhD Researcher, University for the Creative Arts

Supervisors: Professor Lesley Millar, Dr Victoria Kelley

Participant Name:

Participant Location:

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the subject information sheet provided dated March 2015, version 1.2 for the above correspondence. I have been given a full explanation by the investigators of the nature, purpose, location and likely duration of the study, and of what I will be expected to do. I have had the opportunity to ask questions which have been answered fully.   ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without prejudice and without my legal rights being affected. I understand that if I withdraw all records of my participation will be destroyed   ☐

3. I understand that sections of my personal records may be looked at by responsible individuals from UCA (company/institution) or from regulatory authorities where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to access my records that are relevant to this research.   ☐

4. I understand that my records will be anonymised and be kept in the strictest confidence and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) I agree that I will not seek to restrict the use of the results of the study on the understanding that my anonymity is preserved.   ☐

5. I acknowledge that in consideration for completing the study I shall not receive any reimbursement, payment or rewards.   ☐

6. I, the undersigned, agree to take part in the above study, a practice- based research project. I confirm that I have read and understood the above and freely consent to participating in this study. I have been given adequate time to consider my participation and agree to comply with the instructions and restrictions of the study.   ☐

Name of participant……………………………

Signature……………………………………..   Date

Name of Witness…………………………………

Signature……………………………………..   Date

Name of person taking consent………………
Signature…………………………………….   Date

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