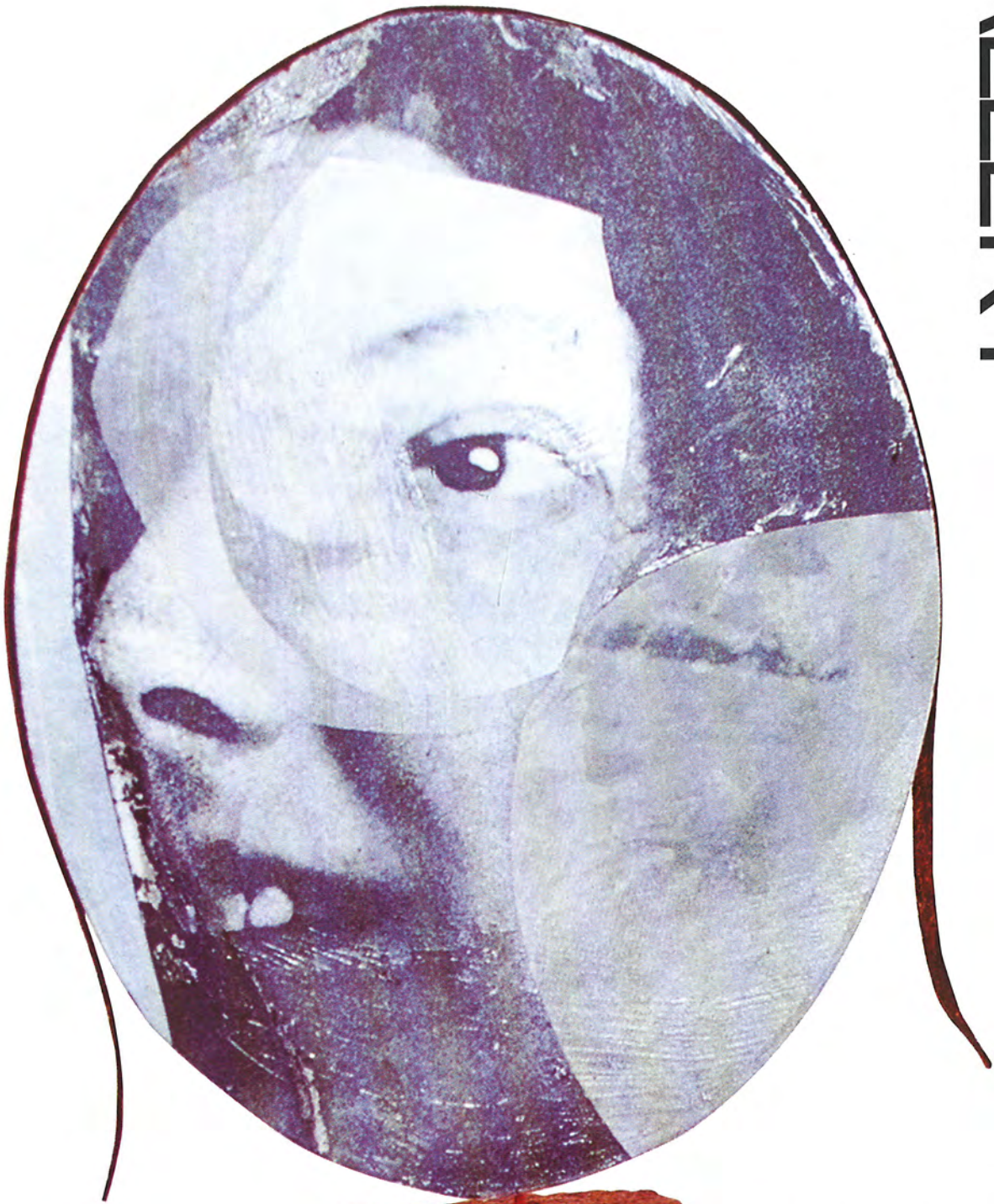


EARLY GALLERY



re-emplace
2—28 April 1999

re-emplac

2—28 April 1999

Singaporean and Australian artists, Suzann Victor and Sally Smart, exhibit for the first time together. Their interpretations of 'body and memory' with installation-based art produces an energetic, cross-cultural dialogue between their works.

Earl Lu Gallery, LASALLE SIA College of the Arts
Singapore

Curator & Editor

Binghui Huangfu

Photograph of Sally Smart

Michael Laurie

Photograph of Sally Smart's Family Tree House Series

Gary Ireland

Printer

National Photo Engravers

Project sponsors



NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL

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**Australian High Commission
Singapore**



BRITISH AIRWAYS

Cover: 'Die Dada Puppen#16', detail,
Sally Smart 1998

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Binghui Huangfu (Ms)
Curator
Earl Lu Gallery
LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts

re-emplace

By Binghui Huangfu

Re-emplacement—a set of references relocated.

This exhibition presents two women artists dealing with the issues of body, memory and femininity from very different contexts. Suzann Victor is a Singaporean artist who has been important in the development of contemporary art in this country. Sally Smart is a leading Australian artist dealing with the issues of women's identity. This exhibition brings together these two artists with the hope of exploring their similar concerns while examining the impact of their very different contexts.

It is very much the theme of this exhibition that similar concerns can have very different outcomes where the underlying forces driving the expression are different. Conversely, artworks that have similar appearances can be very different in their impact by virtue of the social and political environments in which they are seen. For Suzann Victor the customs and traditions which govern an Asian context form a very different focus to those of Sally Smart who is dealing with the restraints of a western context. Symbols accepted as standard devices for those artists dealing with women's issues in the West can become very confronting to audiences in an Asian context. Issues accepted as rights in the West are still being confronted in Asia. On the other hand issues that are important to women in the West can be lost to Asian audiences not familiar with those issues.

These two women artists come from these two contexts. Essentially, their work deals with the same issues— body and memory. The basis of their practice, however, is constructed from very different settings. One has very strongly engaged with Western feminist theory, the other has constantly dealt with and

confronted a cultural context that has, on the whole, had very little artistic discourse and even less discourse on any women's issues. The similar content of their work is separated by the different social and political backgrounds.

I first became aware of Suzann Victor's work in 1997 at "Artspace" gallery in Sydney, Australia. I was attracted by the complexity of her work and ambiguous messages it contained. I had the opportunity to talk with her on the phone but unfortunately I missed the opportunity to explore her art in more detail. The year before I moved to Singapore Suzann moved to Sydney. It was not until 1998 and the ARX project (Artist Regional Exchange) was staged in the Singapore Art Museum that we had the opportunity to finally meet and talk. It was then that I began to put all the pieces of her puzzle together.

Singapore as a location provides the opportunity to experience Asia in the process of bridging Asian and Western traditions. As one begins to explore and discover the contemporary Singapore art movements, Suzann Victor emerges as one of the important pioneers. As artistic director of "5th passage" Suzann's name is synonymous with new art movements on the island (5th passage was founded in 1994 at the Parkway Parade Shopping Centre by a group of artists including Suzann Victor, Iris Tan and Susie Lingham, and was active for two years).

Many of the comments from other artists and critics of her work are generalised around women's political themes. If you take a closer look at her work, it is not difficult for one to realize that her response to the social and political issues surrounding her are not solely confined to women's representation. Rather she uses the metaphor of women as outsider to better service her artistic strength and her role as a woman artist. In this sense, her work approaches the concerns of all people who feel marginalised and excluded.

I have had the opportunity to examine with Suzann all the periods of her work. Through her explanation, the static slides came to life. The story of the rise and decline of "5th passage" (from 1994 to 1996) sets her work in a very Singaporean context. The "personae 1" (7 women artists' exhibition) in 1995 as Susan says: "I don't think there is enough talk between people. We go about presenting a very pastel side of life and we don't represent how we connect with people. "Personae" is about being oneself, to connect with oneself, to connect with one another and come to better understanding".

Suzann in common with Sally Smart, has made a habit of

using and then reusing certain elements in her work. Some of these elements have easy interpretations while others are more challenging. This is particularly so when these elements are used in combination to distort the obvious interpretations. The progressions have been her use of human hair (1994), which could represent the discarding of human body materials, followed by bodily fluids such as breast milk and vaginal fluids which symbolised women's fertility and life giving. The use of menstrual blood (1997, *The Expense of Spirit and Waste of Shame*, Artspace, Sydney, Australia) symbolised the cycle of women's lives. Suzann's own body separated by glass from the viewer became a symbol for the separation from the mainstream of the art world (1998, *The Still Water Between Estrangement and Reconciliation*, Singapore Art Museum). It was a process of her artistic growth that in dealing with women's issues she has expressed the journey from the individual to the universal.

In the exhibition of 1998 at the Singapore Art Museum, Suzann used the symbols of glass and water to describe the separation of women from the mainstream of contemporary art. She used traditional symbols of womanhood such as water to express exclusion. Based on the architectural structure of the Singapore Art Museum, she placed her work and herself outside the temperature-controlled and secure inner sanctum of acceptable art practice.

Singapore Art Museum, being a converted colonial building, has a glass-enclosed colonnade. The glass partition was constructed by the conservators of Singapore Art Museum as a way of keeping moisture out of the museum and is located on the second floor outside of Gallery 7. By blocking the drain holes on the outside of the building, she was able to allow water to build up against the glass protecting the inside of the building.

Her work existed on the periphery of the Museum. She performed in the space between the glass wall and the balustrade. Her performance was conducted outside of the climate-controlled inner sanctum of the Museum. This continued the symbol of Suzann, herself, being locked out of the mainstream of Singapore art. In addition, it acted as a universal symbol of women artists facing the

'Still waters between estrangement and reconciliation'
Suzann Victor, 1988



difficulties of accessing the male-dominated domain of contemporary art and culture. The blocked drain allowed water to fill up against the glass partition while it remained dry inside. She placed her diary on the balustrade in the corner of the glass partition. The viewers had to walk through a narrow passage to be able to reach and read this diary. The artist was performing in the waterside of the glass partition and dressed with light almost transparent cloth. Through the glass, the audience not only watched her wet body crawl inside the box, they are also experienced her anxiety and struggle. Her work also critiques the museum's hydrophobia as well as comments on the otherness of the feminine role in the family and the society.

Suzann employs real objects to create a disturbing reality. It is a true reality that people try to forget or ignore. Particularly in the Asian tradition, the objects which she uses in her work are regarded as forbidden or taboo. These elements of the work cause it to have as much affinity with political and social discourse in an Asian context as the feminist discourse of the west. Suzann's work responds to the restraints of this social environment.

Sally Smart's work is responding to the history of feminist theory in the west. Since 1988 in the "X-Ray Vanitas" exhibition (Luba Bilu Gallery, Melbourne) Sally has focused her work on how identity is constructed particularly in relationship to women through a persistent exploration of what constitutes femininity. From painting, drawing, collaging, assembling to installation of real objects in space her work provides us with a steady journey exploring from within oneself. The theme of her work strengthens and emphasizes the body/house metaphor particularly evident in the 1996 "Unhomely Body" exhibition (Contemporary Art Center of South Australia, Adelaide).

In order to understand Sally's work we must look at the key work of her artistic development, the "Unhomely Body". In this work, Sally plays with the concept of the architecture, the interior and exterior space as a body, the body as representation of the inner and outer to create an illusionary mind space as well as a bodily experience in a surrealist sense. Her use of images that have a strong connection with the feminist discourse in the West is evident in elements of wallpaper and the chair. These images arise from "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, a feminist writer, who describes women as trapped figures in a domestic space. Wallpaper evokes a story as well as suggestive metaphor in Sally Smart's work. As writer, Helen McDonald, commented "Smart's work is informed by current philosophical writing on the body".¹

¹ Helen McDonald, the Unhomely Body, Catalogue Essay, 1997, Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne.

Sally Smart employs cutting, pasting, sewing, shifting furniture, re-presenting body parts, flaying wall paper and hanging strips of skin as a strategy to create a reality which was set against the arbitrary way media images construct our idea of reality. The domestic pallet of objects is able to evoke and distort the sense of space, mood and place. Elements are used to question what is real and what is fundamental in our perceptions of women. What should be seen as the mundane and ordinary become eerie and disturbing. By causing feelings of unease to be present in a domestic setting that should feel safe, Sally heightens the dislocation of women.

Sally seems to see her role as an artist as one of revealing the hidden. She often uses a shift in perception to confront us with what we have taken for granted. Often the work has the effect of not existing within space but rather becoming the space

negating its surrounding environment.

Both artists express their reality, their set of references, their memory into a space and re-empower for us another reality being more real, in-depth, complex and engaging.

Sally Smart's work at Earl Lu Gallery in LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts is conceptually related to the "Unhomely Body" (1996) and combines the work developed

from the "Treehouse" (1998, Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne) and "Haunted House" (1998) series. Susan is presenting segments of her past work recombined to form both a survey and new product of expression.

This exhibition is for the artists, a review and a conversation with their progression to the new millennium. In the process of re-examining their own work they are consolidating and setting the stage for their next steps. Each outing is both a new statement reflecting concerns of the moment as a woman and an amalgamation of concerns of the past. In all of their work they are trying to express the unity of development. Each work is reliant on the work that has gone before as the structure supporting the work that is now presented. This exhibition provides an extension of that concept in that not only will the work relate to its antecedents but also to the expression of other artists. By the

'Family Tree House', detail
Sally Smart, 1999



placement of Suzann Victor's work in the same space as Sally Smart, a comparison and contrast between two artists working with the themes of the contemporary women will be caused to mix and expand in their impact.

As Suzann once said about this exhibition "Re-emplace is exploring how individual works can shift, merge or prospect its own ground of psychic space when they stimulate each other to produce a different dynamic in the construction of memory."

sally smart

Text by Lara Travis

Let's Go Outside

*You should lie down now and remember the forest,
for it is disappearing—
no, the truth is it is gone now
and so what details you can bring back
might have a kind of life.*

Susan Stewart, *The Forest*.

Whether domestic, corporeal or psychological, Sally Smart is well-known for her fascination with inner spaces. While ostensibly dealing with interiority, Sally Smart's installations elide distinctions of inside and outside, of body, psyche, nature and culture. Smart's practice thrives on the dissolution of boundaries and the creation of discordant new relationships as she collects, cuts, arranges, charts, pins, stitches, dismantles and reassembles a seemingly fragile, always changing and sharply evocative world. It should not come as a surprise then, to find that when Smart steps outside, she takes her aesthetic luggage with her and goes about constructing an enchanting yet perversely domesticated landscape.

Like a forest, *Family Tree House* is best apprehended with a view from a distance, followed by a journey inside. *Family Tree House* is the second phase of Smart's continuing work, *Femmage* (*Shadows and Symptoms*), the first being exhibited at Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne, in 1998. The unifying technique and conceptual foundation of *Family Tree House*, is Smart's adaptation of the 1970's concept of *Femmage*. *Femmage* is a feminist reading of the techniques of collage, assemblage, decoupage, photomontage, stitching, applique and quilting as embodying a particularly female (and previously undervalued) relationship to art making. Smart adapts *Femmage* to her own discourse on feminist art practice, place, interiority, exteriority, the body, and psychoanalytic theory.

Family Tree House is part body, part house, part nature and part culture. Its enclosure within the gallery space brings to mind a walled forest—a domesticated landscape, contrived to represent and please the designer's caprices. Yet the installation

Lara Travis is a Melbourne-based art writer and Master of Arts student at the University of Melbourne, Department of Fine Arts, Cinema Studies and Classics.



Die Dada Puppen #6 with 'Family Tree House', 80cm
Sally Smart, 1998



also connotes the eeriness often ascribed to the Australian Bush. The sense of the unease of that of a young, urban Australian society experienced when confronted the Bush, endowed it with a kind of interiority, a sense that it had a life and laws of its own. Sally Smart plays on the ambiguity of inside and outside that is part of the Bush mythology and the broader imaginary tradition of the forest in Western visual and literary culture.

Smart's evocation of a beguiling but threatening sense of new knowledge, places Family Tree House in keeping with the Western imaginative tradition of the forest. The word "forest" is derived from the Latin "foris" meaning "outside". However, to go outside to the forest, is to paradoxically go inside—into our fears and wishes, our memories, our history and origins. The forest is traditionally the hideout of outlaws, fugitives and a haven for the defenders of justice. In the forest, civilised law is inverted, as

inanimate matter becomes animate. Both threatening and enchanted, the forest beckons travelers with intriguing possibilities. This might be enlightenment, an awakening to new knowledge or maybe its opposite, the defilement of innocence. The forest is also a mythical place of origin. Since the Romans' mythologised their origins as an emergence from the oak of an ancient wood, family links have been



'Das Schatten (Bike)', synthetic polymer paint on felt, 70cm x 190cm
Sally Smart, 1998

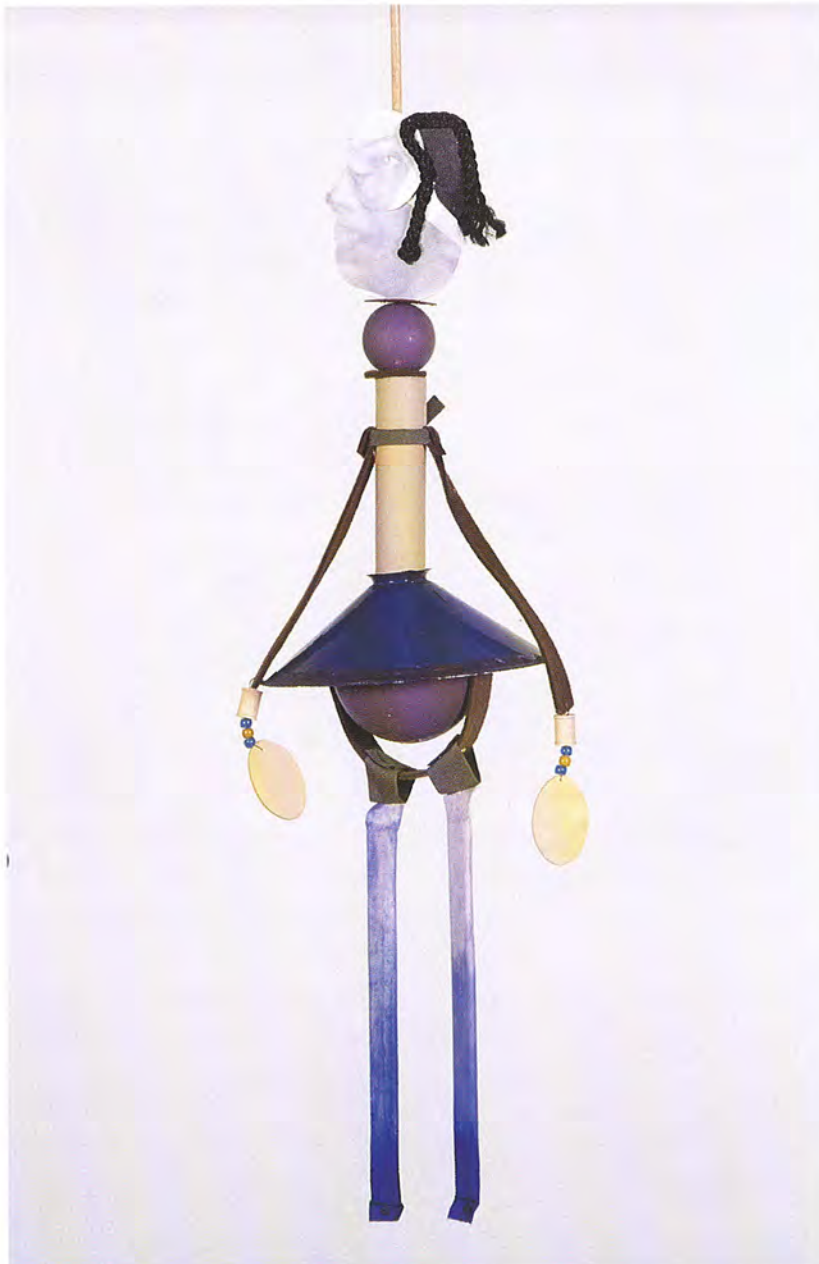
described in terms of tree parts. This continues in our culture today—the family tree.

Rather than charting links in blood and marriage, the connections that striate Family Tree House are shifting and ambiguous. Its dwellers are based on the Dada puppets of German artist Hanna Hoch. The dolls' faces are photomontages of the faces of Hoch and two women artists of Russia's avant-garde of the early twentieth century—Lyubov Popanova and Varava Stepanova. More than a homage, these dolls are invested with an animate quality, a sense of personage. Hanging, casting shadows on the gallery wall like marionettes, the dolls activate Family Tree House to a three dimensional level.

Looking more closely at Family Tree House, small vignettes of texture, colour and motifs can be observed as one sees lichen on tree bark or finds a leaf skeleton on the ground. A destabilising

play on binaries and uncanny combinations continue in the details of this artwork. The dark at first seems empty but then morphs into a silhouette, a presence delineated by the traces of its absence. Branches reach towards an unexpected bed. What might have been a vine is a dangling spinal chord. Lace, spider webs and leaf skeletons are indistinguishable. Pinned Rorschach pictures, in Freudian psychology of reading the patient's psychosis, might well be internal body parts. The silhouette of a tree is cut out in delicate, flesh-pink felt. A spray of vascular lace further blurs the distinction of internal and external materialities. The viewer is enclosed in a disorienting network of connections that are at once whimsical and sinister.

Die Dada Puppen #1,
synthetic polymer paint on felt,
cardboard and wood with xerox, satin
and other collage elements, 100cm
Sally Smart, 1998



Both performance and product, Sally Smart's art is a constant renegotiation and display of her sense of the interrelatedness of intellectual concepts, visual conceits and art history with our contemporary world. Smart appropriates techniques, ideas and images as if they are booty from a foray. But her deftness and sense of play prevents her art form being burdened with its intellectual gravity. Her use of the past is always with an eye to the future, the focus being on the opening up of a new possibility rather than prescribing limitations. To be definitive without being descriptive, to open up new meaning and not close it off, is the balancing act of the creative process. This requires an astute contrariness, a preparedness to find generative potential in the death of more stable meanings. Sally Smart's art treads this border of fecundity and decay.

sally smart Artist's statement

Family Tree House (Femmage—Shadows and Symptoms)¹

"I suddenly see the solution to the puzzle-picture. Before, there were branches there; now there is a human shape. My visual impression has changed and now I recognise that it has not only shape and colour but also a quite particular 'organisation'."

"If you put the 'organisation' of a visual impression on a level with colours and shapes, you are proceeding from the idea of the visual impression as an inner object. Of course this makes this object into a chimera; a queerly shifting construction. For the similarity to a picture is now impaired."²



'Bed with nerves' (Femmage) in detail of 'Family Tree House', 110cm x 270cm
Sally Smart, 1998

The words of the title specifically for this work, "Family Tree House", like the work itself, can be read individually, in parts, or as a whole; separately and together the words mean construction.

This work is about making a visual construction of ideas like mapping, diagramming, charting, or planning; but open, showing the process of that kind of working, drawing, assembling.

The title suggests this is a genealogical tree, which is a chart, like an inverted branching tree, showing the descent of a family (or a species).

I imagine picturing thinking about the meanings of the world; inevitably the discourse begins with the body, a forensic activity, an external and internal examination of the parts, displaying what is seen, including the parts of the body's environment: clothes, house, furniture, landscape. This becomes an anatomy of the world lesson; where dissected parts are examined and reconstructions are made for explanations. Inevitably the conclusion is like a puzzle-picture: a maze of fugitive parts; tree parts become human parts, and body parts become abstract parts; but whether the lines, shapes, and colours appear abstract or representational, there is an 'all-over composition' of the parts. However, the composition is unstable, "a queerly shifting construction", a chimera; the picture is impaired.

The text of the "Family Tree House (Femmage—Shadows and Symptoms)" centres on the visual analysis of seeing meaning as a feminist discourse in art practice; that discourse has radically changed the use and view of detail in art. I intend this work to be "a queerly shifting construction" to lure the viewer's gaze to detail;

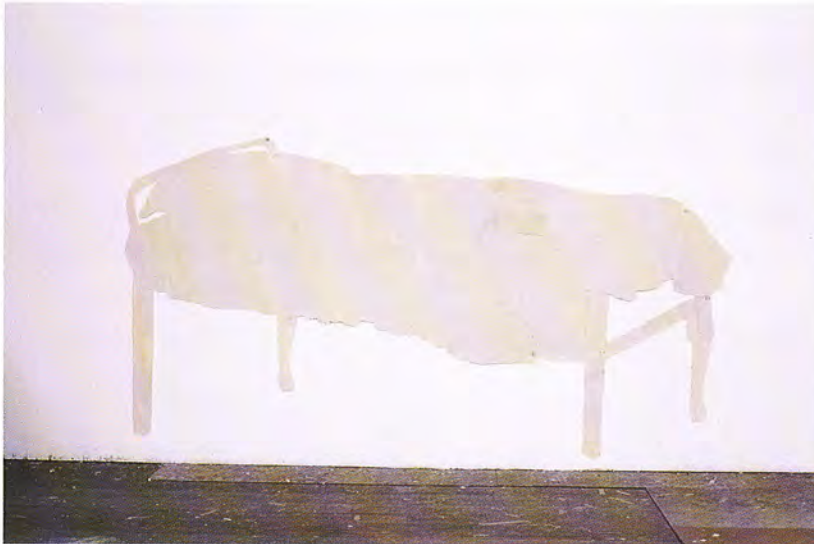
¹"Femmage—Shadows and Symptoms" is the generic title of a large group of works begun in 1998; part of which was a solo exhibition at the Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne, in September 1998; and a major part to be a solo exhibition the Fukuoka Art Museum, in May 1999.

²Ludwig Wittgenstein, "Philosophical Investigations". lixi, 1949.



'Family Tree House', detail
Sally Smart, 1999

this is partially achieved by the use of techniques for creating the illusion of space, in an aberrant way: to disturb the view of the flat, solid wall. The devices for controlled, well-ordered spaces of representation and of illusionism, become incorporated into an "organisation" for unrestricted space: a phenomenological space, a sensational field; of the psycho-physiological world.



'Pale Bed' part of 'Femme
Shadows and Symptoms', synthetic
polymer paint on felt
Sally Smart 1998

suzann victor

Text by
Susie Lingham

A Swallowed Bait.

*Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murd'rous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust,
Enjoyed no sooner but despised straight,
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had
Past reason hated as a swallowed bait
On purpose laid to make the taker mad;
Mad in pursuit and in possession so,
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in proof and proved, a very woe;
Before a joy proposed; behind, a dream.
All this the world well knows, yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.*

William Shakespeare, Sonnet 129

Scene:

10 incandescent tungsten light bulbs hanging on their black electrical cords in a row from a rod. Bulbs and cords and rod are attached to a mechanical baby rocker which causes the row of bulbs to bob, up and down, rhythmically. Each bulb descends to barely touch an oval unframed mirror which is raised off the floor at a 45 degree angle.

Enter: You, as Observer. Or Voyeur.

And they dance. Ten incandescent light bulbs in a row, Jerky, uncertain—yet chronically constant, almost manic. Each

'Expense of spirit in a waste of shame'
Suzann Victor 1997



glowing light bulb lowering, making contact with its mirror both visually—real and virtual image touch for a fleeting instant—and sonically, with a little clink, glass on glass. Then they bob up again, jerky, uncertain. The mirrors, ovoid, open, impermeable tongues of silvered glass, shiver slightly: touching, licking, but tasting nothing. These baits of light cast from long wires, each skimming

the surface of its own mirror pond, seeking to catch its own reflection. And you enter like a fish, bewildered at your non-targeted status. These baits you will not swallow. There is no need. You will watch them instead, these "mimetic machines (which) pump out contact-sensuous",¹ And they dance. Sensuous, yet nervous, rhythmic reflections of bodily engagements.

And as they grind nervously into the pools of their mirrored reflections, the sound shavings of their attention to each other gathers around the mirrors, spilling on the floor, a bed of broken glass, glinting reflections. You edge around the ground glass, all shards and splinters. With each step you take the splinters wink, like knowing eyes plotting your progress, mapping your desire. Your desire to know. To understand.

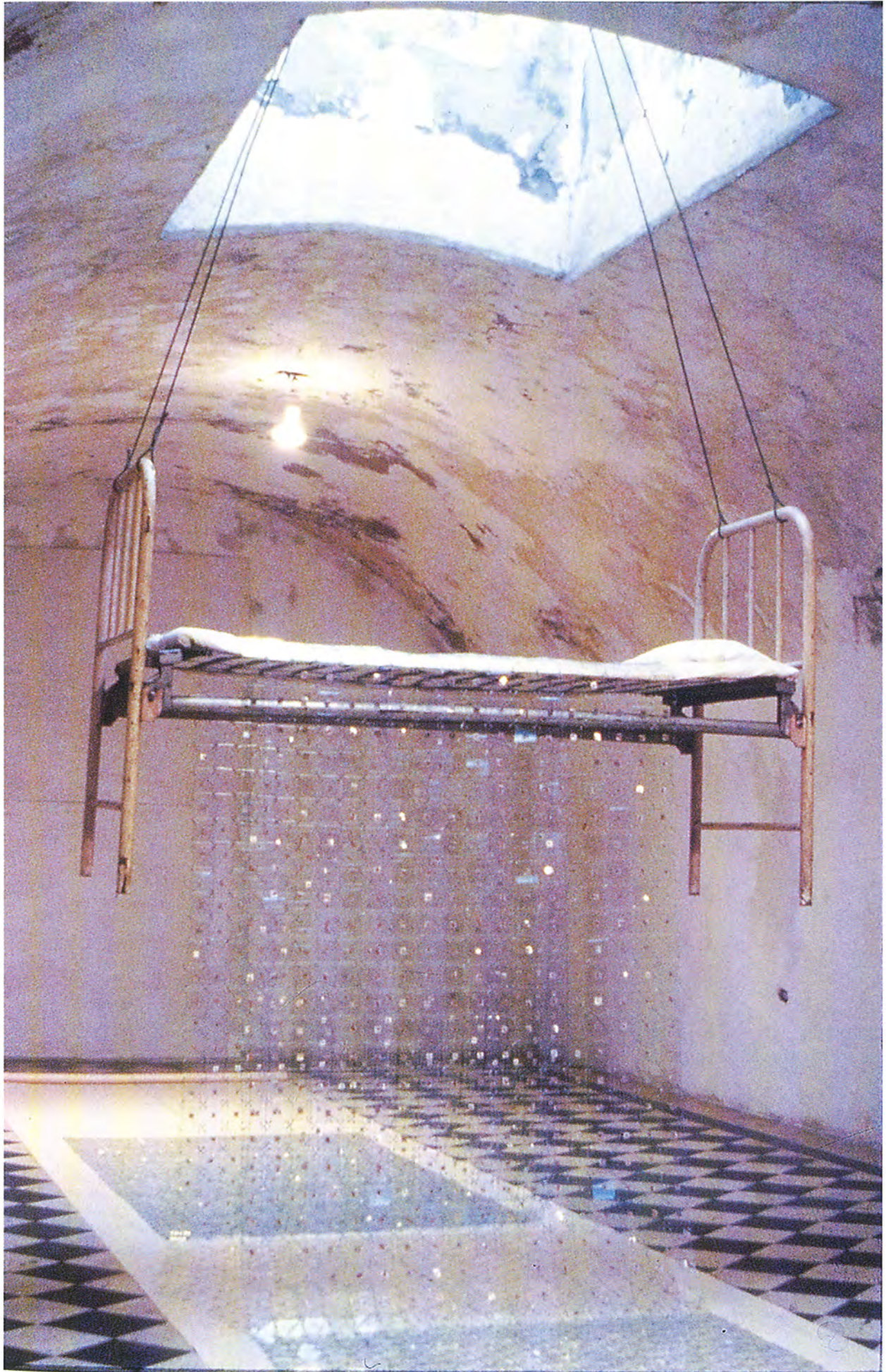
I am an Observer, you say sternly to yourself, but the constant clink of glass on glass in almost syncopated rhythm drags you by the ear past the edges of your detachment and in a flash you realize you are hooked. And have been for a while. The glass walls of the Observation Space is chipped away, thinning into shatterable sugar-panes. You are giving up something, and it may not be voluntarily.

You hurry forward, ignoring the winking glass shards scattered at your feet.

But you cannot ignore the non-materiality of the ever enlarging metaphorical significance of these dancing baits of light and their speculums casting light everywhere; nor the growing amplification of the possibilities of meanings of the visual and sonic rhythms of their interaction.

Reflective, reflecting, reflected—light dancing everywhere and still you remain in the dark. Observer. Nothing involves you. Voyeur. Yet these speculums drive your thoughts into a speculative rhythm. Your desire to know reflected. Perhaps you are a Witness? To the machinations of apathy? These endless apathetic grindings of smooth glass on smooth glass—mimicking friction. Apathy—in what context? Here, where these sensuous machines mime the unspeakable? In what context unspeakable? All desire, all lust, and no action. Observer, Voyeur, Witness. Although you are aware there is no innocence in these positions, you do not, will not, must not partake contextually of this waste of signification; you will not, must not expend your spirit in the interpretation of this wasteland of "shattered" glass spilled like secrets from the shut windows of non-perception. But through the chinks you are pushed to witness: significant metaphors spilling reflective glass like water off a duck's back; reasonable doubts ground into "non-issues" at the whetstone of apathy. Nothing sharpens. Like slow

¹Taussig, Michael, *Mimesis and Alterity*, Great Britain, Routledge, 1993, pp 21-23. "To ponder mimesis is to become sooner or later caught, like the police and the modern State with their fingerprinting devices, in sticky webs of copy and contact, image and bodily involvement of the perceiver in the image, a complexity we too easily elide as nonmysterious, with our facile use of terms such as identification, representation, expression, and so forth—terms which simultaneously depend upon and erase all that is powerful and obscure in the network of associations conjured by the notion of the mimetic."



'Third World Extra Virgin Dreams'
Suzann Victor, 1997



'Tintoretto's Risen Christ
Arresting Lazy Susan', detail window
insert: nipples
Suzann Victor, 1996

motion grinding of the teeth in the depths of unconscious night, the edge of the desire to know—a lust for action, interaction—is taken off the bite. But what does it mean? What is the artist's intention? If only art were more "accessible"!

Artist's Aside: (Nothing sharpens? Preach to the converted and art refines its aesthetic appeal. Give in to requests for accessibility and what little that is understood by that accessibility comes swiftly into play like a sledgehammer on your sharpening edge. And so you find you may have to re-

define your appeal, appeal for redefinition, and give up trying not to look like sex, affordable if not cheap, displayed in a shop window.)

Through the chinks of the closed windows you are an uninnocent witness. You are aware there is no such entity as an innocent witness. Perjured. Murderous. Bloody. Full of blame. You reach the end of the row, turn, walk back past the hung lightbaits still jiggling past your ears, away from the wasteland that frames your retreat. The edge of your desire to know grounds down, you cannot bite into the knowledge, or the acknowledgment of your reflected apathy, and as you walk away, you know you are watched by a school of reflected 'selves' swimming dangerously close to the light.

Having walked the edge of reflective hell, you head, run for the familiar, the heaven of indifference. Away! Away! Like that other Shakespearean facet, guilty Claudius, brother of the King, asking Hamlet: "What do you call this play?" Who could reply: "The Apathetic Observer Trap." Or perhaps "The Annexation² of Subjectivity." And, like the implicated murderer, you rise, and turn to go, and 'Hamlet' might ask: "What, frightened with false fire?" And you, distraught and craving light, cry: "Give me some light. Away."

And the lightbaits and all their echoing reflections cry in syncopated chorus: "Lights, lights, lights!"

Metaphors slowly dig into the roof of your mouth and you

²Crary, Jonathan, *Techniques of the Observer*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, An October Book, MIT Press, 1990, pp 5, 146 & 145: "Doesn't the history of art effectively coincide with a history of perception? Aren't the changing forms of artworks over time the most compelling record of how vision itself has mutated historically?" Since "an observer's sensations always depended on the previous sequence of stimulation, hence is subjective in nature, the observer's subjectivity is always subject to "annexation."

have swallowed the very woe of your enlightenment. You have become aware of the unconscious grinding of teeth in the night—hidden anxieties—all unconscious lust and no conscious action—all desire for knowledge and not daring to know. You leave the site of the collision stained. Murderous, bloody, full of blame.

Exit: You, as Witness. Your spirit spent in speculation, craving respite from the peripherals of the visual mirror of your eyes and the still trembling chambers of your ears. You exit like a fish out of water—bait clawed into the roof of your mouth, teeth grinding metaphors, tongue bleeding interpretations. Swallowing, swallowed—in the “sticky webs of copy and contact, image and bodily involvement of the perceiver in the image.”

Postscript: “The mind does not reflect truth but rather extracts it from an ongoing process involving the collision and merging of ideas.”³

To the sticky-webbed heaven of conjured associations and sensuous collision, welcome.

3 Crary, p 101.

‘His Mother is a Theatre’
Suzann Victor, 1994





suzann victor

Artist's statement

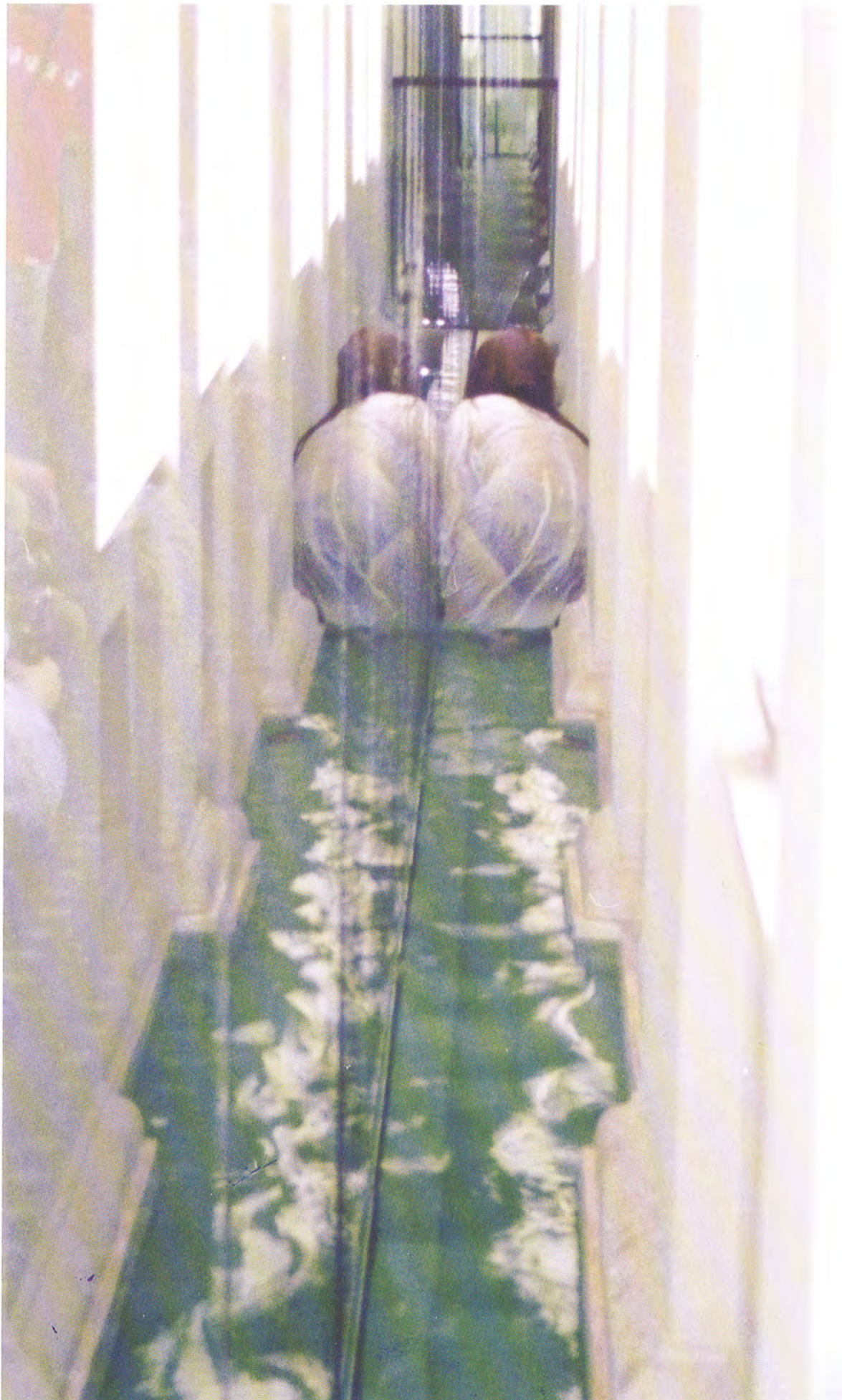


'Tintoretto's Risen Christ
'Arresting Lazy Susan'
Suzann Victor, 1996

As an Asian woman artist, my performative-installations have functioned as an embodiment of visual testimonies to lived experience. Born of the socio-political realities of this region, my work is strategised as a passport for encountering or crossing the boundaries that define or shift social, sexual or cultural identity.

My practice has been enriched by the privilege of proximity to the various cultural contexts I have shown my work in. In these periodic immersions where language is more a barrier than a bridge, they have attuned me to a process of discernment—transformed into a rewarding alternative of listening to the body rather than the voice. As such, my work acknowledges a return to the body as an enduring site of inquiry. While I emphasise the inclusion of the potential of the viewer by producing images that give can rise to or redeem even more images for the spectator, I also aim to exteriorise the inner theatre of the female as body and conversely, the body as female. In so doing, they become ways of inversion, and therefore, a method of revelation for the less visible inner histories of female and feminised experience in this region.

As allies or adversaries, the ceremonies for 'bodily' events that I insert into public spaces attempt conspiracies with the spatial dynamics and contextual significance of the given architecture. They function as sites of contestation to emerge as the re-enactment of an agitated body—the body that performs its loss of innocence even as the socio-political and the personal-political rushes in to colonise the voids wherever innocence is proclaimed.



sally smart Biodata

	1960	Born in Quorn, South Australia
STUDIES	1995-97	Research for PhD, Monash University, Melbourne
	1991	Master of Fine Arts, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne
	1987-88	Post-Graduate Diploma, Painting, Victoria College of the Arts, Melbourne
	1978-81	Diploma of Graphic Design, South Australian School of Art, Adelaide
AWARDS	1999	Visual Arts and Crafts Board, Australian Council Overseas Studio Residency, London
	1998	Women Artists Grant, Victoria Cultural Development Grant, Arts Victoria
	1995-97	Monash Graduate Scholarship
	1991	Visual Arts and Crafts Board, Australia Council Project grant, Sydney
	1989	ANZ Travelling Scholarship, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne Fred Williams Family Prize, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne
	1988	St Kilda Prize Acquisition, City of St Kilda
	1981	H.P. Gill Memorial Medal, South Australian school of Art, Adelaide
SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS	1999	Femmage (Shadows and Symptoms), Fukuoka Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan
	1998	Femmage (Shadows and Symptoms), Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne
	1997	The Unhomely Body, Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne
	1996	Dora Drawer, Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne The Unhomely Body, Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide
	1995	Imaginary Anatomy, Australian Print Workshop, Melbourne Itchy, Itchy, Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne
	1992	Delicate Cutting, Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne 'Where I come from the birds sing a pretty song' Latrobe Regional Gallery, Morwell
	1993	'Where I come from the birds sing a pretty song', Geelong Art Gallery, Geelong
	1992	Dress, Luba Bilu Gallery, Melbourne Cut-Outs, Monash University, Gippsland School of Visual Art, Churchill
	1991	The Large Darn, Luba Bilu Gallery, Melbourne

	1990	The Printed Curtain, Luba Bilu Gallery, Melbourne
	1989	X-ray Vanitas, Luba Bilu Gallery, Melbourne Mad Woman in the Attic, 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne
	1986	Roslyn Oxley 9 Gallery, Sydney
	1985	Gippsland Institute Gallery, Churchill
	1984	Adelaide Festival Centre, Adelaide
	1983	Union Gallery, Adelaide University Union
SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS	1999	Re-emplace, Earl Lu Gallery, Singapore
	1998	Unhomely, Sonje Museum of Contemporary Art, Kyongju and Seoul, Korea Pusan International Contemporary Art Festival, Pusan, Korea
	1996	Flagging the Republic, Sherman Goodhope Galleries, Sydney Works on paper, Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne
	1995	The Moët & Chandon Touring Exhibition 1995, Australian Tour Recent Acquisitions: Deakin University Art Collection, Geelong Art Gallery, Geelong The Loti and Victor Smorgon Gift of Contemporary Australia Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
	1994	The Moët & Chandon Touring Exhibition 1994, Australian Tour Focus, Central Gallery, Adelaide
	1992	Victorian College of the Arts Post Graduate Exhibition, Ian Pottery Gallery, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne Skin, Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide Moët & Chandon Touring Exhibition 1992, Australia Tour Savage Club Invitation Prize, McClelland Art Gallery, Langwarrin Margaret Stewart Endowment, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
	1991	The Upside Down river, The Australian Gallery, New York City, USA Moët & Chandon Touring Exhibition 1991, Australian Tour Selected Works from The University of Melbourne Art Collection, Deakin University Gallery, Geelong
	1990	Selected recent Acquisitions, National Gallery of Melbourne, Melbourne ACAF2- The Second Australian Contemporary Art Fair, Melbourne Special... It's been used before, Luba Bilu Gallery, Melbourne
	1989	Imaging Aids, Australian Centre of Contemporary Art/ Linden Gallery, Melbourne Sixteen Artists, University Gallery, The University of Melbourne Scotchman's Hill Vineyard Art Prize, Geelong Art Gallery

- 1988 St Kilda Acquisition Prize, Linden Gallery, Melbourne
A Short Ride in a Fast Machine, 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne
- 1987 Artbank Big Paintings, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney
- 1986 Six Melbourne Artists, Ben Grady Gallery, Canberra
Expatriates or Exiles? Adelaide Festival Centre

COLLECTIONS

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra | National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne | Geelong Art Gallery, Geelong | Latrobe Regional Gallery, Morwell | The University of Melbourne Art Collection, Melbourne | Deakin University Art Collection, Geelong | Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane | University of Tasmania Collection | Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney | Loti and Victor Smorgon Collection | Artbank, Sydney | Victorian College of the Arts Foundation Collection, Melbourne | City of St Kilda, St Kilda | John Sands Collection, Melbourne | Shell Australia Collection, Melbourne | Sam and Minnie Collection, Melbourne | Private Collections in Australia, France, United States of America | The Vizard Foundation, Melbourne | BP, Australia | BHP Collection | The Walter & Eliza Hall Institute, Melbourne | Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane | Bendigo Art Gallery, Bendigo

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Christopher Coventry, *X-Ray Vanitas*, (exhibition introduction), Luba Bila Gallery, Melbourne, April 1989
- Scott Brown, *Sally Smart: X-Ray Vanitas*, exhibition review, Art Beat, Melbourne, April 1989
- Fiona Scott-Norman, *House of puzzles*, The Sunday Herald, Melbourne, 19 November 1989
- Christopher Heathcote, *The myth of unified mainstream*, Australian Art Monthly, 1989
- Peter Hennessey and Patricia Piccinini, *Sally Smart: The Printed Curtain*, (exhibition introduction), Luba Bilu Gallery, Melbourne, April-May 1990
- Graeme Sturgeon, *Art: Six names to watch*, Australian Collectors Monthly Sydney, November-December 1990
- Helen Topliss, *Contemporary Issues: the fifth Moët & Chandon*, Art and Australia, Fine Arts Press, Sydney, Spring 1990
- Alison Carroll, *The Moët & Chandon Touring Exhibition 1991*, (catalogue introduction), Melbourne 1991
- Women's Resource Centre, *Nonagon, Nine Australian Women Artists*, slide kit, Melbourne 1991
- Jyanni Steffensen, *skin*, (exhibition catalogue), Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide, 1992
- Jude Adams, *Skin*, exhibition reviews, Artlink, Vol. 12, Adelaide, 1992
- Ray Edgar, *Dress* exhibition review, The Melbourne Times, Melbourne, June 1992
- Alison Carroll, *The Moët & Chandon Touring Exhibition 1992*, Melbourne, 1992
- Helen Macdonald, *Dress*, (catalogue introduction), Luba Bilu Gallery, Melbourne, 1992
- Christopher Heathcote, exhibition reviews, The Age, Melbourne, June, 1992

Rebecca Lancashire, *Intent on unravelling our patchworked past*, exhibition review, *The Age*, Melbourne, June 1992

Amanda King, *Sally Smart: Dress*, Agenda, Melbourne, January-February, 1993

Helen Macdonald, *Where I come from the birds sing a pretty song*, (catalogue introduction), Geelong Art Gallery, Geelong, 1992

Peter Timms, The Moët & Chandon Touring Exhibition 1994, (catalogue introduction), Melbourne, 1994

Amanda King, *Delicate Cutting*, (catalogue introduction), Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne, 1994

Amanda King, *A secret garden: the work of Sally Smart*, *Australian Art Monthly*, November, No.75, Canberra, 1994, (plus cover illustration)

Janine Burke, *Anima: Feminist art since the seventies*, *Art and Australia*, vol. 23/ no.3, Autumn 1995, Fine Arts Press, Sydney, 1995

Peter Timms, The Moët & Chandon Touring Exhibition (catalogue introduction), Melbourne, 1995

Jenny Zimmer, *Metaphor in Body Parts*, *The Age*, Melbourne, 17 May 1995

suzann victor Biodata

EDUCATION		Completing Mater of art (Hons), UWS Nepean, Sydney
	1996-1997	Bachelor of Arts (First Class Hons), UWS Nepean, Sydney
	1988-1990	Associate Diploma in Fine Arts (Painting), LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts, Singapore
SCHOLARSHIPS		
	1999	Institution Scholarship (B.A.Hons), UWS Nepean School of Visual and Performing Arts, Sydney
	1998	Institution Scholarship (M.A.Hons), UWS Nepean School of Contemporary Arts, Sydney
	1997	International Postgraduate Scholarship (M.A.Hons), UWS Nepean International Centre, Sydney
AWARDS/PRIZES		
	1995	Singapore International Foundation Art Award
	1994	Republic of Singapore Nay Competition, 2nd Prize
	1989	IBM Merit Prize
	1988	Australian Bicentennial 'Highly Commended' Award GRANTS
	1997	Research Grant (Group Project) for S.U.R.G.E. (South East Asian Union, Research & Generative Exchange), Queensland Arts Council, Brisbane UWS Nepean Travel Grant
SOLO EXHIBITIONS		
	1998	Waiting Room, Gallery 4A, Asian Australian Artist Association, Sydney
	1997	Expense of Spirit/ Waste of Shame, Artspace, Sydney
	1995	Six Chambers, Substation, New Criteria III Programme, Singapore
	1992	Untitled, David Marshall Talk, Substation, Singapore
GROUP EXHIBITIONS/ PROJECTS/ ACTIVITES		
	1999	ARX5 (Artist Regional Exchange): Hong Kong (October) Perth (June-July) Imaging Selves, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore Re-emp lace, Earl Lu Gallery, Singapore S.U.R.G.E. (South East Asian Union, Research & Generative Exchange), Manila
	1998	ARX5 (Artist Regional Exchange), Singapore Art Museum, Singapore National Graduate Show, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Perth

- WARDROBE: Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Perth
Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane
- 1997 Sixth Havana Bienale, Cuba
WARDROBE: The Performance Space, Sydney
Madlove Gallery, Adelaide
- 1996 The Second Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
Lahore International Workshop, Lahore, Pakistan
Dose, Artspace, Sydney
Kandang Kerbau Women's Hospital Project (co-curator and participant), Singapore
- 1995 Visions of Happiness: Ten Contemporary Asian Artists, Japan Foundation Asia Center, Tokyo
Dilating Pupils, Gallery A & O, Berlin
Transculture (curatorial advisor for Singapore)
Venice World's women On-Line Internet Project
United Nations 4th World Conference on Women (incorporated activities and images by Muriel Magenta), Beijing
- 1994 Artists General Assembly (co-artistic directions & participant), 5th Passage, Singapore
PACIFIC PLAZA TEMPORARY TENANT PROJECT (participant, co-ordination):
Personate
Surrogate Desires I
Surrogate Desires II
Agak Agak
- 1993 Abeno-Soho Art Project, Osaka
- 1992 Memory Substation, Singapore
- 1991 Painting a Dream, Contact-Y (profile), Singapore Broadcasting Corporation
Still Life, Body Fields 24-hour Project, 5th Passage, Singapore
- 1990 Cranny Nook, National Museum Art Gallery, Singapore
Urban Art, National Museum Art Gallery, Singapore
- 1988 Break, Orchard Point Art Gallery, Singapore
Australian Bicentennial Art Exhibition, National Museum Art Gallery, Singapore

SELECTED CORPORATE & PUBLIC COLLECTIONS/ COMMISSIONS

Singapore Art Museum | Australian High Commission, Singapore
| Ministry of Information & the Arts, Singapore | Changi Airport, Singapore | Meteorological Services, Singapore | Singapore Armed Forces Reservist Association | Republic of Singapore Navy | Takahsi Coporation, Osaka | Hotel Royal Peacock, Singapore | Ernst & Young, Singapore | Film Partners, Australia | Fine Arts Management, Singapore | Ban Hin Lee Bank Berhad, Singapore | Art Forum, Singapore



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