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CRAFT - 31 Flinders Lane Melbourne
Gallery Three
1 – 31 August 2013
Part of the Craft Cubed Festival - *A Better Blueprint*

List of Works:

Therese Keogh

Table re-structure for development of ceramic vestige, 2013
Fine milled ball clay (Axedale Clays/Claypro), plaster, screw (partially melted in firing)

Justine Makdessi

Crux, 2013
Installation

Lachlan Petras

Assembly, 2013
Animation on HTC monitor
Pencil drawing on masonite board
Black PLA 3D print
Digital poster print and Ford Mustang GTA 1967

Curator: Spiros Panigirakis

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Regardless of our understanding of our respective roles as cultural producers and consumers – we are meeting within an institutional context called Craft in a festival focusing on design.[1] This is both our physical locale and our discursive site.

As an artist how I distinguish between art, craft and design is with a degree of ambivalence. How we arbitrarily (at times) distinguish between these cultural fields and forms is important as it tells us a bit about how we value different technical roles, social milieus and objects. These distinctions are unimportant if we consider or at least humour the rhetoric that all cultural forms rely on a critical equivalency – flattening out the cultural terrain that considers a comic magazine, an artwork in a gallery, fashion design and a salad bowl in the same breath.[2] It is within this ambivalence and the critique of institutional boundaries that this exhibition is produced. I am using the discourse that is central to the tradition that distinguishes between fields cautiously.

It was critical writing practices in the 19th century associated primarily with paintings and painters that left craft and design to as Paul Greenhalgh notes "struggle to maintain a place in intellectual life at exactly the time when intellectual life was being classified and consolidated in museums, academies and universities."[3] It was at this point however that grand museums for the craft and design were establish so they too could create their own divisions between say prestigious porcelain and everyday earthenware. In the proceeding decades and century there were of course attempts to fuse the fields' more utopian ideals. Anna Rowland notes, that the Arts and Crafts Movement endeavoured to use 'applied arts and craft to engender "dignity in labour, humanity, healing and wholeness," while Walter Gropius, the first director of the Bauhaus school used the concept of 'Gesamtkunstwerk' to articulate his vision of art, design and life, "as a plea for unity, collaboration, wholeness and reintegration."[4] But these examples that resist a divisive distinction between the fields arguably played a pivotal role in the development of the design field and were

less influential on the development of the autonomous Modern artwork.[5] Although it must be said that these concerns reverberate with a familial semblance to more recent art practices of the last two decades that bring together an interest in installation, design and social relations.[6]

The distinctions between the creative fields hinge on the privileging of the conceptual value of art over a presumed deficiency in decorative, useful, industrial, applied or ornamental arts. Peter Dormer notes in regards to the split between art and craft and the reductive binaries that ensue, "has led to the separation of 'having ideas' from 'making objects'... It has also led to the idea that there exists some sort of mental attribute known as creativity that precedes or can be divorced from a knowledge of how to make things."[7] While this might seem like a redundant query in 2013 – there is still arguably a resistance and/or prejudice to understanding a broad scope of creative production as a varied constitution of effects, procedures and outcomes. Attributing a conceptual value only to art is not only historically enculturated but also arguably a myopic perspective on the arts. A reappraisal of Marcel Duchamp's *Green Box* (1934) and *Manual of Instructions* (1946-1966) not only affirms the tried and tested readings regarding the resistance to aesthetic paradigms, chance, the mechanistic, the found and activated spectatorship but also a considered approach to materials, surfaces and finishes – to crafting.

Taking a different perspective on the art and craft confluence is the unquestioning rarefaction that takes place when art obliviously deals with craft and crafting. This manifests as David Geers notes as a revisiting of once anti-aesthetic and critical measures of the avant-garde to an "emphasis on labour and process as index of aesthetic (and monetary) value."[8] He continues to note that these "returns mobilise the rhetoric of craft as essential to tradition..." rather than the critical and social dimensions of the initial gestures.[9] Of course not all engagements with craft in the field of art empty its material dimensions of critical value. Artists over the last 40 years have reaffirmed various virtues of craft – the vernacular, the decorative and the domestic - highlighting the knowledge and narratives that were excluded when white male hegemonic cultures created systems of legitimation for our museums. It is historically curious then when an artist who fought part of that critical battle within her own art uses that authority to differentiate art's co-option of craft and craft in its own right. Elissa Auther notes that when Louise Bourgeois reviewed Wall Hangings a MOMA exhibition for the magazine Craft Horizons in 1969 she noted that the artists "rarely liberate themselves from decoration."[10] While craft is not necessarily synonymous with the practices of the decorative – Bourgeois contended that these fiber and tapestry practices were on

1. The *Craft Cubed* 2013 festival theme - *A Better Blueprint* - explores the intersections between craft and design.

2. This is not a validation of any hierarchical distinction of fields and forms but an acknowledgement that there is an untested acceptance that artists don't let "craft get in the way" regardless of the material and technical outcome of the artwork.

3. Paul Greenhalgh, "The History of Craft." In *The Culture of Craft Status and Future,* ed. P.Dormer, (New York: Manchester University Press, 1997) 28; Pierre Bourdieu explored the key role writing played in creating an autonomous context for the avant-garde but at the same time explored its fraught dependence. He notes: "Manet and all the Impressionists after him repudiate all obligation, not only to serve, but also to say something - so much so that in time, to take their enterprise of liberation to the limit, they will have to liberate themselves from the writer, since a writer, as Pissarro says of Huysmans, *'judges as a* littérateur *and most of the time sees only the subject matter.'* Even when, as with Zola, they defend them by affirming the specificity of the pictorial, the writers are, for the painters, alienating liberators. And even more so since, with the end of the academic monopoly on consecration, these taste makers become artist makers and, by their discourse, are in a position to make a work of art as such. Moreover, barely liberated from the Academic institution, the painters - Pissarro and Gauguin first of all - have to achieve their freedom from the littérateur who use the support of their work (as in the good old days of academic criticism) to exploit their taste and their sensibility, going as far as to superimpose or substitute their own commentary." Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Stanford University Press, 1992), 138.

4. Anna Rowland, *Bauhaus Source Book* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1990), 10-11.

5. A pertinent ink to this discourse might be the proto-installation tendencies found in El Lissitzky's *Proun Room* (1923). El Lissitzky's links to Soviet Constructivist ideological doctrine regarding the social use of art via the notion of "techtonics" can be discerned when he notes: 'Space is not there for the eye only: it is not a picture; one wants to live in it ... We reject space as a painted coffin for our living bodies." El Lissitzky, El Lissitzky - 1890-I941: *Architect, Painter, Photographer, Typographer* (Eindhoven: Municipal Van Abbemuseum, 1990), 36. In Claire Bishop, *Installation Art: A Critical History* (London: Tate, 2005), 81.

6. This is clearly evident in the art practices of Jorge Pardo, Andrea Zittel, Tobias Rehberger and more locally Fiona Abicare and Scott Mitchell.

7. Peter Dormer, "The Status of Craft" in *The Culture of Craft Status and Future,* ed. Peter Dormer (New York: Manchester University Press, 1997) 18.

8. David Geers, "Neo-Modern." *October* 139 (Winter 2012): 12.

9. Ibid.

10. Elissa Auther, "Introduction: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft." In *String, Felt, Thread: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft in American Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), xi.

a conceptual basis "less demanding" and more "delightful" perpetuating a hierarchy of abstractive strategies that demotes the pattern to a diminished critical position.[11] It is then interesting to not only look at Bourgeois' late wall-hangings that utilise tapestry and pattern but the profusion of weaving, knitting, crochet, glass-blowing, woodwork and stain glass in more recent contemporary art that might embed a critical dimension to the décor-turned-art but it might also not.[12]

The multiple rifts that emerged between what we now consider art, design and craft between the twelfth and nineteenth century are not redundant to a contemporary context that approaches the consideration of cultural production with a certain fluidity.[13] These issues are broader and more historically contingent than the scope of this exhibition and catalogue essay allows.
So whilst the field of craft is part of the sited and ideological context of the curatorial statement—I can only commit to a partial response to the predicament of curating three self-identifying artists in a gallery that focuses on craft and design. There is a tendency in the curatorial to encapsulate an issue; draw common threads through divergent practices; or align the project to a theory or narrative. raft resists these tendencies in order for the audience to not only engage in the autonomy of the three respective artworks by Therese Keogh, Justine Makdessi and Lachlan Petras but to also to find idiosyncratic relationships between the projects. There are of course concerns that are sympathetic to all creative production – process, technology and hierarchical modes of legitimation that I will use to frame the artists' work. And while the megalomaniacal part of me wants to assert why these artists don't make craft or on the flip side align the projects to craft and design—this can only be reductive measure and prone to an array of exceptions, over-simplifications and inconsistencies. Like art – we can find craft and crafting almost anywhere.
It was with these mixed feelings that I deleted the capital C from Craft but retained part of the field's nomenclature—connoting the sense of the partial but also allowing for some questions in regards to the inter-disciplinary to be left unanswered. We are then of course left with a raft, which I can only assure that in this case won't be saving anyone.

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11. Ibid., xii

12. Judy Chicago's use of craft in the *Dinner Party* (1979) was an explicitly critical gesture but Louise Bourgeois' Fabric Works (2002-2010) alongside a consideration of Louise Weaver, Benjamin Armstrong, Carol Bove and even the stain glass work of Gerhard Richter can elicit a mixed critical capacity.

13. Larry Shiner, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001)

Therese Keogh

The field of craft privileges a myriad of technical processes. Contemporary art practices co-opt from these craft strategies regardless and in spite of the historical rifts of the past. How is art generated out of a process-driven enterprise different from the craft that engages in material experimentation? The simple answer relies on the consideration of the field's boundary and purpose of the enquiry. The distance between the discourses surrounding the aesthetic deliberations of the 18th century and the dematerialised art object of the post-1968 period are not as incongruent as they first appear. Both rely on distinguishing the social constitution of the material process and its outcome to notions of play.

For Immanuel Kant the relatively newly coined term *Fine Art* privileged disinterested play and pleasure whilst craft (or *handwerk*) was considered a labour connected to a monetary value.[14] As Larry Shiner notes "by making disinterestedness the key to the universality of aesthetic judgment, Kant distinguishes the autonomy of aesthetic experience not only from ordinary pleasure of sense or utility but also from science and morality."[15] This framing of autonomous artistic practice (or "purposiveness without a purpose") is in part at odds with a critical aesthetic practice connected to social world it is placed in.[16] So whilst you can associate the process-driven art from the post 1960s period as a type of material play free from social implications—it would be inaccurate to do so. The artist's working process was understood as part of the broader social world. For Robert Morris, the focus on art's process was not only a record of "mutable stuff which need not arrive at the point of being finalised" but of the forms of "behaviour aimed at testing the limits and possibilities involved in that particular interaction between one's actions and the materials of the environment."[17] In *Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object*… Lucy Lippard describes Morris's *Aluminium, Asphalt, Clay, Copper, Felt, Glass, Lead Nickel, Rubber, Stainless, Thread, Zinc* (1969) as a process driven work that "underwent drastic changes during the show, but the results were less important to the artist than the fact of changes and his three-week commitment to continue the changes."[18] Anti-form, scatter, happenings, and Fluxus made an audience aware of the art-work's making and that this making was part of artist's work and therefore subjective life. This did not necessarily result in audiences engaging explicitly with sociability (or 'experience' as it was otherwise known) but with the social being represented as part of art's "submerged iceberg."[19]

This submerged iceberg in relation to Keogh's project relies on I as the curator imposing a provisional work-bench that was constructed to assist Keogh's process, and to develop and form her ceramic work for the exhibition. This built construction would be a material boundary that would be part of the artist's process or brief—in lieu of curatorial premise that might feel like a theme. A bench to knead and work clay requires a plaster top or what is called a plaster wedge. Whilst I had very limited experience with plaster, I thought casting a shallow rectilinear bed to sit on top of the bench would be easy enough to make. I had observed sculpture technicians demonstrate rudimentary techniques for mixing plaster to students on numerous occasions. While making the plaster wedge and acknowledging that some practical conventions needed to be followed there was a simultaneous trivialising of the technical competencies required to meet those conventions on my part. I was somehow reveling in the dysfunctional approaches that were informed by part-knowledge, hearsay and intuition. After the second unsuccessful pour and the resultant mess that this produced in the studio, it was time to turn this bench which was meant to be a bit-part technical support in Keogh's overall project into a functional player. At this point it felt like a one-sided collaboration that echoed the ephemeral detritus of post 1960s experimental practice.

The initial role of the work-bench was that it would assist in the processing of the clay – removing all the excess moisture – turning something like sludge into something more workable. Keogh is not a ceramicist. The clay is a literal materialisation of her commitment to site - to landscape and the anthropological role clay has played in the development of culture and the material metamorphosis of forms. The work-bench would become a relay point in a project that would engage field-work based in the rural geological and geographical contexts of Central Victoria. While Keogh's practice emerges out of site-based research, the forms generated out of these investigations are not grounded and fixed to these locales as per the tradition of site-specificity.[20] As part of Keogh's process the data collected in fieldwork is translated across sites—via the studio— to the sited discursivity of the gallery context. In this project these concerns manifest by collecting milled clay from a clay pit in a town called Axedale to process on the work-bench to then be fired in a pit kiln that was constructed nineteen kilometers away at a farm just North-West of Maldon. The work-bench was used as a type of jig-turned-inverse-mold to help determine the form of the ceramic. The bench, a brief of sorts is buried and burnt from within the fired ceramic forms. To assign the notion of play to what is an uncompromising and disciplined approach to process and site is not to frame Keogh's methodology, but to a finished outcome that is unknown and completely at odds with both the programmatic quality of the work-bench and past regimes of aesthetic discernment.

14. Larry Shiner, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 146.

15. Ibid., 147.

16. The Kantian aesthetic paradigm is a little more complicated than this crude generalisation suggests. For Kant there is in fact an indirect link from the aesthetic to the moral. As Shiner notes "Kant does claim a highly indirect connection between the aesthetic and morality: beauty is a symbol of morality since both aesthetic and moral judgments are similarly free of external rules, and the sublime—our aesthetic pleasure in the midst of nature's overpowering force—reveals our dignity as rational-moral beings. An aesthetic experience of beauty or the sublime does not teach us particular moral lessons but makes us aware of our freedoms as moral agents." Shiner, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History,* 146. In Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), 225-30.

17. Robert Morris, "Some Notes on the Phenomenology of Making: The Search for the Motivated," in *Continuous Project Altered Daily: The Writings of Robert Morris* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993), 73.

18. Lucy Lippard, *Six years: The Dematerialisation of the Art object From 1966 to 1972 ...* ed. Lucy Lippard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 93.

19. Morris, "Some Notes on the Phenomenology of Making: The Search for the Motivated," 73.

20. Miwon Kwon's notion of a discursive site challenges the 'specific' in the now historical term 'site specificity.' Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, 2002); James Meyer's 'functional site' offers a similar account; James Meyer, "The Functional Site: or The Transformation of Site-Specificity," in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art,* ed. Erika Suderburg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 35.
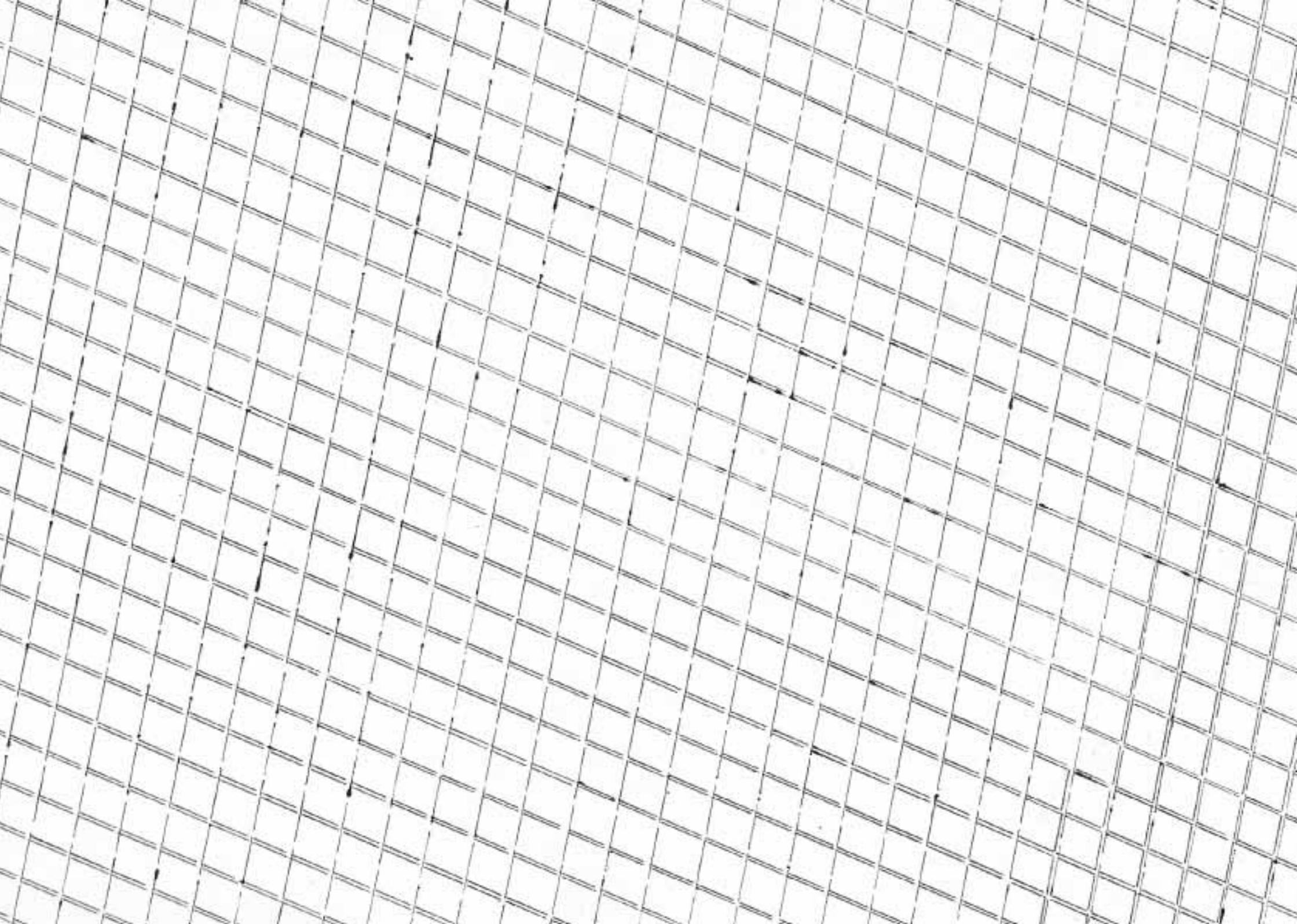
Lachlan Petras

A pencil is a piece of technology. The pencil is an extension of the hand's mark making potential. It sits between an idea and its realisation as a pencil drawing.[21] This perspective focuses more on the drawing as a process and action that emanates out from the body rather than an object or material support. The technology in this regard is a mediating force that performs a piece of culture or knowledge.[22] The ability for technology to disseminate knowledge and extract value has always been part of human life and the human body with or without the pencil as the said instrument.[23] And whilst technology or the technical play into the hands of the dominant paradigm as tools of advancement and violence, they also play a crucial role in critique and dissent.[24] The digital networks used within the Arab Spring is a recent example of this—the historical avant-garde's incorporation of technology is another, as they attempted to as Andreas Huysen notes, "liberate technology from its instrumental aspects and thus undermine the bourgeois notion of progress and art as natural or autonomous."[25] One hundred years on, the implications for cultural practices that knowingly utilise technology, can't help but comment on the plastic possibilities for art, its distribution and the social structures that support it.

Lachlan Petras is engaged in the link between technology, instrumentalisation and the ideal within a context that is close to home and familiar. For *raft* he has developed a complex abstract form that has been mediated across space and material processes. As an abstract form – the starburst – relies on various technical systems to be realised and drawn. In the drawn realm there is a suggestion of the infinite, an impossible state to articulate in actuality, Petras therefore presents these ideas through a series of codes and some bits and pieces. The first system is an understanding of space that is gridded within a Cartesian rationale evidenced in the pencil drawing. This gridded plane suggests a planometric view, a perspective that privileges the all knowing from above. This hand drawn sketch is a springboard to the digitised and virtual mediation of the wire-form system of representation that is produced in the video fly-through. This application is an amplified efficiency and provides a simultaneous understanding of the form in all its potential views. At times it shows an audience so much detail in the tangle of vector-based lines that the starburst disappears into the abstract ether, belying the drawing's functional role in the production of a physical model. The second system utilises the 3-D printer. Not so much a crafted virtuosity but a process that fixes the digital – the abstract realm of data - into the specificity of the sculptural object.[26] The starburst carries an echo of the digital. Traces of the mechanical reproduction are played out in the glitches made material in the surface textures of the printed object. This form-as-model sits alongside other prescient realisations of 3-D printing: as a potential for human advancement; a new version of counter cultural democracy; the anti-authorial possibilities of open source systems; the potential menace of the printed gun; to the interim banality of the printed replacement of a fridge component.

The infinite capacity evoked by the starburst is contextualised in a space that resists the rational, linear, serial presentation and manufacture of the minimalist object in the 1960s.[27] For Petras the project's mediation doesn't expand through one repeatable and reduced form, as it also uses the logic of dispersal that allows for the random and the everyday. In Petras' project there is an understanding of the object as a representation of a vast system of interconnected decisions, images, consumptions, disputes, designs, thoughts, processes, people and places coming together and apart to compose a thing—like a geometric abstraction—or a car.[28] This is not the rarefied space of the ideal cube.

The project resonates with the aforementioned social context of the functional but paradoxically sits in a virtual space closed off from this social complication. Petras' art is in flux between the magnitude of the abstract, to the familial detail that sits modestly alongside it: the gallery's actual workshop and store room plays host to the epic perspectives of the digital fly-through; the 3-D print of his autonomous form is mute to the automobile industry that manufactures culture, capital and social status; the *Ford Mustang* out the front of the gallery being used as an object in his model of the city where Petras rewrites the grid that it's parked in.

21. Rancière notes that the word medium translates to "as that which holds between: between an idea and its realisation, between a thing and its reproduction. The medium thus appears as an intermediary, as the means to an end or the agent of an operation." Jacques Rancière, "What Medium can Mean." *Parhesia* 11 (2011) 35.

22. The ancient Greek etymology of *techné* means neither art or craft but a knowledge made in a type of production.

23. For Bernard Stiegler the human life is resolutely linked to the technical, which he differentiates from technology as it has a scientific imperative. Stiegler notes: *"For to make use of his hands, no longer to have paws, is to manipulate—and what hands manipulate are tools and instruments. The hand is the hand only insofar as it allows access to art, to artifice, and to tekhné. The foot is these two feet of the human, this walking and this approach only insofar as, carrying the body's weight, it frees the hand for its destiny as hand, for the manipulative possibility, as well as for a new relation between hand and face, a relation which will be that of speech and gesture."* Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time I: The Fault of Epimetheus* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998) 113.

24. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (London: Allen Lane, 1973); Andreas Huyssen, "The Hidden Dialectic: Avant-garde – Technology – Mass Culture." In *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Indiana: University Press, 1986)

25. Ibid.

26. Pamela Lee, "Media Specificities." *Artforum International* 51, no. 1: 402.

27. Sol Le Witt's elaboration of digital systems to form complex arrangements of forms and the all-consuming expansive built qualities of his late installations are an exception to this statement.

28. Bruno Latour uses the murals of Diego Rivera to highlight what is absent from a strictly material understanding of a Ford automobile - he notes, "every object was first a project. The problem is that these assemblages have no assembly to represent them; this is the reason that "technology" can look like a dull, mechanical, autonomous force that exerts power without anyone actually holding the controls….there is not a single technology around which…you do not find a swarm of different people assembled to bring it into existence." Bruno Latour, "Which Assembly for Those Assemblages?" in *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*, eds. Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005), 503.

Justine Makdessi

The vernacular works against professionalism, specialisation, authorship or any sense of the academic. Paul Greenhalgh notes "real people through the millennia have unconsciously generated styles and techniques based on local values and economic necessity. People make things and entertain themselves in ethnic groupings – they are capable of cultural creativity in the absence of universities, art schools and museums."[29] There are two issues with this statement. The first equates professional cultural production as a role disconnected from the everyday real world. The second is that creative production is "unconsciously generated" and somehow outside of knowledge production. But Greenhalgh continues to problematically frame the vernacular by equating it to notions of authenticity. He notes:

> "The vernacular refers to the cultural produce of a community, the things collectively made, spoken and performed. It is as close to nature as culture can get the unselfconscious and collective products of a social group, unpolluted by outside influence. It carries then mystique of being the authentic voice of society."[30]

In this focus on particular ethnic or communal tendencies there is a danger of equating the vernacular with notions of authenticity. What happens however when we create essential traits for belonging to a cultural group – this either becomes a totem of empowerment, reductive measure or an exclusionary force. Justine Makdessi is interested in interrogating this fraught terrain, not via literal representation of the politics but by creating spaces that evoke in an abstract capacity how power is distributed in systems that legitimate subjects and self. This often requires the artist to analyse the abstract field of power, knowledge and ideology in relation to the spatial practices that incorporate modes of understanding, perception and action.[31] So while this is an abstract space it is also experiential and psychological. The body is implicated. Makdessi's projects demand an audience to grapple with how they navigate space – independently – collectively - differentially. How does one wedge their claim in this space? What is an ordinary dialect anyway? Who defines it?

Richard Serra's practice is no stranger to wedging claims for territory. The force he inflicts on his chosen sites privilege the autonomy of his sculptural production. There is an uncompromising relationship to how the spectator's body relates to the material weight, scale and structure of his work. The body is diminished by the sculpture's autonomous quality – an almost arbitrary component to the sheets of steel that traverse through and up site. Serra's *Hand Catching Lead* (1968) is a short film that depicts a blackened hand – open and closed – methodically clenching and grasping for sheets of falling lead. Like his list of verbs, the film can be seen as a coda for artistic practice. The artist's hand a typical and questionable site of authenticity, sometimes catches the lead, holds it for a moment but quickly discards it. The graphic and reductive framing

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29. Paul Greenhalgh, "The History of Craft." In *The Culture of Craft Status and Future,* ed. P.Dormer, (New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 32.

30. Ibid., 31.

31. In *The Production of Space* Henri Lefebvre explores how social relationships are inherent to the production of space. Lefebvre divides space into a three key and interrelated fields that are: the 'representations of space' which involve the abstract field of power, knowledge and ideology; the 'space of representation' which involves the local and emotive field of everyday experience of inhabitants; and 'spatial practices' which incorporate modes of understanding, perception and action. Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Cambridge, 1991), 33-42.

of the artist's arm is both "real" document of action and analogy for a psychological context. The lead sheets responds repeatedly in different ways to gravity as random pathways are created across the film's field of vision. The hand – a signpost for an artistic subject is systematic in its approach to the exercise but also compromised by the reaction time required to successfully catch the lead. There is a failure found in this film not usually activated by his balancing tonnes of metal.

The door is open. An opportunity is predictably created via a vantage point through the spine of the gallery. We understand in particular how the various material structures facilitate the management of the white cube. As the door opens, an enclosed space is created behind it. This is the wedge of Makdessi's work. Between the door, the hinge and the wall another opportunity emerges that is not usually privileged by the threshold of the doorway. This opportunity – an opening and a closure - relies on how we understand the machination of the door and its potential for activating space. Makdessi re-orientates the hierarchy produced by the doorway, and questions the mode of legitimation for this once diminished architectural space. This is a tactical decision on Makdessi's part. The door creates an ocular depth through a space busy with decisions, structure, storage and mess. It is difficult to compete with this seemingly ordinary context that is part of the pedestrian reason for the modernist white cube. Makdessi turns her back on this field of vision – creating a wedge that plays host to an aural soundtrack that puts an axe through our habitual blindspots.

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