





Between Memory and Trace

RUTH EWAN
MADDIE LEACH
LUKE WILLIS THOMPSON

Curated by Bruce E. Phillips



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Foreword

James McCarthy, Executive Director

Similar to the artworks exhibited, this publication is self-consciously both complete and incomplete as a recollection in itself. We have attempted a careful balance of images and text to give the reader a strong sense of *Between memory and trace* and reflect the depth of the artists' research underpinning the work. It is important to keep in mind that this catalogue is an echo of the exhibition experience itself. While it encapsulates the artists' work and the curator's context well it does not account for the rich responses and conversations that the show triggered for visitors. For example, Te Tuhi's full-time arts educator Jeremy Leatinu'u found that people of all ages responded to the artworks with their own memories of people and places. This wealth of the public's memories cannot be recorded in this publication but will remain their own private memorials.

Te Tuhi is an organisation that aspires to produce exhibitions in a close working relationship with the artist. It was a great honour and pleasure to work with artists Ruth Ewan, Maddie Leach and Luke Willis Thompson. With Ruth and Maddie it was an opportunity to significantly re-contextualise their existing works at Te Tuhi. It was important that their works were not treated like readymades. Rather these artworks gained a new life as part of Bruce E. Phillip's curatorial framework – to be effectively and respectfully integrated into our space and to those who were likely to encounter them.

With Ruth's work *Them that plants them is soon forgotten* the cultivation of Paul Robeson tomato plants was a successful collaboration of the artist's sensibilities and Te Tuhi's technical and horticultural resolve. All of the staff enjoyed assisting with gardening, especially on sunny Friday afternoons. I held several meetings while picking laterals in the sun and felt like I was in some strange Antipodean remake of *The Godfather*. I would like to thank Ruth and also RobTuffnell Gallery in London, who made it possible to also exhibit the accompanying work *The New Idealism* and archival material that provided much insight into Robeson's life. With Maddie's work *Evening Echo* there were many discussions about how to represent a site-specific work based in Ireland in a gallery context in New Zealand. The resulting selection of constituent material supporting *Evening Echo* was also greatly added to by the National Sculpture Factory in Cork who arranged for a live video feed to witness the second instance of the lamp being lit.

Extra special mention does need to go to Luke for producing a remarkable new work for the exhibition. This work was an important piece for Te Tuhi because of its significance to a hotly debated incident in South Auckland. During his well-attended artist's talk Luke profoundly articulated the nuances of the work as both a preserved item of overlooked urban history and as an action that has made very real physical changes to the neighbourhood of Manurewa. Since Te Tuhi is a merging point for many communities from all over Auckland, the conflicting opinions on this tragic incident were often debated and discussed in front of Luke's work. I would like to thank Shannon Te Ao for his essay and for bringing this project to the attention of Bruce around two years ago which resulted in laying down the core concepts for the exhibition. Shannon together with Hopkinson Mossman gallery and the technical assistance of Te Tuhi's Guy Nicoll should also be thanked for their guidance and assistance to Luke in realising this work. Following Te Tuhi's commissioning of this piece it was then exhibited as part of the 5th Auckland Triennial, curated by Hou Hanru and opened in May 2013. Its inclusion in the Triennial soon after the showing at Te Tuhi is a testament to the potency and importance of the work – I am immensely pleased that Te Tuhi could assist in making it a reality.

My sincere thanks to Auckland Council and the Contemporary Art Foundation for their continuing support of Te Tuhi to provide innovative exhibitions. Te Tuhi strives to contribute a programme that melds internationally significant works alongside the local to help position Auckland's place in the global artistic community.

Finally a sincere thank you to our small but highly dedicated and fearless team here at Te Tuhi, with whom I have the pleasure of working.

Introduction

Bruce E. Phillips

¹ Jorge Luis Borges. 'In Memoriam A. R.' in *Dream Tigers*. Texas: University of Texas Press, 1964. 10th ed 2004. p.75.

In his poem 'In Memoriam: A. R.', Jorge Luis Borges writes, 'man's memory shapes its own Eden within'.¹ In this passage Borges suggests that memory functions selectively by editing the past within the mind. Herein lies a great contradiction of memory: that to remember, something must be edited out and forgotten. When this process of selective remembrance is expanded from an individual to the collective, the ramifications are escalated to the erasure of people and the history of their existence.

Between memory and trace grouped together three projects that examine this contradictory process of public memorialisation. The three projects were unified by conceptual practices that employ strategies of intervention and exchange to elicit varying aspects of erasure or precariousness in relation to the memorial. By doing so, the artists resist the political rhetoric and nation-building narratives commonly evident in forms of civic remembrance.

Working with the ephemeral trace of a person's life was for Ruth Ewan an opportunity to pay tribute to a politically silenced figure. Ewan memorialises the notable singer, actor, athlete and activist Paul Robeson (1898–1976) in two works. Robeson became a target of the U.S. government during the McCarthy era 'witch hunts', in an operation that attempted to silence his political and cultural prominence. In the work *Them that plants them is soon forgotten*, Ewan reflected upon this attempted erasure by growing over 200 'Paul Robeson' heirloom tomato plants in the Te Tuhi courtyard. As the plants matured, gallery visitors were able to enact a form of commemoration by eating the tomatoes. Within the gallery, Ewan also installed *The New Idealism* an grid of empty record sleeves carrying the indentation of Robeson's recordings. This fragile material memory stood as a potent reminder of the attempted deletion of Robeson's music from cultural history and raises questions as to the political role of artists within society.

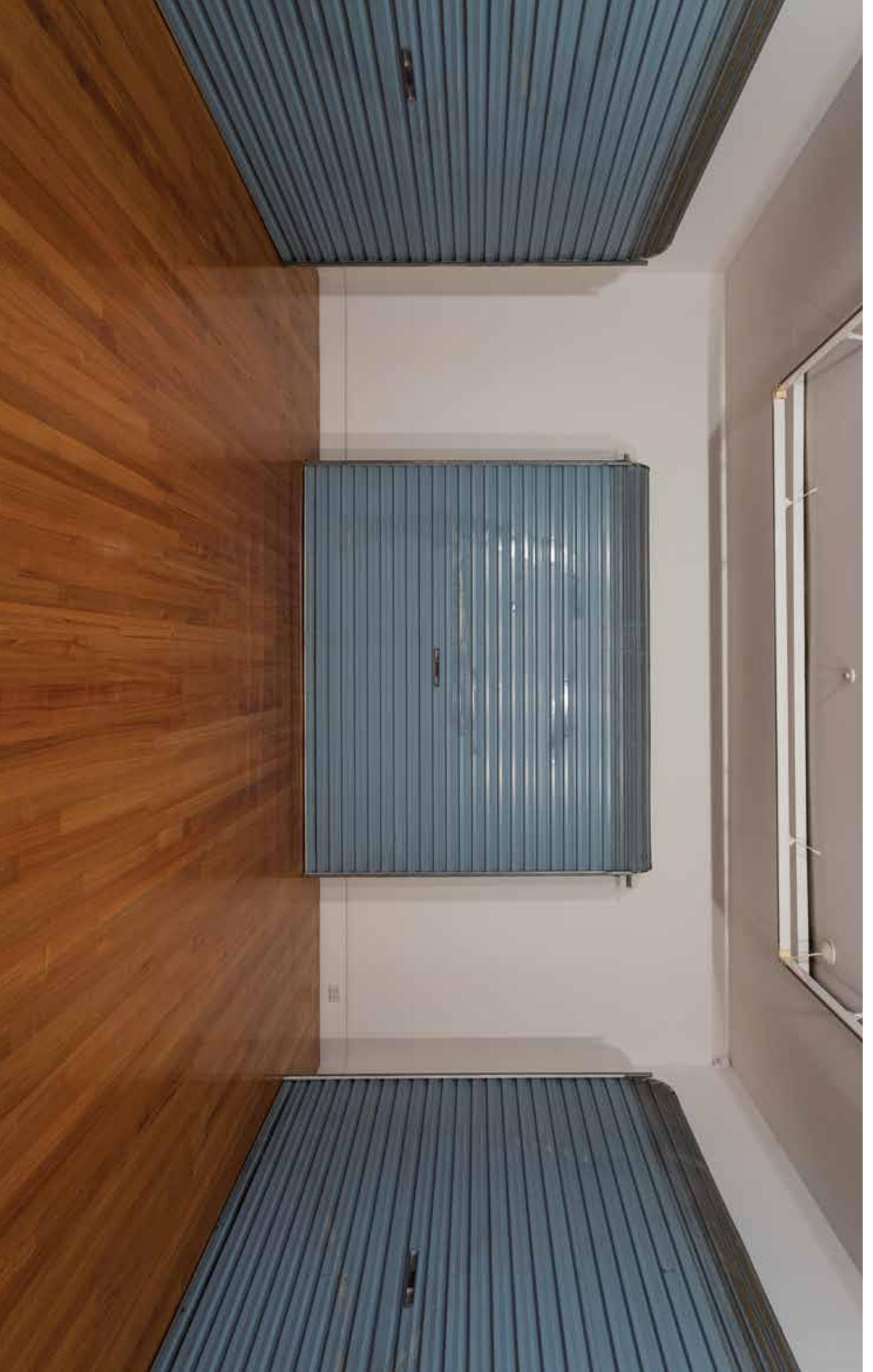
Responding to the site of Shalom Park in Cork, Ireland, Maddie Leach's work *Evening Echo* questions permanence in relation to collective remembrance. Shalom Park was opened in 1989 and its name marks a connection to Cork's dwindling Jewish community who have lived in the surrounding area since the 19th Century. The park's opening ceremony included the illumination of a gas lamp – a gesture acknowledging the gifting of the land by the

Cork Gas Company. After falling into disrepair for some years, the park was again 'upgraded' in 2003 and included a new suite of six electrically powered lamps. In 2011, Leach installed three additional matching lamps, completing a sequence of nine to correlate with the number of candles on the Hanukkah candelabrum. Linking a conceptual framework to Jewish tradition and a contract partnership with Cork City Council, Leach's work proposes that for the next 50 years the ninth lamp be lit for only 30 minutes once a year, at sunset, on the last night of Hanukkah. Framed by a quiet, cyclical call to permanence, the public observance of this fleeting annual occasion remains uncertain. The work's continued relevance is partially contingent on future communities in Cork to remember and enact remembrance. *Evening Echo* featured in *Between memory and trace* through documentation, artefacts and a live video event at dawn on 16 December, 2012 that gave viewers in Auckland the opportunity to witness the second occurrence of lighting the ninth lamp in Cork.

In a new work commissioned by Te Tuhi, Luke Willis Thompson attained and erased a site of trauma in Manurewa, Auckland. In the early hours of 26 January 2008, teenager Pihema Cameron was tragically stabbed to death by homeowner Bruce Emery. The incident occurred after Emery caught Cameron and his cousin tagging his three prominent street-facing garage doors. After confronting the pair, Emery gave chase with a knife and stabbed Cameron in a nearby cul-de-sac. While the garage doors were not the site of the killing, they became closely associated with the act of the 'tagging' in news reports. Locally the doors and the trace left by the tagging became a tangible marker of the death from which to retell and remember the story. For Thompson's contribution to *Between memory and trace*, these same doors were removed, replaced and installed at Te Tuhi. Through this act of exchange, Thompson negotiated with the homeowner to fast-track building renovations so his garage will no longer look the same from the street and thereby erase all visual association to the incident.

All three projects explore the potential of the ephemeral and everyday as profound but overlooked vestiges of life. While the works ultimately memorialise their subject, they also simultaneously resist the convenient simplicity of conventional civic remembrance. Through this resistance, the artists critically question collective memory and the trace that is consciously created in its wake.





Street level mediation: a response to the work of Luke Willis Thompson

Shannon Te Ao

The installation is simple. Consisting of only three found garage doors. Without apparent fuss, each door is hung separately on a wall of its own, occupying three out of the four relatively small gallery walls. The presentation is matter of fact, focused on the clear and uncluttered display of the objects at hand. Essentially, it is the relationship between the *object* and the *hand* that lies at the crux of this new work by Auckland-based artist Luke Willis Thompson. Included as part of the exhibition *Between memory and trace* held at Te Tuhi in Auckland, the garage doors, which comprise the focus of the installation, do very little to explain their origin or the reasoning behind their being here. They tell us very little of their history and nothing of the way in which their objecthood has coincided with the deeply tragic and deeply personal.

Within the gallery space the garage doors relate to the body more or less as they would if they remained *in situ*. Although, within this context they resemble something in between industrially inspired minimalist sculpture and hard-edged, abstract painting. The viewer faces them front-on as one would a conventional painting and, like many paintings, closer inspection of the surface eventually reveals more for the eager or persistent. The surfaces of the doors begin to hint at their age. Their colour faded and suggestive of an eighties or nineties build, certainly nothing recent. Other blemishes – the kind that you would expect to find on a garage door like small dings, scuffs and scratches – would seem to support this. These doors are weathered in a way that cannot be simulated, only gained through sustained exposure to the elements.

Under the gallery lighting what appear to be large single letters painted on each of the doors are visible. The letters have been ‘painted’ out or over at some stage although, because of either the mismatching of the touch-up paint or the inherent differences of the particular paint used underneath, each trace remains visible. The letters begin to expose themselves – a *B* and an *E?* – the third might be a *D*

or *P*? Simple enough in style, at this scale, the underlying letters describe broad, sweeping mark-making. They embody a ‘fluid’ style recognisable as that used in tagging and graffiti. An intuitive, performative script and, as the culture that lies behind the tradition would prescribe, one that is informed by repetition and often adrenaline, carried out under tenuous terms.

On 26 January 2008, Pihema Cameron was killed during a confrontation, which occurred when he and his cousin were found tagging the garage doors of the property of South Auckland resident Bruce Emery. Emery was later convicted of manslaughter over the death of the teenager. Throughout the media coverage of the case, trial and eventual sentencing of Emery, much of the public dialogue around the event focused on the aggressive nature of Emery’s [re]action upon confronting Cameron and his cousin. It was reported that after Emery initially apprehended the pair, he chased them approximately 300 metres down the road armed with knife.¹ More anger surfaced in response to the apparent disproportionate sentencing of Emery after his conviction. Emery was sentenced to four years and three months imprisonment for manslaughter. The starting point for sentencing of a homicide with a knife is usually five and a half to six years but Justice Hugh Williams was quoted as taking into consideration factors such as Emery’s ‘family standing’ – and by inference, intentionally or otherwise, Cameron’s lack of.² This fuelled claims of institutional racism from Cameron’s family and other media commentators.³ After sentencing, Cameron’s mother was quoted as saying that ‘justice had not been served’ adding that Emery would most likely be out in two years.⁴ Evidently, Emery was released after serving 11 months of his sentence.







It is clear from the long threads of commentary in response to articles from mainstream as well as independent media outlets that the public reaction to the case was divided to say the least. Each stage of the proceedings seemed to incite heated and at times polarised dialogue. Many rallied behind the Cameron family, supporting calls of injustice in particular towards Emery's sentence. Others displayed empathy for Emery, voicing frustration and anger towards 'taggers' and at times calling for his total acquittal.⁵ It would also seem that the opinions held are as diverse as their potential sources. Different articles covering the case offered variations on the information and omissions of particular facts that ultimately perpetuated ambiguity.

The fact is that, as indirect bystanders, complete and reliable understanding of all the facts, as they happened, is impossible. An immediate response or gut reaction to hearing of such an event might be to simply project anger toward Bruce Emery for his actions. Another might be to share responsibility for the outcome between both parties. In a sense, neither Cameron nor Emery could be deemed as completely faultless. It is true, Cameron and his cousin were engaged in illegal acts. Acts that qualify Cameron's eventual fate? Not at any stretch; but if the two teenage boys in question weren't doing what they were caught doing, this tragedy would never have occurred. Similarly – the same questions can be asked of Emery's actions: if he had a) never chased the two boys and b) never picked up a knife on the way, Cameron would not have lost his life. The different lines of ethical or moral thinking proposed by our partial knowledge of this event begin to trigger complex social dilemmas for the viewer. We can sympathise with both families, imagining the different kinds of turmoil and long-lasting effects felt by all those involved. We can empathise. We can appreciate the immediate tragedy that comes with the loss of life – especially at such a young age. All the more painful when considering the measure of the act in question. We can even understand our innate desire to protect one's own property. Ultimately, though, we are only really able to infer through speculation.

After the recent passing of my father's sister I attended the tangi held to lay her to rest. Only a few days before Christmas, she died in hospital due to complications from a major heart attack, which struck while she was gathering with family and friends at what would have been one of the first celebrations of the oncoming festive season. Her passing and the tangi took place after I had begun working on this piece of writing. As such, much of my time during

the three or so days of travel and ceremony were spent thinking about the death of Pihema Cameron. Upon my arrival at the tangi it occurred to me that a large number – larger than usual, if there is a usual for this kind of thing – of the mourners, my relatives and relatives of the deceased, were teenage boys. Many of whom would fit a similar description to that of Pihema Cameron.

Cameron was described by his mother and family as someone who was raised in a loving family, knew the difference between right and wrong but who had, in recent times, begun to 'lose his way'.⁶ This could quite easily serve as a typical description of the teenage boys I reacquaint myself with upon arriving at the tangi. I don't need to speculate too much on their lives outside of the marae; I know the kinds of things they get up to. Like Cameron, we might describe them as 'good boys, who occasionally get into a bit of trouble'. Across many of the threads of response during the media coverage of Cameron's death, there were plenty who were quick to remind us of the 'trouble' and bring into light the perceived negatives of Cameron's lifestyle. One blog posted links to a Bebo page which showed images of Cameron posturing and wearing 'gang colours'; unfairly insinuating that the media's portrayal of Cameron as 'innocent' was grounded on some sort of false pretenses.⁷ This kind of effort to tarnish Cameron's image after his death is disrespectful to his memory and the family members grieving his loss. Aside from this it does nothing to change the fact of his death and comes nowhere nearer to bridging the gap between the crime that Cameron committed and the level of reprimand he ultimately paid. With this in mind, I observe the young men attending this tangi based upon their present conduct and interaction over the next few days.

Like Cameron, they are of the generation and age of young male who relate to me as 'nephew' and I to them as 'uncle.' 'Cousin' would be more accurate but genealogical precision is not completely necessary. 'Uncle' and 'nephew' both serve here as useful intergenerational markers for our respective positions within the wider whanau. It has been a couple of years since I have seen most of my nephews (and younger cousins) and they have all since grown into that age – uncertain for most – where they simultaneously qualify as 'boy', 'young man' and 'men'. Over the course of the tangi there will be literally hundreds of people visiting the marae, and this scale of ceremony requires a collective effort. There are many duties to be carried out. As such, there will be many firsts asked of the young adults, both male and female, throughout the various proceedings. Most will understand already the expectation of their involvement. Some will meet this with grace and some will resume their ascendance into adulthood at the next opportunity. For the young men, their role in, for example, the preparation of the hāngī may carry more responsibility and as the 'young men'

they will no doubt be called upon to be part of the crew who will take the predawn walk across to the urupā when the time comes to prepare the grave.

Over the course of the tangi, I watch my nephews. An exercise part-observation and remembrance. This will promote a full range of reaction. From them *and* me. These boys exhibit the expected amount of bravado during the physical tasks. They are proud of their strength and energy, and work hard to demonstrate their own physicality while seeking approval from their older male peers. They also eat like it's a measure of their manhood but are still of the age where they need not worry about the excess baggage that will stay with them if they are not vigilant about what and how much they eat. They will converse in more mature ways at times and at times revert to the kinds of language usually saved for their cousins or the schoolyard. They *do* at times overstep the mark and assume a position not rightly theirs yet and are often put in place by their father or uncle if need be – these kinds of social hiccups all being part of understanding your place. The form of their bereavement has also changed, and this is something that a young man must succumb to at some stage. They have mourned before but as many of the boys here are the mokopuna and grandsons of the deceased, and as their age and life experience grow the acuity of their loss carries new resonance. This is a surprise for many but when the time comes these young men cry freely. The age where one might feel embarrassed by such open displays of emotion still lingers for some. Most, however, wear the weight of their grief as a sign of sincerity, knowledge and earned maturity.

In response to the now infamous rioting that took place in the Los Angeles district of Watts in August 1965, Black Panther Party leader Huey P. Newton wrote:

Most human behavior is learned behavior. Most things the human being learns are gained through an indirect relationship to the object. Humans do not act on instinct as lower animals do. Those things learned indirectly many times stimulate very effective responses to what might be a later direct experience.⁸

Here Newton suggests that we all learn the social standard or common convention through hypotheses that are drawn out of the experiences that occur around us. In relation to Watts, the actions of those involved in the rioting were somehow made acceptable via the perceived common agreement that it was OK to do so. He goes on: 'The first man who threw a molotov cocktail is not personally known by the masses but yet the action was respected and followed by the people.'⁹

The Watts riots were sparked by an incident of – essentially – police brutality, where local residents reacted against what they saw as ill-treatment of another local resident.¹⁰ Many viewed the riots that ensued as a tipping point to the civil rights efforts in America up until that point, and for Huey P. Newton, this was potentially also a moment that if repeated could ultimately misguide those same efforts. Although the two events happened worlds apart from each other, Watts is analogous in relation to the death of Pihema Cameron for a number of reasons. First, these are both cases where encroachment against the civil liberties of one upon the other fuelled further violence (albeit on different scales) and ended in tragedy. In Watts it started with a seemingly minor arrest over a traffic charge. In South Auckland, over a petty crime such as tagging private property. Second, each initial incident provided symbolic impetus for the public at large to voice and act upon their subjective frustrations. In the case of Watts, masses of people took to the streets destroying public and private properties. Here in Aotearoa New Zealand, after the Cameron/Emery case, the public's opinions displayed anger towards both parties involved and often used newspapers, blogs and online forums covering the case as vehicles for commentary on cultural issues which dwarfed the scale of the initial incident.

It is this *symbolic* potential that undermines any simple consideration of the garage doors of Thompson's *Untitled* (2012). As objects that embody specific functional and formal qualities – one's engagement with them may be as matter of fact and pragmatic as garage doors can be. Banal material that exists at the peripheries of a common image of suburban everyday life. Their history, however, undermines any straightforward definition of these objects as dormant. Partial knowledge of their provenance gives rise to their forensic qualities. Evidence not only of the events surrounding Pihema Cameron's death but also of the discursive aftermath that followed. Amidst all of this they pose a chain of social and cultural questioning, implicating the viewer from angles that are simultaneously political and personal. Their role in the event in question reminds us that objects and material is 'just stuff'. We *can* project meaning and we *do* project value onto these 'things' but these things are just there for us to move around. The significance of our 'lives' happens outside of the material. This is a subjective meditation for each and the next. Hypotheses will vary, as will people's positions, but we eventually understand that it is our actions dictated by our choices that can determine the real and lasting effects on our lives.

In his recent documentary, *Into the Abyss* (2012), investigating aspects of the capital punishment system in America, Werner Herzog poses a 'disclaimer' of sorts to

interviewees awaiting the death penalty. At the beginning of each of a number of frank discussions with inmates, some of whom have been convicted of what can only be described as horrific, violent crimes, Herzog calmly states, 'To talk to you does not mean I have to like you but I respect you and you *are* a human being.'¹¹ Thompson lays out a similar disclaimer through this understated display. There is no evident inference of the artist's position on the events nor is there any expectation placed upon the viewers' response. He does not steer proceedings only presents, through the doors, part of the story. Any subjective artistic response is either well disguised or completely hidden. Thompson does ask a question of the viewer but within the gallery setting, as opposed to that of the media, this is largely undertaken alone. Like Herzog, Thompson reminds us of our humanity but depicts no standard or fixed position as a marker. He merely presents us with evidence. In the end, we can only deduce via our life experience how we will react to certain situations or events. This is the dialectic model that Thompson proposes. Simultaneously undermining any innate agency of the object while demonstrating the pivotal role that a 'simple' object may play in the articulation of our decisions, our actions and, through the accumulation of these, the expression of our worldview.

1 K. Ruscoe. 'Emery Jailed for Killing Tagger'. www.stuff.co.nz/national/1399650/Emery-jailed-for-killing-tagger (accessed on 25 January 2013).

2 *ibid.*

3 T. Selwyn. 'Crown Must Appeal Emery Sentence'. tumeke.blogspot.co.nz/2009/02/crown-must-appeal-emery-sentence.html (accessed on 25 January 2013).

4 Ruscoe.

5 Selwyn. See also 'Institutional Racism'. thestandard.org.nz/institutional-racism/ (accessed on 14 January 2013); 'You can only be victim if you own a house'. archive. indymedia.org.nz/article/76597/you-can-only-be-victim-if-you-own-house.html (accessed on 14 January 2013).

6 Ruscoe.

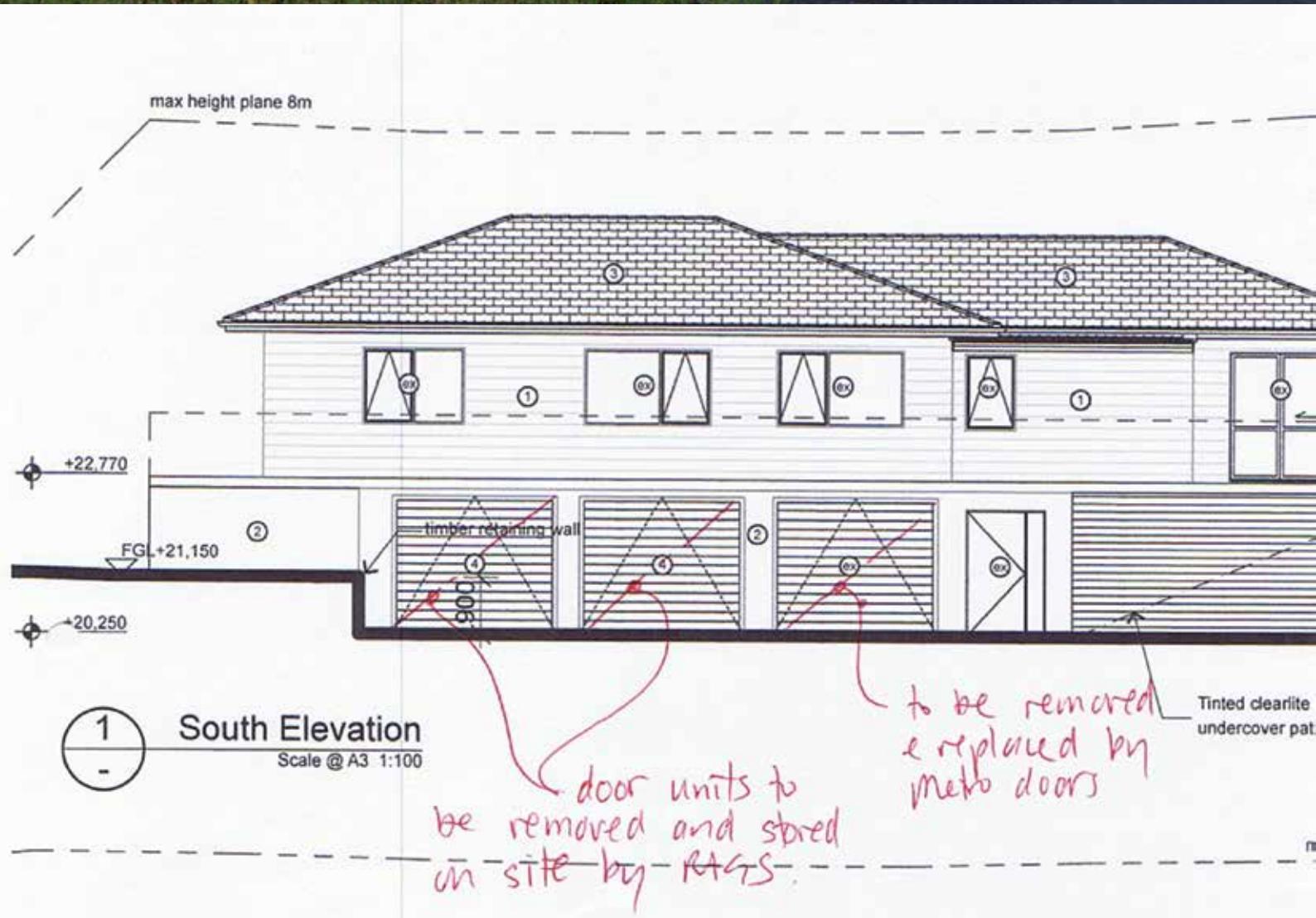
7 P. Starr. 'Patrick on Pihema'. keepingstock.blogspot.co.nz/search/label/Pihema%20Cameron (accessed on 22 January 2013).

8 H.P. Newton. 'The Correct Handling of a Revolution' in Phillip S. Foner (ed.) 'The Black Panthers Speak'. Da Capo Press, 2002. New York. p41.

9 *ibid.*

10 Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots. *Violence in the City: An end or a beginning?* Los Angeles: The Commission, 1965. Also found at www.usc.edu/libraries/archives/cityinstress/mccone/part4.html (accessed on 11 January 2013).

11 W. Herzog. *Into the Abyss*. IFC Entertainment, 2011.



An unresolved tension

Bruce E. Phillips

Memorialisation has unavoidably become a civic political act. By this I am not only referring to the ubiquitous inert obelisk, statue or bronze plaque. The act of memorialisation and its political motivation are also evident in more intangible forms including the public speech, parade, or the televised news report. Even though many such motivations might be unavoidably subconscious, fuelled by assumptions deeply engrained in the collective social psyche, it remains that public remembrance is an exercise in political influence. An influence that has the power to shape the formative tenets of identity, history and a sense of place.

Art often has a central role in memorialisation. For acting under the commission of the state an artist may be responsible for creating the image, monument, song or story. Art in this guise, more often than not, subsumes a redundancy of agency and critical integrity in favour of the politic at play. The obvious reaction against such compromise, usually involves forms of revolutionary iconoclasm or ideological activism. However, according to theorist Jacques Rancière, the problem of art being subsumed by politics is not simply solved by an act of oppositional subversion but rather maintaining an unresolved position in between. Rancière explains:

Art has lived for two centuries from the very tension by which it is at once itself and beyond itself, and by which it promises a future destined to remain unaccomplished. The problem is therefore not to set each back in its own place, but to maintain the very tension by which a politics of art and a poetics of politics tend towards each other, but cannot meet up without suppressing themselves ... To prevent the resistance of art from fading into its contrary, it must be upheld as the unresolved tension between two resistances.¹

The exhibition *Between memory and trace* brings together three artist projects that, I believe, attempt to maintain such an unresolved tension in relation to the memorial. Jointly, the three artists strategically form various positions under the umbrella of conceptual practice by employing various means of intervention, exchange and the readymade. Through these approaches, the artists explore aspects of erasure or precariousness in relation to overlooked or forgotten social histories. In fact, it is not only an unresolved tension between just two resistances but numerous pairs

of resistances that play a pivotal role under the rubric of memorialisation. I have identified three pairs of such unresolved tension apparent throughout all three projects. These include the tension between: memory and erasure, engagement and estrangement, and the banal and profound. Due to the limitations of this essay, I explore each pair in relation to a single project rather than all three. Despite this, I aim to investigate these resistances as a sequence of interconnected in betweens that might aid in discerning levels of contextual depth within the artworks and to ascertain what the artists might be contributing to current practice.

Between memory and erasure

Memory is a selective phenomena that occurs both consciously and unconsciously in our daily lives. Our brains are an incredible processor of information but they are also evolutionarily programmed as bias editors. This bias editing engages in a process where some information is prioritised and saved while other information is deleted and forgotten. The end product of this process is memory. When this editing process is amplified from the individual to the collective, it is people and communities that are erased or forgotten.

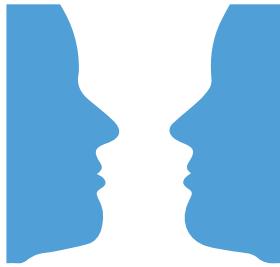
However, with memorialisation, there is more at play than just selective memory. Memorialisation also often involves the claiming of space through the founding of a site. In discussing the topic of foundation sites, art historian W. T. J. Mitchell states that:

Historical events must, as we say, 'take place' somewhere and these places are almost immediately sacralised or monumentalised as foundation sites. The 'taking place', as native Americans sometimes say, requires a totemic keeping place to preserve memory and continuity ...²

Such foundational sites or totemic keeping places have also been described as time markers, designated areas in physical space that are preserved to create a perceived pause in the 'motion and flow of time'.³ Subjective engagement with these time markers is important in

enabling individuals and communities to maintain a sense of place, one that informs the basis of identity and the understanding of *being* in the face of mortality.⁴ Therefore, it is within this pursuit of stasis amongst the complexity of life that the politics of space and time is fought.

The added complication here is that in the process of creating markers in time and space we also have to delete something. As Mitchell explains, the process of establishing foundation sites erases the actual 'memory of the road to foundation'.⁵ To unpack the psychology at play within this inherent contradiction, he uses the example of the Gestalt diagram 'one vase, two faces' to point out the impossibility of focusing on both the figure and the ground simultaneously.⁶ Within this optical metaphor, it is the vase which stands as the time marker or memorial object in place of the face as the secondary negative space where the loss has occurred.



In this light, Luke Willis Thompson's exchange with a property owner to obtain the garage doors used in his artwork simultaneously preserves and erases. His act of exchange oscillates between the figure and the ground as it does between the site and the saved trace. The action removes a local time marker of the tragedy and the history of the event as told through the news media. This act of erasure is also intended as an act of subversion on part of the artist to save, from inevitable destruction, the last remaining trace of a life. Conversely, due to the fact that after stabbing Pihema Cameron for tagging his garage doors, Bruce Emery proceeded to clean off the tag, and his marks are also evident on the garage doors through the abrasions left in the outline of the spray paint. Thus, Thompson's act of collecting the doors preserves the trace of the victim but also the hand that killed. The mark of the killer is inextricably bound in the mark of the life lost; the time marker of the trauma is simultaneously erased and conserved as it is removed from the site; the complication between what is being saved and lost is bound in the impossibility of separating the figure and the ground.

This psychological conundrum is further added to by the many news headlines and reports that have surrounded the incident. During his research, Thompson unearthed a considerable number of newspaper articles that, through

the repetitive use of particular language, have played their part in influencing public opinion or disseminating disinformation. As a form of public remembrance, these reports simplified remnants of information so that they might catch the eye of the reader, or more accurately, appeal to the latent bias of a certain demographic.

The graffiti-marked garage doors became the salient point for many news reports, through which Cameron was identified as the 'tagger' rather than the tragic victim of a violent act. As it turns out, the validity of the 'tagging' was later not deemed relevant to the judge in the sentencing of Emery. This revelation raises a number of pertinent questions: Why does a crucial point of interest to the media become irrelevant in a court of law? Whose interests are being served through the limited labelling of this individual? As a form of memorial, what effect does this type of reporting have on public remembrance?

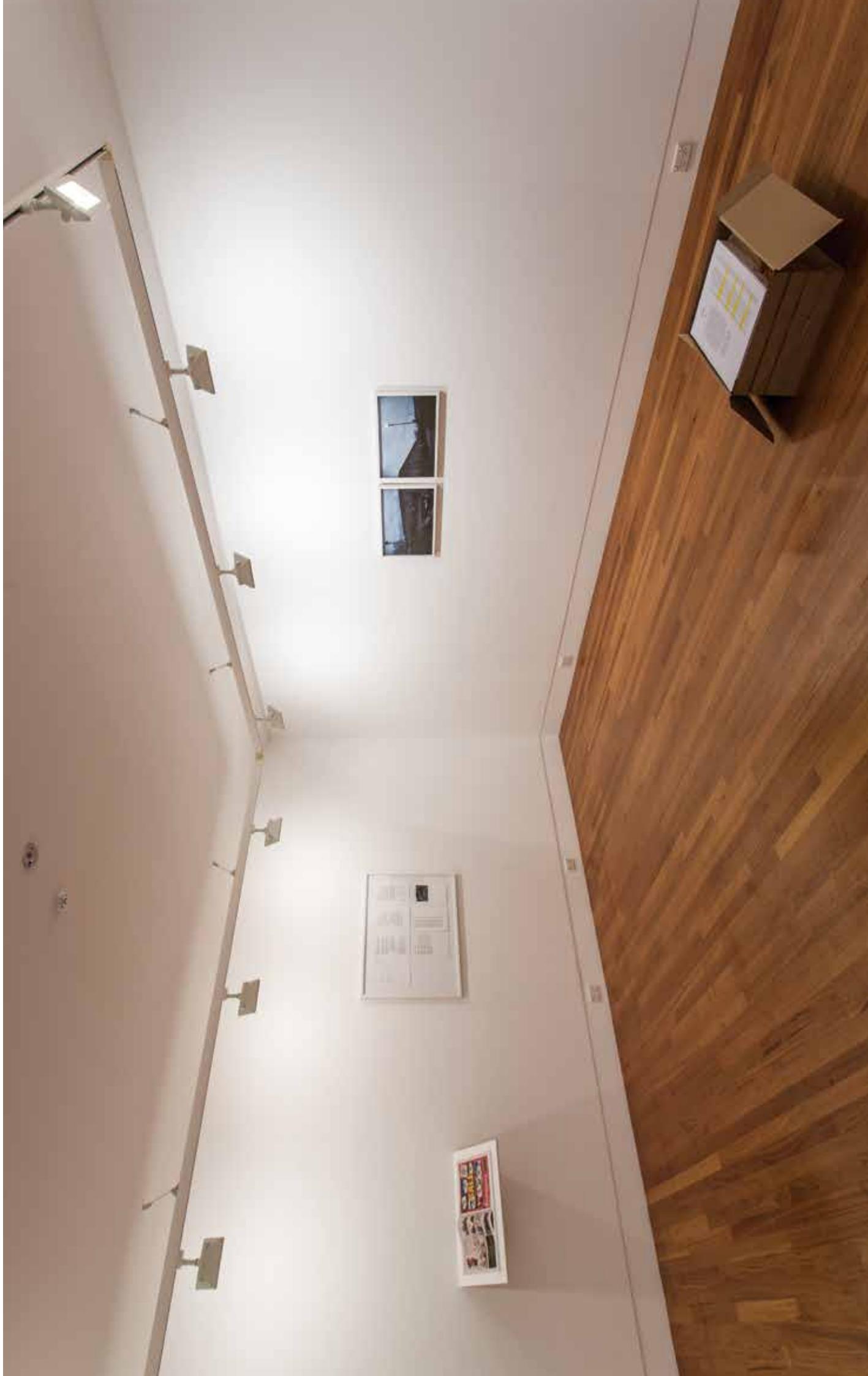
In critiquing the lack of critical investigative journalism and fear-driven media rhetoric following 9/11, theorist Judith Butler explains that such examples of limited identity profiling in reporting hinders empathy and mourning:

Those who remain faceless or whose faces are presented to us as so many symbols of evil, authorize us to become senseless before those lives we have eradicated and whose grievability is indefinitely postponed.⁸

She continues to explain that this facelessness also acts to limit critical discourse:

The foreclosure of critique empties the public domain of debate and democratic contestation, itself, so that debate becomes the exchange of views among the like minded, and criticism, which ought to be central to any democracy, becomes a furtive and suspect activity.⁹

While the media may limit critical discourse in the public domain there are still other public platforms, such as public art galleries, that encourage independent perspectives to be voiced rather than cloistering discussion. By attaining the doors for the gallery context, Thompson shifts the remembrance from the street and eye of the media to the context of the art gallery, where slow thinking and contemplation are prioritised over attention-grabbing headlines.



Between engagement and estrangement

Butler's position that empathy is contingent upon the understanding of life's fragility is also of importance in the mode of strategic social engagement evident in Maddie Leach's work *Evening Echo*. The question of empathy for Leach may operate within the notion that life is a slow and quiet passing and that this is heightened for those whose cultural perspective is in a direct mismatch with the fundamental tenets of the majority.

Leach's intervention essentially attempts to reactivate a memorial mostly forgotten. In doing so, she calls on the problematic question of empathetic remembrance for a dwindling community whose memory is fading amongst the city's current inhabitants. However, to mistake this motivation as an attempt at creating lasting social change would be a grave misreading.

As a type of social engagement, Leach sets up the possibility for participation but does not assume or presuppose that the offer is taken up. She made no Twitter announcements, no Facebook sharing of the annual event, rather, the occasion was made known to the public through a series of advertisements in Cork's free newspaper the *Evening Echo*.

Here, the artist made no attempt to fabricate a positive public situation in the beguiling neoliberal spirit of social inclusion.¹⁰ Alternatively, Leach establishes a conceptual framework that prioritises the possibility for physically present participation in such a way that allows for the artist's own proposition to be ignored or discarded by the community. This approach allows social engagement to take place with various levels of criticality.

To understand this strategy further, it is important to consider how it combines forms of communicative and symbolic acts. Influenced by theorist Jürgen Habermas, communicative action is a 'type of social action geared to communication and understanding between individuals'.¹¹ Leach enacts a form of communication that partakes in the shared understanding of a specific location and community. She does this by adding to the existing six lamps together with the constituent ephemera (advertisement, poster, promissory agreement and publication). These communicative contributions allow the potential for a set of relations to be established through a participant's own free will to engage. The example here is pivotal because it reduces the possibility for the artist to act as a manipulative agent in presupposing from an assumptive position what is or isn't in the community's best interests. It further posits a dramaturgical situation where time, place and the community set the context for meaningful engagement.

Evening Echo also functions strongly as a symbolic act. In the symbolic, there is no actual social exchange enacted only meaning attributed to the artwork beyond what its objective existence suggests at face value.¹² This is particularly evident when considering the contingent material exhibited at Te Tuhi as part of *Between memory and trace*. For example, the free takeaway poster was brought into association with the promissory agreement; this drew attention to the dichotomy between the Jewish and Western European calendars and the artist's logistical hurdles to work with this problematic issue to establish the automated lighting of the ninth lamp for the next 50 years. The 1989 video documentation of Shalom Park's inaugural dedication was also brought into relationship with the live video feed at Te Tuhi that observed the second instance of the lamp being lit on the last night of Hanukkah. By considering the uncannily similar video footage; the 1989 documented and real-time presence of Fred Rosehill, the president of Cork's Hebrew Congregation; the lamp's

Sunset

*

**Shalom Park
Gas Works Rd
& Albert Rd**

*

2 Tevet 5773

www.evening-echo.info



fleeting illumination coupled with the sun setting in Cork as it rose in Auckland, these relationships subtly built upon the nuances of time and light as a fitting reflection on the passing of a generation. A myriad of other associations and attributed meanings could be further applied by taking into account the reproduction of the original ceremonial photograph, documentation of the first lamp lighting and a copy of the Evening Echo newspaper featuring the advertisement.

Here, strategic forms of communicative action and lingering forms of symbolic significance balance contemplation with participation and spectatorship. In doing so, there is a conscious decision to resist the presupposed emancipation of the viewer through social engagement – a proposition that risks not connecting with anyone but at the same time has the potential for deeply profound connections to be formed. This resistance, between engagement and estrangement, stands at odds to forms of participatory art that critic Claire Bishop argues are rather than 'being oppositional to spectacle [and neoliberal capitalist agendas that champion the spectacle, have] now entirely merged with it.'¹³ Echoing Rancière, she continues to emphasise that:

This new proximity between spectacle and participation underlines the necessity of sustaining a tension between artistic and social critiques. The most striking projects that constitute the history of participatory art unseat all of the polarities on which this discourse is founded (individual/collective, author/spectator, active/passive, real life/art) but not with the goal of collapsing them. In doing so, they hold the artistic and social critiques in tension ... for both art and the social are not to be reconciled, but sustained in continual tension.¹⁴

Between banal and profound

I have so far explored two pairs of unresolved tension: between memory and erasure, and between engagement and estrangement. Throughout, I have emphasised the strategic conceptualism employed by Thompson and Leach that has enabled their projects to maintain a resistance in between these polarities. In considering Ruth Ewan's work,







Shalom Park
Cork



The problem is that the civil calendar used by most of the world has abandoned any correlation between the moon cycles and the month, arbitrarily setting the length of months to 28, 30 or 31 days. The Jewish calendar, however, coordinates three astronomical phenomena: the rotation of the Earth about its axis (a day); the revolution of the moon about the Earth (a month); and the revolution of the Earth about the sun (a year). Also, a Jewish 'day' is of no fixed length, and there is no clock in the Jewish scheme.

Therefore, the last night of Hanukkah is observed at nightfall on 1 Tevet or sometimes 2 Tevet.

2011	Tuesday 27 December	4.30 pm
2012	Saturday 15 December	4.24 pm
2013	Wednesday 4 December	4.26 pm
2014	Tuesday 23 December	4.27 pm
2015	Sunday 13 December	4.24 pm
2016	Saturday 31 December	4.34 pm
2017	Tuesday 19 December	4.25 pm
2018	Sunday 9 December	4.24 pm
2019	Sunday 29 December	4.31 pm
2020	Thursday 17 December	4.25 pm
2021	Sunday 5 December	4.26 pm
2022	Sunday 25 December	4.29 pm
2023	Thursday 14 December	4.24 pm
2024	(go to 2025)	
2025	Wednesday 1 January	4.34 pm
2025	Sunday 21 December	4.26 pm
2026	Friday 11 December	4.24 pm
2027	Friday 31 December	4.34 pm
2028	Tuesday 19 December	4.26 pm
2029	Saturday 8 December	4.25 pm
2030	Friday 27 December	4.30 pm
2031	Tuesday 16 December	4.25 pm
2032	Saturday 4 December	4.26 pm
2033	Friday 23 December	4.28 pm
2034	Wednesday 13 December	4.24 pm
2035	(go to 2036)	
2036	Tuesday 1 January	4.35 pm
2036	Saturday 20 December	4.26 pm
2037	Wednesday 9 December	4.25 pm
2038	Tuesday 28 December	4.31 pm
2039	Sunday 18 December	4.25 pm
2040	Thursday 6 December	4.26 pm
2041	Tuesday 24 December	4.29 pm
2042	Sunday 14 December	4.25 pm
2043	(go to 2044)	
2044	Saturday 2 January	4.36 pm
2044	Wednesday 21 December	4.27 pm
2045	Sunday 10 December	4.25 pm
2046	Sunday 30 December	4.33 pm
2047	Thursday 19 December	4.26 pm
2048	Sunday 6 December	4.26 pm
2049	Sunday 26 December	4.30 pm
2050	Friday 16 December	4.25 pm
2051	Tuesday 5 December	4.26 pm
2052	Sunday 22 December	4.28 pm
2053	Friday 12 December	4.25 pm
2054	(go to 2055)	
2055	Friday 1 January	4.36 pm
2055	Tuesday 21 December	4.27 pm
2056	Saturday 9 December	4.25 pm
2057	Friday 28 December	4.32 pm
2058	Tuesday 17 December	4.26 pm
2059	Saturday 6 December	4.26 pm
2060	Friday 24 December	4.29 pm
2061	Wednesday 14 December	4.25 pm



I will now investigate the third and final unresolved tension: between the banal and the profound.

In the Te Tuhi courtyard, a grove of over 200 heirloom Paul Robeson tomato plants grow in black pots. The grove's presence invites joy in some, curiosity in others and overall a common acceptance by most gallery visitors and locals who frequent Te Tuhi. However, lingering behind the easy approval of these tomato plants is a troubled history. For the act of naming has politicised these tomatoes and so they carry the story of a man, the situation he found himself in and the cause he fought for.

No one knows who named this Siberian tomato variety after Robeson, only that the seeds were first exported internationally from Moscow in the early 1990s.¹⁵ Although, given Robeson's fame and relationship with the Soviet Union during the 1940s, the connection is not wholly surprising.¹⁶ Neither is the fact that the Paul Robeson fruit is a 'black beefsteak' tomato – no doubt a deliberate racial insinuation of the African male body. Far from glorifying the memory of Robeson, these connotations further obfuscate his life and the significance of the plant in a confusing mix of Cold War politics and racial profiling.

Ewan entitled the installation, *Them that plants them is soon forgotten*, after the lyric from Robeson's most famous song 'Ol' Man River' from the Broadway production and film *Showboat*.¹⁷ Her use of the Paul Robeson plant does not function to reconcile the problematic associations embedded in the tomato's naming. Rather, as the artwork title suggests, her use of the tomato plant is to further emphasise the complications within an existing form of memorialisation, to invite a reinvestigation of Robeson's legacy and thereby a reflexive consideration of who and what is remembered or forgotten.

The allowance for participation in the work adds further layers of complexity. As the fruit ripened, gallery visitors were welcome to pick and eat the tomatoes. Given the associations to Robeson's body through naming and the consumption of the tomato flesh, there is a similarity to the Catholic tradition of communion as a form of remembrance – an association that creates a tension between the joy of eating freshly picked heritage tomatoes and the elegiac remembrance of an artist who became a politically harassed figure. This almost Buddhist reflection on the unkind nature of life is emphasised to me by witnessing the behaviour of avian visitors to the tomato grove. Blackbirds made a habit of dropping in to feed off ripe fruit that had not yet been picked. The birds fluttered and fought over the remaining fruit only to wastefully peck out red patches on mostly green fruit. Yet, due to their beastly behaviour, the birds invite other life such as insects, both beneficial and harmful, to establish the beginnings of an ecosystem.

In this work, Ewan creates a bittersweet commemoration that sends conflicting messages on the memory and fragility of life. At first consideration, however, many people would have simply recognised the work as only a grove of tomato plants. Between this initial objective recognition versus the social significance, which unfolds more slowly, is a powerful tension that shifts our understanding from the casually ordinary to the deeply insightful and back again. The resistance between the objective and subjective creates a lag that somehow invites the discovery of greater symbolic meaning to be experienced as if an epiphany.

Chicago-based artist Theaster Gates has been exploring this betwixt mode of objective and subjective comprehension in various projects that range from social events to urban regeneration. Of particular relevance to my enquiry here are his series of works titled *In the event of race riot* (2011), which consist of coiled fire hoses of the same vintage as those used against the protesting Black youths of Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963. Critic Matthew Jesse Jackson quotes Gates and shares the meaning-making significance of this work:

Fire hoses are something you don't really think about until they are necessary ... but they're filled with real potency: the potential of this tremendous amount of water and water pressure. And they summon the Ghost of Bull Connor onto an upper-middle-class stage, so it's a psychological twofer: potency and pain in one package. Or, to paraphrase James Baldwin, white liberals tend to get an erotic charge from their fantasies of black rage. That is, it gives them a little shiver.¹⁸

This white liberal emotional 'shiver' shares some similarity with the impact and reception of Ewan's work. What this example also illustrates is the potential of inanimate material in conjunction with remembrance to awaken a response to past pain.

For *dOCUMENTA* (13), curator Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev conceived the notion of the 'traumatised object/artwork', one that gives some further understanding of materiality and pain. In her research, Christov-Bakargiev explored the history of post-traumatic stress disorder beginning with Sigmund Freud's early studies of relieved trauma in soldiers who had returned from World War I.¹⁹ Freud developed the theory that we have a psychological impulse to remove emotional tension or pain from our memory but that in some cases of severe trauma the psyche allows pain to remain unresolved and therefore relieved after the fact.²⁰ Christov-Bakargiev proposes that bodies of culture, like bodies of people, also suffer from a type of post-traumatic stress disorder.²¹ Trauma causes inanimate objects to undergo and relive transitions of symbolic and objective meaning – transitions that if recognised can help us 'react to a sense of the precariousness of life'.²²

Throughout dOCUMENTA (13), there were many examples of artworks and historical artefacts that illustrated Christov-Bakargiev proposition. Sharing similarity to Ewan's work was the planting and display of Korbinian Aigner's apple varieties. Known as the Apfelpfarrer (apple priest), Aigner was a Catholic priest whose anti-Nazi stance during the 1930s resulted in his imprisonment and ultimate deportation from Germany.²³ His most enduring form of resistance was the cultivation of four new strains of apple, which he named after concentration camps during his four years spent in Dachau.²⁴ As with the Paul Robeson tomato, Aigner's act of naming irrevocably associates a humble apple with both the horror of the Holocaust and the memory of resistance.

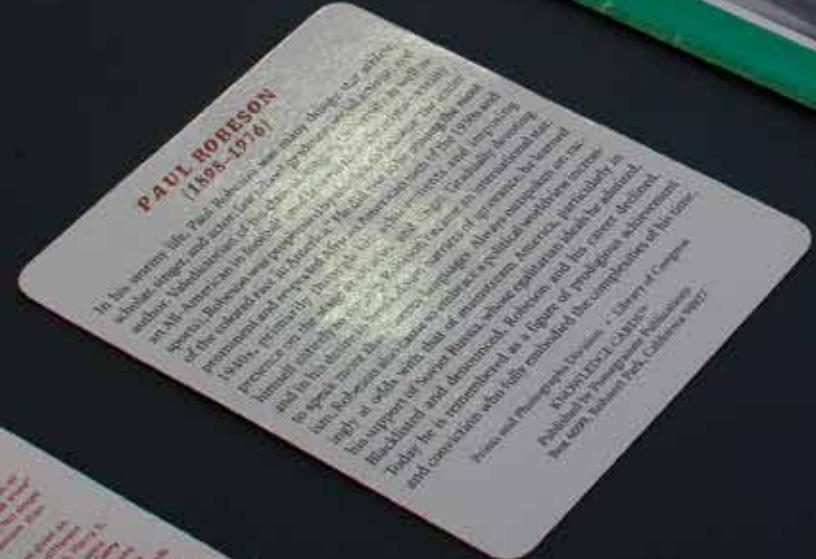
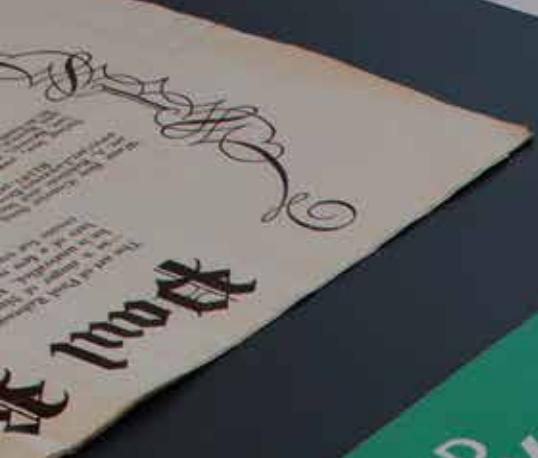
Context is integral for the transition of the traumatised object's symbolic meaning to shift from the banal to the profound in such artworks. The road to uncovering this context has its rewards for those willing to sit with the object and to scratch the surface of its reason for existence. In the search for further meaning, anticipation builds and the experience of discovery or impact of understanding are made all the more compelling. Carefully chosen words from the artist, curator or institution are required in this process for both allowing the objective and the subjective contexts to be considered with subtlety and time.

All the projects included in *Between memory and trace* rely, to some degree, on this lag between experiencing the objective existence of a work and the availability of explanatory reading material. Some might argue that supplementary material makes such artwork dependant on an institutional voice to elucidate secret meanings only known to the few. The great assumption within this logic is that art should be a cohesive visual language that is easily understood, and this assumption shows an apparent lack of awareness that all art is culturally relative and therefore reliant on an existing context in which deeper meaning can be found.

Ewan, Leach and Thompson are artists who take considerable time to research the specific nuances of the material and contexts in which they are working. They are also artists who are greatly aware of the implications of information and display, and, because of this, steer away from the didactic methods of museumology. For museum practice seeks a reductive taxonomy and simplicity of information. Whereas, these artists are aware of the stifling implications that such methods can have on the histories of people and the meanings of objects. Their alternative approach, therefore, is to explore the potential of the ephemeral and everyday to be considered as symbolically profound, but ambiguous and open-ended, remnants of human life.

- 1 Jacques Rancière. *Dissensus: On politics and aesthetics*. Edited and translated by Steven Corcoran. London/New York: Continuum, 2010. p. 183.
- 2 W. T. J. Mitchell. *Foundational Sites and Occupied Spaces*. The keynote lectures, dOCUMENTA (13). Staendehaus: 4 p.m., 10 June 2012. <http://d13.documenta.de/de/#/research/research/view/foundational-sites-and-occupied-spaces> (accessed 9 September 2012).
- 3 Yi-Fu Tuan. *Space and Place: The perspective of experience*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 1977. p. 179.
- 4 Kevin Walsh. *The Representation of the Past: Museums and heritage in the post-modern world*. London: Routledge, 1992. p. 152.
- 5 Mitchell. *Foundational Sites and Occupied Spaces*.
- 6 *ibid.*
- 7 Hugh Williams J *Sentencing remarks of Hugh William's J.: Regina v Bruce William Emery*. High Court of New Zealand:Auckland Registry. CRI 2008 092 001285. 13 February, 2009. [5]. p. 2.
- 8 Judith Butler. *Precarious Life: The powers of mourning and violence*. London/New York: Verso, 2004. p. xvii.
- 9 *ibid.* p. xx
- 10 Claire Bishop. *Artificial Hells: Participatory art and the politics of spectatorship*. London/New York: Verso, 2012. pp. 14, 277.
- 11 Pablo Helguera. *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A materials and techniques handbook*. New York: Jorge Pinto Books, 2011. p. 7.
- 12 *ibid.* p. 78.
- 13 Claire Bishop. *Artificial Hells*. p. 277.
- 14 *ibid.* pp. 277–8.
- 15 Ruth Ewan. *Brank & Heckle*. Exhibition brochure. Dundee Contemporary Arts. 13 August–9 October 2011. p. 6. www.dca.org.uk/uploads/Ruth-Ewan---Brank-Heckle-interpretation.pdf (accessed 2 September 2011).
- 16 *ibid.*
- 17 *ibid.* 'Ol' Man River', music by Jerome Kern, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, 1927.
- 18 Matthew Jesse Jackson. *The Emperor of the Post-medium Condition in Theatrical Gates: 12 Ballads for Huguenot House*. Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2012. p. 19.
- 19 Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev. 'On the Destruction of Art – or conflict and art, or trauma and the art of healing' in *The Book of Books: dOCUMENTA (13) Catalog 1/3*. Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2012. p. 282.
- 20 *ibid.*
- 21 *ibid.*
- 22 *ibid.* p. 283.
- 23 Lars Bang Larsen. 'Korbinian Aigner' in *The Guidebook: Catalog 3/3*. Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2012. p. 34.
- 24 *ibid.*





In this approach at the NDC and bath, on Thursday, 31 March, HOBSON several times made or less hinted at better, a committee. Somebody asked

NO FEEHAN • 1-800-221-1111

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16. *lit.*

**BRITISH EMBASSY
WASHINGTON**

PF. 143

To: Director-General

Subject: Paul ROBESON

We are informed that the State Department has asked Paul ROBESON to surrender his passport. He has refused to hand it over and Immigration and Customs officials have been ordered to prevent ROBESON from embarking should he attempt to leave the United States. The reason given by the authorities here is that any trip abroad that ROBESON might make "would not be in the interests of the United States".

✓ 7.7.3 Pallen

August 4, 1950

G. T. D. Patterson

List of works

Ruth Ewan

p.4, 28, 31

Them that plants them is soon forgotten, 2010–12

Crop of 200 Paul Robeson heritage tomato plants

Photos by Sam Hartnett courtesy of Te Tuhi

p.9

The New Idealism, 2010

Collection of inner record sleeves

Courtesy of the artist and Rob Tufnell Gallery, London

Photo by Sam Hartnett courtesy of Te Tuhi

p.32–34

Paul Robeson archive

Paul Robeson, Greatest Hits, insert from album,
EMI Records, 1977

Paul Robeson, Knowledge Card, Pomegranate
Publications, California

Plays and Players, May 1959, featuring Paul Robeson
as Othello

Advertisement for Robeson's posthumously released
greatest hits album

The Persecution of Paul Robeson, Headlines, August 1976,
10 pages from the declassified secret intelligence files held
on Robeson from CIA and MIS

Photograph of Robeson and Nikita Khrushchev

Here I Stand, Paul Robeson, Beacon Press, Boston, 1958

Paul Robeson Black Heritage US postage stamp, 2004

HMV advert in Paul Robeson UK Tour Programme, 1929–30

Negro Spiritual, by Antonio Salemme, article on the
censorship of the original statue of Robeson, *Time*,
December 1930

Photos by Sam Hartnett courtesy of Te Tuhi

Maddie Leach

Evening Echo, Tuesday 27 December, 2011–
Active at sunset on the last night of Hanukkah
Shalom Park
Gas Works Road & Albert Road
Cork, Ireland
Nine electric lamps (1 x 4.6m; 8 x 3.6m) with 'Chatsworth' columns, 'Kensington' lanterns and metal halide bulbs; SELC candelon street light control system.

p.21
'Promissory Agreement' document between Maddie Leach and Cork City Council
Installation view. Photo by Sam Hartnett courtesy of Te Tuhi

VHS footage of the opening ceremony of Shalom Park, 28 April 1989. 59 min
(Reproduced courtesy of Fred Rosehill)

p.1
Documentation of the first instance of *Evening Echo*, Tuesday 27 December 2011. Photo by Clare Keogh

p.22
Announcement in the *Evening Echo* newspaper, designed by Warren Olds

p.23
(video still of Fred Rosehill, 16 December 2012)

p.24–25
(video still)
Live video feed to witness the second instance of *Evening Echo*, on Sunday, 16 December, 5–6 a.m., Auckland New Zealand
Courtesy of the National Sculpture factory, Cork and Te Tuhi

p.26
Reproduction of Shalom Park ceremonial photograph, 1989

p.27
Edition of offset printed posters designed by Warren Olds / Studio Ahoy

Electrical engineer: Martin Murtagh (Cork)
Programming: Jean Pierre Ferrand (Paris)
Park manager: Liam Casey
Installation: John Sullivan and Pat Carrigan
Park assistant: Pat O'Sullivan
Sunset times: www.wolframalpha.com
Future calendar: www.hebcal.com

An artist-initiated project developed and presented with the support of National Sculpture Factory, Cork City Council, Bord Gais (Ireland), Massey University, and Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts.

Luke Willis Thompson

Untitled, 2012

Three garage doors relating to the death of Pihema

Cameron, 26 January 2008

Courtesy of the artist and Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland

Commissioned by Te Tuhi

p.6, 10, 12–14

Installation view. Photos by Sam Hartnett courtesy of Te Tuhi

p.18

Documentation of the garage doors in Manurewa,

photograph by Caroline Boreham

p.18

Technical drawings courtesy of the home owner and the artist

Contributors

Ruth Ewan

Ruth Ewan lives and works in London. Ewan's work takes many forms including performance, installation and printed matter. Her practice explores overlooked areas of political and social history, reviving these forgotten thoughts and ideas and highlighting their continued relevance today.

Often celebrating activists and radical thinkers, Ewan's work encourages collaboration and participation – in the past she has worked with historians, traditional craftsmen, musicians and school children. One of her best-known works *A Jukebox of People Trying to Change the World* (2003 –), invites visitors to the gallery to choose tracks from its growing catalogue over 2,200 politically motivated songs.

In 2011, Ewan had her first major UK solo exhibition *Brank & Heckle* at DCA, Dundee, and was a contributor to the Folkestone Triennial. Ewan exhibited in *Altermodern: Tate Triennial* (2009) and was one of fifty international artists selected for the *Younger than Jesus* exhibition at the New Museum, New York (2009).

Maddie Leach

Maddie Leach's practice is project based, conceptually driven and frequently involves research into the specifics of the site in which she is working. With her interest in the development of new thinking in relation to social, place-based and process-driven art, Leach's early work held a central position in New Zealand's relational aesthetics practice. While no longer overtly participatory, her work continues to explore ideas of spectatorship, expectation and strategies of cooperation in the production of artworks. Leach's recent projects often operate beyond the walls of the gallery and focus on constructing complex arrangements between space, time, place and audience.

Leach has been included in significant group exhibitions including: SCAPE 7, Christchurch, 2013; 5th Auckland Triennial, Auckland Art Gallery, 2013; *Peripheral Relations: Marcel Duchamp and New Zealand Art*, Adam Art Gallery, Wellington, 2012; *Iteration: Again*, CAST, Tasmania, 2011; *Reason and Rhyme*, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, 2011; *Close Encounters*, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, 2010; *One Day Sculpture*, Wellington, 2008; *Trans Versa*, The South Project, Santiago, 2006.

James McCarthy

James McCarthy has been the executive director at Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts since 2009. Previously he worked as the school manger for the Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland. As a sound artist, he has exhibited and performed extensively both nationally and internationally.

Bruce E. Phillips

Bruce E. Phillips has been the curator at Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts since 2011. Throughout his practice, Phillips has explored how a critical awareness of performativity and contextualisation can influence the function of art institutions for the benefit of artists. In 2008 he curated *Close Encounters*, together with Chuck Thurow, an evolving curatorial project at the Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago. Phillips has also curated over 30 exhibitions featuring artists such as Tania Bruguera, Maddie Leach, Derrick Cherrie, Eugene Hansen, Tahi Moore, Anu Pennanen, William Pope.L, Santiago Sierra and Angela Tiatia.

Shannon Te Ao

Shannon Te Ao is a Wellington-based artist, curator and writer currently lecturing at Massey University's Whiti o Rehua School of Art. His work as an artist has focussed on producing collaborative, performance and video works. Recent exhibitions include *Follow the Party of the Whale*, Blue Oyster Gallery, Dunedin 2013; *Moving on Asia*, City Gallery Wellington, 2013; *The New Artists Show*, Artspace, Auckland, 2012; he was also selected as the 2012 Rita Angus Artist in Residence, Wellington. As a writer he has contributed to the exhibition catalogues *Tanya Ruka 'Pukohu'* and *'Tō Tātou Kāinga* published by Papakura Art Gallery. In his previous role as Te Tuhi's Exhibitions Manager & Curatorial Assistant, he curated projects including the artists Fiona Jack, Bepen Bhana and Yona Lee.

Luke Willis Thompson

Luke Willis Thompson's art deals with sites and objects that embody a sense of historical, political or social trauma. In recent work the artist has used readymade objects – such as a local funeral home's art collection and a house in the Auckland suburb of Epsom – to trace the faultlines of race and class in his chosen context. Thompson sets up estranging encounters where the viewer is confronted with an object both ontologically and in the space of narrative and mythology.

Selected exhibitions include:
5th Auckland Triennial,
Auckland Art Gallery, 2013;
in this hole on this island where i am,
Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland, 2012;
Yaw, RM, Auckland, 2011; *In Spite of Ourselves: Approaching Documentary*,
St Paul St Gallery, Auckland, and The Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt, 2012;
Make\Shift: Tautai's Third Tertiary Show,
St Paul St Gallery, Auckland

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Maddie Leach:

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Luke Willis Thompson:

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Te Tuhi:

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te tuhi

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Te Tuhi Staff: Executive Director, James McCarthy; Assistant to the Director, Simran Saseve-Dale; Centre Administrator, Cherrie Tawhai; Senior Curator, Bruce E. Phillips; Exhibitions Manager and Curatorial Assistant, Guy Nicoll; Customer Services and Classes Manager, Jennie McCormick; Learning Experiences Outside the Classroom, Jeremy Leatinu'u; Accounts Administrator, Diana Hector-Taylor; Accountant, Paul Tindill; Exhibition Preparator, Kenny Willis.

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Contemporary Art Foundation



