

SEAN LOWRY

*Gradually, as repetition and citationality turn into habit, they will become the foundation for a new lyric poetry, whose journey has its beginning and not its end in ironic estrangement.<sup>1</sup>*

Although the word 'agnostic' is generally applied to someone who rejects the idea that it is possible to know whether gods exist or not, its literal definition ['without knowledge'] is also potentially applicable to a range of untenable intellectual problems. The question of originality in art, for example, although rhetorically exhausted, remains an unresolved dialectic. Now positioned in a doubly paradoxical moment, a moment after the projected 'end of history', played out through much late twentieth century criticism [culminating in 1980s critical postmodernism], contemporary artists are now both historically distant and increasingly ambivalent to the modernism/postmodernism dialectic. Freed from the literal influences of millennial projection and historical retrospection, the paradoxical limitations of such oppositionalities become clearer. Wherever art criticism becomes overtly polarised, emphasising either aesthetic or anti-aesthetic, historical or anti-historical, strategic or qualitative, radical or ironic, or indeed modern or postmodern concerns due to the speculative and provisional nature of art itself, it is ultimately reduced to a belief versus disbelief dichotomy. For the believer, art still serves as an index of culture in general. For the non-believer, art is now equalised with the culture it once claimed to index. From an agnostic perspective on the other hand, both 'art' and 'non-art' remain equivalently contestable propositions.

For New York-based artist Ashley Bickerton in 1986, after postmodernism, artists might be able to assume a vantage point over all the "contrary information we have witnessed in the postwar period" and as a consequence, start to merge or "implode a variety of different strategies and epistemologies".<sup>2</sup> According to Richard Grayson, British artist and Artistic Director of the 2002 Biennale of Sydney, *The World May Be Fantastic*, although contemporary artists realise that it is not possible to "do grand narratives any more", they nonetheless resolve to "pretend" as if they still can.<sup>3</sup> For Grayson, "this return to narrative [knowing, although not ironic] is in some ways inevitable", because "humans have a fundamental desire for pattern-making, grand narrative, be that scientific, artistic or occult".<sup>4</sup> Also in 2002, New York artist Tom Moody, described fellow New York painter Jack Featherly's paintings as continuing to "operate 'as if' purity was possible".<sup>5</sup> New York-based critic Tim Griffin described a tension in Featherly's paintings "between self-conscious quotation and a savvy pleasure in

# THE AGNOSTIC MODEL: CONTEMPORARY ART AFTER POSTMODERNISM?

painting”,<sup>6</sup> while Ken Johnson, art critic for the *New York Times*, saw Featherly’s work as “playfully questioning the great twentieth century romance of abstract painting”.<sup>7</sup> Artists such as Featherly continue to make art as if invention is still possible and art were somehow still meaningful, but without necessarily believing as such. Has the idea of meaningful invention made merely a provisional return after the impact of postmodernism? According to Russian theorist Mikhail Epstein in 1999, as a consequence of the dilemma of post-subjectivity that preceded it, the ‘as if’ ultimately limits the return of subjectivity in contemporary art to face value. According to Epstein, following the demise of modernist concepts such as ‘truth’, ‘objectivity’, ‘soul’ and ‘subjectivity’ under the premise of the prefix ‘post’, self-conscious art was only left capable of reintroducing such concepts ‘as if’ they were possible.<sup>8</sup> By historical consequence, the trans-subjectivity of the 1990s that replaced the post-subjectivity of the 1980s had finally become little more than “an ‘as if’ utopianism”, still “aware of its own failures, insubstantiality, and secondariness”.<sup>9</sup> Art criticism produced and evaluated under the premise of ‘as if’ demands an amalgamated approach to established critical polarities, one that does not reject subjectivity wholesale, but that at the same time remains conscious of the weight of history and fragmented repetition of originality. Art cannot be wholly reduced to either a dry cynical exercise of strategic negation or a naïve utopian subjectivity, without inviting contradiction. Once the idea of art is accepted as being at once original and unoriginal, it becomes possible to regard the idea of postmodernism generally as merely an acquired tool within contemporary art’s evolution.

Most art histories to date have used only one of two forms of analysis—diachronic or synchronic.<sup>10</sup> The modernist paradigm of art history is typically founded on diachronic analysis. Diachronic analysis is typically used in modernist accounts of art history, such as those that describe the gradual break-up of the image in late nineteenth century French impressionism, its subsequent deconstruction in cubism and later graduation to 1950s American formalist abstraction. Where diachronic analysis typically aims to model art history in terms of linear innovation, synchronic analysis more typically refers to relationships between various ‘generations of interest’ across the present.<sup>11</sup> In the visual arts, the synchronic model can be described as being analogous to a chess game.<sup>12</sup> The actual material nature of the piece does not matter, for the game can be played with pieces of any shape, size or material. What matters instead is the location of the piece. That location is what signifies its meaning within the overall context of the game. Although postmodernism is typically modelled in terms of lateral expansion, rather

than a vertical or hierarchical structuring, since it is paradoxically positioned after modernism, it also invites diachronic analysis. The agnostic model represents an attempt to critically balance the idea of historical innovation against quality and interest in the present. In other words, the agnostic model simultaneously regards both diachronic and synchronic analysis. The shift in attitude toward appropriation, for example, from that of being principally a cynical and ironically charged strategy during the 1980s, to its now omnipresent, relatively tacit [and significantly technologically enabled] role as merely another means of production, suggests the possibility that the very crisis of faith present in postmodernism is now paradoxically enabling new [albeit speculative] modernisms.

During the 1990s, American critic Hal Foster worked to redefine established linkages between early twentieth century avant-gardes and postwar neo-avant-gardes. According to Foster, the commonly held belief that postwar avant-gardes had merely repeated, re-routed or redeployed paradigms already brokered in the historical avant-gardes, for example, is ultimately limited.<sup>13</sup> Instead, Foster asks whether the neo-avant-gardes acted on the historical avant-garde in ways that can only now be appreciated.<sup>14</sup> According to Foster, the triumphs awarded the historical avant-gardes were, at any rate, largely the “retroactive effect of countless artistic responses and critical readings”<sup>15</sup> and therefore must indicate a two-way stream of legitimisation. As Foster points out, “the first helped to charge the second, the second to frame the first” and “in the process both were transformed”.<sup>16</sup> Rather than seeing the neo-avant-garde’s very repetition as simply cancelling the project of the historical avant-garde, for Foster it was the neo-avant-garde that actually comprehended it for the first time. Since the historical avant-gardes were limited by the lack of a critical context in which to be effective, only within the extended and ‘permitted’ context of the neo-avant-garde, are subtle transgressions made possible.

Art criticism of the future, according to New York-based critic Benjamin Buchloh in 1994, will need to contrast the question of whether we have finally reached that stage, where all attempts at writing art history as a history of authors and anti-authors have become “utterly futile and methodologically unacceptable”,<sup>17</sup> with the “view of those who give modernism a long, last passionate study imbued with the scrutiny of mourning” and for whom “Duchamp and his legacies simply do not constitute a sufficiently substantial—existentially and aesthetically complex—visual culture”.<sup>18</sup> Although Buchloh wishes to resist “lapsing into a melancholic call for old conventions of representation, types of artistic subjectivity and models of aesthetic experience”, as epitomised by “tragic artists such as Picasso

and Pollock”, he nonetheless warns that in continuing to expressly focus efforts on avoiding this “fallacy”, the question as to whether Duchamp and his anti-aesthetic legacies had finally “fallen short” of their “actual historical potential” should not be ignored.<sup>19</sup> As the Australian art historian Rex Butler reminds us, much of the dilemma of contemporary art is still founded in the dialectical incontrovertibility of originality versus appropriation,

*We would want to think how tradition, authorship and expressivity might again be possible against that appropriationism, which so expediently and wrongly did away with them, without returning us to a merely ‘substantialist’ version of them.*<sup>20</sup>

Having largely retreated from the iconoclastic anti-modernism initially presented by photo-appropriationists during the late 1970s and early 1980s, the problem of appropriation has nonetheless left a stubborn legacy that artists can neither wholly transcend nor parade [without inviting now unfashionable rhetoric]. With its initial legitimisation founded on discrediting modernism, postmodernism has since transformed into an enactment with it. Foster describes this shift as part of larger pattern of movement in postwar art from “radical disruptions” and “grand oppositions” to “subtle displacements”.<sup>21</sup> Just as civic tolerance of what was once considered avant-garde would ultimately become comparable with an average evening of television and most art ever revered as radical would eventually inhabit the institutions it disrupted, postmodernism’s initial “break with the fundamental practices and discourses of modernity” was also ultimately reducible to style.<sup>22</sup> Despite the fact that we see second-hand signs of its influence everywhere, modern art has probably never mattered less. Although Foster does not disagree with “certain aspects” of poststructuralist or Marxist-influenced critical theory, he does argue that “they concede too much too quickly”.<sup>23</sup> As a consequence, he is now attempting to try to “recover some of what they surrender[ed]”.<sup>24</sup> Warning of an easy cynicism at play in postmodernism generally, he is also careful to neither wholly abandon nor wholly accept the legacies of the historical avant-garde. As a former champion of a critical ‘postmodernism of resistance’ during the 1980s, by the early 1990s he had become suspicious of its empty fashionability. By 2002, he had concluded that the “expanded field” of modernism initially introduced by the “doubling” of postmodernism “has slowly imploded, as terms once held in productive contradiction have slowly collapsed into compounds without much tension”.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, he now argues, since “we live in the wake not only of modernist painting and sculpture but of postmodernist deconstructions

of these forms as well”,<sup>26</sup> might “the ‘end of art’ be one more thing about art that is not self-evident anymore?”.<sup>27</sup> In conceding that the expanded field of postmodernist art has “largely imploded” and that “the recovered devices of avant-garde art” are now “mostly attenuated”, Foster sees the potential for artists, “[p]aradoxically enabled by historical distance and/or geopolitical difference”, to transform “this imploded field into the departure point for an expansive practice... in which certain aspects of both postmodernist and neo-avant-garde art are recovered”.<sup>28</sup>

In retrospect, postmodernism’s cynical constructions of irony were finally as overfamiliar and predictable as the art out of which they were constructed. Reduced to a view of art that consists of little more than the creation of an ironic distance from a historical prototype, whose construction and decipherment might temporarily afford a certain intellectual interest, postmodernism could never aspire to any real level of elation. Although irony protected the artist from the feeling that without it art might seem futile, irony in itself finally became a *fait accompli* and was therefore doomed to banality. Although postmodernism had sought to interrogate established dichotomies such as original/copy, mind/body or history/myth, in doing so it produced other equivalently ideologically-imbued polarities—self/other, centre/periphery and culture/nature. Postmodernism, as both a style and a critical function, had by the late 1990s become both subsumed as tradition and considered part of the narrative sequence of late twentieth century art. According to Foster in 2002, “the model of formalist modernism challenged by an expansive postmodernism no longer drives or describes significant developments in art or criticism”.<sup>29</sup>

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, many artists schooled in critical postmodernism were finding it difficult to sustain the paradoxical conviction that there was any truth to discover within a discourse that denied the very existence of truth. The failure of both postmodernism and modernism to accurately define or account for the conditions and functions of art has caused many artists to adopt an ambivalent attitude towards both propositions. Where modernist art had often served as an allegory of progress and suffering, postmodern art had served as an allegory of boredom<sup>30</sup> [as indicated by such boredom-inducing features as repetition and seriality]. Since art had supposedly completed the line of questioning which had begun when photography stole painting’s role as an imitation of reality, was there anything else left for art to do but splinter into myriad pluralistic



variations that no longer required any critical justification other than the routine doubled logic of camp irony? The question of where to move after postmodernism is made more difficult because of the fact that it is relatively easier to move from naivety to cynicism than it is to move from cynicism to anything else.

What are the legacies of 1980s styled postmodernism? Modern art's former antithesis in abstraction and representation was certainly significantly merged, the historically conscious artist now knows better than to claim a radical break for its own sake, and certain weaknesses were highlighted in the idea that modernism should necessarily be equated with progress or art history be conceived as a singular narrative. According to New York-based critic Thomas McEvilly in 1991, what really happened to art history during the 1980s was "far greater" than "formal fashions".<sup>31</sup> For Australia-based English critic Nicholas Zurbrugg in 2000, to entirely negate postmodernism "is to neglect the most significant cultural mutations of our time".<sup>32</sup> For French critic and current Professor of the History of Art at Harvard University, Yve-Alain Bois, to "claim that the 'end of painting' is finished" is ultimately a naïve assumption when "reproducibility and fetishisation" have otherwise "permeated all aspects of life".<sup>33</sup> Although its more apocalyptic tendencies appear to have softened, the legacies of postmodernism are still clearly apparent for many artists. For all its contradictions

and empty rhetoric, it is still clear that postmodernism has made a contribution to the way art is evaluated that cannot be simply retracted or forgotten. But at the same time, it is also evident that postmodernism's cynical detachment from sincerity and subjectivity has lost steam. It is as if artists want to believe in art again, yet can't quite bring themselves to. With no other option foreseeable, artists get back to the job at hand, 'as if' art is somehow potentially still possible or relevant. For the agnostic, both the utopian ideal of radical originality and its cynical antithesis, appropriation art, are similarly limited in their ability to accurately describe and account for the diversity of contemporary artistic production.

The agnostic model represents a view of art that belongs in a world in which uncertainty remains the only certainty. Invariably however, both the believer and the non-believer will accuse the agnostic of unresolvedness. As Australian painter [and current Head of School of Art, Victorian College of the Arts] Su Baker puts it, "We live in a world defined by a war between the faithful and the faithless".<sup>34</sup> According to Mikhail Epstein, this "courage of restraint" is somehow "perceived as a form of cowardice" or "fear in the face of banality".<sup>35</sup> Where the rhetoric and discursive interpretation of the postmodern paradigm of appropriation seemed excessive in hindsight, for many artists of the 1990s, it remains difficult to return to art as an unmediated

reflection of the world, or as possessing any real or socially progressive agenda. Instead, contemporary art is floating off somewhere between social commentary and self-reflexive fiction, between public and private spheres and finally, between an engagement with and a suspension of belief in the idea of art itself. For artists to continue in the naive hope that radical possibility will again be made possible in art seems no less clichéd or unthinking than to maintain a cynical negation of the idea of any innovation whatsoever. With no other apparent option, many artists have returned a quasi-expressive enthusiasm to their practice, an enthusiasm that falls short of declaring a belief, but that also refuses the cynical endgames and wholesale negation of possibility implied in textbook postmodernism. Jean Baudrillard once suggested that the attitude of the post-Warholian artist is essentially agnostic because, "We no longer believe in art, only in the idea of art [which is of course no longer aesthetic]".<sup>36</sup> Moreover, for Baudrillard, all humans are secretly agnostic.<sup>37</sup>

Many artists have clearly softened in their approach towards established oppositionalities. Australian artist and critic Ben Curnow described Australian artist John Young's work in 1997 as no longer as "eclectic and decadently ambitious" as it once was, therefore allowing "a more qualitative appraisal".<sup>38</sup> As a consequence, having retreated from the rhetorical ambitions of postmodernism, Curnow saw an artist "asking to have it both ways".<sup>39</sup> For Young, this shift was a consequence of the desire for "a bit more poetry in [his] life".<sup>40</sup> And as with any imminent consensus, there are also always historical precedents. For American philosopher Arthur C. Danto in 1992, the inevitable amalgamation of antithetical projections in art such as gesture and appropriation was first represented and perhaps best epitomised in German painter Gerhard Richter's 1960 painting *Abstract Expressionist Coca-Cola Bottle*.<sup>41</sup> Even archetypal postmodern painter David Salle's work is being reconsidered in line with this now emerging tension between appropriation and poetic subjectivity, with New York critic Donald Kuspit describing Salle's work in 2000 as a "paragon between traditional and modern art" and as a "kind of poetic whole of prosaic fragments".<sup>42</sup> As with much emerging digital new media art, the emphasis is no longer generally focused on the origin of the found object/fragment itself, but rather on its manipulation. Just as the found object once represented the origin of conceptual art, the concealment of appropriation represents the substitution of concept for self-reflexive production methodology [often known only to the artist].

Initially, post-appropriation art of the early 1990s contained two distinct streams. One was neo-minimalist [sleek, stylised and emptied of signification]; the other was grunge [abject, anti-aesthetic and emptied of signification]. In retrospect, perhaps the most enduring art of the 1990s inhabited a position somewhere between. According to US-based critic John C. Welchman, by the 1990s it had become clear that the "antagonism between original and copy is rarely present as an absolute antithesis"<sup>43</sup> and that the most provocative art and convincing criticism of the 1990s was that which had somehow refused "the absolutes of this polarity".<sup>44</sup> Other unexpected amalgamations of previously antithetical formations also appeared in contemporary art during the 1990s. Minimalism, for example, which had sought autonomy in the 1960s [i.e. to be unaffected by events such as the (President) Kennedy assassination], was finally merged with its former antithesis—pop art. After all, both pop and minimalism were initially concerned with production and seriality and both streams had also employed the Duchampian 'readmade' as their historical model. Another breach, which had first ignited during the late 1970s between two terms previously considered indivisible—modernism and formalism—had again become significant in the early 1990s. By the 1990s minimalism could be recycled without its modernist implications. Art of the 1990s and early 2000s also possessed, by historical definition, a differentiation founded in its ability to reflect not only on history but also on the 'end of history'. The 'end of history' now had a history of its own. Did that not therefore disprove its existence? Just as Roland Barthes had claimed the 'death of the author' while emerging as the authoritative author on that subject, postmodernism's claim that art history was over is now part of art history itself. As with the existence of god, the same logic that demands that we cannot prove [his/her/whatever] existence also demands that we cannot disprove it. As Swiss artist John M. Armleder put it in 1993 [when describing his relationship with modernism], "Maybe I don't care enough about UFOs, but I know that UFO sceptics are not my friends".<sup>45</sup>

Ideas related to high or commodity culture, originality or appropriation and modernism or postmodernism may once have provoked stern critical and ideological clashes, but for the majority of artists of the early twenty first century, these polarities are now givens—no longer opponents, but rather companions. Oppositionalities are difficult to maintain in a world of constantly shifting borders, power balances and alliances, a world no longer

neatly divided into east and west. Evidence of such integration and amalgamation can also be observed in other disciplines, from the integration of the nature/nurture dialectic in child psychology to British sociologist Anthony Giddens' political model for a "third way".<sup>46</sup> Art is no longer an idea to necessarily 'believe in' or to cynically dismiss altogether, it is rather an activity that continues 'as if' it were still possible and valued. Artists cannot return to the naïve impression that artistic autonomy is wholly possible, but at the same time they cannot maintain the cynical view that any level of invention is impossible or futile. Both positions are clearly limited when considered against the breadth of contemporary cultural production. Like a joke told too many times, the value of postmodern irony in art is lost in repetition, just as quickly as is the emotive value of the expressive gesture that is its projected antithesis. They are now both simply givens. Emptied of specific value, but not discarded. Rather, so omnipresent as to no longer be visible.

Artistic production that utilises appropriation as a conscious means, but that ultimately conceals the paternity of explicitly appropriated elements in the exhibited outcome, can represent one possible recourse for artists who want to avoid the empty rhetoric of postmodernism and continue to work [as artists have always done] with pre-existing fragments of image, narrative, text and melody in a world in which many of the raw materials of culture are privately owned. Where appropriated elements are actively concealed from specific recognition, subsequent works will more likely be read in a manner that does not require the legitimising value of the prototype, but can nonetheless maintain some of the prototype's qualities. Now operating beyond its former function as a critical device, the strategy of appropriation extends a range of technologically enhanced formal possibilities to the artist. Although the means might still be postmodern, the exhibited outcome avoids a specifically postmodern interpretation. Somewhere along the way, the emptiness of pop appropriation started to become sublime. For the agnostic artist, styles or methodologies are there to be hybridised, but making hybrid art in and of itself is no longer the point. Rather than regarded as evidence in support of the 'end of art history' argument, appropriation is now considered to be just another way to make art.

Although cynicism and irony are now widely regarded as passé, the return of subjectivity, witnessed in much contemporary art generally is still clearly moderated by a general suspicion toward the taking of ideas and images at face value.<sup>47</sup> This suspicion is

evidence that certain legacies of 1980s styled postmodernism have endured. Both the oppositional logic of postmodernism and the recursive strategies of neo-modernism appear equivalently exhausted. Neither suffices, yet nothing stands in their stead. Nor does 'art for art's sake' provide an acceptable substitute. In finally admitting that we do not know, we resort to the agnostic position. Perhaps all that is finally intellectually and emotionally defensible is that we still do not know.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Mikhail Epstein, 'On The Place of Postmodernism in Postmodernity: Removing the Quotation Marks', <http://www.emory.edu/INTELNET/e.pm.conclusion.html>: 4

<sup>2</sup> Ashley Bickerton, quoted in D. Robbins [ed.], 'From Criticism to Complicity', an edited transcript of discussion between Sherrie Levine, Pater Halley, Jeff Koons, Haim Steinbach, Ashley Bickerton and Philip Taaffe, which was moderated by Peter Nagy at Pat Hearn Gallery, New York, 2 May 1986, *Flash Art* 129, Summer 1986: 46

<sup>3</sup> Richard Grayson, interviewed by Jacqueline Millner. 'Sydney Biennale 2002: Tripping Over a Zeitgeist', <http://www.realtimemarts.net/rt48/millner.html>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Tom Moody, 'Jack Featherly's 'As If' Paintings', <http://www.digitalmediatree.com/tommoody/featherly/>

<sup>6</sup> Tim Griffin, 'Jack Featherly', *Art in America*, July 1998: 94

<sup>7</sup> Ken Johnson, 'Art listings: Jack Featherly', *New York Times*, Arts section, 5 April 2002, <http://college4.nytimes.com/guests/articles/2002/04/05/911730.xml>

<sup>8</sup> Mikhail Epstein, 'On The Place of Postmodernism in Postmodernity: Removing the Quotation Marks', <http://www.emory.edu/INTELNET/e.pm.conclusion.html>: 4

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> In his influential work, *Course in General Linguistics* [1916], Swiss linguist Ferdinand Saussure established a structural study of language that emphasised the arbitrary relationship of the linguistic sign to that which it supposedly signified. Saussure distinguished synchronic linguistics [the study of language at a given moment] from diachronic linguistics [the study of the changing state of a language over time]

<sup>11</sup> See Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1996

<sup>12</sup> See Yve-Alain Bois, 'Painting as Model', in *Painting as Model*, October Books, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993: 245–57

<sup>13</sup> For an example of such analysis see Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-garde* [trans. Michael Shaw], Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984: 53

<sup>14</sup> Hal Foster, 'What's Neo about the Neo Avant-Garde?', in M. Buskirk and M. Nixon [eds.], *The Duchamp Effect: Essays, Interviews, Round Table*, Cambridge, Mass: October Books, MIT Press, 1996

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Hal Foster, 'This Funeral is for the Wrong Corpse', in *Design & Crime [and Other Diatribes]*, New York: Verso, 2002: 133

<sup>17</sup> Benjamin Buchloh, *October* 70, 1994. Reprinted in M. Buskirk and M. Nixon [eds.], *The Duchamp Effect: Essays, Interviews, Round Table*, Cambridge, Mass: October Books, MIT Press, 1996: 3

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid: 4

<sup>20</sup> Rex Butler, *An Uncertain Smile: Australian Art in the '90s*, Sydney: Artspace Visual Arts Centre, 1996

<sup>21</sup> See Hal Foster, 'What's Neo about the Neo Avant-Garde?', in M. Buskirk and M. Nixon [eds.], *The Duchamp Effect: Essays, Interviews, Round Table*, Cambridge, Mass: October Books, MIT Press, 1996

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. "We did not lose. In a sense a worse thing happened: treated as a fashion, postmodernism became *démodé*."

<sup>23</sup> Hal Foster, 'This Funeral is for the Wrong Corpse', in *Design & Crime [and Other Diatribes]*, New York: Verso, 2002: 125

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid: 127

<sup>26</sup> Ibid: 125

<sup>27</sup> Ibid: 123

<sup>28</sup> Ibid: 141

<sup>29</sup> Ibid: 127

<sup>30</sup> See Jean Baudrillard, 'Warhol: Snobbish Machine' [trans. Julian Pefanis], University of Sydney, Department of History and Theory, 1999, unpublished

<sup>31</sup> Thomas McEvilly, 'Enormous Changes at the Last Minute', *Artforum* Vol 30 No 2, October 1991: 87

<sup>32</sup> Nicholas Zurbrugg, *Critical Vices: The Myths of Postmodern Theory*, Amsterdam: G+B Arts International, 2000: 63

<sup>33</sup> Yve-Alain Bois, *Painting as Model*, Cambridge, Mass: October Books, MIT Press, 1990

<sup>34</sup> Su Baker, in conversation with the author, 2/11/04

<sup>35</sup> Mikhail Epstein, 'On the Place of Postmodernism in Postmodernity: Removing the Quotation Marks', <http://www.emory.edu/INTELNET/e.pm.conclusion.html>: 3

<sup>36</sup> Jean Baudrillard, 'Warhol: Snobbish Machine' [trans. Julian Pefanis], University of Sydney, Department of History and Theory, 1999, unpublished: 6

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ben Curnow, 'John Young: Paradigm Fountain', *Art Asia Pacific* 13, 1997: 104

<sup>39</sup> Ibid: 104

<sup>40</sup> John Young, quoted from an interview with the author at Sherman Galleries, Sydney, on 24 October, 2001

<sup>41</sup> Arthur C. Danto, *Beyond the Brillo Box: The Visual Arts in Post-Historical Perspective*, University of California Press, 1992: 145

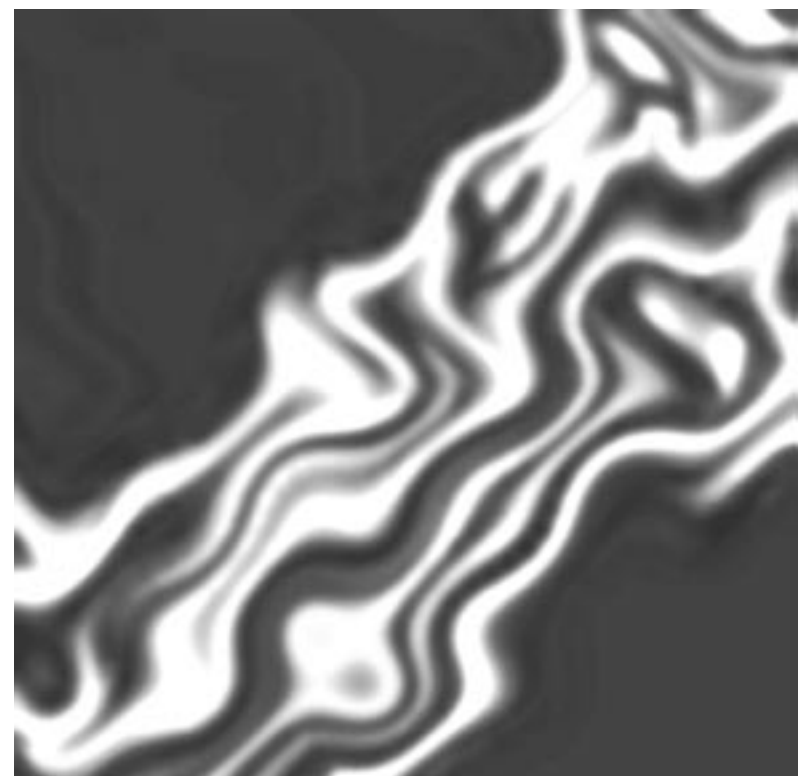
<sup>42</sup> Donald Kuspit, 'The Hard-To-Get-At Muse', *Artnet*, <http://www.artnet.com/magazine/reviews/kuspit/kuspit1-29-01.asp>

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> John C. Welchman, 'Introduction, Global Nets: Appropriation and Postmodernity', in *Art After Appropriation: Essays on Art in the 1990s*, Amsterdam: G+B Arts International, 2001: 53

<sup>45</sup> John M. Armleder, 1993. Quoted in [http://www.artspace.org.nz/shows/99\\_3.html](http://www.artspace.org.nz/shows/99_3.html)

<sup>46</sup> UK sociologist Anthony Giddens' model for a "third way" consisted of an amalgamation of political values formerly identified with the Left or Right of the political spectrum. Giddens' model was endorsed by UK Prime Minister Tony Blair's Labour Party during the late 1990s



All images Sean Lowry, *Untitled*, 2005