

The Psyche In Seventeen Increments

This ongoing body of work is an investigation into methods of embodying psychological and emotional experiences in physical form. This basic central principle is one of the core focuses of my practice.

The project was engendered by a rereading of a series of my personal journals, accumulated over a 10 year period, in which I wrote about my daily life, attempting to assimilate a disarray of thoughts, ideas, issues, stresses and anxieties by examining them through the written word. The writing was peppered with poetry and song lyrics I had composed over that period, which reflected my state of mind. On reviewing this material, I realised that, examined in chronological order, they represented a narrative of emotion. The trajectory of the narrative was circular, sweeping away incrementally in an expansive manner, but eventually arriving more or less back at the starting point.

When I isolated these poems from the rest of the text, I saw that there were seventeen of them, the same as the number of syllables used in a traditional Japanese haiku. The poems were highly personal and emotional in nature, revealing them as they were would convey a confessional quality, which didn't suit my practice, but I felt I wanted to investigate the substance of the emotional journey.

I reworked the material as a series of transformations as a way of testing how emotional referencing changes from one material and format to another.

The stages of transformation of the seventeen parts of the material are as follows:

Transcripts from the Timeline Of An Invented History

Each of the original poems/song lyrics was rewritten as a haiku, distilling the overarching emotion as much as possible into its essential form. These were written in fragile, barely legible handwriting on thin, delicate sepia coloured paper. They were mounted, in three line, seventeen syllable, haiku format, suspended by transparent thread and back lit, so that they seemed to be floating, over the wall surface, the supernatural remnants of a past revealed.

Somatic Continuum

Each emotion identified in the *Transcripts* was illustrated as collage in abstract figure form. These are edgy, disturbing, disfigured bodies, suggesting they have undergone some trial or process leading to this transformation. There is a feeling of their being subhuman, as if this is what we are under the surface, splintered, though we may look complete to the public gaze.

Fragmented Response To Loci

The collages from Somatic Continuum were reinvented as fragmented sculptures composed of disparate elements, and jagged edges, human form but not quite cohering, parts held together with wire and pins.

Apertures

A series of large watercolour paintings capturing the quantity of light to shadow suggested by each identified emotional state from the original haiku. This was an intuitive, not scientific, process. The form of the paintings reference the "eyes of the soul", or the aperture of a camera using degrees of light to create images. They were mounted as a single installation work, seventeen pieces in three rows, arranged in traditional haiku format.