"Sounding Identity: extending traditional portrait form with temporal sound and music as its initiating media"

CHAPTERS

This chapter details the creative development, conceptual framework and problems encountered during the process of completing the initial project *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence (2018)* - 7 channel audio with 6 channel film created for the Data Arena at UTS. The chapter includes links to the creative works.

CHAPTER 2

The Voyeur:

We are all voyeurs. How many of us watch the faces around us and imagine who the 'real' person is behind them. As new born babies, our eyes are constantly drawn to the face of the mother; as children, the first figures we draw are usually stick bodies with oversized faces, and even these faces, primitive as they are, have expression. As adults, we overtly and covertly catch glimpses or ourselves and others in mirrors, reflective windows; we watch each other in public places; on buses, in the car beside us at the traffic lights, at parties and cafes.

We attempt to 'capture' these faces in portraits; social media with its billions of portraits; passports, police mug shots, security cards; press photography, film, TV and family photos are all ubiquitous in our lives; modern portrait prizes introduce high art portraiture to millions who have access to museums or news media. And the remarkable thing is, in all manifestations of the human form, there is something to intrigue us, to inform us, whether accurately or not, to spike the imagination.

This is because, in all these portraits we attempt to capture and see not just a physical 'good likeness' but also some sense of our inner selves. And yet can we really attain, with any consistency, some deeper understanding of the other by looking at a portrait presented solely as an image, a captured single moment in time, a face with a single expression?

And on another level, we could be questioning the very existence of that essential identity in each human being; is there, in fact, anything real to be represented or is every moment of reality, including our inner selves, merely a *"model of a real without origin or reality"* a *"simulacrum"* as Jean Baudrillard contends. (Baudrillard, 1988)

A dark view indeed but one that perhaps sums up the world of virtual identities, the photo-manipulated reproduced images, the "fake news" photos and "alternate facts" of personal and social narratives - the endless circuit of simulacra that are the hyperreal, edifice of reality in the 21 Century.

So I ask, can we really attain some deeper understanding of the other by looking at a portrait? As a historical artefact, or as an iconic trace of a memory, it has something to offer, but its expression is limited and I suggest, cannot achieve its most noble intention of capturing both the outer and inner manifestation of who we are.

The research question:

Hence the aim throughout my dissertation and creative works, has been to explore how significant music and sound might contribute to the hitherto silent world of traditional visual portraiture. The creative outcomes of the doctorate are two self portraits made up of many portraits of individuals that exist in an extended time and incorporate as the initiating media, a sound portrait to express the intangible, emotional nature of their

inner identities. Attached to the sound portrait is moving film image to depict the external manifestation of identity. In this way, I ask whether this significant music/sound text can legitimately extend the traditional practises of portrait making past the depiction of an external 'good likeness', to capture a representation of our fluctuating contemporary selves.

The theoretical overview:

I've chosen the topic 'portraits' within the context of music/sound paired with film. The idea fascinated me because it enabled an approach to the research in equal detail across the three disciplines that would be involved in the creative practise; visual arts, documentary and music/sound. Each of these areas resonate personally because my creative practise to date has been as a professional performing musician, a part time visual artist, documentary film maker and film composer. I offer the following broad outline of the theoretical considerations that I will expand on in later chapters.

Visual art theory has written voluminously on the subject of portraiture largely because of its long portrait tradition beginning in the Renaissance when modern portraiture began. (Walker, 1984) (Reiss, 2003) It is the visual arts that have defined portraiture as a form and that definition could be summed up as

"a representation or depiction of a living being as a unique individual possessing
1. *A recognisable physical body along with*
2. *An inner life. That is, some sort of character and/or psychological or mental states"* (C Freeland, 2010)

That is put simply, an expression of both an external and an internal identity. It is within the theorising and creation of visual art portraits that theories of self are met head on and addressed by artists and scholars.

While the visual arts, due to their history, have defined portraiture, documentary has taken up the form with its own supplementary 'added values'; (Chion, 1994) both image, sound and temporality. While documentary has more media resources at its disposal, it has economic and cultural constraints - funding, broadcast requirements and a limitation created by its claims in regard to objective truth in reporting. (Adorno &

Eisler, 1947; Breitrose, 1964; Corner, 1996; Minh-ha T, 1990; Nichols, 1993; M Renov, 1993; Winston, Wang, & Vanstone, 2017)

Music/sound is the least practised in representing the human identity. Ironically, its particular strength lies in this minimal representational ability, (Langer, 1953)(Cox, 2011) (Raffman, 1993) leaving space for an openness not available in the other two disciplines. To state the obvious, it does not <u>look</u> like anything however, the particular emotion and meaning that can be conveyed by significant sound, words and music, alone of all the arts, is an effective 'added value'. (Daltrozzo, Schön, & Scho, 2008; T. Fritz et al., 2009; T. H. Fritz, Schmude, Jentschke, Friederici, & Koelsch, 2013; Janata, 2004; Koelsch et al., 2004; Kuchinke, L Kappelhoff, H Koelsch, 2013; Painter & Koelsch, 2011; Slevc & Patel, 2011; J. Sloboda, 2005; J. A. Sloboda, 1991; John A. Sloboda, O'Neill, & Ivaldi, 2001)

These three disciplines are clearly separated in scholarly realms as well as in practise. The doctorate unites them, both creatively within a work that requires a single artist originator (Gernalzick, 2006) to exercise skills across each discipline of music/sound, film and visual arts; and theoretically, via the philosophical considerations that cross all the disciplines - from Cartesian ideas in the Renaissance to the Post Structural theorists to whom practitioners in each discipline, refer in their thinking and practise.

To approach the portrait form with music/sound combined with film, I am, as well as researching contemporary theoretical considerations, also exploring the historical first principles of portrait, documentary and music/sound theory to ask what each brings to the portrait - the limitations and the strengths determined by the specificity of their form - to investigate where music/sound might provide a significant text to extend traditional visual portraiture. These theoretical explorations are detailed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 3

The methodology overview:

"As a method of materialising ideas, research is unavoidably creative" (Carter, 2004)(7)

The methodology incorporates both theoretical investigation of the research context alongside practise based creative outputs. The area of research has been initially investigated from a theoretical perspective as broadly outlined above and detailed in later chapters. This theoretical investigation has been informed by and has informed the creative practise outcomes in a circular fashion with the theoretical research and writings continually intersecting with the practise based creative process. Research, invention, reflection, creation, review and evaluation inform the other with the outcomes being both completed artworks and a written exegesis that is at the same time 'about' and 'of' the work; that is, an explanation of the ideas behind the creative works <u>and</u> itself part of an opening field of enquiry; *"not to write <u>about</u> art but to write <u>of</u> creative research, to document the making of a new social relation through a concomitant act of production"* (Carter, 2004)(10)

As is customary in a creative research doctorate, the creative work carries the principal weight of the research.

The creative outcomes:

"I was making a continuous succession of the statement of what a person was until I had not many things but one thing" (Stein, G 1974)(103)

- *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence (2018)* **-** 7 channel audio with 26 minute 6 channel film
- *Self Portrait 2: xxxxxxx (2019)*

The two creative works are both self portraits, each exploring different elements of the research questions.

"For much of Western art history a trend can ... be detected; while music imitated 'men's characters feelings and actions' (Aristotle, 1965) *fine art imitated the appearance of things"* (Shaw-Miller, 2013)(34)

The portraits start with sound; the intangible, uncanny sonorous event that can't be touched and unless the source is present and obvious, we could be fooled into thinking it an hallucination that has faded into old air, no remnant left. Perhaps a good place to

start to attempt to re-present the elusive internal individual.

To the sound is added vision; temporal digital film and other subtexts which, as traditional portraiture has for centuries, re-present the tangible bodily presence; the 'good likeness'.

Portrait traditions inform all the works; from mimetic portrayal utilising perspective, sound/music utilising hierarchical tonal structures and other closed textural additions informed by works from the Renaissance; to contemporary fragments of sound vision and text within open, chaotic relationships. I have attempted to capture a plethora of moments of sound with subtexts of vision, narrative and style referencing portrait traditions

In both self portraits, I have constructed myself via a series of intimate portraits of the other, thereby creating a self-portrait with Post Structural theory of the self as its framework. The Cartesian ontological dualism which formed the Cartesian view of self, and the radically different postmodern thinking around self, truth and reality, are the lenses through which we create and also through which we observe, analyse and criticise the visual arts and music/sound. The broad conceptual framework of my practise has been to use the theories of Barthes, Lacan, Foucault, Derrida and Baudrillard as a lens through which to view the ways in which theories of identity from the Renaissance and the 21 Century, have grounded portraiture. In particular, I have created portraits that use the traditions of portraiture that saw their first stirrings in the Renaissance and have attempted to extend my creative work through the lens of postmodernism. Herein lies the theoretical and practical challenge of this creative research; how to embrace the fragments of self, culture and media to bring them into meaningful dialogue with each other.

The self portrait and autobiography:
(look at collaboration - I'm 'collaborating' with myself - Paul Carter Material)

A defining feature of my methodology is to be the single artist originator of the portraits that make up the self portrait. In my determination to create the work in this way, I am attempting to closely align with the defining elements of the visual art self portrait. It is within literary autobiography scholarship that the form has been comprehensively

studied, Philippe Lejeune's definition seeing it as a retrospective story created by a real person concerning her own life and personality.

"Autobiography (narrative recounting the life of the author) supposes that there is identity of name between the author (artist*), the narrator of the story, and the character who is being talked about"* (Lejeune, 1989)(12)

A self portrait is different in only one element; that is, it does not necessarily have a retrospective temporal narrative. Rather, in the case of a visual self portrait, only a moment in time is captured. In the definitions of both autobiography and self portrait, the clear indication however, is that the process calls for a single artist originator who produces a work about his or her life. (HavertyRugg, 2006)

I will generally use the title 'Self Portrait' to clearly identify my work as part of the genre that I am attempting to extend - the visual art self portrait. However, given my work involves both film image and music, it is temporal in nature and so could be equally aligned to autobiography. At times I use both these descriptions interchangeably.

Film, in many ways is perfect for autobiography; the referential power of the camera is unequalled; the 'having been there-ness" of film is undeniable, which enables an unparalleled ability to reference the external characteristics of an individual. However, Elizabeth Bruss claims in her oft quoted essay, the use of film or multimedia to create autobiography, given the large scale production needs of most films, can make satisfying this definition impossible; the person in front of the camera - the protagonist of the autobiography - cannot also be the person behind the camera (the artist) let alone the person editing the film, composing the score, the designer, sound recordist and all the other personnel required in a multimedia production.

"Where the rules of language designate a single source, film has instead a disparate group of distinct roles and separate stages of production.... There is ... no way of discriminating a shot of the director from the shot of any other, indifferent individual" (Bruss, 1980) (304-305)

Bruss's conclusion is that given the increasing dominance of film and sound media over the single author literary work *"the autobiographical act as we have known it for the past 400 years could indeed become more and more recondite, and eventually extinct"* (296-297)

Theorists have attempted to open the definition of multimedia autobiography to embrace the 'collaborative' (HavertyRugg, 2001) or 'interactive' (Egan, 1994) nature of contemporary selfhood thereby allowing the creative input of others in a multimedia autobiography. I consider this an unnecessarily artificial adjustment; as Renov and Gernalzick (Gernalzick, 2006; Michael Renov, 2004) have pointed out, it <u>is</u> possible to create an autobiography according to the classical definition if the multimedia autobiography is one that is not acted but rather created and performed by the single artist originator.

"As a consequence of not including single-person-produced films, ... scholars ... continue to deny the possibility of filmic autobiography because a technological division of autobiographical subjectivity in the person before the camera, the cinematographer, the editor, and the narrator is assumed to be irreducible." (Gernalzick, 2006)(3)

I choose to maintain this essential feature of autobiography in my work - the protagonist, narrator and creator of the work are the same individual. In all my work, it can and will be argued that the person behind the camera as well as the sound and music heard narrating the story are created by the subject of the autobiography who is the single artist originator.

None the less, the late 20th Century deconstruction of a stable self has indeed changed the landscape for the autobiographical act, but not in the way suggested by Haverty Rugg and Egan. Contemporary thinking sees the self as elusive and recreated in every moment; the self is defined by how the other sees it; the self is defined by social relationships and mediated through language; the self is never defined except as forever shifting moments of perception. It would be easy to conclude as many have, that this deconstruction of a stable self means there can be no such thing as a self-portrait or autobiography. Instead I maintain we could draw the conclusion that the self-portrait is the generic form of <u>all</u> portraiture because all portraits capture both the other (sitter)

and the self (artist), simultaneously and by this action are capturing a self that is mediated via social relationships and the constantly fluctuating dialogue of perception and language between the self and the other.

Integrated into my autobiographical work are portraits of the other and it is through these portraits of the other that I, as a single artist originator, have constructed many moments of myself.

Therefore, who is the portrayed?

"... one might claim that the portrait rests on a competition between sitter and portraitist as to not only which in the true subject but which is the true author." (Steiner, W 1987)*(171)*

Van Alpen comments on the importance of the artist of portraits; as he says, both the portrayer and the portrayed exist as an original reality and as this double act, they create a special relationship that increases the 'being' of the represented <u>and</u> the representation. It is the double act itself that authenticates the portrait and that makes us as viewers believe that the signified (sitter) and the signifier (portrait) form a unity that conveys a true reality. (Van Alphen, 1977)

Wendy Steiner suggests the interaction is so profound that one could question who is being portrayed; is it the artist or the sitter?
"On the one hand the work focuses on its represented subject: on the other it expresses the artist's conceiving of that subject and hence the artist <u>per se</u>....and so one might claim that the portrait rests on a competition between sitter and portraitist as to not only which in the true subject but which is the true author." (Wendy Steiner, 1987)*(171)*

This follows from an intuitive view many artists would share, encapsulated by the words of Matisse early last century:

"I believe, however, that the essential expression of a work depends almost entirely on the projection of the feeling of the artist in relation to his model rather than in organic accuracy...." (quoted in Cynthia Freeland, 2007)(156)

In other words, portraits are not only indexical documents of identification and recognition in that they evidence a person's interior and exterior existence, but, as works created by an artist, they are also works of fiction with an aesthetic form and an interaction that can act to intensify the 'being-ness' of both the person represented and the artist, who is also represented.

By this interaction they "*take us away from the passive state of 'It is painted'*" as one would claim when viewing a painting to, *"the complex action of 'I see another'"* (Soussloff C. M., 2006)*(122)*

It is my subjective *'I see another'* that is explored in my creative works. The individual 'selves' that are presented here emerge, in *Self Portrait 1: ...(2018)* from different perspectives of a single event and in *Self Portrait 2: ... (2019)*, from random fragments offered by the sitter. While each subject's experience is portrayed as an expression of their own inner self, these expressions are captured via the perspective of the artist, to create in essence, a self portrait of that artist. Like Deleuze's rhizome, the filaments of the multiple fragments spread far and wide; no one individual has solid borders but rather we are conjoined "*always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo..."* (Deleuze, Guattari, 2005) *(25)*

The process:

"To conduct research is, in the first instance, to explore, to wander about, without any itinerary in place, or any necessary destination in mind, but to do so with a fervency, an intensity of focus, that would not ordinarily be associated with an aimless stroll." (Briggs & Lucy, 2012)

This method of research, wandering either aimlessly or with only a broad context in mind and with little solid plan as to how or even what final outcome might be reached, describes well the method chosen for this creative research. This method is very much concerned with the 'process' in the first instance, the 'outcome' being an almost surprising gift emerging from the intensity of focus.

Both the creative works have been created in this way. While both are clearly multimedia works involving sound, music, filmed image and editing, they defy the usual

characteristic of multimedia by being a single artist produced work and so are able to unfold via a subjective process. By comparison, more conventional film making requires forward planning involving a team of skilled personnel; the story is developed, the script is written followed by treatment and shooting schedules, the shoot and edit. Finally the score is written and recorded, joining the other media in a pre-defined outcome.

Single artist produced works follow instead, in the tradition of visual art portraiture; that is, as the paint is slowly applied and layered over time the continually evolving work is considered by the artist and decisions are made as part of that ongoing, circular process. This process is time consuming, highly subjective and intensely focused. The process undertaken for this creative work is detailed in Chapters 6 & 7.

CHAPTER 4

EYES
Embodied Likeness and Interiority: referencing and extending the traditional Renaissance portrait

From the stick figures and handprints of cave paintings; the primitive featureless forms of Neanderthal man's carvings, through to the spirit catching Egyptian tomb portraits; the perfect idealised forms of Greek and Roman portraits to the Renaissance when modern portraiture as we know it began, the simple definition of a portrait fits each and every one of these eras. That is, the portrait refers, in bodily form, to a human being that in some way exists outside the portrait[1]

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[1] A whimsical idea of mine to add the portraits of various scholars I review and yet, a point is made. On their own, images mean very little - particularly the more recent portraits which appear mugshot-like in their blandness. None the less, placed beside the text, they immediately take on a deeper meaning; the image and the words each inform and enrich the other. For Barthes, the text forms the '*anchor*' to the image, directing the reader to 'see' the portrait in a certain way and the image adding meaning to the text. (R Barthes, 1977a) For Benjamin, the text turns all images into literature and without this, the photograph may remain meaningless. *" This is where the caption comes in, whereby photography turns all life's relationships into literature, and without which all constructivist photography must remain arrested in the approximate... Will not the caption become the most important part of the photograph?*" (Benjamin, 1997) (256)

Scholars Richard Brilliant, Cynthia Freeland, Marcia Pointon, Van Alphen, Catherine Soussaloff, Joanna Woodall, offer a similar definition: a portrait is

"a representation or depiction of a living being as a unique individual possessing

　　1. A recognisable physical body along with

　　2. An inner life. That is, some sort of character and/or 　　psychological or mental states"

(C Freeland, 2010)(5)

(Brilliant, 1991, 2007; Pointon, 2013; Van Alphen, 1977; Woodall, 1977)

Or from Sousaloff:

"The truth claim of an indexical exteriority, or resemblance, to the person portrayed simultaneously coexists in the genre with a claim to the representation of interiority or spirituality. Both are said to reside in the portrait representation itself and in the eyes of the beholder." (Soussloff C. M., 2006)(5)

The eyes within the face

"The standard of likeness cannot be maintained in the object portrait with any consistency, but the expectation that we can potentially or actually recognise an individual in a portrait makes the genre what it is" (Soussloff C. M., 2006) *(6)*

The face traditionally, was the central place for representation of both the external 'good likeness' and the 'inner life' from pre-Renaissance onward, and the powers encapsulated in the representation of the face were particularly amplified by J.C Lavater's Essays on Physiognomy (1774-78) that offered a scientific codification of the face that supported the assertion that it could also reveal the inner psyche. *(Lavater, 1789)*

Charles Le Brun, the court painter to Louis XIV took these studies to his portraits and they became the guide for portrait painters for at least the next 100 years. Franz Joseph Gall (1810), followed with his 'science' of phrenology; Charles Bell (1806) and Duchenne de Boulogne both developed theories of measuring the expressions of the face culminating in the work of Charles Darwin's in his work The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals (1899)

We look at these ideas now and are amused by the naivety of the conclusions drawn and the authority the face was granted based on the ideas presented; portrayed faces have played a part in political, monocratic and theocratic power, they have placed themselves with God, they have subjugated populations and races via their study as 'types', and now the face has become a playground for postmodern artists to trivialise, subvert, endlessly reproduce and distort. None the less, rather than having abandoned faces, we still follow our Darwinian biology and attend to, and interpret the expressions of the face even though, intellectually, we know that the face cannot reveal a true inner self. It continues to be rare indeed, even in the postmodern 21st Century, to find a portrait without at least some manifestation of a bodily part, and more usually it is a face.

My creative research is informed by traditional Renaissance portraiture in its focus on the visual conventions of a facial likeness front and centre of the frame. However, I aim to extend the techniques and media of the traditional portrait with the use of music and sound, to research the proposition that this may act to increase the focus on the interiority of the sitter. I expand on these ideas in the following sections.

The fluctuating self:

"The eyes are the windows to the soul" (https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Eyes)

The *"I see another"* of portraiture is a complex plenitude of interactions that supplies endless questions for theorists and artists alike. What is this 'other' that portraitists have been aiming to capture? Concepts of identity are inextricably linked to the history of portraiture. Because portraits re-present human figures, "*their seeing and showing also contains the ways through which a society learns to imagine human essence, in other words discourses and practices about body, self, soul, mind, identity, and subjectivity"* (Subhash Jaireth, 2003)*(37)*

Cartesian views of identity and portraiture have been the dominant mode of thinking about the self since modern portraiture began during the Renaissance. From this thinking came a single pointed, highly directed view of reality; a separation of mind and body; a separation of reality 'out there' and the experiencing subject; a separation of sitter, viewer and artist originator. This hierarchy it has been argued, is no longer entirely viable within the context of Post Structural ideas of the subject, object and the 'death of the author' (R Barthes, 1977b).

An explosion of portraiture came with the decline of religious repression and the rise of the individual during the Renaissance and the theories of self developed by Descartes reflected the era. The Cartesian view saw the human as dualistic; body and mind were two distinct elements. The self was seen as separate and stable, with

a self-determining will that enabled the individual to act independently; a will that could abstain from believing in things (even in God) and that exempted the individual from being subject to Him. This was a radical shift away from the ancient world and the later Christian West, where individuals did not have a self that exercised free will, intent and choice but rather, a soul inextricably bound to God and the social community. The idea of the soul could not survive the impact of modern physical science in the 17th and 18th centuries. Descartes's idea of the self as consciousness was recruited to take its place, and this unified stable self, discoverable by a clear rational mind, became the subject of portraiture. (Reiss, 2003) Realistic portraits of the growing numbers of middle
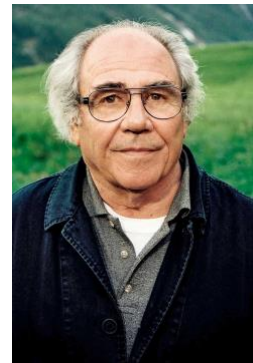
class, with the defined form of a face highlighted front and central and a dark or disappearing background utilising perspective, were widespread. (Walker, 1984)

According to Martin and Barresi, by the 2nd half of the 20th Century, post-World War II, largely because of French post structuralism, this 'self' had become comprehensively fragmented and dethroned. (Martin, R. & Barresi, 2006)

After WWII, building on the semiotic theorist Saussure, the structural theorist Levi-Strauss and the psychoanalyst Freud, the post structuralists, Lacan, Barthes, Foucault, Derrida and Baudrillard, each with their own variation, discarded the Cartesian model of self as unique and stable and recast the self as socially and linguistically constituted. They claimed that the reflective powers considered by the Renaissance and Enlightenment thinkers to give human individuals free agency, were constructed by the very language and culture that restricts those powers because words themselves have no stable meaning; without a stable centre the self itself is destabilised and decentred and in a constant state of reconstitution. (Martin, R. & Barresi, 2006)

"It is a matter of depriving the subject (or its substitute) of its role as originator, and of analysing the subject as a variable and complex function of discourse... The author has been decentred, that is, relegated to linguistic structure - a subject position not a centre. In p[lace of a centre is an author that creates a clearing."(Foucault, 1984)*(118)*

It was into this new mid 20th Century reality that confidence in the definitions of a 'portrait' begin to become undermined by the new theorists. The portrait genre, in its imperative to convey an authentic likeness of the sitter both in their inner psyche and external features, was placed in an untenable position as centre of a storm of debates about the nature of reality and identity. It could have been the end of portraiture as a genre however, instead, the portrait artist's dilemma about the nature of the self to be represented became the perfect place to deconstruct and subvert prior thinking about the definition of the self and to engage in new ways of thinking about the intersection between portraits and human identity. (Van Alphen, 1977)

Visual Art Portraits and the fluctuating self:
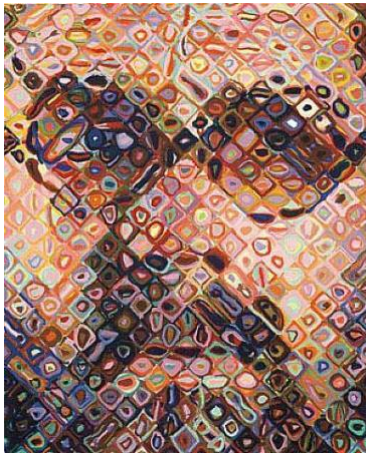
Mimetic portrayal became the victim of the new thinking. The abstraction, cubism and impressionism of Picasso and Matisse, beginning with Picasso's Portrait of Gertrude Stein; the deeply subjective expressionists Kokoshka, Munch, Beckman, Sheile; through to the un-personed postmodern portraits of Sherman, Lee, Close; the celebrity constructions of

Warhol; and the desecrated faces of Bacon; the creation of one's face and body image as a 'good likeness' was no longer the imperative

As a consequence of the loss of mimesis, intertextuality has become important - titles, narratives and other signs became the defining element in portraiture. (W. Steiner, 1978) As Barthe contends, text can act as an anchor to meaning. It is a *"parasitic message designed to connate the image"* (R Barthes, 1977c)(25) And Derrida in his work The Truth in Painting, devotes a chapter to the portrait of Walter Benjamin in which he speaks at length 'around' the title of the portrait, Retratto di Walter Benjamin.

Derrida says:

"When the face begins to disappear, or as here, no longer to occupy the top of centre, the legend becomes necessary... Disappeared is the subject. What has disappeared appears, absent in the very place of the commemorative monument, returning to the empty place marked by his name. Art of the cenotaph." (Derrida, 1987)(178)
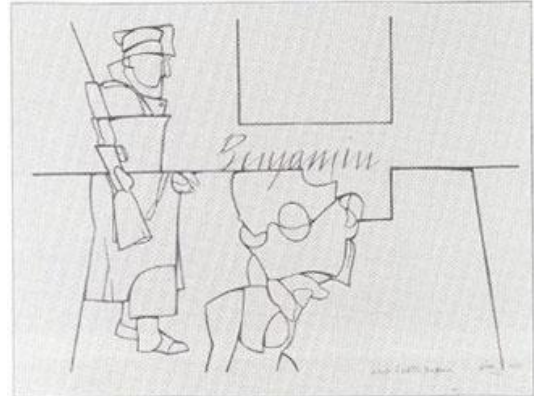
"The idea now seems to be that the face hides so much of the person's reality that the true markers of autobiographic revelation are anything but the person's face." (Seigel, 2005)(73)

The contemporary portrait is no longer able to sit comfortably within its simple definitions because the concept of the existence of a solid inner identity that has its outward manifestation in the face and body of the sitter can no longer be sustained.

"Through (portraiture) we realise how powerful a vehicle of postmodern concerns the portrait's paradoxes have become" (Wendy Steiner, 1987)*(171)*

Film Portraits and the fluctuating self:

The 'self' captured in film and television documentary portraits has also been subjected to the pressure of the postmodern lens. The belief that there was a reality 'out there', a signified, that could be captured identically by a signifier image, has been called into question. This was particularly so in documentary because the camera had been from its inception, enshrined as the ideal of scientific transparency. It was this detailed presentation of reality that provided a convincing canvas in which to turn unreality into a *pretence* of reality.

In this way, documentary portraiture and high art portraiture sit in a similar dialectic. Film's problematic dialectic between the claims of evidence-based reality and the subjective expression of the filmmaker, mirrors and amplifies that of high art portraiture, where traditionally the portrait is expected to be offering as close to a mimetic representation of the subject as the artist's ability allows and yet each portrait is deeply embedded with the artist's subjective interpretation. Looking at the history of film and film theorising, we can see the issues argued in a concertinaed version; a dialectic that plays out over a hundred years, from the first public showing of film by the Lumiere brothers in 1895, instead of five hundred years since modern art portraiture began in the Renaissance.

For both art forms, mimetic representation has been conflated with the reality or truth of the referent. (Bazin, 1958) (Benjamin, 1997) (Mitry, 1998) (Metz, 1985b) (Eisenstein, 1949) (Corner, 1996) (Nichols, 2010) This conflation and the attending debate has been more marked in broadcast documentary film than art portraiture because the work is presented with mimetic images and sound in the form of evidence, with the use of archival and seemingly accurate capturing of reality 'as it happens' as well as interpretation of the image in the form of an authoritative voice-over and interviews. It is these 'supplementary components' as Christian Metz calls them, (Metz, 1985b) incorporated into the time-based motion of film, that most renders its power in appearing to mirror reality. (Nichols, 2010)

The debates in both art forms around the issues of reality/truth and the depiction of such in portraiture come from different places. For visual art practise, the changing discussions around identity theory, particularly with changes in the late 20th Century have created the most scholarly argument. For documentary, the arguments come from two places; the covert nature of the filmmaker's subjectivity and economic and political influences on filmmakers. The strength and longevity of the style of Expository broadcast documentary spearheaded by Grierson (B Winston, 2008) and the studios funded by government and other business interests, is testament to the effects of politics and funding on an art form. Film prepared for broadcast consumption, is an expensive pursuit and it is the dominant political and cultural paradigm that will determine the financial winners. (Adorno & Eisler, 1947; Minh-ha T, 1990)

While art, at various stages in its history, has been driven by the economic imperative of patronage, certainly in the 20th Century, with the beginning of independent government funding bodies, art has been able to, at least partially, wrest itself from being tied to sources that would strongly direct the final work. Unlike the production of film, creating small, independent art work is affordable and hence able to be created and shown to a wide audience without major financial support.

This has altered the raison d'etre for both art forms. Art is able to take space for aesthetic and philosophical considerations and such subjective musings are considered its major 'reason for being'. The artists aim is self-expression; the 'hand of the artist' is actively sought in a portrait and it is applauded.[2]

Film documentary's use of the camera, an instrument enshrined as the ideal of transparency, reinforces the claims of authenticity and truth thereby masking the highly subjective nature of any artistic output. And yet, as the scholars I have reviewed have argued, broadcast documentary is highly invested in appearing to be objective. (Corner, 1996; M Renov, 1993; Winston G. Chi, Wang, 2017; Winston, 1993) Brian Winston suggests a solution to this dilemma:

"If documentary drops its pretence to a superior representation of actuality, explicit or implicit promises of simplistic, evidentiary 'referential integrity' will no longer need to be made... Unburdened by objectivity and 'actuality', film of the real world could be creatively treated without a hint of contradiction." (B Winston, 2008)(290)

And this is certainly what has happened as Renov has pointed out in his work The Subject of Documentary (Renov, 2004). With more single artist originator filmmakers offering a *'forceful reflex of self-interrogation*" (105) in their work, filmmakers wishing to express a subjective truth can and do look toward the ideal of art practise, that is, where the artist's hand is obvious and applauded. It is art's very subjectivity that relieves it of the burden of objective truth and gives it its strength and poetry. Documentary then, like art practise, becomes fiction; a fiction whose truth is purely personal; creating portraits that are 'signed' unashamedly by the filmmaker/artist; at once, portraits equally of the portrayed, the portrayer and the viewer.

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[2] Indeed the more famous the 'hand' the more it is applauded financially

EARS

The doorway to the soul

Music/sound[3] and the fluctuating self:

"A painter . . . in his longing to express his inner life cannot but envy the ease with which music, the most non-material of the arts today, achieves this end. He naturally seeks to apply the methods of music to his own art" (Kandinsky, 1914)

The central and initiating media I have chosen to depict the fluctuating, transient contemporary 'self', is music/sound.

We live in a world dominated by the visual; media in general prioritises the visually perceptible - advertising, film, TV, tablets and computers, visual art, projections - our eyes dominate to the neglect of hearing.[4] As film theorist Christian Metz pointed out, our physiology and perceptive hierarchy holds us in thrall to sight; sight that signifies being, space and presence; while sound, which is spatially vague and with no solid form, signifies absence of the material and as such can only have the status of a secondary "attribute" in relation to the primary visual and tactile "substance". (Metz, 1985a) Audio has become an experience that has been denied us in its totality through framing the world as something that is seen. (Schedel & Uroskie, 2011)

And not only does sound retreat into the background of our senses, but film music/sound has also floundered in the background of scholarly observation and exploration:

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[3] The 'instrumental music' (including the voice as instrument) I employ, mixed with the worded voice, vocalisations and all other sounds will be named 'MUSIC/SOUND'. I will name it thus because no one element will take priority but rather each of these different sounds are used as instruments in my overall composition; the outcome being the sound track to which the film images are finally added. Each sound, whether it is produced by an instrument, an object, electronically or vocally, is of equal definition and weight in the overall composition which is ultimately 'musical'. As needed for explanation in my text, I will call each of these sounds by their different denotations at times, but the overall composed result is always musical 'music/sound'.

[4] In fact, visual dominance over audio and other senses has been frequently scientifically demonstrated. eg. (Posner, M.I & Nissen, M.J & Klein, 1976; C. Spence, 2009)

"For it is also part of Sound's effacement that she respectfully declines to be interviewed, and previous writers on film have, with uncharacteristic circumspection, largely respected her wishes." (Murch, 1994)*(ix)*

But why need it be one or the other? I will try to tempt music/sound out of the shadows and to firmly take its place in the realm of portraiture at least, where it can share the portrait with the face of the other.

Music and representing the fluctuating self 1:

Music/sound has often been named to be a non-representational art, because it lacks the reference characteristic of words and images; that is, as a signifier or sign that stands for some other thing outside of itself. (Cox, 2011; Langer, 1953; Raffman, 1993) For this reason, music/sound has long eluded the analysis that has surrounded the visual arts in terms of representation, signification and reality and, as a result, has been considered to be purely formal and abstract. Many philosophers have seen music as the 'ideal'; the 'absolute'; the one that offers us 'significant form' precisely because its abstract nature leads it to be most suited to expressing emotions as opposed to the visual arts and portraiture which are highly representational and viewed in terms of their correspondence to external reality. Therefore, a recurrent theme in the history of music scholarship is that music symbolises abstract human emotions; that music is the *"tonal analogue of emotive life"*. (Langer, 1953)(27)(Davies, 1994, 2011; Kivy, 1990b; Meyer, 1956)

More recent theorists have disputed the certainty of this description of music/sound as purely non-representational (Cox, 2011), a point I am in agreement with and which I'll discuss further in this review. First, however, recent psychological and cognitive studies have also offered compelling results supporting the idea that music/sound can be representative of both emotions and meaning.

Music psychology:

The music philosopher's intuitive view that music/sound is effective in expressing abstract human emotions is borne out by psychological and cognitive studies. Physiological testing particularly from the 1980s onwards, has shown without doubt that music and sound can convey both emotions and meaning. In reading the many psychological studies (Daltrozzo, Schön, & Scho, 2008; T. Fritz et al., 2009; T. H. Fritz, Schmude, Jentschke, Friederici, & Koelsch, 2013; Janata, 2004; Koelsch et al., 2004; Kuchinke, L Kappelhoff, H Koelsch, 2013; Painter & Koelsch, 2011; Slevc & Patel, 2011; J. Sloboda, 2005; J. A. Sloboda, 1991; John A. Sloboda, O'Neill, & Ivaldi, 2001) it is clear that music/sound effectively conveys emotion and meaning via a complex process, taking into account the structural properties of music itself, the personal and cultural background of the listener, the physiological, aesthetic and emotional experience of the listener, and the timbre of the sounds heard.

Leonard Meyer led the way in directing the course of early physiological testing of music when he claimed convincingly that music was able to elicit emotions. He suggested music achieved this by the action of either fulfilling or suspending musical expectations within the structure of music itself; that is, emotions were produced in the listener when their expectations of what they were about to hear in a piece of music, were either fulfilled or suspended. (Meyer, 1956) Music philosophers Stephen Davies, with Nicholas Cook and Peter Kivy followed, arguing for what one could call the 'appearance' of emotions in music rather the theories that claim music arouses or contains emotions (though it can do this); it's a position one could call *"appearance emotionalism"*; that is, the music appears to be sad/happy/frightened much like a person can appear to be sad/happy/frightened. (Davies, 2011)(7) (Cook, 1998) It has been shown that even cross culturally, music is able to convey these basic emotions effectively. (T. Fritz et al., 2009)

A ground breaking study led by Koelsch in 2004 added substantially to the studies proving a link between music and emotion; his work added meaning to the list of attributes that music could represent. (Koelsch et al., 2004)

Their study showed that physiological measurements[5] were triggered by music in the same way as they were by language. These measurements showed, not that a musical sound directly represented something (we couldn't order a take-away for instance) but that the brain processing required for matching a conceptual meaning to a word was also elicited when the conceptual meaning was matched to a musical sound, in the same way and with the same strength and consistency. Koelsch's study began to open the way to the possibility that music/sound can have extra-musical meaning (that is, meaning outside itself) (Daltrozzo et al., 2008; Orgs, Lange, Dombrowski, & Heil, 2006; Schön, Ystad, Kronland-Martinet, & Besson, 2010) One study in particular emphasised this point when it showed that a single unrecognisable sound, even when presented to the listener outside of a musical context, could convey meaningful concepts. (Painter & Koelsch, 2011)

The quasi grammatical similarity to language is also a factor that has been postulated, gives music a sense of meaning not found in the visual arts, however it appears this meaning is in part ineffable and can't be translated either into direct representations or words. (Raffman, 1993) (Lerdahl, F & Jackendoff, 1983)

As well, it has been shown music plays a part in the formation, marking and fluctuations of identity, each of us holding within, our own *"inner musical library"* (Folkestad, 2012) or *"soundtrack of our life"*(Hargreaves, D & Meill, D & MacDonald, 2012) that constructs and re-constructs as our identities shift throughout our life.

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[5] The measurement used for electrical activity in the brain observed when an individual is processing semantic meaning in language and music, is the N400 which is a component of the event-related brain potential (ERP) measured by electroencephalography (EEG). It was discovered to be related to semantic processing and first began to be used in 1980. This is the method that has been used in most studies since then to measure the normal brain response to words and other potentially meaningful stimuli, in this case music/sounds.

While these studies offer compelling, and for my creative work, usable results, one must question the narrow focus on the minutiae of the musical experience and its artificial measurement in laboratory settings and ask - can the 'music alone' or 'absolute music' that formed the main element of these studies, actually exist?

Cook says there is no such thing as 'music alone'. He asserts: *"pure music it seems, is an aesthetician's (and music theorists) fiction: the real thing unites itself promiscuously with any other media that are available"* (Cook, 1998) Susanne Langer names music as an *"unconsummated symbol";* that is, a symbolic representation that is missing the final moment of representation or meaning. As such, music is constantly urging toward consummation and it achieves this by attaching to other media. (Langer, 1953) As Cook concludes, and more recent theorists confirm, (Tobias, 2004) 'music alone' rarely happens, and by this model, the key to meaning in music is not found in music alone but within all the elements (media and culture) that make up a musical discourse.
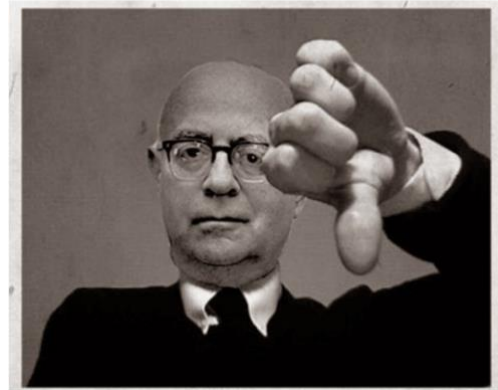
Music & Film:

The scholarly imposition of boundaries created by the long institutional separation of the academic disciplines around musicology and film music studies, have created an historical and ideological chasm between the disciplines. (Buhler, Kassabian, Neumeyer, Stilwell, 2003) Whereas the field of musicology came from the European, classical ideal of 'absolute music' and its research questioning tended to be narrowly focused on the internal structures of 'music alone' (Kivy, 1990a), film studies, because of the prioritising of image and story, tended to ignore music/sound altogether. It was not until the 1990s that scholars began to look at film music in more depth and begin to postulate the possibility of a cross-disciplinary perspective. In these last three decades, studies of film music have risen from practically nothing to a significant number, incorporating perspectives from cultural theory, musicology, psychology and other disciplines. (Stilwell, 2002)

Eisenstein wrote extensively about the way image and music could interact, well before the Hollywood juggernaut overwhelmed filmmaking. He called for the non-synchronisation of sound with image. Eisenstein, followed by Adorno and Eisler, were

ground breaking and sadly alone, in their criticism of the 'culture industry' as it existed (and still does) in Hollywood. They argued that film had become standardised for mass consumption and film's value judged solely in terms of its exchange value in the market. (Adorno & Eisler, 1947; Eisenstein, 1949; Hufner, 1998) The total synchronisation and subservience of music/sound to the story and image played an important part in creating the 'filmic illusion' that served to maintain the economic status quo.

Buhler and Neumeyer point out that the discourse on film music since then, has consciously followed the same two opposing paths; that is, those who are invested in the classic Hollywood ambition to preserve the filmic illusion, and those who see this as a blatant attempt to sustain the dominant ideology. Put simply, synchronisation of music and image perpetuates the illusion, counterpoint creates tension. (Buhler, J. Neumeyer, 1994)

Gorbman, Flinn and Kalinak explain the most pervasive general rule, film music *"was supposed to 'repeat' the activity or mood of the film image and was not supposed to deviate from this nor draw attention to itself qua music ... it is really quite simple: bad cinema music is noticed; good scores are not"* (Flinn, 1992)*(37)*(Claudia Gorbman, 1987; Kalinak, 1992)

Cook, Chion, Murch, however, claim that the narrative and image is not, as the film industry contends, the most important element, rather the music/sound, image and story all work together to create meaning. French sound theorist, Michel Chion, in his book Audio-Vision claims music addresses neither the eye nor ear separately but at one and the same time - what he calls the *'audio-visual illusion'* or the *'added value'* (p 112) that sound and image bring to each other. His contention, put simply, is that sound and image act together to signify. (Chion, 1994; Cook, 1998; Murch, 1994) Although Hollywood film, TV and commercial media in general, has embraced film music and put it to work for its narrative and emotive ends, it has done so with the composer's role tightly controlled by the director and producer. As a result, film music has often languished in conservatism. (Burch, 1969) I suggest that as long as music and sound remain corralled behind high walls restraining its intrinsic properties and power, it will be seen as secondary in the visual/film arts in general.
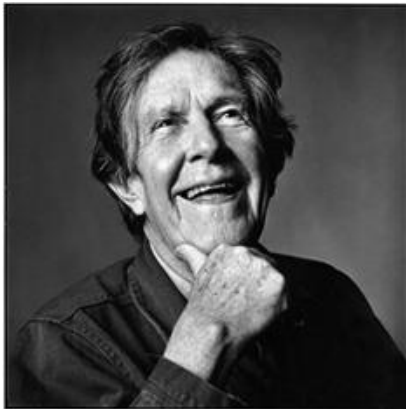
So, where lies the power of non-synchronous music? According to Chion it lies "in the gap"; for Eisenstein it is the 4th dimension; for Barthes the obtuse meaning. Both Eisenstein and Cook critique at length the synesthetic ideals of Kandinsky, Scriabin; synaesthesia being the extreme form of synchronicity. (Eisenstein, 1943)(Cook, 1998)

For Chion, by choosing what to keep and what to eliminate or by associating sounds that don't match or even conflict with the image, they thereby invite the viewer to step into "the perceptual vacuum" and their imagination will follow. (Murch, 1994) As Eisenstein eloquently puts it:

"Art begins the moment the creak of a boot occurs against a different visual shot and thus gives rise to corresponding associations..." (Eisenstein, 1949) It is at that point, Eisenstein says, the 4th dimension is revealed or as Barthes explains, *"the signifier is not filled out, it keeps a permanent state of depletion"* and thus the *"obtuse meaning"* can emerge; (R Barthes, 1977c) or as Chion would say the relationship between sound and image has been stretched in such a way as to create a tension between what is on the screen and what is in the mind of the viewer; we have moved "into the gap". It is this tension, mindfully created, that holds the power in an un-synchronistic sound and film relationship. (Chion, 1994) It is this tension I hope to exploit in my creative work.

Music and representing the fluctuating self 2:

Late 20th Century post structuralism rejected the naive idea that images and signs can represent or signify some reality in a pre-existing world out there. They rejected closed systems with predicted outcomes and instead embraced chaos and loosely bound moments in time. Some artists working with music/sound have embraced these ideas. Sound art, spearheaded by the Futurists, led by Russolo (Russolo, 2004) at the turn of last century, the coming of recording in the 1930s, and Pierre Schaffer's Musique Concrete, a term he coined in 1948, held the most promise for a radical deconstruction of musical thinking. It gave composers access to what John Cage called *"the entire field of sound",* making conventional distinctions between music and sounds increasingly irrelevant. (Cox, 2011; Kim-Cohen, 2009)

Cox explains that the sounds produced by Musique Concrete, even more than the 18th Century ideal of 'absolute music', were seen as pure, unadulterated 'sonorous objects'; entirely non-representational *"presentations of the sonorous object itself".* (Cox, 2011)(156).

However Kim-Cohen claims this view of music/sound as non-representational must be questioned. (Kim-Cohen, 2009) As I have argued throughout this section, sound and music can be and is representational, and in a way that is not dissimilar to the visual. Recorded sound can be seen as representations of those very sound objects, in the same was as a painting which captures a representation of a sitter posing or film that captures the movement of objects and subjects within space. There is a difference, but one merely of surface, not structure, which is that the film or painting is confined to the two dimensions of a

canvas or screen, as opposed to the multi dimensionality of the sound recording which matches the original. Nor is music or sound an unadulterated or 'clean' sign. As with painting and film, the sound literally must pass through the 'bottleneck of the signifier" (Kittler, 1999) subject to the artist's interpretation. In the case of music/sound, like film, it must pass through the bottleneck of the editing process, marked by the absence of what the composer chooses not to record, what the engineer chooses to adjust, to overlay, to extend, or to cut. Finally, as I have outlined in the previous section, music/sound has been shown conclusively in many recent psychological and cognitive studies, to express emotion highly effectively; as long as there is no categorical distinction between expression and representation, then music would have to be regarded as representational. (Shaw-Miller, 2013)(40)

The great beauty in using music/sound for my research is that music/sound is both expressive and representational while still allowing space for the listener to evoke their own subjective thoughts, feelings or emotions in its processing. Placed with image in an equal and largely non-synchronous way, music/sound is in a strong position to exploit 'the gap' (Chion, 1994), the '4th dimension' (Eisenstein, 1949) or the '3rd meaning' (Barthes, 1977c), that contemporary philosophers and theorists call for. From this perspective it could be seen that music/sound has a unique capacity to express that space within which our elusive, slippery inner psychic world can reside and be revealed.

CHAPTER 5

==THIS IS SKETCH ONLY at this stage with artists being a suggested shortlist Still to be properly researched and written== **and will be a significant chapter**.

The portrait form has been clearly defined since modern portraiture began in the Renaissance. *(Artist: Durer)* The three main defining elements of a portrait I refer to in this doctorate are an identifiable likeness to an individual's external manifestation, a depiction of the individual's inner world; that is, a sense of their deeper identity and the third feature, particularly relevant to the self portrait, is that both these elements are interpreted and created by a single artist. Most commonly, portraits were created for an intimate market - ultimately, sometimes after a short public display, to be displayed in a family home. Ideas of identity have changed radically since the Renaissance, with Post Structural theorists seeing the self as no longer solid but rather fluctuating, de-centred

and formed by language and relationships. As ideas of what defines a self have changed, so too have the ideals of portraiture, leading to a dissatisfaction with, and subsequent subversion of, the form. This subversion grew in strength throughout the 20th century. *(Artists: Picasso, Warhol, Sherman, Close, Bacon, Tracy Emin)*

With the development of film and then digital technology during this time, there is now an abundance of media that portrait artists can use. **Video portraiture** has emerged utilising temporal moving image, however these portraits use minimal or more usually, no sound. *(Artists: Warhol Screen Tests, Bill Viola Passions, Fiona Tan Correction, Petrina Hicks Ghost in the Shell, Melita Dahl e-motion)*

Documentary portraits can use both the temporality of moving image as well as sound / music to satisfy the two defining elements of portraiture however these portraits are often constrained by broadcaster's requirements to attract a larger public audience rather than the intimate audience of traditional portraits. *(Artists: Scott Hicks Portrait of Glass in Twelve Parts, Girard 32 Short Films about Glenn Gould)* The more alternative forms of documentary portraiture - Poetic and Performative modes (Nichols, 2010) certainly can satisfy the definitive requirements of traditional portraiture however, music/sound is often a poor 2nd cousin in the form. *(Artists: Baillie Mr Hayashi, Mona Hartoum Measures of Distance, Agnes Varda Beaches, Minh-ha Trinh T Surname Vietnam, Other suggestions??)* It is rare for documentary portraits to use music/sound as a central element in the portrait. It is utilised, as with most film music, as an accompanying afterthought, usually not created by the originating artist.

What then would be the status of a portrait that utilised music / sound as a central conveyor of meaning? Music/sound is not part of the traditional portrait. However, **Sound Portraits, Acousmatic Music** and **Radiophonic portraits** could be seen as sub genres of portraiture in that they can create portraits to be heard rather than seen. While they can offer an intimate view of an identity, they are missing the defining visual element, the embodied 'good likeness'. *(Artists: selection of portraits from Radio Portraits Australia, Delia Derbyshire The Dreams, Hilda Westercamp Kit's Beach, Trevor Wishart Red Bird, Luc Ferrari Dangerous Visions)*

Music video is a popular form that prioritises music/sound; a genre where music is the initiating media with both the sound and image as equal partners. However it has a

very specific commercial purpose to promote and sell contemporary music/popular music artists, and for this reason as well as the fact that it is rare for a single artist to create both media, it moves it out of the scope of this research. *(Artist: David Lynch Crazy Clown Time)*

Visual Music is a specific form where music and moving image are equal partners and often created by a single artist but the form is not used to depict human identity or narrative but rather to explore the computer manipulation of both sound and image as an end in itself. Their work is often highly synesthetic and synchronised. *(Artists: Piche Australis, Diego Garro Patah)*

There are many fine examples of **Art Films** (for want of a better name) where the use of music/sound is significant and inspiring (*Felicity Wilcox Threading the Light, Angela Mestiti Citizen band, Andriessen & Greenaway M is for Mozart, Isaac Julien Ten Thousand Waves, Takemitsu & Kobayashi Kwaidan, Daniel Crook Static 12*) however it is rare for a single artist to create both music/sound and film. In fact, there is a sparsity of single artist originators that create both music/sound and moving image with music/sound being the initiating media. *(Artists: Felicity Wilcox Snow, Yurabirong, Gouttes D'un Sang Etranger, Jacob Kirkegaard 4 Rooms, Carla Thackrah Circus Sweet)* There are even fewer artists who would create portraits in this way, none that I have found. *(my previous output includes a series of 4 portraits - "Sex Drugs String Quartets" - created with sound as the initiating media however they were created with broadcast in mind hence the style was restricted by this.)* For this reason, it is a gap open to be explored.

CHAPTER 6

List of Illustrations:

Figure 1: Screenshot of *Voyeur Series* (Thackrah, 2015c)
Figure 2: Film still from *Pole Woman* (Thackrah, 2015c)
Figure 3: Film still from *Demon Man* (Thackrah, 2015c)
Figure 4: Film still from *Graffiti Man* (Thackrah, 2015c)
Figure 5: Film still from *Self Portrait 1* (Thackrah, 2015b)
Figure 6: Film still from *Self Portrait 4* (Thackrah, 2018b)

**1st PROJECT - *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence (2018)*
EYES, EARS & SELF; the doorways to the soul come together**

The creative development:

My initial research experiments were attempts to clarify the first defining principles of visual portraiture to contextualise my research. It was essential to understand not just the scholarly definitions of portraiture but to absorb the defining principles as they applied to my practise. The first project was the *Voyeur Series* (Thackrah, 2015)

They were edited during 1st semester from raw footage that I had shot in Buenos Aires a few years prior. I wasn't concerned with the sound at this stage as I was looking solely at the visual to ask several questions, the most pressing question being at the time "What is a portrait?"

They were shot on the street with a small camera so the subjects were unaware of my presence. I wanted to capture, at the time, the essence of street life in this huge and poor city. They were shot on the edge of San Telmo where it borders the dangerous no-go area of La Boca and houses many of the inner city's poor.

I had been thinking about the distinction between a portrait created as a negotiated contract between the artist and the subject, presumably as two individuals equal in

power, and a portrait, such as these, that were shot anonymously, without the agreement of the subjects. Is it still a portrait? Are the sitters merely observed 'objects' if they have no personal input?

I chose the display - intended to be on multiple LCD screens in a gallery setting, playing simultaneously and looped repeatedly - to ask the question again; are they now, more akin to a police mug shot or an endlessly repeated Warhol screen print portrait? Or simulacra? Or merely a likeness? Are they seen as 'objects', or as 'subjects' with a human interior life as well as a likeness?

Figure 1 Screenshot showing *Voyeur Series* in the repeated display format. View here.

To further explore this idea, I wrote a short textual story to attach to each of the portraits and displayed them individually rather than repeated. The story was about my experience of the sitters while I was filming them. Does this make them satisfy more closely, the definition of portrait and if so, are they portraits of me or them?

Figure 2 Film still *Pole Woman* here

I filmed this old woman for some time. She was intent on her 'job' cleaning the poles of their remnants of advertising posters. Why had she made this the focus of her life, where did she sleep, how did she survive? I was fascinated by the old brown slippers on her feet and the softness in her face; the street was her living room and she was fastidiously keeping it clean

Figure 3 Film still *Demon Man* here

The young alcoholic in the street; fighting so many demons in his crazed state. What were they saying to him? The existential isolation of his world seems to be mirrored in the crossed out 'E'

sign - existence not allowed? - the hard, hot, toxic truck grill and the gaping garbage bin. Everything seems to be waiting for him to finally falter.

Figure 4 Film still *Graffiti Man* here

I noticed this man only because I was filming the wonderful bit of graffiti on the wall which translates to "music for your eyes...". As I filmed the graffiti, my attention was drawn to the man sitting on the step. He appeared calm, until slowly I became aware of his disturbing facial tics...

I came to the following conclusions: They certainly have recognisable faces and a limited depiction of the life, space and culture they inhabit. If the intention was to make a point of this limited representation, then the repeated presentation format is effective. With the addition of text and a concentrated focus on each individual portrait, I believe this viewing format creates a space where a richer reflection and interpretation of the inner psyche of the individual sitter is enabled for the viewer. However, I knew nothing about the sitters so the text was focused on my experience of them. As with almost all visual portraits, the addition of a back story that offers a deeper insight into a real person, either by personal or historical knowledge, or by virtue of the depicted sitter being a well-known celebrity or via the small explanatory placards pinned to the gallery wall, we are more able to gain some insight into the inner psyche of the sitter even if only by spiking the viewer's imagination. Because these texts were about the sitters via my experience of them, we are also gaining some insight into the artist.

It is apparent then that these intertextual elements are important in portraiture - perhaps even essential to a successful portrait. This observation is confirmed by theorists including Roland Barthes and Walter Benjamin. For Barthes, the text forms the '*anchor*' to the image, directing the reader to 'see' the portrait in a certain way and the image adding meaning to the text. (R Barthes, 1977a) For Benjamin, the text turns all images into literature and without this, the image may remain meaningless. *"This is where the caption comes in, whereby photography turns all life's relationships into literature, and without which all constructivist photography must remain arrested in the approximate... Will not the caption become the most important part of the photograph?"* (Benjamin, 1997) (256) These elements can direct the attention highly effectively, even to the extent of shifting focus from sitter to artist.

With these conclusions I was now ready to move on to replace a written text with music/sound.

Hence, the next portrait created was the music/sound for the first self portrait which went on to form the basis of *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence* (Thackrah, 2018) As can be seen on these links, each of the works that make up the final *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence* began life as individual stand-alone portraits.

Figure 5 Film still from *Self Portrait 1* (Thackrah, 2015) view here

Figure 6 Film still from *Self Portrait 4* (Thackrah, 2018b) view here

Figure 7 Film still from *Last Portrait of Moshlo* (Thackrah, 2015a) view here

Figure 8 Film still from *Portrait of Ange* (Thackrah, 2017) view here

The music/sound and visual edits of all the above early drafts were developed over time as outlined in the following sections until what began as many disparate fragments, of myself and the other, became a 26 minute completed and continuous *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence.*

The intertextual:

In addition to the backstory offered either as intertextual music/sound, text, words or common community knowledge, titles also offer an important intertextual element.

"... few paintings of any period are ever received by the public without a title, and moreover one with the authority of the modern, intentional label. Generic or subject titles thus gain considerable importance in the work's reception ..." (Wendy Steiner, 1985)*(57)*

This work is titled *Self Portrait 1: ...*
The title is placed to create a question in the viewer's mind: Who is the subject?

The presentation:

The work has been edited in two formats, the choice of which is dependant on the viewing venue. The first iteration of the work, both the music/sound and film, has been created and edited specifically to show in the Data Arena at UTS. The arena can play 16 channel 360-degree audio sound and 6 repetitions of a single broadcast format image projected by six video projectors on a 360-degree cylindrical screen 4 metres high x 10 metres around.

The aim in choosing this venue is to escape the single broadcast format screen and stereo sound, thereby moving the viewers preconception away from the TV documentary into another context for viewing. As well, playing as an installation on a continuous loop with no specific start or finish aims to amplify this end. As Basanta suggests, a work changes its form when the artist is no longer in control of the start or end points; the form is set by the viewers/listeners movement in and out of the work. (Basanta, 2015)) In this venue the movement is limited by the fixed arrangement of the screens and the need for the sound to be played as an unchanging but repeating sequential 26 minute work. [6]

Figure 9 *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence* playing in the 7 channel audio, 6 channel video format at the Data Arena, UTS. Image: Carla Thackrah
[view here](view%20here)

The work has also been edited for stereo sound and single screen broadcast format video to play on web platforms and other readily available screens, principally for reference purposes.

[6] The 2nd project for this doctorate will be presented on individual large screens set throughout an exhibition space where the viewer will be able to navigate freely through the room hence altering the form the work takes in a more radical way. As well, the sound for each portrait will be played simultaneously rather than sequentially, again altering the final sound work the listener experiences, depending on which part of the room they stand or move in to. See Chapter 7

Figure 10 Film still from *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence* playing in the stereo audio, single channel video format. <u>view here</u>

The process:

As already outlined in Chapter 3, the creative work emphasised process rather than outcomes to bring it into line with single artist produced visual art portraiture. The work's first layer was music/sound providing the important intertextual element; it was edited through many drafts, layering the new sounds as they were collected - words, vocalisations, object (environmental) music and instrumental music. Once the sound layers were complete, the portrait image was shot, sometimes with additional words and object music to be layered into the already completed sound track. The image was edited through several drafts. Finally other image layers were added, in this instance, the picture frames and signatures.

Every creative decision, from ideas through to choosing sounds and images, editing and re-editing and conceiving the work in its entirety, was informed by 'who I am' in the moment that each decision was taken.

From within this process the work *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence* emerged.

The genesis:

An important part of the process is illustrated by the genesis of the work itself. This work came about because of an unexpected event, 2 months into the research. Rather than being the result of careful planning, it emerged because of that event; an event that defined my identity for that period of time and continues to play a part in the fluctuating portrait of 'who I am'. My ex-husband attempted to kill himself. Afterwards he asked me to make his portrait. Two weeks after I filmed this, he made another attempt on his life which succeeded. Rather than viewing this as something that life throws up unexpectedly, taken some time out and moved on to the planned research project, I chose to build on the portrait to see where it would go. Prior to his death I had already filmed a self portrait; I chose then to record a portrait of the friend who found his body. I filmed another self portrait touching on the abuse and difficulties I suffered at his hands during my marriage and then, a portrait of my present partner who was close to my ex-husband and was with me throughout the events of his death. I had answering machine recordings of my ex-husband and many emails between us from the last weeks of his life, all of which combined to connect the work as a whole.

The music/sound:

Although I have already stated the definition of music/sound I'm employing, it's worth repeating at this point. The 'instrumental music' (including the voice as instrument) I employ, mixed with the worded voice, vocalisations, electronic and object music will be named 'MUSIC/SOUND'. I will name it thus because no one element will take priority but rather each of these different sounds are used as instruments in my overall composition; the outcome being the sound track to which the film images are finally added. Each sound, whether it is produced by an instrument, an object, electronically or vocally, is of equal definition and weight in the overall composition which is ultimately 'musical'. As needed for explanation in my text, I will call each of these sounds by their different denotations at times, but the overall composed result is always musical 'music/sound'.

I quote Shaw Miller from his work, Eye hEar, whose definition of the word 'music' is synonymous to my 'music/sound':

" I take 'music' to be a concept that includes what most conventional use excludes. When I use 'music' I mean a discursive practise, not isolated autonomous sound; a complex of activities and ideas, a network of cultural practises that act together to signify the musical." (Shaw-Miller, 2013)*(xiii)*

A note about fragments:

"Out of the broken pieces of the self will come a subjectivity that acknowledges the fragmentation process, but which encompasses and embraces the parts and brings them into dialogue with each other" (J. Spence, 1988)*(198)*

There is nothing solid, there is no clear delineating walls defining a single 'who we are' in the postmodern identity; all we have is the multiplicity of our own fragmented thoughts. Paul Mumford comments on the fragmentation of postmodern society in reference to his own fragments of visual music:

"time no longer unfolded in a linear way and space was no longer governed by Cartesian laws ... the present was being understood from a bombardment of multiple perspectives of singular moments." As discourse theory tells us, our personalities are assemblages of stories, beliefs, networks of connections that require a hyper-narrative to tell; that is a *"collection of small story pieces designed to be arranged in many different ways or told from different points of view. The production of these stories are a logic of reverse deconstruction - a re-construction"* (Mumford, 2009) *(155)*

The postmodern, constantly fluctuating identity, according to Jonathon Kramer, is best expressed by the "vertical time" of "moment music" and sound, as described by Stockhausen, Feldman, Cage and others.

Every present moment counts, as well as no moment at all: a given moment is not merely regarded as the consequence of the previous one and the prelude to the coming one, but as something individual, independent, and centred in itself, capable of existing on its own." (Stockhausen, 1963) quoted in Kramer, 1998)

Moment music reached its pinnacle in the middle of the 20th Century with Cage, Glass, La Monte Young, Stockhausen, Reich and Feldman to name a few, and certainly they owe their lineage to the Futurists and later Musique Concrete. These movements

cleared the way for a radical deconstruction of musical thinking and gave composers access to a new field of sound, not exclusively created by traditional musical instruments, making conventional distinctions between music and sounds increasingly irrelevant. Not only was an infinite sound palette unlocked but also the structure of musical time was rethought. Kramer calls the time created in Western art music in this period *"vertical time"* where *"a single present is stretched out into an enormous duration, a potentially infinite 'now' ... the music exists between simultaneous layers of sound, not between successive gestures"* (55). It is defined by stasis rather than process; that is, it is going nowhere, it just 'is; it is 'being' rather than 'becoming'; it doesn't 'begin' it 'starts'; it doesn't 'end' it 'stops'. Noel Burch amid the flowering of "moment music" called for atonal music/sound to take its place within multimedia art specifically to break the inescapable linear temporality, the hierarchical structure and ultimately to allow the form to become open and less dominated by the narrative as film so often forced it to be. (Burch, 1969)

With these ideas in mind, *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence* is initiated by the coming together of many fragmentary moments of music/sound chosen from a broad palette incorporating vocalisations, worded vocalisations, object & electronic music and conventional instruments; at times related but often, not; at times reaching an end but often, not; and layered vertically until I realised, as Gertrude Stein said about her literary portraits:

"I was making a continuous succession of the statement of what a person was until I had not many things but one thing" (Stein, 1974)(103)

A note about sparsity in the music/sound:

While the music/sound is often layered, my aim was to maintain each line as a sound separate to the existence of the other lines of music and sound that are occurring simultaneously. There is no sense of a melody line with harmony or a controlling rhythm, but rather I embrace the amalgamation of separately existing moments of music/sound with single lines of layered vertical instrumental music.

These single lines of melody, intertwining at times, are metaphorically mirroring the single voices of the subjects as they recount their story. Worded vocalisations were

placed with the pace of the whole music/sound work in mind. Other sounds were chosen for their evocative qualities or personal connections to the sitter and placed as individual moments in time, again with both rhythm and tonality of the sounds impacting on the work as a whole.

There are many moments of silence as there are, in the film image, many moments of black screen. I do this to break from the dominant habit of film and sound which is to fill the gaps, to leave no room for boredom or thought.

I quote Laura Marks, whose reference here is to intercultural cinema but can also be applied to *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence* and other experimental cinema

"... the new combination of words and things that cannot be read in terms of the existing languages of sound and image but calls for new, as yet unformulated languages. To read/hear the image, then, is to look/listen not for what's there but for the gaps - 'mind the gap!'... here the importance of absent images (often video black or black leader), barely legible image, and indistinguishable sound ... " (Marks, 2000) *(31)*

Audio signals even when sparse, have a peculiar intensity because we have little choice but to hear them - we cannot shut our ears. The combination of silence and sharp or significant sound then, can create a powerful affect.

"Unlike seeing, where one can look away, one cannot 'hear away' but must listen ... hearing implies already belonging together in a manner that one is claimed by what is being said" (Gadamer, 1975)

The instrumental music:

I aimed to create a new context for the instrumental music I wrote and layered into the work. I neither wanted to use the 'film music' context where music is seen as a subordinate accompaniment to the work's visual and narrative needs, nor the abstract high art context of 'absolute music' which separates itself from other media and senses.

To counter both these defining contexts of instrumental music, I have endeavoured to make the instrumental music layer equal in weight to the other layers of music/sound - the worded vocals, vocalisations, electronic and object music. In this way it offers us another representational text that in combination with the other representational elements of music/sound, adds meaning.

The object music:

I am naming the sound heard that isn't obviously created by a musical instrument or voice, 'object music'. The more common name in the film context would be foley, however, I'm using and placing these sounds as part of the music score and not separate to it as it would be as foley within the sound design. Toru Takemitsu's music, in particular the score for the collection of Japanese horror stories *Kwaidan* by the director Kobayashi Masaki (Takemitsu, 1964), has for many years lived in my 'inner musical library' (Folkestad, 2012) as a fine example of object music. Being largely self taught and isolated within a Japanese tradition he was, in his early years, free of the constraints of the Western music canon and had developed his own form of Musique Concrete quite separate to Pierre Schaffer's developing in parallel in Europe. His use of evocative and unexpected percussive object soundscapes have been an influence on my use of object music, particularly in the second portrait in *Self Portrait 1: ... (Portrait of Ange)* which was the last portrait fragment I completed. I have carried through and developed object music for *Self Portrait 2: ... (2019)*

Audio 1 Toro Takemitsu *Kwaidan* (1964) screen music excerpt

The vocalisations:

The clean edit - the sound that is free of any sense of either the space within which the sitter is being recorded or the fact that the voice is emanating from a body - the sitter's body - is more usually the sound that the engineer is aiming for. Hence, it is usual in post production, to edit out the guttural, unintended sounds that are produced by the body.

"Sound editing can become an obsessive quest to wash away this troublesome grime" (Norman, 2004) I have instead chosen to keep and emphasise these sounds as musical.

I sense that Barthes is referring to this embodiment of sound when he bemoans the loss of *"the 'grain' of the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs."* (Roland Barthes, 1977)(188) Rather, he says recorded sound has been 'flattened out' into perfection. He claims that it is in hearing the obvious corporeal sounds that emanate from *"the throat, the place where phonic metal hardens and is segmented"* (183) that the 'signifiance', the third meaning, explodes.

Throughout all the recordings, these personal, intimate vocal sounds created by the body such as tongue clicks, 'umms', groans, tight throated, audible breaths, sighs etc - are retained and in fact emphasised by repetition and increased volume. Deeply personal, always emerging involuntarily much like dreams from the subconscious, these sounds to me reveal the inner psyche, as Barthes call it - the 'jouissance' - where the listener can enter between the cracks of the words.

The worded vocalisations:

The use of words, particularly in the stated postmodern context of this work, is laden with connotation, implication and questions. It was always intended that words would be used, none the less this work, coming as unexpectedly as I have already described, uses more words than I had originally intended for this research. This has had the effect of closing the structure and setting the audience on a more predetermined narrative line. I persevered because I believed it would act as an interesting comparison to the next work I will create that will, while still using worded vocalisations, have less narrative structure. I have attempted to lessen the impact of this closed structure by fragmenting the temporality of the narrative both within the work's structure and by the presentation of the work playing on a continual loop with the audience free to come and go at any point.

The edit of visuals to music/sound:

The visual edit points were always chosen to correspond with one of the layers of music/sound occurring in the moment. It was chosen because I wanted the visual edit to emphasise or draw attention to that particular layer of sound at that moment, not, as is usually the case, for the sound to be created to draw attention to the vision or story. I have created static, simple, repetitive visual imagery. Music/sound is the priority and although we may find ourselves intensely 'watching' as is our habit, there actually isn't much to see, the aim always being, to draw the attention to the music/sound.

The design references:

The visual design was taken from Renaissance portraiture, in particular Albrecht Durer, who was at the centre of a flowering of self portraiture during this time. While not the first artist to create self portraits, he was at the forefront of artists in this era who were beginning to highlight the importance of the human individual in general and the artist's self in particular. This self portrait from 1500 is a fine example, with the direct frontal depiction of his own face with veil-like hair and piercing look clearly referencing Mediaeval iconic portraits of Christ. In this way Durer has elevated his very human self to the status of a religious icon thereby encouraging the explosion of self portraiture that continues today. (Cummings, 2010)(55)

Figure 11 Albrecht Dürer *Self Portrait* (Durer, 1500) oil on panel

The framing with face and shoulders front and centre against a black background was used consistently throughout *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence.* as was the style of clothes worn by the sitters. This was carried through in all the portraits except for Portrait of Mosh which was shot under conditions for which I had little control. The signature used also references Durer's quite explicitly and it is in the form most common during the Renaissance, placed as a significant feature within the canvas often with other explanatory text.

I filmed the original frames surrounding significant Renaissance portraits in the National Gallery and Portrait Gallery in London and the Louvre to make my collection for the work.

The repetitions of the film image:

The six repetitions of the image, larger than life, surrounding the viewer, are performing the opposite function to the repetitions in a Warhol portrait which act to make the self being portrayed empty of meaning and feeling except as an expression of the surface engagement of consumer celebrity. They are clearly not concerned with the traditional need to portray some manifestation of an inner identity of the sitter, rather they are machine-like, revealing not a real 'self' but rather only surface signs or simulacra in endless repetition. (Berg, 1989; Foster, 2010) As Walter Benjamin claimed many years prior to Warhol's work, the mechanical reproduction acts to destroy the illusion that the portrait holds in any way the subject's 'aura'. (Benjamin, 1936)

Figure 12 Andy Warhol *Self Portrait* (Warhol, 1966) silk screen & polymer paint

The repetitions in my work are aiming for the opposite. Rather, they are intended to intensify the actuality of the inner subject - to overwhelm the viewer with a larger-than-life representation of the sitter. The difference is compounded by the sitters themselves who are the traditional stuff of contemporary portraits - friends or family of the artist - not in any way sharing the celebrity status of Warhol's sitters.

The frames:

There were several reasons why I used picture frames so extensively. The first and most obvious is as a reference to traditional portraiture.

According to Derrida's *The Parergon* in *The Truth in Painting*, the frame is placed to delineate the outside from the inside; the work of art from the non-work of art. In the case of art, that which is "not art" is excluded in order to shape and form "art" as an entity that is transcendent. (Derrida, 1987) For my purposes, it reinforces that this work, although in the form of temporal moving image and sound, is referencing the transcendent aims of visual art portraiture.

They are created as solid and highly detailed, shot in close up with 4K resolution, almost with the appearance of having been scanned rather than filmed, creating a sense they exist in a different space or reality. This is intentional. I wanted them to appear as unmoving frames; both as picture frames in the traditional sense but also, with a moving image rather that painted image within, they become metaphoric window frames through which we look at the constant flux of life. The unmoving solidity also has the effect of emphasising the softer, fluctuating individual being captured, 'framed', held captive to the vagaries of life's events and this event in particular, as well as captured or framed via the process of portrait-making.

Figure 13 Francis Bacon *Three Studies of Isabel Rawsthorne* (1967)

oil on canvas

To further illustrate the 'capturing' in the process of portrait making, I'm reminded of Francis Bacon's *Three Studies of Isobel Rawsthorne* (Bacon, 1967) which could be seen as an allegory on the nature of portraiture, in particular, being 'nailed' to the wall; failing to be completely 'seen'; and being 'captured' by the frame. Here Bacon seems to be dissecting the themes of 'inside' and 'outside', subjectivity and objectification, reality and representation, with the sitter both inside and outside the frame and the door. At the same time, with her back to the door betraying a sense of discomfort, she is attempting to either let her 'self' out or lock her 'self' in within the portrait. The third portrait-in-a-portrait sees her 'nailed' to the wall via the act of portrait making; the artist's representation of the sitter seeming to nail the self down in an act of mortification or crucifixion. As Barthes writes in relation to being captured or objectified within the frame of photographic portraiture *"I feel that the photograph creates my body or mortifies it, according to its caprice"* (R Barthes, 2000)

Why does the frame change? To my mind, each of the many thousands of video frames could be viewed as a separate portrait, each portrait being a fragment of a continually morphing whole, sometimes with this frame, sometimes framed in another way,

sometimes without a frame - each depending on the aesthetic and metaphoric reasoning of the artist in that moment.

The final rationale for the frames is to do with the requirements and constraints of the viewing venue for which this iteration of the work was specifically edited. The six repeated screens that surround the audience are stitched together by software and the resulting blended edges sometimes, depending on the framing of the original image, can look unintentionally jarring. A single frame down one side of the filmed frame creates a naturally complete frame that justifies and smooths the repeated images turning them into six framed portraits.

The signature:

The signature used, in some lengths of footage, references Durer's quite explicitly and it is in the form most common during the Renaissance, placed as a significant feature within the canvas often with other explanatory text. In this work it has usually been placed at the beginning and end of each portrait only when there is a frame present. Again, this is a reference to traditional portraiture, the importance in this context being that the film is signed to differentiate it as a visual art work rather than a documentary claiming to be objective truth. These works are marked by the signature as being the highly subjective work of the artist; the signature gives permission for the single originator artist to be wholly present, even to the point of sacrificing truth.

A note about sparsity in the film image:

As in the music/sound, the film image is intentionally sparse and perhaps by film conventions, boring. Music/sound is the priority and although we may find ourselves intensely 'watching' as is our habit, there actually isn't much to see, the aim always being, to draw the attention to the music/sound. To encourage this, I placed long stretches of black screen in the original single screen edit. In the Data Arena edit I have replaced these with empty frames because at those moments the Arena itself became too present and we were transported away from the imaginary space elicited by the portrait. The continuous frame instead, tends to hold us almost literally within the framed portrait and yet still performs the function of the black screen; perhaps even more so

because we are more consciously aware of the intensely empty frame that a moment ago, held a person.

The materiality of the digital image and sound

Problems are encountered in a single person produced film that are unique simply because there was no other crew except the filmmaker to perform several tasks.

The need to have the camera set to auto focus in the SP1 meant the camera couldn't make up its mind what part of the image to focus on leading to soft focus at times

The not perfect lighting in Rom's Portrait in particular was also due to this; I couldn't monitor the subject in camera and move the lights into optimal positions at the same time. This will improve in later iterations as I become more experienced at placing lights or have access to a separate monitor.

The transparency/loss of solidity of the keyed composite images of SP4 was emphasised as signifying the loss of solidity of the subject's body; the vulnerability of the naked and almost transparent body in the face of the abusive partner and his traumatic death.

The poor quality of Mosh's portrait, shot on an iphone due to circumstances, was emphasised to act as a signifier of his real absence - he is 'passed away' as is the material presence of his deteriorating digital image. In post production I desaturated to black and white for the same reason; both to match the design of the other portraits but also to differentiate it from the other portraits - the absent as opposed to the still present.

Poor audio quality in both Mosh's and Ange's portrait (3rd and 2nd portraits) were due to the unexpected, and hence uncontrolled, circumstances of both recordings and each were emphasised and ameliorated with processing.

The final issue is to do with what is often the bane of a musician's life - the limitations imposed by the quality of the sound equipment. Certainly, for live performance the skill of the sound mixer and the quality of the PA equipment can make or break a performance. For the showing of the work in the Data Arena, I was faced with the

limitations of the speaker system in the venue. The speakers are Genelec 8030B. (https://www.genelec.com/support-technology/previous-models/8030a-studio-monitor), Despite having fourteen of these high quality speakers placed around the arena, given the size of the space and the fact that these speakers are the babies of the range, they were prone to distort with certain frequencies. To get any volume, it was necessary to play each of the 7 channels through 7 speakers rather than 2, hence losing some of the spatial sense intended in the mix. Even with this configuration, the volume level was less than I would like for a work focusing on sound and some frequencies distort momentarily.

A note about audience:

Another aspect of single person produced film portrait that moves the work away from more conventional filmed portraits toward visual art portraiture is the issue of audience appeal.

This topic, a personal exploration of an intimate partner's suicide and its impact, is not one that would have broad appeal to a viewing public. It is a private and personal portrait that I expect will hold limited interest to anyone outside those involved. I don't intend to issue invitations to view the work except to those who have an interest; after all, I joke, 'who is interested in the portrait of Great Uncle Arthur hanging in the hall except a few family members?' I will instead treat it within the context that many traditional portraits have been placed - a work that can have a deep impact on a small audience and as such is created to be shown inside a home only to those who are family, intimates and friends. This could be seen to be antithetical to the portraits that might be made to be viewed by the general public particularly within the film and TV industry and the highly publicised visual art portrait competitions and exhibitions, which require a broad, often commercial, appeal to justify their creation.

I find it interesting to be aware of how uncomfortable I feel creating a work that goes against all I have accepted to be 'good' film or art making, judged by the audience size, but I observe and instead celebrate this as being an aspect of the traditional portrait.

CHAPTER 7

2nd PROJECT - *Self Portrait 2: ...(2019)*
EYES, EARS, SELF - coming together

My final work planned to be shown at the end of 2019, will be less personal and have a broader interest. It will include some re-edits of the portraits in the first *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence*, (perhaps with *Self Portrait 1: Fragments of Presence and Absence* showing in the Data Arena as part of the overall exhibition). However, there will be a number of other portraits included. The overall context will not be an event linking all the sitters. It will not be shown in a continuous semi-narrative form in the Data Arena, but rather each portrait will show on its own screen playing simultaneously with the others in a large exhibition space. The music/sound will be chaotic if standing amongst all the portraits but will be focused as one moves closer to each individual portrait and its music/sound. The contextual theme will be to capture many random fragments offered by the sitter and each sitter will be in some way, in relationship to me. As a whole it will be argued, these random fragments will come together to make up *'Self Portrait 2: ...'*

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