MASTER OF ARTS BY COURSEWORK AND RESEARCH REPORT

Wits School of Arts

RESEARCH REPORT
BALANCING ACT: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE IN-BETWEEN SPACE USED BY SELECTED CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

DEIRDRE WATSON
0317536K
DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters of Fine Arts (by coursework) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree in any other university.

_________________________________________Signature of candidate

_________Day of__________2005
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank and acknowledge each individual who helped with this document, and those who were part of or influenced the work in it.

Clive van den Berg for your guidance and inspirational words.
Elsa Watson for your patience and love.
Alan Alborough for urging me to do this Masters. I would not have done this otherwise.
Colin Richards for making me question (and introducing me to Salman Rushdie).
Elsabé Marnitz, for reading.
Dot for your words.
Anneke Stone for friendship and good wine.

To Riaan van der Merwe, my biggest thank you for your ABSOLUTE support.

To Terry Kurgan and The Trinity Session (Stephen Hobbs, Kathryn Smith and Marcus Neustetter) without whom this paper would not have been possible.

And, to all who attended shift, for participating and entering my life.
CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: ‘SHIFTING EXPECTATIONS’ 1

CHAPTER TWO

TERRY KURGAN: ‘POSITIVE INTERRUPTION’ 20

CHAPTER THREE

THE TRINITY SESSION: ‘SURVIVAL TACTIC’ 49

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION: ‘COMPARING NOTES’ 93

CHAPTER FIVE

SHIFT: POSTMODERN ‘PLAY WITH PURPOSE’ 117

END NOTES 143

REFERENCES
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS


15. The Trinity Session. 2002. Installation view of *Tricrotic*, digital projection (9 x 4m) for the 16th Rencontres Vidéo Art Plastique festival, France.


32. The Trinity Session. 2002. Safe Food at BIG TORINO, Biennale for Young Art, Turin, Italy.

33. The Trinity Session. 2002. Website for Safe Food at BIG TORINO, Biennale for Young Art, Turin, Italy.

34. The Trinity Session. 2002. View of telephone that was part of the Safe Food exhibition at BIG TORINO, Biennale for Young Art, Turin, Italy.


Watson, Deirdre (2004). Shift, an installation at Upstairs@Bamboo: image details

38. Installation view of door (front), mixed media, 180 x 80 cm

39. Detail of door (back), mixed media.

40. Installation view of red carpet and entrance to hut, mixed media.

41. Installation view of podium and medals, mixed media.

42. Installation view of crown, bubble wrap and sweets, 160 x 140 cm

43. Detail of ‘graduation panel’, paisley patterned plastic, thread, felt.

44. Installation view of ‘bed of new acquaintances’, mixed media.

45. Installation view of ‘bed of celebration’, mixed media.

46. Detail of ‘chessboard carpet’, red imitation leather, folded plastic carrier bags, PVC, gut.

47. Installation view of ‘wine area’ with symmetrically placed cords, mixed media.
48. Installation view of wine and glass display.

49. Installation view of Monument (on the inside of gallery), chair, cushion, binoculars, buckets, sweets and vinyl lettering (‘Monument’).

50. View of Monument on the corner of Rustenburg Road and 9th Street, Melville.

51. View of Monument on the corner of Rustenburg Road and 9th Street, Melville.

52. Installation view of the hut: ‘HUT RENTALS 794 1111’