

# An Autoethnographic Approach to Material as Form and Meaning in Sculpture and Printmaking

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Submitted in compliance for the degree of a Masters of Art in Fine Art by Research

Department of Fine Art

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Noswal Hall, Braamfontein, Johannesburg]

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School of Art

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## Research Question

What is the role of material in sculpture and printmaking with particular reference to my own creative work?

## Abstract:

This study involves a written component in dialogue with a creative body of work in sculpture and printmaking. There is an engagement with the personal material and corporeal experiences in relation to the production of a body of artworks. The focus is on the materials used, the materiality and the personal experiences. The written component engages autoethnographically and psychoanalytically on the structural possibilities and metaphoric potential of materials, namely: sugar, polyurethane foam and metal. The principle interest is on sugar. Whilst emphasizing the materiality and the object-material-viewer and/ or maker embodiment, there are particular interests in the ways in which the 'objectness' and/ or 'thingness' of materials affects the experience of the artwork by a physically present viewer. There is an exploration on how the materiality of the work may provoke experiences associated with abjectness and disturbance. It is suggested that the grotesque, abject, uncanny and amorphous, have the ability in sculpture to affect the viewer as well as maker through sensual experiences of the works material. The amorphous, formless and malleable materials' abilities is argued to be able to subvert conventions that allows for the investigation of how anti-form embraces temporary existences. The written component further aims to support an understanding of the process and choice of materials through an exploration of a number of theoretical and critical positions on the importance and significance of materials when used to produce artworks. There is a primary engagement with ways of making meaning through cultural production in Fine Arts in South Africa by focusing on materials' structures (social, political, historical, and chemical) in relation to personal experiences.