

https://dspace.org/

The pet in contemporary art

Pretorius, Elmarie

2011-06-23
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/10170

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

THE PET IN CONTEMPORARY ART

Elmarie Pretorius

Student no. 0203238V

2011

I declare that this is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Arts in Fine Art at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

Table of Contents

Abstract: pg 4
Introduction: pg 5-7
Chapter One: *The Animal in Contemporary Art*: pg 8-18
Chapter Two: *Not 'Other' Enough: The Pet in Cultural Discourse*: pg 19-33
Chapter Three: *Form to Force: Pet-form, Medium and Perception*: pg 34-56
Chapter Four: *Becoming-Animal: Prolonging the Instants*: pg 57-67
Conclusion: pg 77-78
References: pg 79-87
Bibliography: pg 88-89
List of Works: pg 89
Masters Exhibition Images: pg 90-91

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the figure of the pet in contemporary art. I will argue that the pet offers rich potential for creative exploration that challenges the conventional binaries of self/other, human/animal, and tame/wild in a way that tries to speak of a different subjectivity.

I take as a starting point that the pet is seen as not *other* enough and this explains its relative absence in contemporary visual art practice and discourse. Currently there is a lot of interest in the animal within this field, but the animal is usually cast as *wild* or *untamed* – all too often functioning as a signifier of difference from the human (through this difference, of course, we define what is human). For all that the pet is an animal it does not serve as a signifier in the same way. It straddles binaries/boundaries of human/animal and even self/other in a manner that is often interpreted as 'uncomfortable'. I will argue that the widespread prejudice against pets is based on a very deep seated and problematic formulation of the *wild*, and if the binary opposition of the wild and the domestic is discarded (as the binary opposition of the human and the animal was/is) the pet is more than equal to the same theoretical, and consequently practical, burden as the wild animal. With special attention to the concept of becoming-animal, outlined by Deleuze and Guattari, I look at the artists Jo Ractliffe, Carolee Schneemann, and William Wegman whose pets play a pivotal role in the production of their artworks, and in some cases, the trajectory of their careers. I contend that within this cross-species relationship/experience/void/communication (or any other description one might hazard to apply) something happens, an event, something meaningful, worth consideration. The very nature of a cross-species phenomenological, libidinal relating is, for me, laden with creative possibility. I argue that the pet has the potential to open up a creative space within which important and topical issues, anxieties and subject fractures can be visually manifested.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the figure of the pet in contemporary art. I will argue that the pet offers rich potential for creative exploration that challenges the conventional binaries of self/other, human/animal, and tame/wild in a way that tries to speak of a different subjectivity.

I will take as a starting point that the pet is seen as not *other* enough and this explains its relative absence in contemporary visual art practice and discourse. Currently there is a lot of interest in the animal within this field, but the animal is usually cast as *wild* or *untamed* – all too often functioning as a signifier of difference from the human (through this difference, of course, we define what is human). For all that the pet is an animal it does not serve as a signifier in the same way. It straddles binaries/boundaries of human/animal and even self/other in a manner that is often interpreted as 'uncomfortable'. In this context, I want to reiterate, the pet can be seen as not other enough. Indeed it is often understood as presenting a site for unnatural projection, identification, and complex libidinal dynamics. I suggest that, within what might be termed a cross-species merging, something exists, happens or emerges that can prompt serious creative work.

I will explore artworks in which the pet is the primary signifier. This will consist of South African artist Jo Ractliffe's series *Guess Who Loves You* and her work *Love's Body*, Carolee Schneemann's *Infinity Kisses* and *Vesper's Pool*, and the self-titled 'dog-photographer', William Wegman's *FrogI/FrogII* and *Dog Duet*.

The artworks I have chosen, namely those with pets as primary signifiers, are relatively rare in contemporary art. As suggested, the pet is generally not considered a topic, within visual art, that can offer critical engagement for either the artist or the viewer. There are compelling reasons for this which center on issues surrounding perceived sentimentality and perversity, as well as a general lack of 'seriousness' when it comes to the topic. This phenomenon is reflected in Deleuze and Guattari's exhortation "Anyone who likes cats or dogs is a fool"[1]. This sentiment is echoed by many other theorists, artists, and writers. It piques my interest that the pet, as a category of animal, is frequently ignored, or in cases like this, actively disparaged and trivialized. This, to me at least, seems to elucidate some deep seated social and personal anxiety associated with the phenomenon of the pet, which in turn is inextricably linked to the experience, and critical understanding of the artworks.

To inform the reading of the works, and my own practical investigation of the pet image, it is obviously necessary to draw on art critical discourse, which itself draws on wider theories. I am particularly interested in two concepts; Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's concept of "Becoming-Animal" found in their text *A Thousand Plateaus* (1988), and Jacques Derrida's text *The Animal Therefore I am (more to follow)* (2008). Both have become very influential on animal discourse in contemporary art.

The importance of "Becoming-animal" cannot be overstated. It is critical, both as it makes a specific argument against pets, as well as the fact that it underpins the writing

on art and the animal more generally by, arguably the key writer on animal discourse in contemporary art, Steve Baker. In his various essays, and his book *The Postmodern Animal* (2000), Baker focuses in some depth on becoming-animal – using it to expand on other writing and thinking on the subject. Deleuze and Guattari's ideas have also extensively influenced the artistic practice of artists working with the animal subject (such as Mark Dion, Edwina Ashton, and Olly and Suzi to name a few).

The text by Derrida belongs to a minority of writing that has taken the 'inferior knowledge' of the pet seriously. He put his real, singular cat at the heart of his lecture series *The Animal that Therefore I am*. For Derrida his cat offers him access to a philosophy and a self-knowledge that is neither abstract nor self-centered, but intimately embodied and related to an other. This *experiential base* of relating is what the pet offers, in my opinion, for the artists under discussion. I find this a rigorously engaged position from which to investigate the delicate constellation of ecological, social and personal relations that has opened up with the dislocation of the animal-other from its traditional space.

Within this cross-species relationship/experience/void/communication (or any other description one might hazard to apply) something happens, an event, something meaningful, worth consideration. The very nature of a cross-species phenomenological, libidinal relating is, for me, laden with creative possibility. The pet has the potential to open up a creative space within which important and topical issues, anxieties and subject fractures can be visually manifested.

I will argue that the widespread prejudice against pets is based on a very deep seated and problematic formulation of the *wild*, and if the binary opposition of the wild and the domestic is discarded (as the binary opposition of the human and the animal was/is) the pet is more than equal to the same theoretical, and consequently practical, burden as the wild animal.

Structure

In chapter one, titled *The Animal in Contemporary Art*, I examine the position of the pet in contemporary art, aiming to contextualize the field within which the use of the pet is situated. This forms a necessary backdrop to any specific discussion of the pet in cultural discourse.

Chapter two is titled *Not 'Other' Enough: The Pet in Cultural Discourse*. In this chapter I look at prevailing theories that alternately trivialize, or take the pet subject seriously, and some of the reasons for this. This forms the basis for understanding why there is such an extreme reaction centered on the pet within, but not limited to, creative work.

Chapter three focuses on some of my chosen artwork by South African artist Jo Ractliffe, and my own practical exploration of pet-imagery for my Masters' exhibition. Entitled *Form to Force: Pet-Form, Medium and Perception* I analyze both these aspects in Ractliffe's work, as well as my exploration of it in my own.

In the concluding chapter, chapter four, titled *Prolonging the Instants: Becoming-Animal* I look at Deleuze and Guattari's theory of Becoming-Animal and how some

artists' work with their pets seem provide the perfect examples of their thinking in action. I discuss the work of Carolee Schneemann and William Wegman.

In the conclusion of my paper I hope to show that the inclusion of the pet in theoretical debate and practical work is of some importance, and necessitates serious critical consideration precisely *because* it is so easily disparaged. I also hope to show that this knowledge is necessary to progressive thought within the Nature/Culture debate that encompasses the entire Animal Philosophy discourse of which visual art is but one aspect.

Chapter One
The Animal in Contemporary Art

The animal occupies an impossibly complex place in our world, permeating every fiber of society – even our own bodies. It is a very exciting, intricate and multilayered field. To attempt a succinct explanation for 'where we are at' with animals in relation to art and philosophy is impossible within the confines of this paper. In deference to the intellectual chaos present within this particular discourse I am going to attempt to outline very basic points, relevant to my specific project.

The use of the animal has become increasingly prevalent in contemporary art, and with the growing importance of animal studies in a wide range of disciplines, an increasingly important point of discussion and specified discourse. Use of the animal differs widely in visual art practice.

To give some idea of its scope, it encapsulates everything from the uncanny transgenic animals and hybrid flesh of Patricia Piccinini (*Still Life with Stem Cells* 2002), to the stark, compassionate life and narrative drawings of Sue Coe. There are quirky, charming animal-cam videos produced by Sam Easterton, and Brian Conley's theory-based installation projects dealing with human/animal communication and animal consciousness. Works such as the elaborate installations by Rachel Berwick and Mark Dion that contest or explore the relationships clustered around animal life and our perception/influence of/on it. There are the haunting and ephemeral photographs by Britta Jaschinski, seeking a way to express the animal's unconcern with the human, and finally the likes of Olly and Suzi making 'collaborative' works with the animals they confront/encounter. This *very* short list gives one an inkling of the myriad of themes and concerns that are being addressed by artists interested in, or working with, the animal. In recent years there have also been several group exhibitions bringing together these various concerns, most notably *Becoming Animal* (2005); *Animals* (2004) Haunch of Venison Gallery, London; *Animals and Us* (2004) Galerie St. Etienne, New York; *Animal Nature* (2005) Regina Gouger Miller Gallery; *Animals in African Art: From the Familiar to the Marvelous* (1995*)*, amongst others.

Despite the wildly differing thematic, aesthetic, and ethical concerns/practices/materials (and often intentions) the artists are a part of a similar 'project' or movement – a renegotiation of the human/animal Cartesian dualism and, as an extension of that, our longstanding perceived philosophical separation from Nature. Throughout our history non-human animals have been seen as beings of almost no ethical, philosophical, or intellectual significance other than that they qualify the human, but this is changing.

The importance of animal philosophy lies in the profound dislocation of the animal-other from this traditional binary of human and animal. This renegotiation of boundaries affects everything. Giorgio Agamben states that philosophy, theology, politics, ethics, and jurisprudence are all "drawn and suspended in the difference between man and animal"[1]. Historically this *difference* has never been doubted, but in the last thirty years philosophers and scientists have mounted a challenge to the traditional view of the status of non-human animals, and reciprocally that of the human.

The Cartesian dualism separated us from the animal in a hierarchical manner, with the animal-other being confined to a convenient signifier for our difference. They can no longer fulfill that role. Current scientific knowledge has shown that the categories of difference that have kept our understanding of this relationship static are falling away. This collapse has far-reaching consequences and generates some pronounced difficulties.

Our difference from animals has been central to our identity-production and thought-patterns for centuries, and a true rethinking of this relationship would leave no aspect of our lives untouched. This is not just a question of ethics and responsibility – it has wide ranging implications for concepts such as identity, experience, 'truth', communication, language, history, the self and the body, as well as practical implications within medical, legal, biological and sociological discourse, amongst others. Moving forward from this 'collapse' is also complicated by its peculiar ambiguity – it is not a reduction of two opposing sides (human and animal) to *sameness*, but rather a collapse of the human into the realm of the animal. Despite our similarities there is still something irreducibly non-human about the animal-other, the gist of which is distilled by Ludwig Wittgenstein's oft quoted "If a lion could talk, would we be able to understand it?"[2]

What has been written on the animal generally seems to be based on two types of thinking. A realist assumption that there must be (like with Thomas Nagel's bat) something it is like to be a bat – the bat's 'subjectivity'- even if it is not accessible to us. Secondly there is the very human-centered idealist proposal that what it would be like *for us* to be a bat is *what it is like* to be a bat[3]. Although both of these are problematic, they are quite prevalent and hard to circumvent.

There has been a call to acknowledge the animal as a 'true other' – a conceptually unthinkable thing, power, status and agency residing in its silence. This has merit as one does not fall into the trap of speaking for the animal, but to quote Derrida "there is no interest to be found in a discussion of a supposed discontinuity, rupture, or even abyss"[4]. Declaring the animal 'unknowable' and leaving it at that (although philosophically interesting) is just as much a dead-end as presuming to be able to speak for it. The interest within the oscillation between these points resides, according to Derrida, in the undertaking:

> [5]…once it is a matter of determining the number, form, sense, or structure, the foliated consistency of this abyssal limit, these edges, this plural and repeatedly folded frontier…once the frontier no longer forms a single indivisible line, but more than one internally divided line, once, as a result, it can no longer be traced, objectified, or counted as single and indivisible.

A middle ground as such, albeit a rather complicated one. Art might be said to have a privileged place in this exploration. It is both in and outside of language, and the animal has a long association with our conceptions of creativity.

The use of the animal in art has a long history proven to date back to Paleolithic cave paintings. This is a complex history, but my focus will be on the current position of the animal in art that has been developing since the early 1980's. This is a period and development specifically identified by cultural theorist Steve Baker. Baker is one of

the few people who has written two books, *Picturing the Beast* (1993), *The Postmodern Animal* (2000), and numerous essays on the subject of the animal and contemporary art. He has coherently brought together a vast amount of theory from different disciplines, outlining key concerns, practical characteristics, and positioning artistic practice in relation to key cultural theorizations involving the animal. Examples of these are Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "Becoming-animal" and Derrida's text *The Animal That Therefore I Am.* There are many, *many* texts on more specified aspects of the animal in art, but Baker, it seems, is the first to attempt a collective description encompassing all of these as they are manifesting within our cultural practices.

I am going to keep largely within the critical structures outlined by Baker for two reasons; one is that he has outlined a lucid account of the affect of the animal in contemporary art, and two is that he identifies something that is both the core of his account and the core of my argument – the animal, in its surface, body, behaviour and fact provides the artist with a certain freedom, and a creative space within which to act. This is at the heart of my argument because the pet is accused of doing the opposite. In light of this I will be outlining Baker's main arguments as it pertains to the above, but it in no way even touches on many of the other concerns raised in this field.

Baker's Animal:

In *The Postmodern Animal* Baker explores the possibility of an aesthetic appropriate to the animal in postmodern art.

Baker's hypothesis is that there was no modernist animal; the modern animal was the symbolic and sentimental 19th century animal that was 'made to disappear'[6]. Although he highlights that there were examples of artists working with animals and animal form (like Brancusi and Franz Marc) this was largely *ignored* by prevailing modernist theorists. In the 1980s there was a proliferation of animal imagery *back* in use by artists, coinciding with the advent of 'postmodernism'.[7]

Baker positions himself quite specifically; postmodernism, to him, is that envisaged by Lyotard in *The Postmodern Condition* (1984):

> [8]"…the forms in which imaginative thought necessarily challenges the complacency of the age, an 'unthinking consensus' of politics and of taste which would prefer 'to put an end to experimentation'; 'to liquidate the heritage of the avant-gardes', and instead 'to offer the reader or viewer matter for solace and pleasure'."

Baker describes a stage of postmodernism that has one vainly, but philosophically, raging about things that 'matter'. "It is for those for whom something has gone wrong, but who 'know' in their rage, that it could be otherwise"[9] – this, to Baker, is an engaged and promising approach to understanding the animal in postmodern art, and the pursuit for new ways of 'being-in-the-world'. This approach is in contrast to some works that he discusses – such as Malcolm Morley's *Parrots* – that are characterized by an ironic detachment and freedom from humiliation, reveling in the

seductiveness of the imagery. These works, with their comfortable approach, do not provide a promising model for self-thought for Baker.[10]

This pursuit of 'new ways of being-in-the-world', in its many forms, is to a large degree a practical pursuit played out within the nature/culture debate, with many artists approaching and fulfilling multiple roles and straddling different disciplines – teacher, conservationist, activist, scientist, etc. – often leading to contradictory conceptual and ethical questions. In trying to categorize the approaches of artists, Baker outlined two often-overlapping categories: animal endorsing art, and animal skeptical art[11]. Animal endorsing art looks at animal life itself rather than cultural constructions of it (Baker uses the work of Olly & Suzi as an example). Animal skeptical art, on the other hand, is specifically skeptical of culture's means of constructing and classifying the animal in order to make it meaningful to human beings (here he uses Mark Dion's work as an example).

As mentioned in outlining these two broad categories he discusses and compares the work of Mark Dion and Olly and Suzi. The differences in their approaches and concerns are self evident, but what interests Baker are some of the issues of common concerns in their attitudes to art and the responsibilities of the artist. Baker's discussion around these artist's works indicates the range of serious contemporary art employing animal imagery. To look at them more carefully before continuing with my own summary will provide some very concrete and clear examples of how Baker's formulation of 'the postmodern animal' can function, and they illustrate important manifestations of 'truth', 'authorship', and the use and concern with a living animal – all of which will be important in discussing work that deal with pets.

Mark Dion:

Mark Dion has been described as a postmodern "ironist theorist"[12], whose main strategy and responsibility is to call received wisdom into question. Baker outlines how Dion's interest in Nature centers on how it presents as a "constantly reinvented rhetorical construction", and in how such constructions have "articulated cultural anxieties about difference that separates Homo sapiens from other living creatures"[13]. Dion engages directly with scientific theoretical perspectives, found in the commentaries on science of writers such as Jay Gould and Donna Haraway. He is not so much focused on the animal itself, but rather, according to Baker, the attempts of science and philosophy to devise secure hierarchies and taxonomies in which to place it. This approach makes his work an obvious example of animal skeptical art[14]. Dion positions himself within the environmental activist movement and frequently works alongside scientists and other players in the field. The role of the artist, according to Dion, is to employ "the rich set of tools, like irony, allegory and humour"[15], which are less readily or imaginatively employed by the institutions that seek to promote particular 'truths', such a science or the entertainment industry.

Since 1993 Dion has been producing a series of site-specific 'tree-works', starting with a complex installation entitled *Library for the Birds of Antwerp* (1993) exhibited in the city's Museum for Contemporary Art (he also produced *Library for the Birds of Massachusetts* 2005, *Library for the birds of New York* 1996, *Tar and Feathers* 1995, *Killers Killed* 1994 and *Library for the Birds of Connecticut* 1994). The work consists of a complex installation of a tree (a real tree, suffering from dry rot) and several

signs of the exotic bird trade that has been flourishing in Antwerp since the sixteenth century (wooden cages, metal traps and cartridges of birdshot). This is all wedged and hung among a wider set of references to extinction such as an image of a dodo, and books on extinct bird species. Baker writes that, like much of Dion's work, the piece is both a site-specific response to local history and a commentary on broader ecological issues. Baker highlights Norman Bryson's reading of the tree as a "by now ironic image of man's place at the pinnacle of the evolutionary hierarchy"[16].

The most important part of the work is the inclusion of eighteen living African Finches purchased at Antwerp's Vogelmarkt. During the exhibition the birds could fly freely throughout the gallery space and could perch on the tree-like installation. The *living birds* do the real work within the piece. Baker quotes Bryson:

> [17]"Through the conceit that birds are readers' the book-laden tree stages an encounter between 'man-made systems of knowledge' on one side, and on the other side a realm beyond those systems, a Nature whose properties remain radically unknown and unknowable."

The importance of the *living* animal in the work cannot be overstated. Baker marks this importance through another quote by Bryson that succinctly and insightfully explains their function: In an essay on the piece Bryson wrote that the birds in the piece mark a reality which exists "as an excess lying beyond the scope of representation, as a reserve which the production of truth draws upon, but cannot exhaust or contain."[18]

The reality of the animal's existence and its physical proximity to the artist also plays a central role in the work of Olly and Suzi. It serves as a reminder "of the limits of human understanding and influence, but also of the value of working *at those limits"*.[19]

Olly and Suzi:

Olly and Suzi are a collaborative duo that seek to make art which reflects their immediate encounters and interactions with animals in the wild. Their work mainly takes the form of paintings and drawings of animals in their natural habitat, as well as photographic documentation of their encounters. Baker focuses on work produced for their *Raw* exhibition. These works include paintings of lions, zebras, wild dogs and rhinoceros in the African Bush, polar bears in the Arctic tundra, tigers and elephants in Nepal, leopards and tigers in India, white sharks in the ocean off South Africa, and ravens, wolves and deer in Minnesota.

Baker indicates that for Olly and Suzi the primacy of experience is one of the most important aspects in their work. They state that whatever else happens "we have to have an experience in the bush"[20], and the work emerges directly from that experience. They try to get as close to the animals as possible and then work with materials such as natural pigments, soil, plant colorings, blood, inks, dyes, simultaneously, on the same piece, "hand over hand"[21]. Importantly whenever possible the animals are encouraged, without manipulation or coercion, to interact with the work and mark it for themselves. This involves everything from urine stains to having the work dragged off and destroyed by a leopard. This is the 'performance'

documented by the photographer Greg Williams who travels with the pair. Baker notes that in their work there is an attempt to express *directly*, in an uncommonly straightforward manner their sense of the beauty and perfection of these animals.[22]

It is important for Baker that both Dion and Olly and Suzi deal with issues around authorship and agency. The living through of a complex-authorship is evident not only in the collaborative 'hand-over-hand' technique of Olly and Suzi, but also in the participation of animals themselves in the mark making, and with Dion, it is present in the finished work.

The question of 'truth' is another issue that they have in common.

Widespread skepticism in cultural discourse about the operation of 'truth' and knowledge has inevitably complicated thinking about animals. Baker lists some of the questions that are clustered around this issue. Questions such as: what constitutes 'authentic experience', and to what extent is it possible to shed what Olly and Suzi calls the "'baggage' of their Western thought"?[23] In relation to the last question, another issue touched on by Baker is the prevalence of experiencing wonder and fear as an antidote to anthropocentrism. In Baker's discussion he notes that Dion has a long-standing interest in the way that pre-enlightenment curiosity cabinets 'tested reason' and attests to the marvelous. When Dion was questioned as to how one might provoke a contemporary sense of the marvelous, he replied: "One thing is to tell the truth, which is by far more astounding than any fiction."[24] Baker writes that when Olly and Suzi were asked whether they sought to communicate a kind of 'truth' about animals they answered; "Our way of working aims to express our view of the world, which is our 'truth…We can't really say that there is one truth and we're aiming to get to that."[25] This is 'truth' as an experience. Baker argues that the incorporation of the marks made by the animals is a very specific attempt to overcome the viewer's postmodern sense of not knowing or believing what they are seeing. The example he uses is of the work *Shark Bite*. The photograph (that incidentally graces the cover of the book) is exhibited along with a ragged corner, ripped off and spat out by the shark, and this attests to the presence or existence of the living animal. The photograph offers an important but somehow lesser – or at least more conventional, familiar, and thus more easily ignored – record of its existence. Baker maintains that it is only the painting as object, as thing, marked by the animal itself, which can indelibly record the immediacy and 'truth' of the encounter.[26]

These 'real-world' processes and practices, named by Baker, are often the main concern for the respective artists, but there are also fundamental concerns brought to the surface by our rethinking of our place in nature – identity and creativity. Baker notes that these are well-worked concerns within art critical discourse, but that the animal image or body has such a *particular* role to play is very interesting. Identity and creativity are two major interlocking strands running through Baker's book – he largely looks at the animal within a postmodern aesthetic as a strategy to get out of the humanist traditional patterns of expert -, hierarchy-, and identity-thinking. These traditionally secure aspects are challenged for the following basic reasons: expertise is not considered creative, if one sustains hierarchical models of thought you cannot assign the animal 'true' other status, and the normal construction of subjectivity through identity-thinking is at the heart of what must be reconsidered.

I will give a brief summary of Baker's talking through of the postmodern animal, although he separated the discussion into three separate chapters dealing with each of these concepts, they are so interconnected that, if one keeps the reasoning behind them in mind, it is more coherent just to follow his argument.

Expert-, Hierarchy-, and Identity-thinking:

The most important and influential aspect of the postmodern animal, in its various manifestations, is that it opens up a space of creative freedom within which to act for many artists. It is not subject to old categories, classifications, and entrenched 'knowledges'. Postmodern thought, across a range on disciplines, is keen to distance itself from notions of expertise – expertise is not considered creative – and Baker uses this premise as a basis to explore both the aesthetics and ethics of the postmodern animal[27].

Baker writes that within the distinctions drawn up between the concepts of creativity and expertise, an *opening up* of the human, the 'self', is associated overwhelmingly with creativity. On this basis Baker identifies the concept of "estrangement"[28] (as developed by Viktor Shklovsky) as a basis for understanding the importance of getting beyond what we know. Many of Shklovsky's examples involve the confrontation or confusion of human and animal perspectives in order to undermine human complacency and certainty. Baker quotes Carlo Ginzburg in explaining that "estrangement" is "a delegitimizing device" employed specifically "against preconceived formulas, against frozen habits, against 'knowing', because knowledge means imposing a blueprint on reality instead of learning from it."[29]

According to Baker the adoption or interrogation of an animal perspective can itself aid the artist in working against the worst effects of an expert conception of knowledge. The importance of the animal lies in how it figures in the limits of the artist's understanding of what they are doing, and it also figures in how they frame their own identities. Baker outlines that willing identifications with the animal often spill over into representations of the artists themselves. It is as if the artist, through the mediation of the animal, renders himself or herself "an other estranged"[30].

These 'identifications' are problematic because of their dualistic nature (expert vs. philosopher/artist) – they can easily resort to the kinds of prescriptive moralization that echoes the dynamics of expert-thinking, (classification and judgments based on established knowledge etc). Despite its prevalence, Baker identifies that a constructive way of using this dualism can be found in artworks that explore the relation of the human and the animal as a confrontation between the clashing perspectives of the expert and the philosopher. "The value of the art lies in the manner of its *cutting across* the philosophical distinctions, using it and testing it without ever conforming to it"[31] – one of the examples used by Baker is Joseph Beuys's *Coyote: I Like America and America Likes Me* (1974). In the work Beuys and the animal act out the limits of the artists' control of the situation, with the coyote figuring for Beuys "as an important cooperator in the production of freedom"[32]. Baker explains that artists work with the animal in order to get beyond the pettiness of human authority and closer to something, as Beuys puts it, "that the human being cannot understand"[33] – in other words the importance of estrangement. In such *confrontations*, the artists should

not try to turn the animals into versions of their own secure human selves – the outcome of the confrontation must be left open.[34]

Both the art and the situation within which it is encountered have a part to play in rendering the human experience strange. Baker writes that the nature of the encounter is, as mentioned above, a *confrontation* with an *embodied* thing. He postulates that the postmodern animal is most productively thought of as an embodied thing; "the literalism of the thing matters, its presence, its objecthood"[35]. It captures something of the essence of our fascination with boundaries. According to Baker *it* has to confront the viewer as an obstacle, within a physical or metaphorical space, where it creates something (a situation) that comprises and binds the bodies of the viewer and the thing itself to form a new, awkward, non-modernist whole.[36]

In considering what such an encountered thing may look like, Baker developed his concept of 'botched taxidermy'. Botched taxidermy characterizes works where "things appear to have *gone wrong* with the animal but where the animal still *holds together*"[37]. Baker's examples are loosely grouped thematically. Mixed materials[38] as in *Monogram* by Rauschenberg, Paul McCarthy's *Cultural Gothic*, with its deliberate disruptive incoherence. 'Stuffed" animals[39], not as taxidermy but as toys, Mark Dion's *Taxonomy on Non-Endangered Species* 1990, and Jeff Koons's 1986 *Rabbit*. The use of 'wrong' materials[40] like John Isaac's *Say It Isn't So* 1994 and Mark Dion's 1995 *Ursus maritimus*. Hybrid forms[41], Thomas Grunfeldt's *Misfit* series, and William Wegman's photographs of Man Ray cross-species-dressing. Messy confrontations[42] as that of Beuys with the coyote. There is taxidermic form reworked[43] like Dorothy Cross's 1992 *Amazon*. Lastly, tattiness, like seen in Damien Hirst's *Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* – imposing as an idea, tatty as an object.[44]

A lot of these works are disquieting, leaving one feeling powerless, registering feelings of, for example, shame, like that elicited by Hirst's Tiger Shark. Baker uses this example to illustrate how feelings, tinged with an element of ethical judgment, such as shame, must be rigorously investigated. Judgments "with its temptation to neatly divide (on the basis of existing categories, existing knowledge) the ethically sound and unsound, the politically correct and incorrect' must be interrogated."[45] For Baker one distinctive feature of the 'botched taxidermy' work, if considered collectively, is that they problematize such categories.[46]

This problematization is managed, seemingly despite ethical positions taken up by the artist, through the fact that *materials count*. The materials used create knowledge, or at least encourage open imaginative thought; they do not just banally symbolize things already known[47]. Baker makes the point that, if these thematically grouped forms count for anything, it is that they render the animal *abrasively visible*, regardless of how the artist thinks about the animal. These works are neither what viewers *do know*, nor what viewers *do not know* about animals[48]. They seem to be "questioning entities"[49] (a term Baker borrows from Derrida). "Questioning entities' whose value might lie in their direct acknowledgement of absent or fractured knowledges"[50]. Baker notes that in a field of many competing forms of knowledge and expertise – zoological, historical, medical, taxidermic etc. – the importance of these works is that they *can* be regarded as such, while institutionalized practices might not allow such a reality.

Baker ends this specific discussion with a more general question: "What kind of thing, what kind of being, is a 'botched taxidermy animal'?"[51] His answer is that it is an attempt to *think a new thing*. It refers to both the human and the animal, without being, or directly representing, either. Even when it incorporates a living animal it occupies a space that will not readily distinguish art and the animal. Both are open to endless interpretation, but also the *refusal of interpretation*.[52] Being so difficult to fix, they are not readily available to the categories and classifications of expert-thinking.

Following on from this description of the postmodern animal as something with which to think, rather than something to be thought about, the traditional problems with animals seems to be that they *signify too much* [53](Baker theorizes that this is why comparatively little has been written on postmodern animal imagery – what can usefully be said?), but for Baker the most radical postmodern option is "the animal as a strange being, encountered and experienced rather than rendered familiar through representation"[54].

To a certain degree then non-manipulation of the animal can be seen as one postmodern ambition or ideal. The postmodern animal is in the gallery not as a *meaning* or *symbol*, but in all its pressing *thingness*[55]. This, to Baker, is another key role of the animal in postmodernism: "too close to work as a symbol, it passes itself as the fact or the reality of that which resists both interpretation and mediocrity"[56]. According to Baker, the postmodern animal, 'abrasively visible' throughout these works, is just this "face of the real"[57]. The postmodern animal does not set itself against meaning as much as operate independently of it. It is traumatic to be faced with this conceptual non-compliance. We as humans have always wanted animals to be meaningful and wanting to control and be consoled by those meanings. Baker, and several artists, state that the productiveness of the idea of the postmodern animal lies, in contrast, in it's "pointing to the unavailability rather than the inescapability of an anthropocentric perspective"[58]. Thus Baker outlines that postmodern conceptions of the animal aim, in part, to understand the animal 'as other', and to let that otherness be (i.e. to avoid forcibly rendering it meaningful in human terms).

Postmodern artists, having to address the appearance of the animal body, have explored varied and vivid ways of taking the animal (and the human) out of meaning. Baker describes three strategies of estrangement - designating them sound[59]-, meat[60]-, and abjection-before-meaning[61]. All three strategies rely on a material uncertainty and interpretive disruption but many of the works, especially the group that he designated 'abjection-before-meaning', still fail to address the longstanding hierarchical relationship we share with the animal other[62].

Hierarchical models of thought tend to privilege the group constructing the hierarchy, and animals are thus typically assigned lesser or lower significance than humans. This mode of being and thinking is certainly not easily displaced. Baker writes that even animal-rights philosopher Peter Singer has argued that "there is a basic biological substratum that affects the way we are, and that isn't going to be changed by what is fashionably called cultural constructions"[63]. This leads him to the uncomfortable conclusion that "you're not going to be able to get rid of hierarchy simply by changing culture and society"[64]. To Baker the issue is not whether hierarchy can be eliminated, but rather that the attempt is important.

There have been attempts to think of the animal in non-hierarchical terms, most famously Heidegger's formulations around "what is world"[65]? Heidegger's argument, flawed as it might be, nevertheless offered a rare and necessarily difficult attempt to think outside familiar human experience of the world, and to find a way of characterizing a non-human experience in non-hierarchical terms. According to Baker it was a serious attempt to understand the animal 'as other', in its 'otherness', and to let that otherness be. The notion of letting the animal's otherness be has clear links to postmodern conceptions of the animal that try to avoid forcibly rendering it meaningful in human terms. This also has strong links to Deleuze and Guattari's formulation of becoming-animal.

Baker formulates "holding to form"[66] as a way in which the animal can keep its 'otherness'. He believes that for the postmodern fascination with the animal to function, the distinct form of the animal has still to be recognizable. Holding to form is perhaps the clearest way in which the postmodern animal's *unmeaning thereness*[67] can be expressed. He explains that it is the means by which the animal in postmodern art maintains its difference – it is as if the artist allowing the animal recognizable form constitutes a kind of respect for the otherness of the animal[68]. It is a matter, rather as Heidegger saw, of leaving something other *as it is*, of representing it without manipulating it, without meddling, without assuming as artist who *knows best* and who, in the certainty of that expert knowledge, reduces otherness to sameness, or wonder to familiarity. But, as mentioned previously, non-manipulation is never wholly achievable.

In a discussion on this 'holding to form' Baker uses the example of German photographer Britta Jaschinski's large-scale black and white prints from a 1996 series called *Animal*. In each print the animal's looming presence hits the viewer but holds something back, keeping its identity to and for itself. Baker writes that it is by that very reserve that it offers something close to what Luce Irigaray calls *wonder.* This is the wonder experienced by individuals when faced with the unbridgeable distance between themselves and another (any other): "Wonder being the moment of illumination… between the subject and the world." In recognition of wonder the human is not able to assimilate the animal, or to make it wholly meaningful in human terms: "an excess resists", as Irigaray puts it[69].

Once again it is a delicate balance identified by Baker. The notion of holding to form might be understood to imply that postmodern art clings to the notion that there is such a thing as *proper* animal form, which is what renders the postmodern animal recognizable as such. Baker however opines that the challenge is to hold open the question of form. The thing seen is recognized as an animal, but the nature of the experience may be less recognizable[70].

According to Baker neither the aesthetics of modernism, the philosophical values of humanism, or postmodern conceptions of subjectivity can cope easily with the unsettled boundaries of the human and animal/non-human. He outlines that there have been a number of explorations of the "creative re-description of subjectivity"[71], and common to a number of those was a positive identification with the new forms of the 'monster', the 'hybrid', and the 'cyborg'. It is in these attempts to reconfigure the

human by thinking the in-human, that a more general 'postmodern' resistance to the worst excesses of identity-thinking can be found.

In his analyses of the postmodern animal Baker utilizes the older and more radical concept of *Becoming-animal* to explore ways out of identity -thinking. He lists several reasons for this choice, the most important two are: that Deleuze and Guattari give a creative role to the animal rather than the 'monster', and in doing so usefully avoid casting the animal, as an instance of the non-human, as automatically 'monstrous'[72]; and that becoming-animal charts the possibilities for experiencing an uncompromising sweeping away of identities, human or animal.

Baker does explain that the becoming-animal that appears in *The Postmodern Animal* is not exactly the postmodern animal itself; but it shapes the way in which both the human and the animal forms of the postmodern animal may be understood[73]. Baker provides a close reading of the concept aiming to explore how becoming-animal might offer a real alternative to identity-thinking. It is intercut with three fairly detailed commentaries on how the concept might apply to recent art practices, "traversing" certain self-centered conceptions of the artist and 'sweeping them away'.

Baker utilises Ronald Bogue's introduction to Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy which suggests that it builds on a "Nietzchean conception of the cosmos as the ceaseless becoming of a multiplicity of interconnected forces", which "admits of no stable entities" and which must therefore "be understood in terms of difference rather than identity"[74]. Deleuze and Guattari use the concept in order rigorously to avoid describing modes of thought, action and experience in terms of identities and subjectivities; "the becoming-animal', they write in Kafka, may be thought of as a process or method that 'replaces subjectivity"[75].

Three significant themes are already apparent here[76]. One is the contrasting of interpretation and meaning on the one hand, and experimentation on the other (with a high value seeming to be accorded to artistic experimentation). Another is the characteristic awkwardness in phrasing which results from the avoidance, at all cost, of the language of subjectivity, individuality or selfhood. The third is the role of artistic production and artistic discipline in the creative transformation of experience: it is "through a style that one becomes an animal, and certainly through the force of sobriety"[77]. A particular conception of the artist and of the animal are, it seems, bound up with each other in some manner in the unthinking or undoing of the conventionally human.

In the final chapter of this paper I will be looking in more detail at 'Becoming-animal' and how it can function (or not, as the case might be) in particular within critical work involving pets. I will provide a basic outline in the following chapter, in so far as it is necessary to understand why Deleuze and Guattari do not consider pets an animal in the same degree. The ideas should seem familiar as it reverberates with many of the concepts discussed by Baker that I have outlined above.

Chapter Two
Not 'Other' Enough: The Pet in Cultural Discourse

In this section the discussion is focused on the prevalence of theories that actively disparage, trivialize, or ignore the pet. I will briefly investigate the cultural, psychological, and social reasons for this reaction, as they pertain directly to the experience and understanding of the artworks. I will also touch on what Steve Baker describes as the postmodern artist's "fear of pets"[1].

"Individuated animals, family pets, sentimental, Oedipal animals each with its own petty history…these animals invite us to regress, draw us into narcissistic contemplation."[2] This quote deserves repeating. It is such a vehement and concise expression of the orthodox position on the pet (we will not mention that Deleuze was himself the owner of many cats)[3].

Not 'Other' enough: The Persistence of the Wild and Domestic Categories

As can be gleaned from a lot of writing and artist's interviews and statements (as I hope I have made clear in the previous chapter) there is a widespread *valorization of the wild*. The idea of the domestic animal as an "aberrant creature, a living betrayal of its properly animal potential or trajectory…"[4] is a common perception.

In *The Postmodern Animal* Steve Baker explains that this valorization is a means of outlining a space of creative freedom within which to act. This is one of the most influential functions of the 'postmodern animal' in my opinion. Wonder and fear are seen as antidotes to anthropocentrism. Wonder is used, by Baker, as the wonder experienced by individuals when faced with the *unbridgeable* distance between themselves and any Others[5]. The pet does not, for various reasons, inspire artists and writers in this same way. The pet is not considered 'other' enough. The pet is not recognized as a 'true other'; they, and other domestic species, are generally precluded on the basis that their association with us has somehow *corrupted* them.

In the final chapter of *The Postmodern Animal*, entitled *Fear of the Familiar*, Baker discusses artists' specific hostility against the pet. His argument centers on how the 'tame' and 'domestic' threatens something essential to the artists self-image. "They are perfectly safe"[6] is the general outcry. Some essence of the *wild* is still what most artists want. He uses the example of Olly and Suzi (discussed in the previous chapter) to show that, for many artists, the way they deal with animals reflect the way they see themselves as practitioners. The wild animal (rather romantically) epitomizes a healthy purposeful creativity, independent-mindedness, 'outsider' status etc. while the domestic animal is exemplary of everything that is tame, safe, conventional, constructed, and externally controlled. Baker postulates that this is largely irreconcilable for the image of the artist (or for the philosopher, writer, in fact *any* serious intellectual) and often results in a lashing out at domesticity[7] both in production and interpretation, regardless of the artists' sympathies for those animals as such. There is also the deep-seated pervasive view that sympathy for pets represents a gratuitous perversion of natural behavior.

My problem lies with the obvious perpetuation of the binary opposition of domestic and wild.

Baker explains that the persistence of categories is, to a degree, inevitable because our engagement with the animal is always a process of bringing it into meaning. Thus the categories remain firmly in place despite the characteristic postmodern pull towards the dissolution of categories and boundaries. Baker looked at several writers who, in their writing described and justified these categorizations. In a short summary: the first text he looked at was Edmund Leach's work *Animal categories and verbal abuse* (1964). In this text Leach argues "we make binary distinctions and then mediate the distinction by creating an ambiguous (and taboo-loaded) intermediate category"[8]. Leach identified the pet as such a category and taboo (which was defined by him as that which "serves to separate the self from the world"[9]). In these terms the pet is definitely seen as an improper and anomalous creature. The second text Baker looked at was the 1977 text, *Why Look At Animals*, by John Berger. Berger takes as a central position that "No animal confirms man, either positively or negatively"[10]. He then theorizes that pets are the exception, that they are "creatures of their owner's way of life," that "the pet completes him, offering responses to aspects of his character which would otherwise remain unconfirmed"[11]. Baker makes the point again that for Berger the pet is not a proper animal. In *Becoming-animal* Deleuze and Guattari's open hostility to the pet stems from how conveniently this kind of animal stands for all they despise "in the expectations of an imaginative psychoanalysis: family loyalty, obedience to the law and the possibility of a world made meaningful by well formed and exhaustive interpretations"[12]. All of these secure, entrenched aspects need to be 'swept away'. I will discuss the particulars of becoming-animal further in the last chapter. For now it is enough to know that they embrace the wild animal, and are most disparaging about any contribution the pet can add to their philosophical project - they do not consider it a proper animal.

These descriptions are too brief to undertake an understanding of what the respective theorists were *saying* about the animal, but the point is that there is a consistent separation of the pet from the main category of the animal, and reasonable arguments and justifications therefore.

There are also omissions from texts where, conceivably, our real life interaction with animals could have been of some theoretical and practical value. These include many texts by the theorists of Phenomenology Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jean-Paul Sartre, *et al*.

As an example: Elizabeth A. Behnke provides a reading of Merleau-Ponty's 1960 'Le concept de Nature" (Concept of Nature) where she highlights the lost opportunity of not taking our relations with domestic animals seriously.

She describes Merleau-Ponty as deeply suspicious of what he termed a 'frontal' relation with Nature, meaning that this is posited as an "object over-against a subject contemplating them from the outside"[13]. Merleau-Ponty posits that Nature itself – "wild, savage, primordial, pre-reflective Nature" – 'resists' such a maneuver. Behnke writes:

> [14]"A way must thus be found to speak from "within" this Nature that is not in front of us but is behind us or beneath our feet, supporting us. In other words, we must learn to speak from within this Nature that surrounds and includes us, This Nature with which we are intermingled, this natural being that we are".

According to Behnke, Merleau-Ponty wants to move from a frontal ontology to ontology explicated *from within a shared flesh*.[15] In her own project of exploring the nature of interspecies interaction, she too wants to move from a "separative, subject-facing-object type of experiencing" to a more inclusive, connected mode *within lived experiencing* itself. It is from this context that she views this text[16].

Central to Behnke's project is how *de Nature* clarifies that the animal can be seen as a 'loophole'. It is a concept through which one can escape from theorizations that want to assign everything either to the realm of 'pure mind' or 'pure matter' (another of the myriad of manifestations of the Cartesian dualism), or alternately it can be used to maintain these categories unscathed when applied to cases where boundaries are malleable[17]. My own understanding is that the piece highlights the self-serving nature of the Cartesian dualism - the animal being used in its usual fashion to situate boundaries and borders, keeping conceptual difficulties in check. Despite this for Merleau-Ponty the human-animal relation is not a hierarchic one, characterized by the 'addition' of rationality to a mechanistically conceived animal body, but a *lateral relation of kinship*, among living beings[18]. He deals with questions surrounding animal consciousness (referring to, amongst other things, animal culture and animal institutions) and rejects the Cartesian concept of the animal as machine. Instead, for Merleau-Ponty, the human animal is simply "another way of being a body, another variant of sensing/sensible/sentience within the sensible"[19]. He also speaks of his key concept of intercorporeality.

Despite the promising recognition of our kinship and the guidance to investigate from 'within a shared flesh' Behnke identifies several weak areas in the text. Merleau-Ponty looks extensively at the scientific investigations of a myriad of different animals, but those that we share our lives with such as working and companion animals are seldom mentioned. The animals he does mention are observed, experimented upon, and theorized about. Apart from a lack of representation and consideration, Behnke's problem is just this - that the question of the human-animal 'relation' is treated only ontologically, and there is almost no mention of human-animal sociality. Her most serious contention, though, is that the unthematized relation between human beings and animals that supports many pages of this text *is* a frontal relation of contemplation, objectification, intervention, and domination.[20] Behnke's contention is that if Merleau-Ponty truly wants to develop a concept of Nature "from within wild Being as a field of shared flesh"[21], he is looking in the wrong place. She writes that evidence is to be found in much more abundance if one speaks from within our life among animals, shared situations, "the lived experience of interspecies sociality where it is not just I who looks at the animal, but the animal who looks at me."[22] Behnke herself uses this approach in shifting from a 'frontal' attitude to becoming part of a shared situation among fellow beings. Crucially, there is a shift from "knowing in advance" what is likely to happen (and reacting accordingly) to relinquishing the project of "knowing" and allowing "something else" to emerge among us instead.[23]

(This is a phenomenological approach to other beings that shares a lot of the hallmarks of artistic approach in *The Postmodern Animal*).

In reading many texts on what is termed 'animal philosophy', like those mentioned above, there is either an attempt to theorize the pet as the opposite of the animal, the

exception and detractor to the philosophical ground being explored. If it is not actively partitioned and inscribed within a domestic economy, the pet is generally omitted, its existence and participation in our lives ignored. The insistent *over inscription* of the domestic economy on the pet seems to me to signal a profound anxiety, the origin and definition of which is particularly difficult to locate.

I return again to the widespread 'valorization of the wild', and my particular unease at the persistence of these categories. What is not evident in a lot of the work, writing and thinking is that the *wild* is as much a cultural construct as the domestic. I believe that the persistence and nature of the 'theorized' pet is a manifestation of a suspension of actual engagement with the animal. (And here I am talking in a very broad manner, specific artists' concerns are much more complex but this is a current that runs through almost all the critical discourse)

In interrogating the deep-seated beliefs and assumptions that govern our attitudes towards Nature, and inevitably also our stance towards the animal, I think new perceptions and understanding can be found. In the controversial collection of essays entitled *Uncommon Ground* (1996), the writers all investigate these perceptions. Writing on the concept of 'Wilderness', William Cronon identifies a point that seems very simple, but has great influence and forms the basis for all the other writers.

> [24]"Far from being one place on earth that stands apart from humanity, it is quite profoundly a human creation – indeed, the creation of very particular human cultures at very particular moments in human history. Wilderness hides its unnaturalness behind a mask that is all the more beguiling because it seems so natural – As we gaze into the mirror it holds up for us, we too easily imagine that what we behold is Nature when in fact we see the reflection of our own unexamined longings and desires. The non-human world we encounter in wilderness is also far from being our own invention – you feel you are in the presence of something irreducibly nonhuman, something profoundly Other than yourself. And yet: what brought each of us to the places where such memories and feelings become possible is entirely a cultural invention."

The exploration incumbent in animal philosophy is tightly wound within Nature-related cultural production. Becoming-animal and related attempts are also cultural inventions aimed at getting closer to the 'animal' but with the rigid persistence of nature/culture categories the attempts get sidelined. Cronon traces the nature of some of these cultural inventions including the powerful attractions and grounding of the romantic sublime and primitivism. He shows how these still have a powerful pervasive hold on us and manifest in our current day societies. His main thesis is based on his belief that the concept of wilderness, in virtually all of its manifestations, represents a *flight from history*.[25] In a simplistic analogy it is almost seen as the 'original garden', it is a place outside of time, from which human beings had to be ejected before the fallen world of history could properly begin.

For Cronon, as well as artists and writers, wilderness offers us the *illusion* that we can escape the cares and troubles of the world in which our past has ensnared us. It is also held up as the ultimate landscape of authenticity[26]. This 'flight from history' that he inserts as the core of wilderness represents the false hope of an escape from responsibility, the illusion that we can somehow wipe clean the slate of our past and

return to the tabula rasa that supposedly existed before we began to leave our mark in the world.

> [27]"This, then, is the paradox: wilderness embodies a dualistic vision in which the human is entirely outside the natural. If we allow ourselves to believe that nature, to be true, must also be wild, then our very presence in nature represents its fall. The place where we are is the place where nature is not."

This kind of thinking points to a profound societal alienation from the land. Only that explains the use of wilderness as a model for human life in nature. The romantic ideology of 'Wilderness' leaves precisely nowhere for human beings to actually make a *living* from the land[28]. It is this kind of thinking that results in our postulations on eating meat ending in the conclusion that eating is an impossibility, genocide, cannibalism. The same dynamic works in animal rights where the protection leads to the decimation of a species. This is a special kind of delusion based on an impossibility that plays out in our cultural explorations of the Nature/Culture debate. As Cronon notes, the most troubling cultural baggage that accompanies the celebration of wilderness has to do with the ways we think about ourselves. The wilderness dualism, according to him, tends to cast any use as *abuse*, and thereby denies us a middle ground in which responsible use and non-use might attain some kind of balanced, sustainable relationship[29]. As he says, the middle ground is where we actually live. "It is where we – all of us, in our different places and ways – make our home."[30]

The persistence of animal categories has its roots, I believe in this paradox outlined by Cronon. No genuine interrogation of our position within the Animal can be lived without a reinvestigation of the place of the pet and domestic animal.

Sentimentality, Perversity, and the Pet

What I hope to have made clear so far is that the pet is not 'other' enough, it will not bare the same philosophical burden as the wild animal. It complicates and straddles the boundaries and arguments brought forward by most, and thus is either disparaged or ignored. I have described that the persistence of the wild and domestic binaries has at its heart a pervasive, largely un-interrogated cultural construction of the wild.

The domestic animal is abhorrent to the postmodern artist or philosopher's self-image for reasons mentioned, and the fact that a reaction to the pet based on this conception and further social stigma is the 'orthodox' position regarding the pet. There is a lot more lashing-out *at* than engaging *with* within this framework. This lashing-out takes the form of accusations of *sentimentality* and/or *perversity* directed at artists.

For a discussion on sentimentality I turn to a text by Deborah Knight, entitled *Why We Enjoy Condemning Sentimentality: A Meta-Aesthetic Perspective* (1999). What Knight does in her paper is to step back and analyze the philosophical environment within which her formulation of the standard view of sentimentality operates. This is a similar approach to what Cronon does with the concept of Wilderness, and mirrors the approach I feel one needs when looking at the pet in contemporary art.

Sentimentality, as defined by Knight, is a concept associated with mental-feelings and is always about the self. Tender, comforting emotions such as pity, affection, sympathy, compassion and fondness are the usual targets of derision, but stronger emotions such as anger, regret etc. are also perceived to give way to a progressive corruption of our emotional states and responses. Sentimentality is thus taken as a mark of decline in moral and aesthetic sensibility[31]. According to Knight experiencing these mental-feelings is not the issue; it becomes a problem when one holds views, opinions, and beliefs that are based on these mental-feelings/emotions/sentiments. Knight describes that the problem with sentiments are that they are equally right, "because sentiment has a reference to nothing beyond itself, and is always real."[32] Already one can envisage the complications that will arise in relation to pets. In a complex phenomenological relationship where there is no philosophical purchase given to one of the participants, accusations of this sort cannot be countered or engaged. But it is within this framework that realizations such as Derrida's (his cat offering him access to a self-knowledge that is intimately bound with an other) start to resonate. It also complicates previously discussed notions of authenticity, experience, and truth, and in a basic way highlights the need for re-engagement.

Knight summarizes the standard view of sentimentality in the following way: [33]Firstly, sentimentality is bad because it simplifies the object of our attention; secondly it depends upon quick, predictable, and familiar reactions (these reactions are generally considered shallow, trite, or clichéd, and they become habitual and routine); thirdly sentimentality makes no demands on us, it requires no struggle and involves only a narrow range of feelings. Knight also writes that it arouses no thought or feeling about the real world, and both contributes to and is supported by a general failure of the imagination; further it also prefers the obvious and avoids the ambiguous. As mentioned above sentimentality is also always about the self. According to Knight it supposedly has no reference beyond the self, and when it is directed towards types of fictional objects and sentimentalized commodities it is considered to be morally perverse or perverting[34]. What is involved in accepting the standard view, for Knight, is condemning sentimentality without bothering to think about the philosophical environment that stands as the background for such condemnation.[35]

Of course the point is much more complicated than such a list. Knight uses the example of Savile who states that sentimentality is "always open to criticism"[36]. Knight considers his point valid because he claims that the correct way of thinking about the relationship between sentimentality and those emotions with which it is associated is to see it, not as one emotion among others, but rather as "a mode of thought or feeling". It is not located in the objects of our attention, but rather in our mode of attending. Our responses also do not depend solely on an object and its properties, but simultaneously "on common cultural associations that are not directly presented or described."[37]

According to Knight what is not considered sentimental, in contrast, involves a certain complexity of situation and depth of response. In Knight's discussion she highlights the following key aspects. Non-sentimental experiences and responses require the expenditure of mental-energy, and openness to new experiences and points of view. We must ask questions, reflect, ponder, and sort through a range of conflicting feelings, both in the original situation and in our response to it[38]. Because

sentimentality is so keyed to our own responses, it leaves us preoccupied with ourselves (whether we realize this or not); non-sentimental responses, - it is claimed – turn our attention away from ourselves towards objective situations, toward others.

In short, Knight writes, "sentimentality leads us away from active, cognitive engagement with the ambiguities and complexities of the real (here construed broadly enough to include the representational content of art and literature as well as other persons and the world we share with them) toward the oversimplified, the distorted, the falsified, the fantasized, the fictional."[39] So, according to her traditional understanding of sentimentality is simplistic, its rhetoric is manipulative, and its examples are hackneyed or quickly became so. But, Knight points out; these are the sorts of charges that are generally brought *against* sentimentality. Her argument is that condemnation of sentimentality can in fact be a second-order sentimental response.[40]

One thing that stops one from realizing this, according to Knight, is the philosopher, or intellectual's self-image[41] (this sounds familiar). Another is that the philosophical condemnation of sentimentality seems to be part of the philosophical environment, and on a certain level to be a matter of language. Knight writes that condemnation relies on remaining within structures of praise and blame that operate according to established rhetorical strategies. General consensus about the meaning of a term can lead to the more-or-less automatic dismissal or condemnation of particular works of art, or lived experiences, as well as our responses to them[42]. Knight emphasizes that, in contrast, it should be at the level of *particulars* that we should be philosophically and critically engaged. What we should guard against is the prejudice of treating everything that could be called sentimental as unworthy of further aesthetic consideration. "For if", she writes, "we just call something sentimental in order to condemn it, we are likely to end up failing to recognize the complexity or significance of works that we have too hastily taken to be paradigmatic anti-metonyms of our preferred set of philosophical virtues."[43]

Thus, condemnation of sentimentality can be a sentimental activity, and because it masquerades as reasoned it conceals its potential to be self-deceiving and consequently can be seen as sentimentality of the most vicious sort[44]. Definitely something to keep in mind.

> "What is a dog anyway? Simply an antidote for an inferiority complex." W.C. Fields[45]

This is an example of the types of accusations that are leveled at pets and their human counterparts. Deleuze and Guattari, as mentioned previously, find family pets the most contemptible of animals. This is a commonly held belief that James Serpell investigates in his book *In the Company of Animals* (1996).

Pet keeping is a subject mired in a great deal of prejudice and misunderstanding. According to Serpell the nature of these prejudices boil down to a belief, or suspicion, that there is something strange, perverse, or wasteful about displaying sentimental affection for animals. The sinister aspects of pets take several forms, including the belief that they substitute reality for socially inadequate owners[46]; they are an excuse for gratuitous self-indulgence, they can be emblems of status and power[47], it can be

an excuse for playful domination[48] – a practice which stems from man's inherent insecurity, and/or zoophilia and bestiality[49]. It is even regarded as a phenomenon that "consumes people's positive emotions and, thus, contributes indirectly to 'the oppression and physical or psychological annihilation of human beings'"[50]. The view of pet keeping as a 'gratuitous perversion' of normal behaviour (think caricatures of post menopausal women and poodles, old crazy cat ladies, teenage girls and horses – there seems to be a pattern - etc.) is reiterated throughout history.

What is also evidenced throughout history is the importance, in whatever form it existed, of the companion animal. Serpell writes of a unique human burial found in 1978 on a late Paleolithic site[51]. The tomb contained two skeletons: an elderly human of unknown sex and, next to it, the remains of a five-month-old domestic dog. The two had been buried together roughly 12,000 years ago. "The most striking thing about these remains was the fact that whoever presided over the original burial had carefully arranged the dead person's left hand so that it rested, in a timeless and eloquent gesture of attachment, on the puppy's shoulder"[52]. Serpell, and others, conclude that the contents of this tomb not only provide us with some of the earliest evidence of animal domestication; they also strongly imply that man's primordial relationship with this particular species was an affectionate one. In other words, "prehistoric man may have loved his dogs and his other domestic animals as pets long before he made use of them for any other purpose"[53]. Serpell theorises that despite seeming trivial and unimportant in retrospect, affection for animals may have been responsible for one of the most profound and significant events in the history of our species, the domestication of animals.

This is an example of how Serpell treats all these different accusations leveled against companion animals; the above mentioned was part of an investigation of the claims that widespread pet keeping is a relatively modern Western phenomenon driven by rising living standards and symptomatic of a widespread social alienation. Evidence in every accusation, scientific, empirical, and anecdotal, (all those that I have listed are discussed in detail in the book), are all objectively weighed and found to be inconclusive. Despite a lack of factual evidence, people's relationships with their animal companions are generally considered absurd, sentimental and somewhat pathetic. Serpell also discusses the fact that there has, within the larger animal project, been this lingering tendency to dismiss close, affectionate relationships between humans and animals as trivial, wasteful, perverted and wholly unworthy of serious consideration[54]. These are widely held, though not necessarily acknowledged, beliefs that underscore the persistent failure to include pets in the general discourse of different practices, including – especially – contemporary art practice.

According to Serpell pet keeping, by its nature, involves a certain degree of sentimentality. A lot of what people derive from any close relationships involves sentiment, and Serpell points out, that there is no obvious justification for the belittling or repressing of such feelings when they involve animals. Serpell does acknowledge the examples of when people carry 'relationships' too far. These are examples such as hoarding, abuse, bestiality, pathological attachment etc. But, as Serpell notes, "Society will no doubt continue to deal with such cases according to the degree of suffering or harm they cause themselves, other people, or the animals they exploit". He points out that "these are not reasonable grounds for regarding the majority of pet-owners as potential zoophiles or fanatics any more than there is reason

to treat all alcohol drinkers as embryonic dipsomaniacs."[55] Despite this Serpell's opinion is that these accusations do not even *have to be made*, they are considered normal.

Serpell's argument is that this disquiet, this propensity to trivialize and denigrate affectionate animal-human relationships, is because it reveals the simultaneity of two contradictory and incompatible sets of moral values. On the one hand you have the ruthless, economically driven exploitation of domestic animals, and on the other you have pets. He points out that the inconsistencies inherent in our treatment of these two separate classes of domestic animal are only paradoxical when it is assumed that both types of treatment are normal. He argues that, until very recently, we have accepted the least painful solution to this disturbing moral dilemma. In a bid to resolve the contradictions he posits that we only assume one of these types of treatments as normal, that of the domestic animal[56]. Thus companion-animal relations are seen as perverse, wasteful, or extravagant. Serpell theorises that instead of questioning the hard-line, economic exploitation of animals we have tended, in one way or another, to adopt a disparaging, condescending or trivializing attitude to pets and pet-keeping.

It seems that anyone who allows themselves to get emotionally, or socially, close to a pet are damned with the accusation of sentimentality. Yet, as Serpell maps out in his book, for more than 90 per cent of their history, human beings lived as hunters and gatherers, and the majority of hunter-gatherers display similar sentiments towards animals[57]. The truth, in fact, is that it is normal and natural for people to empathize and identify with other life forms, and to feel guilt and remorse about harming them. According to Serpell it is the essence of our humanity. He believes that the acknowledgement of this is key to attempt to form the base for a sustainable future on this planet.[58]

To return to the example mentioned above, the spread of pet-keeping in the western world may or may not have something to with rising living standards, or demographic changes in family and community relationships. But it has always been with us in forms that have not necessarily entered our history. Through his research Serpell makes it clear that since the middle ages the growth in popularity of companion animals has been inextricably linked with the decline of anthropocentrism, and the gradual development of a more egalitarian approach to animals and the natural world.

Despite all the logical counter-arguments made by Serpell, and one would think the truth of our own experiences, 'anthropomorphobia' is rampant. This is the fear of pets, a fear of artists (in this case) that they 'may be accused of uncritical sentimentality' in their depiction or discussion of animals. All seem to unanimously regard sentimentality as a *bad* thing. In an interview on her work in the *Becoming-Animal* exhibition in Massachusetts, artist Kathy High (who works extensively with her pets) describes that:

> [59] "There is a constant struggle for me between earnestness and irony when talking about pets. It is easy to describe them sincerely, but one doesn't want to appear too "sappy" (picture wide-eyed kitties on velvet). Pets are, at the same time, paradoxical and difficult to unravel (picture twitching paws and gnarled teeth, tongues lashing). I think there is a pressure on contemporary artists to be

> ironical and critical. Somehow, today, sincerity – to me – takes a certain amount of bravery".

She is not alone in her view of sincerity. Sue Coe is another artist (and activist), working with pet imagery, who is very vocal and accuses the devices of irony and criticalness to be convenient distancing devices[60]. Emily Mayer, and Olly and Suzi suggest that, when looking at the realities of death and life in the wild, "it is hard to sentimentalize"[61]. But is death and life in a domestic situation really less brutal, joyful, or fulfilling? Even within the animal rights movements theorists like Peter Singer and Tom Regan, well aware of the dangers of being labeled sentimental, tried to distance themselves from such views[62]. Ironically, in a classic Cartesian move they set up reason and sentiment as opposing terms, and chose reason – displacing the binary once again. The sociological function of sentiment is important and wide-ranging, but Baker identifies that the question of sentiment needs to be addressed in *specific terms* in relation to art[63].

According to Baker, in art, it is a matter not of "sentiment vs. reason" but rather of "sentiment vs. seriousness."[64] He identifies that accusations of sentimentality seem to imply a state of *being too close* to the animal, in other words having lost a proper sense of objectivity and distance. This manifests itself as more of a *formal* than an *emotional* problem for Baker.[65] "Sentimentality, in the entirety of its manifestation, matters; its 'formal expression is a problem'"[66]. One of the biggest problems for Baker is that sentiment seems to go hand in hand with moralizing. This goes against the imperatives for the postmodern artist and philosopher. I outlined in the previous chapter how the animal has a privileged place in allowing the artist to overcome such compulsions.

Baker notes that formal rigour is central to seriousness[67]. Again for the artist, this seems to be more a matter of *style* than of subject matter. To highlight this Baker compares the work of Paula Rego and Sue Coe[68]. Rego's family subject matter, full of Oedipal tensions, is generally not experienced as sentimental, but Coe's brutal, stark, and compassionate life-drawings constantly risk being drawn close to a stylistic sentimentality in the artist's attempt to express her moral and political outrage. Rego's work, in its style and content, is a very good example of work that has a more 'sophisticated' distance using and inverting symbol and archetype. But, as mentioned above, Coe believes, not without merit, that the trappings of irony and other distancing devices are an excuse or an evasion of the stark 'truth' she wants to depict.[69]

In summary Baker asks the question: "how does one devise animal representations which might be acknowledged, with some degree of reliability, as *being* ethically responsible without *looking* aesthetically sentimental?"[70] And to complicate it some more, he adds the question of how one frames notions of ethics and aesthetics for something as ideologically unstable and provisional as the postmodern animal? These questions are party dealt with through his understanding of living inexpertly with animals.

Living Inexpertly with Animals

One of Baker's important expressions is that we live *inexpertly* with animals. This involves operating (though not necessarily consciously 'thinking') outside expert categories, and *allowing that the animal may be doing so too*.[71]

The persistence of, and insistence on, distinct and secure categories are the point on which many academic studies of pets disappoint. Baker writes that Marc Shell, in *The Family Pet* (1986), assumes from the outset that the categories 'human' and 'animal' are distinct and secure, and that any conception of the pet must fit one or the other. "For pet-lovers the interspecies transformation of the particular animal into a kind of human-being is the familiar rule"[72]. Shell's determination to cling so firmly to his human/animal distinctions seems (in the terminology adopted in the previous chapter) unhelpfully, and unhealthily melancholic in the process of our renegotiation with the other.

Works of art, especially ones dealing with pets, suffer from the same dynamic, keeping these binaries secure. Again, Baker offers his formulation of 'botched taxidermy' as a possible way forward[73]. One of Baker's examples of what works with pets should *not* be like is David Hockney's painting of his dogs[74]. They are sincere, traditional, and reassuring. In no way do they acknowledge, question, or negotiate anything. They are not 'questioning entities'; they seem like the end of something. An encapsulation of their supposed traditional position within our culture. Botched taxidermy offers an alternative to Deleuze and Guattari's image of the Oedipal animal.

> [75]"Botched taxidermy animals do not seem to know what they are doing, what beliefs or attitudes they stand for, let alone what categories they do not fit."

Baker identifies such a work as William Wegman's photographic work *FrogI/FrogII*,[76] which shows Wegman's dog Man Ray, dressed as a frog (I will discuss this work in more detail in the next chapter). In analyzing this work as an example of a 'botched taxidermy' animal, Baker suggest that it may offer something of the 'alliance' between human and animal which Deleuze and Guattari see as constituting the process of becoming-animal. "Such an alliance", writes Baker, "may be one in which people find themselves, inexpertly, to be operating without needing consciously to think about it. For those who do, however, there is some evidence that the alliance may – like Winnicott's account of the 'potential space' which opens up the experience of 'creative living' – offer a singularly productive (while endlessly difficult) space not only for thinking the postmodern animal, but simply for thinking."[77]

The Pet in Contemporary Art

Apart from the example of Wegman's work above there are serious formal issues in works that contain or use pets. Baker relates that most forms of contemporary animal representation, whether in lens-based media or not, fail effectively to communicate an animal's *individuality*, *singularity* or *particularity*.[78]

Baker identifies two key areas of image making where this creates acute difficulties. Firstly there are examples of artists such as Hockney, Dave White, or Judy Chicago who draw or paint their own pets from life.[79] Hockney and White both stress the direct contact and observation, but this is not how the works are perceived according to Baker. They seem to be generic dogs, despite the artists intention there is no reality-marker to anchor the image. Secondly there is the example of artists, such as Sue Coe[80], who truthfully and directly record the conditions of animal suffering that usually remains hidden in modern life. In this case it is the opposite, he notes that the particular animal will *not* previously have been known to the image maker, but – as for all those who acknowledge a relationship between animal rights and animal representations – its independent *individual* existence is an important issue, but does not necessarily come across in the image. Baker quotes Linda Vance who argues that in this context any form of human 'meaning making' which leads to an "animals 'particularity' becoming obscured" is cause for concern to all of us who care for animals as individual entities and not abstractions[81]. This is where these types of representation seem to fail. Baker concludes that it does not access the right register to convey and understand the issues involved.

Baker identifies the images produced in this way as a form of portraiture[82]. Their concern with the particular rather than the general seems to align them with this genre. There are two significant differences, however, both of which are located at the viewer's end of the experience. He identifies a particular distrust in the image's portrait status; viewers do not know the particular animal and tend to read it as 'any dog, or any sheep'. Any insistence of the artist on the creature's individuality, on the other hand, may be read as a kind of over-investment in the animal's appearance. This insistence itself (almost regardless of the style of the image) may be taken by viewers as a sign of the artist's sentimentality[83].

As Baker concludes, the postmodern audience for adventurous or challenging art has no time for animal imagery marked by sincerity, compassion and directness. A certain level of fear and anxiety is present in these reactions.[84] As outlined in the previous chapter the artist and the animal are intimately bound up with each other in the unthinking or undoing of the conventionally human. Fear is present at all junctions and *in particular* when it comes to the pet. In an essay by Baker entitled *What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like* (2002), published after his book, *The Postmodern Animal* (2000), he comments on the prevalence of, and investment in fear by the majority of artists he looks at.

Barker writes on how contemporary artists dealing with animal imagery stress the significance of fear in their own creative practice. Olly and Suzi state: "Fear plays a vital role in our art-making process"[85]. Jordan Baseman, whose work includes highly disturbing identity-blurring taxidermic constructions, writes: "Fear plays a huge role in my work. I think that it is one of the main things that inhibits and dictates behaviour in humans. And it is also, I think, one of our prime motivators"[86]. Edwina Ashton says of fear, "It's critical, really, in my work. Using animals is a way of avoiding all sorts of things for me". She also writes more generally of her "impulse to make things" coming from "an excitement and nervousness about the world. Fear seems to have a creative role; it forms part of a set of practices which allows the body to go on, to do things"[87]. Writing of their research on and experience of dangerous

animals in the wild, Olly and Suzi significantly conclude, "the knowledge we gather arms us, but fear is still present; a warm glow, keeping us warm".[88]

Baker acknowledges the complex interaction of knowledge and fear present in Carolee Schneemann's thinking on the animal. Her cats play an important, and sometimes crucial part in her work. She writes: "I identify with the animal as a feminine principle. I have always known myself to be an animal among animals,"[89] she goes on to identify a range of specific knowledges and skills acquired through an upbringing doing farm work, which, according to Baker, developed into a broader politicized awareness of the brutal and cynical decision-making which is imposed on all aspects of the non-human world. Fear therefore figures in her work as something inextricable from an *informed rage* – a thing with its own quite specific work to do:

> [90]"My animal fear goes deep; deep as rape, genital mutilation, witchcraft burning, religious persecution, because my culture has defined itself for 2000 years (until "yesterday") by the systematic exclusion of participatory feminine powers. I recognize meat fear that is soft, yielding, tender, moist; for the creatures outrun, overwhelmed, trapped, and stripped of their sacral realm."

Sue Coe's position also involves a sympathetic identification with the animal. That identification sees productive, affective fear as something entirely different from emotional timidity: "The difference between humans and non-human animals is that the latter do not live in fear, once the threat has moved on by, they regain joy, and carry on… Humans are not so healthy, every moment has some level of anxiety, aggression and fear."[91]

Baker narrows down this prevalence of fear to the question: what is the relation between fear and our unselfing? Baker uses the writings of the British psychoanalyst Adam Phillips, who addresses something very much like the Oedipal self when he writes "the defensive ego has a kind of pre-emptive morality born of fear, it prejudges in order not to judge, in order not to have to think too much."[92] Discussing a story concerning fear of a tiger, Phillips also notes that fear "tells us very little about the object". More than this, fear can produce a kind of wrong knowledge of its object, its animal, making the sufferer "misleadingly knowing", so that in this context knowing "becomes rather literally the process of jumping to conclusions"[93]. This seems to function in a similar way to knee-jerk accusations of sentimentality.

Despite some of the examples above there is a general alignment of the animal and the admirably fearless artist in opposition to the mass of ordinary timid humans (and their pitiable pets) that follows the general wild/domestic binary. As can be seen from the above quotes from a personal experience and process angle fear plays a very important role and to simplify it to those terms does considerable injustice to the complexity of issues involved. Discussing the butchered animals preserved in formaldehyde in his Natural History series, Damien Hirst remarked, "I want people to be frightened…Frightened of themselves"[94]. In one sense the observation seems to echo Nietzsche's assertion that "it will always be the mark of nobility that one feels no fear of oneself", but Hirst, more interestingly, envisages the *animal* as the source of human fear of self[95]. If you try and work outside of the wild/domestic binary this fear/sorrow/longing/horror gets laid bare.

In the last section of his *Fear of the Familiar* chapter, Baker touches on the thinking of several continental philosophers who have gone against common practice and have taken knowledge of the pet seriously. All of his examples find in the reality of the pet (interestingly all of them use cats) the same philosophical access and freedom usually associated with formulations of the wild animal.

Baker writes that in *Tristes Tropiques*, Levi-Strauss proposes that every society searches for that which might "show us the opposite course to that leading to enslavement"[96], and that one of the places it may be found is "in the brief glance, heavy with patience, serenity and mutual forgiveness, that, through some involuntary understanding, one can sometimes exchange with a cat"[97]. Baker also highlights that Lyotard perceives the cat as that which might link the mundane and the profound. It is in living this life at the threshold – in living this 'questioning', as he called it – that Lyotard seems to locate the cat's particular value to the writer and philosopher.[98] As mentioned previously Baker notes that Derrida puts his real, singular, female cat at the heart of his lecture series *The Animal That Therefore I Am*[99]. According to Baker she (the cat) occupies a crucial threshold in Derrida's philosophical knowledge. She allows him to see something of the otherness of all non-human animals. For Baker the cat offers Derrida access to a philosophy and a self-knowledge which is neither abstract not self-centered, but embodied and intimately related to an other.[100] In Derrida's essay he also encounters a similar problem to the one experienced by artists using pets: he seems close to, and gets accused of, an uncritical humanism. Baker makes the important point that this springs from the enormous pressure of grounding his philosophical thought in the 'truth' of his own experience.[101]

Baker foregrounds a text by Helene Cixous as one of the clearest examples of the 'domestic' abyss being realized. It is a short text entitled *Shared at Dawn*, where Cixous relates an experience shared between her, her cat and a trapped bird inside her house. According to Baker the situation that unfolded provoked an honesty that unsettled the rhetoric of Cixous's own writing. Baker writes that "there on the carpet, the alliance of the cat and bird, an uncomfortable and untidy assemblage of the wild and the domestic, will not be ignored. The domestic animal's ordinary habits open up a truth for the writer which the imagery of the wild has overlooked."[102]

Cixous's story is exemplary as an instance of not allowing rhetoric or theory to disguise the contradictory and compromised manner in which people live with animals. We do live *inexpertly* with animals, and this is a truth that Baker identifies as something that postmodern art and philosophy need to be able to articulate.

The biggest single thing identified by Baker in relation to pet imagery is that postmodern art's struggle with the animal is all about distance[103]. The difficulty is about establishing a serious relation to the work. In seeking to create a particular distance from what, for example, may be judged to be an *unavoidable* sentimentalization of the pet, or in choosing to work on particular (and thus get closer to particular) kinds of animals such as predators, which may be judged to be representable with a *necessary* seriousness, the artist is acting with a certain integrity.

I will be looking specifically at works where the pet is a crucial part of the production, a co-conspirator in the creative act, and in my own work I will be looking at formal

strategies of avoiding the ‘knee-jerk’ accusations of sentimentality that plague this particular area.

Chapter Three
Form to *Force*: Pet-form, Medium and Perception

Despite the anomalous cultural position of the pet, many artists do use the subject of the domestic animal in their work to varying degrees of critical success. As mentioned previously, Baker outlines examples of 'unsuccessful' works, such as David Hockney's paintings of his dogs, and formally problematic works such as Sue Coe's slaughterhouse drawings, which fail, in his opinion, to be *read* as being critically engaged with the subject. In contrast, works by both Schneemann and Wegman involving their pets are foregrounded by Baker as examples of 'becoming-animal' in artistic practice, and fulfills the aesthetic requirements of his formulation of botched-taxidermy. In this chapter I will be discussing works by South African artist Jo Ractliffe which share a source and eloquence with the work of both Schneemann and Wegman, before discussing the latter two in the fourth and final chapter.

The pets of all three artists (named Gus, Vesper and Man Ray respectively) are the subjects of, participate in, or prompt the making of the artworks that I have chosen to discuss. I have chosen to focus on these three artists over the next two chapters because of the key role that the animal, as a pet, plays in the production of, or the conditions of production of the artworks. After a discussion of Jo Ractliffe's work, I will proceed with a discussion on my own practical exploration of the pet image in the mediums of painting and photography, before continuing with the next chapter.

At the outset the works by these artists can, and have been perceived as sentimental or perverse as the compulsion inherent in their making belies the same tensions that provoked those accusations, but in their handling of the visual register (with seriousness and self-awareness) they invalidate such claims. Apart from each of their works proving by its existence that you can make serious work about or involving pets, all three artists in different ways lay bare an interesting facet of our 'renegotiation of our place in the world' and the problems faced in our language laden society.

Jo Ractliffe

Jo Ractliffe is a South African photographer whose relationship with her dog Gus was central to several bodies of work in the late 1990's.

The first group of works I will be considering is a series of large-scale photographs entitled *Guess Who Loves You*, exhibited in 1997. Fetishistically enlarged, the colour photographs each figure the mangled remains of a single toy on a flat, bright white background. All the photographs are of a similar scale but differ in format when installed. The toys all belonged to Gus who used to obsessively present them to Ractliffe. Gus died on the day that the body of work was completed.

The *Guess Who Loves You* series is an eloquent visual realization of the melancholy of incomplete communication, the expression of unconstituted and unformed loss. It points to structures of communication outside of *our* language, one dependent on our senses and bodies – different perceptual systems – and in a way, coupled with the medium of photography, it somehow articulates what we do not know, not only about the animal, but about ourselves. As previously discussed the value of 'botched

taxidermy' pieces relates to their direct acknowledgement of absent or fractured knowledges, of their reading as 'questioning entities'. These works are definitely a lucid expression of our 'inexpert knowledge' within our most intimate relations with animals. It is also, in keeping with Baker's formulation, exemplary of messy confrontations. This is evident, and happens, even though the actual animal body is not present in the images. The beautiful and pristine analytical display of the objects heightens the emotional tension because the longed for body, the libidinal form of contact, is not present. At the same time it is fully relatable – playing with our pets, or the loss of this interaction is something known to a great number of us.

Playing with your dog, *with toys*, would seem to be an event that exemplifies all that is wrong conceptually with the domestic animal. It would seem to buy into rigid and proprietorial relationships imposed by our engagement of the pet into our societal institutions – "Organizations such as the institution of the family and the State apparatus"[1], according to Deleuze and Guattari. But the rigidly controlled construction of these photographs belie the uncontrolled, provisional, playful, aggressive process intrinsic to the production of these objects by Gus, and the artists participation in this process. For something that should be exemplary of externally controlled, tame, secure, routine relations between a human and a domestic pet there is a disturbing gnashing of teeth and howling in the background.

Why the toys? Focusing on the toys means it is easier to convey the intimacy while maintaining some distance from the dog-body, one degree off the libidinal relationship. They are powerful images because of the absence of the animal, highlighting both the content and structure of the images. The toys function as a particular relational focus, a point of communication, incidental in its objecthood – a point of contact outside of the animal body, though still chosen and marked by it. The toys meant something to Gus, what, we can't be sure, but we know it meant *something* – he chose it, marked it, and then presented it to Ractliffe. It functions as an obsessive acknowledgement of a connection. Brenda Atkinson writes that they are about a "compulsive gnawing, a desire to consume that which is beyond hunger, a desire to please that shifts uneasily from love, to ingratiation, to abjection."[2] By marking it and loving it the dog has transformed it into enigmatic remnants of non-human autonomy-the animal's uncanny presence being felt (the excess that resists).

This work is interesting because there is 'estrangement' without the confusion of human and animal perspectives, the separation between animal and human is clear, but it is still bound within the reading of the work. It is also to a degree bound by the nature of photography. It is a series showing shared objects – surfaces of interaction taken out of their context and documented by the artists. On the toys you see the traces of the animal's own desires, as constructed and projected by the artist. This is such an obvious and careful projection that it highlights that everyone's desire comes into question. Atkinson acknowledges that this is definitely not about the sentimental *construction* of pet dogs – the images do not comfort the viewer, instead the images speak of a profound loss and failing that has nothing to do with the fact that Gus died, it moves far beyond a mourning of the actual pet[3]. The dog died. Roland Barthes notes (in relation to photography) "To reproduce death or birth tells us nothing"[4]. To becoming meaningful, Barthes suggested, such imagery had to gain access to a "true language" in which the historical specificity and particular circumstances of these

'facts' could be addressed and potentially transformed[5]. This is an aspect I find pinned down by Ractliffe in these works.

> [6]"We need animals. Animals don't need us, but we need them. We constantly look for any kind of connection we can possibly get to them."

These words, attributed to Britta Jaschinski, undercut the psychic indetermination presented by our continual oscillation between wanting the unknowable other, and the appropriated other. We *do* need animals, but – one source of great anxiety and anguish – in some instances they *need us*.

Jaschinski's photographic work, as identified by Baker, is largely concerned with finding visual vocabularies with which to express the animal's unconcern with human beings, exploring how "mysterious they are", their power residing in conceptual darkness[7]. In Ractliffe's work something entirely different, but just as intriguing, is happening.

Lize van Robbroeck writes that the ambiguous title, *Guess Who Loves You*, articulates the "(im)possibility of the interspecies love and the inevitable guilt and responsibility this relationship entails"[8]. It is difficult writing on the (im)possible, especially when the overwhelming feature of this particular issue is its functioning outside of language, outside of reasoned arguments and logic. The physical intimacy and emotional connection that a person has with his/her pet is generally seen as something that can thwart our powers of self-perception. Marcus Bullock writes, "the familiarity produces a density that distorts our emotions or an obscurity in the way we manifest the tie between human and animal lives"[9]. This work, however, is constructed with a particular clarity and ascetic rigour that does not allow for emotional hubris, but by its mere presentation, existence even, lays bare a profound undercurrent of anxiety in our connection to animals.

The anxiety at the heart of this work is the fact that the animal is actively participating in 'our' world. In his text, *Watching Eyes, Seeing Dreams, Knowing Lives* (2002), Marcus Bullock investigates what it is that we see when we look at an animal, and he formulates a lot around how important animals are in our perception of freedom. This is nothing new. I have already outlined a similar argument in the previous chapter, but as he writes from a literary perspective he aligns it with language in very useful ways. He posits that we, as human beings, derive a deep value from our understanding/perception that the world of animals is not the world we construct for ourselves[10]. Bullock writes:

> [11]"Our sensory apparatus burdens us, as reflexively conscious beings fully aware of time and change, with the inescapable demand that we bring that excess to order by all the conflicting means of language".

His claim is that without the example provided by animals, we as a species might be unable to imagine a state beyond the constantly re-created series of delusions in which our existence exists. Our world is, according to Bullock, a habitat without proportion or measure without the touchstone of the animal.

> [12]"All the estimates we make within its visible horizons are thrown into confusion by our existing far beyond our senses in realms of language and transcendent computation, in dreams and savage excesses of speculation."

This is why the wild/domestic categories persist – the domestic animal, especially the intimately known companion animal, threatens this comfort. The anxiety comes from the evidence of our introduction of loss to the animal with its inclusion in our phenomenological world. Our relatings towards pets are bound by present experience. Yesterday and tomorrow does not mean anything, time does not mean much, for the times that we are together we are relating, not like with language that spans time. In this way we introduce loss to them and to ourselves. When we lose a pet the loss is profound because we lose a particular way of being in the world. There is 'love', but it has no base, no home, no level or comparative ground. It is projected love realized in moments of real interactions. Something beyond our hallucinatory world, which some would term 'authentic' experience. The toys are both an expression of, and an example of the introduction of loss imprinted on the animal.

This interaction, or participation, (the documentation of which constitutes the work), functions on the knife edge of the "repeatedly folded frontier"[13] spoken of by Derrida in a much more interesting way for me than, say, the work of Olly and Suzi. They work with encounters and the respective artifacts, which literally encompass that *one* moment, that *one* confluence of events. *Guess Who Loves You* speaks of a history of relating, a complex interconnected experience by both the artist and the dog, the meaning of which is unclear, but it manages to manifest our fundamental communicative and perceptual fracture without denying the shared experience and its importance.

In her catalogue article for the exhibition, Penny Siopis writes that Gus's toys crystallize our sense of how we fail to live up: "the traces of Gus's teeth, the specific way in which he chose to dismember certain objects, signify the unspoken and unacknowledged, the in-between in emotional relationships"[14] - or, rather, the *unspeakable* and *unknowable*. When we look at, or interact with animals we encounter something alien to the historical moment, despite the apparent layers of familiarity we share with animals that share our lives. They are strangers to both our history and our language. Bullock writes:

> [15]"Animals might not be able to participate in the world of human speech, but the muteness that shroud their senses always accompany us in the realm of language, despite our convictions, knowledge and reasoning, we have to acknowledge that we are looking at something that eludes our ability to form a concept. Therefore, unless we refuse to look, the muteness of an animal also imposes a moment of muteness on us".

These works somehow expresses something of this muteness, this void – a tactile muteness, drawing out the moment of missed communication, or rather the loss of its source.

Love's Body is a photographic installation that formed part of an exhibition in 1999 entitled *End of Time*. It is a single, saturated, full-colour image of Gus taken as he lay

in his uncovered grave. It forms part of a light box, embedded in a fake floor in a darkened room. You look down upon it as if the installation were the grave. The work is accompanied by a text, also called *Love's Body*. It contains and expresses the psychic determinants for the event – the artist digging up and uncovering the body, then taking the image in an act of profound mourning. Ractliffe writes:

> [16]"This death, one assumes, was always going to be a question of loss. Not simply of the Other, but of course of the self."

Love's Body continues a necessarily self-reflexive exploration of Gus after his death. Although they share thematic and formal concerns, the immediate difference between the previous work and this one is the presence of the animal body. It is also the presence of a *dead* animal body. Dead animal bodies, or the images thereof, carry a considerable symbolic weight. Questions of propriety and respect, ethical and aesthetic arguments, all cluster around the dead body (human or animal). Where there was little emotional hubris in the previous work, by the nature of the form encountered here there is a clamour of preexisting meanings and associations waiting to be heard.

The presentation of the work, looking down upon it, embedded in the floor, structures the act of looking as a transgressive one, something within which the viewer is framed as complicit, if not wholly guilty. Looking at Gus is a violent act. Atkinson writes that it is:

> [17]"the illicit violation of a private relationship, the intrusion into an intensely private moment (the artist resisting the corpse of love's body) – that pulls the viewer/voyeur into a place at once compelling and appalling. We want to understand the desire that drove this desecration but, once caught in the dynamic of its intimate gaze, we feel the eerie chill of the uncanny, the material that should have remained off-scene."

Added to this is the text, written by Ractliffe, displayed with the work. According to Atkinson it is through this text that another reconstruction enters the field of representation, this time in the form of a "non-narrative that mimes, in language, the imagined drives and conflicts that refract through Ractliffe's image"[18]. She writes that the narrative voice assumes an omniscient perspective that conveys information that may or may not be true, but is presented as absolute fact. Ractliffe's text insists that the power of the photograph is not in its documentary aspirations, but in its representational failures – the photograph becomes a porous screen that never fully mediates or displaces pain, the abject, the other, the ultimate loss: death[19].

This particular work has, in the past, been read in very specific ways. Lize van Robbroeck, in an article on the use of dogs in South African art, identifies its subject (and that of *Guess Who Loves You*) as the "middle class female's somewhat obsessive relationship with her male dog"[20]. The compulsion to re-excavate the dog's body, the documentation of it, points for Van Robbroeck to an excess of mourning, an almost "improper attachment and desire." The work, apparently, compels us to wonder, along with the artist, "at the improbable force of the relationship between women and dogs"[21]. Van Robbroeck then adds an aside: "It is no coincidence that the overwhelming majority of volunteers at animal shelters are middle class, white

women."[22] Added to this implied accusation of pathological over-dependency the discussion continues to the fundamentally Oedipal sexual component of this relationship. According to Van Robbroeck "It is this improper/improbable passion, this mutual attachment, desire and longing, that Ractliffe is compelled to own in these photographs."[23] Ractliffe writes in the text included in the work:

> [24]"He lived a good life; he protected me; he lay close to me; he sometimes spoke with my voice; he died a good death. But was he loved, sufficiently? And did he love me?"
>
> [25]"I cannot bear parting with me."

I am skeptical of the type of reading presented by Van Robbroeck, not because I think it is in any way incorrect, I cannot witness what drove Ractliffe to unearth Gus's body, but I think it attaches meanings to the work that actually take away from the extremely sophisticated construction of the piece. I also feel that this was definitely about *Gus*, not some typical social generalization on 'male' dogs and women. Van Robbroeck does acknowledge that Ractliffe's unflinchingly sober interrogation of the attachment between human and animal allows for no sentiment or narcissism[26]. In its process and final realization the work is a form of heightened looking, searching, reaching out – again writing included in the piece:

> [27]"Trace the body for a sign: the closed concave lids, the soil-smudged fur, the familiar snout, all achingly indifferent."
>
> [28]"There is no eye here. There is no sight, no warm or defiant look, no glossy wetness, no conspirator in longing. But there is a gaze, a ghost that impales us, marks us in its cruel and tender sights, engraves the terrain of our projection."

Bullock wrote that there is no part of an animal that does not look back at us. "There is no part that does not remind us that there is something, a life, and an existence that in some way echoes our own, but which remains always behind what meets our gaze, elusive, impossible, and unimaginable"[29]. According to him the part that we name, know and love - form as a concept - *cannot hold onto* what we share with the elusive animal condition, which is wholly absorbed into its body and its senses. We share a libidinal relationship with animals that is outside of language, a conceptual black hole that we can touch, see, feel – but, according to Bullock, in seeing we start interpreting, form and content take on a whole other aspect with the animal, form being read as content. This work, in its final realization, disrupts the carefully managed modes of distance and association in which enlightened language controls the admissible and inadmissible correspondences between a conscious and a non-conscious creature[30]. But our inability to rise above the condition of animals permits them to enter into our forms of experience without their encountering any contradiction. Photography is such a medium that seems to have a special affinity for the animal and is used to its full capacity by Ractliffe. She wrote:

> [31]"The photograph wants something back, without giving up the ghost. It can convey the auretic quality of the lost object, while bringing that object into culture, across the reality-principle, to within the parameters of sanctified mourning. Uncertain of its own narrative, full of desire yet clinging to the sign,

> the photograph fails as souvenir. Its object scuttles nostalgia, becomes the portrait-as-icon, the face "gigantic with meaning and significance". The anthropomorphized animal other, the softly decaying death-mask, disinterred and immortalized, is embattled ground. How to bury the dead in this life, the hate in this love, the other in this self. This image will do."

Where does the force of the work come from, Gus's dead body or the photographic image? Akira Mizura Lippit, in an essay on technology and the animal, theorizes that the combination of the animal subject and photographic image alters in some essential fashion the structure of identification[32]. According to Lippit both the animal and the photograph impede the dialectical flow of subjectivity, but "as an assemblage, a rhizome, animals and photographs appear to found and animate an entirely other topology – one that allows for an economy of the gaze, identification and becoming"[33]. He poses the question of whether we can only 'see' the animal in a photograph or on film? Photography has privileged place in the work involving animals. It takes it out of our skin. Lippit has described animals as fleshy photographs because they can produce the same phantasmatic and liminal effect disrupting the flow of figurative language[34]. But how do animals facilitate this transit between corporeality and photography? Why are animals the ideal subjects of photographs? Lippit quotes Derrida: "There is no original existence for the animal"[35] because animals have been excluded from essential categories that constitute being. Without belonging to any ontological category, animals have made those categories possible by situating their borders. It is only in the imaginary topology of the photograph that one is able to *perceive* the animal world. Lippit concludes that the animal look can be seen as a continuation of the photographic look[36].

Baker, as mentioned previously, formulates that there can be a holding-to-recognizable-form in art, but it is one that *presumes nothing* about a correspondence between that form and that of any particular '*real*' animal subject[37]. As with the previous work, Ractliffe's work is *all* about the relation to the 'real' subject. The difference being that it is meticulously structured in such a way that the image produced *is* the real subject. Another quote from the text accompanying the work:

> [38]"The truth of this hidden body, this sanctified face, is in its refusal of stability. We have no access, we have too much, we have only our own longing, desire, rage, projection. The face – preserved and undone – preserves and undoes. It is its own law, the law of desire, the law of both life and death. If it were to speak, it might say: Admit the void, accept loss forever. The true body is a broken body."

As has been discussed, the term 'botched taxidermy' characterizes those instances of recent art practice where things again appear to have *gone wrong* with the animal, as it were, but where it still *holds together* rendering the animal 'abrasively visible'. In this work the form of the animal is so complete, mute, all encompassing that this visual register is turned on its head. Something has '*gone wrong*' with the human. There is something characteristically postmodern about this experience of visual intensity combined with conceptual instability. Postmodern artworks gain what coherence they have from the fact that they *register themselves with intensity*. This work, with all its uncanny presence, presents a final irrevocable fact of loss. Enshrined, illuminated but unrisen, saturated with colour, Gus/the image of Gus has

no mediating function, it is the trauma – the image itself and its existence and its process are all embodied as the trauma. Open interpretation with closed form, mediated through the photographic medium to become, or be proven unstable. What do you learn from this mourning? Not about the mourning per say but rather a mode of attention to the animal? That mode of attention may be focused on making, and on form, rather than meaning.[39]

Masters Exhibition

Represented animal form causes great interpretive difficulty, especially in the mediums of painting, and to a lesser degree in photography. As discussed, Ractliffe's work and process exposes one of the core anxieties influencing the experience of companion animal work. In my own practical exploration of the animal image I am more concerned with the ways that the reading can be manipulated. Harraway speaks of the "mode of attention"[40] to the animal, a way of intuitive operating focused on making, form, and relating, rather than meaning. I looked at animals; through my process and end product I negotiated my own gaze with similar concerns. Discomfort was a more productive starting point than delight and awe, enthrallment can happen either way but it takes a much more subtle touch than my own to invert comfort and stability.

A lot of my concerns are about painting, but with the pet fulfilling a specific function. It is the 'excess that resists', creating internal inaccessible areas within a work. The pet's body surface endears it to some kind of experiential libidinal response – taking the experience out of a language bound theoretical bind. The animal will not be theorized but the pet has been – extensively. This overinscription of human meaning into the pet is based on a false dichotomy as I discussed in previous chapters, and in my own personal thought process it is quite irrelevant. What interests me though, are the formal issues set out regarding pet imagery. The interpretation and experience of sentimentality and seriousness, sincerity and distance, and the perceived distrust in the portrait status of pet images, all mentioned in Chapter two. Conditions of viewing are also important to negate the myriad of preconceptions people do have when faced with the image of a pet.

Because of the prescriptiveness around the subject, and the general heightened, emotional response to the subject matter I took quite an analytical approach to creating a body of work. I had two starting points, documentary images of animal abuse and photographs I took of cats and dogs under anaesthetic.

I found the documentary animal abuse images through Internet searches. This is a process I had already worked with during my graduate degree. The images are invariably stark, un-composed snapshots taken on camera-phones at a very low resolution. The fact that they are of such low resolution means that when they are blown up to a big scale, as in my prints, the surface detail and image that it creates is quite unique. During the process of taking a low-resolution image and reworking it into a very high-resolution, the removal of any pixilation or other traces of digital imaging produces an image that can often seem painterly. These images are the evidence of trauma, a trace of something real. Most of the images evoke a very profound emotional response – and this is important to me as an access for the

viewing of final works. Another important thing is the fact that I have not met or had anything to do with the animals in the pictures. My 'distance' from them is sufficient.

To get the images of the anaesthetized dogs and cats I observed and documented several operations and could position some of the animals for the photographs while they were still asleep. My reasoning behind this was related to the experience of 'the whole body of the animal' looking back at one. Autonomous animal consciousness, when encountered in a pet, is conceptually problematic, as discussed in the rest of the paper, but especially when you are photographing them. To photograph, 'seriously', a complete cat or a dog (and by complete I mean that their bodies are still intact, that they are not dead or broken) is almost impossible as it elicits pre-programmed responses and associations. To counter this I photographed them while they were unconscious. There was no interaction except that which was initiated by me. It also granted me an opportunity to get some photographs one would not usually get – I photographed every inch of them, which was a very surreal experience.

Photography and painting come in for a lot of criticism related to the pet, for example from Baker as discussed in chapter two and I found it appropriate to try and deal with this collectively as this feeds straight into concerns I have that are related to surface and painting. Broadly, I am interested in the tension between the figurative and abstract and notions of the 'real' and traces of the 'real'. I tend to use autonomous mark making as a controlling mechanism, often with the image guiding the parameters - burying the 'real' image, leaving the surface for scrutiny. Small controlled mark making can also function as a way as of resisting rage, for example, generally controlling emotion to captivate both a viewer and myself. With several of the works I produced I played with the notion of constructing trauma through internal surface tension.

"Endearment", 2007, The Substation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Working concurrently I developed the body of thirteen works over a period of a year. The exhibition was held at The Substation exhibition space on the university grounds in October 2007. The Substation is a split-level, two-roomed space. The main room is large with a very high ceiling, whitewashed brick walls, a cement floor and track lighting. To enter the second room you go up half a level with wooden stairs into a smaller, more intimate space, with a lower ceiling and similar walls, floor and lighting to the larger space.

Within the main room (into which one first entered) I had eight works installed. All but one were large scale pigment prints on paper – the smallest being a series of four 60x90cm works, and the largest 120x200cm prints. The prints were hung loosely from mounted board on the walls with unobtrusive clips. Each work was spot lit by track lighting. The smaller room contained five works, three paintings and two pigment prints on paper. All were large scale and also spot lit. The works in this section had much more surface detail and texture than the works in the main room. The more intimate space was more conducive to the scrutiny and experience of these details. They were also installed in a similar manner to the works in the main room.

All but four of the works I produced were large-scale pigment prints on cotton paper. I mentioned above my process regarding found images and the photographs that I

took: further to this I had these images printed in a very specific way that resulted in images with a quality of colour and texture that could be read as both photographic and painterly, and above all produced a very beautiful, evocative and desirable surface. On certain works I also worked on the printed surface with various paints and stains, all in an attempt to create something captivating that would hold the attention of the viewer for longer than the initial dismissive reaction to the pet subject matter.

To explore my concerns I started with two works: 'Untitled' 2007 (figure2), and the collecting of the teeth. They seemed to come from opposite ends, the white work almost completely empty of reference, abstract with a specific focus on the surface. The teeth are bizarre, bloody, damaged, very real traces of animal bodies.



(detail)

'Untitled' 2007
Cat and dog teeth on paper
90x65cm (figure1)

I had approached several veterinary practices to collect teeth for me over a 12-month period. They were disinfected and cleaned before I started attaching them to paper. The work consists of hundreds of cat and dog teeth, glued in a random manner, ranging from the tiniest cat teeth to large seven-centimeter canines from large dogs. Its scale in comparison to the rest of the exhibition is quite small.

I hoped that they would provoke both a fascination as objects in themselves for what they are and a mild anxiety as to the location and condition of their respective bodies. Bared teeth (whether your own or those of others) are a classic source of anxiety and with animals often a point of contact and penetration. They are also quite aggressive

little things robbed of threat in their current location. It made sense to me to have some real remains of the animal body present, even if they do not develop into a work on their own. They are a very visceral (especially in their original state) offset to what was, at the time, my pristine white print. I included them in the final works because, surprisingly to me, they conveyed very little presence of threat. It was fascinating to me to correlate this lack of threat to the power that the image of teeth potentially has to haunt and possess the viewer. It turned into a kind of 'anti-presence'.



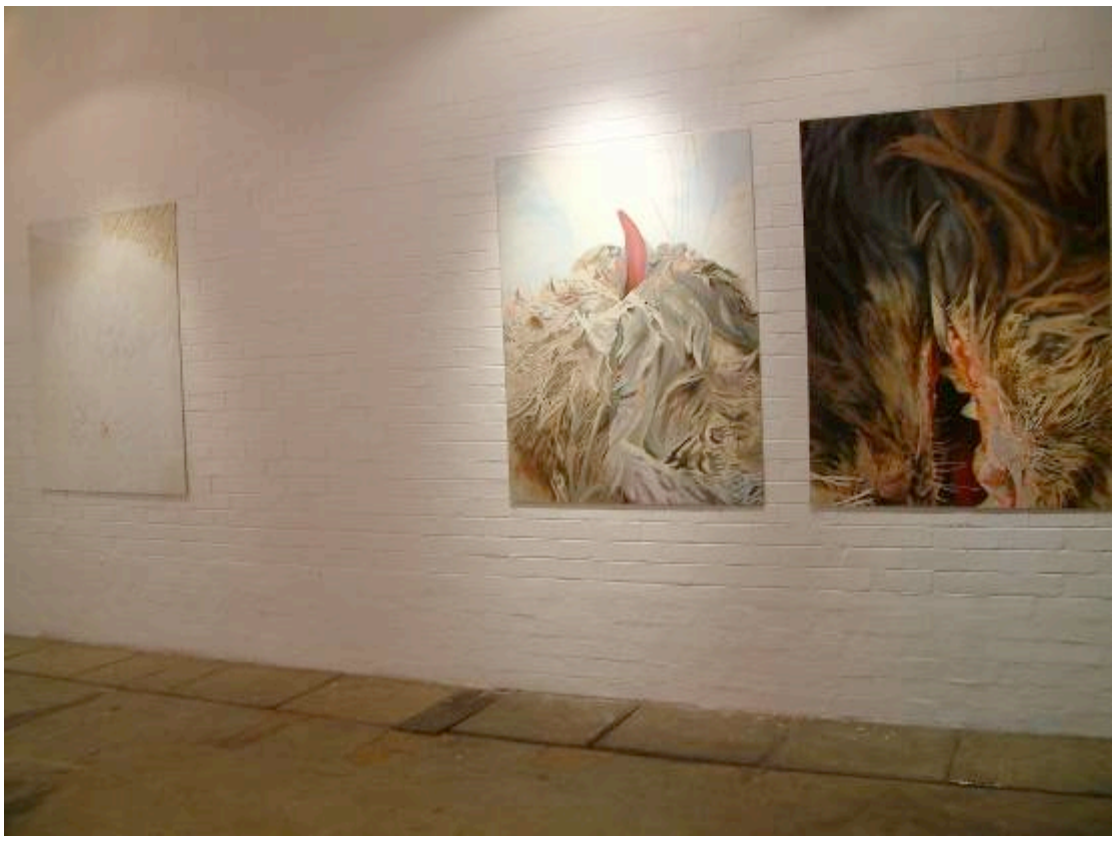
(detail)

'Untitled' 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, gouache, glass-stain
120x175cm (figure2)

As mentioned before, this was the first work I worked on. It is a large scale, completely white pigment print on cotton paper with subtle variations in the white expanse, smallish shapes being of a more intense white. Around some of these shapes, and on other areas of the print, are built-up areas of actual texture, achieved by layering small translucent, semi-translucent, and white marks applied by hand to form a writhing mass that moves across the work. These marks are made with white gouache and glass-stain ranging from white to clear in different opacities.

The original found photograph on which this work was based was of hundreds of birds lying dead in the snow. I manipulated the image in Photoshop until there was the barest trace of an image left, only the brighter shapes of bodies left to discern. I found both making and viewing this work captivating. Everything from the delicate variations of white in the print, the shimmer and texture of the marks on paper, the comfort of repetitive mark making, and taking pleasure in surface with hardly any

trace of reference left. It is almost like being drawn into nothingness. One of my earlier considerations was the pull and tension between the figurative and the abstract, and how important the figurative reference is in artworks containing pets. Apart from Ractliffe's *Guess Who Loves You* works I have not found examples where the pet body becomes a conceptual entity as evidenced in some works dealing with wild animals. In a way pets are even more bound by a figurative reference for identification and one has to work around it. This work does not contain any pet imagery but it was an initial attempt to ground the kind of captivating experience I was looking for in a work, both for the viewer and myself.



'Untitled' 1, 'Untitled' 2, 'Untitled' 3 2007
Oil paint on board
140x105cm (figures 3-5)

I considered it necessary to explore a more conventional painterly perspective and produced a series of three paintings based on my photographs of anaesthetized cats. They were a useful exercise. What was interesting was the degree to which I had to avoid imaging the eyes to sustain some kind of distance, and that the most successful painting ('Untitled' 3) hardly imaged the animal at all (which was not a surprise). I tried to find strategies of painting pet-related images that don't automatically look sentimental by adopting unconventional perspectives and concentrating on creating an evocative surface.

These, together with my work of collecting teeth and working on the large-scale white print (figure 2) formed a good exploratory basis for the rest of my work.

Found Images:



‘13 Kills’ 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper
200x120cm (figure 6)

This image was found on the Internet. It is a very low-resolution documentary image of an animal abuse case. It was printed as is, with only some partial cropping from me. It shows a nighttime shot of a Dalmatian hung from a tree, gently swaying in the wind. The dog appears as if lit from within, both in the image itself (it was taken with a cell-phone camera with an unsophisticated flash) and as result of particular emphasis on the lighting of the dog's body during the installation of the work. It looks very peaceful, there is a hint of gentle swaying, but the dog's passivity and flaccid body suggest that the animal must be dead.

This, to me, is an extraordinary, shocking, redemptive, beautiful image introducing an uncanny transgression of death to the exhibition space. It engenders a feeling of disbelief; you are not sure whether it is a 'real' image. This is jointly due to the shocking subject matter (disturbingly the hanging of dogs is a common form of animal abuse) and the painterly feel of the print. The painterly impression given by the enlargement and printing process that I utilized is important. It provides a moment of conceptual and perceptive instability about the 'reality' of the image, the event, and the body – you are momentarily not sure whether this is a photograph of a real event or a manipulated or fictional image. This reaction would not have been evoked to the same degree if it were depicted in paint on canvas.

I wanted a liminal presence to frame the viewing of the other works. Something shocking and emotionally provocative that, despite this, would not make viewers withdraw or recoil. The work was foregrounded in two ways. An ambiguous section of it was used for the exhibition invitation; the full image was then instantly recognizable upon entering the gallery space. The work was also installed to attract slightly more attention when you entered. By virtue of its scale and disturbing subject matter the image itself has a lot of impact but it was also lit more specifically than the other works to draw attention to it and to underscore the luminous quality of the dog's white body against the dark background. It was also hung a little differently. The other prints had all their corners attached to mounting board, but with this work it was just attached at the top and hung loosely, curling slightly at the bottom to reinforce the gravitational aspect of the hanging dog. I felt that there had to be something at the start of my exhibition that would make an immediate impression and to a certain extent frame the viewing of the rest of the work on show. The dog seems to hang there between the real and the imaginary, a truly spectral, haunted figure that transgresses its original state. A contextual, haunting presence to accompany the viewing of the other works.





‘Untitled’ 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, enamel
100x220cm (figure 7)

This work is a very big, long, horizontal pigment print on cotton paper. The image is that of a dog's body lying on the ground. It is printed from a *very* low-resolution digital documentary photograph I found on the Internet. Although figuratively recognizable, the fact that it was enlarged to such a degree obscures a lot of details, leaving you with impressionistic pools of colour that, on close examination, look almost abstract. There are no obvious signs of trauma but the dog is clearly dead. The areas that spread across the dog's body are white with some expanses that have a delicate blue or pink tint. I worked by hand onto the image of the dog's body by applying tiny gloss enamel dots with a brush, matching its colour to the surface behind it. This forms a delicately glittering mass, catching your eye as it moves across the body, accentuating the surface of the photographic image.

The dog, although already very 'painterly', looks like it should have been painted with a sense of violence, expression, colour and texture – visceral and flesh-like – the body would have been less of a problem if it were. I tried in my reworking of the surface to not give any such cathartic or immediate satisfaction. The dots are very seductive and captivating, giving great visual satisfaction in contrast to the lack of visceral, active, emotive mark making in the construction of the body. They provide an illusion of movement and light – captivating the eye and generating movement in both the image and the viewer. It confuses the viewer's preferred distance and highlights its contents. There is an activation and participation generated by my autonomous little dots. Mourning, commemoration, guilt, love, obsession? There is an investment in surface that somehow captivates and comforts but complicates and prolongs one's feelings of horror (one's engagement). Images like this one evoke, for me at least, feelings of rage, despair, guilt etc. – but the dots sublimate this, they are painterly expressions of restraint, an obsessive reworking of anxiety.



‘Untitled’ 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, gouache
120x165cm (figure 8)

This work was produced from a low-resolution cell-phone image of an animal hoarder’s house. The print itself is a big, monochromatic, very unfocused photograph taken through a window. The image is that of a room filled with undefined animal-like shapes. There is one distinct shape of a cat staring back through the window.

With this work I experimented more broadly with applying mixed media processes and used gouache instead of reflecting enamel dots. I printed the image on a small scale, using oil paint and scratching the surface to disturb it, before re-photographing and printing it out at full scale. I then used black gouache on the bars of the window, the window frame, and the cat’s mask, alternating between tiny marks and an expanse of black. The cat’s face has dark, Siamese-type markings which I covered with the gouache. The eye area of the cat was left untouched, framed by the black. There is a separation of conceptual layers through a focus on the cat’s eyes as a result of leaving them uncovered but framed in this way. They seem to occupy a space between the dense surface of black and the ephemeral, agitated background. You get the impression that the cat is really looking at you, without the conceptual trap of imaged eyes. Unconcerned with the strange painterly chaos invading its space, the image is non confrontational but rather quiet and contemplative. It is also quite autonomous, at peace with its surface, patiently watching. More than anything else this work made me aware of the different possibilities with the gouache paint.



‘Untitled’ 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, gouache
120x170cm (figure 9)

This print shows the image of a kitten on a drip, on a blanket, being handled by a person. As with the previous works the original image was a low-resolution photograph of an animal abuse case found on the Internet. Initially I printed the image on a small scale, and removed the person’s hands by cutting them out and isolating the kitten’s body with black gouache (except for its open mouth). I then re-photographed and had it printed to its final scale. I then applied some detail in gouache to the final surface.

The silhouette/contour of the cat is undulating and agitated and the white of the paper that defines the human hands seems to be pulling the shape of the cat. In this work I specifically experimented with introducing different layers of surface treatment. I wanted to see how much of a tactile emotional response I could evoke by way of a formal exercise in surface tension and interaction. The work is ultimately more fragmented, and with less tension and cohesion than some of my other images. The image is not as eloquent or self-contained, so I went with a simpler approach for the next work (figure 10).



‘Untitled’ 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, gouache
120x145cm (figure 10)

The image is taken from documentary footage of an animal hoarder’s house. It is an image of a cat sitting rather dejectedly in a washbasin. Like the previous work it is a pigment print on cotton paper, and the cat is painted in a black gouache. Due to its original small scale, the enlarged print has a very soft focus with some glowing, diffused colour bleeds – soft pastelle colours. Everything is soft within the image except the very strong, delineated cat silhouette. The demeanor of the cat is so sad and dejected, a soft non-threatening, non-confrontational pose, and there is something very inviting about the dense blackness.

The black gouache is very seductive. It is extremely dense, matte and powerfully absorbing. I find it to be a very simple and eloquent work. It is as if the cat can’t quite be contained but at the same time it draws you in. There is an innocence to the image and the colours, a kind of negation of known cat imagery. It reduces it to one solid, self-contained barrier while retaining the enigmatic quality that prompts our original fascination. It definitely has its own non-referential presence that even eclipses the original cat in the photo. There is something fascinating to me about the ‘complete’ animal body – it’s something that denies everything that we want to possess completely. You can live with this painting quite easily – it demands nothing (but the cat means something) and gives pleasure (a ‘pet’ painting?)

Photographed Images:



‘Untitled’ 2007
Series of four Pigment prints on cotton paper, oil paint
90x60cm each (figure 11)

Figure 11 is a series of four smaller prints, each seeming to feature a close-up of a sleeping cat. They are taken from a series of photographs I took of a Persian cat waking up from anaesthetic. I painted on them in miniature before re-photographing and having them printed to their final scale. I then painted areas of the surface in oil paint, focusing on accentuating fur and texture.

I wanted a visceral, sensual sleeping image provoking a physical empathy in the viewer without the postmodern guilt trip that requires lashing out at pet subject matter. With this work I wanted to take an established, sweet and sentimental subject (sleeping cats, and even better – a Persian: the darling of what is often wrong with the approach to pets) and to see if I could not just convey it for what it is – the experience of a sleeping cat without the often provoked ‘knee-jerk’ response. I wanted to convey the hot, sleepy, sticky, stretching cat luxuriating on the page, as only cats know how. The painterly marks provide some kind of resistance – an experiential marker for physical empathy (in my mind this resilience/barrier is physically and theoretically specific to fur).



‘Untitled’ 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper
120x200cm (figure 12)

The work is a big, vertical, pigment print on cotton paper that shows a cat’s hind legs with a sheet wrapped between its legs and under its tail. I took this photograph of a cat being spayed. Initially I printed the image on small-scale matte paper, and set to

work separating layers, painting the sheet between the legs with oil paint and staining areas with oil. I re-photographed the work and had it printed to its final size.

The cat is monumental in scale and positioned to look like it's almost jumping out of the frame – but the legs are slack. It can clearly be read as a photograph of a 'real' cat, but there has been some painterly interference with the sheet between its legs. The interference is not overwhelming, but enough to disrupt the surface without being present on the final work. The inclusion of the painterly field within the print is an important distancing device. It clearly separates the two sheets from one another and the cat from both, while the surface remains pristine and fragile. To me the image is very evocative of some kind of trauma. Questions like what is the sheet covering? Bestiality? Some kind of injury? What is seeping into the sheet? Due to its presence, whatever it is, is within man's domain. In the process I set out to create different internal surface tensions – constructing trauma instead of representing it. There would have been some kind of visceral resolution if it were painted (like with the dead dog). Instead it is quietly violent in its final form in its very fragile, vulnerable appearance - something that needs to be protected.



'Untitled' diptych 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, enamel
120x135cm each (figure 13)

This work consists of two photographs I took of the same dog under anaesthetic printed in pigment print on cotton paper. The first is a close-up of a section of the dog's face. Both photographs show the respective body parts lying on a flat surface. In the second image there is a white cord binding the dog's nose, lifting its lip where

it is lying on the surface. This flaccid lip, closed eyes, as well as the strange posture of its shoulders allows for the impression that the dog is either asleep or dead.

It is a very moving pair of images – there is something about the awkwardness of the combined composition that is very affecting. The cord across its nose is painted over in a white, gloss enamel – it is the only disturbance of the printed surface. The enamel cord is highlighted as a reality marker – opening up the reading of the sections as body-objects. The emotional impetus comes from the intense desire to reassemble the dog, to somehow redeem that cord. Fragmented human beings are generally acceptable, but with animals there is a need to put them back together again, they have to be made whole – their conceptual integrity kept in tact behind form. As there is an oscillation between the unknowable and appropriated other there is a strong pull between the fragmented and whole animal bodies, playing out anxiety in a visual form. We do not know at what point they become what Baker termed undifferentiated meat[41], the crucial holding-to-form, one of the only conceptual signifiers of difference we can still hold on to.

I titled my exhibition "Endearment" – a word or an act expressing affection. In any relationship with a non-human animal there is an incredible tension between love, affection, respect, perception and perspective. This tension I believe comes from the core anxiety I identified when discussing Ractliffe's work. Love and distance, captivation and possession all feature in work with companion animals, with a special attachment to the body and form. In my own work and process I focused on the formal expression and reworking of anxiety, tied not to a specific pet-body, but rather a general visual disquiet in relation to images of the pet. In Ractliffe's work where the body was loved, the distance complicated and the living filled with visceral ecstasy, in its existence and execution I find it a very good example of what can be termed 'becoming-animal' in visual art.

Chapter Four
Becoming-Animal: Prolonging the Instants

Becoming-animal is a concept developed by Deleuze and Guattari within the context of broader attempts to reconfigure the human by thinking the *in-human*. It maps the possibilities for experiencing an uncompromising 'sweeping-away' of identities, both human and animal, and shapes the way in which both human and animal forms in contemporary culture may be understood.

The text is dually important; firstly, as a particular theorization/distillation of an experience of *freedom*, and secondly, it's affective rhetoric calls to debate issues of 'authentic experience', 'reality', 'truth' and the incredible tension inherent in the concept/existence/reality of the individual. As mentioned previously in chapter two this text has resonated within contemporary creative practice, giving voice to experiences and feelings of artists, especially those with an interest in the animal (although not limited to animal subject matter). This is also the text with one of the strongest statements against the normal formulation of pets and their place in creative culture.

Ironically when I first read sections of the text I was immediately taken by the profoundly similar approach shared by becoming-animal and the theory and practice surrounding working with, and training animals. To me it makes perfect sense then that two of the compelling works that exemplify 'becoming-animal' in art to Baker were those of Carolee Schneeman, and William Wegman, both of whom work closely with their pets in the production of their work. I am not equipped to discuss the far-reaching complexities of 'becoming-animal' as a philosophical concept, but I can summarize the sections specifically pertaining to art, and identified and expanded on by Baker, before moving on to a more detailed discussion of the work of Wegman and Schneemann and how they relate to 'becoming-animal'.

Becoming-Animal

As mentioned previously, Baker introduces Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy using Ronald Bogue's suggestion that it builds on a Nietzschean conception of the cosmos as the ceaseless becoming of a multiplicity of interconnected forces, which "admits of no stable entities" and which must therefore "be understood in terms of difference rather than identity."[1] The authors use this concept of becoming-animal in order to, in a concise summary by Baker, "rigorously avoid describing modes of thought, action and experience in terms of identities and subjectivities". The becoming-animal may be thought of as a process or method that "replaces subjectivity"[2].

The entire concept, in fact, is what artists such as Olly and Suzi are searching for: "a full blown doing away with the subject and all of its associated philosophical and psychoanalytical baggage."[3] It is within this context that becoming-animal resonates so strongly with artists. The key undercurrent for Baker's exploration of the animal in contemporary art builds on this notion that a particular conception of the artist and of the animal are bound up with each other in the unthinking or undoing of the conventionally human[4].

Becoming-animal is a text filled with seductive but tenuous ideas. I will try to selectively highlight parts of the text that define or describe both 'becoming' and 'animal', and the combination, in an attempt at some clarity.

Becoming, according to Deleuze and Guattari, "is a verb with a consistency all of its own; it does not reduce to, or lead back to, 'appearing', 'being', 'equaling', or 'producing'[5]. It is not "a resemblance, an imitation, or…an identification.' To clarify they continue, "becoming does not occur in the imagination…Becomings-animal are neither dreams nor phantasies. They are perfectly real"[6]. This is a difficult statement to get one's head around. The authors rightly ask:

> [7]"But which reality is at issue here? For if becoming-animal does not consist in playing animal or imitating an animal, it is clear that the human being does not 'really' become an animal anymore than the animal 'really' becomes something else"

Baker's guidance is that this has to be thought differently. It has to be thought outside of the production of identities, meanings, and the categories and distinctions upon which they depend. Deleuze and Guattari are adamant that "becoming produces nothing other than itself"[8]. What is real to them is the becoming, and not the "supposedly fixed terms through which the becoming passes". It is therefore not a matter of moving from one distinct state to another, of which both must have their independent realities[9].

Within the larger project of problematizing identity the strategy is to divert the artist's-writer's subjectivity or to put it at a distance. In the case of Deleuze and Guattari our subjectivity is "drawn into concern with an animal's fate or even, in a sense, drawn into the animal's body"[10].

> [11]"To become animal is to participate in movement, stake out the path of escape in all its positivity, to cross a threshold, to reach a continuum of intensities that are valuable only in themselves, to find a world of pure intensities where all forms come undone, as do all the significations, signifiers, and signifieds, to the benefit of an unformed matter of deterritorialized flux, of nonsignifying signs."

According to Baker the becoming must be understood to move in this direction: away from the subject, and resultantly away from meaning[12]. Baker highlights two interconnected proposals at this point: firstly "that signification may be undone, with both literal and metaphorical attempts to fix meaning giving way to a 'distribution of states'. Secondly that individual identity may be undone, with both human and animal subjects giving way to "a circuit of states"[13].

An example used by Deleuze and Guattari is that of a painter 'representing' a bird. They write:

> [14]"No art is imitative, no art can be imitative or figurative. Suppose a painter 'represents' a bird; this is in fact a becoming-bird that can occur only to the extent that the bird itself is in the process of becoming something else, a pure line and pure colour."

They write of music:

> [15]"If the sound-block has becoming-animal as its content, then the animal simultaneously becomes, in sonority, something else, something absolute, night, death, joy…"

Deleuze and Guattari describe that the painter and the musician do not imitate the animal, they become-animal at the same time as the animal becomes what they willed, "at the deepest level of their concord with nature."[16]

> [17]"For not only do animals have colours and sounds but they do not wait for the painter or the musician to use those colours and sounds in a painting or music, in other words, to enter into determinate becomings-colour and becomings-sound by means of components of deterritorializations…"

Deleuze and Guattari focus extensively on Kafka's use of animals in his writing. It is in Kafka's animals that they discover animals that "never refer to a mythology or to archetypes but correspond solely to new levels, zones of liberated intensities where contents free themselves from their forms as well as from their expressions, from the signifier that formalized them"[18]. According to the authors the stories refuse "an author's or master's literature"[19], and crucially for Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of the potentiality of the animal, they articulate a movement from the individuated animal to the pack or to a collective multiplicity." The result is that: "…there is no longer a subject…Rather, there is a circuit of states that forms a mutual becoming, in the heart of necessarily multiple or collective assemblages".[20]

Traditionally animal characteristics ranges from the mythic to the scientific but Deleuze and Guattari are profoundly uninterested in these characteristics, they are interested in what they term 'pack modes'. "What interests us are modes of expansion, propagation, occupation, contagion, peopling." For them the wolf, for example is not a fundamental characteristic, or a collection of characteristics; "it is a wolfing"[21]. It is important to note that the authors do not use the word 'pack' in its zoological sense, they are not stating that animals live in packs but rather that every animal *is* a band or a pack. "It has pack modes rather than characteristics"[22]. It is at this point, for Deleuze and Guattari, that the human being encounters the animal.

Deleuze and Guattari write:

> [23]"The German pre-romantic Karl Philipp Moritz feels responsible not for the calves that die but before the calves that die and give him the incredible feeling of an unknown Nature-affect. For the affect is not a personal feeling, nor is it a characteristic; it is the effectuation of a power of the pack that throws the self into upheaval and makes it real. Who has not known the violence of these animal sequences, which uproot one from humanity?"

In understanding their perception of these 'pack modes', further distinction within these modes are called for. Deleuze and Guattari distinguish between three types of animals, according to the way in which they traditionally function within identity and cultural production. The first type is the pet. "Anyone who likes cats or dogs is a fool". The authors find the pet contemptible because of, according to them, the way in

which: “These animals invite us to regress, draw us into narcissistic contemplation, and they are the only kind of animal that psychoanalysis understands.”[24] Pets are Oedipal, sentimental, and highly individuated animals. The second kind of animal is what they term State animals[25]. These animals are understood in such a way as to extract from them series, structures, archetypes or models; animals with characteristics or attributes, genus and classification. These also include animals as they are treated in divine myth. They are part of the meaning systems through which we try to understand the world around us. Then there is the third kind of animal, the ones referred to by the authors “demonic animals, pack or affect animals that form a multiplicity, a becoming, a population, a tale.”[26]

Pets, who to such a large degree embody Oedipal, familial and psychoanalytic structures for the authors, are too close to what is contemptible in man (they ‘confirm’ man). Of all possible becomings, there is no ‘becoming-man’, precisely because ‘man’ is in the dominant, majoritarian, and apparently fixed identity from which all becomings must pull.”[27] Baker writes that one of the authors’ most direct and generalized statements about becoming is that “all becoming is a becoming-minoritarian… Becoming-minoritorian is a political affair and necessitates a labour of power, an active micropolitics.”[28] This is the same strand that runs through from pets to State animals. Baker explains that their concept corresponds to Lyotard’s emphasis on moving away from grand-narratives. Lyotard wrote that micropolitics is “the opposite of History, in which it is a question of knowing how to win or obtain a majority.”[29] Interestingly, Baker writes that in Kafka, a micropolitics is close to Lyotard’s conception of the artists’, writers’ and philosophers’ responsibility to resist the complacent certainties of the expert: it is “a politics of desire that questions all situations.”[30]

The third kind of animal, the ‘demonic’, or ‘pack’ animal is the only kind to exemplify the potential for becoming. One might presume or think that a similar structure to those mentioned above runs through a ‘pack’ concept but the authors specify key differences in the functioning thereof[31].

The authors developed the term ‘involution’ to describe the relations of becomings. According to Deleuze and Guattari becoming is not an *evolution* by descent and filiation; “It concerns alliance”[32]. If evolution includes any becomings they write that it is within the domain of “symbioses that bring into play beings of different scales and kingdoms, with no possible filiation.”[33] Propagation by epidemic, by contagion, has nothing to do with filiation by heredity, even if the two themes are intermingled and require each other. The difference for the authors is that “contagion, epidemic involves terms that are entirely heterogeneous: for example, a human, an animal, and a bacterium, a virus, a molecule, a micro-organism.”[34] These combinations are neither genetic nor structural; they are interkingdoms, unnatural participations; “Unnatural participations or nuptials are the true Nature spanning the kingdoms of nature.”[35]

This, according to the authors, is the only way that Nature operates – against itself. ‘Involution’ is the term the authors prefer for this form of evolution between heterogeneous terms. Deleuze and Guattari stress that the only condition is that involution must in no way be confused with *regression*.[36]

> [37]"Becoming is involutionary, involution is creative. To regress is to move in the direction of something less differentiated. But to involve is to form a block that runs its own line "between the terms in play and beneath assignable relations."

It is here, within these multiplicities with heterogeneous terms, cofunctioning by contagion and entering certain assemblages, that human beings effect their becomings-animal, according to Deleuze and Guattari.

With the above in mind the authors see the origin and functioning of packs as entirely different from that of families and States; "they (packs) continually work them from within and trouble them from without, with other forms of content, other forms of expression."[38] A key concept, aligned to the functioning of involution and creativity, is that of 'line of flight or 'line of escape'.

> [39]"There is nothing metaphoric about becoming-animal. No symbolism, no allegory. Nor is it the result of a flaw or a malediction, the effect of some kind of guilt."

The authors describe becoming-animal as "a map of intensities, an ensemble of states, each distinct from one another, grafted onto the man as far as he is searching for a way out."[40] "It is a creative line of escape that says nothing other than what it is."[41] On language they write: "In contrast to the letters, the becoming-animal lets nothing remain of the duality of a subject of enunciation and a subject of the statement; rather, it constitutes a single process, a unique method that replaces subjectivity."[42]

Deleuze and Guattari use the example of Hoffmannstal's contemplation of the death of a rat, to illustrate such a moment of 'line of flight'.

> [43]"When Hoffmannsthal contemplates the death throes of a rat, it is in him that the animal 'bares his teeth at monstrous fate'. This is not a feeling of pity, as he makes clear; still less an identification. It is a composition of speeds and affects involving entirely different individuals, a symbiosis; it makes the rat become a thought, a feverish thought in the man, at the same time as the man becomes a rat gnashing its teeth in its death throes. The rat and the man are in no way the same thing, <u>but Being expresses them both in a single meaning in a language that is no longer that of words, in a matter that is no longer that of forms, in an affectability that is no longer that of subjects.</u>"

To help one understand the 'flight' or 'escape' the authors do describe these becomings in a more clear-cut way. A becoming is always a *line*. "A point is always a point of origin, but a line of becoming has neither beginning nor end, departure nor arrival, origin nor destination." It only has a middle, but the middle is not an average, "it is a fast motion, it is the absolute speed of movement"[44]. They describe a becoming as neither one nor two, nor the relation between the two. It is the in-between, "the border or line of flight or descent running perpendicular to both."[45]

> [46]"If becoming is a block (a line-block), it is because it constitutes a zone of proximity and indiscernibility, a no-man's-land, a non-localized relation sweeping up the two distant or contiguous points, carrying one into the

> proximity of the other – and the border proximity is different to both contiguity and distance."

The difficult, but philosophically useful, realization of this 'line of flight' is that it is in no way an escape from the forces of Oedipalization. Deleuze and Guattari note that acts of becoming-animal cannot follow their principle all the way through, they seem to "maintain a certain ambiguity that leads to their insufficiency and condemns them to defeat."[47] The authors' pose the question of whether animals are not still too formed, too significative, too territorialized? The whole of the becoming-animal oscillates between schizo escape and an Oedipal impasse. Deleuze and Guattari write; "One allows oneself to be re-Oedipalized not by guilt but by fatigue, by a lack of invention."[48]

> [49]"The becoming-animal is a potentiality that is gifted with two equally real poles – a properly animal pole and a properly familial one. We saw how the animal oscillated between its own becoming-inhuman and an all-too-human familiarization."

The authors state thus that all animals (not only pets) are subject to this oscillation. From this realization, or perspective, the tension and expression of metaphor (with its anthropocentric entourage) agitates expression. Deleuze and Guattari write that animalist stories are a component of the machine of expression "…Grasping the real, writing themselves within the real itself, they are caught up in the tension between two opposing poles or realities. The becoming animal effectively shows a way out, traces a line of escape, but is incapable of following it or making it its own…"[50] Deleuze and Guattari write that for Kafka, "the animal essence is the way out, the line of escape, <u>even it if takes place in a cage</u>."[51]

In the Hoffmannsthal quote, and subsequent description of the line, or block of becoming, you can start seeing a very different conception of bodies. "Spinoza asks: What can a body do?"[52] In the same way that the authors in previous writing avoided defining a body by its organs and functions, they here also avoid defining it by Species or Genus characteristics. Instead they seek to count its <u>affects</u>. Affects are becomings. Within this formulation they write that a racehorse is more different from a workhorse than a workhorse is from an ox[53].

> [54]"To every relation of movement and rest, speed and slowness grouping together an infinity of parts, there corresponds a degree of power. To the relations composing, decomposing, or modifying and individual there corresponds intensities that affect it, augmenting or diminishing its power to act; these intensities come from external parts or from the individual's own parts… We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it to compose a more powerful body."

In writing on music Deleuze and Guattari give an idea of how all-encompassing the becomings and affects can be. Messiaen, they write, presents multiple chromatic durations in coalescence, "alternating between the longest and the shortest, in order to

suggest the idea of the relations between the infinitely long durations of the stars and the mountains and the infinitely short ones of insects and the atoms: a cosmic, elementary power that…derives above all from the labour of rhythm".[55]

According to the authors' logic the same thing that leads a musician to discover the birds also leads him to discover the elementary and the cosmic. "Both combine to form a block, a universe fibre, a diagonal or complex space." There is also, as they quote Messiaen saying, that "music is not the privilege of human beings:… the question in music is that of a power of deterritorialization permeating nature, animals, the elements, and deserts as much as human beings."[56] In a realization that has a direct link to the other writing in this piece, and my eventual conclusion, what Messiaen discovered in music is the same thing ethologists discovered in animals: " human beings are hardly at an advantage, except in the means of overcoding, of making punctual systems. That is even the opposite of having an advantage."[57]

The above is but a small sampling of concepts discussed and explored by Deleuze and Guattari. In *The Postmodern Animal*, and numerous essays, Baker poses specific questions, and/or statements, to try and coalesce the nebulous ideas clustered around Becoming-animal in relation to art.

<u>The first of these questions is whether Becoming-animal can amount to something that can be acted upon, a practice rather than rhetoric?[58]</u>

Essentially, becoming-animal is a human being's creative opportunity to *think* himself or herself other-than-in-identity. This process, one of 'metamorphosis', and not imitation or identification, is identified by Deleuze and Guattari as a pull of opposing forces which can be turned to good effect.

> [59]"The metamorphosis is a sort of conjunction of two deterritorializations, that which the human imposes on the animal by forcing it to flee or to serve the human, but also that which the animal proposes to the human by indicating ways-out or means of escape that the human would never have thought of by himself."

I repeat that for Deleuze and Guattari the animal indicates "the way out, the line of escape, even if it takes place in place, or in a cage. "*A line of escape, and not freedom"*.[60] Cagedness, according to Baker is a condition of art[61]. It is an expression of art's entanglement with desire, and a means of addressing that desire. Becomings are also described as "the process of desire" in which "experimentation replaces interpretation"[62]. Baker makes the important distinction here that *freedom is not the issue*. In relation to cagedness and desire the experimental practice of becoming is located elsewhere. "Cagedness is an effect of art, *a means of rendering the animal evident*".[63]

According to Deleuze and Guattari what the artist is alert to in the animal is " the affectuation of a power of the pack that throws the self into upheaval and makes it real"[64]. These 'upheavals', becomings, participations – all of them happen for a limited time, it may be something experienced "only for an instant". Baker implies

that the artists' work could be to *prolong such instances*, to make them and the relevant blocks and forces visible.[65]

Baker's second question is why is the very idea of the animal aligned in some way with creativity for Deleuze and Guattari?[66]

As discussed previously in chapter one the traditional use of animals for artists was as ciphers for human meanings. This form of use gave way, in the last quarter of the 20th century, to instances where artists and animals have come closer together as living beings "caught up in each other's affairs, willingly or otherwise."[67] Meanings do not matter; the question is always not what becoming-animal *is*, but what it *does*. Deleuze and Guattari describe what becoming-animal does as something close to what art does:

> [68]"It is only a tool for blazing lines, in other words, all of those real becomings that are not only produced in art, and all of those active escapes that do not consist in fleeing into art, taking refuge in art, and all of those positive deterritorializations that never reterritorialize on art, but instead sweep it away with them towards the realms of the asignifying, asubjective."

Art's work then involves affecting the human away from anthropocentric meanings and subjective identity, similar to the work of the animal in becoming-animal of figuring out how to operate other-than-in-identity. Crucially, according to Baker, *the experience of bodies and the experience of art are not easily distinguished*.[69]

The third concern that Baker takes up is "what does it take to gesture towards the other-than-human, and thus enter that privileged 'experimental' state of identity suspension which they call Becoming-animal?"[70]

Baker identifies three key ideas outlined by Deleuze and Guattari, the inhabiting of bodies, 'affects', and 'haecceity', some of which I have already touched on above.

One of the answers offered by Deleuze and Guattari on how to operate other-than-in-identity has to do with speeds. Baker quotes: "To 'make your body a beam of light moving at ever-increasing speed', they write, is something which 'requires all the resources of art' – the kind of art through which you become-animal"[71]. The relevance of this rather tenuous identification is that the making-something of the body involves a radical shift in perspective, a *focus on what things do rather than what they are*. Deleuze and Guattari write:

> [72]"We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are."

The next key idea is Deleuze and Guattari's definition and use of 'affects'. Affects, to them, do not denote any personal feeling or sentiment but rather "a personal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act"[73]. According

to Deleuze and Guattari, human tenderness is necessarily foreign to that which only has affects[74]. They have a particular disdain for culture locked into individualistic and possessive concerns with sentiments and emotions. This is nowhere clearer than in their opinions regarding pets. As an alternative to Oedipalized beings, well-formed subjects and culture, the authors describe:

> [75]"…a natural play of haecceities, degrees, intensities, events and accidents that compose individuations totally different from those of the well-formed subjects that receive them"

The third important term that they use is 'haecceity'. Baker explains that "the word itself suggests no more than a kind of 'thisness' by which to designate a 'mode of individuation' which consists of 'relations of movement and rest' and 'capacities' to affect and be affected', for example a degree of heat, intensity of white."[76] For Deleuze and Guattari a haecceity is not a subject but rather an event. It involves moving (by whatever means, whatever animal) from one perspective to another, and this ceasing and becoming is a matter of desire. "Starting from the form one has, the subject one is, it is the establishing of the relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness that are *closest* to what one is becoming"[77]. For Baker this alternative to identity and identity-thinking is a willed or worked thing, just like a work of art. According to him it involves an imaginative rethinking of the body, and *inhabiting that body as a haecceity rather than as a well-formed subject*.[78] Art's rethinking of bodies and forms therefore necessarily includes a rethinking of the artists' own body, understanding it to be distinguished (and experienced) "solely by movement and rest, slowness and speed"[79].

Baker's conclusion is that the important fact regarding these three 'gestures' is that what is at stake here is a *form of inhabiting which is also a kind of unselfing*[80].

The artist and the animal are intimately bound up with each other in the unthinking and undoing of the conventionally human, and Baker identifies two key ideas with regards to this, the relation of fear and this unselfing, and the authors' concept of involution.[81]

It seems then that part of becoming's movement away from the Oedipal human self necessitates a movement away from fear, and towards the animal. As with all such binaries, the binary of fearless artist/animal opposed to ordinary timid humans and 'their pets' is overly simplistic, and it is here that Baker expands on the importance of work with domestic animals and pets. Work with these animals reveals some of the complexity of issues regarding fear, "its different locations, use and purpose."[82]

Fear in its different forms plays a big and complex part in the process identified as becoming-animal, and definitely seems to play a productive part in creative work. Blocks of becoming are always a relationship of alliance rather than filiation, and when it involves the animal it may, according to the authors, be "fearsome"[83], but the entanglement is nonetheless creative. This is because its work lies in the undoing of simplistic binary thought, as Carolee Schneemann is quoted: "Fear as well as joy and rage tangle in the motives of my work"[84].

The authors' concept of involution was mentioned earlier. Baker describes involution in the following manner: "Involution might be thought of as part of art's continuing creative work against regression into the individualistic and fear-ridden Oedipal self."[85] It seems, on balance, when one looks at creative production and its driving factors that the perplexing qualities of fear find their own inventive, creative, place in these involutions.

If all the above is the 'work' of artists (including visual-work which proscribes the use of identity-tainted form), Baker's core question is what does becoming-animal look like?

As can be seen, fear may be regarded as part of the work undertaken by the artist in respect of the animal. For Baker it is fear's capacity to orient the artist that brings the discussion back to the subject of form.[86]. He goes to great lengths in his book to analyze the manifestations of animals in contemporary art, through formulations such as 'botched-taxidermy', but when considering becoming-animal it focuses specifically on experience and form. The fact is that art and becoming-animal is said to undertake similar kinds of work. The similarity lies in the reality (despite all the talk of being "swept-up") that both involve a degree of conscious, considered decision-making, a manner of orientation in which the question of form is key[87]. Baker encapsulates it in this quote where Dennis Oppenheim proposes: "artists, quite often more than other people, are thrown into volatile storms as they evolve. This has always been what I thought arts' content was – a way of feeding this experience into form."[88]

Deleuze and Guattari write on becoming-animal:

> [89]"What does it mean to disarticulate, to cease to be an organism? How can we convey how easy it is, and the extent to which we do it everyday? And how necessary caution is, the art of dosages, since overdose is a danger. You don't do it with a sledgehammer, you use a very fine file. You invent self-destructions that have nothing to do with the death drive. Dismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself, but rather opening the body to…distributions of intensity, and territories and deterritorializations measured with the craft of a surveyor".

Baker interprets the purpose of caution as that which has to prevent the work (of the body, or of art) "from bogging down, or veering into the void"[90]. It is in art where "the idea of human completeness disappears", and whose difficult purpose is to offer "good ways of bearing our incompleteness". This seems to be a matter of learning how to operate alongside the animal, alongside fear, being open to both despite the discomfort[91].

I repeat the quote by Deleuze and Guattari: "what interests us are modes of expansion…The wolf is not fundamentally a characteristic or a certain number of characteristics: it is a wolfing…every animal is fundamentally a band, a pack"[92]. Pack imagery itself is unusual in contemporary art, which might seem strange at first, but the form of the individual, recognizable animal body is put under considerable strain, revealing a more lucid distillation of the uncomfortable reality of animal form, and the conceptual struggles faced from the becoming-animal perspective.

Baker describes the uncomfortable reality of responsibility towards the animal in art in the following way:

> [93]"Acknowledgements of being bound up with each another, inhabiting each others' lives and spaces, might be seen as an aspect of the artist's responsibility toward the animal… Responsibility, of course, may also figure as form…The artist's work, simultaneously cautious and experimental, is to find an appropriate form and style for becoming-animal…"

Baker turns to the concept of the 'figural', developed by Deleuze, as one such example of appropriate form for becoming-animal. The term was inspired by the paintings of Francis Bacon. Bacon was the subject of Deleuze's book *Francis Bacon: Logique de la sensation* (1981) in which he proposes to "oppose the 'figural' to the figurative."[94]

Deleuze contends that Bacon does not paint characters, but figures. Figures, unlike characters, according to him, do not imply a relationship between an object outside the painting and the figure in the painting that supposedly illustrates that object. "The figure *is*, and refers only to itself."[95]

For Baker, Bacon's 'figural' figures consequently have at least three things in common with the becoming-animal, and he lists them as follows:

> [96]"In not being characters, they do not have the characteristics of a subject. In simply dumbly existing, they are not aiming to set up meanings, references or interpretations. And most importantly, in being neither characters nor representations, these figures (which certainly have a pictorial form – it would be absurd to deny this) are not echoing or representing the form of an individual subject with a reality outside Bacon's art."

The figural is thus Deleuze's way of describing what the body does in Bacon's paintings. The bodies are certainly read by Deleuze as active things with work to do. They have to find a way to constitute themselves within the picture: "the body…expects something of itself, it makes an effort to become Figure". The body is thus both "a source of movement" and an "event"[97].

This formulation of the figural offers Baker an answer that there can be a holding-to-recognizable-animal-form in art, but "it is one which presumes nothing about a correspondence between that form and that of any particular 'real' animal subject."[98] In the particular case of works involving pets where they play a key role in the production, process and resulting works, this formulation is more problematic. It is at this point that I want to mention Deleuze and Guattari's idea of the 'Anomalous'.

The 'anomalous' is one of the ideas introduced by the authors in order to facilitate thinking their way out of subjects and identities[99]. The language and detail seems arcane but it does offer an easier, more structured way of understanding the principles involved. Baker also concludes that in these descriptions the authors bolster the importance of the artist. With regards to the anomalous Deleuze and Guattari offer two noteworthy elaborations on the creative alliance of becoming-animal. First is

their suggestion that there are certain beings which, or who, have a particular openness to an understanding of becoming-animal. They name these privileged beings 'we sorcerers'[100]. The second important elaboration concerns the knowledge 'we sorcerers' have of the distinctive make-up of packs:

> [101] "Our first principle was: pack and contagion, the contagion of the pack, such is the path becoming-animal takes. But a second principle seemed to tell us the opposite: wherever there is a multiplicity you will also find an exceptional individual, and it is with that individual that an alliance must be made in order to become-animal".

The privileged animal, the exceptional individual, is termed by Deleuze and Guattari the "anomalous". Baker explains that the anomalous is part of every pack, and to the extent that every "demonic" animal is already a becoming-pack, it is part of every animal[102]. The authors comment: "In short, every Animal has its Anomalous. Let us clarify that: every animal swept up in its pack or multiplicity has its anomalous".[103]

Baker explains that it is something that has neither an identity nor characteristics, so it is a phenomenon that cannot be judged by its relation to a standard. The word itself carries for the authors a sense of designating 'the cutting edge of deterritorialization.' It is 'a phenomenon of bordering', an edge[104]. According to Baker it is a way of thinking of each animal, and of a particular animal within the pack, and of the pack as a whole, as a border, as its own border, its edge, a centerless thing: 'all that counts is the borderline – the anomalous'[105].

To have access to this limit-knowledge is to be a "sorcerer". "Sorcerers" haunt the fringes: "Encountering the animal at the border, it is therefore, it seems, as a sorcerer that a human being makes an 'anomalous choice", strikes a creative alliance, and thus "enters into his or her becoming-animal"[106]. For Baker, these descriptions make it difficult to think of the sorcerer, the human who is able to make an alliance with the animal, other than as an artist[107]. For me it makes it difficult to think of the anomalous as anything other than the point of being shared with an animal, domestic or otherwise.

Two exemplary 'sorcerers' are the artists Carolee Schneemann and William Wegman, with their respective 'packs' of cats and dogs. Even though becoming-animal is largely a description of the creative process and does not necessarily have to have anything to do with actual animals, I think these artists demonstrate an extraordinary facility in visually renegotiating the self exactly within these parameters.

Carolee Schneemann

Carolee Schneemann is a multidisciplinary artist who has done revolutionary work exploring issues of the body, sexual identity, social taboos, life, death, spirit, to name but a few. Her cats play a key role in many of her works. In 1965 she made her self-shot film, *Fuses*, of her and her lover having sex under the watchful eye of Kitsch, her cat at the time. Her various cats also formed one of the central points in her works, *Kitsch's Last Meal*, *More Wrong Things*, *Unexpectedly Research*, and the two I will be discussing: *Infinity Kisses*, and *Vesper's Pool*. These works are used by Baker as

examples of becoming-animal. Schneemann finds great personal meaning in the shared narratives of cat and woman in culture, religion and everyday interaction. In her work and her process she admits and recognizes the *active* participation of the other. She acknowledges that these are the narratives within which her *experience* is couched. "She does not problematize the language, or the theory, but unashamedly celebrates the experience"[108]. Her work seems to serve as a site of *mutual participation in visceral phenomena* often governed or shared between her and her cats.

Infinity Kisses:

Infinity Kisses consists of two bodies of work, *Infinity Kisses I*, 1981-87, and *Infinity Kisses II*, 1990-98.

Infinity Kisses I consists of 140 self-shot 35mm photographs; 84x72in in size – set up as a photo-grid wall installation printed on linen. It documents a morning ritual first initiated by Schneemann's cat Cluny. He would wake her each morning with what she describes as 'deep kisses'. Schneemann started photographing these sessions (sleeping with a camera next to the bed) in 1981, up until Cluny's death in 1988[109]. Each grid-line of images has a mirror image beneath it. The formal quality of the photographs (light, focus, composition etc.) varies wildly. Schneemann also included a photograph of an Egyptian relief fragment, picturing a lion kissing a goddess.

In 1990 Schneemann continued this body of work when, strangely, her next cat – Vesper - continued this behaviour up until his death in 1999[110]. *Infinity Kisses II* consisted of 24 self-shot 35mm colour-photographs, 96x120in in size. Both works have been exhibited in several forms and contexts around the world.

Infinity Kisses contains intermedia processes using a combination of mediums and processes in the construction of one work of art. Schneemann is known to work with stylized imagery and multiple themes, and it is within this context that Robert Riley grounds his reading of *Infinity Kisses I*.

Riley reads this work as a collapse of the present and the past, producing or initiating some new hope, or regeneration[111]. This springs from an analyses grounded in the juxtaposition of her use of modern mechanical reproduction processes (such as surveillance photography and the saturation of photography dye on paper) and the evocation of an ancient symbology in reference to the stylistic use of serial repetition and the inclusion of an Egyptian relief fragment. Riley reads this relief as something that was inserted into the structure as a key to reading the whole. In Egyptian mythology a lion that kisses a goddess restores peace to civilization[112]. This quite conventional reading can itself be juxtaposed with the accusations of 'obscenity' and 'bestiality' leveled at the works and artist from other corners. Schneemann herself writes on this work:

> [113]"With the cat imagery, I have that same surprise and bewilderment when people say this is "bestiality, obscenity". This negative response seems a measure of erotic dislocation and cultural deception. Tenderness, sensitivity, yielding, wetness, permeability are all taboo aspects, isolated as "female". The

cat is an invocation, a sacred being, profoundly devoted to communicating love and physical devotion, and the cat is self-directed."

This is a prime example of 'mutual participation in visceral phenomena', even when couched in the constructs of mythology and feminist rhetoric. Schneemann writes that these flipped images "introduce permutations of repeated form as a time process, and the repeated rhythms of convexity, concavity eroticize the shapes surrounding the human animal mouths"[114]. For Schneemann the intimacy between the cat and woman becomes a refraction of the viewer's attitude to self and nature, sexuality and control, the taboo and the sacred. The cat's input is crucial – according to Schneemann "pets can teach us pleasure and shamelessness"[115].

In *Infinity Kisses I*, Schneemann consciously deals with archaic visual forms and symbols, the divine, superstition, reincarnation etc., but the cat that she is kissing is real. If her embedded beliefs (the feline familiar) led her to this mutual encounter with not one but two cats to what degree was she fathomed by them?

Infinity Kisses II does not contain this loaded referential framework. It focuses on the dissolution of boundaries between human and animal, reason and the irrational. Of this work Schneemann writes "the expressive self-determination of a cat is captured in recurring sequences as he ritualistically, ardently kisses me on the mouth."[116] The images raise questions of interspecies communication, as well as also triggering unexpected (for the artist) cultural taboos.

Schneemann continued with themes of interspecies communication, cultural taboos and artificial coincidence in her installation work *Vesper's Pool*.

Vesper's Pool (2000):

As with *Infinity Kisses*, the artist's archaic quality of experiencing psychic affiliation with her materials is offset by forcing it through cool high-tech means. *Vesper's Pool* is a multi-channel video installation completed in 2000. The installation consists of several separate elements, the main body of projections filling a darkened room. A corridor lined with illuminated niches precedes this room. The niches contained artifacts and text associated with Vesper's death.

Vesper, her collaborator and companion, died a slow, traumatic death from leukemia on the 19th of July 1999[117]. The displayed objects include artifacts such as a dead dove, a bloody nightgown, a deer tail, splintered wood from a tree hit by lightning, a gull-feather etc., all with accompanying texts. Everything is set-up to show, according to Thomas McEvilly, "the death of the small incubus recorded as a staged transition from healthy moments of great flying leaps between buildings to the tragic sopping outflow of the life-force-as-bodily fluid."[118]

In the main room there are seven projections on a wall displaying images of Schneemann and Vesper kissing. The images also dissolve vertically into a projected pool in the center of the room. A continuous slide relay projects the seasonal changes of a pond (specifically the one at Schneemann's home[119]) on the gallery floor, and motorized mirrors move dissolving images of the pond onto the ceiling and across the room. On an opposite wall a video projection cantilevers the six-minute video-loop

detailing the life and death of this cat. It contains everyday images of her life with Vesper, his deterioration after he started hemorrhaging on July 15th, until his eventual death in her arms[120]. A multilayered soundtrack accompanies the entire exhibition. Sounds overlap and blend in with one another; the sounds of a train-on-tracks, coffee percolating, insects, bells, a cat-purring – all blending into an incessant scraping sound that eventually dominates the viewing experience. It is the sound of, what one presumes is, Vesper's grave being dug.[121]

As with *Infinity Kisses*, *Vesper's Pool* occupies areas of feminist aesthetic. The work is autobiographical and intensely personal and invokes another archetypal realm of women's history – the female and her feline familiar, an association that, as suggested by Andre Leroi-Gourhan, may go back to the Magdalenian caves[122]. Mc Evilly reads the blood-stained nightgown (which caught Vesper's Hemorrhaging on July 15th) in some detail:

> [123]"It hangs there almost like a priestly garment, seeming to refer to the bloodstained white cassock of Herman Nitsch's own incursions into the realms of ancient religion. But Schneemann has characteristically skewed the material into another riposte to the overweening scale of men's ambitions; the nightgown is clearly feminine and has to do with intimacy in bed rather than with temple ceremonial. In terms of the longstanding antifeminism of male clergies, it seems to commemorate a sacrilege, while in terms of the reality of women's cultural history, it has the accumulated dignity of millennia of child-bearing, corpse laying-out, lamentation, and rending of garments."

Within this sophisticated framework there is the simple experience of profound mourning. Schneemann writes: "in *Vesper's Pool* I reconstitute psychic spaces as part of ordinary phenomena."[124] These spaces are filled with the loss of her visceral little incubus and detail a personal mythology surrounding Vesper's death. The nightgown is followed by fragments of the tree split on August 10, to the dove that fell dead in her hands while invoking Vesper by the pond on September 27th, the deer found dead in the pond on October 5th, amongst other artifacts[125]. These inanimate 'real' artifacts contrast sharply with the projections in the main room, and everything gets brought to point with the sound of Vesper's grave being dug.

Schneemann's work is seemingly filled with the kinds of referential frameworks abhorred by Deleuze and Guattari (religion, culture, feminism, history, mythology). Through simply admitting the active participation of the other she effects a becoming-animal irrespective of the narratives that structure her experience. Schneemann views perception as an empathy drawing, and writes on her work process:

> [126]"If a performance work is an extension of the formal-metaphorical activity possible within a painting or construction, the viewers' sorting of responses and interpretation of the forms of performance will still be equilibrated with all their past visual experiences. The various forms of my works – collage, assemblage, "concretion" – present equal potentialities for sensate involvement."

This is a very good description of becoming-animal between viewer and work in a visual art context. Her use of her animals comes from a drive to remove societal constraints. She writes, "I'm using myself in a culture that surround me with artifice,

lies, obfuscations, grandiosity. Every time a film is made, you are cast to act, constrained to "represent" someone and something that you're not, or in semiotic structure you are abstracted into a set of propositions to demonstrate something you may or may not believe."[127] In her 'erotic' work with her cats, for example, she takes the issue out of the context of heterosexual mating into eroticism for its own sake. A. Rahmani writes on her work "eroticism becomes a language of communication not necessarily attached to specific organs, actions, people, but simply part of being alive."[128] Kissing her cats in the morning was a becoming-animal, governed by both sides.

William Wegman:

William Wegman is an artist that identifies himself, self-deprecatingly, as the 'dog-photographer' for his work with his Weimaraners. He has experimented widely with a range of media – film, kinetic-sculpture, installation, performance and painting – but developed his mature artistic voice after acquiring his 'canine muse' Man Ray.

Together with Man Ray, Wegman started down a road of very interesting intersubjective production, culminating (after Man Ray's death) in Wegman breeding his own Weimaraners to use in his work. His changing motives in working with dogs throughout the trajectory of his career are the subject of a very interesting text by Susan McHugh entitled *Video Dog Star: Video Dog Star: William Wegman, Aesthetic Agency, and the Animal in Experimental Video Art* (2001). Her discussion centers on what she describes as 'pack-aesthetics', which shares common ground with 'becoming-animal', and provides an interesting study of the human/animal dynamics present in an established career. According to the argument outlined by McHugh it was particularly through his early experimental video work that Wegman and Man Ray developed and engaged the conflicts between animal aesthetics and human ideals of artistic agency. From this early period I will discuss a video piece entitled *Two Dogs/Dog Duet* that was hailed as a masterpiece by some critics, and I will also discuss a photographic work, *Frog/FrogII*, that was identified by Baker as a very good example of 'becoming-animal'.

Frog/FrogII (1982):

Frog/FrogII is a Polaroid photograph taken in 1982 of Wegman's then Weimaraner – Man Ray – very clumsily disguised as a frog. This presentation of Man Ray 'crossing' the species barrier, as a deliberately transparent 'hybrid-form', is very funny, and very effective, as his identity and status refuses to settle. Baker explains that, though the observation itself might be construed as anthropomorphic, "the dog's role seems often to be that of co-conspirator."[129] Wegman himself suggested that Man Ray somehow 'diverted' his own narcissism[130]. With reference to this, Craig Owen observed that Man Ray seemed to offer Wegman the opportunity "of another, non-narcissistic mode of relating to the other."[131]

The importance of this particular photograph is that in a discernible visual way there is agency to Man Ray's presence. His identity and status in relation to the work, the artist, and the viewer refuses to settle into any normal category. The traditional

hierarchical relationship between human/animal, artist/model etc. are all turned on their heads.

Two Dogs/ Dog Duet (1977):

This is a six-minute, nearly silent, video piece featuring Man Ray and an anonymous mongrel companion. They are filmed from behind both intently watching something off-screen. The dogs heads continuously move in unison, following the unseen object – revealed at the end of the video to be a hand-held tennis ball. During the six minutes the mongrel dog also slowly slides down out of the shared sitting position, and this is followed (towards the end of the video) by an excruciatingly funny moment when both dogs turn to look behind them but move in the opposite direction – breaking the continuity and mirroring one another.

Wegman claims that this work was transitional because it included multiple agents in the production process. He wrote: "What makes this work exceptional was working in the presence of others."[132] The human-canine 'work' initiated, and the incorporation of traces of this work in the video itself, is responsible for the evident inscription of otherness into the videotext. The dogs interest and evident desire for the ball gains human interest in the initially off –screen action. McHugh describes:

> [133]"First-time viewer's share the dog's frustration by being prevented from seeing the object of their attention, thus crossing the line from watching the dogs as objects to watching along with them for signs of the object."

This work, for McHugh, confounds singular interpretation in terms of one-to-one, human-canine correspondence[134]. This refinement of dialectical form (that of human/canine, canine/canine, and participation of the viewer) enables the piece to address the "assimilation of humans and other animals to various species-specific and interspecific cultural formations."[135]

As seen above McHugh reads the work in terms of 'pack structures' and 'pack-aesthetics'. The moment when dogs previously locked heads turn in opposite directions signals the 'pack-structures' of the video's production. This non-scripted interaction runs freely through the work, thus establishing the dogs' difference but, according to McHugh, reinforcing the shared desire for the ball. McHugh explains:

> [136]"This formal structure singularly highlights intracanine sociality and, in light of Wegman's subsequent breed-specific works, seems peculiarly amplified by the other dog's mongrel body. Subtly, Man Ray, the breed dog, embodies the imposition of human aesthetics on canine biology while his unnamed random bred companion exemplifies a concurrent history of canine aesthetics through self-selected breeding."

When read as a conjunction of human, canine, and interspecific sociality, cush as in McHugh's writing, *Two Dogs/Dog Duet* is regarded apart from the other Weimaraner pieces. This is because it enables intracanine as coming *before* intrahuman and intraspecific aesthetics[137]. The work, according to McHugh, marks a brief alignment of human and animal aesthetics, configuring a range of aesthetics appropriate to what Midgely terms the "mixed community" of domesticated animals and humans.[138]

Human/Canine Career Trajectory:

Susan McHugh set out to account for the correlations between multiple and mongrel dogs in Wegman's early experimental video work, and the exclusively Weimaraner breed-dogs with human bodies in his recent large-format Polaroid photography. There is such a conceptual disjunction between the two poles. Her article explores how Wegman's work with his 'video dogstar' (Man Ray) troubles the erasure of the animal in certain contemporary conceptions of artistic authority. Wegman and Man Ray engaged and developed the conflicts between animal aesthetics and human ideals of autonomous artistic agency. This is in stark contrast to new works, and the anthropocentric closure the artist retroactively claims for his work.[139]

As seen in the two examples I have mentioned above, the strand that runs through these early works is that the images/video troubles the separation between non-human cognition and aesthetic systemization, between the individual thoughts and their consolidation into cultural forms. McHugh pints out that the striking thing about the Wegman/Man Ray images is that when they incorporate the dog's thought processes, they hold the potential not only to *resist reduction to simply human terms but also to validate canine culture and, by extension, pack aesthetics*.[140] For McHugh, the distinguishing marks of these works are their movement to what she terms 'pack-aesthetics'. Pack-aesthetics can be understood as the interlacing of human and canine engagements with the art-making scene[141]. This forms the basis for a larger analysis by McHugh:

> [142]"What has yet to develop in the critical history of this work is the way in which the videos, as Wegman (1997) notes, 'changed the way I thought about my work'. This acknowledgement of the artist's shifting aesthetic reflects how the interlacing of human and canine engagements with the artmaking scene compels reconceptualization of human as well as animal aesthetic agency".

In *Two Dogs/Dog Duet*, and other video works, such as *Treat's Bottle (1978), Spelling Lesson (1978)* and *Smoking (1978),* McHugh identifies the importance of the sharp demarcation of the limit at which the exchanges of ideas between dog and man cross overlapping systems of thought. This makes evident the clashes between species-specific cultures, which in turn makes the interspecific premise simultaneously evident[143]. By at once displaying *and* critiquing these exchanges, the works sweep aside deadlocked questions of exploitation or manipulation by "actively engaging interspecific, collective configurations of their author-functions."[144] *Negotiations, not subjugations*, characterize these early pieces, according to McHugh. Man Ray's participation quickly and irrevocably becomes an integral part of Wegman's photography and video. Wegman relies heavily on the dogs spontaneous interaction with prompts, primarily speech, to develop a video aesthetic that McHugh notes both establishes the material conditions of artistic production and challenges conventional conceptualizations of them. In particular the notion of singular artistic agency.[145]

Wegman himself traces a movement from individuating toward pack-aesthetics by positioning the interspecies work as preempting the development of his own individual artwork:

> [146]"He [Man Ray] was very interested in working, so, when I didn't want to use him, he would persuade me that it would be in my best interest to use him… In 1978 I didn't photograph him, as a challenge, and he was very unhappy. He hated not working. Like a lot of people who are out of work, he was sullen, miserable. He started biting, attacked four or five postmen; I was forced to get another divorce… In Man Ray's last years, since each picture seemed like it would be his last, I wasn't able to do my own work. I was compelled to photograph Man Ray."

For McHugh, Wegman's differentiation between 'my own' and *another* kind of work is key. Wegman describes a growing awareness of choosing between making "my own art" as opposed to work involving Man Ray[147]. But, as McHugh points out, the artist's own clean separation glosses over the more complicated issue of how his own independent work *became* entangled with Man Ray's participation. In identifying a difference between his own and the interspecific work Wegman does position himself in a determining role, but as the dog's action comes to contribute to the aesthetic process it becomes difficult to read him as simply an art object manipulated by the artist. Particularly in the video work there are constructions of different modes of authority, and by extension, of authorship.[148]

McHugh makes the argument that this early work with Man Ray, through which Wegman develops this aesthetic, stands in contrast to Wegman's current work. In her reading his current work positions his relationship with his dogs as the instrument of his own alienation. They have become a signature-style into which he was lured and caught by the commercial structures of the fine art industry[149].

Wegman's movement across the aesthetic spectrum is highlighted in *Puppies* (1997), his autobiographical book about how he became a dog-breeding artist. McHugh writes:

> [150]" Subtly colluding the dog-breeding and art making worlds, Wegman's lone authorial voice, here the structuring device of a singular human authorship, assumes directorship of both these interspecific (that is, cross-species) sites of production. In this tale, the artist's sense of his own authority grows rather than dissipates through images of the dog's bodies, but it does so not by refuting but by avoiding examination of the ways in which hybrid human-animal art promises a radical decentralization of the human (in this case, literally, the autobiographical animal)."

It is clear that Man Ray came to saturate the art in ways that were not easy to dismiss in terms of subject/object binaries. The Wegman/Man Ray work communicates the idea that dogs contribute to the art making process, yet, McHugh argues, Wegman's work after Man Ray's death compromises this by promoting interspecies art at the expense of imaging canine aesthetics[151]. Canine bodies consistently link the early Wegman/Man Ray images to Wegman's recent work, but it also obscures a shift away from experimentation with dialectical form that directly engages these problems of self-definition through animal art practice[152]. McHugh suggests that the success of the early pieces depend on the dog and artist's joint ability to erode the one-on-one correspondence framed by the critic's anthropocentric aesthetics. She writes:

> [153]"Confounding this approach to the artwork as the property of a singular author and the dog as therefore a human substitute or object, the Wegman/Man Ray art opens up questions about how such art involves a collective process, an alternate approach that I term "pack-aesthetics". Without wholly promoting or critiquing a single set of artistic values, the early Wegman/Man Ray images in this way cultivate pack-aesthetics, provoking conceptualizations of history, aesthetics, and communication that situate the human within the context of other animal cultures."

It is interesting how all encompassing the artist's attempts at regaining control are.

> [154]"Through the breeding bitches body, the human artist regains control over the terms on which dogs contribute to the production of Wegman's art, emptying out the revolutionary potential for conceptualizing animal cultures and reinventing Man Ray's legacy as a breed body, a cipher through which Wegman reclaims a human-exceptionalist sense of artistic agency. In this way, the first Wegman Weimaraner's shifting status as video dog star fosters, then frustrates, a sustained critique of the confluence of anthropocentrism and artistic agency."

McHugh notes that both through individual works, and dynamics within his career, Wegman opens up a common ground for shifting and multiple negotiations of interspecies and species-specific social systems including, but not limited to, aesthetics[155].

Conclusion

In investigating the pet in contemporary art I found the philosophical, and practical undercurrent grounding the subject consists of two things. The first is a central question on how difference can be taken seriously, and the second (especially within a visual art context) is how 'being' can express this, or be expressed.

Donna Haraway writes on her concept of 'significant otherness' in an effort to learn how to narrate the co-history of people and dogs, and to learn how to inherit the consequences of co-evolution in nature culture. She asks:

> [1]" How can general knowledge be nurtured in postcolonial worlds committed to taking difference seriously? Answers to these questions can only be put together in emergent practices; i.e., in vulnerable, on-the-ground work that cobbles together non-harmonious agencies and ways of living that are accountable both to their disparate inherited histories and to their barely possible but absolutely necessary joint futures. For me, this is what significant otherness signifies."

I have outlined my problems with the categories of wild and domestic, and the problematic formulation of nature and wilderness that underpins our thought processes. Haraway relieves my disquiet with particular clarity in *The Companion Species Manifesto*. She makes the argument that dogs are not an alibi or a realization of an intention, "they are fleshy material-semiotic presences in the body of technoscience. Dogs are not surrogates for theory; they are not here just to think with. They are here to live with."[2] A simple and obvious statement, but nevertheless profound. Her understanding of our relatings with companion species is very close to key aspects of becoming-animal. She describes that Beings do not pre-exist their relatings, through reaching into each other, through their 'prehensions' and 'graspings', beings constitute each other and themselves. "There are no pre-constituted subjects and objects, and no single sources, unitary actors, or final ends. According to Haraway the world is a knot in motion and 'prehensions' have consequences[3].

In becoming-animal Deleuze and Guattari do write that all animals can be treated as 'demonic' or 'pack' animals, even the cat and the dog, as long as it does not lead us back into narcissistic Oedipal regression. I cannot conceive of a better way of understanding becoming-animal, or of exposing it to wider understanding and application than looking at it in the light of the working with, and the training of animals. Haraway writes:

> [4]"We are training each other in acts of communication we barely understand. We are, constitutively, companion species. We make each other-up, in the flesh. Significantly other to each other, in specific difference, we signify in the flesh a nasty developmental infection called love. This love is an historical aberration and a naturalcultural legacy."

Ractliffe, Wegman and Schneemann are all examples of artists bonded in significant otherness with their respective pets, and in their relatings the partners come to make

each other-up in flesh and sign. The relatings with their pets offered, and sometimes compelled, a potential for creative exploration focused on understanding and exploring different formulations of subjectivity without being dictated by conventional Cartesian binaries. Wegman's work and career highlights a common ground for shifting negotiations of interspecies social systems and differing participation within it. Ractliffe's clarity and ascetic rigour in her work surrounding Gus's death calls to mind, for me, a description by Deleuze and Guattari on the 'line of flight'.

> [5]"Flight is challenged when it is useless movement in space, a movement of false liberty; but in contrast, flight is affirmed when it is stationary flight, a flight of intensity".

I could not find other examples of work that registers with the same intensity as *Guess Who Loves You* and *Love's Body*. The reason for this is their perfect distillation of our profound anxiety about the inclusion of the animal in our phenomenological world, and the alignment of this anxiety with photography.

Carolee Schneemann all but embodies becoming-animal in her subversive work process. She provides what Baker identifies as one of the most compelling descriptions of a becoming-animal when writing on the lasting influence on her work by her first cat Kitsch. "Her steady focus enabled me to consider her regard as an aperture in motion."[6] A lot of Schneemann's work is bound up in mourning and images and artifacts of her cats play a key part. In an article on *More Wrong Things* (2001), Barbara Leon wrote on Schneemann's integration of her personal grief with global 'wrong things':

> [6]"What Carolee Schneemann has done here is to create a bridge from the "other" into the "I". She has revealed the domain where suffering exists beyond the boundaries of ownership. Pain is neither pushed away nor clung to, it just IS. And far from making one feel isolated and helpless, there is a sense of shared grief that somehow lightens the burden. Afterall, isn't it the ultimate embrace, to have the sense that one's tears are falling not only from one's own eyes but from the eyes of all the world?"

The difficulty of expression, and seemingly unavoidable conceptual oscillation when dealing with animals is necessary. I find a correlation between this and Vicki Hearne's insistence on using normal language in the training of dogs and horses. She argues that all philosophically suspect language is necessary to keep the humans alert to the fact that somebody is at home in the animals they work with. "Just *who* is at home must permanently be in question. The recognition that one cannot know the other or the self, but must ask in respect for all time who and what are emerging in relationship, is the key."[7]

References:

Introduction

[1] Deleuze and Guattari. (1988) *A Thousand Plateaus*. London: Athlone Press: p.240

Chapter One: *The Animal in Contemporary Art*

[1] Agamben, G. (2004) *The Open, Man and Animal*. Trans Attel, K. California: Stanford University Press
[2] Wittgenstein, L. (1994) *The Wittgenstein Reader*, ed. Kenny, A. Oxford: Blackwell: pg 213
[3] Discussed in: Laycock, S.W. The Animal as Animal: A Plea for Open Conceptuality; (1999) *Animal Others,* ed. Steeves, H. P. Albany: State University of New York Press
[4] Derrida, J. (2008) *The Animal That Therefore I Am,* trans. Mills, D. New York: Fordham University Press: pg 30
[5] Ibid: pg 30-31
[6] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 30
[7] Ibid: pg 26
[8] Ibid: pg 18
[9] Ibid: pg 37
[10] Ibid: pg 38
[11] Ibid: pg 9
[12] Richard Rorty quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 9
[13] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 9
[14] Ibid: pg 9
[15] Ibid: pg 10
[16] Ibid: pg 16
[17] Ibid: pg 16
[18] Ibid: pg 16
[19] Ibid: pg 16
[20] Olly and Suzi quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 16
[21] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 14
[22] Ibid: pg 12
[23] Ibid: pg 12
[24] Ibid: pg 13
[25] Ibid: pg 13
[26] Ibid: pg 13
[27] Ibid: pg 41
[28] Ibid: pg 49
[29] Ibid: pg 49
[30] Ibid: pg 49
[31] Ibid: pg 42
[32] Ibid: pg 44
[33] Ibid: pg 44
[34] Ibid: pg 46
[35] Ibid: pg 53
[36] Ibid: pg 53
[37] Ibid: pg 56
[38] Ibid: pg 56
[39] Ibid: pg 56
[40] Ibid: pg 57
[41] Ibid: pg 57
[42] Ibid: pg 58
[43] Ibid: pg 58
[44] Ibid: pg 60

[45] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 61
[46] Ibid: pg 61
[47] Ibid: pg 62
[48] Ibid: pg 62
[49] Ibid: pg 73
[50] Ibid: pg 74
[51] Ibid: pg 75
[52] Ibid: pg 76
[53] Ibid: pg 80
[54] Ibid: pg 81
[55] Ibid: pg 82
[56] Ibid: pg 82
[57] Ibid: pg 82
[58] Ibid: pg 83
[59] Ibid: pg 83
[60] Ibid: pg 86
[61] Ibid: pg 89
[62] Ibid: pg 92
[63] Ibid: pg 92
[64] Ibid: pg 92
[65] Heidegger, M. (2004) The Animal is Poor in World, *Animal Philosophy*, ed. Atterton, P. and Calarco, M. New York: Continuum: pg 17
[66] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 95
[67] Ibid: pg 96
[68] Ibid: pg 96
[69] Ibid: pg 96
[70] Ibid: pg 98
[71] Ibid: pg 101
[72] Ibid: pg 102
[73] Ibid: pg 103
[74] Ronald Bogue quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 103
[75] Ibid: pg 103
[76] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 104
[77] Ibid: pg 104

Chapter Two: ***Not 'Other' Enough: The Pet in Cultural Discourse***

[1] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 166
[2] Ibid: pg168
[3] Ibid: pg 184
[4] Ibid: pg 168
[5] Ibid: pg 96
[6] Ibid: pg 169
[7] Ibid: pg 170
[8] Leach quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 167
[9] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 167
[10] Ibid: pg 167
[11] Ibid: pg 167
[12] Ibid: pg 168
[13] Behnke, E. A. (1999) Merleau-Ponty's Concept of Nature, *Animal Others*, ed. Steeves, H. P. New York: State University of New York Press: pg 95
[14] Ibid: pg 95
[15] Ibid: pg 96
[16] Ibid: pg 96
[17] Ibid: pg 99
[18] Ibid: pg 99

[19] Behnke, E. A. (1999) Merleau-Ponty's Concept of Nature, *Animal Others*, ed. Steeves, H. P. New York: State University of New York Press: pg 99
[20] Ibid: pg 99
[21] Ibid: pg 100
[22] Ibid: pg 100
[23] Ibid: pg 100
[24] Cronon, W. (1996) The Trouble with Wilderness, *Uncommon Ground*, ed. Cronon, W. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc: pg 69-70
[25] Ibid: pg 79
[26] Ibid: pg 80
[27] Ibid: pg 80-81
[28] Ibid: pg 80
[29] Ibid: pg 85
[30] Ibid: pg 86
[31] Knight, D. (1999) Why We Enjoy Condemning Sentimentality: A Meta-Aesthetic Perspective; *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* Vol. 57, No. 4. Pp. 411-420
[32] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[33] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[34] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[35] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[36] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[37] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[38] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[39] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[40] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[41] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[42] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[43] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[44] Ibid: Pp. 411-420
[45] Quoted in Serpell, J. (1996) *In the Company of Animals*, Cambridge University Press: pg 23
[46] Serpell, J. (1996) *In the Company of Animals*, Cambridge University Press: pg 25
[47] Ibid: pg 51
[48] Ibid: pg 52
[49] Ibid: pg 33
[50] Ibid: pg 25
[51] Ibid: pg 72
[52] Ibid: pg 72
[53] Ibid: pg 72
[54] Ibid: pg 168
[55] Ibid: pg 42
[56] The argument is discussed in Chapter 11 of Serpell, J. (1996) *In the Company of Animals*, Cambridge University Press: pg 186-211
[57] Serpell, J. (1996) *In the Company of Animals*, Cambridge University Press: pg 211
[58] Ibid: pg 211
[59] Interview with Kathy High, (2005) *Becoming Animal: Contemporary Art in the Animal Kingdom*, ed Thompson, N. Massachusetts: MASS MoCA pg 67
[60] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 178
[61] Ibid: pg 175
[62] Ibid: pg 176
[63] Ibid: pg 176
[64] Ibid: pg 176
[65] Ibid: pg 177
[66] Ibid: pg 177
[67] Ibid: pg 177
[68] Ibid: pg 178
[69] Ibid: pg 178
[70] Ibid: pg 179
[71] Ibid: pg 182

[72] Shell quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 182
[73] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 182
[74] Ibid: pg 180
[75] Ibid: pg 182
[76] Ibid: pg 183
[77] Ibid: pg 183
[78] Ibid: pg 179
[79] Ibid: pg 180
[80] Ibid: pg 178
[81] Vance quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 180
[82] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 180
[83] Ibid: pg 181
[84] Ibid: pg 181
[85] Baker, S. (2002) What does Becoming-Animal Look Like?; *Representing Animals*, ed. Rothfels, N. Indiana University Press: pg 82
[86] Ibid: pg 82
[87] Ibid: pg 82
[88] Ibid: pg 82
[89] Ibid: pg 82
[90] Ibid: pg 82
[91] Ibid: pg 82
[92] Ibid: pg 80
[93] Ibid: pg 80
[94] Ibid: pg 81
[95] Ibid: pg 82
[96] Levi-Strauss quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 184
[97] Ibid: pg 184
[98] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 184
[99] Ibid: pg 185
[100] Ibid: pg 186
[101] Ibid: pg 186
[102] Ibid: pg 188
[103] Ibid: pg189

Chapter Three: ***Form to Force: Pet-form, Medium and Perception***

[1] Deleuze, G. Guattari, F. Becoming-Animal, *Animal Philosophy* (2004) ed. Calarco, M. Atterton, P. New York: Continuum: pg 91
[2] Atkinson, B. *Jo Ractliffe: Artist's Book* (2000) David Krut Publishing: pg 40
[3] Ibid: pg 40
[4] Barthes, R. *Mythologies* (1973) trans. Lavers, A. London Paladin: pg 101
[5] Ibid: pg 101
[6] Attrib. to Jaschinski, B. in: Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books Ltd: pg 135
[7] Ibid: pg146
[8] van Robbroeck, L. Speaking Dogs: Undoing the Human Art, *Art South Africa*, Vol. 6.1, August 2007, South Africa: Bell-Roberts Publishing
[9] Bullock, M.; Watching Eyes, Seeing Dreams, Knowing Lives; *Representing Animals* (2002) ed. Rothfels, N. Indiana: Indiana University Press: pg100
[10] Ibid: pg 107
[11] Ibid: pg 107
[12] Ibid: pg 118
[13] Derrida, J. The Animal that therefore I am; *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*, ed. Atterton, P. Calarco, M. New York: Continuum: pg 123
[14] Siopis, P. quoted in: Attkinson, B. *Jo Ractliffe: Artist's Book* (2000) David Krut Publishing: pg 41
[15] Bullock, M.; Watching Eyes, Seeing Dreams, Knowing Lives; *Representing Animals* (2002) ed. Rothfels, N. Indiana: Indiana University Press: pg 99

[16] Ractliffe, J. Love's Body, quoted in Atkinson, B. *Jo Ractliffe: Artist's Book* (2000) David Krut Publishing: pg 54
[17] Atkinson, B. *Jo Ractliffe: Artist's Book* (2000) David Krut Publishing: pg 53
[18] Ibid: pg 53
[19] Ibid: pg 33
[20] Van Robbroeck, L. Speaking Dogs: Undoing the Human Art, *Art South Africa*, Vol. 6.1, August 2007, South Africa: Bell-Roberts Publishing
[21] Ibid
[22] Ibid
[23] Ibid
[24] Ractliffe, J. Love's Body, quoted in Atkinson, B. *Jo Ractliffe: Artist's Book* (2000) David Krut Publishing: pg 54
[25] Ibid: 54
[26] Van Robbroeck, L. Speaking Dogs: Undoing the Human Art, *Art South Africa*, Vol. 6.1, August 2007, South Africa: Bell-Roberts Publishing
[27] Ractliffe, J. Love's Body, quoted in Attkinson, B. *Jo Ractliffe: Artist's Book* (2000) David Krut Publishing: pg 54
[28]Ibid: pg 54
[29] Bullock, M.; Watching Eyes, Seeing Dreams, Knowing Lives; *Representing Animals* (2002) ed. Rothfels, N. Indiana: Indiana University Press: pg 101
[30] Ibid: pg 101
[31] Ractliffe, J. Love's Body, quoted in Attkinson, B. *Jo Ractliffe: Artist's Book* (2000) David Krut Publishing: pg 54
[32] Mizuta Lippit, A. …From Wild Technology to Electric Animal, *Representing Animals* (2002); ed. Rothfels, N. Indiana: Indiana University Press: pg 120
[33] Ibid: pg 120
[34] Ibid: pg 122
[35] Ibid: pg 123
[36] Ibid: pg 123
[37] Baker, S. *The Postmodern Animal* (2000) London: Reaktion Books Ltd.: pg 142
[38] Ractliffe, J. Love's Body, quoted in Attkinson, B. *Jo Ractliffe: Artist's Book* (2000) David Krut Publishing: pg 54
[39] Harraway, D. J. *A Companion Species Manifesto* (2003) Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press
[40] Ibid.
[41] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books: pg 86

Chapter Four: ***Becoming-Animal: Prolonging the Instants***

[1] R. Bogue quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books, pg 103
[2] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books, pg 103
[3] Ibid: pg 103
[4] Ibid: pg 104
[5] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg. 88
[6] Ibid: pg. 87
[7] Ibid: pg. 87
[8] Ibid: pg. 87
[9] Ibid: pg. 87
[10] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books, pg 116
[11] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg 96
[12] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books, pg 117
[13] Ibid: pg 117-118
[14] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg 94
[15] Ibid: pg 94

[16] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg 95
[17] Ibid: pg 95
[18] Ibid: pg 97
[19] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books, pg 117
[20] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books, pg 117
[21] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg 88
[22] Ibid: pg 89
[23] Ibid: pg 89
[24] Ibid: pg 90
[25] Ibid: pg 90
[26] Ibid: pg 90
[27] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books, pg 104
[28] Ibid: pg 104
[29] Ibid: pg 104
[30] Ibid: pg 104
[31] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg 90
[32] Ibid: pg 88
[33] Ibid: pg 88
[34] Ibid: pg 88
[35] Ibid: pg 90
[36] Ibid: pg 88
[37] Ibid: pg 88
[38] Ibid: pg 91
[39] Ibid: pg 100
[40] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 120
[41] Ibid: pg 120
[42] Ibid: pg 120
[43] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg 93
[44] Ibid: pg 94
[45] Ibid: pg 94
[46] Ibid: pg 94
[47] Ibid: pg 94
[48] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 84
[49] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg 100
[50] Ibid: pg 100
[51] Ibid: pg 100
[52] Ibid: pg 91
[53] Ibid: pg 92
[54] Ibid: pg 92
[55] Ibid: pg 95
[56] Ibid: pg 95
[57] Ibid: pg 95
[58] Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 68
[59] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg 99
[60] Ibid: wspg 99
[61] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books, pg 129

[62] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books, pg 129
[63] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books, pg 129
[64] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 68
[65] Ibid: pg 68
[66] Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 68
[67] Ibid: pg 69
[68] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 74
[69] Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 75
[70] Ibid: pg 68
[71] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 77
[72] Ibid: pg 77
[73] Ibid: pg 77
[74] Ibid: pg 77
[75] Ibid: pg 78
[76] Ibid: pg 78
[77] Ibid: pg 78
[78] Ibid: pg 78
[79] Ibid: pg 78
[80] Ibid: pg 78
[81] Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 80
[82] Ibid: pg 82
[83] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg 89
[84] C. Schneemann quoted in Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 84
[85] Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 84
[86] Ibid: pg 84
[87] Ibid: pg 85
[88] D. Oppenheim quoted in Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 85
[89] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 85
[90] Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 86
[91] Ibid: pg 86
[92] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 91
[93] Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 92
[94] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 142
[95] E. van Alphen quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 141
[96] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 142
[97] Deleuze quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 141
[98] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 142
[99] Ibid: pg 125
[100] Ibid: pg126
[101] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 127
[102] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 127

[103] Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 127
[104] Ibid: pg 128
[105] Ibid: pg 128
[106] Ibid: pg 128
[107] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 128
[108] Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 71
[109] Schneemann, C. (2002) *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects*. The MIT Press pg 264
[110] Ibid: pg 264
[111] Riley, R. 'Infinity Kisses', in Schneemann, C. (2002) *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects*. The MIT Press pg 263
[112] Ibid: pg 263
[113] Schneemann, C. (2002) *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects*. The MIT Press, pg 215
[114] Ibid: pg 264
[115] Schneemann, C. quoted in Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 73
[116] Schneemann, C. (2002) *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects*. The MIT Press, pg 264
[117] T. McEvilly quoted in Schneemann, C. (2002) *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects*. The MIT Press, pg 314
[118] Ibid: pg 314
[119] Schneemann, C. (2002) *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects*. The MIT Press, pg 309
[120] Ibid: pg 315
[121] Ibid: pg 309
[122] T. McEvilly quoted in Schneemann, C. (2002) *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects*. The MIT Press, pg 314
[123] Ibid: pg 314
[124] Schneemann, C. (2002) *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects*. The MIT Press, pg 309
[125] Ibid: pg 315
[126] Ibid: pg 47
[127] Ibid: pg 215
[128] A. Rahmani in Schneemann, C. (2002) *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects*. The MIT Press, pg 214
[129] Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 183
[130] Ibid: pg 183
[131] C. Owen quoted in Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*. London: Reaktion Books pg 183
[132] W. Wegman quoted in McHugh, S. (2001) 'Video Dog Star: William Wegman, Aesthetic Agency, and the Animal in Experimental Video Art', *Society and Animals*, 9 (3): pg 243
[133] McHugh, S. (2001) 'Video Dog Star: William Wegman, Aesthetic Agency, and the Animal in Experimental Video Art', *Society and Animals*, 9 (3): pg 243
[134] Ibid: pg 243
[135] Ibid: pg 243
[136] Ibid: pg 244
[137] Ibid: pg 244
[138] Ibid: pg 245
[139] Ibid: pg 299
[140] Ibid: pg 241
[141] Ibid: pg 236
[142] Ibid: pg 237
[143] Ibid: pg 236
[144] Ibid: pg 236
[145] Ibid: pg 236
[146] W. Wegman quoted in McHugh, S. (2001) 'Video Dog Star: William Wegman, Aesthetic Agency, and the Animal in Experimental Video Art', *Society and Animals*, 9 (3): pg 237
[147] McHugh, S. (2001) 'Video Dog Star: William Wegman, Aesthetic Agency, and the Animal in Experimental Video Art', *Society and Animals*, 9 (3): pg 237
[148] Ibid: pg 237

[149] McHugh, S. (2001) 'Video Dog Star: William Wegman, Aesthetic Agency, and the Animal in Experimental Video Art', *Society and Animals*, 9 (3): pg 231-232
[150] Ibid: pg 233
[151] Ibid: pg 233
[152] Ibid: pg 234
[153] Ibid: pg 234
[154] Ibid: pg 246
[155] Ibid: pg 238

Conclusion:

[1] Haraway, D. (2003) *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dog, People, and Significant Otherness*, Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, pg 7
[2] Ibid: pg 5
[3] Ibid: pg 6
[4] Ibid: pg 3
[5] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) 'Becoming-Animal', in P. Atterton and M. Calarco (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*. London: Continuum, pg 97
[6] Schneemann, C. quoted in Baker, S. (2002) 'What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?', in N. Rothfels (eds), *Representing Animals*, Indiana University Press, pg 73
[6] www. caroleeschneemann.com/morewrongthingsreview.html (21 May 2001)
[7] V. Hearne quoted in Haraway, D. (2003) *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dog, People, and Significant Otherness*, Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, pg 49

Bibliography

Agamben, G. (2004) *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. Attel, K. California: Stanford University Press

Atkinson, B. *Jo Ractliffe: Artist's Book* (2000) David Krut Publishing

Baker, S. (2000) *The Postmodern Animal*, London: Reaktion Books

Baker, S. (1993) *Picturing the Beast: Identity and Representation*, University of Illinois Press

Baker, S. (2002) 'What does Becoming-Animal Look Like?' *Representing Animals*, ed. Rothfels, N. Indiana University Press

Barthes, R. *Mythologies* (1973) trans. Lavers, A. London: Paladin

Bullock, M. (2002) 'Watching Eyes, Seeing Dreams, Knowing Lives', *Representing Animals,* ed. Rothfels, N. Indiana: Indiana University Press, pg 99-118

Behnke, E. A. (1999) 'Merleau-Ponty's Concept of Nature', *Animal Others*, ed. Steeves, H. P. New York: State University of New York Press, pg 93-116

Cronon, W. (1996) 'The Trouble with Wilderness', *Uncommon Ground*, ed. Cronon, W. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988) *A Thousand Plateaus*. London: Athlone Press

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (2004) 'Becoming-Animal', *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Idenitity* eds. Calarco, and M. Atterton, P. New York: Continuum, pg 85-87

Derrida, J. (2008) *The Animal That Therefore I Am,* trans. Mills, D. New York: Fordham University Press

Derrida, J. (2004) 'The Animal that therefore I am', *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*, eds. Atterton, P. and Calarco, M. New York: Continuum: pg 111-113

Haraway, D. (2003) *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dog, People, and Significant Otherness*, Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press

Heidegger, M. (2004) 'The Animal is Poor in World', *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*, eds. Atterton, P. and Calarco, M. New York: Continuum, pg 15-18

Kathy High, (2005) *Becoming Animal: Contemporary Art in the Animal Kingdom*, ed Thompson, N. Massachusetts: MASS MoCA

Knight, D. (1999) 'Why We Enjoy Condemning Sentimentality: A Meta-Aesthetic Perspective', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* Vol. 57, No. 4. Pp. 411-420

Laycock, S.W. (1999) 'The Animal as Animal: A Plea for Open Conceptuality', *Animal Others,* ed. Steeves, H. P. Albany: State University of New York Press, pg 271-284

McHugh, S. (2001) 'Video Dog Star: William Wegman, Aesthetic Agency, and the Animal in Experimental Video Art', *Society and Animals*, 9 (3): pg 243-245

Mizuta Lippit, A. (2002) '…From Wild Technology to Electric Animal', *Representing Animals,* ed. Rothfels, N. Indiana: Indiana University Press: pg 119-138

Schneemann, C. (2002) *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects*. The MIT Press

Serpell, J. (1996) *In the Company of Animals*, Cambridge University Press

Van Robbroeck, L. 'Speaking Dogs: Undoing the Human Art', *Art South Africa*, Vol. 6.1, August 2007, South Africa: Bell-Roberts Publishing

Wittgenstein, L. (1994) *The Wittgenstein Reader*, ed. Kenny, A. Oxford: Blackwell

www.caroleeschneemann.com/morewrongthingsreview.html (21 May 2001)

List of Works

Jo Ractliffe:
Guess Who Loves You (1997), series of colour photographs, 165x127cm and *Love's Body* (1999), Light box installation, 85x85cm can be found both in Attkinson, B. *Jo Ractliffe: Artist's Book* (2000) David Krut Publishing and at www.artthrob.co.za/99mar/artbio.htm

Carolee Schneemann:
Details and images of *Infinity Kisses I* and *II*, as well as *Vesper's Pool*, and *More Wrong Things* can be found at www.caroleeschneemann.com
Video excerpts of *Vesper's Pool* can be viewed at www.criminalanimal.org/people.html

William Wegman:
Frog/Frog II and the video *Dog Duet* can be viewed at www.wegmanworld.com/gallery/works.html

Masters Exhibition List of Works

Figure 1

'*Untitled*' 2007
Cat and dog teeth on paper
90x65cm

Figure 2

'*Untitled*' 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, gouache, glass-stain
120x175cm

Figure 3

'*Untitled 1*' 2007
Oil paint on board
140x105cm

Figure 4

'*Untitled 2*' 2007
Oil paint on board
140x105cm

Figure 5

'*Untitled 3*' 2007
Oil paint on board
140x105cm

Figure 6

'*13 Kills'* 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper
200x120cm

Figure 7

'*Untitled*' 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, enamel
100x220cm

Figure 8

'*Untitled*' 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, gouache
120x165cm

Figure 9

‘*Untitled*’ 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, gouache
120x170cm

Figure 10

‘*Untitled*’ 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, gouache
120x145cm

Figure 11

‘*Untitled*’ 2007
Series of four Pigment prints on cotton paper, oil paint
90x60cm each

Figure12

‘*Untitled*’ 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper
120x200cm

Figure 13

‘*Untitled*’ diptych 2007
Pigment print on cotton paper, enamel
120x135cm each