INTRODUCTION

In July 2004 I had the opportunity to walk through the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. During this walk I noticed that in virtually every room there was at least one blank spot, sometimes even two, on the walls accompanied by a note declaring that the artwork usually in this space was in the process of restoration. This was not exclusive to the Uffizi. I experienced this in most of the (public) galleries and museums I visited in Italy during that trip – the only exceptions being temporary exhibitions.

Similarly, the façades of numerous historical buildings, like the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, were obscured by scaffolding because of some restoration project. At that time the scaffolding was covered with a safety mesh illustrating the actual façade. Naturally, this was for the purposes of tourism and much appreciated by someone like myself who was unlikely to visit the city in the near future. I was thrilled to see, at least, what the clock tower on St Mark's square in Venice looked like unobscured by building material. The Art Newspaper (TAN) writes that more recently there has been strong criticism in Venice as the city's law has been amended to permit "the scaffolding on public buildings under restoration to carry advertising so long as the superintendent considers that it does not 'detract from the appearance, decorum or public enjoyment of the building' " (No.196, Nov. 2008). Increased advertising rights have brought in more revenue to fund the restoration projects as government subsidies continue to be cut. However, visitors to the city now see ads for movies, cars and watches instead of the city itself.

Although the building owners insist the advertising will only last as long as the restoration, who knows how this might change in future as the economic climate deteriorates and the scramble for money persists (*ibid.*).

Most of the churches I visited, during 2004 and more recently, were also undergoing restoration. The marble floors of the Duomo in Siena and the marble exterior of the Duomo in Florence were being restored. The interior of San Martino in Lucca was covered in scaffolding. The Arena Chapel of Padua had recently finished a twenty-year restoration project. This is not to say that all churches in Italy are in the process of restoration. I visited only a very small percentage. But even in those not being restored there were boxes asking for donations towards a future restoration project.

Someone mentioned to me that there is a restoration 'war' on in Italy as big business and corporations throw money into restoration projects in an attempt to outdo one another. According to The Art Newspaper article mentioned on the previous page, the advertisers are named as sponsors of the restoration. This obsession with restoration surely begs an explanation.

The necessity for restoration is, as most things are, linked to economics. The continued upkeep of art, cultural and heritage sites means the continued income of the tourist 'dollar', and tourism is big business. Without that income most restoration projects would, most likely, not receive enough funding elsewhere to make the project financially viable. This process of building and maintaining cultural capital is also concerned with building national identity, particularly in European countries which see themselves as the custodians of classical Western culture. While I here acknowledge the economic and nationalist socio-political implications of restoration, they are not the primary concern of this research report. Nor will I consider what effect art restoration may have on social change. Instead I am more interested in focusing on the psychological dimension of this obsession.

It is not difficult to appreciate that in most human cultures there exists a powerful need to restore, heal, and make whole. This need is not limited to cultural products. In some sense it stems from a basic human impulse for preservation, predominantly related to trauma and disease. This is revealed as an impulse to repair because the wound or fracture, whether physical or psychological, is painful. The pain experienced is immediate and includes the prospect of complete loss, ultimately in death.

This pain may be the disappointment at the realisation of our own flawed utopian ideals. The anxiety for anticipated loss, being one aspect of this disappointment, compels an idealism which holds that the past age was 'perfect' – a 'golden age'[1]. This process, Michael Bywater (2004) remarks, is really the longing for our childhood memories at which we grasp yet never fully recall. He terms this a "condition of amazement" (27) where the world was our oyster. We

[1] Of course the past was never that perfect. We tend to retrospectively idealise the past in the same way as we repress unpleasant memories of our childhoods because they are not consistent with our notions of that innocent pre-fallen state.

are instead left in a flawed present, flailingly attempting to recover some part of that perfect past. Restoration is one collective aspect of acting out that impulse to recover the past. This impulse is also evident on a social level as a need to contain loss experienced on a collective scale.

The contemporary world is not the first to experience devastating loss through war or natural disasters. Entire cultures and histories have already been lost to the world. As Kirby Farrell (1998) explains, "From one point of view every generation's experience is potentially traumatic because no era wholly avoids misfortune, battered idealism, and reminders of death" (5). But what is different now is that it is possible to obliterate humanity through the power of our own inventions in the form of nuclear and chemical warfare. If that were to happen, what would remain to mark any previous presence? Are our grand designs destined to become the ruins and fossils of the future from which archaeologists and scientists may uncover glimpses of our present? Living in a worldwide 'post-traumatic culture' (Farrell 1998) seems to make the impulse for preservation all the more frantic.

The dramatic and traumatic events contemporary European and North American society has experienced in the last century are emerging with far-reaching effects, particularly in cultural fields. Farrell refers to this as "reflect[ing] a disturbance in the ground of collective experience: a shock to people's values, trust and sense of purpose…" noticeably consistent with a sense of moral and cultural decline (*ibid.*; 3). Likewise, the disturbing effects of colonialism are painfully conspicuous in the post-colonial context many countries today find themselves in. Traumatic legacies of tyrannical control and the erasure, distortion and misrepresentation of identity, history and heritage now have to be dealt with. The more frayed society becomes, so increases the necessity to make some kind of repair.

The subject of this research report, as I have indicated, is the psychological dimension for this need or impulse to recover and repair, through a restorative process, objects that mark the past which are under threat of loss. The redemption of restoration lies in that ability to 'save' these objects, specifically those we call art. Restoration also attempts to halt the decay of the artwork, an attempt at slowing loss. If it were possible, restorers would most likely stop time altogether and suspend the artwork in a bubble, unchanging for the cultural benefit of future generations. At most though, we can only hope that the ravages of time may be temporarily slowed.

Considering the limitations of this research report is important in directing my discussion. As this report is an exploration of a particular moment in restoration, I have explored the field in fairly general terms. It is important to emphasize that my focus is the psychological dimension of restorative processes throughout. Despite the immense economic and market value in the restoration of the 'priceless' works in Western art history, these economic factors are not within the scope of this research report. I discuss the concept of value frequently but it should be understood as within the context of symbolic or cultural value, rather than economic or market. Similarly, I will not engage with the socio-political construction of national identity which is closely tied to the construction of the cultural value of artworks.

I also realise that I am working out of a post-colonial context which is still impacted on by colonial discourse. International museum standards, especially with regards visual art restoration, are controlled by Western museum practices established in Great Britain, Western Europe and the United States. And the literature I encountered on restoration was limited to artworks and museums from the same. It is impossible to exclude Africa or any other country in the post-colonial world from a discussion centred on loss, trauma and the need to preserve heritage. However, in this report, Africa does not centre in my discussion due to the difficulty of finding examples in literature and because of my own familiarity with established Western museum practices.

Some definition of International Museum Standards is also important here for the reader. Throughout the report, I am specifically referring to the standards directly related to the care of museum collections, for instance climate control, handling or conservation, where disregard for or neglect of the recognized standards can result in damage to the artwork. But International Museum Standards encompass much more than just that. If you try searching for some kind of a definition online you will find not much that really explains what they are. But when working in a museum environment, you quickly come to know what they mean. The *Code of Ethics for Museums*, which the International Council of Museums (ICOM) adopted at their general assembly in 1986, best summarises what is meant by International Museum Standards. The *Code* is freely available on the ICOM website and undergoes revision regularly.

In the introduction to the current 2006 edition, Geoffrey Lewis (head of the Ethics committee at the time) explains that the *Code* "provides a means of professional self-regulation in a key area of public provision where legislation at a national level is variable and far from consistent" (ICOM 2006; vi). Or more simply, "the ICOM Code represents a minimum standard for museums. It is presented as a series of principles supported by guidelines for desirable professional practice" (*ibid.*; iv). The *Code* outlines eight key strategic areas of museum responsibility, with more thorough definition of specific concerns in each. These are summarised as:

1. Museums preserve, interpret and promote aspects of the natural and cultural inheritance of humanity (Institutional standing, Physical resources, Financial resources, Personnel)
2. Museums that maintain collections hold them in trust for the benefit of society and its development (Acquiring collections, Removing collections, Care of collections)
3. Museums hold primary evidence for establishing and furthering knowledge (Primary evidence, Museum collecting & research)
4. Museums provide opportunities for the appreciation, enjoyment, understanding and management of the natural and cultural heritage (Display and exhibition, Other resources)
5. Museum hold resources that provide opportunities for other public services and benefits (Identification services)
6. Museums work in close collaboration with the communities from which their collections originate as well as those they serve (Origin of collections, Respect for communities served)
7. Museums operate in a legal manner (Legal framework)
8. Museums operate in a professional manner (Professional conduct, Conflicts of interest) (*Ibid.*; ix)

Most importantly, the *Code* emphasizes the importance of maintaining these standards and ethics as the custodians of public heritage and sustaining public trust, for the fundamental preservation of the objects for which they care.

Within restoration practices, changing public taste looms large and the changes often seem to be controlled by the philosophical trends of the time. Sarah Walden (2004b) explains that:

> Velleities of taste have always been clearly evident in the history of restoration itself. In the last century, a single fact proves the point: the eighteenth-century restorers lightened the pictures they worked on, and those of the nineteenth century darkened them. The link with the prevailing aesthetic philosophies of the time needs no underlining (21).

Where these considerations are important for my research relates to how the impulse to restore and contain loss in the collective is visible in changing approaches to restoration. In the West, the 'mania' to restore has escalated over the last century in concert with the rise of post-traumatic culture. In this research report I concentrate on the restoration of old artworks: the so-called masterpieces of Western art history which have been susceptible to the impact of time, diverse histories and fluctuating environments, ultimately shifting their meaning and symbolic value because of their vulnerability to changing tastes.

At times there are also other elements which bear on my discussion and have their own long-standing critical histories and theorisations. While important, they lie outside the immediate scope of this research report and will not be discussed at great length. Three of the more significant of these involve ethics, the history of decay, and restoration and heritage.

Firstly, the issue of ethics in the art restoration field, which James Beck (1993) and Sarah Walden (2004b) explore in depth. They raise concerns over unregulated restoration practices in both public and private sectors worldwide as scores of artworks have already been subjected to heavy-handed cleaning techniques. Oblivious to the nuances of glazes, varnishes and the patina of time, layers have been indiscriminately removed revealing garish colours, predominantly in response to a twentieth-century appeal for the photographic. Walden argues that many paintings have been irrevocably damaged this way, diminishing their future value (2004b; 9-25). Both Beck and Walden suggest more stringent control and public debate is necessary to address ethics within the field. The problems surrounding ethics are not directly relevant to my discussion but I am aware that they do exist and present other problems for the cultural value of restoration.

There is also the history of decay (Dekkers 1997), closely related to the issue of patina that I discuss in the first chapter. The desire for decay is not a new one but has become an increasingly forceful contemporary trend in the search for retro, old, aged, antique and *faux*-antique objects. This desire does somewhat contradict the impulse to restore, yet also implies a nostalgia for the timeworn and that attempt to recover the past, somehow authenticating the present. The trend has also impacted on design and art in the forced 'distressing' of objects to make them appear old – the commodification of agedness.

Lastly, there is the matter of restoration and heritage within a post-Apartheid culture. Within South Africa we have been subject to a legacy of art erasure and censorship (Coombes 2003). This history appears to also have impacted on the symbolic value of art and artists. Now huge demands have been made within our own post-traumatic culture for the reparation of the objects, sites and histories of common heritage. This functions in a similar way to my argument about restoration, but is only the tip of the proverbial iceberg where this matter is concerned, and so shall be put on pause for the present.

At this point it is equally important to determine the parameters of the key concepts I consider throughout this report. In addressing this complex topic I focus primarily on the practice of visual art restoration. However, my approach is interdisciplinary and crosses different methodological terrains in order to begin to develop a more in-depth understanding of the cultural effect of restoration. Often I have to connect seemingly vastly different threads of critical theory in order to understand how these processes work in relation to the dynamics of loss on a collective or individual level. Some loose definitions of these key concepts are necessary to give my discussion some precision.

Firstly, the *artwork* is that visual product of a creative process invested with value as a cultural sign. While the 'artwork' usually refers to both the art object or art event (such as a performance), in reference to the collective in this report I use 'artwork' specifically as an art object with a surface that can be restored. Here I may also refer to the 'artwork' as a cultural form or artefact. In relation to my discussion on the individual level in the last chapter, however, the meaning shifts slightly as the 'artwork' here refers to the result of a creative, and more specifically re-creative, process.

Restoration is a technical process necessitated by some form of damage to the artwork. This damage may occur through neglect, natural decay or vandalism, and the process of restoration seeks to return the artwork to its pre-damaged state or retard that decay, thus maintaining its economic and cultural value. I understand this as a restorative process. The term is often used interchangeably with *conservation*. However, conservation should be understood as a more holistic approach to the care of an artwork that emphasizes the protection and preservation of the artwork, first and foremost through maintaining acceptable environmental conditions. Conservation practice requires scientific knowledge, practical skills and an understanding of art history, as well as comprehension of the different value an artwork might have. Restoration within the context of conservation would be seen as the final step in the process, undertaken when damage has occurred. I realise that I use both terms throughout the report, although I mostly refer to the technical process of restoration itself, because the impulse for preservation is intrinsic to both.

Trauma is defined as injury, wound, damage, or complete loss. On the level of the individual, it is often manifest as profound emotional shock and may or may not be directly physical. The long-term effect of emotional shock is referred to as post-traumatic stress that is the manner in which the individual copes with the shock (Farrell 1998). This may happen within the context of therapy where the creative process and art making may be employed as a means of mediating and ultimately containing this shock. Within the collective, such shock and its effects produce a post-traumatic culture, and the cumulative effects are evident in cultural production (*ibid*.).

Loss, as used in this research, is experienced as traumatic, not necessarily only in immediate loss but also in the potential for loss, or a long-term experience of loss through the predations of time and neglect, resulting in long-term trauma. The experience of trauma also varies between 'individuals'. As Gilbert Rose (1987) explains "a complementary relationship exists between external overstimulation and inner sensitivity. What is trauma for one person may be a challenge for another" (*ix*).

The processes of *mourning* and *melancholia* linked to loss, and as articulated by Sigmund Freud (1917), are important here, especially in relation to my own work. *Affect* is the emotional energy that builds up within an individual when associated with a particular 'love' object. Here the object may stand for a person, thing or idea and is not necessarily material as in the artwork. When the individual experiences the traumatic loss of that object, the system copes through a process either of abreaction or pathology (*ibid*.). In the case of abreaction, there is a discharge and displacement or relocation of emotion within the system as the trauma is worked through. This is the process of *mourning* which frees the individual from fixation on the lost object. In a pathological situation, there is a persistent fixation on the lost object and the trauma is not worked through but repeated. This 'paralyses' the individual and the resulting condition is what Freud calls *melancholia* (*ibid.*).

These definitions are by no means comprehensive. They simply provide guidelines for understanding how I am using these terms in this research report.

As I mentioned in the abstract, a dialectical tension exists between collective and individual experiences of loss. The restorative impulse operates on both levels, allowing for the containment and mastery of that loss on a psychological and a cultural level. In the first two chapters of my report I explore this in terms of art restoration and changing cultural trends, but specifically related to the psychological dimension of experience. In the third and fourth chapters, I take into account the individual aspect of this impulse with particular reference to my own creative process.

In the first chapter I focus on art restoration. Here I discuss some technical aspects of restoration (Beck 1993; Oddy 1992) and how the act of restoring is in itself a kind of violence inflicted on the artwork. This violence has implications in understanding restoration itself as traumatic. I discuss two specific examples that involve the restoration of works that were subjected to vandalism and neglect. Thereafter I explore the historical motivation for restoring artworks: natural decay, neglect or vandalism. Artworks generally require restoration (or conservation) for one or more of these reasons. However, the cultural motivations for restoration shift over time. These motivations are governed by the symbolic value of the object relating to its original or authentic and economic status

(Benjamin 1936; Caygill 1998; Foucault 1970; Bourdieu 1990; Appadurai 1986). The shift in value attached to the artwork simultaneously shifts the necessity for the artwork's continued existence and hence the need for restoration. The psychological impulse to restore is connected to this social symbolic value.

In the second chapter I look at post-traumatic culture in relation to art restoration. I begin with a discussion of post-traumatic culture (Farrell 1998; Michaels 1996; Bersani 1990) and what impact the psychocultural effects of trauma and great historical loss have on the collective. What emerges here is a dialectical tension in the experience of trauma between the individual and collective. Individual cases of traumatic loss result in anxiety of anticipated future loss – essentially a fear of the repetition of that first loss. A similar process occurs on a collective level. Where actual loss occurs, or where there is the anticipated loss of some aspect of the collective deemed symbolically valuable, the anticipation of that loss is felt throughout the collective. This anxiety, experienced individually and collectively, is linked to that impulse to contain loss and damage and maintain 'wholeness' or some semblance thereof.

While the motivations for restoration can be understood as economic and cultural capital, they can also be understood as that impulse to contain loss and maintain the products of cultural capital for future generations. The redemptive aspect of restoration lies in allowing us to know and, in some way, protect the 'original'[2]. If the artwork were allowed to disintegrate, for whatever reason, it

[2] It is impossible for contemporary society to know the artwork as it originally appeared years ago.

would be deemed an immense cultural loss to the collective because of the artwork's symbolic value. This disintegration may cause further trauma to an already traumatic culture. The issue of 'bad' or insensitive restoration (Beck 1993) testifies to this point, as reflective of what happens when artworks are 'lost'.

In the third chapter I address my own artistic practice in relation to restoration. My work explores issues around trauma and loss specifically linked to mourning and melancholia (Freud 1917). I understand the creative process itself as dealing with loss and grief in a therapeutic way (Thomson 1989; Rose 1987). Here I consider how art therapy functions on the level of the individual psyche, to heal and deal with traumatic events, notably in the therapeutic use of art. On a psychological level, the re-creative process is a form of self-restoration.

I then explore how this affects my own working process in the fourth chapter, through the use of wax and printmaking techniques. The key image is that of dead Amaryllis flowers which is repeated throughout the work, and I consider this with reference to Michael Taussig's discussion in 'The Language of Flowers' (2003) and Georgia O'Keefe's flower paintings (Wagner 1996). This process is ultimately about addressing my own losses in a psychologically effective way, but also understanding how a personal restorative process is parallel to restoration at a social level.

The predations of time and neglect, and of course lack of visual records (other than copies), make this impossible. The artwork comes to us with its entirely own history. Some of that past will be evident on the surface. But other things, for example, previous owners, are not always so clear.

The connection between the theoretical and practical components of this research report is that both use some form of restoration to contain loss, whether that process be in the physical restoration of the artwork or using the therapeutic possibility of the re-creative process to contain that loss (or the possibility thereof). I use the examples of visual art restoration on a social collective level, and the restorative aspect of the re-creative process in the individual, as demonstrative relationships of the same psychological impulse to restore. The social collective and individual acting out of this impulse are not the same but they work in similar ways. Each offers a way of understanding how the other works. On both levels, something is created, threatened, and then 'restored'. In my own work the mastery of traumatic loss through a re-creative process is central. The mastery of loss in the case of the individual is redemptive in the individual's liberation from the fixation caused by the traumatic event.

In this research report, restoration gives us a way of understanding loss and how we deal with loss. In a sense, it seems we try to avoid loss as far as possible. Museums conserve 'loved' objects of symbolic cultural value but these are still vulnerable to restoration in a destructive sense, as well as a conservationist sense. Museum collections are also under threat of restorers overeager to experiment with new and what are often regarded as irreversible techniques (Walden 2004b). The result is by and large public outcry at the 'loss' of or damage to a valuable artwork.

Visual art restoration appears to be a double-edged sword. It has the ability to destroy the artwork in a second. But it also attempts to preserve the artwork in its 'original' state. Its redemption lies in preservation as it attempts to alleviate the cultural anxiety, perhaps even reality, that could exist for future generations unable to know their own cultural past or history if that artwork no longer existed.

CHAPTER ONE
Technical Aspects and Cultural Motives in the Process of Visual Art Restoration

The 'mania' for restoration is fundamentally manipulated by a collective psychological concern to contain the threat of damage or loss, from partial to complete. Not only do we collectively experience trauma and outrage when we hear of an artwork damaged at the hands of a lunatic or foolish conservator, but there is also incalculable trauma in the knowledge that an artwork, which represents a piece of irrecoverable history since the reproduction can never replace the original, is lost to our sight forever or irrevocably altered in a collective public memory. Key to this concern is the symbolic value attached to the experience and irreplaceability of the original artwork.

It is this reaction that the iconoclast activates when damaging an important artwork to make their (usually) political statement. Editors of the journal ARK, Lars Kiel Bertelsen and Klaus Christensen (1999), write about the slashing of Diego Velázquez's *Toilet of Venus (The Rokeby Venus)* (1647-51) at the National Gallery, London, in 1914 by suffragette Mary Richardson, and their experience of researching the vandalism in the National Gallery archives. The painting was purchased for the National Gallery in 1906, by the National Art Collections Fund which raised £ 45,000.00 so that the painting would be "saved for the nation" (NY Times, 1 May 1910) and not lost to an American collector. At the time this article was written in 1910, there was further controversy raised over the authenticity of the painting and the possibility of different initials on the canvas compared to the

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http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/diego-velazquez-the-toilet-of-venus-the-rokeby-venus
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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Richardson-Venus.png

(Top) 1. Diego Velázquez (1599-1660) *The Toilet of Venus (Rokeby Venus)* 1647-1651, oil on canvas, 122,5 x 177 cm, National Gallery, London. © Trustees of the National Gallery

(Bottom) 2. Detail from a photo published in 1914 (before the repairs) showing damage done to the Rokeby *Venus*; image was published in *The Times* (front page), March 11, 1914; *The Daily Scetch*, March 11, 1914 (front page--under the headline "How the Rokeby 'Venus', Bought by the Nation for £45,000, was Slashed with a Chopper by a Suffragette in the National Gallery".)

recognised signatures of Velázquez, although experts on the artist at the time disregarded these claims. Four years later, Richardson slashes the painting, according to legend, with a meat cleaver hidden under her coat. Bielson and Christensen present Richardson's iconoclast motivations for the attack, as cited in her response to the press at that time, that:

> I have tried to destroy the picture of the most beautiful woman in mythological history as a protest against the Government for destroying Mrs Pankhurst[3], who is the most beautiful character in modern history. Justice is an element of beauty as much as colour and outline on canvas. Mrs Pankhurst seeks to procure justice for womanhood, and for this she is being slowly murdered by a Government of Iscariot politicians. If there is an outcry against my deed, let every one [sic.] remember that such an outcry is an hypocrisy so long as they allow the destruction of Mrs Pankhurst and other beautiful living women, and that until the public cease to countenance human destruction the stones cast against me for the destruction of this picture are each an evidence against them of artistic as well as moral and political humbug and hypocrisy (1999).

Forty years later though, she gave another explanation for the attack: "I didn't like the way men visitors gaped at it all day long" (*ibid*.).

It is interesting that Richardson's motivation changes over time – we cannot know if either is her true motivation or a choice of self-representation in the public sphere, nor is it of significance to this report – but more relevant is that she chose a painting with an already intriguing history, a painting that was defined of national importance. Bielson and Christensen cite art historian Lynda Nead's supposition that:

> on the basis of the contemporary reactions to the act of vandalism that the value of the painting was not only financial or artistic, but 'was

[3] Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst was the leader of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in Great Britain and responsible for securing women's right to vote. At the time of Richardson's slashing, Pankhurst was in Holloway prison on hunger strike.

> also measured in terms of its representation of a certain kind of femininity and its position in the formation of a national cultural heritage'

and go on to say that "the market value of the *Rokeby Venus* rose sharply following the attack" (*ibid.*). Today the painting still hangs in the National Gallery and the slashes are only visible if you know where to look, thanks to the restoration. But the archives files were still classified in 1999, according to Bielson and Christensen, as they were told the museum did not want the story published, and there is no mention of the iconoclasm on the National Gallery website. And still the *Rokeby Venus* continues to thrive in the collective conscious as the image is appropriated in postmodern art and literature: Robert Rauschenberg collages the nude into *Crocus*, *Transom* and *Bicycle* (Crimp, 1985), and more recently she is the subject of a fictional forgery and theft in *The Forgery of Venus* by Michael Gruber, 2008. The *Rokeby Venus* and her radical circumstances is without a doubt an example of the collective trauma experienced at the potential loss of an artwork of symbolic value.

Likewise, the disappearance of Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* from the Louvre in 1911 and the rumour of the man in the white Panama hat who ordered her theft (Caparros 2008), as well as the 1994 theft of Munch's *The Scream* from the National Gallery in Norway (Dolnick 2008), are artworks of symbolic value whose loss (and subsequent recovery) and the resulting public outcry similarly demonstrate this collective trauma. And while there are many ways in which artworks are 'lost': accidental damage, war, decay, vandalism, iconoclasm, theft, etcetera, in this report I will be looking specifically at those related to restoration, and to some degree conservation.

In this chapter I explore restoration from a collective viewpoint, looking at the process of restoration and why it would be required, as well as also how attitudes toward restoration have changed over time. I begin with two examples of British artworks that were damaged by vandalism. This form of damage presents a violent intrusion and traumatic experience in the life of the artwork through the initial damage and subsequent restoration. My motivation in examining works that were exposed to vandalism is not connected in any way to why they were subjected to that vandalism. I raise this kind of damage as a way of understanding the collective reaction to damaged artwork of any kind but most vocal in vandal acts (Walden 2004b) because violence is sensational and makes the headlines. Whereas artworks that suffer the predations of time and neglect are less likely to be noticed by a wider audience not involved in the art field, despite the equivalent resulting loss, so it is more difficult to appreciate the value in their loss.

Whichever way artworks come to be damaged, they are delicately volatile surfaces that have often been exposed to centuries of change. Whether this exposure is due to vandalism, time or neglect makes little difference to the artwork, since these fluctuations for the artwork are generally experienced as traumatic interruptions. Sarah Walden defines paintings as “fragile films of cunningly wrought illusion with their own integrity” (2004b; 21). Their very nature makes them vulnerable to damage and possibly loss, and we therefore use art restoration and conservation as a means of repairing and preserving artworks against this. Yet the restoration process itself can also be damaging. I will consider restoration as an inherently violent act in its technical process, though different to the violence of vandalism. There is also the possibility of 'bad' or insensitive restoration – which is still an entirely subjective matter and appears to create many a libel case for the objecting party – that results in a similar kind of loss. These interventions can all be appreciated as traumatic and are linked to the impulse to restore and contain loss. These various kinds of damage cause different reactions, but all are indicative of understanding what predicates the impulse to restore.

In the second section I explore how restoration practice has shifted over time, and equally changed the value ascribed to the artwork. Here I trace historical shifts within the field according to public taste. From a nineteenth-century desire to see all paintings dark, hence deliberately darkening them and adding patina, to a twentieth century desire to see the authentic artwork stripped of the layers and patina of time (Walden 2004b). In this section I will also provide a link between symbolic value and authenticity, looking at why the 'authentic' artwork has value and examining the importance of aura in increasing the symbolic value of the artwork. Together with historical shifts, technical and scientific developments have also impacted on what is currently regarded as acceptable restoration practice and ultimately affects the integrity of the artwork. While these changes are not my primary focus, they do highlight how the impulse to restore has gained momentum over time.

On 17 July 1987 at 17:55, an unemployed ex-soldier walked into the National Gallery in London and fired a sawn-off shotgun at Leonardo da Vinci's Cartoon *The Virgin and Child with St. Anne and St. John the Baptist*, c.1507-8. The bullet did not penetrate the paper but the force of impact on the protective shield shattered the glass and thrust the shards into the paper. This left the Cartoon with a hole one could stick an arm through, and hundreds of tiny scraps of paper. The vandal was arrested but found unfit for trial and sent to Broadmoor Hospital (Harding & Oddy 1992; 28-41). In an article about the restoration published in the New York Times in 1988, Sheila Rule wrote that "the man, Robert Cambridge, told the police his intent had been to show his disgust with 'political, social and economic conditions in Britain'" (Rule 1988). Over the following two years, the shreds of paper were all painstakingly replaced along with additional reinforcement to the mounting. This was the second recorded incident of vandalism involving this work. In 1962, during a public appeal for its acquisition by the National Gallery, an inkbottle was thrown at the cartoon. Fortunately the work was covered by a plastic sheath at the time and suffered little damage (*ibid.*).

Acts of idiosyncratic vandalism toward art are not a new problem for art conservators. At the British Museum in 1845, a man named as William Lloyd smashed a Roman Cameo glass vase, known as the Portland Vase. He gave no explanation for his actions except that he was suffering from "a kind of nervous excitement" (Smith 1992; 44). The vase was repaired in 1845 by a museum craftsman, and then restored again in 1948 by the senior Antiquities conservator at the time. In 1987 the vase underwent its third restoration when it was discovered that the adhesive was no longer stable and that pieces had been incorrectly replaced in the previous restoration (Smith 1992; 42), as parts of the image did not make sense visually. This example demonstrates a remarkable shift in restoration practice in a little over a century, as it became necessary for the work to reflect the original, especially in terms of the artist's intent, where previously restorations had been at the restorer/conservator's prerogative. As this is the subject of the following section of this chapter, I will discuss the implications of this shift at that point.

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The images can be found in Harding, E. & Oddy, A. ¨Leonardo da Vinci's Cartoon The Virgin and Child with St Anne and St John the Baptist¨ (p 28-41) in Oddy, A. (ed.) 1992 *The Art of the Conservator* London: British Museum Press.
Alternatively, you can view a free one minute preview of a video of the restoration here:
http://www.rolandcollection.com/films/?prm=a12-b84-c760-d2-e0

3. Leonardo Da Vinci´s Cartoon *The Virgin and Child with St. John*, showing the damage caused by the shotgun blast. © Trustees of the National Gallery.

Please see note on preceding page with reference to these 4 images.

(Top left to bottom right, all © Trustees of the National Gallery.) 4. Detail of the area damaged by the blast. 5. Map recording the locations of paper fragments removed during repair. 6. The damaged area after the glass and loose paper fragments were removed. 7. The area after all the fragments were replaced, before retouching.

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The image can be found in Harding, E. & Oddy, A. ¨Leonardo da Vinci's Cartoon The Virgin and Child with St Anne and St John the Baptist¨ (p 28-41) in Oddy, A. (ed.) 1992 *The Art of the Conservator* London: British Museum Press.
Alternatively, you can view the image here:
http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/leonardo-da-vinci-the-leonardo-cartoon
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Leonardo_-_St._Anne_cartoon-alternative-downsampled.jpg

8. Leonardo Da Vinci´s Cartoon *The Virgin and Child with St. John* c.1507-8, after restoration. Charcoal and chalk on tinted paper, 142x105.5 cm. National Gallery, London. © Trustees of the National Gallery.

9. Collage picture showing the restoration of the *Portland Vase* (from top left to bottom right): the vase before dismantled for repair; detail in natural light; the break lines and filled areas were emphasized by flooding the inside of the vase with an intense ultraviolet light – the individual shards of glass could then be identified; resin fill tests (to replace gaps between shards after repair); conservators using UV setting adhesive to join the fragments; vase in fragments laid out ready for reconstruction on a plan; the vase after restoration is complete. © Trustees of the British Museum

(Following page) 10. Two views of the *Portland Vase* after restoration. H. 24cm. British Museum.

Vandal acts are wilful causes of damage. And violent damage as an external force, often fierce and intense, results in profound change. The idea of a violent experience in the life of an artwork is intrinsic to the notion of the traumatic, as the abrasions are felt psychologically (at a collective level) and physically as traces of that damage to the object. The impact of trauma on an artwork is collectively felt especially when damage is visible. But this violence is not always limited to the initial cause of damage. The restorative process can be equally if not more detrimental, although we presumably are not aware that this is the case.

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines **restore** as "bring back or attempt to bring back to the original state by rebuilding, repairing, repainting, emending, etc. ..." (Thompson 1995; 1174). Restore also indicates a sense of 'good-faith' policy: to reinstate, make restitution of, renew, replace. Oddy explains the process of restoration opposed to conservation as follows:

> Conservation seeks to preserve a piece in its present state, providing favourable conditions for its long-term survival. The aim is to use a minimum of new materials and to disturb the piece as little as possible. Restoration, on the other hand, seeks to return an object as far as possible to its original state.(Oddy 1992; 156)

ICOM's Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC) clarifies this even further, explaining that conservation refers to "all measures and actions aimed at safeguarding tangible cultural heritage while ensuring its accessibility to present and future generations" and contains three distinct processes: preventive conservation, remedial conservation and restoration (ICOM-CC 2008). They also emphasize that by whatever process an object is restored, it "should respect the significance and the physical properties of the cultural heritage item" (*Ibid.*) – this is important in terms of the artwork's symbolic value which I discuss further in the next chapter.

Preventive conservation is used to inhibit or reduce future deterioration or loss. It is an indirect process that does not interfere with artwork itself and does not change the appearance. This most often refers to the environment conditions of display and storage, handling, transport, security, and so forth. The purpose of remedial conservation, however, is to arrest damage and strengthen the artwork's support. This could change the artwork's appearance. Remedial conservation is only undertaken when the artwork is under severe threat of loss due to deterioration or extreme fragility. Lastly, ICOM-CC defines restoration as:

> all actions directly applied to a single and stable item aimed at facilitating its appreciation, understanding and use. These actions are only carried out when the item has lost part of its significance or function through past alteration or deterioration. They are based on respect for the original material. Most often such actions modify the appearance of the item (*Ibid.*).

This definition is most appropriate in terms of my discussion. An artwork usually requires restoration when it has suffered some kind of obvious alteration. The causes of these alterations are often, but not always, through the actions of natural decay, neglect on the part of the individual or institution who owns or exhibits the work, or physical damage as a result of vandalism or accident. These are all damaging or harmful to the artwork. Different kinds of damage would necessitate one or more of the three conservation processes as outlined by ICOM-CC.

In the case of improper conservation the surface of an artwork may be damaged due to ignorance as to what specific climate-controlled conditions are required for the storage of different kinds of artworks, or not ensuring the maintenance of these conditions, whether known at the time or not. For example, works on paper which have not been de-acidified can develop the very obvious foxing marks, while extended exposure to light discolours the paper surface, as well as making it brittle. When humidity and temperature control is not maintained at optimum levels, mildew and fungal growths adhere to surfaces, while oil paint and varnish may bloom, discolour, crack, blanch, flake, wrinkle, blister, or form cleavages, *pentimenti*, abrasions and cupping. If fumigation procedures are not constantly maintained and investigated, insects thrive and may eat through wooden structures, decaying canvas stretcher frames and weakening sculptures. When pottery and stone objects are exposed to damp, they may form salt crystals on the surface, and certain materials in metal sculptures may rust or develop 'bronze disease' (Oddy 1992; 14). In all these examples, remedial conservation would required to first repair the objects, and preventive conservation to halt any further damage.

With regards the issue of preventive conservation though, just what are regarded as acceptable levels and fluctuations for climate control in museums is currently being re-evaluated. The so-called "gold standard" of 18-25°C with 40-50% relative humidity (RH), which has been implemented almost universally in museums worldwide since the 1970s, is now thought to be too stringent (Pes 2010a). The gold standard is a definitive loan condition for most museums, although it is generally believed that most museums cannot maintain these stringent levels within their own environment (*ibid.*) – this is true for a number of museums in South Africa. The accepted standards for climate control in a museum environment were established during the early to mid twentieth century following temporary storage procedures during the first and second world wars, where British museum collections were housed underground in rail tunnels (WWI) and later stable slate quarry caves (WWII) (Anderson 2010; 38). Because there was no evident change in condition after their storage in the caves, the temperature and humidity levels in the caves were adopted as the accepted standard, and further conservation studies during the 1960s on the effects of varying relative humidity levels to the deterioration of the artwork only supported the accepted levels (*ibid.*).

But now, further study into the effect of specific ranges on different media, combined with a greater emphasis on decreasing museums' carbon footprints alongside rising energy prices, has found that the ranges could be much greater than previously thought. Following meetings in 2008, the National Museum Directors Conference (NMDC/BIZOT group) in the United Kingdom released a document outlining "NMDC guiding principles for reducing museums' carbon footprint" (NMDC 2008) which is available online. Rachel Madan of Greener Museums wrote in her June 2010 newsletter that these guidelines are being adopted by institutions like the Smithsonian and discussed at conservation symposiums and conferences worldwide to determine new standards (2010).

Neglect of these conditions as accepted within International Museum Standards is not always due to ignorance or improper training. Sometimes it may be the result of economic constraints, particularly in the case of public institutions which often receive insufficient funding to maintain or upgrade conservation systems. Or, as Walden explains, that “Institutions, where Old Masters are public property, have fewer incentives to re-examine the habits of a lifetime” (2004b; 9) are therefore less likely to keep up-to-date with the change in current practice. Previous restorers may also have overcleaned, overpainted, or retouched (Kelly 1972), which is now regarded as extremely poor restoration practice. To return the artwork to its pre-damaged state a restoration process, which can be equally compromising, is required.

During restoration, the restorer often destroys the visible surface or some part thereof. When cleaning artworks, potentially hazardous solvents are applied to remove surface damage, dirt and discolouration. Paint, glaze or varnish applied by the original artist may also be removed. These additions may have been made years after the artwork was initially completed, but in many cases a later artist or restorer may also have made the additions as the artwork changed hands. At times the work has to be broken up if an earlier restoration was incorrectly executed, as in the case of the Portland Vase. In this instance, pieces have to be removed, resorted and then replaced. These are all relatively violent intrusions to the artwork’s surface; however, this ‘violent’ intervention is often necessary in halting decay and prolonging the life of the artwork. The process of restoration may radically alter the surface, presenting a strange new sight, like the recent restorations to the Sistine Chapel Ceiling, which were received with both joy and apprehension[4]. Restoration can be understood as an invasive process, despite its good intention with regard the repair to the artwork. With this, of course, also comes the possibility of bad restoration.

Francis Kelly (1972) mentions that this bad restoration frequently happened in the past when restorers would pour alcohol directly onto the painted surface to establish the artwork's authenticity. Others washed paintings with soap and water to remove grime and rubbed them dry with cotton. Another common practice was to wash the back of the canvas which often caused extensive damage to the paint surface and canvas support. Other restorers removed varnishes with turpentine, ammonia, potash, or even smalt, a substance that contained ground glass. Paintings would be revarnished or rubbed with linseed oil to revive colour, or even retouched with new paint on top of the old varnish. There is a record of one restorer who attempted to remove a painting from its support by using acid to 'eat' away the canvas (Kelly 1972; 35-6). These approaches were not only extreme but also a violent or invasive disturbance to the artwork and its substrate.

[4] James Beck explores these criticisms in depth in his book *Art Restoration: the Culture, the Business and the Scandal* (1993), and amongst many others, was vocally critical of the restoration project, citing potentially additional invasive restoration as highly problematic, since previous interventions had failed. While the restoration team assured transparency, the rights to document the process were awarded to one company, which, in protecting their rights, made the images difficult and expensive to obtain, further casting doubt on the project. When the final restoration was completed and ceiling revealed, there was further debate and the team was criticised for adopting a single restoration approach for the entire ceiling when Michelangelo's process could have changed in many ways over the four years in which he painted the ceiling. While many, like the Pope and restoration team, were delighted with the final result and the removal of accumulated dirt that revealed light and colourful frescoes, others were convinced too much was removed, along with the final marks of the artist. There is also evidence that Michelangelo used carbon black to intensify shadow areas, which could have been removed as it is indistinguishable from the soot and grime, and that the colours may be too intense. In some cases, it has also been noted that the eyes of some figures were painted *a secco* (when the fresco was dry) and these have disappeared too. (*Ibid.*)

Many contemporary restorers regard these methods as unthinkable in terms of current practice, although Walden argues that "in essence, many of the picture-cleaning methods employed in previous centuries were merely less refined versions of some of the less noxious practices used today, and if sensitively handled, could produce satisfactory results" (Walden 2004b; 75). Yet despite this, for Walden "radical and questionable restoration [still] proceeds in the sanitized stillness of many a museum laboratory, undisturbed by critical comment" (Walden 2004b; 20). The prospect of damage to or loss of an artwork remains close at hand.

James Beck argues that 'bad' restoration still happens because the discipline is not regulated by rules or ethics (1993). While ethics bear no relation to this discussion for me, and restorers and conservationists continue to argue for and against Beck's position on 'bad' restoration, the prevalence of 'bad' or insensitive restoration and the resulting outcries seem to enhance the need to restore artworks in such a way that they will be preserved for future generations. Since 1984, ICOM-CC has been advocating for further discussion around the definition of the profession, its ethics and educational training requirements, to establish clarity and status as a vocation (ICOM-CC 1984). From Beck and Walden's comments, this has yet to happen.

The damage inflicted on an artwork, either through restoration itself or the circumstances that create a need for restoration, scar the surface. These scars not only become the markers of traumatic events, but also interfere with the future stability of the artwork as every intrusion into the artwork's surface has the potential to make it more volatile and susceptible to damage over time. The need to contain the anticipated loss of the artwork could become more desperate if insensitive restoration practice becomes frequent habit. However, the factors I have already discussed are not alone in determining restorative work.

Changes in artistic practice and philosophical temperament over time also have a major impact on restoration. As mentioned in the introduction, shifts in restoration are virtually entirely market-driven as the capitalist market reflects consumer concerns. Demand drives production, and production produces demand. The eighteenth-century demand was for dark paintings, imbued with a sense of age and time, while the nineteenth and twentieth-century public insisted on clean paintings reflecting the 'original' surface of bright crisp line and colour (Walden 2004b; 22). Whether or not these elements were present in the artwork to begin with, seems to have been a completely unrelated issue to market demand, but more to do with prevailing fashion.

What links the psychological motivations for restoration to economic shifts, fluctuating taste and increased restoration practice here, are progressive technological developments which filter through all fields. These developments, for example the discovery of the elements, atoms, micro-organisms and bacteria, or microscope technology (Bryson 2003), accounted for greater awareness in science, medicine, health and eventually art as well. While none of the literature I came across addressed this, it cannot be purely coincidental that the shift to

Victorian sterility, and hence 'clean' paintings, in the late nineteenth-century is consistent with Edison's invention of the electric light bulb in 1879. However, technological progress cannot single-handedly account for these advances. In this following section, I establish the factors determining some of the shifts in restoration in terms of changing historical practice, symbolic value, patina and the authentic, as it is the idea of value that is so closely tied to the psychological impulse to restore.

Conservator Andrew Oddy (1992) explains that the rise in restoration practice during the seventeenth and eighteenth-century can be attributed to an increased interest in 'curiosity' collections and the proliferation of aristocratic art and sculpture collections at that time[5]. These "gentleman's 'curiosity' cabinet" (Oddy 1992; 9) collections were made possible through anthropological interest inspired by the voyages of discovery, that had returned from new lands with strange new sights. In addition, these collections and the art of collecting valuable and interesting pieces were also emblematic of a collector's refined education, travel and worldliness. Because of this, the bourgeoisie were willing to pay huge sums of money for pieces of art that emerged from antiquity collections and foreign lands, provided that these valuable art works did not have bits and pieces broken off them. But if that were the case, artisans at the time were quick to supply replacement parts.

[5] There is an example of one of these collections locally, in the form of a late-Victorian Natural History Room, at the Lindfield House Museum, Auckland Park, Johannesburg.

These methods also saw the emergence in the nineteenth-century 'curiosity' collections of 'rare' objects 'created' from leftover bits and pieces (Oddy 1992; 8-10), and consequently this practice has left behind a multitude of hybrid objects that have been 'restored' to appear as the original did. A fantasy of the original is more likely, as they were repaired with entirely new pieces built to fit or pieces from similar objects. This has since lead to much confusion for later restorers trying to establish how the work had previously been repaired, and which parts were actually the original artwork. A perfect example of this is the Piranesi Vase which has endured numerous alterations and restoration procedures since it was discovered in the excavation site at Hadrian's Villa in 1769. The British Museum officially came into possession of the vase in 1868. After World War II, attitudes shifted with regard the restoration of objects that included the replacement of damaged or missing parts, and the archaeological field felt it was inappropriate to continue such practice. All such objects were summarily moved out of sight, that is, to the basement of the museum (Miller 1992). Many were forgotten, and the Piranesi vase would have been, too, had it not been selected for the exhibition *Fake? The Art of Deception* (1990).

The disputed point with the vase was that the various sections dated from different times. The bottom half was ancient, circa second century CE, whereas the fragments making up the top section are considered more modern. This, of course, followed the previously common practice of adding whatever was missing from the artwork. Eric Miller illustrates this clearly, as he explains that Giovanni Piranesi would obtain fragmented antique sculptures, and by:

> Drawing on both his creative and scholarly background ... Piranesi (1720-78) exercised his talents to make convincing marble reproductions of Roman antiquities, conceived and executed upon enough original material to qualify them (at least to his own satisfaction) as restorations, which he then sold to wealthy collectors (Miller 1992; 122).

As far as the Piranesi vase is concerned, the restoration is regarded as accurate (Miller 1992; 122-6). One of the curators from the Greek and Roman Antiquities Department at the British Museum explains on their collection database that the:

> *Piranesi Vase* ranks among the most ambitious restoration projects of the Piranesi workshop. This is underlined by the fact that both vases were represented by three plates each in the 1778 compilation of Vasi, Candelabri e Cippi. In modern literature, the *Piranesi Vase* is mostly considered an elaborate pastiche. However, the frieze is in fact a most skillful and painstakingly accurate restoration of numerous original fragments representing satyrs at vintage. The scene is fully preserved on a Roman Altar in Naples that in the 18th century was in the collection of the Prince of Francavilla and illustrated in Montfaucon's Recueil d'Antiquites of 1757. The configuration of the support of the vase is made up of a variety of unrelated ancient fragments supplemented by matching modern parts (British Museum Collection Database online; visited 27/01/10).

But the additions have given the vase a jaded history, raising questions around the authenticity of early restorers' work. In this manner, restoration can be somewhat deceptive in the way the artwork is repaired so as to appear whole again. Piranesi's restorations and reproductions are hugely problematic since they threaten this notion of the 'original' artwork. Before I can adequately address this issue of authenticity, other factors warrant discussion as they, too, are significant in defining an authentic artwork.

I return again to the issue of taste in relation to fashion. In the past, many attempts were made at cleaning artworks (mostly easel paintings) to remove the build-up of grime and dust that adheres to the surface over time. Thereafter, oil,

11. Roman (antique parts) *The Piranesi Vase*, 2ndC (antique parts), marble, made by Giovanni Battista Piranesi (in present form) H. 271,78 cm, British Museum, London. © Trustees of the British Museum

12. The Piranesi vase as it appeared at the exhibition *Fake? The Art of Deception*, British Museum, 1990. © Trustees of the British Museum.

varnish or wax was often applied to the surface to enhance the colour and give it the 'right look'. Little concern was heeded as to how the artwork was supposed to appear – it was more important that it was suitably adapted to the current trend (Walden 2004b)[6].

The predominant eighteenth and early nineteenth-century attitude towards art was that "a good picture, like a good fiddle, should be brown" (Kelly 1972; 32), as Francis Kelly cites Sir George Beaumont, collector, art benefactor and director of the National Gallery, having said. There is an implied significance in the colour brown which speaks of the value acquired through age and exchange. Randolph Starn (2002) explains that as the masterpieces of art history,

> Old Master paintings had to look timelessly masterful and seasoned at the same time. 'Patina' was one solution to this conundrum. It was the corollary of the category of Old Master and its obliging signifier: an authenticating seal of age that could also be seen as a sign of perfection (88).

Age meant perfection, and thus the application of artificial patina was common to simulate the 'look' of age. Starn gives the example of William Hogarth's allegorical etching *Time Smoking a Picture* (1761) which was used as the catalogue cover for *An Exhibition of Cleaned Pictures, 1936-1947* (1947) at the National Gallery in London (2002; 87)[7]. Artists would 'smoke' their pictures, and gallery conservators had no qualms about applying almost any substance to

[6] An interesting point to note here is that forgeries may suffer the same predicament. Edward Dolnick (2009) questions why Van Megeren's awkward Vermeer fakes, produced prior to and during World War Two, fooled so many, including the Booymans Museum (Rotterdam) and even Herman Goering (Hitler's second-in-command). Despite there being willing buyers, or perhaps 'victims', Dolnick suggests that part of why they were fooled was because the pictures included visual elements that were fashionable at the time, like overly large eyes.

[7] The exhibition was intended to educate the public on the National Gallery's recent cleaning programme that had already been met with criticism in open letters to The Times, but was cleared by an international commission which found that no damage had "resulted from the recent cleaning". The Weaver report (so named for the chairman of the commission, Dr J. Weaver) established guidelines for the formation of a permanent department of conservation that would employ conservators and work on paintings inside the museum, instead of the previous system of employing private restorers. (Bomford 2005/1997:8-10)

darken the surface (Starn 2002), and even Beaumont is known to have applied a glaze made from liquorice to paintings so as to ensure they retained their patinated appearance (Cleere 2002; 123-130).

But the appeal of patina also became a predicament. Starn writes that in the nineteenth-century, "a new attitude toward Old Master paintings split the accommodating veil of patina" and "it became either the unwanted stain or the alluring beauty of age" (2002; 94). The Victorian stress on cleanliness and hygiene made all dirt undesirable (Cleere 2002) and not even art could escape that new aesthetic plague as the patinated paintings were no longer considered the signifiers of age, but suddenly became 'dirty' paintings. From the mid-eighteenth century onwards, few of the artworks in institutions and significant collections bore the remnants of age and patina. Despite the critical view on patina as an artificial addition, it could never be thoroughly dismissed. 'Master' artworks still exist, having survived history because we see in them evidence of beauty or skill as the epitome of cultural heritage which we forever attempt to transcend. They are remnants of the idealised 'perfect past'. Being such, Starn reasons that:

> Old Master paintings had to look a dignified old age. Their venerability in all senses of the word depended on it; so did the cultural and political credibility of the museum as the destination and sanctuary of the Grand Tradition (2002; 97).

The integrity of the artwork as a masterpiece is reliant on the museum or gallery as its safeguard to sustain its value.

The symbolic value, as earlier defined, ascribed to the artwork is critical in understanding restoration's containment of loss as symbolic value links the artwork to cultural importance. But it is equally important to understand why this form of value is attached to particular objects. Michel Foucault (1970) investigates the conditions of the Classical economy of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which controlled systems of exchange and wealth. His discussion explores how money functioned as a measure of the value of commodities and as a replacement in the exchange process because of its materiality. Money is wealth, represents wealth, and has the ability to acquire other desired objects that become markers of wealth. Foucault names these as objects of necessity, utility, pleasure and rarity (1970; 175).

The art and rare objects that formed part of the 'curiosity' and bourgeois collections would fall under the categories of pleasure and rarity. They are imbued with what Pierre Bourdieu (1990) terms symbolic power – a form of capital not reducible to pure economic value. Symbolic power represents an object whose value extends beyond mere monetary value because of the cultural value and importance attached to the object as a result of its status within the cultural domain. These objects are status symbols in that the ownership of an object of symbolic value associates the owner with symbolic capital. Johnson writes that Bourdieu defines this as "a degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity, consecration of honour and...founded on a dialect of knowledge...and recognition" (1993; 7), so enhancing the owner's wealth and position. Arjun Appadurai (1986) also remarks that objects of symbolic value may only remain commodities for short periods of time as the exchange process affects their market value and cultural function. This generates an issue of market access and adds another dimension to the value of the object, as Appadurai notes, citing Simmel: "objects are not difficult to acquire because they are valuable, 'but we call those objects valuable that resist our desire to possess them' " (Appadurai 1986; 3).

Artworks made in the grand tradition of the past are sought after as symbolic capital and the few that survive are often entrusted to the care of the custodians of culture. But their symbolic value is constantly in question under that care. Walden raises concern that:

> Some museum directors are obviously more solicitous than others, and all are theoretically accountable to their trustees. But they may sometimes lack the protective instinct of the more discerning private owner. Certainly they have less incentive to maintain a picture's future market value. Once bought, a painting will almost certainly never be resold. It becomes state property, or 'belongs to the collection', and can therefore be experimented with at will, without even minimal restraints of financial self-interest. De-acquisitioning has sometimes proved embarrassing to great museums because of over-restoration (Walden 2004b; 24).

On the other hand, it is equally easy to argue that not all private collectors are as discerning as Walden would have us believe. Few are able to store such works in perfect conditions and they are often exposed to excess humidity and light. Not to mention how many private collections are severely under-insured (Dolnick 2008). Over-restoration or a lack of correct conservation practices may not only diminish the artwork's economic but also its symbolic value. The artwork, as we knew it, is essentially lost and the collective psychological need to contain loss comes into play.

The dynamic that affects symbolic value in this way is the notion of the authentic. Walter Benjamin (1936) relates how the original measures against the reproduction, arguing that:

> Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. This unique existence of the work of art determined the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence. This includes the changes which it may have suffered in physical condition over the years as well as the various changes in its ownership. The traces of the first can be revealed only by chemical or physical analyses which it is impossible to perform on a reproduction; changes of ownership are subject to a tradition which must be traced from the situation of the original (222).

The symbolic value of the original artwork lies in its aura, in an experience of the authentic work that cannot be realized in the reproduction. While reproductions provide the opportunity to see these artworks, it lacks the aura of the original – the experience of standing in front of an artwork, like the Sistine Chapel, and seeing it with your own eyes instead of through a camera lens or another's impression, is often a sublime experience. Reproduction made art available to a greater public (Benjamin 1936; 222), allowing people to see artworks that would previously have been impossible for them to see. At the time Benjamin wrote, many artworks were inaccessible to the public, others could not be moved, and most people may not have had the economic opportunity to visit the original first-hand. Existential proximity is a condition of value.

Can we be so willing to give up auratic experience by not ensuring that artworks are maintained through proper conservation or restoration and simply lost? Howard Caygill (1998) explains that:

> Aura is not a property but rather an effect of a particular mode of transmitting a work of art, one which privileges its originality and uniqueness. Aura is not the predicate of a work of art but a condition, now surpassed, of its transmission. As a condition it has a cultural significance beyond the sphere of art, indeed aura describes a

> particular form of experience appropriate to a particular culture and stage of technological development (103).

Therefore the reproduction can never be authentic because it lacks aura and uniqueness. Benjamin required that "uniqueness...be impervious to change, whether in its own composition or in its environment" and therefore "outside history" (Caygill 1998; 101). The tension in Benjamin's argument, however, lies in the fact that change is unavoidable in the face of time.

In light of this, Walden reasons that "it is not always understood, for example, that the paintings that we see today are no longer as they left the artist's hands, but are the result of a succession of interferences, as well as natural changes" (Walden 2004b; 20). In the quest to bring the object back to its original state, we often forget this is impossible, although the impulse or desire to do so remains. Walden explains that "there can be no question of 'getting back to the original' by extensive restoration; the original is quite simply no longer there" (*ibid*.; 29). In the following chapter, it will become clear that this is an important point in understanding the impulse to restore. In the quest to preserve the artwork and bring it as close as possible to its original state, we often forget that its symbolic value lies in its history and change. Ultimately it seems there is a greater symbolic value attached to the authentic artwork. And in order for this value to be maintained, the artwork requires some kind of preservation to ensure that the original auratic experience survives.

Today, this preservation is maintained through modern conservation and restoration methods. Starn notes that "the huge expansion and technological take-off of conservation programs have developed out of *ad hoc* responses to war damage, aggressive environmental degradation, and natural disasters such as the Italian floods of 1966" because "a simple cleaning (or not) is no longer the issue" (2002; 103). Advances in photography, radiography and chemistry, along with the development of synthetic adhesives, resins, and solvents, have allowed for technical changes to occur within the field (Oddy 1992; 16).

Restoration now follows two basic rules: firstly, the 'six inch-six foot' rule, meaning that from six feet an object should appear to be complete, while from six inches, a restorer should be able to differentiate between the original and the new. Secondly, all 'retouching' should be 'reversible', or easily removable – that is, "the aim is to tone in with the original, not match it exactly" (Oddy 1992; 11). This follows Walden's point about the 'original' surface.

Present practice is also involved in identifying risks that may have adverse effects on the work. Most often, these are due to environmental conditions; for example light, temperature, humidity, pollution, corrosion and fungal growth, but they also include the issue of safety, accident and theft – in other words, preventive conservation. Restoration is often the final point of the conservation process as artworks that have been inadequately restored in the past, like the Portland Vase in the British Museum, have to be repaired again. This process is governed by a set of unspoken ethics[8], which cannot be laid down or "generalised" according to Oddy, but the principle concern lies in maintaining the

[8] As I earlier mentioned, this is what Walden and Beck publicly attack because of inadequate critical intervention in the restoration field today.

integrity of the original work (1992; 13) and its authenticity. This would also, presumably, need to be in line with ICOM's *Code of Ethics*, as outlined in my Introduction.

During July 2004 I visited the Arena Chapel in Padua, more commonly known as the Scrovegni Chapel, where these practices of conservation and restoration are evident. An intensive twenty-year restoration project was recently completed to repair the badly damaged frescoes, painted by Giotto from 1301 to 1303, because the chapel had experienced severe external architectural damage over the last hundred years. When the city of Padua obtained the chapel in 1881, the palace to which the chapel was originally attached had already been destroyed. In the years shortly before 1881 up to 1885, the portico over the main door collapsed causing pressure on the rear wall from which the external plaster had been removed. This resulted in pollution and moisture seeping through the wall and forming deposits on the fresco surface which required pressing intervention.

The frescoes were first restored in an intensive cleaning process to remove the deposits. They were then retouched using watercolour paint matched to the fresco which was applied in a crosshatch method. This process is entirely reversible and at six inches, it is possible to see which areas have been restored but, at the six feet public limit, it is not. The restorers were also particular as to which areas were retouched and which were to be left as they were. The restorers decided that the architectural details and areas that were important to the interpretation of a panel would be completed. The entire chapel is now sealed by an acclimatisation system that requires a fifteen-minute period for the air to adjust with each new group of visitors, who are then only permitted fifteen minutes inside the chapel.

13. Exterior of the Arena or Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, Italy, 2004. © Jeannine Howse.

The outcome of this latest restoration is that the integrity of Giotto's frescoes has been maintained and the Chapel's long-term survival has been ensured through the use of technological aid. The Scrovegni Chapel demonstrates the shifts in cultural trends as it reveals the importance of showing the effects of time and history, in addition to keeping the object as close as possible to the original.

Since 1850 many debates have arisen around the restoration and cleaning of artworks. It is often felt restorers have simply cleaned too much off paintings, essentially destroying the visual dynamic and interplay between the layers of paint, glaze and varnish (Walden 2004b). The nineteenth-century practice of restorers cleaning paintings, removing surface dirt and aged or yellowed varnish and then reapplying a layer of brown varnish to maintain the patinated appearance (Cleere 2002) is such an example.

Art historian Sir Ernst Gombrich, who raised serious questions concerning the cleaning policies of English Institutions in the sixties, generated the debate again recently. He argued that in the case of easel paintings, restorers had removed all traces of glaze and varnish and, along with these traces, the subtlety of the work, too, was removed (Walden 2004a). The prime examples of over-cleaning were Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne* and Gentileschi's *Lot and His Daughters.* The removed traces are irrecoverable.

Gombrich formally presented his argument in his published paper 'Blurred images and the unvarnished truth' (British Journal of Aesthetics, Vol.2 No.2 April 1962). Walden reiterated the argument from the restorer's perspective, explaining that "the results of decades of ill-advised cleaning in Britain and America especially continue to emerge with painful clarity when seen alongside better preserved and more sensitively restored pictures in international exhibitions" (Walden 2004b; 10). The twentieth-century desire for bright, harsh, clearly defined images has often led to restorers stripping paintings, revealing unequal pigment ageing which irrevocably changes the image. Beck is also opposed to this form of ungoverned restoration practice – that is, restorers working by themselves on major artworks with little or no input from others in the field.

For many artworks this may indeed be cause for concern. Walden (2004b) comments that many of the subtle and intricate details of the painted surfaces have forever been lost due to hasty and unconsidered restoration. She explains that "major paintings in major museums have been traumatised by their treatment, in a way that is short of scandalous. The extent of the damage is only now beginning to emerge" (15). In my reading of restoration, many of the early processes have been abandoned or severely adjusted by today's standards. With the use of technology there are certainly more complicated ways of cleaning, but surely no one now would use acid to remove paint from the canvas. Even so, artworks have and continue to be lost at the hands of insensitive restorers.

But I do wonder if Beck and Walden's views are not slightly extreme. While what they say about 'loss' and damage to artworks because of unregulated practice is true for many, I have since come across more, rather than less, suggestion of collaboration and discussion amongst experts. Vincent van Gogh's *The Bedroom* (1888) in the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, is currently undergoing extensive restoration which is documented on a special museum blog

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www.vangoghmuseum.nl/blog/slaapkamergeheimen/en/ or
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/a/ac/VanGogh_Bedroom_Arles1.jpg

15. Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890) *The Bedroom* (1888) oil on canvas, 72 x 90 cm, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

(http://www.vangoghmuseum.nl/blog/slaapkamergeheimen/en/). All of the museum's staff are involved in the restoration, including the director, curators, conservators and historians; some of whom regularly write on the blog updating the public on each step of the process. They have written about the technical aspects of the restoration: the colours Van Gogh used, the cleaning and debate for new varnish, the canvas surface and stretcher, as well as the different frames the painting has had since it left the artist. All of these technical factors have been considered in addition to the historical context of the artist, with reference to the letters between Van Gogh and his brother Theo as he wrote about the painting, and in line with current conservation principles. Conservation professionals are guided by their own ethics code (ICOM-CC, 2008) as well as ICOM's code, and there are regular international conferences to discuss the current issues of their profession, like the re-evaluation of climate control in the museum environment that I mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The issue still at hand is why we feel the need to restore. The cultural value of restoration at present appears to be how it maintains the value and cohesion of the 'original' artwork, thereby preventing loss. It is this issue of containing loss and how it impacts on the impulse to restore that I now address.

CHAPTER TWO
Art and Restoration in Post-traumatic Culture

My discussion now moves to explore the relationship between post-traumatic culture and art restoration. It is possible to see a link between the two in terms of the psychological dimension, particularly in the way trauma impacts on culture in a collective sense. In other words, that trauma is not only felt on an individual level but also experienced at a social collective level. This can intensify the need to repair post-traumatic effects, thereby reducing further trauma through the containment and prevention of loss, and restoring balance. The impulse and 'mania' to restore is symptomatic of this guarding against loss. Through this chapter, it will become clearer that there are two issues here: that of repairing loss once damage has occurred, and secondly that of preventing loss to reduce anxiety for potential loss.

I begin with an exploration of what I mean by post-traumatic culture, in particular the experience of the traumatic at a collective level. This requires a brief look at how trauma is understood and worked through on an individual level but, as set out in the Abstract, I follow the Mitscherlich argument that psychological trends manifest similarly on both the individual and collective level. Kirby Farrell (1998) explains that:

> In contemporary culture,...trauma is both a clinical syndrome and a trope something like the Renaissance figure of the world as a stage: a strategic fiction that a complex, stressful society is using to account for a world that seems threateningly out of control (2).

He defines the post-traumatic as the "outcome of cumulative stresses" which “reflects a disturbance in the ground of collective experience” (3), in other words, major social upheaval.

Literary theorist Walter Benn Michaels (1996) attributes this disturbance to two major Western historical losses. In the article ‘You who was never there’, he writes that around the end of the twentieth-century, society has collectively begun to experience two major losses: firstly, a generation of first-hand accounts of the Holocaust, and secondly, a generation whose parents and grandparents were American slaves (around the time of the American Civil War). As a cultural phenomenon this has raised questions about the constitution of memory and trauma, particularly how the next generation is able to carry trauma by way of memory instead of just forgetting. It seems that the idea of the loss of living memory and fear of forgetting intensifies this anxiety. The point I introduce by using post-traumatic culture is a collective need to guard against loss for fear of complete loss. Within this, I will also look at various forms or experiences of trauma and post-traumatic stress.

I then discuss how I understand restoration as culturally redemptive by establishing the importance of the artwork as a marker of a culture’s history. Historical traces are inscribed in the surface of the artwork, as a record of events or occurrences throughout its 'life', which also includes more intangible effects such as the shifts in taste I established in the previous chapter. The object is in itself an historical object, almost archaeological in its materiality. An artwork’s symbolic value is entrenched in its authenticity and presence as an exemplary record of an important part of a culture's history, making it important for the artwork to remain in the valued form. I reiterate the point of 'bad' or insensitive restoration here, not to argue for or against restoration, but rather to call attention to what happens when restoration goes wrong. The resulting outcry is evidence of the impulse to preserve and maintain wholeness.

Trauma is, in clinical terms, "an acute injury" (Farrell 1998; 5). But in the last century trauma has also come to be understood as part of a collective stress as the magnitude of destruction and war has escalated beyond what was previously known. This is not to say that prior to the twentieth century war, death and destruction were in short supply. The impact of colonialism and slavery were grave in this respect, and their impact is ongoing. But to recount my comments in the Introduction, the two world wars and threat of nuclear destruction have made for a disturbingly bloody century. This also stems from what Farrell refers to as "a mood of cultural crisis: a sense that something has gone terribly wrong in the modern world, something that we can neither assimilate nor put right" (1998; *ix*). He identifies three modes of coping with traumatic stress for the individual: social adaptation and relearning, depressive withdrawal or numbing, and impulsive force or beserking (1998; 7); and classifies trauma as "psychocultural" because "the injury entails the interpretation of the injury….And those interpretations are profoundly influenced by the particular cultural context" (*ibid.*). The injury can be worked through, relived or denied, but in all cases requires some form of psychological interpretation by the individual.

Because of the way trauma can be interpreted, Farrell explains how trauma can also be "ideologically manipulated" and affect the mind, because "trauma not only represents a specific threat, it also breaches defences against death anxiety that form the ground of personality" (Farrell 1998; 7-8). The interpretation is not "self-contained" as it relies "on past experience and anticipates a future outcome – a process that depends on cultural meanings" (Farrell 1998; 13). These defences are both individual and cultural, and can be understood as an anxiety for both actual and anticipated loss. For example, the destruction of historical churches, monuments, buildings and bridges during the Second World War or Vietnam War, was not simply a tactical manoeuvre that destroyed access points and places of safety. These structures also symbolise a society's identity, and their destruction can be seen to be a direct assault on what that society stands for.

Progress and time can be equally destructive to cities in this sense, and so we increasingly see new laws that protect historical and heritage monuments for future generations. At face value, this is once again a form of economic control on the basis of tourism. But beneath this, there still seems to be some fear against forgetting past histories that identify a place and society. So actual loss (in some measure) stimulates fear and anxiety for future loss.

Farrell continues to explore how trauma and cultural control are related, explaining that "the core experience of trauma is violence" (Farrell 1998; 14). Although trauma is often physically destructive in some way, the idea of a completely non-violent loss, for instance, someone passing quietly during the night, can equally have violent after-effects. Violence is frequently internally associated with trauma and death-anxiety (*ibid.*), however, post-traumatic culture has a shock value in that it wants not to face death but instead seeks to master it through a form of protective self-denial. Farrell argues that "the trope of trauma can be viewed as a corrective or cautionary device that modern culture uses in its efforts to regulate morale in the face of new kinds of stress" (Farrell 1998; 21). In other words, trauma is corrective against loss because, in some cases, its interpretation and integration is reliant on denial. Throughout post-traumatic theory, there are massive contradictions in how the process of integration essentially works. It seems as if the mediation of trauma, whether it is worked through or denied, is valid in whatever way it comes to be integrated. This does however, create some confusion.

Farrell explains that post-traumatic stress is a contemporary symptom but that it is not unique to our time, as it could also be argued to be the experience of the modern. Leo Bersani (1990) writes that modernity has a compulsion for historical reflection as "historical celebration or historical mourning" (47), and that Modernism, here referring to the artistic and literary movement from the mid 1850s to the mid 1950s, sees itself as "stranded" from the past in its rejection of traditions, values and grounding (48), and understands the experience of social isolation and alienation during the industrial revolution as essentially traumatic.

Bersani analyses the same text addressed by Caygill, noting how Benjamin's thought process is "full of pairs – with one term referring to something inauthentic but familiar, the other to something authentic but lost", of which "the best-known of these pairs is *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*, both of which are translated into English (*sic*) by 'experience'" (Bersani 1990; 49). Bersani explains that:

> in the modern city, *Erfahrung* has become nearly impossible, for citydwellers live in a state of shock in which they defensively inhibit impressions from being fully integrated into their history (*ibid*.).

This is the shock of daily life which 'disallows' integration. He goes on to discuss *Erlebnis* as impressions almost outside time and history, and how traumatic dreams (as discussed in Freud's 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle') "express the failure of consciousness to have originally developed strategies...to help it parry or register the shock" (Bersani 1990; 50). The anxiety of dealing with the modern cosmopolitan world through past experience cannot always take place because the processes of *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung* are no longer part of conscious memory construction (*ibid*.). This sense of strandedness and isolation is in part at the roots of post-traumatic culture, and invokes a need to keep remembering moments of extreme trauma and loss to allow for the integration of current experience.

It is important to understand that although these are all somewhat different types of trauma, they continuously function in similar ways. There is the clinical experience of a violent trauma inflicted on an individual, and there is the traumatic shock experienced on both a personal and a collective level. This is Farrell's shaking of the ground of experience – that shock of the modern on an individual level. But there is also the shock of loss which is the trauma experienced on a personal level as a result of extreme and or complete loss.

This is echoed by collective loss, as described in Michaels' article, which manifests itself through an anxiety over the loss of the carriers of cultural memory and history. For the purposes of this research report, my focus here is on the trauma experienced at a collective level for anticipated loss or loss that occurs over a period of time. Michaels cites Arthur Schlesinger Jr. as having written that:

> History is to the nation as memory is to the individual. As an individual deprived of memory becomes disorientated and lost . . . so a nation denied a conception of its past will be disabled in dealing with its present (Michaels 1996; 3).

This is the integration of current experience I discussed on the previous page. We are shaped by memory and history on both the individual and the collective levels. In this sense, cultural products are the rich silt of collective memory. They are the markers that remain and signify a culture, immortalising a culture and its producers, giving them presence in past and future histories. In this way, the threat of forgetting our cultural artefacts or losing them completely can be perceived as the potential death of culture. Traumatic stress is also a pre-emptive anxiety which Gilbert Rose (1987) explains as the "anticipation of future trauma" (*x*). This anxiety can be translated as an impulse to restore, preserve and make whole. As Starn notes, "Nostalgia needs its look as an antidote to oblivion" (2002; 108). Taste continues to have a major impact on value and the necessity to prevent the loss of that value. The "look" today is restoration.

The idea that restoration can be understood as culturally redemptive is connected to this notion of preserving culture to stave off 'oblivion' and save 'identity' from loss. Of course, the idea of restoration as redemptive is entirely dependent on the continued symbolic value of the artwork, as discussed in the first chapter. Similarly, Bersani writes that [from the perspective of modern Western (European and North American) culture] there exists an assumption that art is able to redeem society for its historical mistakes. He explains that within this culture of redemption “a certain type of repetition of experience in art repairs inherently damaged or valueless experience” (Bersani 1990; 1). This assumption is reliant on a particular authority being invested in the artwork. An authority that assumes history allows art to mask the mistakes of history.

Bersani is also inimically opposed to this assumption. He discusses the work of Proust, “who embodies perhaps most clearly...a tendency to think of cultural symbolizations as essentially reparative” (Bersani 1990; 7). Part of his discussion addresses the two major themes in Proust’s work: death and memory. Bersani argues that the notion of art as having the ability to rescue experience is also found in psychoanalysis and he questions what assumptions [in art] are in play in order to allow it to maintain that kind of power. He argues Melanie Klein’s (Freudian) theory of sublimation that integrates, unifies and restores as being the same as Proust’s notion of art as redemptive. Bersani’s argument is that this kind of theory of the redemptive nature of art lessens the legitimacy of cultural forms, making them merely “regressive attempts to make up for failed experience”. Their only role is to “redeem the catastrophe of history”, as a “moral monumentality” whose success and achievements overshadow the “disasters of history” (Bersani 1990; 7).

The implication of this theory is that it could modify the symbolic value of cultural forms. If you agree with Proust's theory, then the reparative value of cultural artefacts lies in their ability to 'redeem' Western culture for its failures. The loss of artwork in this sense could then result in a loss of the power of redemption. However, if you agree with Bersani and buy into his argument, instead asserting that art and cultural forms do not have the ability to redeem Western culture because they are merely a product and reflection of that culture's history, they would still be the products and records of a history that cannot be regenerated or recovered elsewhere. They have value because that culture cannot afford to lose the product and record of its own cultural history. It would be devastating loss, because as Michaels explains, collectively a society needs to know its own history in order to know its identity and therefore cope with its present. The artwork becomes the 'object' and means through which that history can be known and as such, would be essential to preserve.

When the artwork is damaged, whether that damage is permanent or not, the traces of that history are often compromised. Benjamin explains that "what is really jeopardized when the historical testimony is affected is the authority of the object" because "the authenticity of a thing is the essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced" (Benjamin 1932; 223). If that authenticity is compromised through damage, then the value tied to this may also be compromised.

Historical traces are significant to the symbolic value of an artwork as they provide clues about the artwork and its previous context (like environment, provenance, previous restorations) along with more general social and cultural historical shifts. Terry Eagleton (1981) describes how:

> the trace is also what marks an object's historicity. The scars it has accumulated at the hands of its users, the visible imprint of its variable functions. The traces inscribed on an object's body are the web that undoes its self-identity, the mesh of consumptional modes in which it has been variously caught. The erasure, preservation or revival of traces, then, is a political practice that depends on the nature of the traces and contexts in question...(32).

These "traces" or "scars" are clues that identify its history. In other words, the "succession of interferences" and "natural changes" Walden mentions (2004b; 20) and the political practice to which Eagleton refers are the shifts in restoration practice I explored in the previous chapter.

In the case of an insensitive restoration, those historical traces may be destroyed and new ones added, and it is for this type of loss that art-historian James Beck (1993) argues in his vehement opposition to what he regards as a 'mania' for the restoration of art. He maintains that Renaissance works like the *Ilaria del Carretto*, 1406-13 (restored 1989), and the *Sistine Chapel*, 1508-12 (restored 1979-99), have been over-restored, and the effects of these restorations are irreversible. As far as Beck is concerned, the reality of the situation is that the opposite of the intended outcome of restoration is what actually occurs, and he argues that we are thus losing valuable artworks because of this. He has argued that these outcomes are due to insensitive restoration or misinformed personal opinion regarding restoration processes, and in 1992 founded ArtWatch

International “to monitor and campaign for better practices in the conservation of art works” (www.artwatchinternational.org). The case against ‘bad’ restoration supports the point that restoring the artwork guards against the loss of the artwork, since too often historical trace is also destroyed and its value is also therefore diminished.

Public domain image:
http://www.rositour.it/Italia/Toscana/Lucca/Duomo%20S.%20Martino_Tomba%20di%20Ilaria%20del%20Carretto.jpg

15. Jacopo della Quercia *Tomb of Ilaria del Carretto*, 1406-13, marble, sarcophagus 244 x 88 x 66,5 cm, effigy 204 x 69 cm, Cathedral of San Martino, Lucca, Italy

(Following page) 16. Michaelangelo Buonarroti *Sistine Chapel Ceiling*, 1508-12, fresco, Vatican Museum Complex, Vatican City. Restoration began on the ceiling in 1984, and the chapel was reopened to the public in 1994, although the restoration project was only completed in 1999 when the sculptures in the chapel had also been cleaned.

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Public domain image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gardenbeforeandafter.jpg

Public domain image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sistine_Chapel_Daniel_beforandafter.jpg

Public domain image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Adam_and_Eve_damage.jpg

Public domain image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Forbidden_fruit_restored.jpg

(Top) 17 A composite image of *The Fall and Expulsion of Adam and Eve* - the upper left is shown unrestored, the lower right is shown restored

(Centre) 18. *The prophet Daniel* before and after restoration.

(Bottom left) 19. Detail of the *Expulsion from Eden* shows the darkening of the colours to a monochrome, cracking of the plaster, metal pins of a previous stabilisation, staining from water flow, salt deposits, darkening by saltpetre and overpainting.

(Bottom right) 20. Detail of the same section after cleaning shows the brightness of the colours. The major cracks and metal pins have been filled and coloured to match adjacent areas. Smaller cracks are more visible, by contrast with the bright surface. The rings of saltpetre are irreversible.

Artworks are indicative of historical change, as well as cultural identity. The continued existence of an artwork preserves the artwork's value because the possibility of seeing the authentic artwork and therefore knowing a piece of Western cultural history remains secure. If the work is damaged – because of neglect, environmental conditions, vandalism or restoration – then we not only lose the artwork and its historicity, but we also lose the value and potential of seeing the artwork in the future. It is the social anxiety and fear of potential loss which activates the impulse to restore and preserve, as much as when loss has already occurred. Restoration is then redemptive by two factors – firstly by way of being a reparative process that repairs when damage is done, and secondly that it is in addition a preventative process that attempts to prevent future damage and loss.

In these two chapters I have explored the impulse to restore, in the form of the restoration of visual art as a social collective process. I have shown how the impulse to restore can be intrinsically linked to a collective anxiety for the anticipated or actual loss of cultural objects imbued with symbolic value. This 'collective anxiety' could be regarded as the "cautionary device" Farrell (1998) explains as using to control and contain loss. I have also considered these objects as the artworks that reflect years of history and change, both positive and negative aspects. In the face of irrevocable damage to the artwork, the impact of trauma to the collective could be severe for those who set store by its value. Contemporary processes of restoration reveal the impulse to restore and preserve as restoration is ultimately about containing the loss of the artwork.

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines **redeem** as “buy back; recover by expenditure of effort or by stipulate payment; ... save from (a defect); ... save or rescue or reclaim ...”. (Thompson 1995; 1150) The psychological impulse to restore is redemptive by the process of restoration, since through this impulse something will be saved from defect. On a social collective level this process begins with the artwork. Some form of damage threatens the artwork, whether due to natural decay, neglect, vandalism or ‘bad’ restoration. A process of restoration which attempts to contain the threat then manages this threat. Through the expenditure of effort, the artwork may be saved, rescued, reclaimed, saved from defect or damage – and therefore saved from loss. Not forgetting that, by the same token restoration can also create further damage. Restoration is culturally redemptive, not because it makes up for the mistakes of history but rather because it contains or attempts to contain loss. It is a collective restorative process that anticipates loss.

CHAPTER THREE
Loss, Restorative Process and the Therapeutic Possibilities of the Creative Process in my Art Production

In the following two chapters, I consider the other dynamic in this relationship between the impulse to restore and restorative processes – that of the individual working through of loss. I move my discussion away from the collective, turning to focus on the individual impulse to restore when faced with traumatic loss. The restorative aspect echoes on both parallels.

On an individual level, the experience of trauma may be said to predicate the impulse to restore. The traumatic experience may or may not be violent but in the event of extreme traumatic loss, the after-effects of that shock tend to have a violent impact on the system. The mastery of the traumatic experience of loss specifically, and the ensuing impulse to make the individual 'whole' at a psychological level are what concerns me here. This is in reference to the psychological processes of mourning and melancholia as discussed in the introduction.

To briefly reiterate, Freud explains that the 'working through' of traumatic loss occurs on a psychological level through the processes of abreaction or pathology. The process of mourning is one of abreaction: the "normal emotion of grief", in which the individual in mourning will return to normal after a period of time because of natural homoeostatic levelling in the body as emotion and affect are discharged from being bound to the lost object. This is set in opposition to a pathological situation which results in melancholia where there is no discharge of affect or emotion, and the emotion remains in the system, attached to what was lost and not allowing the individual to return to normal, as affect is fixated on the lost love object (Freud 1917). Melancholia locks the mourner into a continued or repeated experience of loss, whereas the process of mourning is restorative, allowing the mourner to heal and return to normal. In other words, mastery of traumatic loss.

My work over the past few years has been concerned with 'working through' loss, like the loss of first love or a dog. At the time it seems overwhelmingly painful but in the process of making an artwork about that loss and methodically working with an image with which I have strong association through a material process, the grief subsides.

When I began this research report, my mother had already had cancer for five-and-a-half years. While my hope for her recovery never dimmed and every extra day we had was a blessing, it is inevitable with cancer (as with any terminal or long-term illness I would expect) that you begin to live that expected death every day. From the first oncologist consultation we had been told that this particularly aggressive form of ovarian cancer was only treatable, not curable. The experience of extended illness is deeply traumatic in the face of extreme suffering, notwithstanding the eventual loss – although profound, was also a relief. With her passing, I felt compelled to work through my loss within the scope of this research and working process.

I understand the psychological process of working through loss as similar to that of the social collective process of restoration: in the social collective process, the actual artwork – primary image – is under the threat of loss; whereas on the individual level, the image or artwork stands in for the actual loss – for me, this is the loss of my mother. The similarity is that each utilises a restorative process of creative preservation. Through this process, the image or artwork is re-created and becomes restorative. What is implied is that this is a re-creative process. To simplify the reading of these two chapters, I will hereafter refer to the 're-creative' process as the 'creative' process.

Since one of my requirements in this process is an image I personally identify with my loss, this chapter begins by exploring my association between the Amaryllis flower and my mother, and why this image holds symbolic value for me. This is the primary image in the process I outline above. My discussion then explores the mastery of trauma and loss at a psychological level within creative work. I establish a parallel between the psychological and creative processes, and the therapeutic possibility of using a creative process to 'work through' loss. While my own artistic process lacks the triangular dimension of the art therapy relationship between client/creator, therapist and artwork as there is no independent agent, the principle of 'working through' the traumatic event on a creative level to facilitate psychological mastery is applicable to my work. My emphasis is on the material process through which the artwork is created, which is where I diverge from Freudian theory.

In the next part of the chapter I consider this parallel relationship between the psychological and creative in relation to my work. I discuss how the process of making art is as equally important to that 'working through' as the 'loss' image. Particular to this are the qualities of repetition, delay, and surprise in printmaking, which echo the mourning process in a controlled way for me. In the following chapter I discuss these aspects of the printmaking process in more detail, specifically in relation to the process and final installation of the artworks. I conclude this chapter by exploring the conceptual and symbolic undertones of the flower image that conveys the fragility and brevity of life and loss, in the writing of Michael Taussig and the artwork of Georgia O'Keefe and Anne and Patrick Poirier.

> **Amaryllis (*Amaryllidaceae*)**
> A genus of indigenous plants which are suitable only for frost-free areas and do best in the winter-rainfall regions. Keep the bulbs dry in summer, when they are dormant. Plant in well-drained soil enriched with leaf-mould in partial shade in hot, dry inland areas and in full sun elsewhere. Plant the bulbs in close groups, with the necks just below the surface, in late summer. Propagate after flowering by removing the offsets every four or five years. Fresh seeds sown in early winter will flower in three to five years.
> *Reader's Digest Complete guide to gardening in South Africa* (378)

My mother loved her flowers. When we first moved into our house in 1985, she planted about eight amaryllis bulbs along the front porch. Over the years they flourished under her care and supervision, increasing to many times that eight. The bulbs always produce spectacular blooms around September, which also happens to be the time when Johannesburg often experiences severe hailstorms. At the approach of any threatening storm, she would become distraught over her flowers and after the storm, always rushed out to inspect them. She never cut the blooms from the bulb as they stayed their best outside on the plant and she felt they would simply wilt if confined to a vase. It seems that for my mother, these flowers were invested with the symbolic value that time and memory brings. These were the flowers she had planted and taken care of for eighteen years, but now had to relinquish their care to someone else.

Over the last few years they have come to signify a different kind of relationship to me. In September 1998 my mother was diagnosed with ovarian cancer – coincidentally the same time of the blooms. She endured numerous surgical procedures, chemotherapy sessions and four intense months of radiotherapy until she passed away in June 2004. During these six years she tried to maintain as normal a life as possible, part of this being her continued time spent doing hobbies she loved, like gardening.

Her anxiety for her flowers became worse over the last years – almost certainly the displacement of fear about her own mortality. It was almost as if these were the things whose survival she could control if she could not control her own. They became the objects of even more meticulous care whenever she had the strength, particularly when Amaryllis lily borers appeared in the bulbs during the first few years. These lily borers are extremely invasive and destructive insects. The adult moth lays eggs on the underside of the leaf that hatch into tiny black-and-white striped caterpillars which then bury themselves in the leaves. Eating the fleshy parts of the plant, these parasites soon grow and continue on their path down into the bulb where they generally kill the plant from the inside out. These parasites can only be destroyed by doses of systemic poison, in much the same way that my mother's cancer was treated with chemotherapy, from the inside out. In her inability to control her own disease, she attempted to control her flowers from natural 'disasters', seeming to displace her fear of her own mortality onto the flowers. Over time her strength failed, along with that care and control over their survival. This care was left to me – her 'green-fingered' child.

For me, these flowers speak of our relationship as she tried to pass on a mother's wisdom through a common interest. The lessons I learnt there are what I remember most. These memories, therefore, have become acutely profound in my need to contain and 'work through' the loss of my mother on a creative and different material level.

Psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Gilbert Rose explores the continuities between creativity and what is described as 'psychopathological', and the ways in which they function in response to trauma. He examines the characteristic effect trauma has on an individual, for example, in the case of a murderer or split-personality disorder, and argues how an understanding of an individual case can lead to a better understanding of how these processes affect society in general. This follows the Mitscherlich pattern I earlier mentioned in the abstract.

In his book, *Trauma and Mastery in Life and Art*, Rose describes how "the psychoanalytic and the artistic experience or process overlap" (1987; *viii*) by examining the clinical and creative process of trauma and mastery, the effect of trauma and how the process of reintegration functions, explaining that:

> Whether arising from the external world or inner hypersensitivity, trauma and the expectation of trauma results in various types of splitting . . . . Mastery is an ongoing process of integration and reintegration, endless in extent and variety. In order to attempt to master past trauma, contemporary reality, and the anticipation of future trauma, both the clinical and the creative imagination split off and repress some aspects of the past and reintegrate others. Psychoanalytic mastery has to do with widening the range of inner experience in order to facilitate as broad and deep an integration of mental life as possible (Rose 1987; *x*).

Rose uses trauma as a "general sense of overstimulation, whether due to actual massive flooding from the external world or stemming from the person's own hypersensitivity to stimulation" (Rose 1987; *ix*). His understanding of trauma thus incorporates various types of trauma, whether real or perceived, but also includes the anxiety induced by the contemporary world as discussed in the previous chapter.

Rose's conception of mastery and the integration of experience is closely related to Farrell's notion of adaptive 'relearning' to deal with trauma. For Rose, the creative process functions as a form of mastery, acting as a vehicle to process the experience of loss. It is a way to assimilate, articulate and internally process the traumatic after-effects of loss, becoming a therapeutic form of 'self-restoration' by allowing that 'organism' to return as close as possible to its original (although idealised) state prior to that trauma or conflict. Through the integration and reintegration of affect into the system, the therapeutic process allows the psyche to work through traumatic loss and achieve a homoeostatic levelling of emotion. While the creative process is itself therapeutic in many ways, the complete mastery of that traumatic event may not be possible without therapeutic supervision.

As I earlier mentioned, this guidance was not part of my own 'working through' and creative process – although professional therapy was an important step in my initial mourning process. What was more important for me was the artwork as the embodiment of traumatic experience or loss through its re-creative production, as outlined in the beginning of this chapter. In other words, how the process is important as a means of coming to terms with loss. But is also important to understand how creative production is deeply implicated in reparative or restorative psychological processes.

The way an artwork is made reflects the individual experience of trauma and helps to enable the containment of trauma and loss on a psychological level. Rose explains that "art has to do with emotional experience" (1987; 202), elucidating that:

> Both the psychoanalytic and the aesthetic experiences tend to overcome various splits that occur under the traumatic impact of inner and outer stimulation: repressed memories, isolated feelings, denied percepts. Psychoanalysis undoes repression and, largely if not wholly through verbalization, reunites memory and affect. Art counteracts denial and, through sensuous forms, reunites perception with affect. *Through different routes*, they both make affect available again for reintegration with thought and perception. *Both the psychoanalytic and the aesthetic experiences* thus *tend to restore wholeness* . . . (212) (Italics mine).

The link is that "through different routes", both processes ultimately have the same result in mastering loss. The psychoanalytical has historically been readily applied in the case of ordinary psychological healing. And the creative, as I discussed previously, has intrinsic therapeutic possibilities. Rose characterises this parallel, explaining that "both creative and clinical processes follow the fundamental psychic principle of attempting to master passively experienced trauma by active repetition" (1987; 44). The psychological and creative processes, both thus functioning along parallel paths, allow me to work through loss in different ways: in my work these processes are linked in the methodical, repetitive (but ultimately open) 'working through' of image and structure, as a form of 'restoration' and mastery which follows through in two ways: firstly in the physical working process of etching, printing and carving; and secondly at an iconographic level through the repetition of image and visual format. I will discuss both these points in greater depth in the following chapter.

The creative process has an inherent repetition in the mediation between the artist, the subject and the final artwork as Rose illustrates that:

> The creative work is a building up and melting down, again and again, a losing and refinding oneself by proxy, a rapid oscillation between imagination and knowledge of reality; in more technical terms, between primary and secondary processes, and between self-images and object images within the ego. It continues until the work itself takes on a reality and autonomy of its own, whereupon the author also becomes free (Rose 1987; 210).

The reiteration and mediation within these processes is ultimately what leads to liberated image and/or process. Kathan Brown writes that printmaking is characterised by a particular "indirectness", "a philosophy [that] involves making a mark on one material and expecting it to come out on another" (1996; 148). The process of making a print is a mediated circumstance, not only in terms of its technicalities – quite directly in that the image is reversed between plate and print, but also in that the image produced is a kind of translated experience: while this idea of mediation is certainly true of all creative endeavour, within the printmaking realm it is formalised in a different way to most other creative processes.

The image produced is not arrived at instantaneously but rather through repetitive working on the plate in a reflective way, in response to the last state of the plate. In media like painting, drawing and carved sculpture, the mark made by the artist is immediately visible. In cast sculpture, the process is seemingly mediated as the process begins with the form created with wax that will ultimately be lost in the process of making the mould and casting the final sculpture – this is the lost-wax process used to cast hollow bronzes, that was spread extensively in ancient times through Samian trade (from the island of Samos in the Aegean) who imported hollow bronzes from Egypt in the Seventh Century BCE and learnt the process. With technological improvements in more recent centuries, it has become possible to cast multiple copies with the same mould – previously, copies could be made by creating a new mould with a series of overlays on the sculpture, but these copies would not be exact replicas and most of the finer details would be lost in the copy (Freeman 2004: 49-61) [9].

Inherent to printmaking are particular qualities of delay and surprise. The delay comes specifically in making the plate as there is a 'built-in' distance for the

[9] An interesting and uncomplicated discussion around bronze casting historically in Greece and Italy, that talks about different processes and includes illustrations, can be found in the chapter "Creating Quadrigae" (49-61) of Charles Freeman's *The Horses of St Marks* 2004.

artist. This distance is lacking in many other disciplines. Here there is no instant mark from ink or paint on the surface. The marks laid on the printing plate may be immediately visible, for example, when the surface is scratched or cut to make an impression. When etching the plate in acid though, the marks take time to emerge on the surface covered in layers of bitumen, wax and rosin, making their presence even more intangible. While these surface marks are apparent when the plate is finally cleaned and ready for printing, they cannot come close to the surprise of seeing the first proof pulled from the plate wherein all the subtleties and intricate details of the plate are revealed.

In my work, the mediated process is a retrospectively conscious repetition in an attempt to 'work through' and 'master' my loss. It is not necessary to characterize this process as either grief or melancholic – what is more important is that the outcome of this process is mourning. The image of dead amaryllis flowers become the markers and the means of translating and mediating my loss.

The relationship between flower images, violence, death and life, is fairly prevalent; and is explored in depth by anthropologist Michael Taussig, in his article 'The Language of Flowers'. Taussig writes that "Like life, only more so, flowers are beautiful and fragile, and this may be why so many people consider them appropriate for death and even more so for disaster" (Taussig 2003; 111), mentioning a New York Times article by journalist Barbara Stewart wherein she comments on the abundance of bunches of flowers throughout New York in the weeks after the World Trade Centre attack on 11 September 2001. Contrasting these with the number of flowering city gardens that seem increasingly discordant within a city context, Taussig cites Stewart's questioning of these flowers' fragility and place within this context by explaining that:

> " 'What's more fragile than a flower?' asks her informant, the aptly named Michael Pollan, whom she describes as a writer on botany and a philosopher and goes on to quote with regards the value of flowers as lying with their being useless. 'Flowers are a luxury,' Mr. Pollan said. They're not useful . . . You don't worry about flowers until you've solved a lot of other problems in life.'" (*ibid.*).

Taussig goes on to argue that "when disaster strikes, the useless becomes useful" (*ibid.*). And it certainly seems to me, that for my mother these 'useless objects' held a particular resonance as objects onto which she appeared to have displaced her affect.

Flowers are useful in a biological sense as necessary to the continued existence of a species, not merely as beautiful forms or organisms in nature. Yet they also appear in many human social engagements – weddings, relationships, and funerals – as symbolic of continued life but also inevitable decay and death. They are the declarations of love and regret, and signs of affection, which people take home to beautify space. Or simply because they feel guilty for leaving them behind and wasting someone else's money. My mother would have said that homes continually filled with fresh flowers are markers of wealth and extravagance. When someone dies, family and friends send expensive bouquets to convey their heartfelt wishes. But at the time, despite the kind thoughts they convey, they really are a nuisance because you end up spending an hour everyday giving them water to prevent them prematurely dying, while these 'beautiful' flowers drop pollen, petals and leaves, ruining furniture and tablecloths; and they still die. My mother hated the fact that flowers died. So much so that as a child I remember only silk flowers in our house. The real flowers stayed outside in the garden, while inside were the ever-present reminders of mortality.

The purpose of my creative process is not to psychoanalyse my mother or myself, but to 'work through' my mourning using that object I associate most strongly with her. This 'working through' presents itself in the "active" and conscious repetition of process and image. Together with the intrinsic qualities of printmaking, it has resulted in much unanticipated reflection visible in my work. These 'useless' objects have symbolic value in the memory of her care which I carry. Historically, however, the flower image as signifier has deeply layered levels of meaning.

Taussig writes of the symbolic nature of flowers as discussed by Georges Bataille in his 1929 essay 'The Language of Flowers':

> He [Bataille] compares flowers to human sex organs, stamens and petals directed towards the sun, and the essence of their beauty owes much to the fragility of their life. Doomed to die almost as soon as they bloom, they wither sadly on the stem in rank disorder, eventually falling to the ground from which they came (Taussig 2003; 118).

Flowers are connotative of life: they convey immediacy, brevity and hence also death. The eternal struggle between *Eros* and *Thanatos*, love and death. The common adage relates that the only certainties in life are death and taxes. I recently heard a psychologist comment that she was treating two-thirds of her patients for death anxiety. In the United States during the mid-seventies, Dr Elizabeth Kübler-Ross (1997) initiated a movement to help alleviate death anxiety, by providing counselling and therapy programmes addressing bereavement and grieving. In her own experience of the loss of family members, she found that nothing in her academic studies as a doctor and psychologist had prepared her to deal with death, and so began to set up various discussion groups, which later grew into programmes and centres, that could open a space for dialogue around death issues. In her book, *The Wheel of Life: A Memoir of Living and Dying* (1997), Kübler-Ross relates the various experiences and problems, at times violent resistance, that she encountered. This movement has since become known as thanatology; "the study or science of the experience of dying and bereavement" (*Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopaedia* 1983, Vol.25; 290).

Death is that ultimate loss against which we all vainly hope, and the acceptance of inevitable loss in death is usually denied and repressed until circumstance makes resistance no longer possible. Here again is the human impulse to preserve life and wholeness, and to prevent or contain decay and loss. The need to create, whether to write a book, build an architectural edifice or bear children, is often viewed as an attempt at immortalising one's self. It is another impulse to leave behind some marker in the world that you existed, had some importance to someone and have not simply been forgotten. To be forgotten is surely to be completely lost – or even worse, to never have been.

Yet it is precisely on this premise of family memory that burial practices are now changing in parts of the world. I read (but unfortunately cannot remember where) of graveyards somewhere in the world, most likely European, which are filling up so rapidly that the burial procedures are changing to accommodate the influx.

Instead of permanent grave sites, caskets will be exhumed after a certain number of years, the skull and femur retained and placed in a mausoleum. Seven generations later these remains will be destroyed, as it is believed by this point you will no longer be remembered by your living descendants. In Greece this practice is already done in part as bones are stored in an ossuary or bonehouse. So much for being remembered, or leaving something to be remembered by. Like that of pressed and dried flowers: a futile attempt to preserve something of the beauty that was while living, so that it, too, should not be forgotten. To return though to the subject of flowers, they are objects of loss and death.

But they are also objects of reproduction and sexuality, and therefore life, being the sexual organs of the flower that enable its procreation. Art depicting flowers was commonly read as the evidence of sexual excess, as in Georgia O'Keefe's flower paintings of the early thirties (Wagner 1996). Anne Wagner writes that O'Keefe's art presents "a site where fantasies of an unbridled feminine sexuality and the female orgasm can be enlisted to stand as surrogates – no, as the vehicles of – an imaginary male experience of potency" (Wagner 1996; 44), and cites Clement Greenberg's dismissal of O'Keefe's work for "indulging in 'private worship and the embellishment of private fetishes with secret and arbitrary meanings' " (Wagner 1996; 73). However, the flower as subject should not be so narrowly construed as a sexual thing. These fragile objects may allude to other things.

Wagner's discussion approaches another aspect of O'Keefe's work, suggesting that these paintings were representations of the artist herself. A point that seems to have been lost amongst the excitement surrounding the rise of a female artist at the time. Wagner quotes Judy Chicago as having said that “in her [O’Keefe] paintings the flower suggests her own femininity, through which the mysteries of life could be revealed” (Wagner 1996; 45). Of course, Chicago adopts a biologistic and essentialist viewpoint on the feminine subject.

21. Georgia O´Keefe *Black Iris III*, 1926, oil on canvas, 91.4x75.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of New York; Alfred Stieglitz Collection (1969). © 2010 Georgia O'Keeffe Museum/ Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

But this proclamation of O'Keefe's work proceeds from a particular context. Chicago apparently requested O'Keefe's permission to make her the subject of one of the plates in *The Dinner Party*, 1979 [10]. The plate was to depict a vagina from rim to rim – a reference to her flower paintings that were often read as giant vaginas. O'Keefe refused, remarking that that was not what her flowers were about (Wagner 1996; 45-7). Incidentally, Chicago's official website (www.throughtheflower.org, visited 29 October 2007) states that each plate in *The Dinner Party* "features an image based on the butterfly, symbolic of a vaginal central core". Maura Reilly, founding curator of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum, New York, where The Dinner Party was permanently installed in 2007, explains further that:

> Chicago specifically chose to use vaginal or "central core" imagery for each of the plates in order to demonstrate that the one thing that united these forgotten historical subjects at the table was that they all had the same genitalia. Her aim was to reclaim and celebrate that mark of women's "otherness," replacing connotations of inferiority with those of pride, and to create a "new visual language" with which to express women's experience (2007).

And that "Chicago, too, insists that her vaginal imagery be read not literally, but metaphorically, as an active and powerful symbol of female identity" (*Ibid*.). While the critics breathed sexuality into O'Keefe's pictorial surface abstractions, Wagner accounts for O'Keefe's flower studies as meaning "that the flower is not

[10] Chicago's installation The Dinner Party was first exhibited in 1979, and is regarded by most critics as a significant example of the American feminist art movement of the 1970s. The artwork represents 1038 women from history, both mythical and real. It consists of a large triangle table, with 13 place settings along each side, with a total of 39 women in chronological order from prehistory, through Judaism, early Greek society, the Roman Empire, early Christianity, the Reformation, the American Revolution, Suffragism, and ends with the Georgia O'Keefe setting. Another 999 names are engraved into the Heritage Floor beneath the table. Critical opinion is varied, but the work was received well by the general public and toured extensively regardless of opposition (Reilly 2007).

simply an object to be looked at but a world to be lost in" (1996; 64).

Anne and Patrick Poirier's photographic registrations are similarly a world to be lost in. Their catalogue *Fragility* (1997) deals with "ephemerality and the frailty of things and their chance to survive" (Sonnabend 1997; 6). The Poirier's photography focuses on a twentieth-century existence born out of violence and devastation – the world as that delicately fragile place experiencing extreme trauma in the contemporary moment, closely tied to the fact that we can destroy

22. Anne and Patrick Poirier *Fragility*, 1996, cibachrome on aluminium, 170x110 cm. © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

(Top left) 23. Anne and Patrick Poirier *Blessure*, 1996, cibachrome on aluminium, 170x110 cm, 50x40 cm. © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris
(Top right) 24. Anne and Patrick Poirier *S.T.*,1996, cibachrome on aluminium, 170x110 cm, 50x40 cm. © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris
(Bottom) 25. Anne and Patrick Poirier *Die Trane*, 1996, cibachrome on aluminium, 96x119.5 cm. © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

the whole world as I discussed in the Introduction. Sonnabend writes that the common thread throughout their work is the idea of *vanitas* and “the allegory of archaelogical ruin” (*ibid.*). In *Fragility*, they present several photographic series’, with titles such as *frailty*, *siècle infernal*, *incisions*, *profondeur de champ bloody*, and *dead flowers* (see images 13 to 18). All are close-up cibachrome photographs of red or white lilies inscribed with words signifying this trauma: sex, war, wounds, ruins, exile, hunger, *etcetera*. The images are arrestingly beautiful, almost botanical documents but for the words ‘etched’ into the flowers’ surface. These words appear as scars, carved and burnt into that fragile surface, most often against a blood-red backdrop that carries this notion of violence in a more direct manner.

26. Anne and Patrick Poirier *Le mots sont des ombres,* 1996, cibachrome on aluminium, 100x200 cm. © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

27. Anne and Patrick Poirier *Wounds,* 1996, cibachrome on aluminium, 170x110 cm. © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

Their flower images signify the loss they have experienced both personally and collectively, but are made because of a "need of REGISTERING [sic.] these ephemeral compositions, destroyed just after the photographic registration. Another fragile and ephemeral composition replace[s] the preceding one" (Poirier & Poirier 1997; 71). These compositions are staged after a systematic process in which "we [Poiriers] observe objectively, we collect press clippings, fragments of images, fragments of sentences, odd objects, vegetables, and we stage these elements that symbolise what we feel about the world" (*ibid.*). Their artwork and process demonstrate a need to create an aesthetic registry of the impact trauma has, a need to:

> stress intentionally the superficial, the elegant, the aesthetic, while in the inside a world in decomposition is hidden, a world that rots, a world that deteriorates, that explodes in spite of its static aspect, a world that explodes and decomposes. AESTHETICS OF DISAPPEARANCE[sic.] (Poirier & Poirier 1997; 72).

Their "aesthetics of disappearance" speaks to an attempt at highlighting and making loss visible. In other words, they feel the need to recognise loss so that it is not forgotten or conveniently ignored and swept under the carpet, so to speak.

While I attempt to work through my loss by using an image representative of my loss, the Poiriers' use their creative process to emphasize the loss experienced in their own lives and that of the contemporary world due to violence. The extreme existence of the twentieth-century has imparted a sense of transience, giving way to the idea that nothing lasts in this fragile world and more things are lost every second. The loss the Poiriers' feel most is the death of the moment and what is lost in that moment. Utterly irretrievable, for them it exists now only as a snapshot memory and the photographic image remains as the record of that moment. Their photographic tableaux are destroyed as soon as the image is taken, while their flowers, as real living objects, will soon die incised and scarred. The Poiriers' work reveals the restorative impulse in a different way to that of restoration by making the fleeting and fragile visible and the loss palpable. Within my own work, it is instead an active 'working through' to achieve mourning.

In this chapter, I have explored various theoretical aspects which are closely tied to my own practice. I began by looking at Freud's conception of the related processes of mourning and melancholia. I understand my 'working through' process as one of mourning, wherein the intrinsic therapeutic possibilities of the creative process help to assist the process of psychological mastery. Within this are two fundamental elements for me – that of the primary image, the Amaryllis flower, which stands in for my loss and is 're-created' through, secondly, the actual process of 'working through' which requires some form of mediation.

In this chapter I shifted my focus from the collective aspect of the first half of the report to look more at the individual aspect of the creative as a way of 'working through' loss as a 'self-restorative' process. In the brief autobiographical section at the beginning of this chapter, I looked at why I had chosen the Amaryllis flower as my primary image because of my association between the flower and memory of my mother. This image is essential to my re-creative process of working with my own emotional loss.

I then discussed Rose's argument regarding the continuities between psychological mastery and the creative process and its therapeutic possibilities. This is important in how I see the creative process of working though loss as restorative. Herein, parallel processes of integration are engaged to work through traumatic loss: loss is meditated and integrated, the desired outcome being mastery thereof. The implication in this process, for Rose, is the involvement of repetition and mediation. In response, I found these to be key elements in the medium of printmaking which was part of my own creative process.

Undeniably, image and process, while distinctly different parts of my 'working through', are inexplicably bound to each other through the actual process of making work, how I use printmaking and its qualities of repetition, delay and surprise to relate and encourage the parallel established between the creative and psychological dimensions. The parallels that Rose identifies between the clinical and creative processes, can also be linked by a third parallel – that of the collective experience and 'working through' of loss which I have discussed in the first two chapters of this report.

This is the link between the social collective and individual aspects of this report, in the idea of restorative work as a relationship between these two processes. In the social collective, art has immense symbolic value as the record of history and culture. The continued presence of the artwork is understood as necessary to that culture as the loss of the artwork would be congruent to losing a piece of history. Therefore we guard against and preserve loss by continually restoring and conserving artworks. In the individual, art is used as a therapeutic device to guard against loss through a process of creative preservation and 'working through' to master that loss. The notion of the restorative is the key in this relationship.

In the last part of this chapter, I explored the flower image and its symbolic value within an art historical context in relation to the work of other artists, like Georgia O'Keefe and the Poiriers'. Most importantly, that the flower image is emblematic of far more than just my memory, but historically engages the dialectic of life and death, reproduction and therefore also loss. The ephemerality and fragility of existence is transmitted through the flower image, and it has been used by artists in allegorical communication. In the last chapter of this report, I will discuss my final body of work in depth, as the outcome of the 'working through' process I have explored in this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR
Amaryllidaceae

My 'working through' process was realised in a series of four works that reflect the concerns I discuss in this report, and in particular in this chapter. The body of work was exhibited as *Amaryllidaceae* during April 2005 at the Substation Gallery at Wits University.

The first work is an etching which functions as a key reference for the three other large-scale works of wax carvings, wax on paper and blind embossings. While all stages of the various processes are essential to my 'working through', I chose to exhibit only the finished artworks as the realization of this process would ultimately be in achieving the completion of the process of mourning. Therefore, with the exception of the carvings, the finished work was predominantly confined to paper as the outcome of the lengthy processes involved in printing.

Certain aspects of installation are critical in supporting not only the process but also in maintaining a dynamic but coherent exchange between works. The consistency of colour is crucial here. In my use of paper I wanted to retain its crisp white quality throughout the body of the exhibition. The etching, however, has different technical requirements and as such, is the only work of colour. Space and lighting also play a significant part on the final installation and conception of the work. As will shortly be evident, I required a huge volume to accommodate the scale of some works but also more intimate spaces for others. These requirements were met within a 'white-cube' gallery space to encourage that whiteness which could be accentuated with controlled lighting.

For me, titling works is also significant in giving an indication of their process and my intention. I decided to use the Latinate tradition of naming plants because of the flower image. The etching is simply called *Amaryllidaceae*, from the family name of the amaryllis. The other three works are called *Ratio luctus una: repetitio*, *Ratio luctus duo: mora* and *Ratio luctus tres: inexpectatum. Ratio luctus* literally translates as process or method of mourning. The numbers of the respective works in the order in which they were made follows this. And lastly, the three qualities I discussed earlier as inherent to printmaking and central to my mourning process: repetition, delay and surprise (the direct Latin translation of *inexpectatum* is 'a thing unexpected', as the word 'surprise' in translation has more of a sense of admiration, rather than suddenness or unexpectedness) [11].

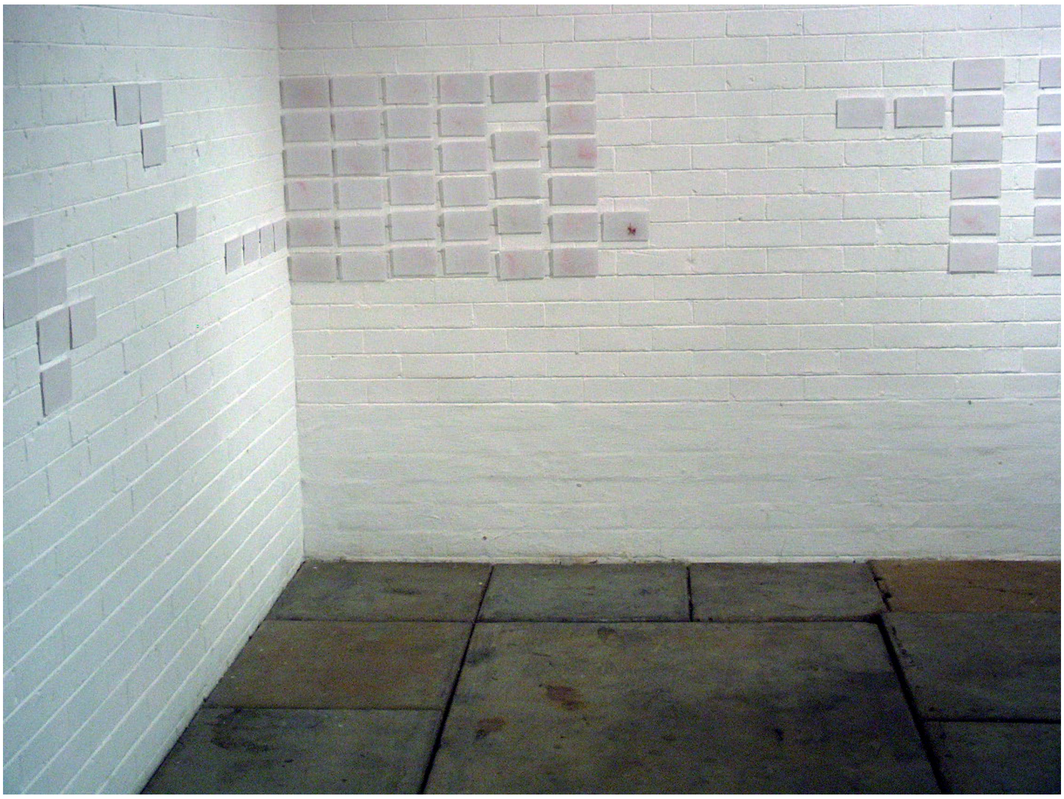
My process began with the etching *Amaryllidaceae*. I worked with traditional *intaglio* etching processes, employing hard ground, aquatint and burnishing to acquire a delicately textured surface, and completed the print with an intense red *chine collé*[12] over the petals of the flowers. In making the plates, I reworked them over five different states, repeating each technique until I had obtained the desired effect through the different layers. Here there are six panels of varying widths

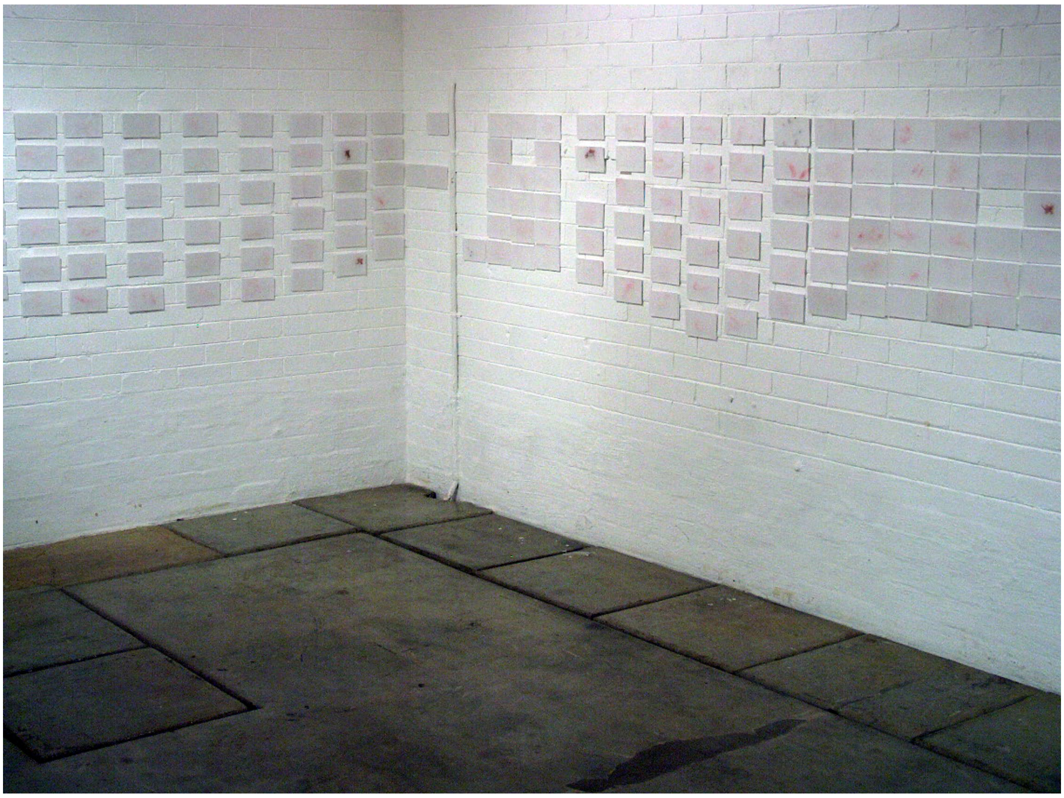
[11] Many thanks to Laura Banducci for these translations.
[12] ¨*Chine collé* was developed by nineteenth-century European printmakers as a way to use thin Chinese and Japanese papers for printing without employing Asian mounting techniques. The papers are exceptionally smooth and print sensitively, but they are made to be mounted, not to stand-alone. *Chine* means 'Chinese' and *collé* 'glue' in French, and in the *chine collé* process the paper to be printed is backed with water-soluble paste before its face is laid on an inked plate on the press bed. Then a strong, dampened paper is laid over the pasted sheet. When the press is run, the thin paper is printed and adhered to the stronger sheet at the same time¨ (Brown 1996; 79).

28. Jeannine Howse *Amaryllidaceae*, 2005, etching and *chine collé*, Artist Collection, © Jeannine Howse

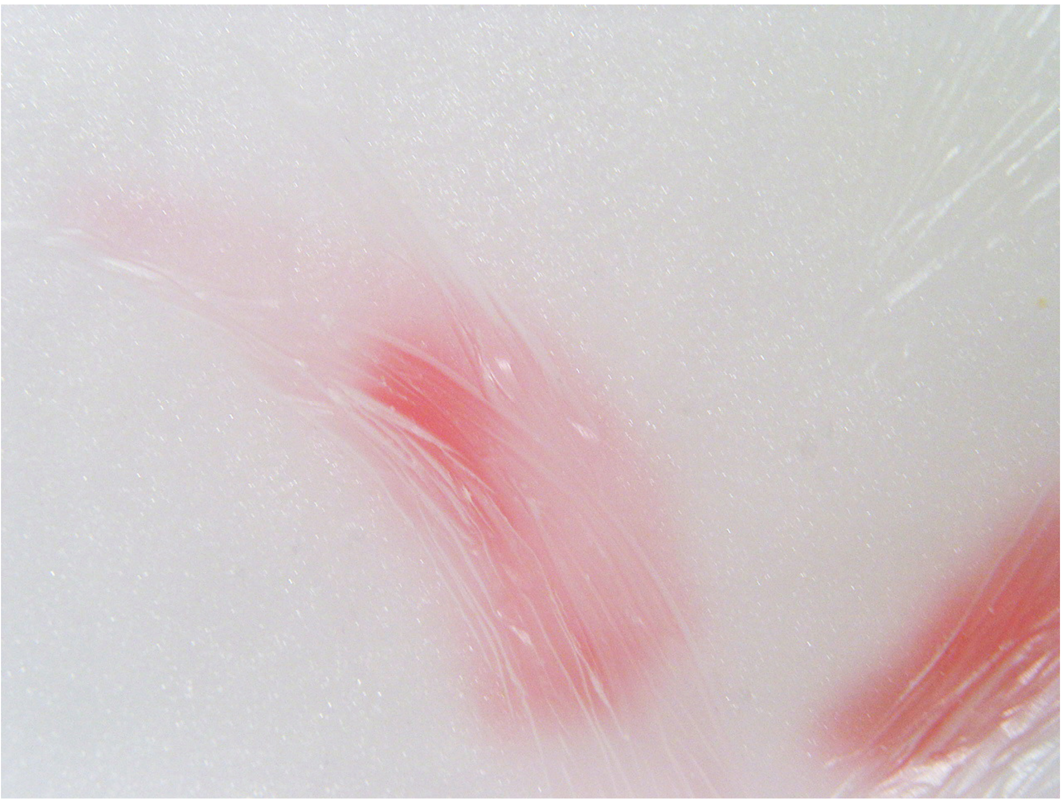
corresponding to the six years of my mother's illness in terms of the width of the plate or the way the flowers are worked on the surface. This idea of the passing of time is carried through to the other works. Repetition also continued in printing an edition. In the other three works the idea of repetition is mostly carried in a more visual way, unlike the conceptual and process repetition of the etching.

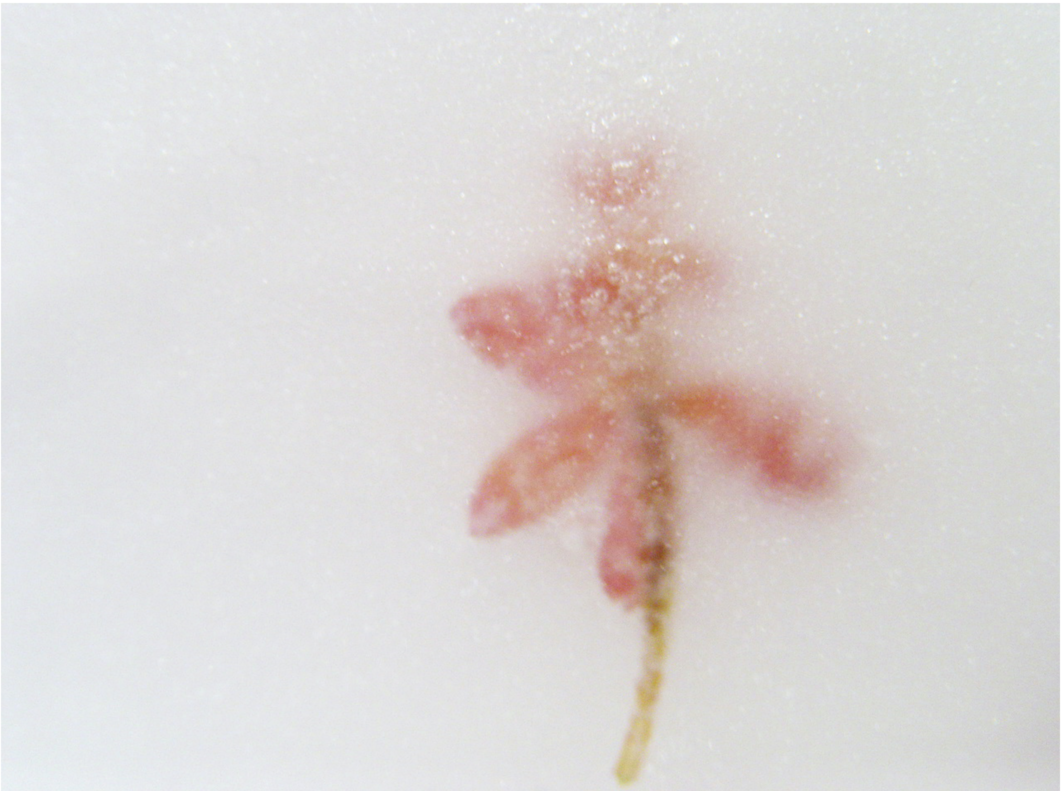
The second work, *Ratio luctus una: repetitio*, was an installation of carved wax blocks. Each block was the size of a postcard and into the surface I carved an Amaryllis. The blocks were hung in sets of sixes along the walls of a room, finally making up a twelve-meter walk. This work was a personal narrative of the previous six years of my mother's cancer, with each metre related to each six-month period along that continuum – the six-month unit being the approximate length of each chemotherapy session. Being so directly related to this sense of narrative, the carvings differed between blocks. At times the lines are so deeply carved they seem to go right through the block. Other lines barely scratch the surface. Some flowers are scraped into the surface as a shape lacking any detail. Some blocks are left bare. These blocks are also incredibly tactile and encourage a desire to touch the wax surface and feel the marks, almost enhancing the sense of intimacy in the space. The surface of the wax, as it puckers and wrinkles when it cools after being cast, resembles skin. This degree of tactility is the particular nature of the wax I use. Chinese semi-transparent wax has a luminosity that almost glows as light bounces off the cast surface, carved edges, areas rubbed smooth by contact with other blocks and the wrinkles on the reverse.

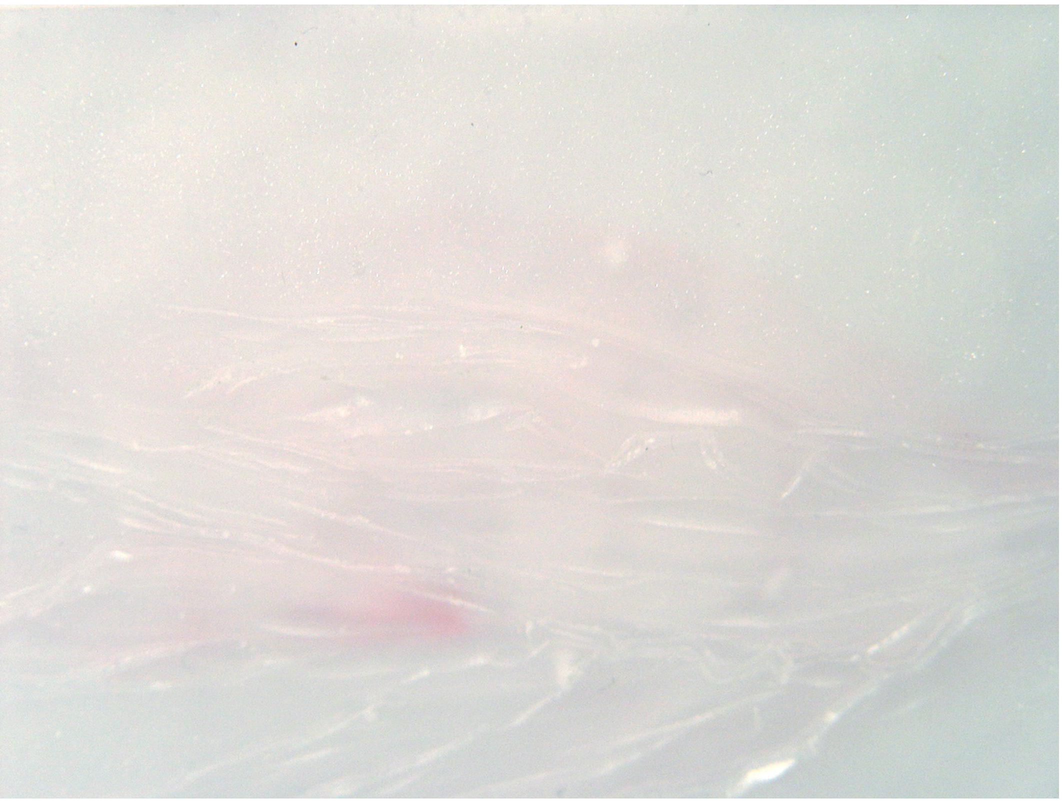




29-34. Installation views and details (following pages) of Jeannine Howse *Ratio luctus una: repetitio*, 2005, wax, ink, paper, Artist Collection, © Jeannine Howse







The translucency of this particular wax also allowed me to work with an image behind the wax, thereby making the subtle intonations of the red Amaryllis a possible aspect of the artwork. A faint ink drawing of the corresponding flower was affixed to each block and was visible as an opaque pink form through the wax. At first glance, it seemed as if your eye is playing a trick on your mind as the evenness of the white wax on the white walls concealed the delicate colour. The blocks almost disappeared into the surface of the wall, yet still emerged as distinct objects. It took a more prolonged examination to discern the image and incisions, and in the time spent looking it became apparent that the smooth edges of each block, not always matching the crisp paper edge, created a harsh disparity between the two surfaces on the wall.

The relationship between a personal narrative of time and the work also followed in the hanging of the blocks. The sets are spaced differently throughout, moving from huge gaps to being tightly pressed together on the horizontal and vertical planes. This became more obvious as the thickness of the blocks varied. The repetitive, almost ritualistic, nature of the carving made this work a deeply meditative process. The flowers were carved over and over again, achieving as much intricacy and immediacy as time allowed. Each block became a strange testament to my loss, and someone even remarked that they look like mausoleum plaques. In some sense, these flowers became the records of a remembered life.

In *Ratio luctus duo: mora* and *Ratio luctus tres: inexpectatum* the flowers again shift in the space. From the quiet, intimate details of *Repetitio*, these two return to the structural format of the etching. Each work consisted of six panels of cotton rag paper of varying widths. The panels were all five metres in length but hung four metres off the ground and dropped to the floor in a roll. These artworks were hung opposite each other as they encouraged the viewer to develop a dialogue between their differences, similarities and the shifts in continuities.

In *Mora*, the flowers appear as a series of transparent marks on the paper. This was achieved by the application of wax onto the paper with batik tools – basically drawing with melted wax. The oil base of the wax makes the paper transparent when applied, and the process of melting the wax, drawing, re-heating it to be absorbed by the paper, and finally scraping sections off, gave the paper this sheer effect. *Mora* is so named because of the delay in the process of making the work. The size and scale made it impossible to work with the paper fully exposed. So I worked on half-meter sections at a time. Not only was it just too big to properly view or obtain the translucency outside the gallery environment, for purely cosmetic reasons it was imperative to work on a reduced scale. The white quality I wanted for the artworks had to be maintained by working in a clean environment and not exposing the paper to dust and dirt. The first time it was possible to see the artwork as a whole was when it was hung. The work in its entirety, paper and gaps, measured approximately seven metres across.

35-37. Installation views and details (following page) Jeannine Howse *Ratio luctus duo: mora*, 2005, wax on paper Artist Collection, © Jeannine Howse

Inexpectatum on the other hand was much narrower as the individual panel size was limited to the width of the press bed. These panels were covered in blind embossings, and the surprise or 'unexpectedness' lay in the appearance of the sheets which on closer inspection, were revealed to be covered with distinct impressions. Another trait of printmaking is that the high pressure forces indentations into the damp paper from the surface of the plate and press-bed. This not only makes prints easily distinguishable, it also permits the surface to be embossed. The fine paper I used (200 gm^2 instead of usual 290 gm^2) and the nature of my work (because I am not fond of brash heavy qualities which would overshadow the delicacy of the flowers) required that I work with a very thin surface into which I could cut and mark the flowers to obtain more subtle embossings. I chose to work with my mother's x-ray plates. Six years of CT-scans and check-ups left hundreds of x-rays behind. I cut the flowers into the celluloid, and then ran these 'flowers' and their offcuts through the press. I embossed numerous layers of x-rays, sometimes just a single sheet or the press bed itself, continuously along the panel length. The front side of the paper was left with a deliciously smooth surface but defined contours, while the reverse was rough due to the impressions of the thick felt (used to protect the press and plates during printing).

The variations in width between the two artworks accounted for huge differences in the installation. *Mora* hung in heavy straight drops from top to bottom with big rolls that swayed when caught by draughts as the paper was wider and had been heated while being made. The panels of *Inexpectatum* were much narrower and, because the paper was dampened during the printing process, were constantly

38-41. Installation views and details (following pages) Jeannine Howse *Ratio luctus tres: inexpectatum*, 2005, blind embossing, Artist Collection, © Jeannine Howse

affected by changing weather conditions and gravity during the course of the exhibition. When first installed the paper hung at fluctuating heights from the floor in tight rolls. But, as the humidity changed the heights of the rolls steadily dropped over time. This also affected the vertical edges of the panels as they curled toward each other, increasingly each day, and eventually appearing to be solid pillars from behind. The curling also enhanced the shadows of the embossed edges and changed the shadow of the edge of the paper on itself. By the end of the exhibition, the two shadows had crossed each other on the front surface of the panels.

In all the artworks, light was an important aspect of their display. The wax required light to allow the luminosity and reflections to appear. In *Mora*, the paper was made transparent by the melted wax and needed ambient light and back lighting to shine through that translucent surface, or reflect off the reverse. The embossings of *Inexpectatum* needed obtuse light to highlight the ridges and impressions which would otherwise have been invisible. The desire to touch the surface was apparent here too, from the smoothed paper of the embossings to the sheer quality of the wax oozing from the paper's surface when not quite fully absorbed.

The installation space was also critical, as *Mora* and *Inexpectatum* required an immense volume and delicate lighting, whereas *Repetitio* and *Amaryllidaceae* needed a more intimate space without other visual distractions. The ephemeral nature of the materials themselves, as impermanent, sensitive and easily destroyed, articulates the transience of life and impact of traumatic loss. The work is inestimably quiet but also profound, making huge demands on the viewer. Time has to be spent looking and thinking to realise the nature of the process in the final result, and appreciate the value of gravitas, light, space and tactility which intensify the 'working through' of loss in this process.

In my work, the flowers are no longer 'real' as the Poiriers' are, although real flowers are sometimes embedded in the wax. Instead, the flowers resonate my memory of my mother in one image, worked repeatedly into the surface. In one work, the image is carved into the surface of wax, cut after cut. In another the wax is made molten hot as it melts into the paper's surface, leaving transparent marks that take the shape of these flowers. In the last work, the image is physically forced into the paper in the form of blind embossings. Here, the image of the flowers, cut into my mother's x-ray plates, interrupts the paper's surface through a series of ridges and depressions as the plates shift from numerous layers to nothing but the press-bed.

Throughout my work, these surface disruptions remain subtle and meditative, constantly requiring a closer look and encouraging a desire to touch the surface. These 'obsessive' marks, despite their subtlety, cut into the surfaces of my work in a process which leaves them scarred and bearing the traces of damage. Yet these same 'scar 'marks create the image and become impressions of the loss I attempt to master through my 'working through'. While this image is intrinsic to my loss, for me it is the process of making the artwork and ultimate installation and display that is even more important, as it is within this framework that the impulse to restore is revealed.

CONCLUSION

During a public discussion led by Susan Sontag in March 2004, entitled 'Photography, Politics and Ethics', the issue of censorship within the American media post-9/11 was raised. Sontag answered briefly that the day after 9/11, all photographs of the Twin Towers deceased were banned from publication. She explained further that photography of the ceremony for the return of deceased U.S. soldiers at the Dover military base has also been banned. Journalist Tim Harper explains that "If there are no pictures of caskets being delivered to U.S. airbases, citizens don't think of them, [American government] analysts say". The censorship has extended to the point that caskets are now called 'transfer tubes' (Harper 2003). Apparently you do not miss what you do not know. While this can immediately be seen as symptomatic of the post-traumatic culture I discuss throughout this report, I raise this point for another reason.

Censorship regarding war photography is not a new concern. Alex Danchev (2004) recently wrote of how photographer Roger Fenton was instructed not to take pictures of dead bodies in the Crimea during 1855 (11). The problems regarding the censorship of war photography are long-standing, especially as it has often not been evenly applied (*ibid.*). The censorship is generally only applicable to the coalition forces. In the case of the American war on Iraq (2003), photographs of the Iraqi dead have not been censored in the Western media. Sontag suggests that this is about the appearance of wholeness. The absence of the sight of bodies allows the public to forget about the war – to forget that

Americans are also vulnerable. If ‘we’ only see dead Iraqis and not dead Americans, it must mean that ‘we’ are winning. And thus the nation effectively appears to be whole and not subject to traumatic loss. An effective strategy whose sole goal is about maintaining this appearance, although it is achieved through denial and deception.

This is linked to the psychological impulse for preservation. Both are on opposite ends of a scale of cultural vulnerability. In the case of censorship, it is about keeping something unseen, while for restoration, it is about keeping something seen. Out of sight, out of mind, lost forever. If either were reversed, there would most likely be critical traumatic stress for the anticipated or actual loss to Western culture.

In the first part of this research report I examined the psychological impulse to restore on the social collective level through the process of restoration. A form of trauma is collectively experienced by damage to an artwork through vandalism, when exposed to the predations of time or ‘bad’ and insensitive restoration. The artwork is subjected to injury. Through neglect or natural decay the object may also suffer some other kind of violence which is then exacerbated by the process of restoration, itself an inherent kind of violence, although necessary to halt further decay. The artwork is felt to be worth saving because of its symbolic value, historical record and the auratic presence of the authentic ‘original’ artwork.

The necessity for this reparative act seems to be generated by general cultural anxiety which is symptomatic of post-traumatic society. The cultural motivation for visual art restoration is that in the restoration of artworks, the loss of the artwork is contained or an attempt is made at its containment (the artwork is never completely safe from future damage or attack). This helps to avoid the cultural anxiety that might or would be felt at the anticipated or actual loss of the artwork by containing the loss to that society, culture and future generations.

The second half of this report explored the impulse to restore on an individual level. Here I understand the creative process as restorative in the therapeutic possibilities it engages to work through traumatic experience and loss. It acts as a form of creative preservation through the re-creation of the image or artwork associated with loss. This was realised within my creative process by 'working through' the loss of my mother in a series of works of flowers based on printmaking techniques which employed qualities of repetition, delay and surprise similar to my mourning process. The process is restorative in its containment of my loss.

I conclude this report with one last thought raised by Walden. In Western culture's rush to ensure the survival of ancient artworks, we are creating another problem. As Walden explains:

> Old paintings are in limited supply. Today we are restoring so much and so radically that many prudent and sensitive collectors and craftsmen have sought over centuries to preserve, or that chance has spared us. By our selfish zeal and overweening attitude to the past, we may be depriving our children of the joy of making their own reading of it (Walden 2004b; 25).

Considered thought needs to be directed toward this situation and produce viable solutions for the future and continued survival of artworks of great symbolic value.

Appendix 1: About Restoration

The confusion that restorers have experienced when examining artworks that have previously been restored is generally due to a lack of written history regarding art restoration. According to Oddy, there are virtually no records of the details of restorations prior to 1960. At times in texts, mention is made of a particular art work being restored and by whom, but these are rare. Even in the British museum, which is regarded as having the finest restoration practice (Kelly 1972; 38), there are no detailed records prior to 1960. Historically, restorers were rather furtive about their processes. Each had their own way of mixing chemicals and materials to achieve new finishes or glues, and they guarded their formulas closely (Walden 2004b; 20).

Over the last fifty years though, art restoration has developed into a vast field with many different specialisations according to different forms of visual art, media and techniques. Consultation between professionals has often been required to work out the best and safest way to complete a restoration project. With academic institutions offering restoration and conservation as part of their programmes, instead of solely working under apprenticeship, a demand has been created for written texts on the processes of restoration. This demand has been answered, and there are copious amounts of publications and journals. But these texts seem only to address the technical aspects of restoration and conservation. Very little actually explicitly addresses the cultural issues of restoration. My research through several libraries, and even a restorer's personal library, has only produced three which address some of the issues at hand.

I also took the search online. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) online library was the most useful. A quick search of restoration presented a vast array of books discussing the technical aspects to museum practices, the conservation and storage of objects, and an almost equal amount of books pertaining to the theft of art objects, international syndicates, tracing stolen art, and so forth. But still nothing that explores what drives the social motivations for restoration.

This point is interesting when one considers the worldwide interest in the preservation and conservation of heritage sites, cultural objects and art. As I mentioned in the introduction, a very limited scope of literature is available, although more and more is available online compared to when I began this Report. To reiterate the point: hundreds of texts are available on the subject of the restoration and conservation of art and heritage, but I have yet to find anything explaining directly why it is that we feel the need to restore. The closest thus far is Walden's recently re-released book *The Ravished Image*, which addresses the technical aspects and attempts at exploring restoration as a cultural phenomenon.

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