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Ann Shelton was born in New Zealand, she currently lives in Auckland city. Her work has been shown widely in public institutions, commercial galleries and artist-run spaces within New Zealand and overseas. Prior to her career as a visual artist Shelton worked as a press photographer on The Dominion and The Dominion Sunday Times in Wellington. Her book *REDEYE* was published in 1997 by Dewi Lewis Publishing, England. She is represented by Starkwhite and Paul McNamara in New Zealand and 1.6 Gallery in Vancouver Canada. Ann Shelton is the 2004 Govett Brewster Art Gallery New Zealand artist in residence.

Chris Kraus is the author of *Aliens & Anorexia*, *I Love Dick* and the forthcoming novel, *Tarpor*. A book of her art essays, *Video Green: Los Angeles Art and the Triumph of Nothingness*, will be published in June 2004 by MIT Press/ Semiotexte. Recently, she has written catalogue essays for Andrea Bowers, Sam Durant and Julie Becker, as well as numerous pieces for *Index*, *Bookforum*, *Art in America*, *The Nation*, *Artext* and other magazines.

Gwynneth Porter is a writer living in Auckland. She is a member of the organising committee of *Cuckoo*, an itinerant artist-run exhibition project. This year she has written catalogue essays for budd et al's *et al arguments for immortality* project at the Govett-Brewster Gallery in New Plymouth, and for Judy Darragh's *So you made it?* retrospective project at Te Papa in Wellington. She has also had work published in *Mute* magazine. She was the editor of *Log Illustrated* magazine from 2000-2, and is presently co-editing the first issue of a new art reviews magazine, *Natural Selection*.

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COVER IMAGE: *Doublet*, (After Heavenly Creatures)

Parker/Hulme crime scene, Port Hills, Christchurch, New Zealand, 2001 Diptych, C Type Prints, Ed. 1/5, Collection of University of Auckland, New Zealand.

PREVIOUS PAGES: *Seacliff Hospital (pre 1917)* Neg # E4694/42A, Hocken Library, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago, Dunedin

FINAL PAGES: Otago Daily Times, 10 December 1942, pg 4

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# CON TEN TS

04/05

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# Hulme sorry over murder

Yvonne Martin

Juliet Hulme, now best-selling crime writer Anne Perry, has apologised for her "wicked, wicked deed" in helping murder her brother's mother in Christchurch nearly half a century ago.

Hulme, now 54, has emerged from anonymity at her home near Invercargill after recording a television documentary with British crime writer Ian Rankin on the nature of evil.

In an interview with the *Telegraph* newspaper, Hulme said she had tried to put the murder out of her mind.

"Have you been ashamed that you are at fault. That you have committed a wicked, wicked deed. Have you got you are sorry. Truly, truly sorry. Have you got the grave. Then you must put it behind you. There is no other way."

Hulme, who was given a death sentence by New Zealand authorities on her release from prison at a 21-year-old in 1959, is now standing down her close relationship with co-murderer Pauline Parker.

Hulme, 15, and Parker, 16, became known as the "Glasgow murderers" after they killed Elizabeth Parker in Victoria Park in the First Hills in June 1954, and burnt her body with a half-brick stuffed into a washing.

"On the occasion of murder, Perry told the *Telegraph*: "It was violent and it was quick."

Ms Parker's body was found scattered on a washed tin 8, with 40 injuries, mainly to her head.

The girls initially told Mrs Parker fell, but they were found guilty by a jury who rejected their defence of insanity and their spent five years in separate jails.

Retired detective Eric McLachlan, 75, who was on duty on the day of the murder, remembers the girls' names attached. As a young officer, he visited the Hulme household in Han with his father to talk to the girls.

"I didn't think we were going to get anywhere, the way they were carrying on. They were just abhorring," said Mr McLachlan.

He said the girls appeared very close. "There was talk around the office. They gave the impression that they were having sex."

On the murder scene, Mr McLachlan said "It was a bloody mess. It was violent. They certainly could not get the words 'I committed a wicked deed'."

Police Inspector Robert Hunter, 50, remembers looking



**Killer's lament**  
Juliet Hulme breaks her silence

after the girls when they were brought into the court for sentencing.

"They were sitting in the office. I was typing up a report on my portable typewriter and the girls was going. They were just crying. I was a little bit surprised," he said. "A lot of people who have committed murder worry about what's happened to their victims."

Perry said she obtained her presence at the sentencing because Parker had stood by her when she was sick and she feared Parker would take her own life. "I was stuck between a rock and a hard place. I just had to try."

However, the late Brian McNeill, who was prison director-general at Hulme, said in an interview that Parker was wrong along by seven and did whatever Hulme said.

Perry told the *Telegraph* her worst nightmare was her time at Mount Eden prison in Auckland.

"Every few months there would be a hanging. I would watch the women leave for jail... I would have been one. Every time it would have been me."

But her jail sentence may also be a signpost of imagination, said police historian Howard Young, who presided over the book *Crimes on the Gallows*.

"I notice that Minnie Dean, the Winton 'Baby Farmer', was the only woman to have been hanged in New Zealand in 1901."

"She [Perry] writes fiction, so maybe her life is very much around fiction," said Young. "She would certainly talk about the dream world that they were in. The night still to be in a dream world."

Southland Times, 16 May 2001

## Southland Times May 16 2001 Minnie Dean

EVEN today, after more than 100 years, the Winton baby killer Minnie Dean exercises a strange fascination with Southlanders. Her story is well stamped on the Southland psyche and is one which young Southlanders learn early. In earlier and less enlightened times, it was used as a warning to bring about good behaviour in recalcitrant children.

It's not surprising then that the Southland District Council considers it inappropriate, even rare, to erect a headstone over her grave, or to mark it in some way.

Among those interested in the macabre, a suitably marked grave would have a fascination and could attract people to the Winton district. But it could be an incitement to vandalism and for this reason it is better that it remain unmarked. Perhaps in another 50 years...

# STATEMENT

06/07

Anne Perry (AKA Juliet Hulme) is a prolific mystery writer who lives in Scotland. Her Victorian mysteries are top sellers. Perry's titles include *Resurrection Row*, *The Silent Cry*, *Highgate Rise* and *Paragon Walk*. But it was the exceptional murder that she committed along with her teenage friend Pauline Parker that shocked New Zealand society and the world at large. Almost forty years later Peter Jackson brought the story of this deadly episode to the cinematic screen when he made the film *Heavenly Creatures* in 1994.

In 2001 I began photographing the series *Public Places*. One of the images in the series depicts the path on which Anne Perry committed the murder. North of Daytona Beach in Florida I photographed another Cimmerian scene, the road where Aileen Wuornos disposed of the body of the first man she killed.<sup>1</sup> In Australia I made an image of the majestic and ghostly Hanging Rock,<sup>2</sup> and later, in New Zealand, I augmented this ongoing series with an image of the Seacliff asylum where Janet Frame, one of New Zealand's most celebrated literary exports was a patient. I then went on to photograph the black back, a featured location in Keri Hulme's Booker prize winning novel *The Bone People*.

What these images have in common is not their status as crime scenes. Much more specifically, these are places where egregious and ill-fated events took place, or were purported to have taken place; spaces where urban myths were born and then exported beyond through the mediums of cinema and the novel.<sup>3</sup> Scenography is representation using perspective points and a scenario is a narrative written for motion pictures. The scenarios pinpointed and reframed in *Public Places* are scenes from New Zealand, Australia and the U.S. Some-what disquieting and out of kilter with seminal narratives of national identity, these are anxious stories full of panic and ghostly pitch.

HISTORIC SEACIFF  
LUNATIC ASYLUM  
1892



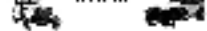
THIS BUILDING WAS  
DEMOLISHED IN 1992

This was the site of New Zealand's  
largest and most famous psychiatric  
hospital situated in 1892

From 1892 till 1992 it was the site of  
New Zealand's largest public building  
As a public mental hospital it was a  
pathway for the history of the New Zealand  
psychiatric system from the 1890s to the  
1990s

THESE BUILDINGS WERE BUILT FROM  
1892 TO 1992

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HISTORIC SEACIFF  
LUNATIC ASYLUM 1892



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Asylum Lodge Flyer, Front

Asylum Lodge Flyer, Reverse

# INTERVIEW

08/09

Conflating fiction and reality they articulate cultural traumas and isolate symptoms. They are evidence of our dread.

Collectively these images invoke the project of myth making, producing and amplifying existent fissures through their presentation as inverted stereoscopic views. Installed as mirror pairs they question monocular vision and foreground the role of the camera in the construction of fields of representation. The documentary impulse is coupled here with a kind of bad detective work, producing a fiction mediated through popular culture. Fiction and reality conflate, marking out the relationship between projected desire and the conception of events that is central to our fascination with cinema and photography.

By inserting a hushed violence into the anorthoscopic leisure zones of cinema and the novel, these sites become points of crisis on several levels. Disorder splits the scene geographically, historically and formally.

Paradoxically there is nothing there; nothing but a banal and empty site.

Ann Shelton 2003.

<sup>1</sup> Aileen Wuornos was executed on death row in Florida late last year.

<sup>2</sup> In the film *Picnic at Hanging Rock* several young debutantes on a school outing fail to emerge from the crevices of the rock formation.

<sup>3</sup> The film *Monster* is currently being made about Aileen Wuornos. The motion picture *An Angel at My Table* tells the story of Janet Frame's life.

TRUE CRIME

a conversation between Ann Shelton and Chris Kraus

Chris Kraus: I remember seeing your book *Redeye* – Giovanni Intra brought copies of it when he moved to Los Angeles. The book gave Auckland a kind of glamour. I was struck by the way it defined a scene that was part club-kid, part family photo album. The way people posed, and who they chose to be photographed with.

Ann Shelton: Yes, I juxtaposed places and people. Prior to that I'd been a photojournalist and this impulse links all of my art practice. One of my art projects, *Abigail's Party*, documented the apartment I was living in. I made it look like a set, and shot it according to conventions of cinema. But I've always been interested in the conventions of documentary photography as well and what those conventions mean.

Chris: And then in *Erewhon*, the people just disappeared. It was all landscape.

Ann: I was living in several different countries then. I was travelling between New Zealand and Canada, and spending a lot of time in Los Angeles. There are bits of people in the *Erewhon* pictures – fists and thighs – but never a complete body.

Chris: It's like you were displaced after *Redeye*, and had to create your own scene. One that was portable, that could happen inside your head, and inside your camera. How much does the series have to do with the Samuel Butler novel of the same title?

Ann: I'd been to Mesopotamia Station where Butler wrote the novel as a young teenager. And then I came across the book again. I like the way the book takes certain pathologies and inverts them, creating new social codes. In Butler's *Erewhon* if you get sick, you're incarcerated.

Chris: Yeah, and if you commit a crime you're taken care of.

Ann: Everything is disrupted. With those snapshots, I was interested in how pathologies are written into different objects and actions – and how disparate things can be brought together into a visual iconography.

Chris: After that, landscape became a very important part of your work. I'm thinking of *Public Places*.

Ann: Yes – I started that series around the same time I was shooting *Erewhon*. It features some of the same places. There's an image of the *Heavenly Creatures* crime scene in the *Erewhon* series as well, shot from a different angle. I think in both of these series I'm looking for this bizarre interaction between myth and daily life.

Chris: Which in a sense is also what you were doing in *Redeye*...

Ann: Yes – and in *Public Places* I'm looking for a geography of myth in places where I grew up, and in other landscapes as well.

Chris: What kind of myths are we talking about here?

Ann: Oh, I like urban myths. I grew up in the South Island, and we never forgot that the *Heavenly Creatures* crime took place so close to Timaru. You grew up hearing about these two girls who had killed the mother. I also grew up hearing about Minnie Dean.

Chris: What did she do?

Ann: Minnie Dean lived in Winton. She was what they called a "baby farmer." The "baby farms" were places, usually run by women, where wealthy young mothers could place their illegitimate children. The practice wasn't exactly legal, but it was somewhat condoned. There were many of these "baby farms" in the English colonies during the late 19th, early 20th century. Sometimes Minnie Dean used to collect these unwanted babies on the train to Dunedin. She would bring

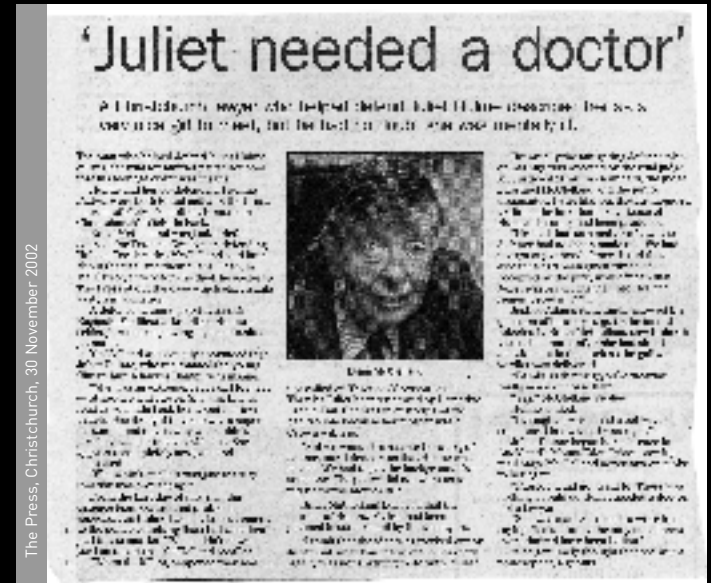
them back in a hat box, because she couldn't be seen coming back with a baby she hadn't left with. There were children's bodies found in her garden. One of them, they say, had been suffocated inside the hatbox. Others may have been the victim of accidental overdose with opiates, which were used then as sedatives. When I was a child, grownups would say "If you don't behave, I'll take you to Minnie Dean." They named a poisonous plant after her as well.

Chris: All of the images in *Public Places* document crime scenes or violent events, fictional and non-fictional. I was reminded a bit of Thomas Demand. But your photos are different – they're very sensuous and mysterious, whereas the pictures he takes are more architectural, clinical, cold.

Ann: Yes, in my pictures I actually don't even know sometimes if I've got the right places, they could be a little bit wrong. I followed all kinds of instructions to find these places; practicing a kind of ad-hoc detective work. Minnie Dean's grave is unmarked, and I'm not sure if the picture of it in the *Public Places* series is exactly the right place.

Chris: And yet looking at your pictures, one can always sense that something has happened there. It's a strange kind of displacement, a feeling something is wrong. I wonder if what we are seeing is really your own desire, that brought you there.

Ann: The image is always reversed. There is a kind of violence in them, via perspective. They do represent a point of slippage. I'm drawn to that gap between perception and cognition, that gives people room to wonder what's happened. Yes, these are images of a space where something has happened, but in another sense, they are just an ordinary bit of landscape, just another banal place in the world.



The Press, Christchurch, 30 November 2002



Southland Times, 16 May 2001



Womens Day, March 31 2003







***Doublet, (After Heavenly Creatures)***  
***Parker/Hulme crime scene, Port Hills,***  
***Christchurch, New Zealand, 2001***  
Diptych, C Type Prints  
Edition of 5  
Installation view, Belkin Satellite Gallery, Vancouver,  
Canada, 2003

***Tracker, (After Picnic at Hanging Rock)***  
***Hanging Rock, Australia, 2002***  
Diptych, C Type Prints  
Ed.1/5, First Title Pacific Collection - New Zealand

***Laudanum, Minnie Dean's unmarked Grave***  
***Winton cemetery, Southland, New Zealand, 2001***  
Diptych, C Type Prints  
Ed.3/3 Chartwell Collection, Ed.2/3 Southland Museum  
Collection, and Ed.1/3 Private Collection - Australia

***The Black Bach, (After The Bone People)***  
***The Kaik, North Otago, New Zealand, 2003***  
Diptych, C Type Prints  
Edition of 5

***Trespass, (After Monster)***  
***Daytona Beach, Florida, USA, 2001***  
Diptych, C Type Prints  
Edition of 5

***Cell, (After An Angel at My Table)***  
***Seacliff Asylum, North Otago, New Zealand, 2003***  
Diptych, C Type Prints  
Edition of 5

PL <sup>14/15</sup>  
AT  
ES























# WRITING

37/38

Miasma

Gwynneth Porter

"Darling, why do you work?" my Grandmother once asked me. A very good question. A very good question indeed. This was when I was twenty and I had no good answer for her. So I stopped working (not that I had ever done very much) and decided to devote my time to observational research into that which coincides, collides, coalesces, constellates, or helps me learn how strange things really are; or might get. I simply insist that there is more. Thirteen years on and my understanding is sketchy at best, embryonic, but I have hope – where one's mind goes, so it grows... You never know, one day I might generate a critical mass that makes me dematerialise with joy.

On top of a pile of things on my desk I have a newspaper clipping from the *New Zealand Herald* back in May about a court-case proceeding against a group of West Auckland gang members and associates charged with the large-scale manufacture and distribution of methamphetamine. That in itself was not remarkable – P is a bull market – but it was the character of the supposed ring leader that caught my attention. The jury listened to 600 hours of transcribed telephone calls recorded in his living-room, and on this tape they heard him call himself a time-traveller. Moreover, he later stated to Police, "We can liken ourselves to all types of beasts. You can liken me to the kingfish."

Research to me is a jewel, but it is another man's delinquency. (How could any different outcome but "delinquency" be expected from calling someone Dorothy? From then on it was all yellow brick roads through poppy fields. Dorothy was also the name of my great aunt,

known as Totty, the youngest of a family of fading aristocrats. She gassed herself in Napier as an elderly lady tired of looking after her invalid husband. Dorothy used to cast spells, was part of an illegal Mah Jong school, and pioneered "wee resties", a daily habit I would like to see become a cultural treasure.) But what care have I when I am entertaining a most enjoyable suspicion that even the way we experience time is changeable. Considering topics like this is surely a more interesting occupation than, for example, tedious old real estate.

Capitalism, it is convincingly argued (see, for example, Negri's *Time for Revolution*), altered the fabric of the time of life so that it merely became time-as-measure. But how can one study time? Such a study requires time itself, so it becomes a tautology of the order of subjects like neurology and how it studies the brain with a brain; or photography that addresses itself as trope; or eating jellied tongues. Perhaps, I am venturing, the greatest advances in the study of time are being made by those society writes off, namely criminals. Maybe by virtue of eschewing dead labour (jobs), conventional decorum, being excited and hypervigilant, hyperassociative states are available. I have a distinct feeling that these states provide a certain potential for temporal plasticity.

Negri himself was labelled a criminal and jailed by the Italian (modern Roman) government as a consequence of direct political action. I would hasten to add at this point that I do not wish to be associated with the general bourgeois (if you will forgive the use of Marxist terms by one committed to genteel poverty) fascination with crime. I have taken pains to cultivate actual involvement with works of crime in an affectionate and empathetic manner. In the mainstream, the public tends to glorify

crime, and thrill at the works of art that picture it. But paradoxically, criminals themselves are despised. I take seriously the traitor Jean Genet's request that artists not take crime and use it as ornament.

Yesterday (or should I say "yesterday"? I noticed a newsprint poster in a wire cage outside a dairy saying "drugs case collapses" and I wondered if this meant the proceedings against the men I had been reading about. Perhaps the chaos generated by the group had rendered processing them impossible. Or perhaps time travel had played a part in this evasion of the so-called Operation Flower. If so, how had it worked? The first thing that comes to mind as I ponder time manipulation is a site-spell involving drawing a kingfish with an Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music pencil on the back of a detective's business card and putting it in a German hardware store's plastic bag with the store's squirrel mascot on it and then tying it to an elm tree in winter in which an escaped caged bird had been sighted.

I construct spells automatically, following obediently as I do the tenets of Pure Psychic Automatism. More considered models for time machines have of course been provided by physicists (and latterly, theorists), but they are not the only ones to have done so. Embracing crypto-fetishism as a form – the yin-yang compliment to ficto-criticism – Auckland artist Daniel Malone put forward his "12 models for time travel" in *Log Illustrated* in 2000. The most compelling of these to me was his 12th: "A silk handkerchief is folded in half six times and a lit cigarette used to burn a hole through every surface resulting in 32 holes." I especially like the silk handkerchief component to Malone's model as it is a dandifying accessory. I like to imagine our time-traveller with one. He then

would correspond with both of Baudelaire's modern types – "criminals and dandies".

If time-travel indeed has something to do with speed, perhaps there is a burgeoning time-travel movement here in New Zealand – long a country of pioneers of gutter drugs, as substances like methamphetamine are known by virtue of being manufactured at home in makeshift labs. It appears we are a nation of people with fairly plain tastes and tolerance for all sorts of crudeness and neglect, as evidenced in our architecture. Take the police stations in our main centres, for example. Their design is prefabricated in style at best, except the newish one in Dunedin with its unfortunate neo-Nazi stylings. When I look at this building, or buildings like it, I think of the Sylvia Plath poem "Every Woman Loves a Fascist".

I am presently considering researching the tension between the over-designed cars of the New Zealand police and their woefully under-designed uniforms; mainly in terms of an extension of Albert Loos' *Ornament and Crime* (1908), i.e. "the evolution of culture is synonymous with the removal of ornament from utilitarian objects". I say mainly, as I deviate from Loos somewhat; I am not interested in demonising crime. It is merely my contention that their ridiculously ornamental cars make the police somewhat criminal themselves. I have a friend who thinks that the tyre-track pattern on their cars makes them look like they have been symbolically run-over. By their own denial maybe.

This conflation of police and crime should come as no surprise as, after all, there is no crime without the police. For this reason, it has been argued that the police should stay out of vice, and that governments should quit asking them to. (The great

sexologist Wilhelm Reich, in *The Discovery of the Orgone: the Function of the Orgasm*, wrote that "compulsive morality and pathological sexuality go hand in hand".) But they can't stay out of it – the police love crime, we've seen their excited eyes. Genet himself, the proud petty criminal, fantasised about policemen for this very reason – he saw his own intense criminal desires mirrored in crime-aroused gendarmes. He surely wrote for the police too when he said "I prepared for my adventure as one arranges a couch or a room for love; I was hot for crime". (I have also recently discovered that Genet was once arrested and imprisoned for stealing silk handkerchiefs.)

I feel that the neon and pastel excesses of Miami Vice expresses the policeman's condition best. In each episode we see the cop's powerlessness over his desire for action and his pain acted out to Phil Collins ballads. These Michael Mann-directed alternative music videos surely spell out how "hot for crime" we are as a people given the popularity of the crap cop show as a genre. Which is why it was weird that I heard a romance novelist say this on the radio yesterday: "People who read romance want romance in their lives. People who read crime fiction want justice." Bunk! They want crime.

But back to he-who-shall-be-likened-to-a-kingfish. I have been considering, in terms of typography, illuminated first letters, specifically the letter I. They are perfect for getting across the self-centredness what I imagine to be the time-traveller's sad reality – being an entity hurtling through whatever it is that time-travellers hurtle through. (Speaking of time-travel, one of the strippers at The White House calls herself Delorian. I wish for a polystyrene or cardboard *Back to the Future* GMC Dalorian as a prop for her.) But illuminations aside, plain writing with

no special effects is a mysterious and powerful act of intention in itself. Language is indeed a powerful entity – it wasn't for nothing that Wittgenstein called schizophrenia "the bewitchment of our intelligence by language".

Words are the basis of most spells after all; at the very least things can be brought into and out of existence by writing them down – you are welcome to try. The ancients knew this; and it has only been since the Enlightenment that the supposedly unenlightened have been encouraged to write. Literacy may be desirable in terms of the demands of "civilisation" (read global capital), but there have doubtlessly been harmful invocations perpetrated by those unaware of the power of the written word, for example, unwitting art historians. Salvador Dali had specific opinions on this matter – in *Dali on Dali* he wrote "Instead of writing a history of Art, I am writing the Art of History, since all art historians are 'average cretins' with the exception of your humble servant".

Last night I was out walking in the full moon looking for signs. I am always on the lookout, but the full moon seems to thin the thickness between me and the place or plane from which I receive information. To be clear, they are scrambled messages at best, hardly hard facts. (On a tangent, the other day I noticed on the cardboard box a data projector had been in, that the French term for this piece of equipment is <projecteur des donnees>. *Donnée* as in givens, giving, gift, as well as information. A strict French mistress at high school continues to pay off; even if she did make me sit in an oversized cardboard box made for a fridge as punishment for talking. My fondest memory there was using aquarelle pencils and spit to colour in my illustrated edition of *Bonjour Tristesse* as we read out loud.)

I am presently on the lookout for a new familiar – things are just not working without one. It may take some time, but I am prepared to wait for it to make itself apparent. I am out looking, but I know, deep in my heart of hearts, that it is not the time. A feeling of sadness washed over me as I caught sight of a neon sign on top of an early '90s corporate building that spelled out URS, which is French for bear, and which was also one of my nicknames for my dear old dog. I know we are still psychically connected as when writing to a friend to say how sad I was now that she was gone, I got a strong olfactory hallucination of grass-clippings – this is what her paws often smelled of.

Seeing the URS sign reminded me of being out walking by the river in Christchurch and walking past a skip outside someone's house. I don't normally look in them, but on this occasion I felt compelled to. On top of things that had been stripped out of a house being renovated was a small brown ceramic bear lying on its back chewing its foot. It had a beautiful egg-shell glaze and upon turning it over I discovered it was Danish studio pottery. Ah, Denmark, land of the midnight sun, paganism, Vikings, liberal post-academic schooling that does not favour marking... All areas of subject concentration, however spurious, are pregnant with possibilities for psychic traction. (Made mental note to use ceramic bear in my next incantation.)

Another thing I noticed out walking in the full moon was something I thought was very sad. There are banners out in Mayoral Drive, by the Auckland City Council, that read "Auckland, a great place to work". The imperative to work is stronger than ever – indeed poverty and mental health have become moral issues – as people try to protect themselves with cash/asset buffers. From what I can

make out, the stress hormones generated by working mean that people are not in the right headspace to receive information from other realms. Work leaves people trapped in the waking world, unable to feel their spirits; it also makes people neglectful friends as Bob Black pointed out in *Semiotext(e) America*.

Half a block west on Mayoral Drive on the Cook Street corner is the Auckland Central Police Station, an edifice built in an extremely odd style – a combination of the aforementioned disarmingly plain institutional architecture from, I guess, the 1960s, but with odd pagoda-esque flyaway roof stylings. These features are not believably orientalist as the latent racism of the interior spaces makes the decoration look more sarcastic than desirous. What makes this even stranger is that one block over is Greys Avenue, the site of the city's old Chinatown – a place of gambling and opium dens – and, in the 1990s, a century on, the address of several morphine dealers I am told. An odd pile-up of incident indeed, and more so given that apparently 100 milligram tablets are known as "greys" according to one of my sources.

[As an aside, on the subject of the Chinese history of New Zealand, my Great-Aunt Eunice had a secret. As a young woman, her family ran a market garden in what is now residential Epsom. She took one of their Chinese labourers as her lover and installed him in a dirt-floored room beneath their house. I would think of her as I weeded in my parents' garden in suburban north-west Christchurch, a 1960s suburb under the prevailing wind's cloud arch. Raspberry canes would still spring up, and the odd Chinese coin would be found harking back to the time when the district was Chinese raspberry farms. What I wouldn't give for a back-in-time-camera.]

Towards my second book, a real potboiler, I am presently developing a character, a forensic pathologist who I imagine works at the Auckland police station. In contrast to those in TV, she just doesn't care. She would not follow leads, but instead close up bodies before anyone else noticed anything untoward, and leave work early. Once home, she is a neglectful parent, and does nothing for her community at all. My choice to make this character a woman I think has something to do with how women are supposed to be nurturing, nice, kind, and good. In other words I chose to give her the emancipation to be corrupt.

When I read newspaper accounts of crimes perpetrated by women, I notice measures of societal harshness, proscription, and suspicion towards my sex. Also a marked lack of interest in the background to crime – e.g. not just the usual sexual abuse, violence, neglect, addiction and other mental illnesses, but more generally how the world drives people crazy and then punishes them most inhospitably for being sick (like in Samuel Butler's olde novel *Erewhon*, set in the South Island, a then futuristic place where many societal ideals were reversed). I think that the evil of the self-help industry is one of the things at the stem of these continuing recriminations. And at the root of this industry, in turn, is the American ideal of individual responsibility. It depends on this assertion: "It is your fault, this neurosis."

Counter to this, in a book about Katherine Mansfield on the subject of writing and madness, I found a ready-made haiku: <True neurosis is a tribute to the fact that life is difficult.> Her work has been talked about in terms of the fragment as form, or more properly the fragmentalisation of women's experience and the attendant "temporal problems". NB. These cannot be outrun by being a tomboy;

instead, like all things we are taught to be afraid of, they should be exploited as possible conditions for time-travel.

Reading about shock treatment in the *Listener* I thought of my last visit to the site of the old Seacliff mental hospital. Many of the original buildings were gone by this stage, including the huge brick Victorian institution main building. Among the extant buildings was a small one-storey modernist one that contained the remains of a huge mainframe computer. To me, it was an extraordinary processing sculptural presentation: the thing about insanity is that it does not make sense, by definition. However, it does not mean that one does not continue to try and to process the situation.

I was interested in Mansfield's, and other famous "crazy" women's stories as a sort of reverse to nostalgia; nostalgia being a warm feeling for something that never happened. I tend to prefer real feelings for something that actually happened. Warm feelings are still possible as evinced by how summer is *été* in French, and also the past participle of being. Being based on a true story is so important because "in the midst of this world which has become blurred and ungraspable, the passage of history becomes a primary element" according to Seigfried Kracauer in his 1927 essay "The Biography as an Art Form". He recommended biography in the interests of absolving oneself from "subjective arbitrariness" as a writer. [This is not to say, however, that the novel has become an artistic genre of the past. It might conceivably be resurrected in a new form appropriate to the confused world, which would mean that confusion itself would acquire an epic form.]

It is difficult indeed for any individual to raise one's head from the miasma

of quotation that is the legacy of photographic thinking, myself most definitely included. One can never really escape the cliché in photography I thought as I took my disposable panoramic camera my mother had given me to take to Venice up to Ponsonby Road to be developed. That is the easy and hard thing about photography – every photograph is a cliché. [Bad karma for soul stealing?]

And sure enough, semantics reflects the situation. According to my second-best French dictionary *cliché verre* is an old-fashioned printmaking term and it is this usage that lead to the coining of cliché to mean redundancy and commonplaceness. It was also still in French usage until at least the 1950s as a term for photographic negatives, and the metal casing of a stereotype or electrotype; also for a hackneyed phrase or opinion. But upon further discussion, I think I am of the opinion that photography is always a cliché for reasons other than its process – it has such a very rigorous set of formal conventions.

So, I hear you ask, how do I live? How very American of you. There is no family fortune any longer, so I had to invoke one. I have a decent earn coming in from a couple of ideas I put to work, one of which is an income from my ridiculous first novel called *The Futurist*. This took the world, if not by storm, by a nice sunny day with light wizard-like clouds. My trick was to make it an unstated assemblage of things people like. Like how most people get really curious about what notes on windscreens say. Or how ears prick when someone we don't know is arguing. This book reads like a vehicle being driven too fast over rough terrain – flawed, but more-ish; like Ritalin.

Another lucky thing is that I pay no rent as I am a caretaker for a historic building, a big house built by a mer-

chant the century before last. I am sure my favourite room in this building was styled on an opium den. (Curiously, there is a chemist shop in the gully at the bottom of the hill that has, several times now, had very sweet window displays using promotional material from the YSL company for their perfume Opium. I wonder what the people collecting their Methadone think of it. I wonder if they sniff the testers sadly.) Not that this interpretation is a feature of the guided tour that invades my privacy briefly on a daily basis. Members of the public are taken about and shown various details such as the spinster daughter's bedroom. On its walls are her watercolours of mountaintops attributed to her passion for mountain-climbing.

That she was a lesbian is not part of the tour either, nor was her true love mentioned as an ex-resident of this house. Their ghosts are about and I think of them as Juliet and Juliet and imagine them reaching out to each other as if touching their reflections. Baudrillard said in the late 60s that mirrors needed psycho-sociological analysis as they were, in his opinion, on the way out. Along with the family photograph – both casualties of the surging frontline of the modern he thought. Then came the 1970s and the modern went all spooky, architecture became stoned, and the mirrors were back in a surge of the neo-rococo and Memphis spatial jags.

Mirrors help deny the solidity of space and help affirm existence in the same way that smoking does. And women look in the mirror to practice smiling and check their hair and to perfect appearances, seductions. I think of women I know who vamp it up and imagine them practising tongue-to-lip movements in front of the mirror like Edie Sedgwick in one of Warhol's films, *Outer and Inner Space* of 1965. Oh it's all just a bit much for me.

I often find myself, at a certain point in my "work", usually before the actual analysis, picking leaves up in the garden instead of actually facing the production end of things. I don't have to do this – we have a gardener.

Out of all of my research areas, the piano is the hardest thing to face. I have an inkling I am from a long line of suicidal witches – and witches go to some dark places. They search slowly, but perpetually, for seats of magical power. The grand piano is an obvious example: a black trapdoor with hugely powerful magic potential. Erik Satie, who composed scores for grand piano, often wrote of sorcerers so I guess that he knew this. The Auckland Art Gallery has a Steinway baby grand that they have left alone languishing in their auditorium, but typically, for a museum – consumed by reduced economies and conservatism – it has no idea what it can really do. I saw it last week at a seminar and it was obscured by a whiteboard on wheels that had a device attached so one could print it out onto fax paper.

All those dead leaves are making me think about camouflage. Is all life activity just camouflage for the hurtling self one only meets in meditation? Is it all ornament? What is our major language and what are the minor languages? Is the primacy of awake speech over that of sleep artificial and/or useful? Why discriminate against languages of supposed delinquency? Ah, enough tidying. The neighbours' cats are still worrying me. It is winter and they hardly ever let them in. They sit out there on their wheelie bins in the late afternoon sun by "my" garage (built at the time of the very first cars). None of them will be my new familiar, I know this. None of them are on the programme in the slightest, but it does not stop me wanting to make jersey beds for them there under the eaves.



# CV

## ANN SHELTON

Masters in Fine Art, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, 2000 - 2.

Bachelor of Fine Arts, University of Auckland, Elam School of Fine Arts, 1995

Subject Co-ordinator/Lecturer in Photography, Manukau School of Visual Arts, Auckland University at Manukau, since 1996.

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

### 2003

*Nine Lives*, 1.6 Gallery, Vancouver, Canada, September.  
*Works by Ann Shelton*, Starkwhite, Auckland, June.  
*Erewhon*, Starkwhite, Auckland, May.  
*K Hole*, Lopdell House Gallery, Auckland, May.

### 2002

*Erewhon*, Ramp Gallery, Hamilton, November.

### 2001-2

Completing Masters in Fine Arts Degree, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

### 2000

*A Girl in Every Port*, Ivan Anthony Gallery, Auckland, July.  
*The Strip*, Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide, Australia, May.  
*Abigail's Party*, Adam Art Gallery, Wellington, May.

### 1998

*Cabin Fever*, an installation for Fiat Lux Gallery, Auckland, October.  
*Big Head*, Art on the Move, Bus Art Project for the Physics Room, Christchurch, July.  
*New Work*, Castle Gallery, Christchurch, July.  
*Selected images from REDEYE*, The Dowse Art Gallery, Lower Hutt, January.

### 1997

*REDEYE*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, September.  
*REDEYE*, Artspace, Auckland, June.  
*REDEYE*, The Art Annex, Christchurch, June.  
*REDEYE*, The Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North, February.

### 1996

*REDEYE*, Selected images, Teststrip Window, Auckland, May.

### 1995

*From the Waist Down*, George Fraser Gallery, Auckland, July.  
*The Intrigue of my Evening*, Teststrip Gallery, Auckland, March.

### 1994

*powder room*, Escalante Gallery, Auckland, December.

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

### 2003

*Deep-Vein Psychosis*, rm 103, Auckland, October.  
*The Waikato Art Award 2003*, Hamilton, September.  
*Portraiture: the art of social commentary*, Te Tuhi/The Mark, June/July.

*Put Out More Flags*, a Cuckoo project, Moving Image Center Gallery, May.  
*Dead Ringer*, Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland, March.  
*Slow Release; recent photography from New Zealand*, Adam Art Gallery, Wellington, February.  
*No Direct Line from My Heart to My Brain*, The Physics Room, Christchurch, February.

### 2002

*Break*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, December/January.  
*Photo 3*, Te-Wa/The Space, Wanganui, November.  
*Dogwood*, Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada, September.  
*Slow Release; recent photography from New Zealand*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, Australia, August, touring to Sale Art Gallery, Canberra, Australia, November.  
*The Waikato Art Award 2002*, Hamilton, September.  
*Suite*, The Belkin Satellite Gallery, Vancouver, Canada, March.

### 2001

*Feature: art, life & cinema*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, December 2001-January 2002.  
*Interior Horizons: Art on the Verge of Architecture and Design*, te tuhi/the mark, Auckland, October.  
*New Work*, Ivan Anthony Gallery, Auckland, October.  
*The Waikato Art Award 2001*, Hamilton, July.  
*Bright Paradise*, The Inaugural New Zealand Triennial, Auckland City Art Gallery, March.  
*Looking Back*, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington, January.

### 2000

*In Glorious Dreams*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, December.  
*Multiples*, Ivan Anthony Gallery, Auckland, May.  
*The Waikato Art Award 2000*, Merit Award, Hamilton, February.  
*The New Acquisitions*, The Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, February.  
*Mobile*, The Australian Center For Photography, Sydney, Australia, January.  
*Drive: power>progress>desire*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, January.

### 1999

*Wonderlands*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, December.  
*The Collected Works*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, November.  
*We Really Care*, rm 3 Gallery, Auckland, July.  
*Conversations*, Fisher Gallery, Auckland, June.  
*In Art We Trust*, Fiat Lux fund raiser, Fiat Lux Gallery, Auckland.

### 1998

*Necessary Protection*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, December.  
*Folklore: The New Zealander's*, Artspace, Auckland, July, touring to Sargeant Art Gallery, October.  
*Media[ti]on*], BWX, Wellington, March.  
*Sense and Sensibility*, Art Station, Auckland.

### 1997

*REDEYE*, fotofeis, The Arches, Glasgow, Scotland, August.

*New Work*, The Physics Room, Christchurch.  
*Sharp and Shiny*, The Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, June.  
*Kisser*, Fiat Lux Gallery, Auckland, May.  
*Art in the City*, Lopdell House Gallery, Auckland, April.

### 1996

*100 Bucks*, Teststrip, Auckland, December.  
*Identikit*, Lopdell House Gallery, Auckland, June.  
*Laying it on Thick*, Artspace, Auckland, January/February.

### 1995

*The International Exhibition of Art Colleges*, Hiroshima, Japan, August.  
*Stop Making Sense*, City Gallery, Wellington, April.  
*Please Give Generously*, Teststrip, Auckland.  
*Terminal*, Ambassador Theatre, Auckland.  
*Stamina*, Ambassador Theatre, Auckland.

### 1994

*Open the Shutter: Auckland Photographers Now*, Auckland Museum, April/May.  
*One Hundred And Fifty Ways Of Loving*, Co-curated by Paul Booth, Kirsty Cameron and Ann Shelton, Artspace, Auckland, February/March.  
*Erotikos*, Outreach Gallery, Auckland, December.  
 Knight Landesman at Teststrip, Teststrip, Auckland, August.

## SELECTED COLLABORATIVE EXHIBITIONS

### 1998

*Lisa*, The New Gallery Window, Auckland City Art Gallery, with Steven Ball, August.

### 1996

*Golden Breed*, 23A Gallery, Auckland, with David Scott, September.  
*Pink Bits*, The High Street Project, Christchurch, with Joyce Campbell, August.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### BOOKS

Shelton, Ann. *REDEYE*. 64 colour reproductions, first published by Rim Books, New Zealand: 1997. Reprinted and republished for international distribution by Dewi Lewis Publishing, England: 1997.

### SELECTED CATALOGUES

BY PUBLICATION NAME

*A Birds Eye View*. Malone, Daniel. Catalogue. Teststrip Micrograph Series, Auckland, July, 2000.  
*Bright Paradise*. Smith, Allan. The Inaugural Auckland Triennial, Auckland Art Gallery, 2001.  
*Dead Ringer: The Duplicitous Image*. Catalogue. Stoney, Robin. *Dead Ringer*. Gus Fisher Gallery and Auckland University, Auckland. March 2003.  
*Deep-Vein Psychosis*. Byrt, Anthony. rm 103, Auckland, October.  
*Dogwood*, Szewczyk, Monika. Catalogue. Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada, 2002.  
*Drive: Power>Progress>Desire*. Burke, Gregory and Scott, Hanna. Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, 2000.

*Feature: art, life & cinema*. Burke, Gregory. Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, 2001.  
*Folklore: the New Zealander's*. Hipkins, Gavin. Artspace, Auckland, 1998.  
*fotofeis basic*, Morgan, Chris. fotofeis 97, Scotland, 1997.

*In Glorious Dreams*. Burke, Gregory. Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, 2000.  
*Nostalgia for the Future*. Brennan, Stella. Artspace, November, 1999.  
*One Hundred And Fifty Ways of Loving*. Artspace, 1994, February/March.  
*Slow Release; recent photography from New Zealand*. Stanhope, Zara. Catalogue. Heide Museum of Modern Art. Melbourne, Australia. 2002,03-24.  
*The Strip*. Chapman, Chris. Catalogue. Experimental Art Foundation Adelaide. (Australia) May 2000.

## SELECTED ARTICLES

BY AUTHOR

Brennan, Stella. "No Place Like Home". *Pavement*, (August/ September 2000): 54.  
 Byrt Anthony, "Erewhon". [http://ramp.mediarts.net.nz/ann\\_shelton/ann.html](http://ramp.mediarts.net.nz/ann_shelton/ann.html)  
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 Gibson, Sarah. "Nostalgia as Cure". *Art New Zealand*, (winter 2001): 48-50.  
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 Laird, Tessa, "Details of Intrigue". *Craccum*, Issue 4 (20 March 1995): 37  
 McAloon, William. "Seven Go Wild in Wellington". *The Listener*, 5 April 2000: 54.  
 McAloon, William. "Review: Abigail's Party". *Sunday Star Times*, 4 June 2000: F6.  
 McFarlane, Kyla. "Slow Release: Recent New Zealand Photography". *Art New Zealand*, no.107 (Winter 2003): 48-51.  
 Magner B.L. "Slow Release". *Photofile*, no.67 (December 2002): 55  
 Mahoney, Elizabeth. "It's all and something", *Make*, no.78 (December 97 - February 98): 22.  
 Peck, Aaron. "Auto Instruction". *Front Magazine*, Vancouver, Canada, Volume XIII, Number 3, May/ June, 2002.  
 Porter, Gwynneth, "Bare Bones". Catalogue. *Dead Ringers*. Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland. March 2003.  
 Porter, Gwynneth, "A Girl in Every Port, Ann Shelton and LACE 2, Yvonne Todd." *Like*, no. 13 (2000): 55-56.  
 Paton, Justin. "Postcards from the edge". *The New Zealand Listener*, Volume 159, no. 2986 (26 July - 1 August 1997): 40-41.  
 Paton, Justin. "Straight to the heart of it". *New Zealand Herald*, 3 October 1996.  
 Scott, Hanna. "Dead Cert, the After-Effects of Dead Ringer". *New Zealand Journal of Photography*, Number 51, (Winter 2003): 23-24.  
 Stead, Oliver. "REDEYE, by Ann Shelton". *Art New Zealand*, no.84 (spring 1997): 84.





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