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JOSEPH NOONAN - GANLEY, J N G, D. PHIL FINE ART 2017

THE CONTAGION OF DESIRE:

TWO CASE STUDIES OF APPROPRIATION ART

Joseph Noonan-Ganley

St John's College & Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford

DPhil Fine Art, Michaelmas 2017

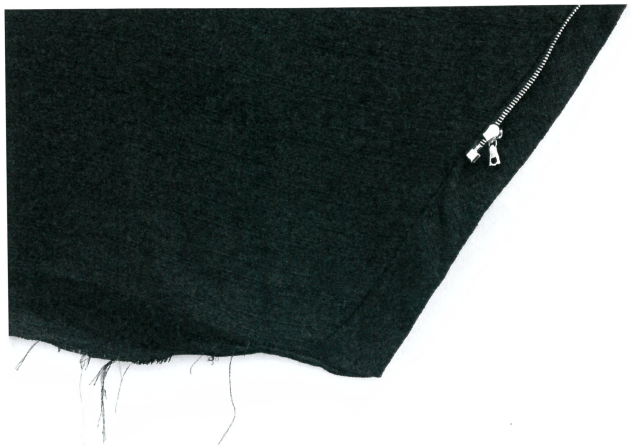
IMAGE REPOSITORY 1A

photographs

Extract of 4 photographs (from a total of 79) taken of the textile elements in *The Cesspool of Rapture* on 27th April 2017.



Photograph number 13 of 79.



Photograph number 21 of 79.



Photograph number 23 of 79.



Photograph number 31 of 79.

ABSTRACT

The Contagion of Desire: Two case studies of appropriation art.

Joseph Noonan-Ganley
St John's College & Ruskin School of Art. DPhil Fine Art, Michaelmas 2017.

My doctoral thesis is comprised of two bodies of research: two artworks taking the form of installations (videos, audio recordings, textiles, texts), which will be exhibited for viva.

Femme Fabrications, 2016, is made from research into the American artist Joseph Cornell's (1903–1972) source materials held in the Smithsonian American Art Museum alongside research on Jean Wilkinson's 1977 book *Flower Fabrications.*

A series of textile works encased in silk lined boxes trace my step-by-step construction of a rose from organdie. The floral emblem of the white rose (dried), '*death is preferable to a loss of innocence*',[1] becomes an editing device, which I use to consider a number of possible recipients for the rose, such as Cornell himself. Spoken word audio recordings, which ruminate on how his sexuality pertain to the criteria of the rose are edited together with home-camcorder video footage of the house that Cornell lived in for most of his life – the house he made the entirety of his artworks within.

Central to *The Cesspool of Rapture,* 2017, are moving-image studies of zippers, stains, rips, abrasions, openings, and closings in a series of dresses made by the American couturier Charles James (1906–1978). These videos register and move through the material research, the garments, at alternating speeds. The changing speed is registered in sound by clicks synced to each individual frame. It is at times violent and at other times tentative and gentle as the uncovering of the damage to the dresses unfolds. Audio recordings of James explicating his interests in eroticism and sexuality persistently interject the footage.

This work includes the installation of a series of reconstructions of James's 1932 *Taxi* dress. Its black linen body is reconfigured and abstracted as the splayed design makes unfinished seams and unzipped zippers visible.

In each artwork I configure viewing and consuming as a mode of authorship. I show how these diverse processes of identification become authored acts. When drawn into intimate relation with the leftover material of these historical authors, my contamination proves deviant: I gain possession of the capacity to speak for them, to expose, idolise, misrepresent, and fictionalise them. My thesis is composed of this group of methodologies, which were found and developed within the production of the artworks.

Keywords: Appropriation Art, Installation Art, Art Writing, Fiction, Video Art, Voice, Joseph Cornell, Charles James, Rose, Zipper, Sexuality, Desire, Couture, Clothes.

1 Kate Greenaway and Jean Marsh, *The Illuminated Language of Flowers* (London: Macdonald and Jane's Publishers Ltd.,1978), 68.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you,

Elizabeth Price and Katrina Palmer for your rigour, guts, and generosity. Nina Wakeford for solidarity and structure, friendship and gossip. At the Ruskin School of Art particularly Martina Schmuecker for making things happen.

The Arts Humanities Research Council and St. John's College, Oxford for the studentship and research grants. Without your financing, I wouldn't have been able to undertake this research, never mind conduct such a diverse range of field trips, which fed my project throughout.

Sam Keogh, Frank Wasser, Linda Stupart, Oisín Byrne, Laura Morrison, Claire Potter, and Susan Conte for your ongoing support and criticism.

Betsy Anderson and Denise Wamaling at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, for your patience and hard work digging through the mass of material at the Joseph Cornell Study Centre. Without your dedication my research at the Smithsonian wouldn't have made any findings.

Rebecca Jagoe, for your early support on the *Femme Fabrications* text. Andrew Hardwidge, Jason Dunne, and Ciarán Ó Dochartaigh, for feedback on the first draft of the piece.

Anne Tallentire and Chris Fite-Wassilak, for pushing me to develop live works, especially through your episodic events *hmn*.

Eoghan Ryan, Zuzanna Ratajczyk, Caitlin Yardley, and Harald den Breejen, for your interest and enthusiasm, which led to opportunities to develop *Femme Fabrications* in exhibition form.

Gianna Ricci at the Brooklyn Museum Libraries and Archives, for regularly pointing me in the right direction, and helping me uncover textual material in other institutions. *The Cesspool of Rapture* wouldn't have got legs without your assistance in networking.

The community of curators at Clothworkers Centre at the Victoria & Albert Museum, whose knowledge, experience, understanding, and sympathy with my project allowed me to undertake in-depth research on impossible dresses.

Tom Dillon, for your analysis – you are my closest reader.

Fiona Byrne, for your uncompromising company.

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LIST OF EXHIBITIONS

The following artworks will be installed at the Ruskin School of Art, Bullingdon Road, Oxford, on 29th June 2018:

Femme Fabrications, 2016

Video projections, 5:21 min, 7:03 min.

Loudspeakers, audio recordings, 3:53 min, 4:45 min, 6:12 min.

Oak boxes, textiles, metal wire, paper, cardboard, makeup, pins, floral tape, quick drying clay, ink, masking tape.

The Cesspool of Rapture, 2017

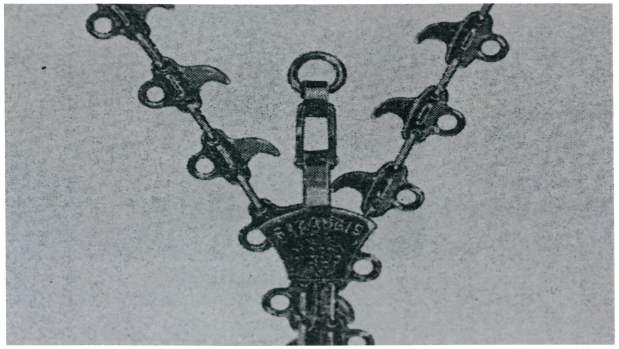
Video projection, duration variable ~ 20 min, (episodic).

Charles James's seamless 'Taxi' street dress, (series), linen, wool, cotton, polyester, zippers, dressmaker's pins.

IMAGE REPOSITORY 1B

video stills

Reproduction of six frames extracted from the video element (.2 – 1637 FPS) of *The Cesspool of Rapture*, 2017.



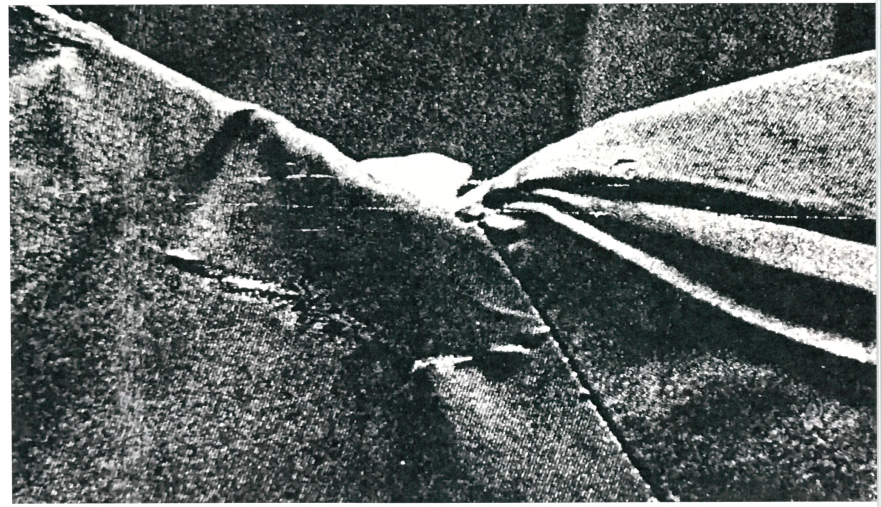
Frame number 107 of 32462.



Frame number 406 of 32462.



Frame number 9120 of 32462.



Frame number 14925 of 32462.



Frame number 25227 of 32462.



Frame number 31023 of 32462.

DEAR READER

I'd like to take the opportunity to identify you, or at least name you and categorise you in institutional roles, as I see them. This may seem a little direct, or irrelevant, but in the course of my research I've found that naming participants, including myself, allows me to position characters, knowledges, desires, and voices, which then animate and narrate, allowing the art to arise from disparate materials and mediums. You will participate in the life of this institutional document, and because of that it seems impossible for me to conceive it without conceiving you. My artistic research demonstrates that acts of reading and viewing are also acts of shady authorship, therefore I cannot help but suggest that your involvement must be characterised in this way too. You are the community of readers, who will both fuel and reconfigure this document. You are a community brought together only by your participation in the economy of this document.

In chronological order, you are:

5th January 2016 – 9th December 2017

Peers, who offered suggestions and criticism on numerous drafts and early versions.

2nd – 18th December 2017

Elizabeth Price and Katrina Palmer, my doctoral supervisors at the Ruskin School of Art (editing and revisions). Tom Dillon, my proofreader.

9th December 2017 – 5th January 2018

Margherita Huntley, who is designing this document.

12th January 2018

Jeremy Moyse, Graduate and AHRC Administrator, or perhaps someone in the administration of 75–81 Examinations School, on the High Street, Oxford, where this document will be submitted. If not reading, at least flicking through, glancing at, or checking that the body of the text exists and is dressed correctly.

Late January 2018 – 29th June 2018

This document will be forwarded by the Examinations School to Corin Sworn my internal examiner and Margarita Gluzberg my external examiner.

July 2018

Depending on our previous readers this document will then be rebound and deposited into the Bodleian library, University of Oxford, its final destination, where it will await your visit and scholarly labour. You will probably be undertaking a doctoral degree in Fine Art if you are in this category.

Hopefully this list will be helpful to you but it seems necessary for me, here at the beginning of this document. Perhaps it is a sort of housekeeping, and if so, I hope its order will orientate you through the temporalities, gaps, and overlappings of the numerous elements, which constitute my DPhil submission. You are not all readers on equal footing in relation to this document, in chronology or in hierarchy, which is exciting. The examiners have the opportunity to intervene in the body of the text. They may ask for corrections or refer it, whereas later readers can't ask for the document to be changed, they can't withhold the document from being archived.

And so, Corin Sworn and Margarita Gluzberg, you will see all of my submission, my 'thesis of art practice',[2] which is comprised of many elements across this document and the exhibitions. My later readers will not be able to access the exhibitions of artwork, you will only access this document.

2 The University of Oxford examination regulations for research degrees for the Ruskin School of Art ask for 'a thesis of art practice that makes an original contribution to knowledge…' https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2015-16/rdftrsofart/

THE PAGES OF THIS DOCUMENT

It may be said that later readers will understand that this document is a residue from the examination process. This document is designed for the exam, but what interest does my visitor have in the rules of examination? Is the administrative gloss, referencing style, page formatting, paper, and font size useful for demonstrating and exposing the subject of artistic research? Are my struggles with them of interest for my later readers? On the other hand, perhaps it is the document becoming a product or residue of the exam, which will engage my reader. They may seek out the traces of the labour of the examiners. Traces of qualities of time spent with the document: procrastination, diligent reading, glancing, speed-reading, re-reading, skipping paragraphs and pages, gazing or flicking. You may prioritise an investigation into this para activity, which would render the content of this document exchangeable. Avoiding the main content of the thesis, you may decide that the examiner-as-reader is the protagonist of the document.

This paper, once leafed and surveyed by the examiners may leave a trace for the visitors to come: She may dog ear pages or neatly fold corners inwards. Perhaps she will make her way through the pages aggressively, grabbing one at a time, from the outer edge, scrunching it as she goes. A tear may occur. A coffee cup could leave a rim shaped stain, most likely upon the front or back when this document's alternative function as a coaster is discovered. It's a much more awkward object when left open. The coffee may even spill. What a wonderful stain that would create!

Contamination by others is likely: family members, studio mates, colleagues, or even administrative staff. Perhaps a child will use it as a colouring book, or rain will seep into its body sticking the photographic medium of the images together. It may, in all likelihood, be lost, stolen, or even defaced by the examiners themselves. They may write in the margins, underline or circle words, paragraphs, or phrases. They may cross out a paragraph or a whole page. They may do this with pencil and rub it out at a later stage, or leave the imprint of notes embedded in the surfaces of the pages. It may be dropped, leaving dents. These items and actions add much additional material for

the later reader. If returned at all, this document could come back much more desirable.

I've seen crumbs (most likely bread, crackers, pizza crust, pie, or pastry) in the crack of the spine of a book, butter that makes paper transparent, jam that makes it sticky. A smashed banana in a laptop bag will stick to its fore edge. Post-its and Post-it note markers, which are like Post-its but simply a third of their width. These strips are attached to the top and the bottom of pages. They protrude from the body of the book, or are enveloped in its pages, and are designed to be stuck next to a particular paragraph, sentence, or word. They can be removed without leaving a trace. A note to self, a ticket to a wine and cheese reception at a yacht club, a receipt for an Americano, a miniature book made from one piece of folded A3 paper, a gas bill, a draft of an essay, a letter to the librarian. They all have been left enclosed in books.

Nail polish, lipstick, mascara, foundation, an ink blot, chocolate, grease, scuffs from the metal of the body of a pen or a laptop. A paper cut! Yes, even blood may find its way into this document, paper is, after all, an exceptionally porous receptacle. The paper will archive these aliens, it will host these parasites.



In order to cater for the desires of these particular visitors who may want to read the examiner-as-reader or the examiner-as-writer, the following actions will be undertaken:

Examiners' copies: This is number 1 of 2 of the examiners copies of this document. (Or, this is number of 3 of my personal copies.) It will have been securely bound in January 2018, in softback for the purposes of examination.

Library copies: Upon completion of the viva exam on 29th June, 2018, and once the board has granted me leave to supplicate, the pages of this copy will be removed from this softback cover and re-bound in permanently fixed binding, drilled and sewn in a stiff board case, in deep-crimson library buckram, with a lettered spine containing my name, initials, degree,

and the year of my submission. If corrections are to be made, this copy will be thrown away, electronically redrafted, printed, and bound, leaving the desires of these readers-of-the-examiners unfulfilled.

An electronic copy of this or of the redrafted version will be submitted to the Oxford Research Archive.

THE CESSPOOL OF RAPTURE

The non-italicised text below is composed of transcribed and edited speech, writing, opinions, and theories of Charles James.[3] It was written to be read aloud by three readers at the event *Stories from the Sculpture City*, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, 8th February 2017.

Readers stood close together, facing the audience, in a line. They read clearly at a moderate speed, keeping the intonation and syntax of the overall sentences intact. Reader One read everything in RED, from text copy 1. Reader Two read everything in BLUE, from text copy 2. Reader Three read everything in GREEN, from text copy 3. For example, the sentence: 'I made clothes for very special people, and I would say that Gypsy Rose Lee, absolutely from a personal point of view of originality, judgment, general sense, and unique imagination was very special', was read with only one reader speaking at a time. Each reader contributed their allocated fragments at the same pace as if the whole sentence were being read by one person.

The right-hand column, *in italics* below, is composed of Charles James's side of a correspondence with Gypsy Rose Lee.[4]

3 Charles James, 'Portrait of a Genius by a Genius: Charles James as seen by himself and all his friends', *Nova* (July 1974); Charles James artist file, Brooklyn Museum Libraries & Archives, New York; Genius of Charles James, 16th October 1982–16th January 1983, folders 1–50, Brooklyn Museum Libraries & Archives, New York; Debbie Ann Gioello and Beverly Berke, *Fashion Production Terms* (New York: Fairchild Publications, 1998); Elizabeth Ann Coleman, *The Genius of Charles James* (Brooklyn: The Brooklyn Museum, 1982); Harold Koda and Jan Glier Reeder, *Charles James: Beyond Fashion* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014); *Zip Fasteners: an Instructional Handbook for Teachers* (Birmingham: Lightening Fasteners Ltd., 1959); Mary Brooks Picken, *The Fashion Dictionary* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1973); R. Couri Hay, Emily Mc Dermott, and Charles James, 'New Again: Charles James', *Interview*, no. 27 (November 1972); Richard Martin, *Charles James (Fashion Memoir)* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1997); Robert Friedel, *Zipper: An Exploration in Novelty* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994); Timothy A. Long, *Charles James: Designer in Detail* (London: V & A Publishing, 2015).

4 Series 1, Personal Correspondence (People), Charles James, 1943–1950, Gypsy Rose Lee Archive, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, New York; 'Charles James Video Interviews', Youtube, Google, last modified 6th December 2017, https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-Afm1SYYfSp1uojFHjfx82Z7yQSXf4Uz.

VOICES

TEXT COPY 1

I made clothes for very special people, and I would say that Gypsy Rose Lee,

Telephoned telegram to postal
telegraph: G. NB 189

absolutely from a personal point of view of originality, judgment, general sense, and

18 1943 OCT 13 PM 12 COLLECT = PZZH
NEWYORK NY 13 1138A =

unique imagination was very special. Her final act is when she appeared fully dressed,

GYPSY ROSE LEE =
NIXON THEATRE = (PITTSBURGH PENN)

in a dress I made, which was to be taken apart in five different sections, which she

LOAN OF MY NEGLIGEE WAS
CONTINGENT ON YOUR ORDER TO MAKE

draped on five naked girls who accompanied her, and in so doing, practically

ONE AT ONCE STOP WHEN ALL HAD
BEEN ORGANIZED MONDAY FOUND

undressed herself and dressed them. The first part she took off was a top jacket –

THAT YOU HAD NEITHER APPROVED
NOR OBTAINED APPROVAL EXECUTION

when one of the girls put it on it became a cocktail dress.

STOP CONSIDER THEREFORE YOU HAVE
PURCHASED MY MODEL AND WOULD

The device, which enabled the dress to be disassembled, is the zipper, which here

LIKE CHEQUE AT ONCE 325 STOP DO
NOT COUNT ON ME FURTHER =

takes on a double function – as it is both the fastening device of the grosgrain dress

BEST WISHES=
CHARLES JAMES = =

parts and also the theatrical device upon which Gypsy hinges her performance. She

CFN 325

understood the nature of the zippers doubling. It is the interface, which mediates the

July 30, 1945

Dear Gypsy:

performers body – the barrier withholding the audience. The intricate and sharp

I asked you to settle things with Mrs. Beach because she is there to do just that.

teeth limit two worlds upon which the dance of separation and togetherness

Just as you have been saving up things to tell me through Mrs. Beach, so I have an angle too.

tantalizes those present. It is a complete machine: top stop; teeth; coil or chain

I rather believe that if instead of pulling in different directions we pulled in the same one,

construction; nylon or polyester or metal; stitching line guide; tape; slider; tab pull;

we would be more useful to each other as good

bar pin or bottom stop. But this machine not only undertakes a physical job, it also

friends should be.

You have had tremendous success

provokes the imagination.

in my clothes and they have held up on the whole

Previously Gypsy used dental floss for many of these fastening purposes. She created

better than most. Dresses that last as long as mine and as thought out and perfect, are well

elaborate brassieres out of dental floss. Covered in body paint, the dental floss was

worth the amount charged.

Apart from two professional costumes you had

invisible to the audience and broke when she pulled at a certain section.

ordered nothing since 1943, up to the green dress. If this dress did not come up to

But the zipper mimics the audience's desire – it narrates the opening or closing

standard, you should remember that you sat out the Saturday fitting so that we were

movement for them by putting it on display, whilst beckoning them to watch.

obliged to work all Monday without knowing whether what we were doing was right or

Although you cannot see each tooth interlocking with its counterpart – the pull-tab

wrong. Actually it was delivered a few hours after you fitted it Tuesday.

guides your eye, while the slider veils the action of the teeth conjoining.

All that counts is that I took the dress back without a word, which few firms would so

Cut in dressmaking is like grammar in language, Gypsy's movement of the dress parts

unless you ordered many more clothes than you do.

from one onto another adheres to similar structures in comic precision. It is

You spoke of going to Mainbocher in order to be included among the ten best-dressed

automation springing from the zipper, which Gypsy transplanted into the

women – not for your pleasure but for your career. I believe you would be charged full

choreography of the dress – it seemed to have a kind of independence, centered in

price there if you ordered only two or three dresses a year.

permission granted or denied. To be taken off or put on. Want sated or denied.

In order to make delivery of your two professional costumes, all work was dropped

I am developing a thesis on the zipper, and many others. They are to be disseminated

and there was no profit in making them. Further, eighty odd hours were charged at

by the Charles James Foundation, during specialized educational programmes,

straight labor for altering old dresses. As for your pink dress, the work in it is

lectures, and workshops. The INJECTOR COURSE, METAMORPHOLOGY, and the

tremendous. It is a sensational dress and one which will do both of us much good. I would

CALCULUS OF FASHION will be hosted by the Brooklyn Museum and the School

charge anyone else $500 for it and get it. Now, I am just as interested in doing a good

of Design at Washington University.

job for you as you are in having me do one, but I must point out that you have missed almost

My theory of the EROTICAL IT is crucial to all my theses on fashion production.

all of my best numbers. For instance, the

brown dress on order was bought a year after I

Knowing that eroticism provides both the impetus and the final qualification it is

suggested it, when both Paulette Goddard and

Dietrich had already ordered it.

necessary to keep a reservoir of material separate from my fashion outputs and my

If I ask you to pay your bill I do so because I

wish to collect what is due rather than to

pedagogy, in order to be able to cultivate and nurture them.

sell bonds.

The green jersey dress, which we replaced, was

This material reservoir consists of homoerotic, often pornographic drawings, collages,

delivered the 17th of May: the suit the 9th of

this month.

and paintings I make. This reservoir or depository both precedes and succeeds all my

Please get together and fix some basis of

settlement of my present account and the

other outputs, although it accumulates, takes up a large physical volume, its effect is

delivery of the dresses on order.

If there is anything you wish for the winter, let

limitless. Neither produced on commission nor in collaboration, these graphic works

us plan it before I go away, with both prices

and delivery dates.

remain excessive. When they are used they are used explicitly – never sublimated. As

With love,

Charlie

I have said that blue jeans' functionability pinpoints the sexuality of all human beings

CHRONOLOGY OF BROWN AND PINK

DRESSES

engaged in work – these works pinpoint my own vexed labor. What, after all, is the

February, 1945 Brown satin dress ordered

April, 1945 Pink jersey dress ordered

true function of fashion but to be a rehearsal for propagation.

End of April, 1945 Foundation fitting: Miss

Lee said it was too hot to put on her corset.

TEXT COPY 2

Two months passed during which nineteen

telephone calls found Miss Lee busy.

I made clothes for very special people, and I would say that Gypsy Rose Lee,

August 7, 1945 Fitted at Miss Lee's house after

hours. Pink dress okay. Brown dress put on

absolutely from a personal point of view of originality, judgment, general sense, and

but not pinned.

Both dresses have been prepared over Miss

unique imagination was very special.

Lee's new corset figure.

September 4, 1945 On telephone instructions,

Her final act is when she appeared fully dressed, in a dress I made, which was to be

brown dress resized to be worn without corset

– one day's work.

taken apart in five different sections, which she draped on five naked girls who

September 8, 1945 Finished fitting. Agreed that

pink dress would be worn Monday night to

accompanied her, and in so doing, practically undressed herself and dressed them.

give proper time to finish brown dress.

September 10, 1945 Monday noon, delivery of

The first part she took off was a top jacket – when one of the girls put it on it became

brown dress insisted upon.

Conclusions – Pink dress, although agreed to

a cocktail dress.

be perfect and exact to order, to be exchanged

because Miss Lee feels that she cannot afford a

The device, which enabled the dress to be disassembled, is the zipper, which here

pink dress at the moment. Decision: to make

instead a new dress in black satin.

takes on a double function – as it is both the fastening device of the grosgrain dress

Brown dress returned for alterations together

with complaint upon behaviour of fabric which

parts and also the theatrical device upon which Gypsy hinges her performance. She

at time of order was stated by Mr. James not to

be entirely suitable for this dress.

understood the nature of the zippers doubling. It is the interface, which mediates the

7 months no deposit no delivery no payment

April 4, 1951

performers body – the barrier withholding the audience. The intricate and sharp

Miss Gypsy Rose Lee

153 East 63rd Street

teeth limit two worlds upon which the dance of separation and togetherness

N.Y.C. N.Y.

Dear Gypsy:

tantalizes those present. It is a complete machine: top stop; teeth; coil or chain

Part of our arrangement is that you pay so

much down, and we are allowed to collect

construction; nylon or polyester or metal; stitching line guide; tape; slider; tab pull;

when we need the rest. That is why we take a

third off your prices. And a third is a big cut.

bar pin or bottom stop. But this machine not only undertakes a physical job, it also

So far this year we have never had anything

down, and each payment came three months

provokes the imagination. Previously Gypsy used dental floss for many of these

after delivery.

Right now, I feel that you should have seized

fastening purposes.

the opportunity of the Capitol contract to

order a proper costume from me which would

She created elaborate brassieres out of dental floss. Covered in body paint, the dental

do both of us credit, for I could have billed it

and your red velvet dress at professional

floss was invisible to the audience and broke when she pulled at a certain section.

costume prices and so form a tax deductibility

for you. Your own work could have then been

But the zipper mimics the audience's desire – it narrates the opening or closing

thrown in.

At the end of this week, I will send you your

movement for them by putting it on display, whilst beckoning them to watch.

underbodice, but it will not have been fitted,

and may not be as good as it could for that

Although you cannot see each tooth interlocking with its counterpart – the pull-tab

reason.

The slip you want, I feel I cannot go into,

guides your eye, while the slider veils the action of the teeth conjoining.

because it is virtually a dress, requiring

movement and fit, which you wouldn't want to

Cut in dressmaking is like grammar in language, Gypsy's movement of the dress parts

pay for — and since you can't find the time to

work with me on it, it wouldn't be the success

from one onto another adheres to similar structures in comic precision. It is

you want.

I think I would have greatly contributed to

automation springing from the zipper, which Gypsy transplanted into the

your act, especially as far as the colours go, as

when I saw them at the Martinique I was

choreography of the dress – it seemed to have a kind of independence, centered in

certainly very disappointed. I feel your

appearance this time is of great importance to

permission granted or denied. To be taken off or put on. Want sated or denied.

you, and I sincerely regret not having anything

to do with it.

I am developing a thesis on the zipper, and many others. They are to be disseminated

Sincerely,

Charles

by the Charles James Foundation, during specialized educational programmes,

June 22, 1951

Miss Gypsy Rose Lee

lectures, and workshops. The INJECTOR COURSE, METAMORPHOLOGY, and the

New York 21, N.Y.

Now Gypsy,

CALCULUS OF FASHION will be hosted by the Brooklyn Museum and the School

You know I love you and will always do so but

business is business. Like you I have only time

of Design at Washington University.

to sell, and that means the time of a great many
others ... on full time. In all the complaints you

My theory of the EROTICAL IT is crucial to all my theses on fashion production.

refuse to face the fact that for more than a year
you have missed your fittings or not fitted at

Knowing that eroticism provides both the impetus and the final qualification it is

all. And afterwards expect me to take things
apart and put them together again. I couldn't

necessary to keep a reservoir of material separate from my fashion outputs and my

do this even if I charged you full price.
What you said about the red dress is

pedagogy, in order to be able to cultivate and nurture them.

outrageous. It was a master-piece...absolutely
my best dress. It meant a good deal to you as a

This material reservoir consists of homoerotic, often pornographic drawings, collages

person, even if not to vaudeville audiences.
(But it does mean a good deal for vaudeville

and paintings I make. This reservoir or depository both precedes and succeeds all

audiences to read of you in the syndicated
columns of Knickerbocker etc.) Your publicity

my other outputs, although it accumulates, takes up a large physical volume, its effect

has been first rate… yet you never stop telling
me what a bore it is. Now IT'S NO JOKE to be

is limitless. Neither produced on commission nor in collaboration, these graphic

told, when you have sweated on unnecessary
overtime with a whole crew, that you were

works remain excessive. When they are used they are used explicitly – never

forced into acquiring a thing you didn't want.
Now as to professional costumes. I cannot and

sublimated. As I have said that blue jeans' functionability pinpoints the sexuality of

won't be involved in them unless
professionally I get the order to make them.

all human beings engaged in work – these works pinpoint my own vexed labor.

When I worked out your draperies for you
(Which after all are the foundation of your act)

What, after all, is the true function of fashion but to be a rehearsal for propagation.

I gave a great deal of time and thought, and got
hardly paid the cost of sewing them up.

TEXT COPY 3

I think your colours and the materials themselves need completely re-styling. They

I made clothes for very special people, and I would say that Gypsy Rose Lee,

are not co-ordinated. Nor are they particularly striking. I've told you this over and over again.

absolutely from a personal point of view of originality, judgment, general sense, and

But I cannot be used .. to advise, shop, buy and make foundations by remote control for you to

unique imagination was very special. Her final act is when she appeared fully dressed,

sew beads on, and get nothing out of it. That is professional work, requiring time, thought and

in a dress I made, which was to be taken apart in five different sections, which she

plan… and also payment.

I realize the tension you work under. I have

draped on five naked girls who accompanied her, and in so doing, practically

always understood it, and have tried in my work to brighten things a bit. But dear friend

undressed herself and dressed them. The first part she took off was a top jacket –

you make it really impossible, in these days, to work according to plan and budget. The

when one of the girls put it on it became a cocktail dress.

excitement over your black dress is typical. It looked wonderful on you. Everyone knows that

The device, which enabled the dress to be disassembled, is the zipper, which here

OFF shoulder cuts are not designed for doing your hair in. The alteration as YOU PLAN it

takes on a double function – as it is both the fastening device of the grosgrain dress

will be messy.

You have absolutely no right to take an attitude

parts and also the theatrical device upon which Gypsy hinges her performance. She

of complaint over my work. No one ever took more pains and with more affection. And that

understood the nature of the zippers doubling. It is the interface, which mediates the

just isn't the way to inspire either. It's true that I hardly remember you having thanked or

performers body – the barrier withholding the audience. The intricate and sharp

shown the least appreciation for efforts which you pretend you don't want and then complain

teeth limit two worlds upon which the dance of separation and togetherness

if you don't get.

Your appearance in England is particularly

tantalizes those present. It is a complete machine: top stop; teeth; coil or chain

exciting to me. I want it to be very successful. I know both the press and audiences. You are a

construction; nylon or polyester or metal; stitching line guide; tape; slider; tab pull;

legend, and the tacky way you are going about things is not the way you ought to do things.

bar pin or bottom stop. But this machine not only undertakes a physical job, it also

I have written a sheet to suggest what I think you ought to wear… privately.

provokes the imagination.

PROFESSIONALLY, that's another matter. I think you need proper colourings, that are

Previously Gypsy used dental floss for many of these fastening purposes. She created

news…..like the pink furs and roses are news. But those dreadful purples, chartreuses and

elaborate brassieres out of dental floss. Covered in body paint, the dental floss was

that sort of thing won't go down in England as news where even the upper gallery has better

invisible to the audience and broke when she pulled at a certain section.

critical taste than here.

If you want to see me Saturday I'll be at your

But the zipper mimics the audience's desire – it narrates the opening or closing

disposal.

This is written in great haste, and with much

movement for them by putting it on display, whilst beckoning them to watch.

love,

Charlie

Although you cannot see each tooth interlocking with its counterpart – the pull-tab

THINGS YOU NEED FOR TRAVELLING IN

EUROPE END OF AUGUST

guides your eye, while the slider veils the action of the teeth conjoining.

Scotland:

A gray flannel suit with fullish skirt

Cut in dressmaking is like grammar in language, Gypsy's movement of the dress parts

For travelling etc.

London:

from one onto another adheres to similar structures in comic precision. It is

Your cocktail dress.

ALSO

automation springing from the zipper, which Gypsy transplanted into the

Long black tulip skirt with blouse with highish

neckline

choreography of the dress – it seemed to have a kind of independence, centered in

(such as the one cut on lines of your suit)

After theatre at

permission granted or denied. To be taken off or put on. Want sated or denied.

SAVOY GRILL

Cocktail suit.

I am developing a thesis on the zipper, and many others. They are to be disseminated

, , , , ,

Your beige wool dress, with chiffon scarf

by the Charles James Foundation, during specialized educational programmes,

tucked into square neckline, if you don't want it

open.

lectures, and workshops. The INJECTOR COURSE, METAMORPHOLOGY, and the

SHANTUNG or PONGEE I think would look

end of seasonish, except in Spain which is

CALCULUS OF FASHION will be hosted by the Brooklyn Museum and the School

hotter.

RATHER...A BEIGE heavy jersey, which will

of Design at Washington University.

pack well.

A variation of that coat, Mrs Vreeland bought

My theory of the EROTICAL IT is crucial to all my theses on fashion production.

at cut rate… she took a very long time to pay a

very small price… 200 for something that cost

Knowing that eroticism provides both the impetus and the final qualification it is

me 8… I thought that Mrs Vreeland might

bring me in a client… with money… an

necessary to keep a reservoir of material separate from my fashion outputs and my

encouragement to do for me what she did for

other people… no, oh never… She never

pedagogy, in order to be able to cultivate and nurture them.

would look at clothes, she never would see

them, she wanted money behind them, money

This material reservoir consists of homoerotic, often pornographic drawings, collages

and society are the only things that appealed to

her. If I had half a million behind me we

and paintings I make. This reservoir or depository both precedes and succeeds all my

would have had to have steel doors to keep her

out…

other outputs, although it accumulates, takes up a large physical volume, its effect is

Mrs Vreeland promotes her own legend

as somebody of knowledge which she lacks. I

limitless. Neither produced on commission nor in collaboration, these graphic works

don't know a woman more uninformed than

Mrs Vreeland… she will say she has read a

remain excessive. When they are used they are used explicitly – never sublimated. As

book but it will be on her night table next to

her, she won't have turned the first page.

I have said that blue jeans' functionability pinpoints the sexuality of all human beings

This is spoiled of course by Mrs Vreeland's

obligation to sell carpet. She got some carpet

engaged in work – these works pinpoint my own vexed labor. What, after all, is the

and put it on the wall and gave credit to the

carpet people. It's lucky I got credit at all

true function of fashion but to be a rehearsal for propagation.

because once she didn't give my dress credit at

all and she had the extraordinary nerve to say

to me that it was much more, that I would receive more recognition because people would know it was my art without my name…



FEMME FABRICATIONS

In the following pages I've unfolded the processes of the construction of a White Rose (dried) in step-by-step paragraphs. I managed to construct this flower in under two hours, modestly armed with perseverance, the right materials, and basic tools. Unfortunately it wasn't a natural flower that I fabricated: I have neither the biological knowledge nor the will to do this—save for actually planting, nurturing, waiting for the acquired seed to fully mature to the point of bloom; then preparing it for drying. This flower was fabricated from organdie: that special, crisp white cotton previously known to me only sensually. It's the then-unnamed material of my grandmother's (Mary Ganley, b. 1928) bed sheets. Perhaps these weren't organdie, but they were extremely crisp: another genre of bed sheet compared to my parent's recycled linen. Not considering the character of the textile itself, I presumed the crispness of her sheets was due to her diligence, and the pride she took in ironing and washing. Similarly, the tightness of the tucked blankets between the mattress and the bed, which pinned me down until I kicked them out, was due to her experience and skill in doing the job very well.

My knowledge of this field of flower fabrication would be non-existent if it were not housed mentally in Jean Wilkinson's (b. unknown, presumed alive) 1977 book *Flower Fabrications*. It is her instructions and guidance that I've carefully followed.

When my friend Oisín comes to our house he'll bring gladioli on the cusp of flowering. In spring my friends Chris and Frank buy daffodils, and put them in a glass vase on our small dinner table. As a child I picked posies of wild flowers for my mother (b. 1958): I plucked cow parsley, cowslips, buttercups, dandelions, primroses, forget-me-nots, daisies, and bluebells from the hedges of Cúil na hUille in east County Clare, Ireland. And once to her horror, I picked an entire plastic bag of dame's rocket.

Flowers are gifted—not usually kept for oneself. My organdie rose is no exception in this tradition of gifts and offerings, although I haven't decided yet to whom, or when, this flower will be given away. The process of construction of the Organdie White Rose (dried), whose floral emblem 'death is preferable to a loss of innocence',[1] guided me to a variety of possible recipients. These have been heavily influenced by the people to hand, who have been introduced to me during a recent trip to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, where I spent time with various portraits in their archives of Joseph Cornell's (b. 1903, d. 1972) work and source materials.

1 Kate Greenaway and Jean Marsh, *The Illuminated Language of Flowers* (London: Macdonald and Jane's Publishers Ltd.,1978), 68.

Whilst feeling strong bonds to these recipients, I don't feel confident deciding whom to give it to. I often feel as Saint Teresa of Ávila (b.1515, d. 1582) must have, as she plainly said in her auto-biography: 'There is nothing in myself that can be relied on'.[2]

2 Saint Teresa of Ávila, *Saint Teresa of Ávila by herself*, trans J.M. Cohen (London: Penguin, 1987), 42.

Possible recipient: Fanny Cerrito (b. 1817, d. 1909)

Fanny is no stranger to receiving gifts. Joseph made an elaborate work dedicated to Fanny: his *Portrait of Ondine*, which had the aim of being commensurate with a series of 'sparkings' that he experienced—profound encounters and visions he had of her. She wouldn't have been surprised at this abundant collection of material destined to conjure her powers and person. In both life and death, she's had a rich and varied career of being the destination for gifts. She was used to leaving the stage with nothing of the original theatrical setting visible, because of the quantity of flowers given—nothing short of the audience commanding control with their own creation of a spectacle.

- No sooner did Fanny Cerrito appear than a great burst of cheering thundered round the theatre. The enthusiasm mounted as she began to dance, and the bouquets, some of them held together by silk scarfs 'of beautiful texture', began to fall.[3]

- There was such 'a tremendous storm of garlands, vases, and bouquets', that the stage looked like a horticultural fête or Covent Garden market.[4]

- During one of her last performances in London in 1843 (the year she rose to the height of her fame and celebration), a bouquet so large that its size can only be estimated by the knowledge that it cost £250, was gifted to her. Due to its weight, it had to be lowered down to her on the stage with a rope.

Her fans and admirers were an establishment. There were names for one who undertook the activity of creatively devoting themselves to her: Cerritomane in singular and Cerritoists in plural. Writing poetry and verse about Fanny was a day-to-day activity for this group of people, a fully engaged community of amateurs wholly writing to and for Fanny Cerrito. Let's take one acrostic as representative:

Certes il est au monde une merveille encor,
Elle éblouit les yeux, comme un brillant dans l'or;
Reine par la beauté, le talent, la poésie,
Irréproachable en tout, en grâce en harmonie,
Toujours le diadème est sur son front radieux,
On la voit sur la terre, et l'on rêve des cieux![5]

3 Ivor Guest, *The Life of a Romantic Ballerina: Fanny Cerrito* (London: Phoenix House, 1956), 66.
4 Ibid., 27.

Certainly there still is a wonder in this world,
She enthralls the eyes, like a diamond in gold,
Queen by beauty, by talent, by poetry,
Irreproachable/faultless in everything, in grace in harmony,
The diadem is always on her radiant forehead,
We see her on Earth, and we dream of her in the skies!

5 Ibid., 66.



Create your own beautiful flowers easily from such materials as fabric and paper. Make silk lilies, taffeta tulips, crepe paper buttercups, organdie roses, wood veneer zinnias, lace daisies, gingham cornflowers, velvet pansies, foil asters and many more fabulous flowers.[6]

I read three lines from the beginning of one of the paragraphs printed in the jacket of *Flower Fabrications* to summon the author Jean, because here, at the beginning of the construction of the rose, before I'd learnt-through-trying, I felt lost.

I sourced a selection of materials[7] in preparation for the construction of my Organdie White Rose (dried), which drew heavily on the 'SHEER LUXURY' chapter of Jean's book.

The first step was to create the center of the flower—the bud. The part densely populated by partially unopened petals.

I CREATED A BUD UPON A STEM:

- I snipped an 11" length of #16 gauge wire, and manipulated a hook out of one end.
- I cut, then folded, a rectangular strip of 4 " by 8" un-sized organdie lengthwise over onto itself, so as to double up the thickness. Each side lay touching the other.
- I held one end of the folded strip between my thumb and index finger of my left hand. With my right hand I wrapped the strip loosely around my thumb and finger to form a roll.
- I pushed the hooked end of the wire all the way through the centre of the roll until it popped out the other side.
- I pulled it back into the roll where it snagged on the material, attaching itself. I sealed this bottom end, the base, on the outside by wrapping masking tape tight around the wire and the material. The masking tape ensured that all the inner surface of the material in the roll was touching another part of the same material. As I moved the bud the inner surface all rubbed off itself, like the private pleasure achievable with the surfaces of ones lips.

6 Jean Wilkinson, *Flower Fabrications* (New York: Butterick Publishing, 1977).

7 *Rolls & Rems*, a treasure trove of fabrics and trimmings at 111 Lewisham High Street in South London, supplied most of the materials I needed. Organdie: I bought one metre, which was the smallest amount I could buy, in starch-white. This is a sheer, diaphanous cotton. It is used for many delicate needs: trimmings, blouses, dresses and other light apparel. Medium green cotton, which I later sized with regular glue mixed with water. A range of 'thread covered' wire in green. Green velvet floral ribbon, 2¼" wide and Fred Aldous fabric stiffener (glue).

Possible recipient: Joyce Hunter (b. unknown, d. 1964)

There are two ways I can read the photo I found of Joyce Hunter. Number 1: With the things I've read about her. Number 2: With what's visible in the photo, coupled with what I can speculate upon based on this. I don't want to mix these two so I'll give you number 2 first, then number 1.

Number 2:

Don't even know if this is Joyce Hunter. An unknown archivist has written in a report that it says 'Joyce' and 'The Lion Sleeps Tonight', on the back. It looks like a photo taken at home or in a photo booth. Just a plain white background. Perhaps taken up against a wall.

She's very androgynous. She looks young, perhaps 17 or 18, she's barely an adult.

She's got a parka tied tight around the neck for protection. You can see the material build up in bulges around the rim of the hood because it's been pulled too tight. The cord must be tight to her neck. It's decorated in a cartoonish floral pattern, but this doesn't look dated (1962–2016). It could have been designed by Keith Haring (b. 1958, d.1990), only he was four years old then. It looks contemporary.

Her parka is graphic and playful, it readily offers itself up for visual communication. Her facial expression, and position in relation to the camera's position, is at odds with her parka.

She looks stern and indifferent.

Her defiance relates to her androgyny.

What is at stake here? How was this photograph solicited? Was she compromised, or brokering a deal? What did she buy with allowing this photo to be staged?

Number 1:

- Joseph courted her in early 1962 at The Strand Food Shop in Manhattan, where she waited tables. She started visiting him at his house in Queens. He regularly gave her artworks (boxes) and cash.

- She already had a husband and daughter in a different city.
- She began to sell his boxes to a collector she met through him. She stole more of his boxes from his open garage and continued to sell them.
- He called the police. She was arrested, but never charged, because he dropped the allegations.
- She was stabbed in the neck and strangled to death by an acquaintance.
- He paid for her funeral.
- He buried her in a wooden box like the ones he'd spent his whole life making collages of women in, only bigger.
- He dedicated a whole series of work called the Penny Arcade series to her.
- When he died he was cremated and buried in one of his own boxes.
- She has a page on findagrave.com. Perhaps user C.Z. #48032290, will make a film about her: on January 21st, 2013 C.Z. left a virtual pink tulip for Joyce Hunter, then posted the following: 'I am trying to locate Sharon Hunter, Joyce's daughter, for a film I am making about Joyce Hunter. If anyone knows her whereabouts, please contact me: zahedic@newschool.eduThank you – C.Z.'

I picked three or four lines from the beginning of one of the paragraphs printed in the jacket of *Flower Fabrications* to summon Jean, because after many attempts at attaching the bud to the stem it didn't look satisfactory—I felt lost and frustrated.

Flower Fabrications *shows you how to create flowers that last forever—flowers that look like nature's own or fanciful ones that are truly unique. With this book you can fashion highly decorative, one-of-a-kind flowers at just a fraction of the cost of purchased ones.*[8]

I CREATED THE PETALS FOR THE OUTER BODY OF THE WHITE ROSE:

- I cut 8 petals out of the sized organdie. They were in the shape of a cute love-heart, except that the pointy tip at the bottom is truncated. So they actually look more like a big arse.

- I powdered 3 petals with a few puffs of foundation to bring a light hue to them—these were for the inner petals and should be a slightly darker shade. This addition of makeup felt important. It added another dimension. The smell and pigment from another industry provided a breath of life to these textile petals.

- I crimped the edges: I rolled each of the two rounded parts of the petal shapes tightly around a pencil, until they curled up inwards by themselves.

8 Jean Wilkinson, *Flower Fabrications* (New York: Butterick Publishing, 1977), dust jacket.

Possible recipient:
Marilyn Monroe (b. 1926, d. 1962)

Marilyn's death induced a frenzied need to collect in Joseph. Whilst listening to Gustav Mahler (b. 1860, d. 1911) records, he snipped hundreds of articles pertaining to the event out of magazines and newspapers until they stacked a foot high. His sizeable collection of snippets is a substantial and complex quantity of physical material. It takes the form of a stack, or a pile:

MARILYNMONROEKILLSSELFMARILYNMONROEPoursHerHeartOutMarilynlets herhairdownaboutbeingfamous'SometimesIfeelI'mfoolingsomebody,maybemyself''It'sl ikerrrrdothis,rrrrdothat''thebesttoyou(andyouandyou)eachmorning"ownaboutbeingfamo usREMEMBERMARILYNApril1952July1950July1962LifeinvitedMarilyntorecreatefo urfabledactressesforitsEntertainmentIssueofDecembe1958.ThedaBara,MarleneDietrich, JeanHarlow,LillianRussellDoStarsHaveAStranglehold?FINDMARIILYN'WANTEDT ODIE'LeftOver500G'MMOftenWishedtoDie'SheLeft500G,142GtoCoachUsuallySoug htHelp:CoronerMARILYNMONROEEIleavaitaccordéàMatchdeuxjoursavantdemourirl 'autorisationdepubliersaconfessionRightToPrivacyMarilynMonroeFuneralIsHeldinHolly woodFewCelebritiesAttendRitesLeeStrasbergDeliversEulogyforActress"Justbeforethec offinclosedMr.DiMaggiobentoveritandkissedMissMonroe,saying"Iloveyou"severaltime s...Themusicfortheserviceplayedonanorgan,includedTchaikovsky'sAndanteCantabile,th ebestknownthemefromTchaikovsky'sSymphonyNo.6,"Pathétique,"and"OvertheRainbo w"fromthemovie"TheWizardofOz."MM:PleaToCallerSTARSEXPLAINMMTRAGED Y'Alone,UnCaredFor'DIDHEMAKEMYSTERYCALL?SeekMexicaninMMMysteryCa llExpectanUninvitedMobatFuneralTodayMM:Gablesaidaboutme,"Whenshe'sthere,she' sthere.Allofheristhere!She'stheretowork."3StarsPityLonelyMarilyn$50Roses,FromMeto MarilynAnUninvitedMobExpectedatFuneralJoeDiMaggioHeadsMarilyn'sMournersWo rdsWillPoorlySay,"Whenshe'sthere,she'sthere.Allofheristhere!She'stheretowork."3Stars PityLonelyMarilyn$50Roses,FromMetoMMarilynMARILYNSPEAKSHerOwnWordsi nLastWeeksMarilyn'sLastPictureTWILIGHTOFASTARHere'sMM,BarefootandBubbl yADIEUAMARILYNMONROEMARILYNSPEAKSHerOwnWordsinLastWeeksLast HappyDay'ILoveYou,ILoveYou,ILoveYou'MM'sESTATEMAYHITMILLIONHerLas tbattleWithGossipsBolanosatMarilyn'sCrypt.BenefitsbyMonroeWill'TheHappiestTime ofMyLifeIsNow'Marilyn'sLastHappyDayILoveYou,ILoveYou,ILoveYou'DiMaggio's FarewelltoMarilynThemusicfortheserviceplayedonanorgan,includedTchaikovsky'sAnda nteCantabile,thebestknownthemefromTchaikovsky'sSymphonyNo.6,"Pathétique,"and" OvertheRainbofromthemovie"TheWizardofOz."MMMMKS'TheHappiestTimeofMyLif eIsNow'Marilyn'sLastHappyDay'ILoveYou,ILoveYou,ILoveYou'DiFromMetoMarily

nAnUninvitedMobExpectedatFuneralJoeDiMaggioHeadsMarilyn'sMournesWordsWill PoorlySay,"Whenshe'sthere,she'sthere.Allofheristhere!She'stheretowork."3StarsPityLo nelyMarilyn$50RosesFromMetoMarilynAnUninvitedMobExpectedatFuneralJoeDiMag gioHeadsMarilyn'sMournersWordsWillPoorlySay,"Whenshe'sthere,she'sthere.Allofher isthere!She's'SometimesIfeelI'mfoolingsomebody,maybemyself'thebesttoyou(andyoua ndyou)eachmorning"ownaboutbeingfamousSeekMexicaninMMMysteryCallExpectanU ninvitedMobatFuneralJustbeforethecoffinclosedMr.DiMaggiobentoveritandkissedMiss Monroe,saying"Iloveyou"severaltimesJustbeforethecoffinclosedMr.DiMaggiobentoverit andkissedMissMonroe,saying"Iloveyou"severaltimesJustbeforethecoffinclosedMr.DiM aggiobentoveritandkissedMissMonroe,saying"Iloveyou"severaltimes3StarsPityLonely MarilynMARILYNSPEAKSHerOwnWordsinLastWeeks$50Roses,FromMetoMarilyn$ 50Roses,FromMetoMarilyn$50Roses,FromMetoMarilyn$50Roses,FromMetoMarilynM ARILYNSPEAKSHerOwnWordsinLastWeeksAllofheristhere!She'stheretoworkFromM etoMarilynAnUninvitedMobExpectedatFuneralJoeDiMaggioHeadsMarilyn'sMourners WordsWillPoorlySay,"Whenshe'sthere,she'sthere.Allofheristhere!She'stheretoworkFro mMetoMarilynAnUninvitedMobExpectedatFuneralJoeDiMaggioHeadsMarilyn'sMourn ersWordsWillPoorlySay,"Whenshe'sthere,she'sthere.Allofheristhere!She'stheretowork MARILYNMONROEKILLSSELFMarilynletsherhairdownaboutbeingfamousMarilynM onroeFuneralIsHeldinHollywoodFewCelebritiesAttendRitesLeeStrasbergDeliversEulogy forActresThemusicfortheserviceplayedonanorgan,includedTchaikovsky'sAndanteCant abile,thebestknownthemefromTchaikovsky'sSymphonyNo.6,"Pathétique,"and"Overthe Rainbow"fromthemovie"TheWizardofOzTheHappiestTimeofMyLifeIsNow'Marilyn'sL astHappyDayUsuallySoughtHelp:CoronerMARILYNMONROELastWeeksMarilyn'sLa stPictureLastW[9]

It was her death that prompted him to create this pile. The cultural significance of her death can be expressed in Hy Gardner's (b.1908, d. 1989) piece in The New York Tribune (date not visible), found in that stack:

> It would be a wise and gracious gesture ... if the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences created a new, special Oscar to perpetuate Monroe's memory. Perhaps an annual Marilyn Monroe Award to the most glamorous and warmly accepted new female star of the year.[10]

It's interesting that Hy's response to Marilyn's death was to create, to fabricate something too, something that would accrete. Organdie White Rose (dried): *'death is preferable to a loss of innocence'*. No innocence is lost here. It's crystallised in death, in a stack of clippings. Sometimes he bought the papers in duplicate, triplicate or quadruplicate. Size and quantity matter when you want

9 Joseph Cornell, source material: box 18, Joseph Cornell Study Centre, Smithsonian American Museum of Art, Washington DC.
10 Ibid.

to possess something. He was a major knowledge on methodology in the field of possession. He knew he was robbed of a self, and that there was no mending that loss. It'd be easy to say his dependants, his mother and his disabled younger brother, robbed him, because he offered to stay, he wanted to stay, but that's not true—it's too simple.

Romantic Ballerinas had to learn how to paint their own face when they were young, so that when they were old they could paint their young face on top of their old face.

They had to separate themselves from a self, which was old. Their young self must not die, not in old age, not in death. He knew this: he snipped the page from Cyril W. Beaumont's (b. 1891, d.1976) *A Miscellany for Dancers*, which detailed this. He also knew Marilyn's filmic self was crafted onto her dead self:

> Hollywood, Aug. 7 (Special): A studio makeup man and a studio hairdresser who attended Marilyn Monroe in life prepared her once-vibrant body tonight for a quiet, private funeral tomorrow.[11]

11 Ibid.



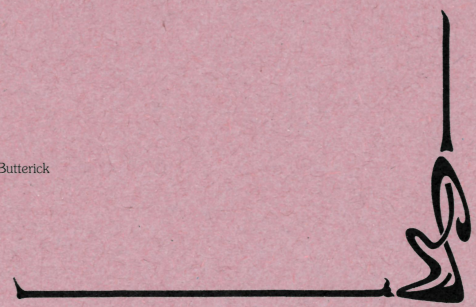
I read some lines from one of the paragraphs printed in the jacket of *Flower Fabrications* to summon Jean, because I felt lost and frustrated despite a momentary sense of achievement from successful construction:

> *This book … pays tribute to the proud tradition of making flowers, a craft that dates back more than 125 years. 'Flower making … so elegant an employment,' an expression, which first appeared in* Godey's Lady's Book *of 1847, still holds true today.*[12]

I MADE TWO SMALL LEAVES AND ONE LARGE LEAF:

- I cut the #22 gauge wire into 3" lengths and cut two pieces of green floral ribbon 2" long.
- For the large leaf I added 1" onto the measurements above.
- I pasted glue onto the underside of the velvet ribbon and then folded it over so that it doubled up on itself. Before I folded it I placed the wire inside.
- Once dried, I cut leaf shapes out of the ribbon, both small and large.
- I drew veins with a green marker onto these leaves. The marker pushed deep into and indented the dense pile of the velvet. These lines provided the necessary touch of life: the sign that the leaves were realistic.

12 Jean Wilkinson, *Flower Fabrications* (New York: Butterick Publishing, 1977), dust jacket.



Possible recipient: Joseph Cornell

Joseph had a painful relationship with his sexuality: an understatement, if I'm to take the information his biographer Deborah Solomon (b. 1957) has laid out. He died without losing his virginity. A few instances, which mark the breadth if his corporeal sexual experiences as displayed by Deborah are:

- In May 1962 he had his first kiss (type and duration unknown) with Joyce Hunter.[13]
- He kissed the artist Yayoi Kusama (b. 1929) 'on the mouth' and explored her body 'with his hands'. Yayoi, reflecting on their relations said, Joseph 'was deeply impotent ... to have sex with him, therefore, was impossible'.[14]
- On one trip to visit Joseph, the travel writer Leila Hadley (b. 1925, d. 2009) had a bath with him. On another 'she treated him to oral sex'. Although he could orgasm through other means, they never had penetrative sex, because of his inability to maintain an erection due to his impotency.[15]

Deborah declared in the last page of the biography that Joseph remained a 'stubborn celibate', whether by biological causes or not, until the time of his own death.

When standing outside his house in the torrential rain, I recorded its surfaces and what was visible through the windows from beneath my umbrella with my home camcorder (fake daffodils, unidentifiable boxes leaning against the glass, net curtains). I felt an intimacy with my subject matter as I scanned his house. I considered his sexuality in the terms of his house, in the terms of the things I know he did in there, and how it hosted them. I looked to his house to hold answers about his sexuality: it was either a prison or a closet. Did he use it as a vehicle for a personal process of metamorphosis (a dressing room) or did it incarcerate, entomb him, his family, and the multitude of his artistic subjects; was it a mausoleum?

At night he used to turn the oven on low, then place the top half of his body inside.

13 Deborah Solomon, *Utopia Parkway: The Life and Work of Joseph Cornell* (New York: Other Press, 1977), 377.
14 Ibid., 382.
15 Ibid., 467.

He brought many women into his house, through the door and through the printed/filmic image. The questions regarding Joseph's intentions toward these women remain: did he want to *be with* them, did he want to *be* them or did he want to *capture* them?



FINALLY, I ASSEMBLED THE BODY OF THE ROSE:

- I cupped a petal in both my hands with the curls facing up. I pinched down and pulled at the centre of each one in order to pleat it, in order to give it a third dimension. Pleating is the central method in fabricating a tutu. It's the method that is used to sculpt the flat sheets of light and stiff tulle fabric. Layers upon layers of tulle are pleated on the inside, where the tutu will meet the body. From this folded and pressed mass of material, the tulle gains strength in order to take shape. My flower achieves strength through similar means: When all the petals touch each other in one place or another, they support each other and take an overall form together.

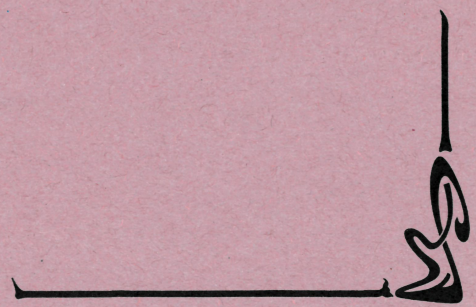
- I glued the petal to the bud upon the stem, which I had prepared earlier. It rose up above the bud, wrapping around it, hugging it.

- I added two or three more in this way, so that they all sat snugly around each other.

- I cut the calyx—the spiky base that holds the petals in place—from green cotton. It's a star shape. I cut an X in the centre.

- I pushed the stem of the rose through the X of the calyx like one pushes their legs through trousers. I fixed it at the top of the stem, at the base of the rose.

- I coiled floral tape around the stem. I embedded the wire, which was coming out of the bottom end of the leaves, so they stood erect. I made my way down to the bottom of the stem.



Possible recipient: Fanny Cerrito

The frontispiece to Ivor Guest's (b. 1920) *The Life of a Romantic Ballerina: Fanny Cerrito* is a lithograph of Fanny dancing with her own shadow, the *pas de l'ombre*, in the famous production of *Ondine*. Ivor must be Fanny's most dedicated fan alive.

She's lifting,
leaning.

She's leaning forward,
upward.

Lifting her left arm above her head and outstretching her right arm forward—

makes her torso twist toward us, to face us.

Extending the index finger of the right hand,
allowing the middle finger,
the ring finger
and the little finger,
to passively drape down.

She's reaching toward her own shadow.

She's keeping her neck relatively straight,
upward as she bends her torso forward.

She is standing on the tip or top of the big toe of her right foot.
Everything leans on this.

She is extending her left leg outwards, upwards and backwards.

Her body is moving like scissors opening up.

It's taking up space.

All these movements and extensions lead her body to make an X shape, rather than an I shape. Her legs extend and form the bottom two strands and her extended arms form the top two strands. The symbol X represents an unknown. X multiplies one known by another known. It adds a dimension, but doesn't provide one.

Like the nib of a pencil is visible at the end of the wooden shaft, her big toe is coloured by silk at the end of her white leg pin. Humans evolved to stand upright, but not many can stand on a toe like this.

Veils extend from her waist. They seclude the mechanics her waist undertakes. Veils cover the parts that don't extend. The centre of the X. The joint in the scissors.

The heel in her right foot is raised into the shaft of the leg, in line with the shin. Without the distinction of the foot the leg itself raises off the floor directly: it barely touches off the floor. It extends the distance between the body and the earth. Like the letter I without serif loses some of its grounding—its base and hat—the leg without foot does too. Rather than standing on the ground, the leg now points to the ground.

When she raises herself onto a point, when she transforms into the X, transformation itself is presented as possible.

S: She is nothing … A thing without a body! …

P: Oh! How she protests her nonexistence by an inexhaustible lightness! … Do you think she represents something? …

S: Nothing, dear Phaedrus … Do you not feel she is the pure act of metamorphosis?[16]

There are many first hand accounts of Fanny's ability to metamorphosise, proclaiming that she escaped the confines of language, such as what the Court Journal and Morning Post wrote:

> We will not accept any dancer of the present day, save only Taglioni, in asserting that a describeless 'shadow of a shade' of heaviness attaches to them, as compared with the chamois-like felicity of bound, the elastic volition, of this exquisite fée; Throwing jetés battus in the air, so high, and so much out of the line of perpendicularity, that to describe the achievement is beyond our powers.[17]

16 Phaedrus and Socrates discussing the dancer Athikte. Paul Valéry, 'Dance And The Soul', in *Paul Valéry, An Anthology*, ed. James R. Lawler (London: Routledge, 1977), 300–312.

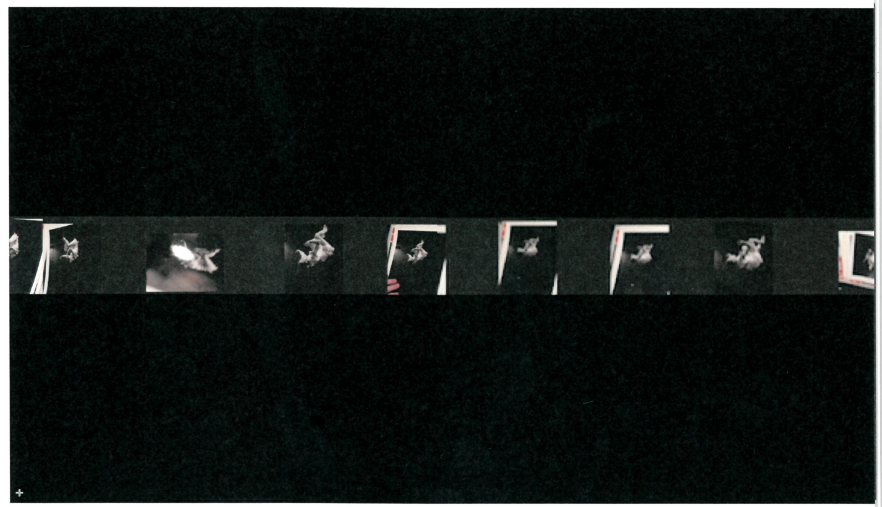
17 Ivor Guest, *The Life of a Romantic Ballerina: Fanny Cerrito* (London: Phoenix House, 1956), 26–29.



All ornaments are from Jean Wilkinson's *Flower Fabrications* (New York: Butterick Publishing, 1977).

IMAGE REPOSITORY 2A
video stills

Reproduction of six frames extracted from one of the two video elements (60 FPS) in *Femme Fabrications*, 2016.



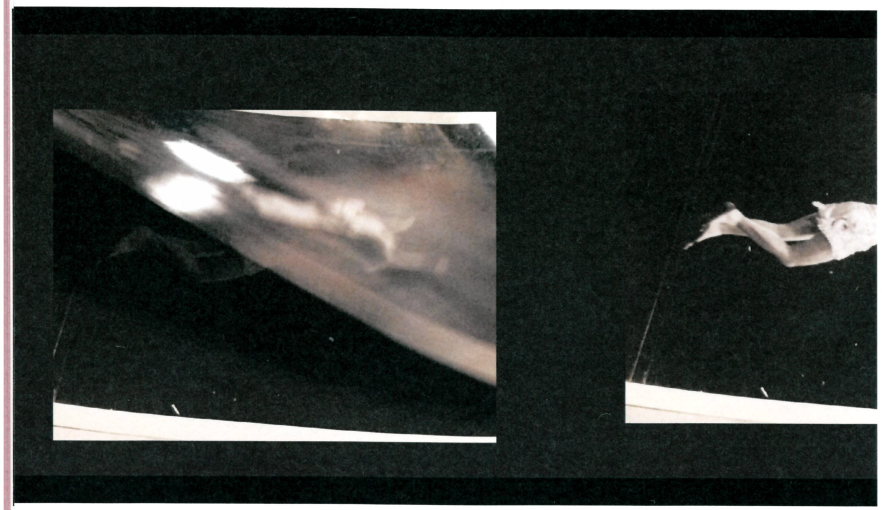
Frame number 1022 of 19252.



Frame number 1115 of 19252.



Frame number 8572 of 19252.



Frame number 17494 of 19252.



Frame number 17913 of 19252.



Frame number 18796 of 19252.

MY LIBRARY

The cataloguing system I have innovated for my library (in my studio) is based primarily on authors's names. Although sometimes there is no material authored by the person that the section is named after. Often the person is not a writer, but, for example an artist (Joseph Cornell), a family member (my mother), a dancer (Fanny Cerrito), or a cook (Alexis Soyer). The nominating act is one I find compelling. Not so I can go and find my own meaning in the literature named. Nor that a Master has saved me time by pointing out worth, but in part so that I can hunt for the nominator's desire in the literature and in doing so, see if I can derive any pleasure out of it.

Although not all sections in my library are titled with an author's name, they are all titled with a person's name. They do not only hold items directly associated with that person, but a rich variety of tangentially associated material. Sections often contain such variety that they each need a customised cataloguing system to be invented. Therefore, they must be acknowledged as individual libraries, independent from their context within a larger library. They are embedded libraries capable of begetting their own libraries.

Take for example Adrian Rifkin's section: There are books by him, *Street Noises* and *Ingres, Then, and Now*, but before they arrived in his section I had put the books he personally recommended to me: *The Complete Gospels* ed. Robert J. Miller, *Augustine: A very short introduction*, by Henry Chadwick. I had also inserted books he had talked about in lectures: *The Life of Saint Teresa of Ávila by Herself*, trans. J.M. Cohen; *The Thief's Journal* by Jean Genet; *Dancer from the Dance* by Andrew Holleran etc. In parallel to this cultivation of the library under Rifkin's name, I was making an artwork using the scripture of the medieval Christian heretics, the Cathars. Next to *The Complete Gospels,* which informed my readings on the Cathars, appeared a great many books on the subject. I had to decide on appropriate categorisation for these, quite separate from the categorisation primarily associated with Rifkin. Some thematic examples: texts on the crusades and inquisition, the military movement, where Northern French Kings, the Pope, barons, and clergy attempted to stamp out the heresy (eg. *The Medieval Inquisition*, Bernard Hamilton); texts

about the Cathar heresy itself, the causes for their re-writing of Biblical texts, and documentation of the everyday experience of these peasants (eg. *Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French Village 1294–1324*, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie); translations of Cathar writings themselves (eg. *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* trans. Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans). And so, within this sub-library, I already had three distinct sections, which over the course of time, as my research and interests progressed each produced further, more idiosyncratic sections. For example: 'the relationship between Prince's body language and his clothes in the video for "If I was your Girlfriend"' grew out of the 'Cathar writings' section.

If my Adrian Rifkin library could be seen as a literary portrait, it wouldn't be one in which Adrian Rifkin would fully recognise himself. Rather it is one in which the many new sub-libraries draw the lineage of an archive within which I am familiar with both him and myself.

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including exhibitions, films, archival files and museum objects

can more be detected ?

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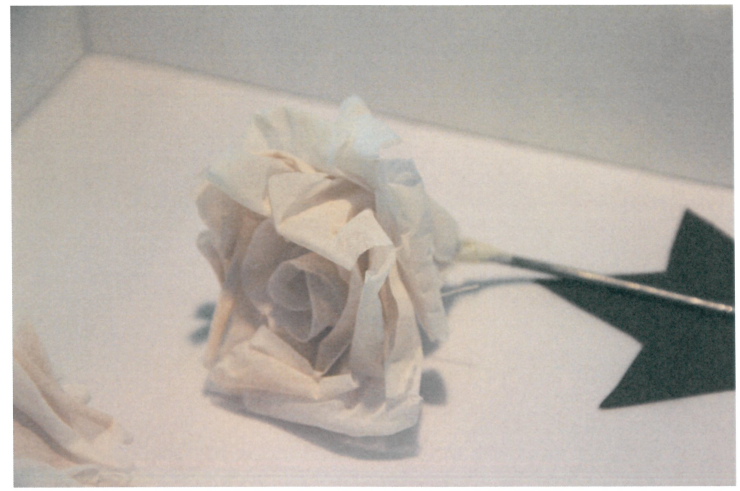
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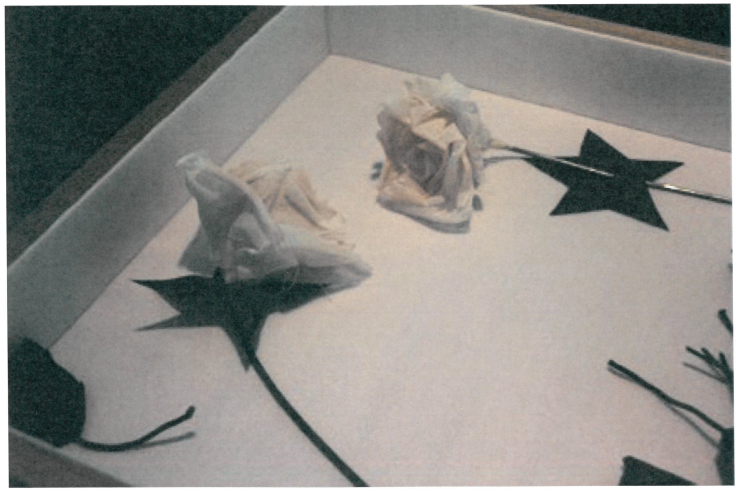
IMAGE REPOSITORY 2B
photographs

Extract of 12 photographs (from a total of 256) taken of the box elements in *Femme Fabrications* on 5th June 2016.

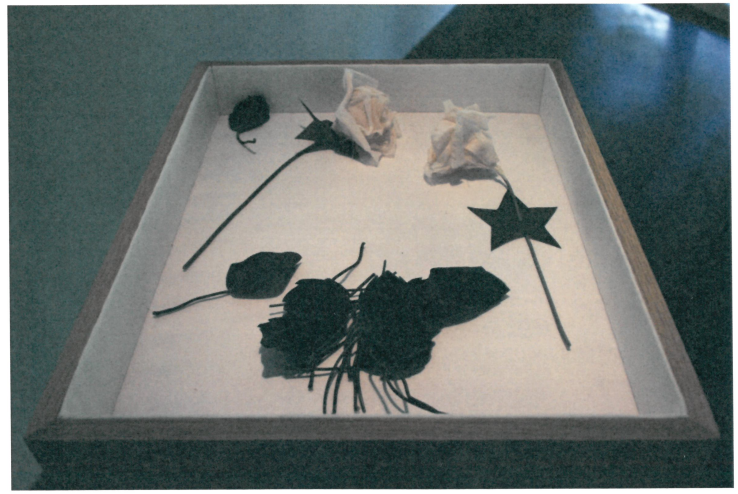


Photograph number 37 of 256.

Charles Sannes was friend or
at least knew: Francis Cyril
Rose
(1909 - 1979)
He was an painter - trained
with Picabia and painted sets
for the Ballet Russe in Paris
He became close to Gertrude Stein
("A rose is a rose is a rose is
a rose")



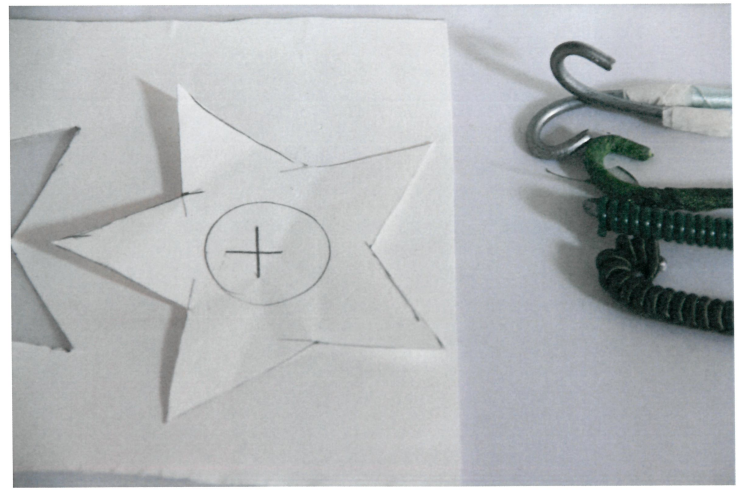
Photograph number 41 of 256.



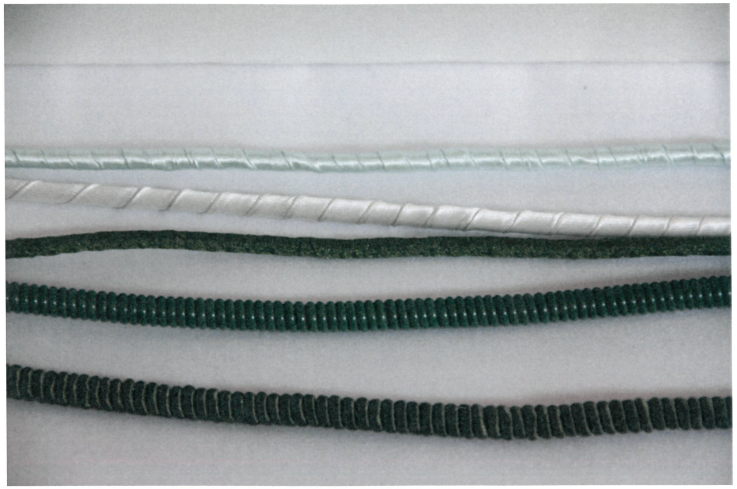
Photograph number 46 of 256.



Photograph number 81 of 256.



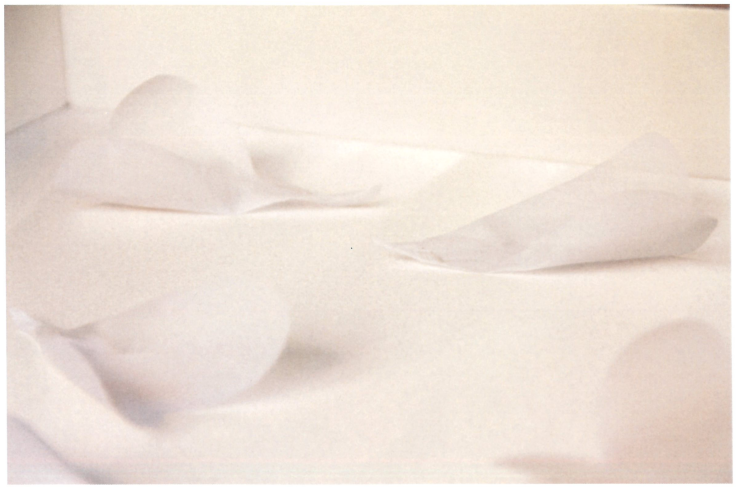
Photograph number 85 of 256.



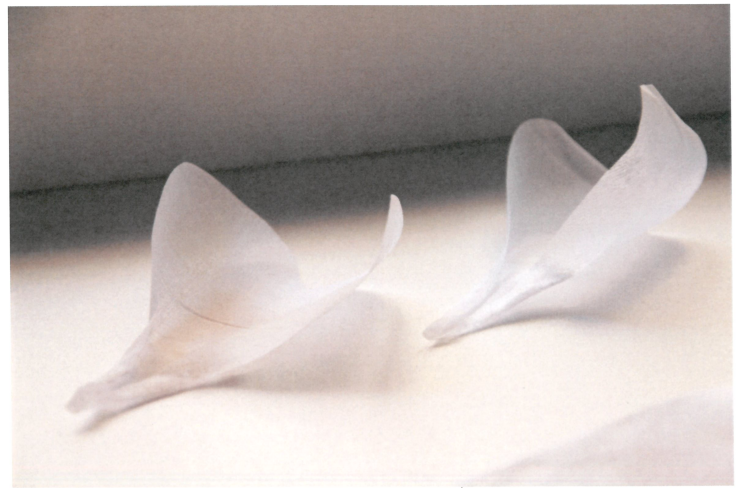
Photograph number 88 of 256.



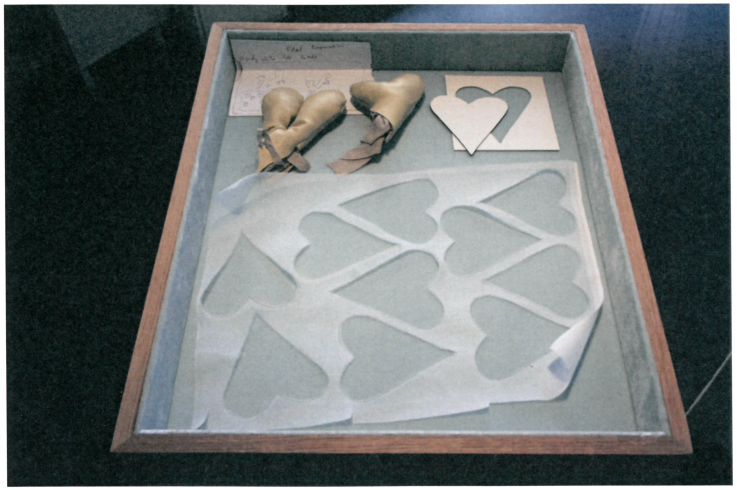
Photograph number 132 of 256.



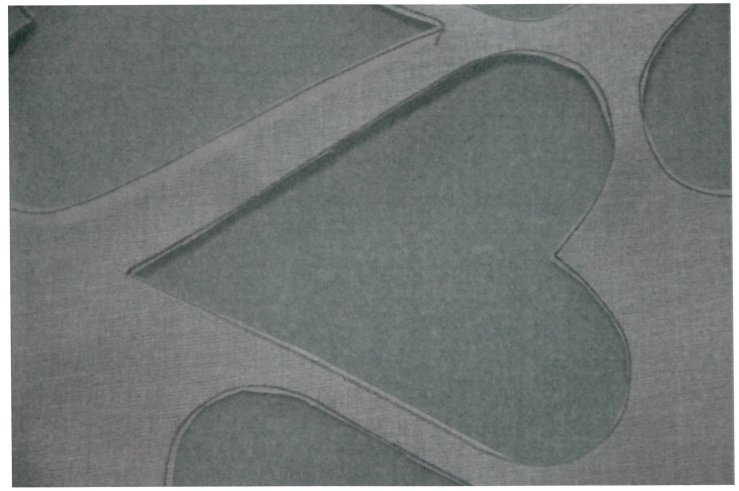
Photograph number 125 of 256.



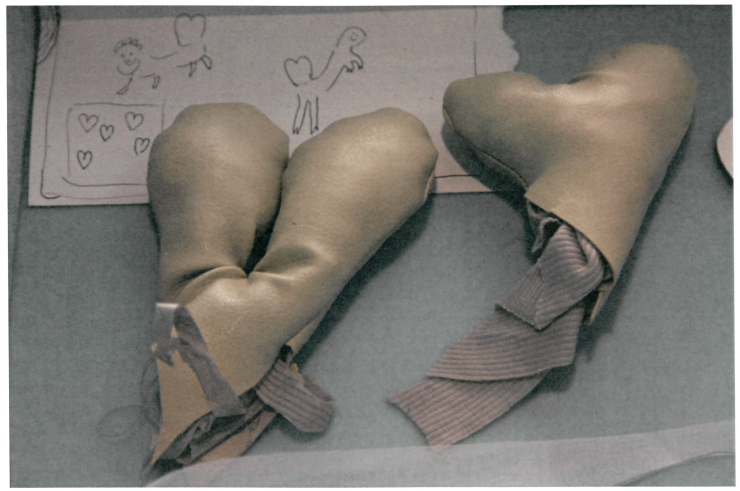
Photograph number 127 of 256.



Photograph number 150 of 256.



Photograph number 154 of 256.



Photograph number 164 of 256.

LIBRARIES & ARCHIVES

Femme Fabrications was developed through research at:

- Victoria & Albert Theatre and Performance collections and Victoria & Albert Clothworkers Centre, London, UK.
- Senate House Library Special Collections, University of London, London, UK.
- The British Library, London, UK.
- The Joseph Cornell Study Centre at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington DC, USA.
- Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

The Cesspool of Rapture was developed through research at:

- Victoria & Albert Clothworkers Centre, London, UK.
- London College of Fashion Library, University of the Arts, London, UK.
- The British Library, London, UK.
- Brooklyn Museum Libraries and Archives, New York, USA.
- Metropolitan Museum Watson Library and Archives, New York, USA.
- New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, New York, USA.

EXHIBITION, PERFORMANCE AND PUBLICATION HISTORY

Femme Fabrications, 2016

- *OAR: Oxford Artistic and Practice based Research Platform, Issue Zero: Response*, 2016
- *EROS, self/love launch*, Bosse and Baum, London, 2016
- *On Dedication*, Corridor Project Space, Amsterdam, 2016
- *EROS journal, self/love*, issue VIII, London, 2016
- *Moving Performances*, Faculty of Music, Oxford, 2016
- *plural melts: Femme Fabrications by Joseph Noonan-Ganley*, Yvonne Lambert, Berlin, 2016
- *Femme Fabrications*, Quick Millions, London, 2016

The Cesspool of Rapture, 2017

- *Amended Plastics*, PuntWG, Amsterdam, 2017
- *Going Along Without a Body*, Iklectic, London, 2017
- *Something II Be Scared Of,* Syndicate, Cologne, 2017
- *Stories from the Sculpture City,* Henry Moore Foundation, Leeds, 2017

IMAGE REPOSITORY 2C

video stills

Reproduction of six of frames extracted from one of the two video elements (25 FPS) in *Femme Fabrications*, 2016.



Frame number 2113 of 10583.



Frame number 3358 of 10583.



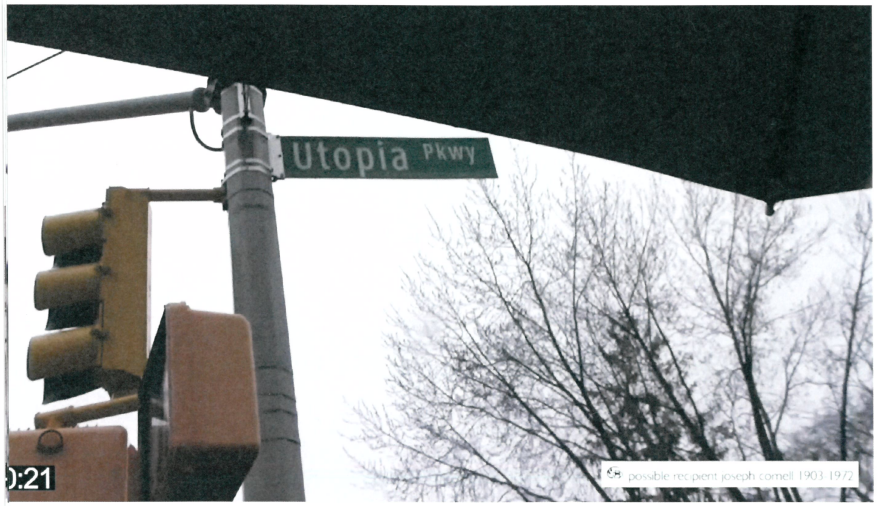
Frame number 6183 of 10583.



Frame number 7637 of 10583.



Frame number 8560 of 10583.



Frame number 10015 of 10583.

INDEX TO AUDIO EXTRACTS ON USB KEY

A copy of these files will be placed on a centralised hard disk within the library at the University of Oxford. This will be useful after USB 2.0 becomes defunct.

File name: '1.mp3'

1:20 min extract of audio from *Femme Fabrications*, 2016, video projections, 5:21 min, 7:03 min, loudspeakers, audio recordings, 3:53 min, 4:45 min, 6:12 min, oak boxes, textiles, metal wire, paper, cardboard, makeup, pins, floral tape, quick drying clay, ink, masking tape.

File name: '2.mp3'

0:57 min extract of audio from *Femme Fabrications*, 2016, video projections, 5:21 min, 7:03 min, loudspeakers, audio recordings, 3:53 min, 4:45 min, 6:12 min, oak boxes, textiles, metal wire, paper, cardboard, makeup, pins, floral tape, quick drying clay, ink, masking tape.

File name: '3.mp3'

2:37 min extract of audio from *The Cesspool of Rapture*, 2017, video projection, duration variable ~ 20 min, (episodic), *Charles James's seamless 'Taxi' street dress,* (series), linen, wool, cotton, polyester, zippers, dressmaker's pins.

I listened twice.
The last time was on
the train.

APPENDIX
How to use the image repositories

You may ask what kind of resources these repositories are; how will they be mined, what use will they be put to? Although I don't know what the future visitor will produce with these images, I do have some insight into their means of extraction: the likely processes applied to the images in order for them to be transported to future destinations, which may go some way to explaining them as a resource.

Even though I will deposit a digital copy of this document into the Oxford Research Archive, this copy, the physical material, printed and bound object, will be scanned by the library services at the University of Oxford.[5] That is why a minimum margin of 3 cm has been left at the inner edge of each page. So that the scanning technology can adequately capture all the information. The areas close in to the spine often come out blurry because the spine pulls this edge away from the angle that the rest of the page holds. The spine reminds the reader that the publication has a body, that is has a number of other pages and that it is an object. Any information stored here, close in to the spine would be obfuscated in reproduction. And so, this formatting around the margin is the preliminary preparation necessary for the images to withhold their potential to become transferable. These stored images, upon visitation, may then be further reproduced and disseminated: hand sketched with pencil, charcoal or pen, photocopied (black and white or colour), photographed, filmed, or videoed (analogue or digital, with a camera, camcorder, phone, or tablet), scanned (sheet-fed, flatbed, handheld, or drum – although some of these will need the pages to be removed), transferred onto microfilm or digitized and rendered into a multiplicity of file formats (.tif, .jpg, .gif, .png, .pdf, .mov, .flv, .wmv, .mp4, .avi …).

You may further ask: isn't the rendering of these images into useable, transferable stock, a process that equally applies to the textual elements of this document – not only the image repositories? But the text, one could argue, could be easily re-typed. The fonts can be sourced, the spacing and paper stock replaced without significant change. There is a cleanliness and ease of reproduction,

5 GSO.20a Notes of guidance for research examinations at University of Oxford, section B, preparation of thesis and abstracts, point 2: 'Candidates should note that the purpose of these regulations is not only to ease the task of the examiners (which is obviously in candidates' interests), but also to ensure that the copy finally deposited in the Bodleian or other university library is of a standard of legibility which will allow it (subject to applicable copyright rules) to be photocopied or microfilmed if required in future years.' https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression?wssl=1

which gifts the copy of the text an ability to be created without many traces to the original. It doesn't have the umbilical link, the kinship, that the reproduction of the printed image can't escape. Similarly, the audio files on the USB key can, in an instant, be lifted from the hard disk, copied and pasted.

The images stored in the image repositories are spread out over the surface of the page, they could have avoided the materiality of the page, they could have been placed on a hard disk. They rely on the consistency of the paper page for support; they rely on its surface, which acts as a host – a collaborator, which fuses with the images. A scan or photograph of these images will undoubtedly leave an autobiographical imprint in the copy it creates. The copy may include elements from outside the edge of the image: periphery text or visual interference between the capturing apparatus and the original image itself, such as lack of focus or warping of the aspect ratio. These are extra elements, which are not generated through digital copying and pasting of images.

It is because of this intimate and material link that I believe the image repositories will provide my future visitors with much pleasure. They will get to wallow in the added transference, which is brought on by the noise that the technology of reproduction adds. The noise that perpetuation generates, the noise appropriation and authorship imprints.

Each of the five repositories is designated to one of two artworks. I want to aid my future visitors, my future plunderers, in acquiring what they desire in as clear a manner as possible. I am confident this is based around building their own associations and identifications, even if this happens through copying or reproduction. Although it may seem contradictory to my wish to aid my visitors, it is necessary to spread the spacing of these repositories out. That way I'll avoid the possibility that my visitor will leave too quickly, thereby not getting the chance to produce what they came to produce.

COLOPHON

Design:

Margherita Huntley

Proofreading:

Tom Dillon

Paper:

Munken Lynx Rough 120gsm

Cairn Eco Lilac 100gsm

Fonts:

Caslon by William Caslon

Courier by Bud Kettler (*The Cesspool of Rapture*)

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Wyvern Bindery, 56–58 Clerkenwell Road, London, EC1M 5PX.

Printing:

Online Reprogaphics, 116 Business Design Centre, London, N1 0QH

Am I expected to write on these pages?
Are they really provided for comment?

First observations:
Is this an engagement with the fictive?
And what did you find out?

What have I learnt as a reader?
If information / knowledge is transferred - or at least if that has to be demanded of a DPhil - then how can this knowledge be transferred.

Is the success of this document my appropriation? Therefore is the point of the research to MAKE the Reader participate?

In that case it has succeeded.
Because I am participating in this document.

There is a different temporality to my participation - there are the initial tentative remarks made in pencil and now this ink-fuelled assertion.

I am the examiner - but will I now be examined through these written comments - hand written and therefore a vocal stream not an edited insertion.

This all seems secondary after seeing the exhibition - it's content is explicit.

Wyvern Bindery
London
020 7490 7899