An Investigation into the Potential of Ceramics to
Expressively Render Flesh and Skin on the
Human Body

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the University of Wales
for the degree of PhD.

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Declaration

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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Date \( \text{Dec} \cdot 2004 \)

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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Abstract

This practice-led research considers the ways in which the emphasis of flesh and skin in figurative ceramic artworks can be understood, discussed and demonstrated in terms of aesthetic properties. It examines theoretical discourse related to the concept of expression in art and applies selected theories and principles to the evaluation of the work of contemporary artists engaging with the figure. Understandings of key principles and properties arising from these studies are applied, tested and evaluated through a studio-based investigation, within the researcher's personal art practice.

The project was undertaken through interdependent strands of theory and practical studio-based investigation, comprising: a literature search and field study to identify, review and evaluate existing material; the examination of key theories and debates related to expression in art; an examination of aesthetic properties in the work of selected artists, through the conduct of case studies; and the undertaking of studio-based trials to give form to, and to test and evaluate, the principles and properties identified in the theory and case study strands.

Findings from the project support the philosophical assertion that figurative artwork exists within a common bodily frame of reference, thus enabling a shared understanding of its properties. Results from the studio-based trials demonstrate how particular perceptual relationships can be created or developed to achieve specific aesthetic properties that are expressive of particular bodily states or experiences. This research has developed and examined modes of ceramic figuration which manipulate the interaction between expression, representation, surface, and form to create a range of aesthetic properties that evoke sensations of flesh and skin.

The study as a whole, being an integration of theory, fieldwork and practice, demonstrates how specific qualities and emotions within a range of figurative artworks might be effectively articulated, and also demonstrates the appropriateness of the medium of ceramics to achieve this.
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Introduction

1 Introduction

1.1 Rationale

The investigation set out in this thesis examines the relationship between surface and form in the figure in ceramics. The proposal for this study arose out of an engagement with the figure in art, developed through the researcher's undergraduate study in painting and extended into three dimensions in her Masters degree. It was at this stage that she identified ceramics as a very pliable, hugely versatile material which, in particular, enabled the extension of her concerns as a painter through the articulation of both the surface and the form of the human body into three dimensions. Although the researcher was initially concerned with anatomy and learning how to construct the figure, it emerged that the surface and the interrelationship of surface and form was a significant issue in the expression of certain sensations or emotions. It appeared that its capacity to express specific properties is strongly influenced by its surface, in particular, differences between the illusion of qualities looking as though they are an integral part of the body, and textures applied to the surface.

A search for figurative artists who might have been engaged with similar issues working within the medium of ceramics, revealed that very few were concerned with the interrelationship of surface and form of the human body. This may be due to conventions arising from the construction of the ceramic figure whereby the surface and form are often created at separate stages with greater focus given to the form, and the surface left either untreated or treated as an independent aspect. It also emerged that little material has either been published in regard to the integration of the surface and form of the body, or seriously examined the ways in which the ceramic figure can be understood as having the potential to evoke particular sensations or emotions.

It was at this stage, about midway through her Masters degree, that the
Introduction

researcher realised that an investigation into the expressive capacity of the figure through the medium of ceramics would demand a deeper examination of properties than could be managed effectively within the constraints of the Masters course. This PhD research project was thus devised to examine the role and impact of surface as an integral part of the form and, in particular, to investigate ways in which surface and form can be manipulated to promote specific sensations and emotions experienced in relation to flesh and skin on the human figure.

At the outset, it was determined that it would be most appropriate to undertake the project in ways that would significantly extend the researcher's practice as well as revealing new understandings of relevance for other practitioners and researcher's working within the field. Thus the decision was made to undertake studio-based practice as the principal means by which to investigate certain properties and interrelationships on ceramic figurative work and their potential to focus attention on particular qualities of flesh and skin. It can also be argued that practice led investigation conducted from the perspective of a practitioner has the potential for a more holistic examination of the effectiveness of the medium of ceramics than a purely theoretical investigation: properties can arise during the process of making that may lead to specific emphasis and the development of novel qualities and interrelationships which, it could be further argued, a practitioner would recognise as being of value, and would respond to accordingly.

The development and analysis of the studio-based investigation was underpinned by an understanding of theoretical debates exploring the notion of expression in art, and informed by a series of case studies to locate the project within a wider context of contemporary figurative art.
1.2 **Aim of the Investigation**

To investigate ways in which surface and form on a ceramic figure can be manipulated to promote specific sensations and emotions experienced in relation to flesh and skin on the human body.

1.3 **Constituents of the Investigation**

The main text of this thesis is set out in three sections reflecting the principal constituents of the project. These sections are:

(i) **Theoretical Debate:** examination of existing philosophical thought and debate on expression in art; most significantly the ways in which aesthetic properties at work in each piece can appear to interact and generate, for the viewer, specific sensations or emotions.

(ii) **Case Studies:** a series of case studies of selected artists to examine how different interrelationships between surface and form of the figure can give emphasis to or reduce connection with bodily qualities.¹

(iii) **Practical Investigation:** a series of practical studio-based trials, which are the principal means by which the understandings evolved and developed from the theory and case studies were given form within the researcher's own practice.

Work on each of the constituents described in these three sections of the thesis proceeded concurrently. This provided opportunities to gain insight and understanding from each constituent part. The interaction of theory and practice also enabled a rigorous and analytical examination of practical work both in the progression of ideas and the outcomes of the trials. At the beginning of each section an introduction sets out the contribution of each constituent part to the project as a whole. They are here outlined in brief:

¹ The case studies demonstrate how bodily qualities can appear as emphasized or reduced in existing figurative artwork, in order to inform the studio-based trials of the extent to which properties and interrelationships could be exaggerated or distorted whilst maintaining connections to flesh and skin.
1.3.1 Theoretical Debate

This section examines selected theoretical debate relating to expression in art and sets out to establish definitions of the term *expression*, and in particular how sensations and emotions can be conveyed through an artwork. It examines the suggestion that connections occur through a process referred to as *aesthetic transference* (see 2.3.1, para. 6), a term coined by the researcher in response to the theories of Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty. This term arose principally from their discussions into the ways in which one quality in an artwork can appear to combine with another or transpose its properties onto another, leading a viewer toward one overriding sensation. Aesthetic transferences are discussed through relationships which structure perception in general, through the imagination (according to Collingwood), and the body (according to Merleau-Ponty). This debate underpins the project as a whole, providing the framework within which the studio trials investigate and analyse the expression of certain properties of flesh and skin. It also informs the selection and analysis of case study artists and artworks.

1.3.2 Case Studies

The ways in which surface has been explored by a range of contemporary figurative artists are examined through case studies. Each case study introduces to the project properties that, whilst possibly not representative of flesh or skin are nevertheless considered as expressive of certain aspects of their qualities, according to the theories of Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty. In this way, they provide a frame of reference which sets out and tests the boundaries or limitations within which qualities and relationships can be considered as emphasizing or

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2 Collingwood (1889 - 1943 Philosopher and Historian, Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy, Oxford University) and Merleau-Ponty (1907 - 1961 considered foremost academic French philosopher of the Post-War period and responsible for revising phenomenological concepts of perception) have both made major contributions to the theoretical debate concerning expression in art.
reducing connection to bodily qualities, and lend comparative focus to the trials and inform their development.

Given the subtlety of the effects evident in each selected case study artwork, it was important to both examine each selected piece directly and to discuss its qualities with the artist responsible. Where practicable, the artists were thus interviewed in their studios in order to observe and record their working practices.  

1.3.3 Practical Investigation

Studio-based practice is the principal means by which certain properties and interrelationships on the body are examined for their potential to focus attention on particular qualities of flesh and skin. The practical investigation is comprised of four discrete series of trials, each exploring different configurations of surface, form, expression and representation of the body (concepts identified in the field study as central to the expression of flesh and skin and examined in depth in the theoretical section). The conduct and findings of each trial informed those that followed, accumulating in the fourth series. There is a significant distinction between the earlier trials and this final series in that it consists of six large scale ceramic figures considered both as trials in their further development of the project aim, and also as finished artworks. The subject of each series is as follows:

(i) The expression and distortion of qualities found on the body in nature.
(ii) The application of inappropriate qualities onto the body.
(iii) Incongruous relationships between the surface, form and the body.
(iv) Scale, and the interrelationship of previous trials.

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The observation and recording of working practices occurred through discussion with the case study artists in direct proximity to their studio and artworks, as opposed to the artists creating or recreating the conditions of their working practice specifically for observation.
1.3.4 Thesis Structure

1.3.4 Rationale

The practical investigation is the principal means by which the aim of the project is examined; the understanding, development and analysis of its findings however, are underpinned by a strong theoretical framework. The structure of this dissertation demonstrates this symbiotic relationship between theory and practice: it sets out in clear and successive stages the theory, its application to the aim of the project, the emerging debate and its findings articulated through the series of practical studio-based trials. The structure and presentation of these stages are set out below and references made to their placement in the main body of text:

Introduction: purpose of the project; the aim, and a brief outline of the constituent parts.
(ref: 1.1)

Literature Review and Field Study: background review of relevant literature, theoretical ideas and existing figurative artworks leading to identification of key precepts/terms on which the dissertation is built.
(ref: 2.1)

Theoretical Debate: foreground theory; definition and application of key precepts/terms illustrated through selection of case study artworks, leading to the location of more specific areas of the dissertation.
(ref: 2.3-.2)

Methodology Used: theoretical framework, exposition of selected theories and application to artwork in general (those deployed by the philosophers and appropriate to discourse).
Introduction

Application of Theory to Aim of Investigation: in-depth examination of selected case study artworks leading to the identification of salient aesthetic properties informing the development of the practical studio-based trials.

Application of Theory to Practical Investigation: synthesis of findings and debate illustrated and developed through a selection of the practical studio based trials - a general overview which enables identification of problems and potential solutions in applying theory to practical investigation.

Case Study Section: identification of a range of contemporary artists and artworks to establish the parameters of the dissertation, giving specific emphasis to the practical investigation and locating research in the wider context of art.

Informed by the findings of the theoretical debate, specific aesthetic properties are identified in selected artworks and analysed in order to locate a range of theoretical concerns in relation to the project aim. Findings arising from the case studies as a whole are discussed under the heading: Theoretical Concerns.

Practical Investigation: Each discrete stage of development is here subject to analysis leading to the identification of aesthetic properties which enable examination of specific areas of concern in relation to the project aim. Findings from each series are discussed under the heading Theoretical Concerns, informing and leading towards the accumulation of findings.
articulated in the final series of large scale ceramic figures.

**Conclusion:**

As findings are identified in the main body of text to inform the development of the practical investigation, the conclusion discusses the interaction between theory and practice. It reflects on salient aspects of the studio-based trials which, due to accumulation of findings are most clearly articulated through the fourth and final series.
2.1 Literature Review

A review of literature related to the subject of contemporary figurative ceramics and the concept of expression in art was undertaken in the initial stages of the project. The aims were:

(i) to identify the ways in which the expression of flesh and skin on the human body has been discussed in contemporary figurative ceramic literature and figurative art in general.

(ii) to select philosophical debate on expression in art which can underpin the analysis of aesthetic properties in the case studies and the practical studio-based trials and articulate the ways in which they can be understood as evoking connections and associations to flesh and skin in a viewer.

(iii) to identify the diverse ways in which contemporary literature has considered flesh and skin as a site of expression and clarify the nature of properties under examination in the practical studio-based trials.

2.1 (i) The scope of the initial review encompassed literature documenting the work of ceramic artists practising in the period since the early 1980's, a time in which there has been considerable expansion of engagement and development in figurative ceramics. It included material published in the English language (including translation) that records figurative ceramic artworks and contemporary artists.

The search identified a significant lack of published material documenting the ways in which expressive properties of the human form have been examined in

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4 It is significant to here clarify the distinction made by the researcher between expression and representation in art. Expression is understood as the capacity of an artwork to evoke particular sensations or emotions in a viewer, a concept clarified further in 2.1(ii) and examined in depth in the main text of the theoretical discussion. These concepts were informed by Collingwood’s description of the expressive values evident in Cézanne’s paintings: Collingwood, R. G., *The Principles of Art*, Oxford University, 1958, p.145.

5 The period of time since the early 1980's is the time scale quoted in the figurative ceramics literature set out below as containing significant development and expansion in figurative ceramics.
Literature Review

contemporary ceramic practice. Other than individual biographies, journals and exhibition catalogues, only three works focus specifically on contemporary figurative work:


Each author focuses predominantly on the figure as the subject of the artwork rather than engaging with the mechanisms by which its qualities can be understood as conveying particular experiences of the human body. Flynn engages only superficially with the issues associated with the figure. His book serves principally as a directory of figurative artists and provides only a brief biography of each artist. Both Waller and Blandino engage with the concerns, position and ambitions of the artist, rather than undertaking an analysis of the artwork itself. Waller in particular discusses the artist’s influences, speaking of what they want to express but in no significant way how the artist may have sought to achieve this. Blandino offers a brief overview of historical precedents to her selection of artworks and concentrates on the different ways in which the figure has been presented: in painted clay, as part of a vessel, and as singular objects. But this

Whilst journals are widely accepted as providing a rich source of information and documentation of current research, a wide range of ceramic journals were examined, both national and international and published within the period since the 1980’s, without finding information relevant to the project. It is significant to acknowledge that *Crafts* magazine reviewed a conference in 1990 devoted to the subject of the body in craft and that no artist or contribution to the conference or subsequent publications examined the notion of expression of flesh and skin on the human body: Coatts, M., ‘Body Language: the Conference: The Body Politic’, *Crafts*, Nov/Dec, 1990. This was of significance, however, in identifying the area to which this study can contribute both practically and theoretically. Other journals reviewed included:

(i) *Ceramics Art and Perception*

(ii) *Ceramics Technical*

(iii) *Ceramics in Society*

(iv) *Ceramic Review*

(v) *Ceramics Monthly*

(vi) *Kerameiki Techni*
Literature Review

descriptive approach follows through to the contemporary artworks rather than engaging with a more rigorous debate of the figure’s expressive potential. This descriptive approach of documenting the figure in ceramics reflects the relatively minimal level of critical engagement and debate also evident in the wider collective of published material on the subject. This descriptive approach of documenting the figure in ceramics reflects the relatively minimal level of critical engagement and debate also evident in the wider collective of published material on the subject. From these findings the researcher determined that it would be necessary to broaden the scope of the search to include the figure in painting and sculpture, and to include figurative artworks created over a greater historical period, in particular between the fourteenth and twenty-first centuries. This period of time was selected in order to include particular artworks and art movements commonly recognised for their depiction of the human form and the expression of properties, for example: the luminosity of skin conveyed through the medium of tempera in

A review of contemporary ceramic literature which includes a general section/chapter on the ceramic figure was found principally to demonstrate a collation of information structured alphabetically, stylistically, chronologically, by process or according to criteria other than the expression of bodily properties and with no specific examination or acknowledgement of the expression of sensations of flesh and skin. The literature includes:


Wallis, K., ‘A Phenomenological Study of the Body and its Representations in Paintings’, Journal of Visual Art Practice, vol.2, 2003, p.78, begins to negotiate the mechanisms by which we can experience the rendered human body. However, her study concentrates on the manifestation of a viewer’s perception of the human body, specifically the moment at which it is perceived before it is given name and related to the body of the viewer. It does not discuss perception of bodily properties such as flesh and skin. The philosophical concepts of Maurice Merleau-Ponty examined by Wallis are considered as significant to this research project and are discussed in depth in relation to a viewer’s perception of flesh and skin in the theoretical debate.

Golding, M., ‘An Echo in the Body’, Modern Painters, 2002, applies Merleau-Ponty’s theory of embodied experience to his description and examination of figurative artwork’s. However, this approach is not applied to properties of flesh and skin on the human body. A range of art journals were examined, both national and international and published within the period since the 1980’s, which also found information only of limited relevance to the project (all articles pertaining to the selected case study artists are documented in the case study section under the relevant artist). Examples of those articles include:

Flemish Panel paintings, a sense of the activity of flesh in figurative and portrait paintings by Rubens and Rembrandt, and the burgeoning of expression in art in the late 1800's leading to a variety of ways of depicting flesh and skin through the work of such artists as Schiele, Gauguin, Kirchner, and Matisse.

It was found, however, that the literature documenting these artists and art movements gave greater emphasis to the social or stylistic context of the figure or simply a description of their properties rather than engaging specifically with the ways in which they convey particular qualities of flesh and skin. For example, the paintings of Hans Memling and Petrus Christus are referred to most particularly through the role of patrons or donors in Flemish panel painting, discussing the historical development of the subject and painterly qualities evident in their work, rather than fully examining the ways in which they were expressive of properties.

Artwork created during the Northern Renaissance was taken as an historical benchmark for the scope of this literature review as, arguably, for the first time in the civilised world, artists attempted to penetrate their depictions of the human form with a psychological reality; to interpret the world about them rather than just record or idealise it - as occurred in the Classical period. Artworks created by artists such as Memling and Christus demonstrate examples of those first tentative and subtle exaggerations to properties of flesh and skin. It was considered prudent, therefore, to consider these works as providing a standpoint against which all subsequent properties considered expressive of flesh and skin were measured. Whilst aspects of this style and approach are also evident in more contemporary artwork, for example the early portraiture of Freud, it can be argued that their specific properties arose out of the particular climate of the time in which they were created and therefore cannot again appear with the same integrity. For further explanation of this Hegelian view see: Gombrich, E. H., *The Essential Gombrich*, Phaidon Press, 1996, p.384.

The artwork of Rubens and Rembrandt demonstrates further development of the 14th century Flemish artists' approach to the expression of flesh and skin. According to Read, 'Rubens achieved complete mastery with his vital, free and expressive brushwork, the brilliance and luminosity of colour and exuberantly sensual feeling for tactile human flesh and materials, which has not been paralleled since' (Read, H., *Encyclopaedia of the Arts*, Thames and Hudson, 1945, p.783). Whilst this reference is taken from a dated text, Read's particular use of language is considered as effectively demonstrating how correspondence can be made between aesthetic properties ie. luminosity, sensuality and tactility, and properties of flesh and skin significant to the aim of this study and the researcher's understanding of the concept of expression in art (ref: 2.1 (ii), para. 4). This point is further reinforced by Read describing Rembrandt as 'the first artist to establish that the handling of paint, light and colour can equal subject matter in importance. He could therefore extend subject matter to embrace the full range of human experience and could portray old age without sentiment or revulsion. Paint became a tool with which to express feeling' (Read, H., *Encyclopaedia of the Arts*, Thames and Hudson, 1945, p.755).

10 The artwork of Rubens and Rembrandt demonstrates further development of the 14th century Flemish artists' approach to the expression of flesh and skin. According to Read, 'Rubens achieved complete mastery with his vital, free and expressive brushwork, the brilliance and luminosity of colour and exuberantly sensual feeling for tactile human flesh and materials, which has not been paralleled since' (Read, H., *Encyclopaedia of the Arts*, Thames and Hudson, 1945, p.783). Whilst this reference is taken from a dated text, Read's particular use of language is considered as effectively demonstrating how correspondence can be made between aesthetic properties ie. luminosity, sensuality and tactility, and properties of flesh and skin significant to the aim of this study and the researcher's understanding of the concept of expression in art (ref: 2.1 (ii), para. 4). This point is further reinforced by Read describing Rembrandt as 'the first artist to establish that the handling of paint, light and colour can equal subject matter in importance. He could therefore extend subject matter to embrace the full range of human experience and could portray old age without sentiment or revulsion. Paint became a tool with which to express feeling' (Read, H., *Encyclopaedia of the Arts*, Thames and Hudson, 1945, p.755).

The term Expressionism is used here by the researcher, as a generic term referring to a number of discrete art movements such as: Der Blaue Reiter, The Fauves, The Nabis. Principally it encompasses the approach set out by Fry, whereby an artist is not concerned with the detail of representation but rather seeks to generate in a viewer, sensations or emotional states. (Harrison, C., Wood, P., *Art in Theory, 1900-1990*, ed Harrison, pub. Blackwell, 1992, p.86). Whilst contemporary debate examines alternative definitions of the term Expressionism and its aesthetic values, Fry's account is considered important in informing the approach taken by this study (ref: 2.1(iii)).
of the skin. This social/historical bias was also found in literature documenting
the art of Rembrandt and Rubens. Documentation of twentieth century artists
recognized for their articulation of the human form such as painters Freud and
Saville and sculptors Butler, De Andrea and Mueck, also emphasizes the artists’
contribution to the history of art and their social or political commentary, rather
than engaging with the mechanisms by which bodily qualities can be understood as
expressed through their work.

Sentiment derived from: Upton, J., Petrus Christus: His Place in Fifteenth Century Painting, Pennstate

A wide range of contemporary literature was reviewed that examines properties of figurative artworks
which serve only to establish the historical, political or cultural context of the figure, rather than the
ways in which its aesthetic properties might be understood as expressive of the properties of flesh and
skin. The term 'flesh' appears instead, almost as a generic term to refer to the naked or nude body in art.
Such literature included:
(vii) Garb, T., Bodies of Modernity: Figures and Flesh in Fin de Siecle France, Thames and Hudson,
1998.
(ix) Atkinson, T. S., The Dissenting Flesh: Corporeality, Representation and Theory, PhD, Wales,
Cardiff, 1999

Biographies: Literature was selected that presents contemporary interpretation of figurative artwork or
establishes approaches to the interpretation of figurative art in general and found of only limited
relevance to the project, being essentially descriptive of the development of both the artist and figurative
work, rather than analytical of aesthetic properties. The range included:
(iv) Grisebach, L., Kirchner, Taschen, 1996.
(viii) Upton, J., Petrus Christus: His Place in Fifteenth Century Painting, Pennstate University, 1989.

Catalogues:
2.1 (ii) An investigation of aesthetic theory was undertaken in order for the researcher to understand the ways in which an artwork can expressively render qualities of flesh and skin, and be more specific in identifying those qualities evident in existing figurative artworks. As it was beyond the scope of this project to conduct a full examination of concepts of expression in art theory, emphasis was instead placed on the application of selected theory to the practical studio-based investigation. The search was limited to Modernist aesthetic theory\(^4\) characterised by the attempt to examine the aesthetic experience \textit{in itself}\(^5\) and its wider social and cognitive effects. Modernist aesthetics moves away from an artwork’s traditional deployment as social representation or commentary, a release of responsibility seen as enabling the generation of new forms of expression and consciousness.\(^6\)

This approach considers the artwork not as an illustration or description of emotions or sensations but rather as an encapsulation of them, the artist expressing their experience through materials and the process of creativity. While this reinforces the aesthetic as a category in its own right, it also shows how the aesthetic has implications for other aspects of the human condition. For example, Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, which underpins this research, argues that art, understood from a bodily perspective, operates within a common framework of

\(^{14}\) Literature was reviewed that examines a range of Modernist aesthetic theories and counter debate and which informed the theoretical approach of the study and consequent selection of Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty as appropriate to underpin the practical studio-based investigation. This literature included:


\(^{15}\) Connor, S., \textit{A Companion to Aesthetics}, ed Cooper, D., Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1999, p. 289

\(^{16}\) Ibid.
experience, thus promoting the notion of art's sociability.

The ways in which art expresses experience has been the subject of much debate. Considering an artwork exclusively in terms of its expression of the artist's condition, according to Wollheim, can lead to its expressiveness being understood as a purely external part of the artwork, to a separation of the artwork from the artist's and the viewer's experience. Against this, Wollheim argues that 'its expressiveness is no longer something that we can or might observe ... it no more belongs to the artist than the viewer', raising questions of the artwork's capacity to evoke a common, shared experience. The concept of expression is also challenged by theorists such as Jameson, asserting the view that as the creation of an artwork requires specialisation and even 'the simple difference that

17 Wollheim speaks of this concept as a 'falsehood' stating there is no reason why an artwork should necessarily express the condition the artist was in when they created 'simply because it was produced in some heightened condition...the work and the condition need not have the same character'. Wollheim, R., Art and Its Objects, 2nd ed. Cambridge University Press, 1980, p. 23.

18 Wollheim's theory of the relationship between the artist, artwork and the viewer is further articulated in a collection of essays in Richard Wollheim on The Art of Painting: Art as Representation and Expression, ed. Van Gerwen, R., Cambridge University Press, 2001. In it, art historians and philosophers critically assess Wollheim's theory of art. Essentially, Wollheim claims that an artist paints to make it possible for a viewer to experience the work as he intended and to make that intention 'retrievable' by a viewer. He claims that the type of experiences that constitute pictorial meaning would belong to our repertoire even if the painting had not been painted. In regard to representation, they are experiences of 'seeing in' the surface of the painting something that is not literally there but recognising in its brush marks, colour and forms, familiar objects, people or scenes. In regard to expression, they are experiences of finding certain properties of our visible environment configured in such a way as to trigger an already familiar kind of feeling or emotion in response to those aspects of our environment. Budd, M., summarises Wollheim's approach to expression in art in his essay: Wollheim on Correspondence, Projective Properties, and Expressive Perception, p.102:

Correspondence is the core of artistic expression: A work of art expresses a psychological condition by corresponding to it; it corresponds to the psychological condition by virtue of possessing a certain perceptible property; the work possesses this perceptible property because the artist gave it this property in order that it would correspond to the condition....'

Whilst this approach finds certain connections with notions of projection between internal states and external properties implied in Collingwood's theory of imaginative experience examined in this thesis (ref:2.4), the emphasis Wollheim places on the intentions of the artist raises two main concerns: firstly, the enduring relevance of those intentions over time and secondly, the conveyance of properties unfamiliar to a viewer. It was considered important to examine ways in which a viewer can be predisposed to understand the value of an expressive artwork without heavy reliance upon intention or communicative conventions or norms in place when the artwork was completed.
accompanies activities from which we are excluded', for example, the artist's experience and knowledge of its properties, will qualitatively differ from that of the viewer.

After an initial review of aesthetic theories relating to expression, for example, those espoused by Berkeley, Crowther, Beardsley, Croce, it was decided that the ideas of Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty were the most appropriate for this research. Both theorists speak of bodily experience of an artwork, through the imagination (according to Collingwood) or through the body (according to Merleau-Ponty). The centrality of the body in our perception of the world can enable a shared framework of experience. This does not presuppose that individuals have or can have the same experience. Rather, it asserts that experience, before it is a private phenomenon, is a relationship between subject and world, including other human subjects. For example, in the context of this

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10 Jameson is speaking from a Marxist perspective, in that what endows any product of human productive activity with value is the abstract human labour power (crystallised) within it. Whilst what follows from this concept in the sphere of political economy is the alienation of the product of human labour from its producer, its contribution to the debate on expression in art lies in the notion that an artwork is the embodiment of the labour power of the artist and the degree to which that labour is specialised. Jameson, F., Postmodernism: Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism, Duke University Press, 1991, p. 147.

20 A brief explanation of why the theories of Beardsley, Berkeley, Croce or Crowther were deemed unsuitable for application to a practical investigation:
(i) Beardsley, M. C., Aesthetics, 1977, conducted a predominantly historical overview of philosophical theory discussing the expressive properties of artworks, accounting different approaches but not asserting his own.
(ii) Atherton, M., Berkeley's Revolution in Vision, 1990, Berkeley avers the overriding belief that there is no material world only combinations of sensations and this would not have given the emphasis necessary to underpin the devising and conduct of a practice based enquiry.
(iii) Croce, B., Aesthetic as the Science of Expression and the Linguistic in General, 1902, states that art is vision or intuition and, as with Berkeley, this overlooks the role played by physical matter.
(iv) Crowther, P., Art and Embodiment, 1993, speaks of our embodied experience of the world but does not, in such a particular manner as Merleau - Ponty, apply his theory to the expressive value of art works.

21 Literature reviewed that is written by Collingwood or Merleau-Ponty or includes description or analysis of their theories (for brief biographic details of Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty see footnote 2):
research, while a mass of dense blue might not necessarily evoke a sense of weight for everyone, what is important is that a particular colour and a particular bodily condition are bought into relation by virtue of the common, embodied nature of the encounter between artist, viewer, and work.

The artwork under this premise can be understood as an interface of relative bodily sensorial or emotional connections (which operates through interactions which the researcher terms 'aesthetic transferences' in the theoretical chapter), between material elements of the artwork and sensations of flesh and skin. Approaching the expressive potential of the artwork in terms of these interactions was considered as an effective means to both examine and underpin the devising and creation of expressive artworks in the studio-based trials.

2.1 (iii) It is also important at this stage to acknowledge the diverse ways in which contemporary literature has considered flesh and skin as a site of expression. Firstly, Connor identifies what might be termed 'a metaphorics of skin'22:

The skin figures. It is what we see and know of others and ourselves. We show ourselves in and on our skins, and our skins figure out the things we

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22 In Connor, S., The Book of Skin. Cornell University Press, 2004, Connor views the long history of reflecting and writing about skin, discussing its nature and nuances through a framework of philosophical thought. He claims that historically skin has been considered in three distinct ways. The first is sited in antiquity, where skin was considered as the thin covering of our body, the container of all internal workings. Aristotle for example, claimed that skin is formed 'by the drying of the flesh...so formed not only because it is on the outside, but also because what is glutinous, being unable to evaporate, remains on the surface' (Aristotle, De Generatione Animalium, trans. Platt, A., in Smith, J.A., and Ross, W.D., The Works of Aristotle, Oxford, 1967, vol. v, 11.6.743b). This view is examined from Aristotle to the embalmers of ancient Egypt, to the view of skin as separate from the body that prevails today in notions of ghosts, to the shredded, flayed costumes worn in Michael Jackson's Thriller video. The second view, beginning in the eighteenth century, is the recognition of skin as an organ consisting of many layers with blood and nerves and thus the surface through which ailment and disease can be treated. Sartre describes this boundary as an 'epidermal in-betweenness, which is neither solid nor liquid, but greasy, slimy-sticky' (Sartre, J.P., Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology, trans. Shaw, J.F., in The Confessions. The City of God. On Christian Doctrine, trans. Pine-Coffin, R. S., et al, Chicago, 1990, p. 726). The third view, in a shift from an epistemological history towards metaphorical considerations of skin and skin related issues, is the contemporary understanding of skin as, what Serres terms, a milieu (Serres, M., Les Cinq Sens, Paris 1998, p. 59), a place onto which we project our identities, societal, gendered and cultural thoughts and feelings.
are and mean...the skin provides metaphorical equivalents for everything: there is nothing that cannot be expressed in terms of the look, shape, texture or aroma of skin.23

Skin, for Connor, is a visible, exposed object, the site of recorded activity: scarification, piercing, sun tanning, tattooing, holding a memory of our choices;24 our class (labour), sex (pregnancy, containment), age and culture (ritual markings).25 Skin can also be argued as an imprisoning of race and identity.26

Connor’s metaphorics of skin parallels the concept of aesthetic transference which this research develops.27 In a similar way to Connor suggesting that skin provides ‘metaphorical equivalents’ for bodily states such as ‘health, youth, beauty, power, enjoyment, fatigue, embarrassment or suffering’,28 so the researcher has, in relation to Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty, shown how figurative

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23 Connor speaks of the skin as that which gives ‘proof of our exposure and visibility’, that which we voluntarily and involuntarily render visible. He writes of its parallel in contemporary society to other surfaces that also render visibility: a mirror, photograph, film or CD. He then returns to human skin and questions its significance, its metaphor if removed from the body, stating that ‘we cannot see skin in itself, since the skin is the hesitation between ‘yourself’ and ‘itself’. No matter how deep one digs below the skin, there is always another skin to be found’. He describes the skin as a membrane which both divides and joins the literal and the metaphorical (p. 49). Connor, S., ‘Mortification’, Thinking Through the Skin, ed. Ahmed, S., Stacey, J., Routledge, 2001, p. 36.

24 Prosser speaks of life histories ‘remembered’ by the skin ‘as much a fabrication of what didn’t happen as a record of what did, as much fiction as fact.’ She draws connections and contrasts between the skin as a permanent reminder of illness, disease and reactions to cures, and the absence of fantasised properties sought from plastic surgery and transsexual sex reassignment. Prosser, J., ‘Skin Memories’, Thinking Through the Skin, ed. Ahmed, S., Stacey, J., Routledge, 2001, p. 52.

25 The subject of Biddle’s PhD research was the Warlpiri, Australian Aborigines, and their ceremonial inscriptions upon the skin ‘these inscriptive signs and symbols are called kurunwarri – a complex term meaning mark, trace, ancestral presence and/or essence, and birthmark or freckle. Kurunwarri are said to be the marks made, left over, by ancestors...’. Biddle, J., ‘Inscribing Identity’, Thinking Through the Skin, ed. Ahmed, S., Stacey, J., Routledge, 2001, p. 179.

26 Tate questions the positioning of black skin within contemporary, everyday discourse and how negotiating this discourse might affect change. She writes of ‘a double consciousness of skin’ raising differences between personal and societal perceptions. Tate, S., ‘Inscribing Identity’. Thinking Through the Skin, ed. Ahmed, S., Stacey, J., Routledge, 2001, p. 207.

27 Connor speaks of the correlation between clay and skin in The Book of Skin, Cornell University Press, 2004, p. 83, describing clay as a warm, soft surface, ‘a kind of reciprocal, emollient flesh, which softens the hand and finger. When wax or clay dries, it seems to form a scar or cicatrice, which seals in the meaning, as though a skin had formed over it...’.

ceramics can be approached with a view to the aesthetic transferences occurring between ceramic media and bodily states. A full account of the concept of aesthetic transferences is given in the theoretical chapter.

Other studies consider the body as a site of expression in ways which are not so immediately relevant to this research. Kristeva speaks of its abjection, writing of the 'danger to identity that comes from within ... threat issued from the prohibitions that found the inner and outer boarders in which and through which the speaking subject is constituted'. The servility of skin is also discussed in relation to self harm, and as an interface of medical interaction or disease. Adams, for example, describes wounds in the flesh as emphasizing 'the boundary between life and death', and that it at the same time 'refuses to be the boundary and allows life and death to communicate in an alarming space'.

While these theories undeniably have a bearing upon how the body is read, this research is practice-based and has located itself within the theoretical framework which concentrates upon the expressive relation between art practice and the body.

A key premise arising from an initial examination of the qualities of flesh and skin is that they do not merely cover the body but rather reflect aspects of its

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29 The abject or abjection is often linked with the absence and presence of skin as it signifies a boundary and at the same time a boundary constantly breached. Kristeva gives metaphorical form to the enactment of abjection in her description of gagging in response to drinking milk 'when the skin of the milk touches the skin of my lips, it threatens the border between the object milk and the subject, 'me'', breaching the subject/object and transforming it into an abject object. Kristeva, J., Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection, trans. Roudiez, L. S., Chicester: Columbia University Press, 1982, p.71.

30 Takemoto presents a documented artwork entitled Her/She Senses, which charts the 'story of two skins', the intense physical and psychological relationship between the bodies of Takemoto and a close friend who was diagnosed and underwent treatment for Cancer. She writes: 'as the boundaries between illness and health, self and other, became increasingly blurred, I became overwhelmed...to repeat them on my body...I began to lose sense of the limits of health and safety. Within the collaboration, the body's surface had become a literal and corporeal register of our difference and a site of identification'. Takemoto,T., 'Open wounds', Thinking Through the Skin, ed. Ahmed, S., Stacey, J., Routledge, 2001, p.104.

31 Adams further reinforces this by stating that whilst a wound may appear healed 'it nevertheless opens you up continuously to the previous time of the open wound, a continuous reopening of the wound'. Adams, P., Carbs and Scars, New Formations 35, 1998, p. 62.
condition and movement. Flesh and skin are in themselves expressive, for example, responding to the body's activity through the ways in which they crease and fold and reveal the movement of fluids, particularly blood, which can indicate temperature or evidence of physical exertion. This study investigates these characteristics and associated sensations and emotional states, in particular those suggested through the interrelationship of flesh and skin and the human body.

By speaking of flesh, skin and the human body, the researcher is not setting up an opposition or a dichotomy between flesh and skin, on the one hand, and the body, on the other. The distinction is made purely to show how the two relate to and interact with one another. Thus references to flesh and skin are not exclusive of the body but are intended to draw attention to how they themselves can be expressive of the body's condition.

The findings from the literature search informed the design and conduct of the subsequent field study and its examination of the ways in which existing figurative artworks can be understood as expressive of qualities of flesh and skin.

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Connor describes the characteristic of skin to convey feeling or emotion by blushing, paling, sweating or registering fear, grief or shame, as a form of 'thinking through the skin' whereby, 'the reasoning subject appears to be, if only momentarily, taken over or set aside...Psychoanalytic theory sometimes goes further, seeing the skin as capable of expressing not only states and feelings in which the subject is not quite in control, but also states and feelings of which the subject is not conscious'. Connor, S., *The Book of Skin*. Cornell University Press, 2004, p. 99.
2.2 Field Study: Review of Contemporary Figurative Artists

This section sets out the aims and scope of the field study, the methods used, the criteria against which artworks were examined, and the terms which emerged coordinating categories for the practice-based research. The review also informed the selection of case study artists and artworks. The aims of the field study were:

(i) to review the work of selected contemporary figurative artists and the ways in which they can appear to suggest those properties of flesh and skin identified in the literature search.

(ii) to identify key precepts which can be understood as articulating expressive qualities of flesh and skin.

2.2 (i) The scope of the field study reflects that of the literature search: examining ways in which the figure in ceramics and fine art in general can appear to expressively render properties of flesh and skin (see fn: 9).

The field study was conducted, where practicable, through interviews with artists in their studios in order to observe their artworks directly and discuss discrete properties with the artists responsible. The search was further informed by suggestions made at the time of interview or through subsequent contact with artists, in the form of written correspondence and the exchange of photographic images of artwork.

Artworks in museums, art galleries and exhibitions were also reviewed and evaluated. Venues were identified in the literature search as locations for the collection or exhibiting of artwork, or for presenting the opportunity, notably in the form of temporary exhibitions, for observing artworks or approaches relevant to the study set within the duration of the research project (ref: fn: 35).

The approach to expression and the specific nature of properties of flesh and skin identified in the literature search as the subject of this study, provided the
criteria to select artists and artworks for the case studies. For example, the field could be narrowed by excluding figures such as those of Christie Brown, Helen Ridhalgh and Glenys Barton (fig. 1), as their surfaces predominantly echo the form of the body rather than appearing to suggest the particular response of skin through details such as creases and folds. On these figures, the clay is either minimally treated, left bare or merely accentuates the undulations and mounds of the form. Other works excluded were figures on which the surface is either purely decorative or appears as a separate or detachable element to the body, for example the work of Gill Bliss, Philip Eglin and Paula Rice, together with work in which the distortion of the form (e.g. Stephen de Staebler) or the rendering of pose (e.g. Stephanie Dinkelbach and Esther Shimazu) appear as a greater influence in our experience of the body than the surface.

By examining the artworks according to their integration of surface and form the researcher was able to more clearly identify properties and relationships that can lend themselves more effectively to the expression of flesh and skin. The work of artists such as Michael Flynn and Claire Curneen (fig. 2) were selected as relevant as the relationship between the surface and form is intrinsic to their practice: the process of construction remains evident on the surface and its relationship to the form is suggestive of certain skin qualities. In Flynn’s work for instance, indentations left behind from the modelling process, emphasized by thick visceral glaze, can be seen to be suggestive, to a viewer, of sweating, wobbling flesh.

Work considered as highly representational was also included. Whilst this may appear to contradict the aim of the project, figures such as those of Judy Fox, Ron Mueck or the Flemish panel painters not only provide a comparison to more

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33 The terms 'suggestion' or 'invitation' are significant aspects of the language used in describing the nature of expression in art, as they reflect the ways in which our experience of a work can extend far beyond its material values and prompt or trigger connection to certain sensations or emotions. It is also the action of suggestion or invitation which is the principal bodily nature of aesthetic response for Merleau-Ponty and also central to the transference of qualities from one modality to another in Collingwood’s theory of the imaginative experience.
Fig. 1 Minimally Treated or Decorative Surfaces

Christie Brown, Prometheus's Helper, 1998-99, brick clay and steel, 111 x 31 cm.

Helen Ridehalgh, Female Torso, 1994, stoneware, 64 cm.

Glenys Barton, Jean Muir, 1992, porcelain, 67 cm.

Gill Bliss, Female Form, 2000, porcelain, paper clay, 40 cm.

Philip Eglin, Recumbent Nude, 1999, porcelain, 23 x 33 cm.
Fig. 2  Emphasis on Distortion of Form or Pose

Fig. 2 (i)
Paula Rice, Lazarus, 1998, stoneware, 122 x 56 cm.

Fig. 2 (ii)
Esther Shimazu, Untitled, 1997, earthenware, 43 cm.

Fig. 2 (iii)
Stephen De Staebler, Standing Figure with Tilting Head, 1985, 111 cm.

Fig. 2 (iv)
Michael Flynn, The Bedspread, 2000, porcelain, 40 cm.

Fig. 2 (v)
Claire Curneeen, Standing Figures, 1999, porcelain, 63 cm.

Fig. 2 (vii)
Judy Fox, Rapunzel, 1999, terracotta, 143.5 cm.

Expression of Flesh and Skin

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expressive qualities but are often found to exaggerate or distort qualities of flesh and skin by subtly reducing the texture and pallor of flesh and skin over the body in order to appear more representational than would a mimetic rendering of surface. Representative elements of the human body and properties of flesh and skin are also aspects evident to varying extents in each artwork included in the field study to inform its identification as a figurative work.

2.2 (ii) Summary of Findings from the Literature Review and Field Studies

In addition to revealing that little work has been undertaken and documented on the subject of expression of flesh and skin through the medium of ceramics, the findings of the literature search and the field study identified the parameters for formulating salient points in the development of the project as a whole: the methodology by which aesthetic properties can be analysed as being expressive (ref: 2.1 (ii)), the specific nature of flesh and skin under investigation (ref: 2.1 (iii), para. 5), and the location of four principal precepts which, through their interaction, can be understood as conveying the particular qualities of flesh and skin (ref: 2.2 (i), para. 4):

(i) surface.
(ii) form.
(iii) expression.
(iv) representation.

The analysis of field study artwork informed the definition of these four terms to be as follows: the surface refers to the outer limits of the form of the artwork and the effect of different applications, the form refers to the proportions

An example of this can be found in Mueck's figure Tall Box which is approx. 490 cm in height and yet the qualities of its flesh and skin are not magnified to the same degree, in fact, with its distinct lack of texture the surface appears almost reduced in scale. If the texture of skin were enlarged according to the form, its texture, open pores and hairs might dominate the image and render the figure as a visceral and perhaps disturbing piece. Instead, the surface is rendered appropriate to our understanding of the qualities of flesh and skin.
Field Study

of the depicted figure and also its shape, volume and contours, the expression of qualities is used as an umbrella term to refer to the exaggeration, distortion and realignment of representational qualities, and representation refers to qualities that directly imitate textures, colours and relationships found on the body in nature.

From the study of these qualities and relationships at work in a cross section of figurative artworks in painting and sculpture as well as ceramics, the researcher was able to locate and select case studies and their artworks which demonstrate a range of configurations which can be understood as both emphasizing and reducing connection to bodily qualities (ref: ftnt:1). The following artists were selected, according to the above parameters, for in-depth examination in the case study section and subject to analysis against the theories of both Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty: Claire Curneen, Carmen Dionyse, Michael Flynn, Ron Mueck, Jenny Saville and Jose Vermeersch.35

Artists, Venues and Exhibitions included in Field Study:

Interviews with artists:
(i) Michael Flynn studio, Hohr-Grenshausen, Germany and studio Cardiff, Wales, UK.
(ii) Carmen Dionyse, studio and archives, Ghent, Belgium.
(iii) Jose Vermeersch's administrator, studio and archives, Ghent, Belgium.
(iv) Claire Curneen, studio Cardiff, Wales, UK.
(v) Gill Bliss, studio Bristol, UK.

Correspondence with artists included:

Museums included as part of Field Study:

Galleries included as part of Field study:

The exhibitions included as part of Field Study:

Expression of Flesh and Skin 29 Natasha Mayo
2.3 Theoretical Debate: Expression, Representation, Surface and Form in Figurative Artwork

The theoretical strand of this project examines how the four elements: expression, representation, surface and form of the human body in a work of art can interact to generate, for the viewer, sensations of or associations with flesh and skin. These four areas (ref 2.2 (ii), para. 2) are defined as central precepts in the project because their interaction is considered a principal means by which the qualities of flesh and skin can be conveyed. They enable direct links to be made between the artwork and the human body and also allow for the exaggeration and distortion of its qualities, or the application of inappropriate textures onto the figurative work to give emphasis to particular skin qualities.36

The ability of one quality to combine with another or to appear to transpose its properties onto another is referred to in this project by the term aesthetic transference. This notion is explored through a series of case studies of artists and their figurative artworks, with particular focus on their properties of expression, representation, surface and form and how their interaction can be seen to allow a figurative work to embrace, reveal or simply be about human physical or emotional experiences.

It is argued that these connections occur between the artwork and viewer on account of the relationships that structure perception in general. In this project they are discussed through the theories of two philosophers who have contributed significantly to debate on expression in art: R. G. Collingwood (who writes of the imagination in our experience) and M. Merleau-Ponty (who writes of our bodily experience). Both claim the painter Cézanne as the paradigm of artistic expression and cite his artwork as an illustration of their theories. This project will, therefore,

36 The term inappropriate was considered a significant term in describing additional qualities applied onto the surface of the body as it was felt that the alternative term 'contrasting' assumed too great a variation from those found on the body in nature and would not so easily incorporate textures simply exaggerated or distorted from representation.
also use his work where appropriate, to illustrate examples of expression in art. Once the relevant theories are identified, they are applied to the case study artists’ artworks.

The theories are also applied in the evaluation of the practical part of the project: the studio-based trials. These trials are the means by which different interrelationships between the surface, form, expression and representation have been examined to develop specific aesthetic properties regarding flesh and skin on the human body. In this way, they can be considered as giving form to or objectifying both Collingwood’s and Merleau-Ponty’s theories on expression in art.

2.3.1 Expression and Representation

Whilst understanding expression and representation as contrasting terms, this study bases itself on the balance between the two - on the richness of their interaction. The existence of the term figurative expression, which can be used to describe the case study artworks, is arguably the strongest example of their coincidence. However, in order to avoid the confusion that a formal understanding of these concepts may introduce and for the sake of clarity, the term representation will be used only to mean the mimetic or naturalistic representation of an object, the repeating or doubling up of the original form. The term expression will not necessarily be used to refer to abstraction - the removal of all directly representational properties - but instead, to the distortion, exaggeration and realignment of representational properties as well as the addition of more inappropriate properties onto the figure.

In this way, expression does not refer to the dramatisation of an emotion through gesture or facial expression but rather to the suggestion of certain feelings or emotions through the quality of certain colours, forms and textures. For
example, the way in which a sense of weight can be inferred by a mass of dense blue or weightlessness by a pale yellow brushstroke. Expression refers to properties pertaining to modes of experience which can extend beyond the visual qualities of the work, where one set of properties can suggest another set of properties by triggering connections and associations in a viewer.

The properties of an expressive work are not as rigidly bound to the object as they are in a representational piece, which records in detail the visual properties of the represented object. In an expressive work, not every brush stroke belongs to the object but is there to make connections to properties outside of it. These additional properties can combine with the original image and evoke a more particular response than mere representation. Colours may be rendered darker or lighter than the object, forms distorted or texture exaggerated, all with the purpose of creating a certain combination of sensory properties that trigger particular feelings or emotions. In this way, an artwork can evoke a network or matrix of associations, where one sensation triggers another, building an experience that extends far beyond the material properties of the work. The density and pigment of a green in Cézanne's landscape, for instance, is not directly connected to the green of a particular hill, it is not fixed to it. The exaggeration or distortion of its hue may refer instead to a sense of the physical exertion involved in climbing the hill or refer to its fresh vitality. The artist and the viewer forge these connections as they respond to the piece.

This project is concerned with establishing a series of interconnections in an artwork that can invite experiences of flesh and skin on the human figure, how connections can be forged between certain colours, textures, forms and corporeal sensations, to feelings of flesh and skin, of its stretching, creasing or shivering. In order that connections arising from the artwork refer to bodily qualities as opposed to any other, the figure needs to provide a reference point or context.
from which they appear to derive. Recognition of the body needs to be a part of the associations surrounding the artwork. In this way, emphasis can be given under the rubric of expression to certain aspects of flesh and skin by finding ways in which to balance representation and the exaggeration or distortion of certain properties in the body.

The effect of placing greater emphasis on either expressive or representational properties in a figurative artwork can be seen clearly by comparison of the surfaces used by two case study artists: the sculptor Ron Mueck and figurative ceramist Claire Curneen. Mueck's work (fig. 3) is predominantly representational; the expressive properties are almost totally confined to his distortion of the form. On the surface, he merely renders what a viewer is already familiar with as being the visual aspects of flesh and skin in pallor, texture and the detail of creases and folds. It could be argued, that this is merely a display of skill and technique in re-presenting flesh and skin, as he does not significantly exaggerate or distort their qualities, giving no emphasis to particular aspects of their nature. Mueck's piece has emotional content due to the posture and facial expression of the represented figure. In contrast, Curneen's surface (fig. 4) bears less direct visual resemblance to skin, and sensations or emotions are evoked as a result of her expressive distortions of the figure. The surface of her work *Standing Figures* for example, is constructed from multiple, overlaid plates of clay that create cracks and apertures over the entire body. Rather than representing skin, these properties appear almost as a magnification of skin tissue and can infer a sense of the figure's fragility; the feeling that, even without needing to touch this surface, it could easily be broken. Curneen's exaggeration and distortion of the skin is extremely receptive to forging connections to felt experiences, as there is also a close association between the work's material fragility and emotional states of vulnerability.
Fig. 3

Ron Mueck, Big Man, 2000, polystyrene resin, 9 ft.

Fig. 4

Claire Curneen, Standing Figures, 1999, porcelain, 63 cm.

fig. 3 (i)

Detail of Big Man.

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The expression of properties in an artwork, in the example of Curneen, the exaggeration and distortion of the body's surface, can evoke a particular range of sensations and emotions in a viewer and they are prompted to shift between the realms of vision and touch and emotional states. This transference of properties in a viewer's experience will be referred to in this project as aesthetic transference. It is the process by which a viewer can build connections around an artwork and as such, is the most appropriate term in referring to the expressive properties at work. It is this transference of sensations that allows the viewer to experience the textures and form of Curneen's figure as fragile and vulnerable, extending and giving particular emphasis to their understanding of the human form far beyond a mere representation of its properties.

2.3.2 Surface and Form

In addition to concepts of expression and representation, this project also explores the more formal or practical interaction of surface and form (ref: 2.1 (iii), para. 6). These four elements: expression, representation, surface and form, are examined in relation to each other. Their interaction plays an important part in aesthetic transference in that their interrelationship creates other possibilities, whereby one quality opens onto another and suggests further pertinent and novel properties. A brief outline of the properties apparent in Curneen's figure offers a clear illustration of this concept: the fragile surface of her unglazed figure is coupled with a distorted body, a disproportionately small head and feet, oversized hands and elongated torso. The interaction of this surface and form creates a third aspect: a sense of the figure's potential collapse.

The distinction between surface and form can create conditions for a separation of expressive and representational properties, where for example, one aspect may contain stronger links to the body than the other. This is evident in
Curneen's unglazed figure (fig. 4) and even more so in subsequent works, where the form retains a stronger representational tie than its surface properties. This disparity becomes part of a viewer's experience of the work. Curneen's surface may still appear fragile without its formation into the human form but its links to emotional vulnerability are forged most strongly in combination with the figure. Curneen's work offers a clear example of how the interaction of surface, form, expression and representation inform our experience of an artwork. It is not merely these aspects in isolation that give rise to certain feelings or emotions but rather their interconnectedness.

Both the surface and form of the body in Curneen's work Standing Figures can be understood as evoking much the same range of connections and associations and thereby reinforcing the properties of each. In her figure Prick they trigger distinctly different sensations. Curneen introduces a sense of discord or friction to our experience of the figure by covering the body in a growth of sharp protruding prickles (fig. 5). There is nothing in the form or pose to suggest the same feelings of pain or harm inferred through this surface; on the contrary, the figure is naked, passive and the distortion of its form - its small head and feet and oversized hands - renders it clumsy and imbalanced. A viewer is invited to ponder on the incongruous relationship between these two properties: the sharp and harmful pricks against the naked defenceless body. Similar to the unglazed surface of Standing Figures, this work evokes a sense of vulnerability but does so through a different combination of aesthetic transferences. The experience of vulnerability is evoked not so much by the properties in themselves as by the contrast between them. The sense of discord and tension between the sharpness of those prickles and the surface of the delicate figure can be felt just as if the texture were pressed against the body's naked skin. The question remains whether this was the emotion felt or intended by Curneen but it is beyond the scope of this thesis to answer this.
Claire Curneen, Prick, 2002, porcelain and glaze, approx. 35 cm.

Fig. 5

Fig. 5 (i)

Detail of Prick.
question directly.

That the process of aesthetic transference can allow properties in Curneen's figure Prick to forge connections to flesh and skin, even though its texture does not suggest human properties, is of particular interest to this research. A viewer is prompted to consider the soft and delicate nature of flesh through the body's relationship with these sharp prickles. This gives rise to the question: can the application of properties in contrast to those found on the body in nature be used to give emphasis to particular sensations of flesh and skin? This juxtaposition of properties brings with it particular problems in reference to the body, in that the discernible leap between the surface and form may infer that properties were happening to the body rather than being emitted from it. This has two main consequences: firstly, the further removed properties are from flesh and skin, the easier it is to make connection to properties outside the body, for instance, the textural surface on Curneen's figure Prick can be suggestive of tentacles or an organic growth crawling over the form and her unglazed surface, can be suggestive of decay or corrosion. Secondly, this relationship often prompts notions of narrative to explore possible explanations for the incongruity of their relationship.

The term narrative in this study is taken to mean that rather than emphasis being given to the suggestion of particular sensations, emphasis is instead given to the connections made between the properties and their ordering into a coherent sequence. Whilst narrative does not go on to play an important role in the suggestion of flesh and skin in this project, narrative and metaphor are important aspects of the process of aesthetic transference and can play a part in our understanding of interactions between properties in an artwork.

The way in which a closer interrelationship between the properties of surface, form, expression and representation of the body can emphasize

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sensations of flesh and skin is clearly evident in the paintings of Jenny Saville. The close interrelationship refers to aspects in the artwork which prompt a similar or complementary range of aesthetic transferences. In Saville’s paintings, she not only refers to the visual properties of flesh and skin through the distribution of colour and the shape of the form but also exaggerates and distorts qualities in order to reflect relationships that occur on the body in nature. For example, in her figure Hybrid (fig. 6) the form retains a strong representational tie and would still resemble a human figure without the application of surface. The surface has also been kept within a range of pigment and hue familiar to the body but Saville distorts qualities in order to express a sense of its activity over the form. It has been argued that she gets the paint to behave in a similar way to flesh and skin, by applying pigment and texture in such a way that it mimics the activity of the surface, moving as if in response to the pressure of the body’s movement or bulk. For example, painting thin, separated and patchy brush marks over areas associated with fleshy or stretched skin such as the buttocks and over the shoulders, giving the impression that the skin is breaking up a little under the stress, as if the white upper layer can barely hold together, revealing the blues, purples and reds underneath it. This activity of flesh and skin and its relationship to the form of the body will be discussed in greater depth later in this section.

The figurative work of Mueck, Cunneen and Saville offer three distinctly different configurations of the expression, representation, surface and form of the human body, giving different emphasis to its properties and interrelationships. In addition to these examples, this project examines three other case studies (ref: section 3): Michael Flynn, Jose Vermeersch and Carmen Dionyse. The case studies contribute to the project by offering various properties that, whilst not

Ref: 2.1(iii), para. 6.

The notion of manipulating a medium to behave in a similar way to flesh and skin is considered important as it suggests parallels between the materials of an artwork and bodily properties.
Jenny Saville, *Hybrid*, 1997, oil on canvas, 274.3 x 213.4 cm.

Detail of *Hybrid*.
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referring simply to the visual aspects of flesh and skin, nevertheless create aesthetic transferences that can be suggestive of bodily states. The process of aesthetic transference is used as a means by which to identify these interactions and examine each work's expressive potential and in this way, the project builds an understanding of the network of properties and relationships which can forge connections to sensations of flesh and skin.

2.4 Theories of Expression

The two philosophers who have considered expression in art in depth are Robin George Collingwood and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. In this section the researcher will demonstrate that both theorists provide accounts of an artwork that claim its expression of properties through the process termed aesthetic transference. It is this process, illustrated by Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty in relation to Cézanne, which allows properties in an artwork (in Cézanne's case the colours in his paintings) not simply to represent other objects but rather to interact in a way which enables aesthetic responses to the work to arise, together with some understanding and appreciation of wider concerns relevant to the depicted object or scene. Let us look at Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty to see how they arrive at this notion.

Collingwood's theories written in the late 1920's can be seen very much as a response to the development of photography and the technically reproduced image. In discussing the nature of art and craft, he attempts to distinguish art from what he sees as being a mere application of skill and technique and claims that there is something uniquely human or spiritual about art that is lost in pure representation. He claims that representation is merely a copy of what can already be found in nature and that there is no creative intervention on behalf of the artist or indeed on behalf of the viewer in response to it. The suggestion that
representation is mere imitation was originally made by Plato who stated that:

[Representation in art] is not difficult, and can be done in various ways quite quickly. The quickest way is to take a mirror and turn it around in all directions; before long you will have created the sun the stars and earth.\(^{40}\)

Collingwood argues that in an expressive artwork, properties pertain to modes of experience rather than simply representing properties, evoking sensations that extend beyond what is immediately presented, either to the artist or viewer in the world around them. This is not to claim that purely representational artworks cannot move a viewer emotionally but rather, to emphasize that an expressive work can free an image from direct connection to its object, so that its properties can find associations to other properties and trigger experiences which extend beyond its material properties. Collingwood describes how physical sensation of Cézanne’s paintings is given prominence by the exaggeration of colours and texture:

With his interiors the viewer finds himself bumping about these rooms, circumnavigating with caution those menacingly angular tables, coming up to the persons that so massively occupy those chairs and fending them off with his hands.\(^{41}\)

The potency of Cézanne’s work for Collingwood lies in its sculptural properties, in the ways in which its aesthetic properties can prompt a viewer to shift between its colours and forms and a sense of the physical attributes of

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objects or surroundings. Properties have been exaggerated and distorted not merely as a composition of colour and forms but also to compose particular sensations, to suggest a sense of weight, mass and contour to the viewer. Collingwood describes his paintings as having a ‘perplexing mixture of projections and recessions, over and round which we find ourselves feeling our way’ where the sensation of properties is amplified ‘as a child feels the table over the back of his head’. He describes the experience of this physical space as the picture plane disappearing, of it melting into nothing. A viewer can go through it, he says, to get at the colours and shapes and feel their properties, not by touching the picture plane with their fingertips but through sensations felt in their muscles and limbs. He claims that in this way, Cézanne’s paintings are never two-dimensional, his shapes are never merely traced onto a surface but rather carved into relief as if there were solid objects lying behind the canvas, instilled with physical values that can be experienced by a viewer. In this way, Collingwood describes the process of aesthetic transference at work in Cézanne’s paintings as prompting a sense of the paint carving out the properties of the landscape so that we might feel the weight of the mountains and the comparative fluidity of the moving trees.

Although Collingwood describes the sensation of properties as physical experiences felt through the body, central to his theory of expression in art is the imagination. He claims these feelings are not in fact actual motor sensations but rather imagined, that it is the imagination of the viewer that allows this transference of sensations. Collingwood writes of Cézanne that:

We need not walk straight through the picture, or even stride about the gallery; what we are doing is imagining ourselves moving in these ways... In

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43 Ibid.
short: what we get from looking at a picture is not merely the experience of seeing, or even partly seeing and partly imagining, certain visible objects; it is... the imaginary experience of certain other complicated muscular movements."

The artwork itself remains material and palpable, its properties do not change in accordance with a viewer’s attention upon them but their experience is generated by how they imagine the sensation of those properties to be. He states that an artwork may trigger connections to certain sensations, which are further expanded and developed in our minds and in this way, the work has the potential to evoke a total imaginative experience where a viewer can become completely immersed in the physical experience of its properties.

Both Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty write about the physical experience of the body in relation to an artwork; how the movement of a viewer’s hands, arms, even feet as they walk around the gallery can inform them of its properties. They differ in respect that on the one hand, Collingwood is referring to the impression of an imaginative experience, and on the other, Merleau-Ponty speaks of actual bodily experiences. For Merleau-Ponty, the body is at the centre of experience as an inescapable presence in everything a person sees, hears or touches and, as such, it inextricably informs perception. His theory of expression in art is based on the phenomenology of perception, on the way perception is generated and organised through fundamental bodily structures. He states that everything experienced is felt against the background of the body’s equivalent gestures and textures. That for instance, my perception of a cube is not only a reflection of its own geometry but also defined by my own form, the softness of my own flesh against its hard,

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angled planes. In the same way, the activity of my eyes and my body around the cube informs me of its scale and proportion. I can never see the whole of the cube all at once as several sides are always hidden from me due to the opacity of the form, the scope of my vision and by the fact of it resting on one side. However, I am able to conceptualise its dimensions by rotating it in my fingers to reveal the angles that were once concealed. The activity of its rotation in my fingers allows me to successively orient the planes and angles and perceive the experience of the cube as a whole.

In this way, Merleau-Ponty claims, the body not only brings sensory experience into being but also organises or contextualises sensations relative to its own properties, its own gestures and movements. Sensation is not considered as the impression of textures or colours on the senses nor, for that matter, as solely determined by any thoughts a person may have of them based on prior experience, but rather, as an interchange of properties between their body and their surroundings, just as my experience of the sharp, hard edges of a cube is set against the soft roundness of my fingers. Our perception of objects is sensory dependent, based on our capacity as sensory beings to experience and at the same time, the properties remain palpable and material, the hardness of a stone is still hard. Merleau-Ponty only reframes an understanding of the way in which the quality of 'hardness' is perceived, as set against the properties of our body, as impressed against its malleable flesh and our flesh impressed against it.

If my hand takes its place among the things it touches, it is in a sense one of them, opens finally upon a tangible being of which it is also a part. Through

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4 Due to Merleau-Ponty's placement of the body at the centre of experience being fundamental to the nature of his theory on expression in art, difficulties were encountered in the use of the convention that refers to "the researcher" or "the viewer" in the discussion of his ideas, as this conveys a response to objects and artworks at a remove from the immediate activity of perception. Therefore the researcher took a decision to use the more personal "I" or "my" in discussing these experiences directly, the collective "our" when discussing these experiences as arising from bodily interaction in general, and the conventional "the researcher" when discussing all other issues.
this criss-crossing within it of the touching and the tangible, its own movements incorporate themselves into the universe they interrogate, are recorded on the same map as it; the two systems are applied upon one another, as the two halves of an orange.⁴⁶

In this way, the body can be understood as reversible, as both subject and object, enabling us to, at the same time, sense the qualities of our surroundings and be sensed, to both touch and be touched. This subject/object relation is defined by Merleau-Ponty with the term flesh - not in its customary sense of describing bodily matter or tissue but to describe the physical and perceptual interface between the qualities of our body and those of our surroundings. It is this interface, he claims, that allows human beings to relate to and find meaning in the world, as experience always stands in relation to the specific nature of the senses and the body's equivalent textures and gestures, each contributing to form an overall understanding.

Contained within this criss-crossing of sensory data is the notion of synaesthesia, the fusion of the senses where, for example, our sensation of vision and touch do not remain separate but rather interact and cross-refer. Distinctions between the senses, according to Merleau-Ponty, are unknown in primordial perception; we are aware of the distinctions only as a result of a science of the human body.⁴⁷ In our most immediate level of perception our sensory qualities of an object are in a constant state of flux, intercommunicating through the medium of the body, by virtue of this ready-made system of equivalents and transpositions from one sense to another. He writes that:


⁴⁷ Merleau-Ponty states: 'Synaesthetic perception is the rule, and we are unaware of it only because scientific knowledge shifts the centre of gravity of experience, so that we have unlearned how to see, hear, and generally speaking, feel, in order to deduce, from our bodily organisation and the world as the physicist believes it, what we are to see, hear, and feel'. Abram, D., The Spell of the Sensuous, Vintage Books, 1997, p.60.
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The lived object is not rediscovered or constructed on the basis of the contributions of the senses; rather, it presents itself to us from the start as the centre from which those contributions radiate. We see the depth, the smoothness, the softness, the hardness of objects; Cézanne even claimed that we can see their odour.48

Sensations are not merely sensory qualities but rather interactions, a constant dialogue exchanging between the properties of an object and the mechanisms of our body. As our body opens onto an object, the activity of our perception can prompt us to react physically to its properties before being fully aware of their influence. Merleau-Ponty describes this reaction as more than the involuntary dilation of pupils to bright light, that colours, for instance, can be said to evoke a certain bodily attitude, such as blues evoking a feeling of cold or heat from an intense red. We can enter into a physically sympathetic relationship with colours or forms and to an extent synchronise our own rhythms with that of people, objects or landscapes, as each has a particular manner of vibrating and filling space to which our body is sensitive; we can open ourselves up to and commune with them.49

In the same way, the activity of perception also reveals emotional dispositions. By activity the researcher is not simply referring to our physical orientation but rather to a state of bodily being which discloses certain experiences and emotional inclinations. As human beings with a certain set of cares and concerns we can find significance or meaning in every minor fluctuation or movement that affects us or that we impose upon our surroundings. Merleau-Ponty avers, that like sensations, our emotions are simply a variation of our being


in the world 'an inextricable part of our pre-reflexive ‘relationship with the world'; they are neither noted nor constituted, but experienced'.

Perception is generated and organised by these fundamental bodily structures. In fact, Merleau-Ponty states that 'there is not a word, not a form of behaviour which does not owe something to our physical being' that speech be returned its 'true physiognomy' as 'sense [is] held within the word, and the word [is] the external existence of the sense'. In this way, even to convey our emotions or sensations to another is to speak of this exchange between our body and our surroundings.

It could be argued that it is the domain of an expressive artwork to explore these body-world experiences, to fix in place the colours, textures or forms which can contribute toward a particular sensation, so that a viewer, by virtue of possessing the medium of the body, can experience it for themselves. Merleau-Ponty writes that it is not enough merely to express an idea, that an artist 'must also awaken the experiences which will make their idea take root in the consciousness of others; if a work is successful it has the strange power of being self-teaching'. If an artist is to convey this lived or living experience, an account must be made of our bodily interaction with the world:

...the arrangement of his colours must bear within this indivisible whole [of experience], or else his paintings will only hint at things and will not give them the imperious unity, the presence, the unsurpassable plenitude which is for the definition of the real. That is why each brush stroke must satisfy an infinite number of conditions...each stroke must contain the air,

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the light, the object, the composition, the character, the outline, and the style. Expressing what exists is an endless task.53

2.5 Application of Theory to Figurative Artworks

Artworks are considered in this project in relation to their capacity to prompt connections or associations to qualities of flesh and skin. Let us return to Claire Curneen’s unglazed surface (fig. 7) and this time consider how Collingwood’s and Merleau-Ponty’s theories have informed our understanding of its qualities. As explored in the introduction, the surface invites a sense of vulnerability. The qualities on the human form can be understood as inviting these connections as the process of aesthetic transference in an artwork and connections arising from it are often determined by the cultural context of an artist and viewer, and as Curneen’s artwork always exists surrounded by a common bodily framework not far removed from other Western European people, it enables this shared understanding of its qualities.54 As my body opens onto the work I can feel the thinness and fragility of the clay in relation to my own frame and mass, and a sense of its imbalance against the movement of my own muscles and limbs. It contains certain visual qualities, such as the thin apertures created by shards of porcelain, that can trigger or encourage these sensations and allow a wider understanding or appreciation of the figure than its visual properties alone.

I can get at these qualities through my physical interaction with the piece. For example, I can never see the whole of the figure and every detail at the same time, due to the size of the piece and the scope of my vision, and yet through my physical interaction with its qualities, the movement of my head and my eyes over its form, I can conceptualise its entirety. It is in this regard that Merleau-

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54 Ref: 2.1 (ii), para. 3.
Fig. 7 Curneen’s Unglazed Surface

Fig. 7 (i)
Detail of belly on Standing Figure.

Fig. 7 (ii)
Detail of hand on Standing Figure.

Fig. 7 (iii)
Detail of back on Standing Figure.

Fig. 7 (iv)
Detail of thigh on Standing Figure.

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Ponty writes of the similarity between the way in which a viewer looks at texture and the passive touch of their hand upon it, as touch without movement produces scarcely identifiable phenomena. It is almost as if, through the activity of participation, I can activate the potential sensations contained within the work. As I move around the figure and encounter different views, I look upon slight differences in the way that light falls over its uneven surface. With each movement I make – placing my body in between the figure and light, causing it to flicker over the surface – the texture appears to change. These changes experienced in succession can build up the appearance of subtle movement and the figure looks as though it is swaying unsteadily in front of me, undulating with each indentation and mound.

The movement of my eyes and my body around the work, however, is only an elongation of the process whereby I, as a fundamentally embodied being, relate to the work through my perception of it. It is the action of suggestion or invitation, which is the principal bodily nature of aesthetic response for Merleau-Ponty and also central to the transference of qualities from one modality to another in Collingwood’s theory of the imaginative experience. Movement is simply a state of bodily being which discloses certain experiences and emotional conditions or inclinations, for example, the expression of external pressures on the ceramic figure from the imposition of our shadow as we walk around it, and qualities internal to it suggested by the thinness of porcelain, allow us to experience through our own body (according to Merleau-Ponty) or the imagination (according to Collingwood) not only the image of the human form but also the suggestion of what can happen inside it, the body’s felt sensations and emotions.

The aim of this project, however, is not to concentrate on any specific external pressures on the body, nor even internal biological processes, so much as it is to identify properties that are suggestive of certain sensorial or metaphoric
connections to flesh and skin. The artist Jenny Saville appears to explore this in her paintings. Her work suggests principal characteristics of flesh and skin, that they do not merely cover the body but, rather, they reflect aspects of the body’s activity, responding to it by stretching, billowing and creasing. Saville’s paintings allow us to locate particular interrelationships of colours, textures and form that can suggest or invite these connections. They also demonstrate how certain fluctuations or activity imputed in the work can prompt emotional states of tension or friction.

A more particular identification of the ways in which Saville achieves this can be found by brief comparison of two other depictions of the female figure which illustrate traditional distinctions between representation and expression in art: a painting by the artist Ingres, often used as an example of Neo-Classical representation in art history, and a work by Delacroix, a fore runner of expression in art, often cited as a paradigm of the Romantic period. In this way, the progressive stages of the exaggeration and distortion of the body’s properties can be examined, leading to the particular interactions at work in Saville’s paintings.

In Ingres’ painting The Odalisque in Grisaille (1824-34), there is no immediate evidence of the activity of painting, with no brush marks shaping the body’s form or surrounding areas (fig. 8). Ingres appears to conceal the process of construction in the interest of convincingly rendering the visual image of the body. It could be argued, however, that in concentrating solely on its image, he barely hints at its properties as a living being. In fact, Ingres actually reduces any indication of the potential activity of the body: the skin appears idealised with barely a dimple at the bend of her elbow, no blemishes or freckles, the colours and textures are lessened to the extent that the body is treated like an inanimate object among others in the room.

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Fig. 8

Jean-August-Dominique Ingres, *Odalisque in Grisaille*, 1814, oil on canvas, 91 x 163 cm.

Fig. 9

Eugène Delacroix, *Female Nude Reclining on a Duvan*, 1830, oil on canvas, 26 x 33 cm.
In contrast, in the painting Female Nude Reclining on a Divan (1830), Delacroix allows the materials and his activity in painting to speak about certain qualities which surround his image of the body (fig. 9). His brush marks create a broken outline around her form and as its definition is not fixed, it appears to suggest more than one stage of movement, inferring either that she is not absolutely still, that we as viewers are in the process of moving or that light is shifting around her. In this way, he gives form or makes tangible several stages in the perception of movement. The overriding sensation, however, is one of general activity rather than movement in the body itself and in this way, the figure again appears as merely one object amongst others in the room, as if light were flickering across the scene over the bed covers, the curtains and over the body of the female form.

Saville, in her paintings Hyphen (fig. 10) and Plan (fig. 11), also depicts aspects of perception of movement but refers far more particularly to the movement of flesh and skin on the body. She conveys this, not only by exaggerating aspects of skin's colour and texture but also by the ways in which it can appear to interact with the form of the body, in particular, the way its properties change in accordance with the body's movement, for example, the upper layer breaking up a little under the strain of bulk or activity, pigment rushing toward or away from certain areas. She freezes or suspends these interactions and brings their sense of activity together, rendered as if in the same moment onto the same figure, so that we might perceive the sensation of flesh as though agitated by its placement onto the body.

These interactions, however, are not merely re-presented on canvas, as they speak of movement which can only be conveyed by means of suggestion or invitation, in particular by prompting connections between certain colours, brush marks and the behaviour of flesh and skin. For example, the brush marks are broad
Fig. 10

Detail of Jenny Saville’s *Hyphen*, 2000, oil on canvas.

Fig. 11

Jenny Saville, *Plan*, 1998, oil on canvas,
274.3 x 213.4 cm
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over large areas of skin, and thicker and more clearly separated over creases and folds. This irregular application can attract our eyes to move with a particular momentum, slowly over mass areas and more quickly over texture as the markings are multiple and the eyes cannot rest. In this way, our experience of Plan for example, can appear imputed with a sense of activity that also implies direction, from flat areas toward more animated parts of the body, from the stretching belly to bloated breasts and towards the more highly articulated hands. This sense of movement can also disclose our emotional disposition in response to the figure, as every minor fluctuation suggested on its surface can trigger significance or meaning, in this case a range of experiences connected with the skin’s irritation or discomfort. As we experience these properties globally, their interaction with our equivalent textures and gestures gives rise to a sense of skin’s activity, moving as though agitated by its interrelationship with the body. As Merleau-Ponty writes:

[discrete qualities] are no longer visible in their own right but rather contribute, as they do in natural vision, to the impression of an emerging order, an object in the act of appearing, organising itself before our eyes.

It could be argued that in this way, Saville conveys aspects of a lived experience of flesh and skin, as it is, felt through a succession of interconnected relationships with the body and associated with both physical and emotional experiences. Its representational qualities can feel as though they interlock with our own and enable us to enter into a particularly sympathetic relationship which

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56 It is important to repeat the sentiment of section 2.1 (ii), para. 3, that this does not presuppose that the connections and associations drawn by a viewer from their interaction with an artwork are identical to those of the artist, rather, that this description of Saville’s work simply gives examples of the range of interactions that her work has the capacity to evoke.

is sensitive to subtle exaggerations or additional properties, allowing them to be experienced as if belonging to or as part of the body. In this way, a viewer can feel its accord and contrast with their own textures, conveying a sense of the skin feeling as though it is itching or agitated in its covering of the body.

2.6 Relation of Theory to the Trials

The process of aesthetic transference can be seen in the practical studio-based trials, as they are concerned with finding different ways in which to give form to certain experiences of flesh and skin. After an initial analysis of Cunneen and in particular Saville, it became apparent that this investigation of skin qualities would not merely entail developing a range or pallet of surfaces, that attention must be paid to the distribution of properties in order to convey aspects of perception of its movement or activity in relation to the body. The trials explore this question by mapping out different configurations of the expression and representation of the surface and form of the body.

This section does not attempt to analyse the trials but rather serves as a general overview of the principal aspects of expression evident in each, identifying potential problems arising in relation to the project aim, the ways in which they can be overcome and reiterating the way in which Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty underpin the behaviour of these properties. The trials are divided into four sets, with each set exploring the process of aesthetic transference between different properties:

1) The exaggeration and distortion of a range of colour and texture in close visual connection with those found on the body in nature.

2) The application of inappropriate properties onto the body.

3) Setting up incongruous relationships between the surface and form of the body

4) Scale, and the interrelationship of previous trials
2.6.1 First trials: Exaggerating Colours and Texture.

The first series of trials deals with properties similar to those of Saville’s paintings, keeping in close connection with the colours and textures of living flesh and skin, and finding ways to suggest their response to the form of the body. This relationship is explored principally by exaggerating and rearranging colours from the order in which they appear on the body in nature, to give prominence to their tendency to come forward or recede in the activity of perception. For example, the way in which warmer tones emerge at the forefront of our vision, particularly when placed next to blues, which recede (trial 1:2 fig. 13). A similar relationship is also found with reflective and absorbent surfaces, appearing either further away due to the reflection of light or closer without it. Given that the synaesthetic relations between the senses underlying our perception of a work’s expressiveness, these visual qualities also affect other sensory modalities. The blue for instance, invites a sense of depth to the surface and it can appear as if the surface of the body were responding to the form by stretching thinly over it. The warm ochre, conversely, suggests a compression or thickening of flesh, as if creasing around the sides and over folds. The movement of these colours is not merely optical, it prompts a state of bodily being which discloses or reveals certain expressive and emotional inclinations associated with flesh and skin, for example, moments of change in its consistency from pale, thin and transparent, to red, coarse and heavy, to feelings of it being hot, clammy and uncomfortable.

There is however, a significant difficulty in rendering the illusion of depth onto a three-dimensional form, for as soon as a colour is set down to infer depth or highlight, external lighting can undermine it. On a broad phenomenological scale, two and three-dimensional artworks are comparable by virtue of the fact that they are always encountered in terms of the body schema, i.e. in terms of our interaction, whereby we map out the work and our experience of it. But there are
Fig. 12

Trial 1: 5, 2001, St Thomas clay, engobes, 40 cm.

Trial 1: 7, 2001, St Thomas clay, terrasilicate, engobes, 58 cm.

Fig. 13

Trial 1: 2, 2001, St Thomas clay, 40 cm.

Fig. 14 (i)

Trials 1: 7, 2001, St Thomas clay, terrasilicate, engobes, 58 cm.

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Fig. 14 (ii)

Detail of Trial 1: 7

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also major differences between the nature of expression in two and three-dimensions, in that their processes of aesthetic transference prompts a different network of interconnections in respects of space, volume and perspective. For example, it could be argued that a painter has already made certain decisions on behalf of the viewer which cannot be controlled to the same degree by a sculptor, such as the direction of light and the perspective from which the subject is viewed and also the editing of certain areas. On the other hand, it could also be said that a three-dimensional object, in presenting multiple sides, could be affected more considerably by the viewer's physical interaction, by rotating or walking around the work or standing between it and the source of light. In this way, two and three-dimensional works need to utilise different techniques in achieving equivalent sensations.

It quickly became apparent that in working with a three-dimensional form, light would need to be considered as much a part of our experience as any other material application. The exaggeration of skin's texture, therefore, is also explored in this first set of trials as a means to convey a sense of its relationship with the body through the direction of light and shadow across the figure. In trial 1: 5 (fig. 12), for example, stretch marks have been increased in density and frequency over the breast to emphasize the way in which skin responds to the body's weight and gravitational pull. The method of simplifying and exaggerating properties was again used to invite a sense of the belly shaking or vibrating as our eyes continually vacillate over the multiple irregular markings, unable to rest.

Both colours and textural properties were then applied onto a full figure, in trial 1:7 (fig. 14). Now in combination with texture (ref: trial 1:1,2,3), the pigment appears as a more integral part of the body than in trial 1:4. This presented another problem, however, in that with each quality suggesting a particular response of flesh and skin to the form of the ceramic figure, they easily undermine
or contradict one other. For instance, the swelling and weight of the breast suggested principally by the arrangement of colour over the form, loses emphasis and momentum set against the stretching of the belly, as our eyes are pulled in two different directions with different intensity. This set of trials begins to demonstrate a relationship between the arrangement of colour, texture and the sensations of flesh and skin but also the need for a sense of unity in their apparent response to the form of the body. The second set of trials therefore, explores the suggestion of only one sensation: that arising from a shiver.

### 2.6.2 Second Trials: Inappropriate Properties

This second set of trials explores the question posed earlier arising from analysis of Curneen’s figure *Prick* (fig. 5): can the particular sensations of flesh and skin be given emphasis by applying properties in contrast to those found on the body in nature? In looking at properties found inappropriate to the body I am focusing again on the notion of aesthetic transference. Just as the sharp prickles of Claire Curneen’s figure *Prick* can prompt a viewer to consider the delicate nature of flesh through the body’s relationship with a multitude of sharp prickles, so I am suggesting that properties not usually found on the body in nature can speak about sensations of flesh and skin. Expressive differences between contrasting properties, when combined, can be regarded from a Merleau-Pontian perspective as interacting sensations in the body schema, and from a Collingwoodian perspective as interacting connections and associations in the imagination. For example, the way in which the relationship between vision, touch and movement can reveal expressive and emotional conditions or inclinations.

These trials concentrate on the emotional and physical states of a shiver. It was important therefore to develop interrelationships that would have the desired effect. It quickly became clear that the sensation of a shiver cannot be conveyed...
by merely applying inappropriate textures onto the body but rather, by considering where the texture is placed on the body in relation to the orientation and increase or decrease in intensity of the sensation. For example, in trial 2:2 (fig. 16), the texture of 'goose flesh' is highly exaggerated in order that connections might be made between the multiple sharp points of the texture and the multiple sharp pressure points of a shiver (ref: 2.3.2, para. 3). The orientation of this sensation over the body can be suggested by placing the pricks more closely together over the spine, the area from which a shiver feels as though it originates, and less over other areas so that our eyes are attracted to move with differing intensity. The progression of this experience is conveyed in a similar way by gradually exaggerating texture, over three individual figures, from slight bumps to protruding tentacles (fig. 17:16:15).

As my body opens onto the properties of each piece, the contrast between their inappropriate textures and my own soft flesh increases along with my perception of their activity, as my eyes are attracted to move over them with progressive momentum. However, whilst this experience at best refers to feelings occurring on the surface of the skin, this movement also prompts certain emotional responses and rather than evoking the experience of a shiver, I instead feel a sense of irritation or discomfort, particularly from the third piece, trial 2:3 with the most exaggerated texture. It appears that the visual connections in this work are too close to the feeling of tentacles crawling over my face and body. The texture of this work is too far removed from the visual properties of flesh and skin or at least too strongly connected to other properties. As with Claire Curneen's figure Prick, the greater the discernible leap between the properties of the body and the properties of the surface, the more their relationship becomes part of that experience, often leading to notions of narrative to explain their union (which is not the remit of the project). To suggest more directly properties of flesh and skin
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Fig. 15
Detail of Trial 2:3, 2002, porcelain clay, 32 cm.

Fig. 16
Detail of Trial 2:2, 2002, porcelain clay, 32 cm.

Fig. 17
Detail of Trial 2:1, 2002, porcelain clay, 32 cm.

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requires a closer interaction between the qualities of the surface and the form for example, suggesting specific sensations which can arise from the interaction of surface and form. This is explored in the third set of trials.

2.6.3 Third Trials: Incongruous Relationships Between Surface and Form

Whilst the second set articulates expression through the relationships between skin qualities and contrasting qualities, the third set focusses on the process of aesthetic transference as it occurs between surface and form and, in particular, the ways in which they interact to speak of the human form. This series of trials returns to properties in close visual connection with those found on the body in nature and explores the ways in which qualities of skin can appear to reflect movement or sensations suggested by the form. Whilst the surface and form could be seen independently as referring to aspects of the body, understanding their interaction contributes further to our understanding of the nature of flesh and skin. For example, as my body opens onto the properties in trial 3:1 (fig. 18), I can feel the full, rounded and smooth structure of the form against my relatively soft skin and these sensations contribute to my understanding of the surface. As I perceive the movement of warm reds against the colder hues coming forward over the nipple and belly, they can appear as if revealed from beneath the skin. The sensations evoked by the form and the surface can convey a feeling of skin pulled so taught and stretched that it is as if the colour red can be seen though it (fig. 18 (iv)).

In the same way, however, when we experience these trials set against the background of our body’s equivalent textures and gestures, we also become aware of missing connections, of incongruities. For instance, there is a significant lack of interaction between the surface, form and the body in trial 3:1. There is nothing in pose or gesture to suggest why properties are exaggerated in a particular way. The
Fig. 18 (i) -- Trial 3: 1, 2002.
St Thomas clay, engobes, Terrasigilata, 38 cm.

Fig. 18 (ii) -- Detail of Trial 3: 1

Fig. 18 (iii) -- Detail of Trial 3: 1

Fig. 18 (iv) -- Detail of Trial 3: 1

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body does not appear to be moving in concurrence with the activity of the breast and belly; in fact, it is static by comparison. In this regard, rather than fully articulating our sense of the mutual interaction of the surface and form, properties can instead appear slightly misshapen and placed at odds with the body. This is further emphasized by the fact that in order to prompt us into looking for an understanding of the relationship between particular properties, aspects are extremely exaggerated - taken as if to their outermost limits - as with the distended belly and thin, stretched skin in trial 3:1, or isolated from all other properties. Exaggeration could occur to a lesser extent but the relationship between two identified properties may appear a less prominent aspect of our experience.

This third set of trials gives largely unsatisfactory results because, whilst they continue or maintain interest in the contrasts at work in aesthetic transference, rather than having the contrasts arise through the disparity of skin properties, the contrasts are instead in terms of incongruity between posture and form on the one hand and flesh and skin on the other. The outcome of this third set, therefore, indicates that these incongruities do not succeed in evoking strong connections of flesh and skin. The fourth set of trials introduces the additional aspect of gesture or pose, which can give the appearance of creating the conditions under which such relationships between flesh, skin and the body take place and particular properties appear.

2.6.4 Fourth Trials: Scale and the Interrelationship of Previous Trials

The role of this series of trials in the project differs from the previous works in that it articulates the accumulative findings of the practical investigation. It also examines how emphasis can be given to particular qualities of flesh and skin through the properties of scale and the interrelationship of surface, form and the gesture or pose of the body.
In this final series, the distortions and exaggerations of five figures are set against a control figure that has been left plain, without significant colour, texture or pose to offer a comparison (fig. 19). Each work is a full figure and stands approximately 95 cm tall. The scale of the figure is significant in that, being much closer to our own size, we are required to see these expressive properties in relation to our own body. For this reason, we can also be made more attentive to exaggerations, distortions or inappropriate surfaces on the body.

Trials 4:2:3 and 4 (fig. 20,21,22) demonstrate the expressive capacity of a brush mark to suggest specific properties of flesh and skin when rendered onto the ceramic figure. Influenced by the first series of trials and the ways in which a sense of movement can be triggered by particular placement of colours and markings on the figure, the colour and consistency of brush marks are developed to suggest the sensation of skin stretching. Although in contrast with the properties of our own flesh and skin, correspondence between the scale of the artwork and our own body, provides a context within which we are prompted to find connections between the thin, separated lines of the brush mark and stretch marks, the revealing of colours as if they were buried far beneath the surface and the sensation of stretching skin.

The full figure offers a larger network of bodily associations and correspondences and therefore a significant aspect of these works is that they move away from incongruous relationships between flesh, skin and pose as explored in the second and third trials, and towards exhibiting a congruent relationship between surface, form and pose. Although properties found on the body in nature have been exaggerated and distorted on these figures, the surface appears to work in accordance with sensations already suggested by the form and gesture of the body. For example, to different extents their pose is arched backward, pushing the belly outward and the upper torso foreshortened giving the
Theoretical Debate

Fig. 19 (i)  
Trial 4:1, 2003, St Thomas clay, 95 cm.

Fig. 19 (ii)  
Side of Trial 4:1

Fig. 19 (iii)  
Side of Trial 4:1

Fig. 19 (iv)  
Back of Trial 4:1

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Fig. 20 (i)

**Trial 4:2, 2003,**
St Thomas clay, engobes, terrasilicate, 95 cm.

Fig. 21 (i)

**Trial 4:3, 2003,** St Thomas clay, engobes, terrasilicate, 73 cm.

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Fig. 20 (ii)

Detail of **Trial 4:2**

Fig. 21 (ii)

Detail of **Trial 4:3**

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**Fig. 22 (i)**

**Trial 4.** 2003, St Thomas clay, engobes, terrasilicata, 95 cm.

**Theoretical Debate**

**Fig. 22 (ii)**

Detail of Trial 4: 4

**Fig. 22 (iii)**

Detail of Trial 4: 4

**Fig. 22 (iv)**

Detail of Trial 4: 4

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belly emphasis by appearing to recede into space. The brush marks accent this section, attracting our eyes to move with particular momentum over the belly and triggering connection to feelings of skin stretching and breaking up a little under strain.

Unlike the disparity demonstrated between expressive properties in the second set of trials, the inappropriate or highly exaggerated properties in these figures contribute to one overriding sensation of stretching skin. The process of aesthetic transference suggests an interrelationship between the surface, form, expression and representational elements of the figure, for example the incongruent thin blue lines of the brush mark in figure 4.3 (fig. 21), set against soft flesh tones can be understood as if emerging from the figure bending backwards and are emphasized by her foreshortened form.

It could be argued, however, that our experience of these figures, in dealing predominantly with surface values, can only be understood clearly from a single point perspective, and that this does not significantly convey the physicality of flesh. It is not that the illusion of depth and surface activity does not invite physical sensations but rather, that more sculptural properties, in relating more directly to the body’s scale and volume, can present a broader network of interconnections that can more accurately or fully articulate our experience of flesh and skin as both a visual and physical activity. As our body opens onto the final two figures, our experience more impressively involves space, volume and perspective.

To a greater extent than in previous works, the development of the final figures in this series present properties and interrelationships which enable the researcher to reflect upon all the practical series in this study. For this reason, whilst the trial figures have so far been described in general terms to give an overview of their particular range of aesthetic transferences, figures 4:5 and 4:6 are
described in greater detail and reflect more directly points raised in their analysis (ref: 4.13).

Trial 4:5 (fig. 23), co-ordinates the suggestion of surface activity on the ceramic figure identified in the first series of trials (ref: 4.3), the orientation, emphasis and direction of that movement identified in the second series (ref: 4.8) and the interrelationship of surface, form and the body identified as being of key importance to the expression of flesh and skin on the human body in the third series (ref: 4.11). The width and breadth of the lower torso has been expanded and carved into with sweeping indentations around the belly and waist. These distortions give prominence to aspects of the successive stages in which we may perceive the movement of the body, in particular its twisting to the right. Activity is not merely dramatised through pose, but rather the main area of activity - the hips and waist - has been accentuated as if to occupy the outer limits of their potential movement. Within that space the creasing and folding of skin that often occurs in the midst of that activity has also been frozen or suspended on the surface. As our eyes follow the formation of its mounds and indentations and as we open onto its different and varied angles, it is as though the movement of our body is reflected in the figure and it appears animated in front of us. However, as this figure lacks any significant surface detail, it could be argued that we experience properties of the form rather than the surface of the body.

In trial figure 4:6 (fig. 24), the physical distortion of the form of the body and the expressive properties of its surface are bought together, in order that their interaction with our body’s equivalent gestures will more accurately or fully articulate the nature of flesh and skin as felt through a series of interconnected relationships. Both the form and colour are treated in a similar manner, articulated through a series of interlocking planes that make up the whole of the body. The sections vary from sharp geometric lines to more intense areas of segmentation.
Fig. 23 (i)

Trial 4:5, 2003, St Thomas clay, 98 cm.

Fig. 23 (ii)

Back of Trial 4:5

Fig. 23 (iii)

Detail of Trial 4:5

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Fig. 23 (iv)

Detail of Trial 4:5
Fig. 24 (i)  
**Trial 4: 6, 2003. Crank clay, engobes, 78 cm.**

Fig. 24 (ii)  
Detail of Trial 4: 6

Fig. 24 (iii)  
Side of Trial 4: 6

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Fig. 24 (vi)  
Detail of Trial 4: 6

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The way in which we experience these properties can allow us to understand their properties through a similar pattern of movement, the same rhythm and distribution of motion, which can be felt in relation to the movement of our eyes and body around the work. For instance, the sweep across the belly is described by the contours of the form and the activity reinforced by differentiation in its colouring from red to blue.

The most significant aspect of this figure is the sense of congruity between the properties of the surface and form as it contains similarities to the way in which flesh and skin respond to the movement of the body and therefore should invite connections or associations to its properties. However, it raises an interesting point in that, whilst demonstrating skin’s inextricable connection to movement in the body, there is no other emphasis given to its qualities and no other expressive or emotional connection to flesh and skin.

Whilst a sense of unity in the body is an important aspect sought throughout each of the trials, it should not be at the expense of sensations evoked by discrete properties in the work, as this lack of emphasis reduces the connections to expressive properties of flesh and skin. As noted earlier, flesh and skin are in themselves expressive, responding to and reflecting movement in the body, and these trials have sought aesthetic transferences which realise or example this expressiveness. The sense of tension or friction that can arise from inconsistencies, as explored in previous trials through the application of inappropriate textures and incongruent relationships, must however, be deployed in a manner which incorporates their properties into the wider context of the body as a whole, such as that demonstrated in trials 4:2, 3 and 4, where the scale and pose of the body appear to create the conditions for exaggerated or inappropriate properties to be understood as belonging to the body.
2.7 Findings

In these trials, the researcher explores the ways in which selected aspects of the works - surface, form, expression and representation - interact to generate, for the viewer, sensations of or associations with flesh and skin. These effects can occur, it is argued by Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty, on account of the relationships which structure perception in general. The value of these trials is that they show how particular perceptual relationships can be developed or created to achieve specific aesthetic properties regarding the human body. The principal concept pursued in carrying out the practical investigation is that of aesthetic transference: the mechanism whereby the combination of one quality with another or the transition from one quality to another is seen to allow a ceramic figure to embrace or reveal or simply 'be about' human physical and emotional experiences of flesh and skin. For example, on trial 4:1 (fig. 92) the more representational markings of veins under the breast can influence our understanding of the expressive gesture of the brush mark over the belly by also finding connection to skin stretching and revealing pigments from underneath its surface. Another example is trial 2:3 (fig. 15), where the incongruity of the relationship between our body and the texture of protruding tentacles can invite the sensation of a shiver by prompting the viewer to consider the feeling of tentacles crawling over our own skin. The significance of these transferences is that they demonstrate the potential of particular ceramic practices, through their own internal operation, to participate in and extend the representational and expressive processes whereby the artist speaks about the world.
3 Case Studies Section

3.1 Introduction

The case study component is undertaken as a means to establish the project within a wider context of contemporary figurative art and to include a broad range of interactions between qualities of surface, form, expression and representation to inform the practical studio-based trials (ref: 3.1.7). As the literature search and field study uncovered relatively little previous investigation into the expression of flesh and skin on the human body, the case study artworks are considered in terms of how their qualities and interactions can be suggestive of bodily qualities (ref: 3.1.6). The phrases and terms developed in the theoretical debate are deployed in the description and analysis of these correspondences.

Each artist selected for case study is currently of prominence in their field or medium and is renowned for creating innovative figurative artworks. Collectively they articulate a diverse range of aesthetic transferences of significance to this study (ref: 3.1.8). Due to the variety in approach presented by the range of artists, the decision was made not to take account of personal aims or interpretations of either artist or researcher in order to avoid distraction from the focus of their application to the aim of this study. Exceptions are made only to briefly set each artist within the wider context of their field and also when reinforcing or extending understanding of the expressive values at work in each discrete case study artwork. In this regard, the case studies differ in content specifically under the heading Two-Dimensions/Preparation Work which discusses the supportive material and context of the artwork under discussion. The artists selected for the case studies are: Curneen, Dionyse, Flynn, Mueck, Saville and Vermeersch.

Analysis of Curneen, Flynn, Saville and Mueck occurs first in the theoretical debate and is not repeated, though reference is made where necessary to the appropriate section.
Each Case Study is discussed under the following headings:

(i) Key Objectives for the Case Study
(ii) Content and Scope of the Case Study
(iii) Methods:
   Two-Dimensional/Preparation Work
   Process and Method
(iv) Relationship to Ceramic Medium
(v) The Subject of the Female Form
(vi) Relationship of Case Study to Theoretical Debate
(vii) Relationship of Case Study to Studio-Based Trials
(viii) Relationship of Case Studies to Each Other

Each introduction is then followed by analysis of a selected artwork.

3.1.1 Key Objectives For the Case Studies

To extend the ways in which aesthetic qualities and interrelationships on the figure in art can be considered as giving emphasis to or reducing connection to bodily qualities, offering comparison to the trials and informing a frame of reference for the project as a whole.

3.1.2 Content and Scope of the Case Studies

The aesthetic properties and interactions demonstrated by the case studies are by no means exhaustive of the ways in which qualities and interactions can be suggestive of bodily qualities but contain a range of key configurations which can be understood as lending themselves to this aim. The case studies were restricted to contemporary figurative artworks to situate the project in a time-scale within which there has been a considerable expansion and development in figurative ceramic artwork, moving away from its historical deployment as for example,
monumental public art (Terracotta and Coalstone) or porcelain figurines (Meissen) to a more explorative and accepted practice in the wider context of fine art. It also enabled the inclusion of artists who were available for interview.

3.1.3 Methods:

Two-Dimensions/Preparation Work

An examination was made of the artists’ two-dimensional work including paintings, drawings, collage or preparatory sketches undertaken in direct relation to their main body of work. These preparatory works are often the means by which an artist first examines and tests out ideas before their incorporation into a three-dimensional final piece and can therefore allow access to the wider context of their ideas. Particular attention is paid to the ways in which the artist may appear to utilise the expressive capacity of their drawing materials to suggest further qualities surrounding the body. For example, evoking a sense of its textures, weight or, most significantly relationships between the surface and form of the body. Documenting these ideas developed in two-dimensional work also draws the case studies into closer alignment with the strategies and methods deployed in the studio-based trials, allowing direct comparison in the evaluation of both results and findings.

Process and Method

The construction of the figures, particularly if their surface qualities are either applied or are an integral part of the form, is of importance to this project, as it contributes significantly to the figure’s expressive values. As described in the theoretical debate, qualities that appear merely applied on the surface can appear as detachable, suggestive of an invasive, imposed sensation, whereas qualities forming an integral part of the body can give emphasis to the way in which flesh
and skin respond to, or reflect, the body's internal conditions or movement. The processes and techniques of construction are often used as an important means by which to impute expressive properties in a work. Documenting the processes used by the artists selected for the case studies also allows, where necessary, greater ease when finding equivalents in the medium of ceramics.

3.1.4 Relationship to Ceramic Medium

To examine qualities not previously sought or attained within ceramics that might introduce possibilities important for the development of the project as a whole, it was considered important that the case studies also include work constructed in other media. For this reason the case studies include the work of the figurative painter, Jenny Saville and the sculptor Ron Mueck in addition to artists working principally through the medium of ceramics.

3.1.5 The Subject of the Female Form

In order to allow access to a broad range of figurative artwork it was decided not to restrict case studies exclusively to the female form or limit focus onto a particular area of the body, as with parts of the practical investigation. Although other properties are introduced by the case studies that are not evident in the practical studio-based trials and do not go on to become significant for this project, they are examined with regard to their influence on our understanding of the expression of flesh and skin, for instance the way in which Mueck distorts scale and Saville's fragmentation of the body.

3.1.6 Relationship of Case Studies to Theory

The case studies are deployed to identify how different qualities, combinations of qualities and their arrangement onto the body can appear either to emphasize or
reduce connection to bodily qualities. They can also be considered, along with the trials, as demonstrating how particular perceptual relationships can be developed or created to achieve specific aesthetic qualities regarding the human body. This section analyses the overriding aesthetic values evident in the case study artworks which can be understood as contributing to an understanding of the expression of flesh and skin in an artwork.

3.1.7 Relationship of Case Study to Trials

The case studies examine a broader range of interactions than the trials. This is in part due to the distinct focus of the trials, the ways in which their qualities and interactions are often simplified in order to concentrate on certain aspects or interrelationships. Although each case study is considered according to the same interrelationship of qualities appointed to the trials (ref: 2.2 (iii), para. 2), they also offer alternative combinations and qualities which overlap with the trials. For example: the exaggeration and distortion of bodily qualities in the first series of trials was directly influenced by Saville; applying inappropriate textures onto the body in the second series of trials was directly influenced by the work of Curneen; using incongruous relationships to draw attention to particular areas in the third series was directly influenced by the works of Vermeersch.

3.1.8 Relationships Between Case Studies

The case study artists and artworks were selected to establish the boundaries within which qualities can still be considered as suggestive of certain sensations or emotions connected with flesh and skin when either the figure’s representation or expression of properties occupy a greater part of our experience of the artwork.\textsuperscript{58}

The artworks selected can be understood as constituting a continuum from the

\textsuperscript{58} The term expression in this context refers to the exaggeration, distortion or realignment of properties from the order in which they are found in nature, ref: 2.3.1.
Case Studies Section

highly representational qualities of the figure demonstrated by the work of
sculptor Mueck, to work that exaggerates qualities to the extent of removing
almost all connections from flesh and skin on the body in the work of Dionyse.
The remaining case studies explore interactions between these approaches:
Curneen places contrasting qualities onto the body which can prompt connection
to flesh and skin; Saville manipulates the medium of paint to behave in a similar
way to flesh on the body, Flynn’s work invites particular sensations of the body
through the interaction of the surface, form and pose; and Vermeersch
demonstrates the ways in which qualities of the figure can be reduced to an extent
whereby their absence from the body can appear to draw our attention to where
they should be, and highlights their role on the human body in nature.

Analysis

An artwork is selected from each case study artist considered indicative of the
artist’s working methods. The analysis is set out in terms similar to those
deployed in the trials to facilitate consistency and allow comparison between
results or findings in each of the components of the project. It is set out in two
sections: brief description of salient properties evident in the work, and the ways
in which they can be understood as contributing to a particular quality of flesh and
skin.
3.2 Case Study One: Jenny Saville

Jenny Saville was born in Cambridge in 1968. She studied fine art painting at Glasgow College of Art and graduated in 1992. In 1994, Saville was showcased in the exhibition ‘Young British Artists III' at the Saatchi gallery, and subsequently ‘Sensations' and ‘Ant noises', arguably watermarks of late 90's contemporary art. Her solo exhibition ‘Territories' at the Gagosian Gallery, Soho, New York saw her work published in a book of the same name. Saville’s work is now exhibited and collected world-wide. She is currently a tutor at the School of Art, University of London.

3.2.1 Key Objective for the Case Study

To examine and demonstrate how the interrelationship between the exaggeration of surface and the distortion of the form can suggest irritated or agitated flesh on the human body.

3.2.2 Content and Scope of the Case Study

The inclusion of a painter in the case study analysis allows examination of surface properties not currently achieved within ceramic figurative artwork but which can be attained through ceramic media (ref: 3.2.4).

3.2.3 Methods

Two-Dimensional/ Preparation Work

Saville works from photographs of the female body rather than from life models, often using an amalgamation of images to construct her paintings. This is particularly evident in Hybrid (fig. 26), which is constructed from an arrangement of separate images of the body. This process, of working at a remove from a life model, can be seen as lending an element of detachment or objectivity to her work.
Fig. 25 Studio Images

Imagery from Saville's studio wall depicting surgical procedures, 1999.

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reflected in her paintings, particularly in her depiction of flesh that appears to move almost independently of the movement of the body. This approach reinforces the subject or intention of Saville's paintings, which is significant to this project in demonstrating the application of expressive properties of flesh and skin to a wider context.

Saville's work is concerned with the dichotomy of women's flesh, being at once a source of physical bodily pleasure and at the same time a focus of guilt – its weight, texture and shape failing to conform to an ideal social image. It is this subject that leads Saville to charge or impute the qualities of flesh and skin over the female form with an almost violent sense of movement, a visceral energy, as if it were agitated or irritated at its placement onto the female body. This wider social/political context of the female body image also led to a developing interest in surgical operations, particularly cosmetic alterations undertaken in response to that sense of discomfort. This is more evident perhaps in the photographs covering her studio wall: images of faces, thighs and breasts with markings in preparation for surgical procedures (fig. 25).

**Process and Method**

Saville builds up the surface of her paintings in layers creating a variety of smooth and rough textures over the body (ref: 2.3.2, para. 5).

**3.2.4 Relationship To Ceramic Medium**

Saville's approach to manipulating the medium of paint so that it appears to

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This review of Saville's intentions for her artwork was informed by the introductory essay to her catalogue: *Territories: Paintings by Jenny Saville*, Gagosian Gallery, 1999, in addition to a wide range of articles including:

behave in a similar or exaggerated way to flesh and skin, can be attained in the medium of ceramics: colour can be suspended in liquid clay, placed onto the body and used to accentuate its creases and folds. It can also be applied in multiple layers to build up the surface, akin to painting a canvas. This process can suggest an interrelationship between the surface and form of the ceramic figure, in a similar way to the flesh and skin on the human body.

3.2.5 Subject of the Female Body

It is significant that the female form is the subject of Saville's artwork as it is a subject which finds connection to a wealth of feminist literature in support of the physical discomfort portrayed through her figurative work. Saville also depicts large women to accentuate these properties, offering a greater expanse of flesh through which to describe or suggest these experiences than would be the case with a thinner model.

3.2.6 Relation of Case Study to Theoretical Debate

Saville creates or develops an overriding sensation of flesh and skin not by representing properties in her paintings but by creating a sympathetic climate of interrelationships between the artwork and the viewer's body which encompasses more expressive properties as if belonging to or as a part of the flesh and skin (ref: 2.5, para. 8-10).

3.2.7 Relationship of Case Study to Trials

There is a connection to the first series of trials in regard to Saville's exaggeration and distortion of colour and texture in close visual connection with that found on

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the body in nature. Connections can also be found to the third set of trials with regard to Saville’s distortions of the form to lend emphasis to the expressive potential of the surface, particularly the suggestion of skin moving in response to the exaggerated shape and scale of certain aspects of the body. The distortion of form also goes on to become an important aspect of the fourth series of trials.

3.3 Analysis: Jenny Saville, Hybrid

In Saville’s painting Hybrid (fig. 26), the body is divided into five main sections which overlap to form an uneven and disrupted whole. Each section depicts subtle variations in the relationship between the surface and form, denoted by the application of various layers of colour and texture.

The suggested interaction between the surface and form in Hybrid prompts connection to other pertinent and novel properties in our experience than those offered by the surface or form in isolation, in particular, inviting association to the sensation of flesh moving as if in response to the form, to its volume or activity. The division of the body into five sections enables Saville to identify and portray different momentums and tensions of skin responding to a thin and to a more voluminous body. For example, the gradation of colour from cold to warmer hues can appear to move forward and recede in the activity of our perception, inferring that thin skin is being stretched over more structural areas of the body. Our experience can be imputed with a range of activities that imply different directions, orientation and emphasis (ref: 2.5, para. 9), and yet, we experience these properties globally as part of one overarching experience.

The movement suggested by this painting creates a climate whereby we are prompted to participate in its activity, to traverse the body for ourselves, to move from the flatter areas toward more animated parts of the body, from a stretching belly to bloated breasts and more highly articulated hands, thus combining and
Fig. 26 (i)

Jenny Saville, Hybrid, 1997, oil on canvas
274.3 x 213.4 cm.

Fig. 26 (ii)

Detail of Hybrid

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interrelating properties and building an understanding of the condition of the body as a whole. Here, it is significant to repeat Merleau-Ponty’s description of the way in which the successive stages of our perception can work together and create a unified experience:

[discrete qualities] are no longer visible in their own right but rather contribute, as they do in natural vision, to the impression of an emerging order, an object in the act of appearing, organising itself before our eyes.\(^\text{61}\)

Each property suggests either a similar or complimentary range of experience to generate this sense of activity. In addition, these properties can disclose different emotional states revealed as if in response to these activities which can lead to an overriding emotional state of tension, friction or agitation in relation to the work.

3.4 Case Study Two: Claire Curneen

Claire Curneen was born in Tralee, County Kerry in Ireland in 1968. She studied ceramics at an undergraduate level at the Crawford College of Art and Design, completed a postgraduate Diploma in Applied Art at the University of Ulster in Belfast and gained a Masters in ceramics at University of Wales Institute, Cardiff in 1992. Ten years after her graduation, Curneen is arguably one of the most prominent figurative artists working through the medium of ceramics in the UK. She exhibits worldwide, is a member of the International Academy of Ceramics, Geneva and is affiliated to Contemporary Applied Arts, London.

3.4.1 Key Objectives of the Case Study

To examine and demonstrate how the application of inappropriate textures onto a distorted human form can prompt notions of narrative which find connections to the sensation of flesh and skin.

3.4.2 Content and Scope of the Case Study

The inclusion of Curneen as a case study allows examination of the role of narrative in figurative ceramic artwork (ref: 2.3.2, para. 4). In particular, the ways in which the application of surfaces after the figure has been constructed can create a sense of disparity between the surface and the form of the body and prompt a viewer to find account for their relationship.

3.4.3 Methods:

Two-Dimensional/Preparation Work

Curneen’s sketchbook and drawings are relevant to this project as they map out salient qualities and relationships surrounding her work. In particular, they further demonstrate an interest in the sensorial properties of textures and their
relationship to the body. This is explored predominantly through the capacity of the drawing materials themselves to suggest particular qualities, for example, the expressive potential of fine pencil lead in depicting hairs or sharp prickles on the body, and charcoal in inferring a thicker, denser, heavier quality (fig. 27). Her sketches also reveal an interest in more representational aspects of the body such as details of the hands and feet, which although evident in her ceramic figures are not given the prominence offered by these individual drawings. The human body, with its areas of high representation, distinctive exaggeration and its relationship with certain textural properties, is the most significant aspect of Curneen’s ceramic figures and those which most prominently lead toward connections or association with qualities of flesh and skin.

Process and Method

Experiences of Curneen’s figures are directly affected by the delicate ways in which she constructs their forms. She presses together small sections of thin porcelain clay transferring an impression of the lines and indentations of her palm and fingers as she attaches each section. This results in her fingers drying out and strengthening the body as she works, enabling the figure to be constructed as an extremely thin membrane of clay. Our experience of any additional texture applied onto this figure is influenced by what can be seen of this membrane. Curneen either leaves exposed the indentations and apertures left in construction or applies textures which often serve to accentuate the figure’s overall sense of fragility, for example, the sharp edges on the figure Prick can feel damaging or threatening to this vulnerable body.

Understanding of Curneen’s method of construction was gained by interviewing the artist in her studio in Cardiff, Wales, UK.
Fig. 27 Sketchbook Images

**Fig. 27 (i)**
Drawing from Curneen’s Sketchbook, 2002, approx. 22 x 26 cm.

**Fig. 27 (ii)**
Drawing from Curneen’s Sketchbook, 2002, approx. 22 x 26 cm.

**Fig. 27 (iii)**
Drawing from Curneen’s Sketchbook, 2002, approx. 22 x 26 cm.

**Fig. 27 (iv)**
Drawing from Curneen’s Sketchbook, 2002, approx. 22 x 26 cm.

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3.4.4 Relationship to Ceramic Medium

Curneen’s figures demonstrate how the methods and process of construction can offer distinct expressive values to the figure in ceramics (as discussed in the theoretical debate). Her figures also demonstrate the versatility of the medium of ceramic to invite connection to qualities of flesh and skin whilst at the same time suggesting textures in contrast with or inappropriate to the body.

3.4.5 Subject of the Female Form

Curneen constructs her own archetypal figure which she replicates for each figurative work: the body’s form and proportions are distorted, the legs and head gently tapering away from the main body which gives the illusion of the figure diminishing at either end. This figure is often androgynous and gender does not appear to be a subject of interest to Curneen. Their androgyny can be understood as allowing us to concentrate our attention on the qualities of their form, the texture of their surface and notions of narrative to explore their possible interrelationships.

3.4.6 Relation of Case Study to Theory

Curneen’s figures are of interest to this study in the way the viewer is prompted to make aesthetic transference between the figure, the application of inappropriate surface textures and sensorial experiences. It is argued that the figure analysed in this section, St Sebastian (fig. 28), prompts notions of narrative to explore the incongruity of this relationship. This has theoretical significance in demonstrating how a ceramic figure can prompt connection to small worlds of

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89 Sentiment obtained through interview with Curneen in her studio in Cardiff, Wales. UK. and further informed by a review of articles describing Curneen’s work:

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experience surrounding those properties depicted. The notion of narrative is claimed in this study as a salient aspect of our experience of Curneen’s figures and therefore an important aspect of aesthetic transference examined in this section.

3.4.7 Relation of Case Study to Studio-Based Trials

Properties identified within Curneen’s figures can be seen as a strong influence on the development of the second series of trials. In particular, trial 2:2 examines and demonstrates how qualities similar to those used in Curneen’s figure Prick, can be used to invite particular emphasis, orientation and direction of a sensation over the body (ref: 2.6.2, para. 2). Curneen’s significance in this study lies in her utilisation of the sense of disparity and discontinuity experienced between the surface and form to extend its suggestion of narrative, an aspect found to reduce connection to properties of flesh and skin in the second series (ref: 2.6.2, para. 3)

3.5 Analysis: Claire Curneen, St Sebastian

The surface of Curneen’s figure St Sebastian (fig. 28) is left untreated, leaving exposed the white porcelain clay and its multitude of undulations and indentations. At irregular intervals, there are sharp edges inserted over the entire body and it is considered that their relationship to the body can prompt notions of narrative which emphasize particular qualities of flesh and skin in relation to the viewer’s own body, especially, its soft and delicate nature.

It is the action of suggestion or invitation which is the principal bodily nature of aesthetic response for Merleau-Ponty and also central to the transference of qualities from one modality to another in Collingwood’s theory of

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Claire Curneen, *St Sebastian*, 2003, Porcelain, gold lustre, 38 cm.

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the imaginative experience. Qualities internal to the body suggested by the thinness of porcelain in Curneen's figure, allow the viewer to experience not only the image of the body but also the suggestion of what can happen inside it, the body's felt sensations and emotions (ref: 2.5, para. 1-3). This is emphasized by its form, in particular the tapering of the body toward either end, leaving the torso with the appearance of being exposed and unguarded. It is this area which is pierced by the sharp edges. Whilst they do not in themselves bear visual connection to bodily properties it can be argued that these multiple shards can evoke a state of bodily being concerned with properties of flesh and skin, as they invite association with its soft and vulnerable nature through the suggestion of their piercing and damaging this surface.

It can be further argued that extending the realm of experience evoked by the ceramic figure to include properties clearly depicted as outside of the body, creates a third element: narrative, a mechanism by which to find account for this incongruous relationship (ref: 2.3.2, para. 1-4). Under this premise the figure exists surrounded by a widening network of associations, prompting small worlds of experiences and sensuous connections, for example, specific narrative of death and martyrdom, as suggested by its title.
3.6 Case Study Three: Jose Vermeersch

Jose Vermeersch was born on the 6 November 1922 in Bissegem, Belgium. In 1941 he attended the Royal Academy of Fine Art in Antwerp to study painting but the German occupation in 1943 forced him into hiding on the west coast of Westvleteren, in Belgium, until 1945 when he could resume study under the director Constant Permeke. In 1964 he became Head of Design at the VTI (Vrij Technisch Institute, in Roeselare) but was successful enough in his ceramic practice to leave in 1969 and devote himself to it entirely. He is increasingly considered to be one of the most important figurative ceramic artists in Europe but has had little international exposure. Vermeersch died on the 13 December 1997 at home in Lendelede Ghent, Belgium.

3.6.1 Key Objectives of Case Study

To examine and demonstrate the way in which qualities of the figure can be reduced to an extent that their absence from the body prompts a viewer to consider where they should be and their role on the human body in nature.\(^6\)

3.6.2 Content and Scope of Case Study

Including Vermeersch as a case study prompted further examination of how skin responds to the body, in order to identify what elements were reduced or absent from his figures. Vermeersch was also an accomplished painter which provides certain distinctions in his use of surface in two and three dimensions, in particular his suggestion of the body's activity or of light moving around the figure in his paintings, seemingly denied in his sculptural work.

\(^6\) The phrase 'their role on the body in nature' in this context refers to the properties of flesh and skin as constituted by or arising out of a series of interactions in the body (ref: 2.1 (iii), para. 5).
3.6.3 Methods:

Two-Dimensional/Preparation Work

There is a strong connection between the ideas and style evident in Vermeersch's paintings and the development of his ceramic figurative sculptures (fig. 29). These characteristics can be most clearly illustrated through comparison of his early Impressionist style paintings, represented by My Father (1941), and the reduction and simplification of colour and form evident in his Study of Head in the 1950's. An archetypal face begins to emerge, clearly reminiscent of his own features but highly simplified and linear. It has almond eyes, a strong and straight nose, a thin mouth with a shapely top lip and a thick neck. Once located and established, it becomes a prominent, almost obsessive character, with practically every figure rendered in both two and three dimensions sharing this familial resemblance.

Vermeersch's paintings also appear to influence the role of surface on his ceramic figures, in particular, the application of solid colour onto the body and the ways in which highlight and shadow can be deployed to suggest a flattening of the body or conversely to suggest additional volume. This interconnectedness of two and three-dimensions can be seen clearly between his drawing Figure 1997 (fig. 29 (iii)), his painting Moving Figure 1969 (fig. 29 (iv)), and the figure selected for analysis in this section, the ceramic work Pink Figure 1970 (fig .30). Vermeersch appears to extend this interrelationship between the properties of two and three dimensions by multiplying the brush marks outlining the contours of his painted figure (fig. 29 (iv)) to suggest a sense of activity distinctly lacking in the ceramic figures.
Fig. 29 Two Dimensional and Preparatory Work

Vermeersch, *My Father*, 1941, oil on canvas, 33 x 28 cm.

Vermeersch, *Figure*, 1997, Charcoal, 150 x 100 cm.

Vermeersch, *Study of Head*, early 1950’s, oil on canvas, 43 x 40 cm.

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Process and Method

The ways in which Vermeersch constructed his figures can be understood as having a distinct influence on their development and characteristics. They are mainly three to four feet in height and in order to construct them he used an adjustable scaffolding system to support the weight of the clay as it dried. The obstruction caused to the artists access to the figure by this scaffolding system can be understood as affecting the ways in which they are distorted. It could be argued that as Vermeersch often looked up at the body as he built, the foreshortening evident in many pieces, for example of the neck, would have been a natural outcome of his point of view. Their broad shoulders may also have been a result of him counteracting what he saw, leading to a noticeably rigid pose. The scaffolding system around and through the body, would also have kept Vermeersch at a slight distance from the figure, limiting the fluidity of his own movement, reflected in the lack of fluidity in their form and gesture.

3.6.4 Relationship to Ceramic Medium

Vermeersch's figures demonstrate how ceramics can be constructed in a way that appears to contradict its natural tendency to fold and crease in a similar way to flesh and skin by appearing hard and unyielding. His figures also offer an insight into the distinct differences posed by two and three-dimensions, a significant relationship in regard to rendering qualities of flesh and skin onto a three-dimensional figure. Vermeersch's work most notably demonstrates how the illusion of shadow can attempt to contradict the fall of natural light, a consideration particularly evident in his work Pink Figure, the subject of analysis at the end of this section.

Understanding of Vermeersch's concept was gained from discussion with his family and his administrator Francine Diendeval and from literature documenting his work: Jose Vermeersch: Retrospective 1922-1997. Openbaar Kunstbezit in Vlaanderen, 2000.
3.6.5 Subject of the Female Form

Vermeersch's figures are predominantly male and when he does construct the female form he does not appear to make any significant distinction, aside from the genitalia. This androgyny, it could be argued, is simply part of Vermeersch's general reduction of the properties of flesh and skin as it is often the additional flesh of the female form that describes her shape.

3.6.6 Relationship of Case Study to Theory

Vermeersch's figures are made up of a basic body frame, his own archetypal figure, which appears almost devoid of the characteristics associated with the activity or life of the body: they appear ridged and stiff with straight backs, inflexible arms and legs and a hard solid surface. Of particular theoretical significance to this project is the way in which qualities in Vermeersch's figures are reduced to the extent whereby their absence from the body can actually draw our attention to where they should be and their role on the body in nature. The process of aesthetic transference at work in his figures generates connections to physical properties and activities not illustrated directly in his work.

Whilst experiencing Vermeersch's figures set against the background of our body's equivalent textures and gestures may prompt consideration of these missing properties, it could also be argued, that the figure's distinct sense of incongruity also competes for emphasis in our experience of his work. The absence of detail pertaining to the potential life of the body can suggest an overriding sense of absence, death, and on figures displaying a patterned surface, mummification. This is significant in regard to the concept behind Vermeersch's figures: to evoke a sense of the presence of life, the body merely providing the vehicle through which that essence is presented.\(^{67}\) In this regard, Vermeersch

\(^{67}\) Ibid.
considered the eyes, their surface always reflective, as the only property indicating the life of the body.

3.6.7 Relationship of Case Study to Studio-Based Trials

The reduction of qualities found to be evident in Vermeersch's figures influenced the development of the third set of trials; in particular the ways in which qualities can be distributed unevenly on the body in order to give emphasis to certain interactions and to set up disparities which can prompt further connections and associations to the body. The findings from these trials demonstrated, however, that the rearrangement of qualities on the body would be more effective and accurate in its expression of skin qualities, if our attention were drawn to sensations through a series of interrelated connections than by stark contrasts and blatant incongruity, as the relationship between qualities can be given too great an emphasis and reduce attention to flesh and skin. Whilst the reduction of qualities on the body does not go on to become a significant aspect of this research, the reduction and addition of qualities is used as a device to give focus to particular qualities in each of the trials.

3.7 Analysis: Jose Vermeersch, Pink Figure 1970

The form of Jose Vermeersch's work Pink Figure (fig. 30) distinctly lacks any fluidity of gesture, it is rigid, its limbs are stiff and its back straight. The representational qualities of flesh and skin are also reduced, for example the detail of its texture and pallor, definition of muscle and tone and most particularly, the ways in which it responds to the body by creasing and folding. Emphasis is given instead, to the shape of the form as if it were a static, inanimate object, by describing shadow around its contours on a vertical axis from head to foot. No consideration is given to subtle changes in the form or to the horizontal axis of the
Fig. 30 (i)
Vermeersch, *Pink Figure*, 1976, stoneware, engobes, 98 cm.

Fig. 30 (ii)
Detail of *Pink Figure*

Fig. 30 (iii)
*Pink Figure* against Vermeersch’s painted background.

Fig. 30 (iv)
Detail of *Pink Figure*

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body.

The form of the body offers enough representational detail against which the reduction of skin qualities is clearly evident. The surface gives the illusion of flattening the form rather than describing the life and potential activity of the body. The surface suggests that the form is hard and unyielding which, it can be argued, draws greater attention to the body's boundaries or limitations than surface properties. However, there is a sense in which a viewer is also prompted to experience those missing aspects of the figure. According to Merleau-Ponty our understanding of objects is based on the reciprocal nature of our perception; an exchange between the properties of an object and our equivalent textures and gestures. The quote used in the theoretical debate is repeated here as it describes the sense in which our own bodily properties can fill into those absent spaces or complete those limited or reduced aspects of Vermeersh's work and we can, almost at the same time, experience the body's potential and absence of life:

If my hand takes its place among the things it touches, it is in a sense one of them, opens finally upon a tangible being of which it is also a part. Through this criss-crossing within it of the touching and the tangible, its own movements incorporate themselves into the universe they interrogate, are recorded on the same map as it; the two systems are applied upon one another, as two halves of an orange'.

3.8 Case Study Four: Michael Flynn

Flynn was born in Germany in 1947. He studied painting at Birmingham College of Art and completed a BA (Hons) ceramics at the University of South Glamorgan and finally applied his interest in surface design onto three-dimensional forms in 1985 on an MA in fine art in Cardiff. He is now one of Britain’s most eminent and prolific ceramic figurative artists. He is a member of Contemporary Applied Arts and exhibits world-wide with work in both public and private collections. He currently has studios in Vallendar, Germany and in Cardiff, Wales.

3.8.1 Key Objectives of the Case Study

To examine and demonstrate how qualities not directly representative of flesh and skin can, through the interaction of qualities of surface, form and pose of the body, invite connection to particular sensations of flesh and skin.

3.8.2 Content and Scope of the Case Study

The inclusion of Flynn as a case study artist informed the researcher’s understanding of how the concepts of surface, form, expression and representation, whilst retaining discrete properties, can each appear to work together and in combination to contribute to one overriding bodily sensation.

3.8.3 Methods:

Two-Dimensional/Preparation Work

There is a notable lack of exploration of surface qualities in Flynn’s two-dimensional work, which may be due to difficulty in finding equivalents to the complex texture achieved through his use of specific glazes, but also because the surfaces used on his figures are arranged closely in relation to form, and cannot be fully realised until after the figure has been completed. In this way, connections...
Fig. 31 Sketchbook Images

Fig. 31 (i)
Sketches from Flynn's studio wall in Hohr-Grenzhausen, Germany, 2002, approx. 21 x 29 cm.

Fig. 31 (ii)
Sketches from Flynn's studio wall, 2002, approx. 21 x 29 cm.

Fig. 31 (iii)
Sketches from Flynn's studio wall, 2002, 21 x 29 cm

Fig. 31 (iv)
Sketches from Flynn's studio wall, 2002, 21 x 29 cm.

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can be drawn between the apparently responsive manner in which Flynn applies surface and the responsive relationship between the surface, form and pose of the body in his ceramic figures. What is explored through two dimensions (fig. 31) is the composition of elements as Flynn brings an eclectic range of ideas to his work, for example, the subjects used by artists in the Rococo and Baroque period for the porcelain figurines, literature, poetry and music. He works with several themes at once, focussing in particular on the nature of female and male relationships and our instinctive animalistic behaviour. These interests are brought together in his drawings which explore the dynamic of the figure’s pose, gesture and its relationships to other figures and other subjects, for example, a cock, a boat or musical instruments.

Process and Method

The surface qualities and their relationship to the form are significantly determined in the process of their construction, by the indentations and prints left by Flynn’s fingers in the plastic clay. In this way, Flynn’s style relies much upon the properties of the clay to retain these marks, to achieve his figures’ characteristic irregularity of surface and form. He begins with the plastic clay in the palm of his hand and the figure is then built hollow from the feet upward, gradually forming the legs and the body by pinching together layers of clay. The process of direct handling dries the clay as he works, enabling it to hold its shape. The figure is then attached to a base, roughly rectangular in shape and frequently little larger than the body’s feet. He builds quickly with the plastic clay but also leaves partly modelled bodies for months before deciding on how they will be developed into

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Understanding of the processes, techniques and content deployed by Flynn was informed by visiting his studio in Vallendar, Germany and Cardiff, Wales, UK, interviewing the artist and reviewing articles on his work and working methods:

full figures or compositions. For this reason, he leaves small holes in their feet or between their legs so they may be easily adaptable to new ideas. When molten, the glaze surfaces, often thick and suggestive of a fatty substance, allow the figures to be fixed together by seeping into the joints and filling apertures.

3.8.4 Relationship to Ceramic Medium
The surface of Flynn’s figures contains a complex range of qualities achieved through a combination of pigments and textures provided by different clay bodies and applied glaze surfaces. They demonstrate, in particular, how colour and a combination of matt and reflective surface can be used to accentuate the indentations and finger marks left behind from modelling. This is primarily informed by the plasticity of the clay body and its ability to record this activity and the initial properties provided by its colour and texture. Subsequent application of glaze responds to these properties by seeping into joints and indentations and also unifying what may be crudely jointed. In this way, the initial application of surface appears incorporated into the form of the figure. The overall composition is further emphasized by additional layers of clays, colours, chlorides, enamels, stains and slips frequently applied irregularly over the surface of the figure to accent this already uneven surface.

3.8.5 Subject of the Female Form
The female form is deployed in Flynn’s work frequently as part of a composition of bodies, fighting or dancing with a male figure, suggesting a vigourous energy and interaction between the sexes. When depicted independent from a crowd, her overriding characteristic is one of a sexual or sexualised object, identified by an

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70 The partly modelled figures left on Flynn’s shelves are not protected to stop them from drying out but are rather left to dry, as the thick application of glaze is frequently deployed to attach fragments together and add to the figure’s irregularity and sense of awkward stance. It is the holes made in their form which allows them to be used in a composition developed months later.
evocative pose and with deep red pigment often accentuating her genitalia and breasts. Aside from these details, the general surface properties are not significantly distinguished from those of her male counterpart.

3.8.6 Relation of Case Study to Theoretical Debate

The interrelationship of qualities in Flynn’s work is of particular significance to this project, as it is only through the process of aesthetic transference that we can feel these qualities as belonging or referring to the body. Flynn’s figure Harlequin (fig. 32) is a particularly fertile example of how evocative his work can be: the figure feels animated, but not solely through its pose or gesture; its surface appears sweaty and energised as though it is moving almost of its own accord over the body, triggering connections to prickly heat, the vibration of flesh or skin constricting as the sweat dries on its surface.

3.8.7 Relation of Case Study to Studio-Based Trials

Flynn’s figures can be seen as a strong influence in the development of the third and fourth set of trials, particularly the way in which certain sensations or emotions can be suggested and emphasized without overt visual description of that experience. He evokes qualities through the interaction of the properties of surface, form and pose, each contributing toward one overriding sensation of flesh and skin. In this way, his work presents an interrelationship of qualities indicative of the ways in which flesh and skin are part of a wider interconnection of relationships in the body as found in nature. Whilst gesture or pose do not go on to become a significant aspect of this research, the suggestion that flesh and skin are responsive to movement in the body is a key interrelationship explored in different ways through each of the trials, most notably in the third and fourth set.

The surface of the figure *Harlequin* (fig. 32) is unevenly coated in a highly reflective glaze and with irregular dots and dashes of opaque pigment. The form is bumpy and irregular and the pose depicts the body as if in the act of movement or activity. It is considered by the researcher, that the interrelationship between this surface, form and pose is suggestive of certain aspects of flesh and skin, in particular, the feeling of it responding to movement in the body.

Whilst this surface may not display any obvious visual connection to flesh and skin, its qualities can be understood as suggesting aspects of its felt sensations, particularly when placed onto a form and pose which suggest similar or complimentary properties. For example, its surface appears wet from the reflection of light and fluid from the pooling of glaze in the undulations of the form leaving other areas thin or uncovered. The unevenness of the glaze's distribution over the body creates gaps in the covering of the supporting leg (fig. 33) and under the figure's right breast (fig. 35), which can add to our experience or the suggestion of it as a fatty or sticky substance. Each of these connections is heightened or extended in relation to the pose of the body, which depicts the figure in the act of moving by balancing on one leg, as if leaping or dancing and by all its limbs being bent at angles to the body. Together, these qualities interrelate and can suggest certain internal movements of flesh and skin in response to the body, from feelings of it sweating or the skin tightening as it dries, of being hot and clammy, to wobbly flesh and shaking muscles. Whilst surface qualities in Flynn's work might appear inappropriate to the body (according to the definition set out in fn.33), where their expressive properties interrelate with equivalent or complimentary suggestions of form and pose, they can be understood as belonging to the body and the suggestion of an overriding sensations of internal movement of flesh and skin.

Detail of *Harlequin*

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Case Study Five: Ron Mueck

Ron Mueck was born in Melbourne, Australia in 1954. He received no formal training in the arts, but worked instead for fifteen years as an animatronics technician and model maker for children's television and special effects artist for films and the advertising industry. Most noticeably he worked on the 1986 film 'Labyrinth', starring the singer David Bowie. Fig. 38 is an example of his advertising work from this period.

In 1996, Mueck built a model of the fairy tale character Pinocchio for the artist Paula Rego (his mother in law) who displayed it alongside her work for her exhibition Spellbound at the Hayward Gallery in London. This figure caught the attention of collectors Saatchi and Saatchi and Mueck was soon heralded as one of the new Young British Artists. His work was displayed in Sensations and Ant Noises, both highly influential exhibitions in the late 90's British art scene. Ron Mueck's reputation has continued to grow. He is now represented by the Anthony D'Offay gallery, London and exhibits world-wide. He is currently the artist in residence at the National Art Gallery, London (at the time of interview), commissioned for three years to work in response to their historical collections and archival material. He had already completed two works (at the time of interview): Man in a Boat and Mother and Child for which the maquettes illustrated in fig. 36 and fig. 39 were made.

Key Objectives Of Case Study

To examine and demonstrate highly representational depiction of the human form and the way in which scale can influence the figure's expressive properties.
3.10.2  Content and Scope of the Case Study

The inclusion of Mueck as a case study offers a representational control against which all exaggerations, distortions and realignment of properties in subsequent case studies and studio-based trials can be evaluated. Mueck’s work also demonstrates how subtle distortions of the surface and form can affect our perception of a figure in contrast with what we may ordinarily feel in response to the scale or subject matter depicted.

3.10.3  Two-Dimensional/Preparation Work

Mueck’s advertising images demonstrate a significant difference in predominantly representational work, between the suggestion of movement in two and three dimensions. In a photograph of a figure, on a two-dimensional plane, the image can be understood as a captured moment in time. On the other hand, if a three-dimensional work suggests movement of a greater level than an intake of breath for example, our suspension of disbelief is easily undermined. At this point it is useful to refer to Michael Flynn’s figures which do suggest high activity and motion (ref: 3.9). They do not, however, pertain to representation of the human body and so our understanding of their shapes and colours is more flexible in contributing to an overall impression of the body in movement.

Mueck’s advertising images also demonstrate a significant relationship between the surface and form of the body, not explored by the trials or by other case studies, in particular, the way in which the human body can appear as a caricature, as a comical image when its form is distorted to a greater extent than its surface (fig. 38). It is interesting to note that Mueck also explored a more expressive rendering of the skin on a highly representational form (fig. 37), by leaving gestural markings behind on its surface. However, this merely served to undermine its representational properties, rather than emphasize particular
Fig. 36
Mueck, Man in a Boat, 2002, plastic clay over chicken wire support, approx. 54 cm.

Fig. 37
Mueck, detail of face fragment, 2002, silicone resin, approx. 20 x 13 cm.

Fig. 38

Expression of Flesh and Skin

Fig. 39
Maquette for Mother and Child, 2002, approx. 17 x 9 cm.
qualities of flesh and skin.

Mueck does not often use drawing. When required, he scribbles thumbnail images on scraps of paper. His ideas are principally explored by constructing small maquettes, which reveal the salient aspects of the work; for example, the pose and gesture of the body and its relationship with other figures (fig. 39). The form of the body and the surface are not explored in two-dimensional work as they are rendered representationally in every piece and do not need further investigation.

Process and Method

Mueck models with immense detail in clay over the top of a chicken wire armature - note the tendons on the neck, the eyelids and facial expression in fig. 36. Subtle changes are also made as he responds to the emerging figure, such as tilting the head upward and placing the legs closer together to create a greater sense of tension and imbalance in the pose of the body. After completing the modelling stage, the figures are cast, either in fibreglass resin or silicone, depending on the amount of detail: the silicone will pick up intricate textures, whereas the resin is more appropriate for overall mass and strength. Layers of particular pigmentation, blemishes, freckles and spots are then painted and sponged into place in the surface of the mould before the cast is taken. Eyeballs are then added, strands of hair individually pinned and holes drilled or punched, to depict skin pores.

Understanding of this method of construction was gained by visiting his studio and interviewing Mueck at the National Portrait Gallery, London, UK. and was further informed by a review of articles discussing his work:

3.10.4 Relationship to Ceramic Medium

It is significant that Mueck deploys the medium of clay to model his figures as no other material offers the malleability for fine modelling, the strength to withstand the casting process and the release properties for casting materials such as silicone resin and plaster.

3.10.5 Subject of the Female Form

Mueck utilises certain aspects characteristic to the female such as pregnancy and mother and child relationships but this is only in order to explore subject matter, there appears no other consideration in the way in which Mueck represents either the male or female form.

3.10.6 Relation of Case Study to Theoretical Debate

Mueck creates what appear to be highly representational figures, however their surface and form are actually distorted to evoke subtle feelings or emotions in the viewer. For example, he models the hands and feet of his figure Big Man (fig. 3) slightly smaller in proportion to the body which has the effect of disarming the sense of threat we may feel from his nine foot seated frame. More particular to this project, however, are the aesthetic transferences at work in regard Mueck's distortion of the qualities of flesh and skin, which actually serve to endow the figure's surface with a stronger representational tie than would its direct representation. This is examined in the analysis of his figure Tall Boy (fig. 40). The representational tie to the body is extremely important in creating the conditions whereby the viewer enters into a sympathetic relationship with the more exaggerated qualities in the work, allowing them to be understood as belonging to the body.
3.10.7 Relationship of Case Study to the Studio-Based Trials

The properties identified within Mueck’s figures inform the first series of trials as they stand as a representational control from which qualities are subsequently exaggerated and distorted. The balance between the representation and expression of qualities on the body is a significant aspect of each of the trials as they explore, in different ways, how the reorganising or recasting of qualities on the body can draw our attention to particular sensations or emotions.

Mueck’s manipulation of the scale of the body also informed the fourth series of trials, bringing the body in closer alignment with the scale of the adult body and thereby presenting a larger network of bodily connections and correspondences. While representational ties and scale do not go on to become significant parts in this research, in working with the human form, representation and the physical relationship of scale to our body is an inextricable element of the interrelationship of qualities within the figure in art.

3.11 Analysis: Ron Mueck, Tall Boy

On Ron Mueck’s figure Tall Boy (fig. 40), he exaggerates the characteristics of the skin’s surface that most commonly describe its representation, for example its pallor and the detail of creases and folds. He reduces more incidental or particularised qualities such as the texture of the skin, open pores, blemishes and body hair. In this way, his distortion of the skin rendered onto a figure constructed 490 cm in height, appears endowed with a stronger representational tie than would its more direct and detailed representation.

Tall Boy’s qualities of flesh and skin are not magnified to the same degree as its extreme overall scale. In fact, with its distinct lack of texture, the surface appears almost reduced in scale. If the texture of skin were enlarged to the same proportion as the overall form, its texture, open pores and hairs may dominate the

**Fig. 40 (i)**

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image and render the figure as a visceral and perhaps disturbing piece. Instead, the surface is rendered appropriate to our understanding of the qualities of flesh and skin. It is only when light reflects strongly off mass areas that this illusion is in part undermined by revealing an overly smooth surface.

The expressive capacity of Mueck’s figures evokes sensations and emotions that frequently belie their scale. *Tall Boy*, for example, towers high above a viewer’s frame, a relationship that would normally evoke a sense of unease and discomfort. Instead, the figure appears as a vulnerable, almost frightened child, eliciting a sense of protectiveness and warmth from the viewer. This contradictory experience can appear to arise from the disarming pose of the figure and his depicted age. It can also be understood as influenced by a viewer’s immediate bodily perception of its qualities, in particular its surface. Mueck’s depiction of flesh and skin on this figure can be felt as though containing similar or familiar properties to those of the viewer, as they are experienced as though rendered onto an equivalent scale. This can inform the climate of our perception of other bodily features as also being familiar and of alike scale. As Merleau-Ponty writes:

[in our experience of an artwork]...perspectival distortions are no longer visible in their own right but rather contribute, as they do in natural vision, to the impression of an emerging order, an object in the act of appearing, organising itself before our eyes.72

A viewer thus can find themselves experiencing relative ease when confronted with this gargantuan figure or at least not experiencing the expected sensations of intimidation or fear.

3.12 Case Study Six: Carmen Dionyse

Carmen Dionyse was born in Ghent in 1921. From 1938 she studied painting, etching and life drawing at The Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Ghent. She is now increasingly considered one of the most influential figurative ceramic artists in Europe but rarely exhibits beyond. She has received numerous awards for her ceramics and for her contribution to art, honoured with the Knight In The Order of Leopold III, Belgium, in 1962 and made an Officer of the Order of the Crown, Belgium, in 1988. She is a member of the International Academy of Ceramics, Geneva, Switzerland and continues to practice from her studio in Ghent.

3.12.1 Key Objectives of the Case Study

To examine and demonstrate the extent to which the form and surface qualities of the human body can be exaggerated whilst still retaining connection to bodily qualities.

3.12.2 Content and Scope of the Case Study

Whilst the removal of skin qualities may appear to be counter to the aim of this research, it was considered important to identify a figurative work in which this occurred in order to establish the boundaries within which qualities could be exaggerated before losing connection to flesh and skin. In this respect, the expressive qualities of Dionyse’s figures provide direct contrast to Mueck’s highly representational figures.

3.12.3 Two-Dimensional/Preparation work

Rather than exploring ideas two-dimensionally, Dionyse instead seeks reference through the collection of small, found objects. Of significance to this project and to the notion of aesthetic transference, is that whilst Dionyse does not seek to
represent the particular visual qualities of these objects, they can be understood as signifying emotional values that extend beyond their material and physical qualities. This is an essential aspect of her concepts. Her figures evolve out of an engagement with ancient myth and religious narratives. Rather than demonstrate or dramatise a scene she instead seeks to infer elements of narrative through the manipulation of material, colour and surface. Her themes include transition and metamorphosis, decay or the contradictions and similarities between beauty and death. It is this fascination with the expressive potential of qualities and textures that dominates Dionyse’s figures, rather than qualities of the human body itself.

Process and Method

It is the clay’s physical connection to the earth, accentuated by Dionyse’s process of construction, creating cracks and apertures, which primarily governs the expressive emphasis of her figures. For instance, the title and narrative it suggests is determined by Dionyse after the work is completed, in response to the intensity of the cracks, the properties of colour and the resulting structure of the piece as a whole. Dionyse employs an old etching press to create consistent sheets of clay. She builds a base with interior supports and works upward, constructing a hollow figure, creating the form through the outward pressure of her hands and tools from the inside. However, this process has proved too physically demanding in recent years and she now constructs by building from smaller sections. The surfaces are also affected by the specific properties of the clay body and the application of glaze, including a variety of lead/chrome glazes, which are painted, sprayed and dusted onto the surface. The qualities of the surface are further developed through multi-firing processes.

Understanding of this method of construction was gained by visiting her studio in Ghent, Belgium and interviewing Dionyse. It was further informed by publications on her work which document her approach:

3.12.4 Relationship to Ceramic Medium

The ways in which Dionyse is able to articulate the medium of ceramics in her figures, gives prominence to the qualities of clay and its symbolic connection to earth. In this way, her figures demonstrate a closer expressive alliance to stratification, erosion and decay, than to properties of flesh and skin.

3.12.5 The Subject of the Female Form

The figures are not given titles or accompanying myth or narrative until they are completed. Their identity is determined by the properties of the material as described in 3.12.3, para. 2. Gender is not a primary consideration and the figures are essentially androgynous in appearance.

3.12.6 Relation of Case Study to Theoretical Debate

Of interest to the theoretical debate is the extent to which bodily attributes can be removed before a ceramic figure looses direct connection to the human body. Dionyse’s figures demonstrate essential connections in the activity of perception of properties of the human body. Her ceramic figures, experienced against the background of a viewer’s equivalent textures and gestures, offer no indication of the behaviour of flesh; the ways in which they define the form and structure of the body, or how they respond to movement through creasing or folding. In addition, there is no indication of any dress or clothing to account for this lack of bodily surface. The distortion of surface and the reduction of form is to such an extent that the figure appears as though fossilised or trapped beneath a heavy and earthy surface. It nevertheless remains recognisable as a depiction of a human body.
3.12.7 Relation of Case Study to the Studio-Based Trials

Dionyse's figures appear inanimate and fossilised, lacking in bodily properties and yet recognisable as a portrayal of the human form. The significance of this work to the study is in their demonstration of qualities of surface and form which counter those that contribute to the expression of flesh and skin, thereby providing boundaries within which the studio-based trials could be most effectively developed.

3.13 Analysis: Carmen Dionyse, Mary of Egypt

The relationship between surface and form in Dionyse's figure Mary of Egypt (fig. 41), does not reflect that found on the body in nature. With the exception of the shape of the head, which displays minimal facial features, the form of the body has been reduced to a single rectangular shape with the suggestion of a shoulder on its left side. The surface is also distorted; it bears little visual resemblance to flesh, its qualities do not appear to reflect or change in accordance to the particular areas of the form on which they are placed, and the interaction between surface and form does not suggest any interrelated activity. Consequently, the surface appears inanimate, lifeless and suggestive of fossilisation.

A viewer's bodily perception of this figure can be understood as informed not only by an immediate sensorial experience in response to its texture, but also by connections forged between the body's physical structure and that of the artwork. For instance, the textures that make up its surface also contribute to the construction of the form, finding similarities to the layers that construct the appearance of human flesh and skin. Whilst this structure of the human body can be claimed as scientific knowledge rather than contributing to our immediate perception, this layering can also be experienced as the concealing or revealing of
Fig. 41 (i)
Dionysse, Mary of Egypt, 1999, approx. 76 x 38 cm.

Fig. 41 (ii)
Detail of Mary of Egypt

Fig. 41 (iii)
Back of Mary of Egypt

Fig. 41 (iv)
Detail of Mary of Egypt

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an interior through thinner or thicker areas of flesh, thereby informing our understanding of relative properties in an artwork. Under this premise, the texture of the artwork can be perceived as flesh-like.

3.14 Theoretical Concerns Arising From Case Studies

The significance of the findings from the case studies is that they suggest qualities and interactions that, whilst remaining intimately connected to the human body and speaking of bodily sensations and emotions, also extend beyond the physical or biological. Experience is not reflected or conveyed through the properties of flesh and skin but rather arises from the body’s interaction with qualities external to it. The case study artworks demonstrate forms of expression which interact with and communicate aspects related to the condition of the human body, often through its relationship with external or other properties. For example, emotional states can be conveyed through the application of inappropriate textures (Curneen), psychological strengths or weakness through distortion of scale (Mueck) and decay (Dionyse). To achieve this, they appear to step outside of the close interrelationship of qualities which govern the expression of flesh and skin and call upon a wider range of connections or associations. It could be argued that this can create disparity between the expressive properties at work on the figurative artwork and the human body, which has a greater capacity to prompt narrative and metaphor than qualities pertaining more directly to flesh and skin. Our experience of these works still arises, however, out of a rich and varied range of interactions with the figure, and demonstrates the potential of certain aesthetic properties to participate with and extend the representational and expressive processes whereby the artist speaks of their experiences of the world.
Practical Investigation

4.1 Practical Studio-Based Trials: Introduction

The studio component of the project is undertaken (i) as a means of examining the ways in which ceramic materials can be used to express certain qualities of flesh and skin on the human body and (ii) as a means to demonstrate and extend the outcomes and findings arising from the theoretical debate (ref: 4.1.7).

The investigation is carried out in the form of a series of practical studio-based trials, which offer an immediate and efficient strategy for investigation. The trials are the means by which particular interrelationships between the surface, form, expression and representation of the body are investigated. There are four series of trials which each explore different configurations of these four elements:

First Series: exaggeration of colour and textures found on the body in nature,
Second Series: application of inappropriate textures onto the body,
Third Series: incongruous relationships between the surface, form and the body,
Fourth Series: scale, and the interrelationship of previous trials

It is important to make clear a significant distinction between earlier trials and the fourth and final series. The fourth series has a different function within the project insofar as, the researcher, in its devising and creation is considering the accumulative findings of the previous series, in addition to the influence of scale in our perception of these properties (reference is made to these connections where necessary). At the same time a practical trial, furthering understanding and examination of the expression of flesh and skin on the human body, the fourth series of works also consist of discrete artworks.

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74 For clarification of the approach to the expression of flesh and skin adopted by this project ref: 2.1 (iii), para. 5.
75 For definition of the terms: surface, form, expression and representation according to this project Ref: 2.2 (iii), 2.2.1, 2.3.1 and 2.3.2.
4.1.1 Each Series of Studio-Based Trials is discussed under the same headings. This enables direct comparison and evaluation of results in a structured and organised manner, lending an element of detachment and objectivity to the project which, it can be argued, is important when artists use their own work as the subject for investigation. However, it also encounters instances of repetition in accounting for properties and their interrelationships; a numbered reference will be made where this occurs. The headings are set out below:

(i) Aim
(ii) Key Objectives of the Studio-Based Trials
(iii) Content and Scope of the Studio-Based Trials
(iv) Methods:
   Two-Dimensional/Preparation Work
   Provisional Testing of Ceramic Materials
   Modelling for the Press Mould
(v) Relationship to Ceramic Medium
(vi) Interrelationship Between Trials
(vii) Relationship of Studio-Based Trials to Case Studies

The introduction to each series is then followed by an analysis of each discrete trial figure.

4.1.2 Key Objectives of the Studio-Based Trials

1) To identify and examine in two-dimensional media the qualities and interactions of flesh and skin appropriate to each trial.

2) To investigate the application of these qualities and interactions in ceramic media through a series of provisional tests.

3) To construct a model of the human body or section of the figure that can effectively demonstrate these qualities or interactions on the body.
4) To make a plaster mould and a series of press-moulded figures from this model and find ways in which to integrate qualities and interactions located in the provisional tests, onto the figure.

6) To analyse and describe these qualities and interactions and the ways in which they are significant as aesthetic transferences, forging connections to qualities of flesh and skin.

4.1.3 Content and Scope of the Studio-Based Trials

The range of interactions explored through the trials and through the artworks within the case studies cannot be exhaustive of the possibilities posed by the interrelationship of surface, form, expression and representation of the body. The trials therefore focus upon principal interrelationships which can be understood as giving emphasis to qualities of flesh and skin on the body (see Key Objectives above).

4.1.4 Methods

The methods devised and deployed for the conduct of each series of trials enabled consistency and facilitated comparison. Stages in the conduct of the trials are set out below:

Two-Dimensional/Preparation Work

The preparation or provisional investigation to underpin each trial, enables qualities to be identified, examined or explored more immediately, in significantly less time than working three-dimensionally. These images are not considered as detailed studies for individual figures but rather as a preliminary trawl of qualities and their interactions on the body, exploring a wider context of ideas and lending focus to these qualities before their investigation through ceramic materials and
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processes. These include paintings, drawings, collage and photographs, the subject and material of which prompt connections between flesh and skin and also suggest certain qualities that may not otherwise have been identified using the medium of ceramics alone, for example, the reflective surface of smooth graphite can be understood as containing similar properties to stretch marks on the skin.

Provisional Testing of Ceramic Materials

The application of qualities and interactions identified in the two-dimensional investigation is initially examined through ceramic by means of small test pieces before the qualities and interactions are applied onto a more complete ceramic body. These test pieces consist of two small fragments of a body-mould, one taken from the female belly and one from the breast. These areas of the body are selected as they identify key characteristics of the female form and relate subtle undulations, creases and detail. However, findings arising from the provisional test pieces have limitations as they do not enable demonstration of a relationship of textures or colour to the body as a whole.

Modelling for the Press Mould

The qualities identified in the test pieces were explored in relation to the full body or a larger section of the human form through a press mould. A model was devised for each series in order to give particular emphasis to the qualities or relationships under investigation (examined in greater depth in the analysis of each series). A plaster of paris cast was then taken to facilitate the rapid and efficient production of consistent press moulded forms on which to apply the surfaces and enable their direct comparison. This method was selected as modelling individual figures would have taken too long and differences between each piece have been too variable, resulting in qualities being easily overlooked in analysis. Initially, a
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plaster cast was made directly from the female body of the area identified in the drawings as containing the key properties of flesh and skin textures: the belly, breast and thigh. This immediately raised problems: it confined the body to direct representation, which significantly restricted the extent to which the form could be investigated in relation to surface qualities. Its size was also difficult to replicate for each test. The decision was then taken to devise a different figure for each series. The description of Stage 2 in each series of key objectives, therefore, will bear similarity in word but differ in practice (ref: 4.2.2).

Analysis

The essential interactions at work in each series are conditioned by their individual aim (ref: 4.1.2). The outcomes of each trial figure however, are not predetermined. Each trial figure is analysed in sequence: stating its aim, the ways in which the aim relates to the previous trial figure and details of the methods deployed for its development. The trial figure is then analysed, with key points identified, in relation to the overriding aim of the series, the aim of this specific trial and the project as a whole (principally its range of possible aesthetic transferences and how these properties can be understood as suggestive of flesh and skin).

Each series is then discussed as a whole under the heading Theoretical Concerns. This enabled comparison to take place between each trial figure and significant properties identified and addressed before progressing onto the next trial.

The outcome of the trials is not set out in advance and simply given form in the practical investigation but rather a significant aspect of the studio-based trials is the way in which they generate and develop ideas.
4.1.5 Relationship to Ceramic Medium

Ceramics was selected for this project as the medium that most appropriately lends itself to the suggestion of qualities of flesh and skin. The intrinsic qualities of the substance - its texture, malleability and behaviour - offer the expressive potential to forge strong connections and associations to the body. The ways in which clay can be manipulated to reflect the skin's pigment and textures are of particular importance. For example, by suspending colour in multiple layers on its surface, a sense of depth or interior space to the body is created. It also responds to the pull of gravity in a similar way to flesh by stretching, folding and gentle cracking of the surface, echoing the creases in skin. But most significant to this project is the fact that the medium can allow both the illusion of depth and actual textural depth to be rendered onto the one figure as an integral part of its material qualities, rather than merely applied on to its surface. These are properties, it is arguable, not found in any other medium with such versatility and faculty for manipulation.

4.1.6 Subject of the Female Form

The female form is selected as the particular body structure for each of the trials as it is normally fleshier than the male form, and as a result, offers a greater range of skin qualities. The belly, breasts and thighs are selected as areas which offer key properties and combinations of texture and pigment on the female form. These areas can also appear to increase in texture and colour in response to the movement of the body, thus enabling the artwork to offer the largest possible network of bodily associations and correspondences of flesh and skin to the viewer. The fact that the researcher is female and therefore has direct and intimate knowledge of these particular qualities of flesh and skin, also influenced this decision.
4.1.7 Relationship of Studio-Based Trials to Theoretical Debate

The trials give form to and objectify both Collingwood's and Merleau-Ponty's theories on expression in art. It is important here to reiterate their principal theoretical stance: both theorists speak of bodily experience of an artwork, through the imagination (according to Collingwood) and the body (according to Merleau-Ponty) allowing a viewer, by virtue of having similar if not the identical realm of human sensibilities, access to properties laid down by an artist (ref: 2.1(ii)).

The practical studio-based trials demonstrate how perceptual relationships can be developed to achieve specific aesthetic qualities suggestive of flesh and skin. Each series of trials examines a different network of interrelationships that can arise from a viewer's interaction with an artwork, in particular, the extent to which a viewer's own body's textures and gestures can inform and influence their experience.

The development of each trial and series builds upon these findings, leading to the production of artworks in the fourth and final series which, it is considered by the researcher, articulate the closest interrelationship of properties in evoking specific sensations or emotions connected to flesh and skin.

4.1.8 Relationship of Studio-Based Trials to Case Studies

The artworks evaluated through the case studies establish the limitations within which the trials are conducted. The artworks selected are considered in terms of the ways in which their qualities and interactions can be suggestive of bodily qualities as the artists do not, with the exception of Saville, appear to specifically examine qualities of flesh and skin. In this way, they contribute to the project by providing a wider range of interactions on the body than do the trials, and are

77 These claims can be made of Saville's artwork according to literature documenting her work, specifically the catalogue accompanying her exhibition Territories: Jenny Saville's Paintings. Gagosian Gallery, 2002.
considered as extending the boundaries within which qualities can be exaggerated or distorted yet still invite connection to bodily sensations. Examples are high exaggeration of texture (Dionyse), predominant representational detail (Mueck) and the reduction of qualities on the surface of the body (Vermeersch). The work of these artists also had a direct influence on the trials as they share certain properties and interrelationships, for example, Jenny Saville’s painting technique is a direct influence on the exaggeration and distortion of pigment in the first series and Claire Curneen’s application of inappropriate qualities onto the body, a direct influence on the second. These connections are documented in the analysis of each trial.

4.1.9 Interrelationship Between Trials

Each of the four series of trials explores different configurations of surface, form, expression and representation of the human body. In this respect, one series does not depend upon the completion of the previous series, although since they are carried out in succession, the findings of one, shapes the way in which the following series is devised and conducted. As a body of work, the trials can be understood as working towards increasing articulation of the ways in which emphasis can be given to qualities of flesh and skin. This is particularly in evidence when comparing the first series, in which the expressive potential of a single line is explored and the fourth series, where discrete interactions are placed in relation to the wider context of the body as a whole.
4.2 First Series: Exaggeration of Colour and Texture: Introduction

4.2.1 Aims of the First Series

To explore and examine the exaggeration and distortion of a range of qualities in close visual correspondence with colour and textures found on the body in nature; to focus attention on particular qualities of flesh and skin; to create relationships within the work which in turn become significant as aesthetic transferences.

4.2.2 Key Objectives of the First Series

Stage 1.

Through drawing and painting from a life model: to identify and analyse characteristic texture and pigment of female flesh and skin (for example, cellulite and stretch marks) and to examine ways in which exaggeration and distortion can emphasize these qualities; use the findings to inform the provisional testing of ceramic materials.

Stage 2

Using small plaster casts of sections of the female body from which a series of press moulded ceramic pieces are produced: to investigate the application of colours and textures identified in 4.2.2 stage 1 onto their surface in ceramic media and use findings to inform the trial series.

Stage 3

Using a model of the female form and resulting press moulded pieces: to apply the qualities and relationships identified in 4.2.2 stage 2 to examine and develop a range of ways in which the application of exaggerated and distorted texture and colour can give particular emphasis to qualities of flesh and skin.

Stage 4

To identify interactions at work in the trials which are significant as aesthetic transferences, to show how they are structured by perceptual relationships as set
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out by Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty and use these findings to inform the series of figures.

4.2.3 Content and Scope of the First Series

This first series of practical studio-based trials is divided into two distinct yet interrelated properties: texture and pigment. Whilst inextricable in nature, their separation within this research is considered important in lending focus to their specific qualities and the particular ways in which they can invite connections to qualities of flesh and skin. As both properties were investigated in a similar manner in two-dimensional work, test pieces and created in relation to the same press-moulded figure, they are considered as two parts of the same trial. They are introduced together here with distinctions made where appropriate and their individual qualities discussed separately in theoretical comments.

4.2.4 Methods

Two-Dimensional/Preparation Work

What arose as significant from this initial investigation, was the importance of placing textures onto particular areas on the body and exaggerating the way in which they appear to respond to its shape and movement, for example, accentuating creases across the belly or heightening the smooth, reflective surface of stretch marks which radiate outward from around the breast (fig. 42).

Paintings were then made from these drawings which examined how colour could emphasize the expressive potential of these interactions. In particular, it was found that the surface could suggest thick or thinner areas of skin and imply a sense of depth to the form, emphasizing the skin's relationship to qualities internal to the body (ref: 2.6.1).
Fig. 42 Two Dimensional / Preparatory Work

Fig. 42 (i)
Preparation pencil drawing of female form, 2001, approx. 40 x 20 cm.

Fig. 42 (ii)
Preparation oil painting of female form, 2001, approx. 40 x 20 cm.

Fig. 42 (iii)
Preparation pencil drawing of female form, 2001, approx. 40 x 20 cm.

Fig. 42 (iv)
Preparation oil painting of female form, 2001, approx. 40 x 20 cm.

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A range of small test pieces was undertaken on which to explore the application of these qualities and interactions in ceramic media (fig. 43). However, it soon became apparent that the size and area of the body covered by these test pieces severely limited the extent to which their interrelationship could be explored. The test pieces, therefore, were employed predominantly to investigate the application of textures and colours in ceramic medium. For example, various intensities of creases and folds in skin can be exaggerated by dipping tissue or muslin into liquid clay and pulling it into creases over the surface. In addition, thicker or thinner areas of skin can be exaggerated by layering colour with stains and liquid clay onto the form. The interrelationship of these qualities with the body is investigated in greater depth in the trial analysis.

Modelling for the Press Mould

The figure onto which these qualities were applied was first modelled in clay before making a plaster cast and then the press-moulded figures used for the actual series of trials. The areas identified in the two-dimensional work as containing qualities suggestive of interactions between the surface and form - the belly, breast and thigh - are subtly exaggerated in order to accentuate the expressive potential of their relationship. The figure appears to be in proportion, in that the elements of the fragment fit proportionally into one another, but the breadth of the thigh is extended, the belly appears bloated with any slight undulations overly formed and the breast, rounded and pert. This distension of the body almost completely removes any subtle creases or markings so that it is the surface alone that appears to speak about its particular properties. In addition, it was considered important to include an area of greater detail to enable the surface to demonstrate a greater variety of skin properties over the figure as a whole and this was offered in the
Fig. 43 Provisional Testing of Materials

**fig. 43 (i)**
Test tile, 2001, St Thomas clay, engobes, 8 x 12 cm.

**fig. 43 (ii)**
Test tile, 2001, St Thomas clay, engobes, terrasilicata 8 x 12 cm.

**fig. 43 (iii)**
Test tile, 2001, St Thomas clay, Porcelain slip, 8 x 12 cm.

**fig. 43 (iv)**
Test tile, 2001, St Thomas clay, engobes, tissue paper, 8 x 12 cm.

**fig. 43 (v)**
Test tile, 2001, St Thomas clay, engobes, 8 x 12 cm.

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form of a hand with articulated fingers, standing in contrast to the distinctly rounded shape of the body.

4.2.5 Relationship to Ceramic Medium

This series also examines the ways in which the ceramic medium has properties that strengthen the suggestion of specific properties of flesh and skin, in particular properties of texture and colour (ref: Provisional Testing of Ceramic Materials).

4.2.6 Relationships Within First Series of Trials

Through the figures in this series, a range of different ways in which the exaggeration and distortion of texture and colour can suggest qualities of flesh and skin are explored, rather than working toward one overriding quality. In being carried out successively, they are informed by the preceding trial figure and seek to reinforce aspects that suggest qualities of flesh and skin and counter those which undermine this connection. The independent investigation of texture and colour are also brought together in a full figure in trial 1:7, to examine their interaction on the body.

4.2.7 Relationship of First Series to Case Studies

The trials are strongly influenced by the paintings of the artist Jenny Saville, and in particular the ways in which she manipulates the paint to behave in a similar way to flesh and skin (ref: 2.3.2, para. 5). This first series explores the exaggeration and distortion of skin’s textures and colours in a similar way to Saville, and examines the way in which their application onto certain areas on the body can suggest interactions, emphasizing particular qualities of flesh and skin.
4.3 Analysis: Part One

Trial 1:1

In essence, this figure serves as the control for all of the trial figures. It is an overtly representational figure in that there is comparatively little departure from the form and appearance of the human body. Different textures are applied onto the figure to mimic the variety of textures found on the body, for example, layering tissue paper and liquid clay to create the raised lines of flesh over veins and creases (fig. 44) and gathering tissue paper and liquid clay together to build-up the rougher area of the nipple. It is from the representational links between the trial figure’s surface and the surface of the human body demonstrated here, that all subsequent exaggerations and distortions are made and compared.

Trial 1:2

In trial 1:2, qualities of flesh and skin are exaggerated and distorted. In particular, the lines and planes on the skin’s surface are exaggerated in order to test the appropriateness of these exaggerations in emphasizing the ways in which qualities of the skin can appear to respond to the form of the body. For example, the jointedness of the fingers is built up by modelling the clay with a palette knife (fig. 48), the belly is divided into a series of planes by a sculpting action with a modelling tool (fig. 47) and lines are carved on the breast using the tool in a sweeping action (fig. 46).

This trial figure, it is argued, begins to demonstrate that the exaggeration and distortion of skin’s texture can suggest ways in which it responds to the form of the body and, most particularly, that there is a relationship between movement on the surface and movement in the form. This planing of the belly, for example, can suggest the vibration of flesh and the sweeping lines can suggest the vertical 78

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78 This project examines the properties of flesh and skin in themselves and in their interrelationship with the body. For further explanation of this theoretical stance ref: 2.1(iii), para. 5.
Fig. 44 (i)

Trial 1:1, 2001, St Thomas clay, engobes, tissue dipped in slip, 40 cm.

Fig. 44 (i)

Detail of Trial 1

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Fig. 44 (i)

Detail of Trial 1:1, before engobes were added.

Fig. 44 (i)

Detail of Trial 1:1 before engobes were added.
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Fig. 45
Trial 1:2, 2001, St Thomas clay, 40 cm.

Fig. 46
Detail of Trial 1:2

Fig. 47
Detail of Trial 1:2

Fig. 48
Detail of Trial 1:2
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hanging of the breast. In this way, the exaggerating and distorting of surface texture can be interpreted not simply as aberrant, but rather, seen as constituting a relationship between the surface and the form of the body.

**Trial 1:3**

In trial 1:3 only one quality of line on the skin’s surface is exaggerated in order to focus more particularly on its expressive potential than those rendered in trial 1:2, in particular, the ways in which its properties can suggest skin’s response to the form of the body. For example, the same quality of line radiates outwards from the nipple over the breast to suggest stretch marks (fig. 50), curves outwards from the waist over the belly to describe folds on the waist (fig. 51) and runs between the inner thigh and belly to infer creases on the groin. The quality of line is created by laying muslin dipped into liquid clay onto the figure’s surface and pulling it into creases and folds over the form.

This trial shows that the exaggeration of this particular line on the skin’s surface can invite connection to different properties dependent on where it is placed on the body, as our understanding of it is influenced by the ways in which it contributes to the reading of the form. However, this can create contradictions as the lines can appear as if in response to particular momentum or intensity of movement in particular parts of the body. For example, the same line can infer a slow gravitational pull on the breast, stretching the skin around it and more temporary and immediate folds and creases across the waist and groin. Contradictions can also arise from the surface suggesting movement in the body when the body is depicted as relatively static. Thus, pursuing exaggerations which reflect movement, when movement is germane to particular body parts, must suggest unified activity in the body. This is explored in trial 1:4.
Fig. 49
Trial 1:3, 2001, St Thomas clay, muslin dipped in slip, 40 cm.

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Fig. 50
Detail of Trial 1:3

Fig. 51
Detail of Trial 1:3

Fig. 52
Detail of Trial 1:3
Trial 1:4

In trial 1:4, both the surface and form of the body is exaggerated and distorted in order to show how the skin responds to unified movement, in this instance, a certain sense of swelling. This is suggested by modelling the form as rounded and distended and then cutting a succession of incisions into its surface, which open up into deep indentations across its volume when the form is pushed outwards from behind.

This trial figure begins to demonstrate that the exaggeration of both surface and form can suggest a more unified interaction between them, than the exaggeration of surface alone. However, it also raises the significant point that in nature, flesh and skin respond to the form in a very particular way and it is important that relationships depicted on the body reflect this. Trial 1:4 (figs. 51 to 56) does not achieve this, because the outward swelling of the breast or belly would not usually be matched with deep indentations marking its surface, as they can infer contradictory types of activity. In suggesting that qualities of flesh and skin arise out of certain interactions with the body, consideration must be given to the ways in which qualities interrelate on the body in nature and the expressive values at work within that relationship.

4.4 Theoretical Concerns

The exaggeration and distortion of texture is employed as a means to explore properties of flesh and skin, as it allows emphasis to be given to particular aspects, for example, accentuating the quality of line created by folding or creasing the skin. What goes on to become significant, however, is not the texture alone, so much as its perceived interaction with the form of the body. This is governed by its placement onto specific areas and the way in which it appears to reflect the body's shape and movement. The trials demonstrate that the direction and
Fig. 53

Trial 1:4, 2001, St Thomas clay, 40 cm.

Fig. 54

Detail of Trial 1:4

Fig. 55

Detail of Trial 1:4

Fig. 56

Detail of Trial 1:4

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momentum of skin vibrating, creasing, stretching and folding can be structured by particular formations of lines and indentations on the surface of the body. The trials examine this fundamental connection between movement on the surface and movement in the body, as skin does not merely cover the body but reflects aspects of its activity, creating the conditions under which qualities of flesh and skin can usually be felt. The suggestion of movement in these figures, therefore, refers to our lived or living experience of flesh and skin rather than merely representing its qualities. In Merleau-Pontian terms, this activity can also be considered as a bodily state of being which discloses certain emotional conditions or inclinations, for example, feelings of stress or discomfort often felt in response to that activity. It is extremely important in pursuing specific qualities of flesh and skin, to consider the ways in which they respond to the body in nature as dependent on a very particular range of interconnected and unified relationships - such as the bending and straightening of a joint and the corresponding stretching or creasing of skin. A lack of unified activity between the surface and form, or an interaction which does not usually exist on the body in nature, can too easily undermine the figure's suggestion of bodily properties. Whilst the suggestion of movement and activity does not become the aim of these trials, it is borne in mind within the outcomes from preceding trials.
4.5 Analysis: Part Two

Trial 1:5

In trial 1:5 the layering of pigment over the surface of the body is exaggerated to suggest thicker or thinner areas of skin, in order to extend the responsive relationship between the skin and the form of the body located in the textured figures. Differences in thickness are suggested by the layering of various pigments onto the body, applied with a brush.

Exaggerating the layers of skin on the body can appear to indicate the ways in which skin reflects qualities internal to the body, for example, its response to the skeletal structure by stretching thinly over areas or collecting in creases, and reflecting the colour of capillaries and veins from red to blue (figs. 57 and 58). However, it is important that these qualities are arranged in such a way as to give emphasis to a distinct quality or interaction with the body rather than merely accentuating the shape of the form. The surface of 1:5 has the effect of flattening the volume of the body, as light can fall onto dark areas and shadow onto highlights. The organisation or arrangement of qualities is explored further in trial 1:6.

Trial 1:6

In trial 1:6, the appearance of opaque or translucent areas of colour and their distribution over the body are exaggerated in order to show how the qualities of skin can be understood as reflecting a particular movement internal to the body. The translucency of colour and the process of layering is achieved by suspending the pigment in extremely fine particled liquid clay. Variations in the thickness of layers of colour is determined by the method of application: a brush allows intense deposits of pigment, whereas a spray can be used to distribute pigments more evenly.
Fig. 57

Trial 1:5. 2001, St Thomas clay, engobes, 40 cm.

Fig. 58

Detail of Trial 1:5

Fig. 59

Detail of Trial 1:5

Expression of Flesh and Skin

Fig. 60

Detail of Trial 1:5

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Fig. 61

Trial 1:6, 2001, St Thomas, engobes, terrasigilata, 40 cm.

Fig. 62

Detail of Trial 1:6

Fig. 63

Detail of Trial 1:6

Expression of Flesh and Skin

Fig. 64

Detail of Trial 1:6

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This trial figure begins to demonstrate how the skin expresses internal processes, both in terms of how it reacts to the structure of the form and to the movement of fluids in the body, in particular that of blood towards or away from certain areas. These properties are suggested by emphasizing the varying thickness of skin as it stretches or creases over the body and thereby appears to reveal or conceal internal movement. This is achieved by exaggerating the gradation of the opaque and translucent colours of skin over the body, for example, from the solid area of pale ochre over the chest to thinner, more detailed layers of darker hue around the volume of the breast (fig. 62). In this way, it can suggest that the breast is swelling outwards, stretching the skin around it and that blood is being drawn toward its base.

**Trial 1:7**

In trial 1:7, the exaggeration of texture and the exaggeration of pigment are brought together onto a full figure in order to more accurately express qualities of flesh and skin and to offer a larger network of bodily associations and correspondences.

The particular emphasis suggested by the exaggeration of texture and the exaggeration of pigment on the figure alter slightly when brought together onto the same form, as they create further interactions in relation to each other. For example, the stretch marks and gravitational pull suggested by the sweeping marks over the breast are extended and reinforced by the movement of colour towards its base, denoted by increasingly darker layers of hue. However, whilst these interactions on trial 1:7 do not contradict one another in the same way as the textures in trials 1.3 and 1.4, too many qualities are exaggerated to an equal or similar degree which can undermine their emphasis. There is no one, overriding sensation. We are required to experience the suggestion of weight and a downward pull on the breast (fig. 67), the billowing of the belly (fig. 68) and the stretching of...
Fig. 65

Trial 1:7, 2001, St Thomas clay, terrasigilata, engobes, 58 cm.

Fig. 66

Detail of Trial 1:7

Fig. 67

Detail, Trial 1:7

Fig. 68

Detail, Trial 1:7

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skin on the thighs. If both colour and texture are to be applied onto the same figure, methods must be deployed which give emphasis to one, overriding property or interaction of flesh and skin.

4.6 Theoretical Concerns

These trials exaggerate and distort a range of colours and distribution of opaque and translucent qualities in close visual connection with those found on the body in nature. They begin to demonstrate how qualities can be organised in such a way that their tendency to move forward or recede in the activity of our perception can suggest interactions between the surface and the form of the body. Red, for example, can appear as though pushing downwards at the base of the breast from beneath a solid ochre (fig. 61), the reflective surface of the belly can appear as though swelling outwards (fig. 63) and we can understand the organisation of qualities as describing the feeling of skin stretching - pulled taught over a distended form.

This arrangement of colour can also suggest the way in which skin reflects movement internal to the body. This is important, not only because external lighting easily undermines qualities which only respond to the shape of a three-dimensional form, but also because qualities of flesh and skin are reflective of internal movement and this interaction has significant expressive potential. For example, the appearance of blood rushing towards the base of the breast can suggest at the same time physical tenderness and emotional discomfort or irritation. In this way, as with the textured figures, the suggestion of movement does not simply refer to the literal activity of the body, but, to movement as a state of bodily being which discloses certain expressive and emotional conditions or inclinations. Coupled with its ability to suggest certain physical movements, colour is particularly evocative in prompting these bodily conditions or attitudes,
Practical Investigation

finding close connection to both emotional states and physical sensations.
4.7 Second Series: Inappropriate Textures: Introduction

4.7.1 Aims of the Second Series
This second series of trials examines the suggestion that the application of inappropriate qualities onto the body can evoke certain sensations associated with flesh and skin, in particular the feeling of a shiver.

4.7.2 Key Objectives of the Second Series

Stage 1
Using small plaster casts of sections of the female body from which a series of press moulded ceramic pieces are produced: to examine the application of a range of different textures in contrast with those found on the body in nature, to analyse their effectiveness in conveying aspects of the sensation of a shiver and to use their findings to inform 4.7.2 stage 2.

Stage 2
Through photomontage: to identify and analyse the composition of textures identified in 4.7.2 stage 1 on the human form, to examine the ways in which their interrelationship might trigger aspects of the sensation of a shiver, to use the findings to inform this trial series.

Stage 3
Through the use of a model of a full figure, moulding and the resulting pressed forms: to examine and develop a range of ways in which the application of qualities and interrelationships identified in 4.7.2 stage 1 and 2 can give particular emphasis to the sensation of a shiver.

Stage 4
See ref. 4.2.3
4.7.3 Content and Scope of the Second Series

A shiver is a particularly fertile flesh and skin sensation in regard to aesthetic transferences, since it can prompt a variety of feelings and emotional states connected with skin on the human body. Inappropriate qualities were applied to evoke these experiences as inappropriateness is a principal means of allowing ceramic qualities to generate expressive aesthetic transferences between one another, as opposed to being taken as mimetic representations of the body. Whilst inappropriate qualities do not go on to become significant for this project, they are considered as part of a wider range of interactions with the human form, which can lend emphasis to the expression of particular qualities of flesh and skin.

4.7.4 Methods

Provisional Testing of Ceramic Materials

A range of test pieces was undertaken to explore the ways in which different textures in contrast with flesh and skin may suggest particular aspects of our experience of a shiver (fig. 69). Three particular aspects of this sensation were examined:

(i) the feeling of skin prickling or tingling over the body, explored through the exaggeration of raised pimples over the surface;

(ii) the feeling of a shiver radiating outward from the spine in waves across the shoulders and the rest of the body, explored by overlaying successive plates of clay onto the surface;

(iii) the sensation cutting through the body to our nerves, explored by different intensities of cracks over the surface.

These test pieces revealed that the potential of these qualities to express sensations of a shiver are forged by their contrast or inappropriateness in relation to the whole of the body. This is developed further in the Two-Dimensional Expression of Flesh and Skin.
Fig. 69 Provisional Testing of ceramic Materials

Test tiles, 2002, Porcelain clay, approx. 6 x 4 cm.

Test tiles, 2002, Porcelain clay, approx. 10 x 5 cm.
Practical Investigation

Two-Dimensional/Preparatory Work

A series of collages were undertaken (fig. 70) which examine the application of these textures onto a female form, allowing consideration of their relationship with the body before application onto a ceramic figure. Photocopied images of the test pieces were transposed onto a photograph of the female back, the area selected as the part of the body on which the sensation of a shiver feels most prominent. What arose as significant from these images was the direct connection found between the organisation of the texture over the body and its expressive potential. For instance, the properties of a texture placed onto areas considered vulnerable or sensitive, such as the spine, can feel more prominent than on other areas, as the viewer is prompted to consider their relationship to their own form. It was also considered that the more exaggerated the texture or concentrated its grouping, the more intense the sensation suggested on the body. In this way, the collages directly informed the series of trials which followed.

Modelling for the Press Mould

The researcher's perception of the experience of a shiver influenced the type of body form on which the textures are placed. As a shiver can be felt over the whole of the body rather than in one particular area, it was considered more appropriate to construct a press mould of the whole body, rather than a fragment of it. A shiver also feels as though it travels over the surface of the skin rather than appearing to affect the body in any significant way and so a pose was selected that was not immediately out of keeping with the experience of a shiver, for example, it is not a posture associated with dynamism but instead a passive state which is more readily associated with a shiver. A decision was made to reduce the form and detail of the body to a basic shape, to act as a contrast to the activity
Fig. 70 Two Dimensional / Preparatory Work

Fig. 70 (i)
Preparation collages, 2002, mixed media, 20 x 30 cm.

Fig. 70 (ii)
Preparation collages, 2002, mixed media, 20 x 30 cm.

Fig. 70 (iii)
Preparation collages, 2002, mixed media, 20 x 30 cm.
Expression of Flesh and Skin

Fig. 70 (iv)
Preparation collages, 2002, mixed media, 20 x 30 cm.

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suggested by the surface. This lent emphasis to the soft and rounded contours of the body to heighten the contrast posed by the inappropriate textures.

4.7.5 Relationship to Ceramic Medium

This series specifically exploited the malleability of ceramics, that it can be modelled and retain the form of a range of textures in addition to offering its own inherent textures in both liquid and plastic form (see provisional test tiles under Methods 4.7.3).

4.7.6 Relationships Within the Second Series

The figures in this series explore three different aspects of our experience of a shiver rather than working toward one, overriding quality. However, as with the first series (ref. 4.2.7), in being carried out successively, each trial figure is influenced by the preceding trial figure and attempts to reinforce aspects that suggest qualities of flesh and skin and counter those which undermine this connection.

4.7.7 Relationship of Second Series to Case Studies

This series of trials is governed by the suggestion that placing contrasting qualities in relation to the body can prompt connection to sensations of flesh and skin. This approach is strongly influenced by Curneen’s figurative work and her placement of contrasting textures on the human form.
4.8 Analysis:

**Trial 2:1**

In trial 2:1 (fig. 71), a highly reflective transparent glaze is applied onto the surface of the ceramic figure, in order to test the effectiveness of this inappropriate texture in suggesting the sensation of a shiver travelling through the skin and over the body. The surface is created by spraying the white porcelain figure with a thick transparent glaze.

This trial figure can be understood as suggesting the sensation of a shiver travelling through the skin by inviting a sense of movement over the surface of the body; as light reflects off the glaze, the figure appears to be covered in a series of angled surfaces and as light shifts or we move around the body these angles appear to move, inferring an overall sense of activity. What arises as significant however, is that this movement does not suggest the activity of a shiver; a shiver feels as though it emanates from the spine and spreads out over the back to the rest of the body, whereas the sense of movement suggested by this trial is irregular and seemingly irrespective of the form. In using inappropriate textures on the body to suggest the sensation of a shiver, attention must be given to its interaction with the body, its activity over the form and its orientation, momentum and emphasis in relation to the body. This is examined in the trials which follow.

**Trial 2:2**

In trial 2:2, a multitude of short pricks are applied onto the figure in order to invite the sensation of a shiver prickling the skin (fig. 75). To give greater emphasis to areas of the body on which this sensation can be felt most prominently, the pricks are rendered longer, for example, over the shins (fig. 78), the back of the hands and the spine. This texture was created by rolling small pieces of clay between thumb and fingers and attaching them to the figure with liquid clay.
Fig. 71

**Trial 2:1.** 2002. Porcelain clay, transparent glaze, 32 cm.

Fig. 72

Back of **Trial 2:1**

Fig. 73

Side of **Trial 2:1**

Fig. 74

Detail of **Trial 2:1**

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Fig. 75

Trial 2:2, 2002, Porcelain clay, transparent glaze, 32 cm.

Fig. 76

Back of Trial 2:2.

Fig. 77

Side of Trial 2:2

Fig. 78

Detail of Trial 2:2

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The particular contrast of this texture to the viewer’s soft flesh can invite certain connections to the sensation of a shiver, by prompting them to consider what it may feel like to have a multitude of short pricks covering their skin. This effect, however, can be easily undermined by the texture finding connection to body hair, which is accentuated by its variations in length, as this reflects areas on the body where hair may be shorter or longer in nature. What arises as significant from this figure, is that in using inappropriate qualities to suggest qualities of flesh and skin, where these qualities forge too strong a visual association with other aspects of the body, they can actually acquire an appropriateness and their capacity to evoke the emotional or psychological elements of a sensation such as a shiver, is thus reduced.

**Trial 2:3**

In order to remove the strong connection the prickles have to bodily hair, in trial 2:3 they have been extended in length until they find closer connection to a multitude of undulating tentacles protruding from the body (fig. 79). Emphasis is given to the particular activity of a shiver by only covering the front of the figure in full tentacles, to suggest the body physically entering into or coming out of an experience (fig. 81). These protrusions were created by extruding plastic clay through a 5 mm dia. nozzle and attaching them in 75 mm lengths onto the figure using liquid clay.

In a similar way to trial 2:2, these protrusions can be understood as prompting us to consider its sensation in relation to our own skin, suggesting the tickling or irritating sensation of a shiver. However, whilst these protrusions are more exaggerated than in trial 2:2 to avoid connections to bodily qualities, emphasis is again undermined by their properties too readily finding other connections, this time to references outside of the body, for example to flames,
Fig. 79

Trial 2:3, 2002, Porcelain clay, transparent glaze, 32 cm.

Fig. 80

Back of Trial 2:3

Fig. 81

Side of Trial 2:3

Expression of Flesh and Skin

Fig. 82

Detail of Trial 2:3
worms or the tentacles of sea anemones. The minimal application of protrusions onto the figure’s back appears to reinforce this connection, as its properties do not appear to belong to, or be a part of the body. What arises as significant from this trial is the importance of inviting an interaction between the surface and the form of the body, in order that inappropriate qualities do not attach themselves too strongly with qualities outside of the body. This is developed further in trials 2:4 and 2:5.

**Trial 2:1, 2 and 3**

In this trial, figures 2:1, 2:2 and 2:3 have been placed together. This is in order to demonstrate the ways in which collectively, they can give emphasis to the qualities of a shiver. They can be understood in either direction, moving from a smooth surface (fig. 71) to sharp edges (fig. 75) to tentacles (fig. 79) or vice versa.

Collectively, the interrelationship of these figures suggests a different emphasis than that achieved with the individual pieces. In particular, their succession lends a more distinct orientation and sense of direction to our experience of the work, as their qualities can be understood as stages in the progression of one overriding experience. This momentum can draw our attention away from the disparity between their surface and form, and also appear to lessen the space within which to find connections to individual features, as they are now viewed predominantly in succession and in relation to each other. However, this can also reduce the particular ways in which these features can prompt connections to a shiver, for example, lessening the suggestion of a shiver tickling or irritating the skin, invited by the long tentacles in trial 2:3. Collectively, these figures can be understood as lending stronger emphasis to the suggestion of an increase or release of tension or stress.
Practical Investigation

**Trial 2:4**

In trial 2:4, the figure is covered in a variety of different surfaces in order to emphasize the sensation of a shiver in relation to the form of the body. In particular, the feeling of a shiver emanating from the spine is invited by running sharp prickles along its length (fig. 86) and the feeling of it radiating outwards in waves across the shoulders is suggested by laying a succession of flat undulating plates over the back and shoulders (fig. 85) and gradually reducing their depth over the rest of the body. This surface was created by the overlaying of successive applications of liquid clay onto the body, determining its position, thickness and texture through precise direction of compressed air over the figure’s surface.

Whilst a particular emphasis or momentum of sensation can be suggested by placing different textures onto particular areas of the body, they still do not appear as an integral part of the form. Although a lack of integration is evident in the previous trials in this series, the detachment of the texture from the body can be understood as an essential part of their expressive value, as emphasizing the inappropriate nature of their texture set against the surface of the body. This is not as important in trial 2:4. In fact, the possibility of detaching the texture from the body, particularly apparent over the shoulders (fig. 85), undermines its emphasis, which is to suggest the movement of skin itself. Qualities appearing as separate from the body fail to suggest the activity of skin moving or a shiver emanating from within the body and this prompted the development of methods by which to further integrate the surface and the form in trial 2:12.

**Trial 2:5**

In trial 2:5, the whole of the figure is covered in various intensities of cracks in order to suggest the feeling of a shiver emanating from within the body and cutting through the flesh to the nerves (fig. 87). This texture was created by first pressing
Fig. 83

Fig. 84
Detail of back of head Trial 2:4

Fig. 85
Detail of side Trial 2:4

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Fig. 86
Detail of back Trial 2:4

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Fig. 87

**Trial 2.5**, 2002, Porcelain clay, engobes, 32 cm.

Fig. 88

Back of **Trial 2.5**

Fig. 89

Side of **Trial 2.5**

Fig. 90

Detail of **Trial 2.5**

Expression of Flesh and Skin

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plastic clay into the body mould, allowing it to dry and encouraging it to splinter, before applying liquid clay onto the inner surface to reinforce the construction of the figure as a whole.

Whilst the sensation invited by this texture can appear to derive from within the body, its inappropriateness in relation to the human form still forges connections to qualities outside the body, in particular to decay and psychological states of fragility. Pursuing qualities not usually found on the body in nature to speak about sensations of flesh and skin, relies upon their capacity when placed onto the body, to generate particular associations and connections. However, these are too readily attracted to qualities outside of the body. If the relationship between surface and form is to speak about qualities of flesh and skin, then it must be through a close relationship to bodily properties.

4.9 Theoretical Concerns

The expressive capacity of these ceramic figures can be understood as arising from a fundamental disparity between the properties of the texture and qualities of flesh and skin which can prompt a viewer to consider what these qualities may feel like if placed onto their own skin. Experience of these textures can extend further by forging connections between the body and the textures’ placement onto particular areas and the intensity of their grouping. In this way, as with the first series of trials, the surface has the capacity to suggest a specific orientation, direction and emphasis of activity over the form.

It is also the fundamental disparity of these textures with the actual qualities of the body, that can undermine their suggestion of particular qualities of flesh and skin. The passive form and the active surfaces have quite different expressive qualities and it is primarily this contrast which gives rise to experience.
of the work rather than connections made to qualities of flesh and skin. The greater the discernible leap between expressive qualities on the one hand and flesh and skin on the other, the more dominant their contrast becomes, which can lead to notions of narrative to explain their relationship and this is not the remit of the project.

What arises as most significant from these trials is not that inappropriate textures cannot be used to prompt certain bodily sensations, as they are effective in prompting certain tensions or frictions on the body (as explored in the third and fourth series) but rather the importance of creating a sense of unity in the body. This can forge interactions that speak about the interconnectedness of sensations of flesh and skin, rather than sensations imposed from the outside. This is examined and developed in the third and fourth series of trials.
4.10 Third Series: Incongruous Relationships: Introduction

4.10.1 Aims of Third Series

To give emphasis to particular interactions of flesh and skin through the setting up of incongruous relationships between the surface, the form and the body. This series of trials works on two levels: (i) further examination of the suggestion demonstrated in the first series, that qualities of flesh and skin are constituted by and arise out of a series of interactions within the body, for example, their reflection of internal processes and their response to movement; and (ii) an investigation of the ways in which these relationships can be made incongruous in order to give emphasis to specific qualities of flesh and skin.

4.10.2 Key Objectives of Third Series

Stage 1

To identify a range of qualities from the first and second series of trials that most effectively demonstrates the ways in which qualities of flesh and skin can appear to reflect movement or sensations in the body. To use the findings to inform 4.10.2 stage 2.

Stage 2

Through photomontage: to compose qualities identified in 4.10.2 stage 1 on areas of the female form in order to examine the ways in which incongruous relationships can lend particular emphasis to their properties. To use the findings to inform 4.10.2 stage 3.

Stage 3

Using a model of a section of the female form and the resulting press moulded pieces: to examine and develop further ways in which incongruous relationships can emphasize interactions between flesh and skin and movement or sensation within the body.
Stage 4

See ref: 4.2.2.

4.10.3 Content and Scope of the Third Series

This series of trials examines and demonstrates ways in which interactions on the body can be exaggerated or distorted as well as discrete qualities of surface and form, in order to give emphasis to particular aspects of flesh and skin.

4.10.4 Methods

Two-Dimensional/Preparation Work

A series of collages was undertaken, in which photographs and acetates of qualities arising from the first and second series of trials were juxtaposed onto an image of the female body. This was in order to consider in what ways the reorganisation of these qualities on the body can appear to emphasize particular interactions (fig. 91). What arose as significant from this initial investigation were the ways in which the uneven distribution of these qualities onto the body dramatically focussed attention upon these interactions. These incongruous relationships are explored further in these trials.

Provisional Testing of Ceramic Materials

There is no provisional testing of ceramic materials for this series of trials, as a range of qualities has already been developed and was available from the first and second series. Textures and colours were considered in terms of the particular interactions they can be considered as suggesting between flesh, skin and movement or sensations in the body, when matched with a particular distortion of form. For example, when thin applications of pigment are met with a bloated form, or when gradations of colour are placed around creased or folded flesh.
Fig. 91 Two Dimensional / Preparatory Work

**Fig. 91 (i)**
Preparation collage, 2002, mixed media, 20 x 30 cm.

**Fig. 91 (ii)**
Preparation collage, 2002, mixed media, 20 x 30 cm.

Expression of Flesh and Skin

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These interactions were tested and analysed on the figure in 4.10.4.

Modelling for the Press Mould

The figure on which these qualities are applied covers the areas identified in the first series as providing the greatest variation of texture and pigment on the body and the most significant range of interactions between the surface and form: the belly, breast and thigh. As with the two previous trials, the figure was modelled first in clay before taking a plaster cast and the figures pressed from this mould are used within the series. The form is less detailed than with previous figures in order not to distract from the areas where these interactions take place. This emphasis is further reinforced in two of the trials by the addition of body fragments created by pressing small amounts of clay and their location onto specific areas of the mould on which the interactions take place. Before attaching to the body, their form was manipulated and its volume extended as appropriate.

4.10.5 Relationship to Ceramic Medium

Ceramic qualities in this series of trials are derived from those developed in the previous series and consider properties arising from the interaction of their expressive values.

4.10.6 Relationships Within the Third Series

Each figure in this trial explores different interactions and different ways in which incongruous relationships on the body can be used to emphasize their qualities. In being carried out successively, each figure is influenced by the preceding trial and its evaluation, allowing reinforcement of aspects that emphasize qualities of flesh and skin and countering those which undermine this connection.
4.10.7 Relationship of the Third Series to Case Studies

These trials were directly influenced by the work of artist Jose Vermeersch, particularly by the ways in which his work appears to employ incongruous relationships to draw our attention to qualities. For example, on his work Pink Figure, he significantly reduces qualities of flesh and skin and there is a sense in which the incongruity between this lack of surface detail and the rest of body actually draws our attention to the missing textures (ref: 3.7).

4.11 Analysis

Trial 3:1

In trial 3:1, the colour and texture of flesh and skin are reorganised to suggest their response to the bloated form of the belly and breast. To focus attention on this interaction, these areas are rendered onto additional fragments (fig. 92), then applied onto the body, whilst the rest of the body is rendered without significant detail.

While this figure may demonstrate how the inconsistent distribution of qualities over the body can draw our attention to particular areas, it also shows how the lack of unity in the body can undermine this focus. Although the qualities of skin and form of the belly and breast are unified by inviting a similar sense of stretching outwards, their relationship to the rest of the body is in such contrast that the emphasis placed on them dominates our experience of the work, creating a sense of disparity between them and the body as a whole. If emphasis is to be given to a particular area, through the inconsistent distribution of pigment, then other means must be found with which to integrate their qualities on the body, as the qualities of flesh and skin exist within a wider network of interconnections. This is explored in trial 3:2.
Trial 3: 1, 2002, St Thomas clay, engobes, terrasigilata, 38 cm.

Expression of Flesh and Skin

Natasha Mayo
Trial 3:2

In trial 3:2, the belly and thigh are covered in multiple indentations and raised peaks to suggest the skin’s response to sudden movement (fig. 96). To focus attention upon this interaction, these sections are rendered onto additional fragments in the same ways as 3:1, and placed onto a body without significant detail. Colour is used across the body to suggest a greater sense of integration between qualities.

Whilst colour may appear to create a visual sense of continuity over the body, it cannot cover or substitute for the need for a series of interconnected relationships between the surface, form and the body. For example, the vibration suggested by the indentations on the surface of the belly and thigh, requires an appropriate activity to be suggested by the body’s gesture or pose. This need is not met or reduced by the use of colour. There must be a clear succession or linkage between qualities which offer possible explanation for their relationship, particularly when the interaction involves a distinct sense of physical movement such as the vibration of the flesh.

Trial 3:3

In trial 3:3, pigment and texture are exaggerated and reorganised on the belly and breast to suggest the skin’s response to movement internal to the body (fig. 100). In order to generate a greater sense of their integration on the body, whilst still maintaining their focus, surface qualities are applied directly onto the figure rather than onto additional fragments and the rest of the body rendered without colour.

This trial figure can be understood as demonstrating how maintaining connections between qualities can (i) allow incongruous relationships to be understood as part of the wider interconnectedness of the body and (ii) generate further associations to qualities of flesh and skin, in this case unhealthy or
Fig. 96

**Trial 3:2, 2002,**

St Thomas clay, slip, terrasigilata, 38 cm.

Fig. 97

Detail of **Trial 3:2**

Fig. 98

Detail of **Trial 3:2**

Expression of Flesh and Skin

Fig. 99

Detail of **Trial 3:2**
Fig. 100

Trial 3:3, 2002, St Thomas clay, engobes, 38 cm.

Fig. 101

Detail of Trial 3:3

Fig. 102

Detail of Trial 3:3

Expression of Flesh and Skin

Fig. 103

Detail of Trial 3:3

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diseased skin. The interaction of the surface and form and the isolation of their activity from any other properties on the body enables a clear interrelationship to arise, in particular that the belly and breast appear swollen and raw, as if all colour has drained away from the rest of the figure. As the properties of the figure have been so dramatically reduced, there is nothing to distract or interfere with this interrelationship, unlike the fragmentation of the previous trials. It is this incongruity that informs our experience of the work and suggests unhealthy skin.

4.12 Theoretical Concerns

These trials once again reinforce the significance of movement in disclosing qualities of flesh and skin. Experience of the trial figures does not merely arise from their visual properties but from the suggestion of certain interactions between the surface, form and the body. It is these interactions which prompt the viewer to make certain expressive and emotional connections to the work, for instance, to diseased or unhealthy skin as demonstrated in trial 3:3. What arises from this series is the importance of understanding this interrelationship of qualities as a part of the wider context of the body as a whole. These figures lend focus to particular qualities of flesh and skin by reducing the qualities on the body which create a sense of disparity. As skin qualities are experienced in nature through a range of interconnected relationships, this disparity can undermine connection to flesh and skin (as with the second series). Emphasis, therefore, must be given through the reordering or reorganising of qualities in such a way as to lead the viewer towards a suggestion of particular sensations of flesh and skin. In this way, a sense of unity can be invited from the work and our attention focussed on particular areas, not merely through their visual qualities but through their suggested interrelationship. This is developed in the fourth series of trials.
4.13 Fourth Series: Scale and the Interrelationship of Previous Trials:

Introduction

4.13.1 Aims of the Fourth Series

To create a range of interrelationships on the body which lead the viewer towards an overriding sensation of flesh and skin through the combination of scale, pose and key points raised in the previous trials. The fourth and final series of trials continues to examine the suggestion that qualities of flesh and skin are constituted and arise out of a series of interactions in the body. Particular consideration is given to the ways in which interrelationships between qualities can invite similar or complimentary connections leading toward one, overriding sensation of flesh and skin.

4.13.2. Key Objectives of the Fourth Series

Stage 1

To identify and examine a range of qualities from the previous trials that most effectively demonstrates the ways in which qualities of flesh and skin can appear to reflect movement or sensations in the body. To use the findings to inform 4.13.2 stage 2.

Stage 2

Using a model of a complete human figure, the moulding processes used in previous trials and resulting press moulded pieces: to examine and develop the ways in which the exaggeration of surface, form and pose can emphasize interactions identified in 4.13.2 stage 1.

Stage 3

See ref. 4.2.2
4.13.3 Content and Scope of the Fourth Series

These trials explore the capacity of the figure to suggest particular interactions in relation to a combination of aspects: an increase in scale, pose and elements developed in the previous trials which are considered as establishing key points in the expression of flesh and skin; principally, the ways in which pigment and texture can appear to respond to movement or sensation in the body and the importance of suggesting a unity of interactions over the body. The role of scale in these figures is not given focus in their individual analysis, as it is an element which contributes to our experience of each figure and will be discussed in greater depth in the theoretical comments.

4.13.4 Methods

Two-Dimensional/Preparatory Work

Preparatory work in this series of trials is taken from those developed in the previous series.

Provisional Testing of Ceramic Materials

There is no provisional testing of ceramic materials for this series of trials, as a range of qualities has already been developed and was available from the first and second series.

Modelling for the Press Mould

The figure on which these interactions take place follows the same process as used in the previous trails. In this series the mould divides the main body into four separate units: the front and back of the torso and the front and back of the legs. This enables the form and pose of the figure to be easily manipulated, in order to correspond with and emphasize the surface values. The figure stands
approximately 95 cm in height. Its features are simplified in order that any changes can be seen clearly and understood as a product of the particular interactions at work in the figure.

4.13.5 Relationship to Ceramic Medium

Ceramic qualities in this series of trials are taken from those developed in the previous series and concentrate on the interaction of their expressive values with the pose or gesture of the body.

4.13.6 The Interrelationship of the Fourth Series

This series of trials explores the interrelationship of surface values with properties of scale, form and pose and each figure offers a different composition or balance of these properties. The most distinct shift occurs in the two final pieces, which move away from the prevalence of surface values to examine flesh and skin through properties more specifically involving space, volume and perspective. The figures are also carried out successively and develop aspects which give emphasis to flesh and skin.

4.13.7 Relationship of the Fourth Series to Case Studies

These trials are influenced by the work of artist Michael Flynn, in particular, the ways in which the qualities in his work appear each to contribute toward one overriding sensation. For example, in his figure Harlequin (fig. 32), the surface, form and pose of the body each suggest aspects of the sensation of movement: the form is covered in a multitude of mounds and indentations, echoed in the highly reflected surface, taking our eyes in different directions; the figure appears as if in the process of movement, dancing with its legs and arms at angles to the body. Each element suggests discrete qualities but it is their interrelationship that creates
an overriding sensation of movement in the body.

4.14 Analysis

Trial 4:2

In trial 4:2, the expression of flesh and skin is examined through the ways in which its qualities can appear as if in response to certain interactions in the body, in particular, the sensation of skin stretching in response to the form and pose of the body. The figure is arched backward and bending slightly to the left and its torso is distorted, diminishing in scale at either end (fig. 104). A single blue brush mark sweeps over the right side of the body denoting stretching skin (fig. 105) and an area of red indentations on the left denotes creasing skin (fig. 107).

The central section of the torso is given emphasis by the distortion of the form and pose and their properties can appear to create the conditions whereby the brush mark is understood as strengthening the suggestion of stretching skin. Its sweeping arc echoes the shape of the belly and set against the red, its pale hue can appear to move forward, accentuating its volume. In this way, surface, form and pose provide a context within which the more expressive property of the brush mark appears to respond and can be considered as belonging to the body.

Trial 4:3

In trial 4:3, in order to extend the expressive potential of the sweeping blue brush mark and its ability to suggest bodily qualities, highly representational characteristics of skin are further examined. The body is arched backward at an extreme angle and the torso subtly diminishes at either end. The surface is kept relatively plain, except for the detail of veins beneath the breast (fig. 109) and there is a pale blue brush mark sweeping over the thigh and belly (fig. 110).

Similar to trial 4:2, the properties of the form and pose appear to set a
Fig. 104

*Trial 4:2, 2003, St Thomas clay, engobes, terrasilicate, 95 cm.*

Fig. 105

Detail of *Trial 4:2*

Fig. 106

Back of *Trial 4:2*

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Fig. 108

**Trial 4:3, 2003, St Thomas, engobes, terrasiligata, 95 cm.**

Fig. 109

Detail of **Trial 4:3**

Fig. 110

Detail of **Trial 4:3**

Expression of Flesh and Skin

Fig. 111

Detail of **Trial 4:3**

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particular climate of understanding within which other qualities rendered onto the figure are also considered, for example as disclosing or extending the sensation of stretching skin. Depicted on the left breast is the highly representational detail of veins branching outwards from beneath its volume. This detail contributes to the network of interactions at work within the figure and can be understood as informing a viewer’s perception of the brush mark, prompting them to consider the brush mark as containing a similar range of qualities, for example, colour and texture revealed from beneath the skin’s surface.

**Trial 4:4**

In trial 4:4, the surface, form and pose of the body are exaggerated and focus is given to the ways in which emotional states inferred by the figure can appear to condition our understanding of its flesh, in particular, extending the expressive potential of the brush mark in suggesting bodily qualities. The entire body is covered in a multitude of brush marks, gradating in thickness from heavy, coarse texture over the sides of the body to thin, wisp-like marks, which appear to give way to areas of representational detail denoted by a smooth, velveteen surface on the belly, breasts and thighs (fig. 112).

This figure demonstrates how the interactions at work on the body can prompt a shift in realms of experience between the suggestion of physical activity and emotional states. The pose again emphasizes the central area of focus by leaning backward and appearing to push the belly outwards, but in addition to this, further significance or meaning can be found in its suggestion of movement. It prompts connections to the body in addition to those immediately presented to the viewer, such as certain sensorial and emotional feelings of listlessness, as if the body were exhausted. These feelings are echoed and reinforced by the figure’s facial expression (fig. 112); her head tilted to one side, eyes half closed and looking
Expression of Flesh and Skin

Fig. 112
Trial 4:4, 2003, St Thomas clay, engobes, terrasilicata, 95 cm.

Fig. 113
Detail of Trial 4:4

Fig. 114
Detail of Trial 4:4

Fig. 115
Detail of Trial 4:4

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Practical Investigation

exhausted. These interactions also condition the climate or range of understanding arising from the surface values, in particular the brush marks which do not simply appear to suggest skin stretching around a distended belly, but are similarly appearing exhausted or worn-out.

Trial 4:5

Trial 4:5 examines the ways in which flesh responds to the body in more physical or sculptural ways than within the previous trial figures, by exaggerating aspects of its surface, form and volume. For example, the width of the thighs and belly has been extended and various creases and folds indented into its surface to suggest that the flesh is wobbling or shaking (fig. 116).

This figure examines the researcher’s concern that the illusion of depth demonstrated in the previous trial figures can only be understood clearly from a single point perspective and does not significantly convey the physicality of flesh. It demonstrates that, just as an increase in scale can offer a larger network of bodily connections and correspondences, so too can a more physical, sculptural form, by prompting a viewer to experience qualities more significantly involving space, volume and perspective. As a result, this can appear to more accurately and fully articulate our experience of flesh and skin as both a visual and physical activity. However, in removing emphasis from surface values, associations to flesh and skin are dramatically lessened and our experience is overwhelmed instead by the suggestion of physical movement in the body, rather than qualities appearing to arise as if in response to it. If a figurative artwork is to be expressive of flesh and skin, the interactions at work in the body must prioritise the suggestion of its qualities as arising out of its activity. This is explored in figure 4:6.
Fig. 116  
**Trial 4:5, 2003.**  
Porcelain, 95 cm.

Fig. 117  
Detail of **Trial 4:5**

Fig. 118  
Detail of **Trial 4:5**

Fig. 119  
Detail of **Trial 4:5**

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Trial 4:6

In trial 4:6, the more sculptural, physical rendering of flesh is integrated with the illusion of depth through the deployment of colour. This is in order to emphasize the ways in which these qualities interact on the body in nature, through a series of interrelationships. The colour and form are treated in a similar manner by dividing them into multiple intersecting planes, which make up the whole of the body (fig. 120).

Whilst the qualities of surface and form on this figure can be understood through a similar pattern of movement (the same rhythm and distribution of motion), this sense of harmony can actually limit the range of qualities which arise out of the surface - form interaction. There is little distinction or emphasis given to any quality other than this overall sense of unified movement. It appears that the physicality of the body is depicted but no emphasis is given to the impact of its activity on the surface of the body. This figure demonstrates the call for a particular sense of friction or tension within the network of qualities surrounding it, offering the focus for the viewer's experience of flesh and skin, which in the previous figures is provided by the sweeping blue brush-mark.

4.15 Theoretical Concerns

In this fourth and final series of trials certain aspects from the previous works have been developed. In particular, the suggestion that qualities of flesh and skin are constituted by or arise out of, a series of interactions in the body, for example, its reflection of internal processes - the movement of fluids in the body and physical activity - through the arrangement of certain colours and textures on the body. Qualities of flesh and skin can be understood as belonging to this wider context or network of bodily interrelationships and are, therefore, directly affected by changes in form, pose and even emotional states. Appreciation of the ways in
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Fig. 120


Fig. 121

Detail of Trial 4:6

Fig. 122

Detail of Trial 4:6

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Fig. 123

Detail of Trial 4:6

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which connections can be made between these qualities on the body surface, allows a viewer to experience a wide range of expressive possibilities related to flesh and skin. They can appear influenced or conditioned by the contribution of certain elements or particular emphasis within this network, for example, the expressive gesture of a brush mark.

The figure in this context can be considered as a composition of sympathetic or complimentary relationships, extended or amplified by certain expressive gestures made by the artist. The relationship between surface, form, expression and representation is the most basic foundation of this interconnectedness at work on the human form. Within this network, the qualities of flesh and skin can be experienced in ways similar to our perception of their qualities in nature, through a succession of interconnected stages. Particular aspects are selected, reorganised and frozen upon the body by their depiction in clay and they await a viewer’s participation to trigger connections between them. It is important here to repeat, that movement is considered a significant aspect of the expression of their properties, referring not only to the literal depiction of skin’s activity, but also to the activity of our perception and the state of bodily being, which allows disclosure of certain experiences and emotional conditions in response to the artwork.
5 Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

It is important to reiterate the fundamental interaction between theory and practice, as both studio-based trials and case studies were analysed according to a theoretical framework informed by Collingwood's and Merleau-Ponty's concepts of expression in art. The key findings are thus set out in the same theoretical discourse as that deployed in the main body of text. Other outcomes, although important in driving the project toward the development of significant properties, are considered to be outside the overall aims of the project and are proposed as further research in the field. They are set out at the end of this section.

5.2 Key Findings

5.2.1 Interaction Between Theory and Practice

A crucial premise of this project, which informed the analysis of the studio-based case studies and trials, is the assertion that a figurative artwork exists within a common bodily frame of reference; that its properties are experienced against our body's equivalent textures and gestures, enabling a shared understanding between the artist and the viewer. The connections between different qualities in an artwork and between the artwork and the viewer may be influenced by a range of stimuli external to the artwork (ref: 2.1 (iii)), but the centrality of our body in our perception of an artwork can allow both viewer and artist to experience a similar range of experiences in response to aesthetic properties by virtue of having a similar, if not the identical, range of human sensibilities (ref: 2.1 (ii), para. 3). This is particularly evident when the frame of reference of the artist and the viewer is similar for example, firmly located within Western European culture. Thus, considering the artworks relative to the primacy of a viewer's perception, that is their bodily experience of its properties, it was not considered necessary to test or
Conclusions

corroborate findings through peer review.

According to this premise (that a figurative artwork exists within a common bodily framework), the overriding value of the studio-based trials lies in their demonstration of how particular perceptual relationships can be created or developed to achieve specific aesthetic properties in relation to the human body. The fourth and final series in the studio-based trials, incorporating aspects of previous trials, identifies not only how qualities of flesh and skin can be expressed, but also how emphasis can be given to specific properties by suggesting how they are constituted by, and arise out of, a series of interactions with the body. An example of this would be the reflection of internal processes in the skin and its response to movement in the body. An artwork can appear to freeze certain aspects of the successive stages in which surface responds to movement in the figure and allow examination of the ways in which those stages, rendered as aesthetic properties, might interlock with our equivalent textures and gestures and lead to specific sensations of flesh and skin. The close interrelationship between the viewer's bodily qualities and those of the artwork can enable a viewer to enter into a particularly sympathetic relationship with the artwork, which is sensitive to subtle exaggerations or additional qualities. A viewer can be prompted to consider more expressive gestures as if belonging to, or as a part of, the body, leading them towards one, overriding sensation of flesh and skin.

Analysis of artwork according to this theoretical premise also identified the capacity of qualities and relationships to prompt a lived or living experience in a viewer, so that its qualities can be experienced beyond mere visual attributes through the mechanisms of the body as physical and emotional states. In this way, contrasts in the consistency of skin from pale, thin and blue to red, coarse and heavy, can also be understood as prompting connections to the sensations of heat and clamminess and to feelings of discomfort. The term 'aesthetic transference',
Conclusions

based on the theories of Collingwood and Merleau-Ponty, proved an appropriate and effective term in referring to the activity of these interactions in ways that encompassed the potential complexity of these interrelationships.

5.2.2 Salient Aspects of Studio-Based Trials

As each series of trials informed the development of subsequent trials, qualities and interrelationships that were central to the development of the expression of flesh and skin are most clearly demonstrated in the fourth and final series. Focus is given, therefore, only to properties evident in this series.  

(i) The overarching finding of the practical investigation was the importance of the relationship between movement on the surface and movement in the body. This relationship was determined as being fundamental to our experience, as skin does not merely cover the body but reflects aspects of its activity both in terms of how it reacts to the structure of the form and to the movement of fluids and soft tissue, for example, stretching and collecting in folds and revealing the presence and colour of capillaries and veins. Movement also informs the conditions under which qualities of flesh and skin can usually be felt, for example creasing, shivering and flushing. Therefore, movement was examined in the trials not merely as a visual device or as referring to physical activity, but as prompting a state of bodily being in a viewer, which can also disclose or reveal certain expressive and emotional states often felt in response to that activity.

(ii) A significant finding to arise from the studio-based trials was that the sense

79 The second series offers clear examples of the ways in which results in earlier trials can be considered as identifying how qualities of flesh and skin can be reduced as opposed to emphasized, as it became apparent through the development of the trials how detrimental the application of inappropriate textures onto the body would be to an overriding connection to flesh and skin.

80 The term 'bodily being' refers to Merleau-Ponty's claim that as our body opens onto an object, the activity of our perception can prompt us to react physically to its properties before being fully aware of their influence, that colours, for instance, can be said to evoke a certain bodily attitude. Abram, D., The Spell of the Sensuous, First Vintage Books, 1998 p.54.
of activity suggested by aesthetic properties of the body can trigger a wider network of interactions associated with flesh and skin, rather than simply an understanding that colour has the ability to move in the activity of our perception or texture to direct our eyes across the form. This in turn led to the most significant finding of the project: that within a climate of interrelationships between the surface and movement in the body, more exaggerated or distorted gestures can be considered as part of the bodily frame of reference. This climate can prompt a wide range of expressive possibilities surrounding flesh and skin. For instance, a sweeping blue brush mark examined in trial 4:2 can suggest skin stretching over the belly, as if arising from the body bending backwards and accentuated by its foreshortened frame, finding not merely a visual connection to stretch marks but also contributing to an overriding experience of stretching skin evoked by the figure as a whole. The expressive value of the brush mark can be extended further when considered part of this wider network of properties, as our understanding of it is readily influenced by other detail rendered within the form. In trial 4:3, for example, the representational detail of veins under the figure’s breast can prompt a viewer to understand the brush mark as containing similar properties, as colour revealed from beneath a thin, stretched layer of skin. To an extent, the facial expression of the figure in trial 4:4 can also influence our interpretation, for example, suggesting that the skin is exhausted and worn out.

(iii) Also emerging from the trials, and in particularly the final series, were suggestions as to the nature of interactions between perspective and the physical form of the body. Trial 4:5 demonstrates how the activity of the body or light around physical indentations and markings carved into its surface, can impute experience with a sense of the body’s activity, its...
potential for shaking or vibrating. The shift in focus away from surface values, however, appeared to speak more prominently of bodily movement than particular activities of flesh and skin.

(iv) Trial 4:6 therefore, demonstrates how the surface and form can appear integrated by the suggestion of a similar sense of activity, in this instance, articulated through a succession of interlocking planes that make up the whole of the body. What arose as significant from this, however, was a distinct lack of emphasis or direction of focus on the figure and not simply an overriding sense of congruity - a demonstration of skin's inextricable connection to movement in the body. Trial 4:6 demonstrated how the sense of tension or friction that can arise from inconsistencies within the bodily framework and explored throughout the project, is essential in drawing attention to particular properties within the context of the body as a whole.

5.3 Case studies
See ref: 3.14.

5.4 Impact of Research on the Practice of the Researcher
Any further development of concepts discussed in the main body of text (set out below), will be informed by the ways in which the conduct of the research project has impacted on the practice of the researcher. The project has enabled her:

(i) to identify different processes by which an artist can create, develop and construct the human figure through a variety of disciplines and identify distinctive characteristics of the medium of ceramics through its close relationship with other specialist properties and techniques,

(ii) to develop a high level of skill in the construction and modelling of ceramic figures and extend knowledge of ceramic materials, processes and glaze
technology,

(iii) to contribute to and extend discourse engaging with the interaction between theory and practice in art and situate ceramic debate within this wider field of fine art through the application of aesthetic theory to ceramic artworks, through both case studies and her own practice,

(iv) to engage critically with debate surrounding the mechanisms by which an expressive artwork can be understood as conveying particular sensations or emotions to a viewer,

(v) to apply significant understanding of the role or activity of perception in the creation and construction of a range of properties and relationships evocative of specific experiences of flesh and skin within her own figurative artworks,

(vi) to develop a rigorous and analytical approach to the writing and public presentation of the discourse and findings outlined above.

5.5 Further Investigations

In the course of this study a number of important issues arose which were outside the specific aims of the project. They were not therefore pursued to any depth in the main body of research but warrant further, separate investigation by the researcher or others working within the field.

5.5.1 Areas arising from the literature search that could inform and extend the relationship between theory and practice and further develop the findings of this project are as follows:

(i) Further investigation of theories of expression in art (ref: 2.1(ii), para. 2), and the ways in which different theoretical approaches might impose differences in the development of a practical investigation. For example, a
series of studio-based trials influenced by Jameson (ftn: 19), might examine direct correspondence between the physical activity of constructing the figure in ceramics, the aesthetic properties of its resultant surface and form, and properties of flesh and skin.

A practical investigation could examine the properties of skin according to the three perspectives set out by Connor (ftn: 22): as a covering or container of the body's internal workings, as an organ through which interior and exterior properties can seep, as a surface upon which we project thoughts and feelings.

(ii) Application of the principal characteristics of flesh and skin identified in the project to a wider social/cultural context such as that outlined by Connor (ref: 2.1 (iii)). Examples of how this might be examined through figurative ceramics are set out below.

5.5.2 There are particular qualities identified in the practical investigation that suggest qualities of flesh and skin but only as part of a wider network of interactions. These have the potential to become topics for further investigation. They are set out below in the order in which they emerged in the investigation:

(i) The relationship between the illusion of depth and actual textural depth (ref: 4.5, para. 1-4).

(ii) The intensity, orientation and rhythm of activity conveyed through specific placement of colour and texture (ref: 4.5, para. 2-4 and 4.8, para. 1-6).

(iii) The change in emphasis of activity over a series of figures (ref: 4.8, para. 7-8).

(iv) The role of narrative prompted by the application of inappropriate qualities (ref: 2.3.2, para. 4).
(v) Properties, other than those pertaining to flesh and skin, arising out of incongruent relationships (ref: 4.11).

(vi) Direction of surface momentum in relation to the pose of the body (ref: 4.14, para. 1-2).

(vii) Broadening of the interaction of representational and expressive properties to other artists and media.

Areas suggested for further investigation arising from these more discrete properties and interrelationships are as follows:

(viii) That the distinct momentum of activity suggested by specific distribution of colour or texture on the body can trigger a subjective response in the viewer to physical gestures, to sudden movement, external pressure or the results of ageing.

(ix) That the concept of the interaction between physical and emotional states can also lend itself to notions of narrative, as colour could indicate either repulsion, or fear in response to inappropriate texture such as pricks or violent gestures marking the body.

(x) The suggestion of a momentum of activity arising from within the body can also be articulated externally to the body to imply an external force upon the form, for example, a violent gesture marking the surface or more dramatically distorting the body.

(xi) Building on the interrelationships set out above, two or more figures could be articulated to suggest interactions not merely physically but in order to convey a potential sensorial or emotional response to each other.
References

Theoretical Debate: Field Study

Fig. 1 Minimally Treated or Decorative Surfaces:


Fig. 1 (iii) Ridhalgh, H., ‘Female Torso’ (1994) in Blandino, B., The Figure in Fired Clay, A&C Black, 2002.

Fig. 1 (iv) Barton, G., ‘Jean Muir’ (1992) in in Blandino, B., The Figure in Fired Clay A&C Black, 2002.


Fig. 2 Emphasis On Distortion of Form or Pose:

Fig. 2 (i) Rice, P., Lazarus, (1999) in Peterson, S., Contemporary Ceramics, Lawrence King Publishing, 2000.


Fig. 2 (iii) De Staebler, S., ‘Standing Figure with Tilting Head’, (1985) in Waller, J., The Human Form in Clay, Crowood Press, 2001.


Theoretical Debate: Main Body of Text

Fig. 3. Mueck, R., ‘Big Man’, (2000) from artist’s personal collection, 2002.

Fig. 3 (i) Mueck, R., ‘Big Man’, (2000) detail from artist’s personal collection, 2002.
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Fig. 5 Curneen, C., ‘Prick’, (2001) from artists personal collection.
Fig. 5 (i) Curneen, C., ‘Prick’, (2001) detail from artists personal collection.


Fig. 7 Unglazed Surface:
Fig. 7 (i) Curneen, C., ‘Standing Figure’, (1998) details in researcher's personal collection.
Fig. 7 (ii) Curneen, C., ‘Standing Figure’, (1998) details in researcher's personal collection.
Fig. 7 (iii) Curneen, C., ‘Standing Figure’, (1998) details in researcher's personal collection.
Fig. 7 (iv) Curneen, C., ‘Standing Figure’, (1998) details in researcher's personal collection.

Fig. 8. Ingres, J.A.D., ‘Odalisque in Grisaille’ (1814) in Ferrara, L.G., Reclining Nude, Thames and Hudson, 2002.
Fig. 9 Delacroix, E., (1830) ‘Female Nude Reclining on a Divan’, in Ferrara, L.G., Reclining Nude, Thames and Hudson, 2002.


Fig. 12 - 24 Natasha Mayo: ‘Studio-Based Trials’ (2001 - 2003) from artist's own
collection.

Case Studies Section

Fig. 25 Studio Images:


Fig. 27 Sketchbook Images:

Fig. 27 (i). Curneen, C., 'Sketchbook Images', (2000) from artist's personal collection.

Fig. 27(ii). Curneen, C., 'Sketchbook Images', (2000) from artist's personal collection.

Fig. 27(iii). Curneen, C., 'Sketchbook Images', (2000) from artist's personal collection.

Fig. 27(iv). Curneen, C., 'Sketchbook Images', (2000) from artist's personal collection.

Fig. 28 St Sebastian:

Fig. 28 (i). Curneen, C., 'St Sebastian', (2003) from author's personal collection.

Fig. 28 (ii). Curneen, C., 'St Sebastian', (2003) from author's personal collection.

Fig. 28 (iii). Curneen, C., 'St Sebastian', (2003) from author's personal collection.

Fig. 28 (iv). Curneen, C., 'St Sebastian', (2003) from author's personal collection.
Fig. 29 Two-Dimensional and Preparatory Work:

Fig. 29 (i) Vermeersch, J., 'My Father', (1941) in Retrospective 1922-1997, Openbaar Kunstkbezit in Vlaanderen, 2002.

Fig. 29 (ii) Vermeersch, J., 'Figure', (1997) in Retrospective 1922-1997, Openbaar Kunstkbezit in Vlaanderen, 2002.

Fig. 29 (iii) Vermeersch, J., 'Study of Head', (1950) in Retrospective 1922-1997, Openbaar Kunstkbezit in Vlaanderen, 2002.

Fig. 29 (iv) Vermeersch, J., 'Moving Figure', (1969) in Retrospective 1922-1997, Openbaar Kunstkbezit in Vlaanderen, 2002.

Fig. 30 Pink Figure:

Fig. 30 (i) Vermeersch, J., 'Pink Figure', (1976) in Retrospective 1922-1997, Openbaar Kunstkbezit in Vlaanderen, 2002.

Fig. 30 (ii) Vermeersch, J., 'Pink Figure', (1976) in Retrospective 1922-1997, Openbaar Kunstkbezit in Vlaanderen, 2002.

Fig. 30 (iii) Vermeersch, J., 'Pink Figure', (1976) in Retrospective 1922-1997, Openbaar Kunstkbezit in Vlaanderen, 2002.

Fig. 30 (iv) Vermeersch, J., 'Pink Figure', (1976) in Retrospective 1922-1997, Openbaar Kunstkbezit in Vlaanderen, 2002.

Fig. 31 Sketches on Studio Wall:

Fig. 31 (i) Flynn, M., 'Drawings', (2001) details from author's personal collection.

Fig. 31 (ii) Flynn, M., 'Drawings', (2001) details from author's personal collection.

Fig. 31 (iii) Flynn, M., 'Drawings', (2001) details from author's personal collection.

Fig. 31 (iv) Flynn, M., 'Drawings', (2001) details from author's personal collection.

Fig. 32 Flynn, M., 'Harlequin', (2001) details from author's personal collection.

Fig. 33 Flynn, M., 'Harlequin', (2001) details from author's personal collection.

Fig. 34 Flynn, M., 'Harlequin', (2001) details from author's personal collection.

Fig. 35 Flynn, M., 'Harlequin', (2001) details from author's personal collection.
Fig. 36. Mueck, R., ‘Man in a Boat’, (2002) from artist’s personal collection.

Fig. 37 Mueck, R., ‘Face Fragment’, (2000) detail from artist’s personal collection.

Fig. 38 Mueck, R., ‘Advertising Image’, (1988) from artist’s personal collection.

Fig. 39 Mueck, R., ‘Maquettes for mother and child’, (2002) from artist’s personal collection.


Fig. 40 (i). Mueck, R., ‘Tall Boy’, (1999) detail from artist’s personal collection.

Fig. 41 Mary of Egypt:

Fig. 41 (i). Dionyse, C., ‘Mary of Egypt’, (1992) from author's personal collection.

Fig. 41 (ii). Dionyse, C., ‘Mary of Egypt’, (1992) from author's personal collection.

Fig. 41 (iii). Dionyse, C., ‘Mary of Egypt’, (1992) from author's personal collection.

Fig. 41 (iv). Dionyse, C., ‘Mary of Egypt’, (1992) from author's personal collection.
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