‘Seer’ and ‘Seen’: an investigation of the ‘lived experience’ of drawing, ideation and praxis.

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A dissertation submitted to the University of the Sunshine Coast in accordance with the requirements of the Award of Doctor of Creative Arts in the Faculty of Arts and Business comprising:

1. An exhibition of creative outcomes entitled: Seer and seen, 23rd January to 11th February 2017 at the University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery.


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February 2017
**Declaration of Original Authorship**

(This declaration shall be considered with the requisite copies of the exegesis and creative work submitted for examination to the Office of learning, Teaching and Research at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Maroochydore DC, Queensland, 4558).

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February 2017
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Abstract

‘Seer’ and ‘Seen’: an investigation of the ‘lived experience’ of drawing, ideation and praxis.

This study evolved from a need, as practitioner and teacher, to understand the foundations of my drawing practice. It examines a series of questions including what, how and why do I draw? Throughout the enquiry I sought to understand the nature of drawing practice and how the strands of thinking and making contained within drawing intersect. The research project considers how drawing, operating as knowledge and experience, represents a particular way of coming to know the world. This is reflected in an overarching question: What is the relationship between experience and its interpretation through drawing? The study examines drawing in the landscape and the studio through a series of drawing cycles which relate to particular landscapes in Europe and Australia. The research questions were examined through three cycles of enquiry which built on prior findings as the project progressed.

The study draws on phenomenology, and particularly the writings of Merleau-Ponty, to examine shifts that occur between drawings in-situ and their interpretation in the studio, in order to reflect the memory and experience of particular landscapes. Merleau-Ponty’s (1964a) notion of the ‘Seer’ and ‘Seen’ was employed to balance the subjective viewpoint of the artist with the objective stance of the researcher. Drawing was used as a research methodology in order to consider creative outputs that were both descriptive and interpretive. A variety of methods, emanating from personal practice, were used to gain an understanding of my drawing practice from different perspectives. These included descriptive and reflective writing, descriptive and interpretive drawings, photographs, video and audio.

The research contributes to understandings of the complex ways that the lived experience of the landscape influences and informs drawing activity. The iterations of the research cycle revealed that as my drawings moved from description to interpretation a phase of ‘re-drawing’ occurred which conjoined the immersed experience of the landscape and drawing activity. The process of re-drawing bridged the gap between in situ and the studio and synthesised experiences which led to an understanding of differing modes of thinking within drawing practice. My experience was mediated through processes that I have termed noticing, awareness and consciousness. These modes of thinking are manifest in the creative outcomes and reveal glimpses of the artist’s experiential world, contributing to wider understandings of the nature of ideation and praxis in the domain of drawing.
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Chapter One

Introduction
This research evolved from a need, as a practitioner and teacher, to understand more comprehensively the foundations of drawing practice. My personal practice had been directly influenced by the development of a number of approaches to teaching drawing within schools. I conceive of drawing as a process involving observation, which functions as a beginning point informing interpretation—and as a vehicle for personal expression. However, within the school environment I saw these ideas being thwarted by the constant narrowing of syllabi and curricula. The focus was often on the skills of representation, technical accomplishment and the quality of reproduction, leading to convergent outcomes. Hickman (2005) discusses these relative perceptions of art and design and proposes that the ‘distinctions’ constituted ‘differences of emphasis’. He views art and design as ‘part of a continuum which has expressive/philosophical qualities at one end and technological/utilitarian qualities at the other’ (Hickman, 2005, p.12). On the basis of my own experience as both a practicing artist and teacher, I felt that the way drawing was taught in UK schools seemed to be located further towards the utilitarian/technological end rather than exploring the philosophical and expressive end of the spectrum, as is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

![Figure 1.1. Visualisation of Hickman’s drawing continuum and the positioning of drawing as taught in the UK secondary studies curriculum.](image)

My own philosophy of teaching and practice is that approaches that lead to a frequently held view of drawing as being merely a skill or technique, deny opportunities to explore drawing as an intellectual activity that links sensing, feeling, thinking and doing. I believe that the expressive/philosophical aspects
of drawing are those which add depth and move beyond ideas curtailed by medium and technique. Central to this idea is the notion that drawing from life fundamentally changes what we know and how we know it. The sensorial experience of drawing a cup, for example, furnishes us with the knowledge and experience of weight, size, material, feel and context. This experience differs sharply from the experience of drawing from a photograph where, it can be argued, we draw what we think we know as it is represented in the two dimensional image we see.

This enquiry seeks to investigate drawing as a way of revealing knowledge and experience. Underpinning the study is an engagement with philosophy as a means of understanding the complexities and interconnections of mind and body, ideation and practice that drawing entails. Emphasis is given to a phenomenological approach to investigating drawing. Of fundamental importance, personally, was a consideration of the expansive nature of an evolving, multifaceted paradigm of drawing practice. The approaches to teaching drawing that I observed in secondary schools in the UK over a 20 year period largely denied students the opportunity to explore drawing as an intellectual activity yet, as a practicing artist, my own experience told me that drawing can also make the invisible visible as it articulates traces of the past, the present and the future.

Examining the dissonance between these differing attitudes led me to question, confront and deconstruct what is meant by ‘observation’, ‘interpretation’ and what drawing actually is. Why do I draw? In peeling back the layers of assumptions and premises, questions arose that challenged the foundations, nature and process of my own drawing practice. Practice does not exist in a vacuum and the link between theory and practice is a dynamic, dissolving and shifting relationship. As these considerations began to direct my thinking, a central tenet of my own philosophy began to emerge, a philosophy that is deeply rooted within personal practice. In investigating the multi-faceted nature of drawing, it became clear to me that it would be essential to consider personal practice as a location at which the following questions would be directed.

**Why do I draw?**

My exploration led me to refocus my attention on my own drawing practice and to revisit a fundamental question: Why do I draw? Do I draw to make sense of the world that I inhabit? To record? To remember? To describe? To interpret? The relevance of drawing within my own work has emerged progressively and is driven by a belief in the fundamental importance of drawing as a way of learning about the world and the things within it and how our experience shapes thinking. Initially, this involved drawing from observation and looking, seeing and thinking about the subject and its context. Over many years, these ideas have developed to encompass a more nuanced understanding of the role of perception and experience, the intentional and the implicit, the real and the imaginary.
What do I draw?
In returning to the question ‘Why do I draw?’ I also had to consider ‘What do I draw?’ Reflecting on my drawing practice returned me to the importance of landscape and my experience of it. My involvement with the landscape began during my college days and it had resurfaced periodically until finally coming to the fore during the last 10 years of my professional practice. Within my practice, the sense of place and involvement with the environment begins by drawing in the landscape. The weather conditions, the light, the wind, the smell of the heat or the iron-hard ground on frosty mornings all combine within the act of drawing. Drawing in the landscape anchors my reality, so that I feel a part of the world, immersed in it, not as something transitory but as something rooted and immovable. The paradox of my rooted involvement through the temporality of drawing drives much of my practice. For a particular moment I can see clearly, I see the world before me and I am able to capture just a fraction of it as I sit and draw. Yet it is this ‘lived experience’ of drawing in the landscape that provides my studio practice with the recall and memory of that significant place—a memory that returns full-bodied and entrancing as I reflect and re-draw within the studio environment. Undertaking a deeper study into how work in situ and work in the studio differs offered the opportunity to consider how the shift might reveal different understandings of the importance of the immersed experience. These different aspects of my drawing practice have been brought to the fore by my move from the UK to Australia in 2013. The move between continents has provided the inquiry with an opportunity to consider how my process has developed and changed as a result of the shift between such physically different environments and the impact this has had on personal practice.

How do I draw?
Another question arising from my early deliberations was: How do I draw? This question brought to the fore assumptions about my practice that I had not previously considered. I have rarely, if ever, seen myself drawing—I just draw—and yet the ability to observe myself drawing—both in situ and in the studio—suggested an opportunity to reflect on the process of drawing as an observer as well as a practitioner. What could this approach to the research offer to the overarching enquiry? By reflecting on and analysing, through observation, my drawing activity I believed I might gain new insights regarding my physical involvement with the landscape, materials and techniques. It was evident to me that my ways of working differed in situ and in the studio—but how were these differences to be understood and what impact did they have on the drawing outcomes? Taking a different viewpoint on the drawing activity suggested I might be able to place myself simultaneously both in the activity as well as standing and looking from the outside—acting in the capacity of what Maurice Merleau-Ponty describes as the ‘Seer and [the] Seen’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1964a).
I.1. Contemporary Contexts

Preliminary investigations suggested that practice-based research (Sullivan, 2010; Scrivener, 2002; Biggs, 2004; Barrett & Bolt, 2009; Bolt, 2010) offered a personal and subjective means of investigating the complex and interweaving strands that exist within my drawing practice and that phenomenology would add further depth to the study. In attempting to define and refine conceptions regarding the beginnings of practice and, in regards to its development and emergence, I found that a number of philosophical paradigms offered me ways of thinking about practice. However, it was the subjectivity of the first person point of view and its role in understanding drawing practice that eventually became the principal focus of my investigations. The experience of the individual is pivotal to the production of a relational knowledge that is revealed through the process of making. As conceptual art pioneer Douglas Huebler (1969) acknowledges, the process of engagement with the world characterises art:

as an activity that extends human consciousness through constructs that transpose natural phenomena from that qualitatively undifferentiated condition that we call ‘life’ into objective and internally focused concepts. (Huebler, 1969, p.173)

Huebler’s conception offers a phenomenological paradigm through which the ‘lived experience’ (Husserl in Moran, 2005; Dilthey, 1985, 2010) is orientated within a mediated interpretation. From this perspective, drawing conjoins experience, memory and imagination. The drawn outcomes document a progression from description of the ‘lifeworld’ (Moran, 2005) or ‘lived experience’ towards an interpretation of the immersed, subjective experience. The question of how drawing moves from Huebler’s ‘undifferentiated condition’ and towards an interpretation of the subjective experience is central to this exegesis. Consequently, within this study/project, I sought to investigate the extent to which drawing questions and investigates the possibilities of experience, ideas and memory whilst retaining and articulating traces of the past, the present and the future.

A phenomenological approach was chosen in order to illuminate the specificities of my practice, as it offered a means of identifying phenomena through the consideration of experience from the perspective of the individual (Lester, 1999; Woodruff-Smith, 2007). In seeking primarily to describe, rather than explain, phenomenological investigation begins free of hypothesis and preconceptions (Lester, 1999), although this remains a contentious viewpoint (Plummer, 1983; Stanley & Wise, 1993). Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2004), in his introduction to The World of Perception, declares that phenomenology enables a consideration of levels of consciousness in order to ‘seek an understanding from all [these] angles simultaneously’ (Merleau-Ponty, 2004 p.xxii). Within a phenomenological paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity, assumptions are ‘bracketed’ (Ricoeur, 1996; Lester, 1999; Bailey, 1982; Moustakas, 1994; Wrathall, 2007) in order to gain an understanding of experience. Consequently, phenomenological standpoints offer a variety of ways of considering differing aspects of drawing practice.
In considering phenomenology’s primary objective of seeking to describe experience rooted in the subjectivity of personal experience (O’Riley, 2006; Bailey, 1982) it can be argued that drawing offers pluralistic visualisations of that same subjective experience. Drawing is a means of engaging the self in considering the meanings things have in our experience. Phenomenology turns directly to lived experience to provide descriptions of experience and of objects, rather than causal explanations. These parallels are evinced through the roles of drawer, drawing and drawn, viewed within a reflective and analytical paradigm. Phenomenology and drawing offer each other the possibilities of new ways of thinking, describing and interpreting experience.

1.2. The Research Question

In considering the relationship between drawing and experience, personal practice can be examined through the lens of phenomenology in order to document, interpret and articulate what the connections might be. For example, it could be used to find out whether drawing is about description, translation or interpretation, or something else altogether; or a combination of some or all of them. As the boundaries of art practice shift and alter, many artists retain a belief in the fundamental importance of drawing within practice; some use only traditional materials and approaches, some may augment their investigations through the use of photography and installation, and some may use digital technologies. But what is it that all these have in common? Is there a shared purpose, function, or process? Indeed, do they have anything in common and how are we to view or test drawing’s claims of capturing the immediacy of thought and allowing for the visualisation of thinking? The challenges of understanding the nature of drawing are noted by Jacobs as he questions ‘What is drawing? At first glance the question seems simple enough to be superfluous; but upon reflection it becomes not only difficult, but perhaps not even definable’ (Jacobs, 1991, p.10) and it is these complexities which the research examines.

The study was driven by my belief in the fundamental importance of drawing as a way of learning about the world, its objects and how my experience of them shapes thinking. Hence, what drawing is and can be was investigated through the paradigm of personal practice. Drawing in the landscape before moving to the studio fundamentally connects me, as an artist, to the world in which I live. We are a part of the world, as well as being of it—for me, the landscape or environment is orientated through my ‘being in the world’ and, whether I like it or not, I am immersed in it. It is through examining this ‘lived experience’ of the landscape, in conjunction with drawing activity, that enables me to establish differing viewpoints, observations and reflections. Within my practice drawing conjoins the self, the landscape and experience, as illustrated in Figure 1.2 below. Initially, my ideas were fixed around assumptions that knowledge is based on understanding; and that drawing from observation encouraged looking and thinking about the object and its context. These ideas developed, through the research process, enabling me to explore and extend the boundaries of these personal
assumptions. In focusing on the nature of drawing within my practice, I developed several ways of considering not only the drawing process, but also how drawing progresses from a description of the 'lifeworld' (Moran, 2001, 2005) or 'lived experience' towards an interpretation of the subjective.

This enquiry does not seek to review the history of drawing which has been discussed by authors such as Rawson (1979) Maynard (2005) and Rosand (2002) but instead focuses on ways of thinking that would seem to exist within drawing activity. However the history of drawing reflects the history of human involvement with the world and since the earliest times we have sought to communicate, record and remember through the activity of drawing (Rawson, 1979, 1987; Berger, 2008). Principally, drawing affords ‘insightful glimpses’ (Sale & Betti, 2004, p.4) into particular experiences without making the relationship between the personal and the universal explicit. The process of looking, seeing and viewing enables us to interpret experiences ‘visually, emotionally and aesthetically’ (Sale & Betti, 2004, p.6). Within the context of current art practice we are at a point where almost everything can be thought of as drawing as postmodern approaches to practice seek to position drawing as an expansive and inclusive way of working (Jacobs, 1991; Kovats, 2007; Harty, 2012; Sawdon & Marshall, 2012). Since the late 20th century, Postmodernism
has been dissolving the boundaries and blurring the borders of disciplines such as photography, painting and sculpture and has opened up a huge territory over which drawing can roam—as has occurred in my own practice over the past few decades. Freed from the shackles of material and outcome, artists have moved to utilise drawing's ability to record the immediate and to explore the second and third dimensions—as well as the more temporal aspects of lived experience.

Petherbridge (2008) in her essay ‘Nailing the Liminal: The Difficulties of Defining Drawing’, discusses some of the competing definitions of what is considered to be drawing as well as reviewing its role and function. As she notes in attempting to clarify what drawing can be it ‘is slippery and irresolute in its fluid status as performative act and idea…as conceptual diagram as well as medium and process and technique’ (Petherbridge in Garner, 2008, p.27) with a multitude of uses and manifestations. Petherbridge goes on to place, briefly, the origins of drawing practice as being rooted in the western historical tradition of the Renaissance. In common with Rosand (2002) and Rawson (1987, 1979) Petherbridge’s considerations primarily focus on the techniques and ways of drawing which contribute to an understanding of drawing as a communicative language. She describes the significance of drawing practice for draftsman, engineers, and artists as sketch and diagram and as a way of looking. Petherbridge (2008), Rosand (2002), Maynard (2005) and Rawson (1987, 1979) all refer to the significance of drawing as underlying arts practice however they do not engage with drawing beyond the materials, techniques and outcomes to consider how drawing manifests ways of seeing and thinking.

In contrast, Sawdon & Marshall (2012) define the character of contemporary drawing practice by its inherent ambiguity (Sawdon & Marshall, 2012). They suggest that it encompasses activity and outcomes that hint at the subtleties of the subjective experience contained within the activity itself. As Meskimmon observes: ‘The moment of drawing, as an act of relating, is one of sustained engagement, of unwavering attention’ (Meskimmon cited in Sawdon & Marshall, 2012, p.xi) and thus, in ‘relating’, it connects experience, artist and viewer within a shared ‘moment’. As the boundaries between notions of drawing and the drawn dissolve and are remade by both artist and viewer, drawing demonstrates its ability to cross conceptual territories, between and over thresholds, whilst at the same time engaging modes of consciousness within the act of making. In this way, drawing can be said to be a particular way of thinking and reflecting on the world and its objects that is not entirely confined to paper or pencil. It is within this space of enquiry that my study seeks to contribute. That is, this study is concerned with understanding how drawing’s connection to the immediacy of thought can be better understood through examining the levels of consciousness which operate within drawing, the affect of sensory experience and how this manifests itself in the creative outcomes.
Phenomenology and drawing both offer the possibility of describing the world as we live it from a first person point of view. Embodied and perceptual experience constitutes feelings and experiences explicitly through and within the activity of drawing. It is my contention that drawing—as a reflexive and reflective cognitive process—gives rise to an articulation of embodied relational knowledge within the world and, as a process of engagement, reveals a ‘subjective truth’ (Wahrheit)—something that ‘opens up a world’ (Heidegger, 1971, p.40). It is within these contexts that an overarching question arises: What is the relationship between experience and its interpretation through drawing?

Preliminary research led to the identification of three central strands (or themes) that needed to be unravelled if the question was to be answered successfully (Figure 1.3). The first is that of utilising practice-based research within artistic practice, which is discussed in relation to methodology in Chapter Three. The second focuses on landscape within personal practice and the third involves an examination of the phenomenology of the ‘lived experience’—these two themes are discussed in more detail in Chapter Two under the headings of Practical Contexts for the former and Situating Contexts for the latter. It was through the examination of drawing and the exploration of these interconnections that the significance of immersed experience and ways of thinking inherent within the practice of drawing—and the influence on practical outcomes—were revealed. Employing the three themes was useful in disentangling the complex and corporeal

‘Seen’ and ‘Seen’—an investigation of the ‘lived experience’ of drawing, ideation and praxis

What is the relationship between experience and its interpretation through drawing?

Practice-based research

Landscape and place

The phenomenology of lived experience

Personal practice

Drawing in situ

Drawing in the studio

Figure 1.3. The research question and the emerging themes of the study.
modes of consciousness that were invested within personal practice. Through investigating these strands, this enquiry examines drawing as it moves from an undifferentiated world into visually mediated interpretation. Employing practice-based research, with its notion of reflection and analysis informing practice, differentiates this study from more traditional research models. The dimensions of reflection, analysis and interpretation that informed this practice-based research enabled findings to be utilised as a basis for practical theory. The research thus entailed a reflexive approach to drawing practice. This in turn allowed the research findings to both inform and become integrated into practice, as both description and interpretation were enacted, challenged and reflected upon.

My personal practice begins with drawing in the landscape before moving to the studio. For this reason, in order to properly examine the relationship of drawing in situ and its interpretation in the studio, it became necessary to examine how and why experience differed between the two locations. Drawing in the studio, whilst recollecting the experience of being in the landscape and drawing there, revealed a number of relational aspects that were not apparent in the field. In examining how experience in situ, or place, differs from experience in the studio, it became necessary to consider whether something or some things were lost, or gained, in the gap or space between experience and interpretation. Looking again at the environment and deconstructing the layers of structure and scale, revealed the importance of orientating both perception and drawing activity in relation to sense experience in both the landscape and the studio. This study contends that it is through examining the ‘lived experience’ in conjunction with drawing activity, that differing viewpoints, observations and reflections are established. The artist’s immersion within the process can then be viewed, at a distance, in relation to activity and outcome. This systematic reflection offered insights into the triangular relationship between landscape (subject), artist and outcome through the process of drawing.

This intense scrutiny of my drawing practice in situ and in the studio through the stance of seer and seen revealed approaches that had previously been unnoticed. The most notable of these is a process which I have termed ‘re-drawing’ and which will be explained in detail in Chapters Three and Four. In essence, the practice of re-drawing occurred in the studio and represented a pivotal process in enabling me to shift from descriptive to interpretative modes of drawing. The study will discuss how the process of re-drawing bridged the divide between ways of thinking in situ and the studio and was a necessary step in enabling mediated lived experiences to be processed. In ways such as this, the study addresses a gap in understandings of contemporary practice by considering how the sensory experience affects the process of drawing and interconnects the plural levels of consciousness which shape ideation and praxis.
1.3. The Structure of the Exegesis

In order to address the research question, Chapter One has discussed the origins of the research, specified the research question and framed the research. Chapter Two examines relevant literature and creative practice and is divided into two sections. The first Situating Contexts, considers theoretical paradigms within which the research is founded. This section explores the intricate connections between the lived experience of landscape, self and drawing. To clarify the act of understanding and interpreting the concept of lived experience, an analysis of the writings of a number of phenomenologists is undertaken, exploring their ideas in relation to the research aims. The second major section, Practical Contexts, situates the study within the broader field of contemporary practice by examining key writings and examples of other artists’ practice pertinent to the enquiry.

In Chapter Three, the methodology and practice-based research strategies used within the study are defined and clarified. The planned ways of working and thinking are related to the ideas and themes that emerged in Chapters One and Two and the ways in which phenomenology, along with the theoretical underpinnings of practice-based research, informed the direction taken. The methods identified specifically have their origins in the subjective practice of the artist. However, it was through the reflexivity of the research process that methods were developed and refined to illustrate and capture in more depth the ideas and outcomes which evolved throughout the creative process. As both knowledge and meaning emerged, so the research methods built upon and strengthened the investigative process. As will be shown, drawing emerged as a way of investigating the world both systematically and reflectively, opening up new ways of thinking and examining the mediated and embodied experience.

Chapter Three also applies the concepts discussed in Chapter 2 by reflecting on the research from the standpoint of both seer and seen. The subjective experience of drawing in situ and in the studio is described and considered from the perspective of both artist and researcher. The significance of process within the practice-based research paradigm is reflected upon in relation to the range of creative outcomes: drawings, sketches, writing, photographs and videos, supported by descriptive and digital journals. My personal journey through differing landscapes and places is documented through progressive stages of the research, and the resulting ways in which this journey impacted on ways of seeing and being seen is investigated.

Chapter Four evaluates the research process and its outcomes. The subjective and objective positions of seer and seen are reflected upon within phenomenological and practice-based contexts. The phase of re-drawing was identified through the research process is discussed in depth in this chapter in conjunction with the levels of consciousness and awareness which
emerged. The notion of seer and seen is analysed more fully and its influence on the exhibition planning is examined. Finally, the artist's personal observations and the theoretical viewpoints that informed the research are analysed and evaluated within the context of the creative outcomes. The impact of the research on my practice and ways of thinking, and the findings and outcomes of the study are discussed, and possibilities for future research directions are provided.
Chapter Two

2.1. Situating Contexts

Chapter One has provided an overview of the enquiry by establishing the origins of the research question and the significance of drawing to the direction of the study. The importance of practice-based research in relation to personal drawing practice was introduced and will be discussed in more depth in this chapter. The initial themes which emerged as a result of the examination of practice were identified and their influence on the direction of the research and the structure of the exegesis were established. The chapter highlighted a central premise of this study which is that drawing from life fundamentally changes what we know and how we know it.

The first major section of this chapter focuses on the significance of a phenomenological approach for this study, and the themes illustrated in Figure 1.3, of landscape and the ‘lived experience’, are viewed within a phenomenological paradigm. In the preliminary section, Phenomenology and Description, experience is discussed in relation to the writings of Edmund Husserl (1970a, 1970b, 2001) and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1964a, 1964b, 2004, 2006). Their ideas offer ways of considering the artist’s engagement with the ‘lived experience’ (Dilthey 2010) of the landscape and its interpretation through drawing. The characteristics of phenomenology that are pertinent to the study are considered as a way of thinking about, as well as describing, our subjective experience. Phenomenology offers an important distinction between the act of consciousness and the phenomena at which it is directed, and it is this distinction between the act of consciousness and its object that offers a way of considering the experience of drawing, including both its content and its object.

In Conjoining Relationships, phenomenology is explored in order to clarify ways of thinking about drawing practice. The artist’s involvement with experience, activity and outcome demonstrates a complex way of thinking about, in and through, a particular way of coming to know the world. The world is revealed by the act of ‘looking’ and this process relates directly to its reception and reconstruction by the viewer (O’Riley, 2006), both artist and audience. The practice of drawing is a means through which the act of looking can be translated in a tangible form. Consequently, the conception of the role of the self in mediating experience has connotations for the direction of the research and its outcomes and begins to establish a phenomenological parallel through which drawing activity can be considered. In Seer and Seen, the writings of Maurice Merleau-Ponty are
examined in more depth. The notion of the artist as viewer is expanded to consider how it might inform the enquiry. If phenomenology's primary aim is to 'describe', then the body could then be said to mediate this descriptive 'lived experience' through its presence as both seer and seen. This act of mediation, this 'enigma' (Merleau-Ponty, 1964a), offers the potential to bridge the gap between description and interpretation. This enables object, activity and outcome to be viewed as something that is concurrent and intertwined. These considerations inform the research and its use of the differing conceptual viewpoints of artist, researcher and viewer.

In the section Drawing on the Landscape, the connection between drawing and drawn is investigated. From this standpoint, it becomes possible to explore drawing's complex engagement with the world through the body. Ways in which drawing in situ and the studio shapes thinking will be investigated. The 'distance' of the studio suspends the direct embodied experience of the landscape and asks instead for an interpretation that is founded within the activity of drawing in situ. The effect of this distancing is specifically considered by Rowley (2007) in relation to the work of Helen Frankenthaler: Working in the studio is a process of 'making visible' (Rowley, 2007, p. 49) that results from 'the painted marks of the sketches made in situ' (Rowley, 2007, p.52). Drawing's corporeality, therefore, can be said to explicate the connection between the real and the imaginary as ways of thinking are directly evinced through marks made on a surface—a 'moment' captured.

In the second major section, Practical Contexts, the work of relevant artists, practitioners and theorists is explored in order to found the enquiry within contemporary understands of drawing as research. The review considers the role that art practice plays as a form of research for artists and which, it will be argued, evinces a particular way of coming to know the world. The writings discussed in this section have influenced the study through their emphasis on the interconnection between research and its creative outcomes. They also reveal how new ways of imaging and creating may be utilised within the research approach. These ideas framed the conceptual considerations of contemporary practice examined in the work of Ana Pollak, Monika Gryzmala, Peter Zumthor and Fabienne Verdier. All four practitioners consider the 'lived experience' as being integral to their working methodologies and outcomes. Their approaches are examined to add insight to both the content and the context of my own research.

By examining both situating and practical contexts, the chapter establishes how personal drawing practice—as a reflexive and reflective way of thinking—incorporates both an embodied world as well as a living process through which its meaning emerges (Prosser, 2004; O’Riley, 2006; Harty, 2012). The corporeal link between experience, drawing and outcome is examined in order to trace the conceptual thinking which underpins the enquiry and influences the methodology and methods that are outlined in Chapter Three.
2.2. Phenomenology and Description

Phenomenology, which Merleau-Ponty (2006) identifies 'as a manner or style of thinking' (Merleau-Ponty, 2006, pp.x) is of particular relevance to this study because phenomenology's primary concerns are with the structures of consciousness and the phenomena that appear within them. Woodruff Smith (2007) defines such reflection as 'the study of the essence of consciousness as experienced from the first person point of view’ (Woodruff Smith, 2007, p.1). Thus, phenomenology entails engaging the self in considering the meanings things have in our experience. Edmund Husserl, who is considered to be the founder of phenomenology (Zahavi, 1994), contends that this begins with a consciousness of experience itself (Husserl 1970a). Hence, his conception of phenomenology is founded in the epistemology of experience. Husserl (1970a, 2001) proposes that in order to study the structure of consciousness, there must be a distinction between the act of consciousness and the phenomena at which it is directed—that is, the object-in-itself, independent of consciousness (Husserl, 2001). These concepts became fundamental to the development of Husserl's phenomenology, in the distinction that he drew between an act of consciousness, its content or essence, and its object (Moran, 2001; Ricœur, 1996; Woodruff Smith, 2007). This involves the self (consciousness) being conscious of the self (object). It is this distinction between the act of consciousness and its object that offers a way of considering the experience of drawing, its content and its object, as it is described through the act as well as the outcome. That is to say that the object, for example the landscape, as it appears in consciousness can be separated from consciousness of the object through the activity of drawing. Drawing admits the object to consciousness but also allows reflection and analysis of the object within the activity, thus constituting a distinction between the object and the act of consciousness.

The drawing itself, as created object, adds another dimension to the complex subjective experience of object, drawing and the drawn. The epistemological experience of drawing posits phenomena within consciousness which, in turn, become objects for reflection and analyses. Drawing not only involves describing the object, or phenomena, but also entails an emerging consciousness of that object. Husserl's phenomenological way of looking at objects is characterised by examining how we, in our many ways of being, actually 'constitute' them. He distinguishes this process from materially creating objects or objects being figments of the imagination (Ricœur, 1996). This phenomenological way of looking begins to separate, or introduce, categories of objects. For example, the landscape is different from a created object—in this case, a drawing. However, a drawing can be said to have a dual role: as an object created in which the self is invested and as an object in itself outside of the activity of making. Drawing’s duality, as activity and object, can be defined through its ability to describe, or show reality, as well as its capacity to ‘describe how it describes’ (O’Riley, 2006, p.2). This dual role can be seen through the distinction of description (as object) and ‘describing how it describes’ (an active process) as shown in Figure 2.1.
2.3. Conjoining Relationships

In his analysis of perception and concrete experiences, *The Phenomenology of Perception* (2006), Maurice Merleau-Ponty extends Husserl’s phenomenology. Husserl and Merleau-Ponty both considered themselves phenomenologists but what most separated them was their different interpretations of what was meant by ‘experience’ (Johnson, 1993). Merleau-Ponty (2006) contends that experience cannot be considered without including the body as a means or ‘nexus’ (Dilthey, 2010) of embodied experience—something, he believed, that was overlooked by Husserl (Zaner, 1964; Kockelmans, 1967; Zahavi, 1994).

Merleau-Ponty (1964a) viewed the body not in terms of the physical body (an object of biology), but rather as a site of a complex set of concurrences in which ‘the structure of the perceptual field is the coexistence of subject and phenomena as lived interrelatedness’ (Rowley, 2007, p.47). Merleau-Ponty (2006) sought to develop a description of embodied experience through his consideration of the body as an object already existing within the world. Through this existing object the ‘perceptual beginning of reflection’ occurs as it begins ‘to reflect on itself’ (Merleau-Ponty, 2006, p.72). For Merleau-Ponty, perception is not merely the result of functioning organs but a vital, human, complex and performative act. As an object already existing in the world, the body can reflect on itself as well as the world outside. Since drawing is rooted in the subjective, we must then consider the self, or the body, as that which mediates the experience of the world. Within this context drawing is in itself an act that involves, in some form, a physical response. Butler and De Zegher (2011) define drawing in *On Line* as ‘A kinaesthetic practice of traction—attraction, extraction, protraction—drawing is born from an outward gesture linking inner impulses and thoughts through the touching of a surface’ (Butler & De Zegher, 2011, p.23). This complex relationship of object and consciousness is founded.

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*Figure 2.1. The parallels of object and consciousness within drawing activity.*
in an embodied experience and mediated by the body. Significantly, Merleau-Ponty (2004, 2006) and Butler and De Zegher’s (2011) ideas suggest that the conjoining relationships of ‘object’ and the act of drawing can be viewed through the context of an embodied experience. Application of this approach within the study allows theory and embodied activity to be studied within the paradigm of personal, and subjective, drawing practice.

2.4. Seer and Seen

In his essay ‘Eye and Mind’, Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1964a) examines the notion of embodiment within the context of art practice and refines his conception of embodied experience. Merleau-Ponty (1964a) proposes that it is the primacy of the body that allows the artist to engage with the world, asserting that it is ‘by lending his body to the world that the artist changes the world into painting’ (Merleau-Ponty cited in Johnson, 1993, p.123). This ‘lending’ of the body to the world implies a dissolving of Husserl’s distinctions between object and subject through inner and outer interaction. These differing viewpoints are illustrated in Figure 2.2. Husserl’s conception separates object and consciousness, whereas Merleau-Ponty envisages the different strands as dynamic and interwoven. Merleau-Ponty suggests that it is through this interchange of body and world that an entwining occurs as the external is internalised and the internal is externalised on paper, or canvas, by the artist. He further elucidates this complex relationship between the ‘visible’ and the immersed world of the body by considering the ways in which they overlap (their ‘imbrication’). From this, Merleau-Ponty contends that it is through the reflective/reflexive process of contemplating this connection that the seer ‘opens onto the world’ (Merleau-Ponty cited in Johnson, 1993, p.124). That is, by being immersed in the visible, through the body, the visible is not appropriated, but is instead revealed by the act of ‘looking’.

This paradox, of both being seen and the seer is derived from the body simultaneously looking at all things as well as looking at itself. The body ‘sees itself seeing; it touches itself touching; it is visible and sensitive for itself’ (Merleau-Ponty, cited in Johnson, 1993, p.124). The immersion in the visible and the movement of the body that occurs through drawing thus becomes part of a relational space that is essentially founded on a self-knowledge. An ‘enigma’ then arises, Merleau-Ponty believes, from this duality of the body as both seer and seen. In being able to look at all things as well as itself, the body is able to acknowledge both sides of this looking.

Merleau-Ponty explores this central ‘enigma’ through a conception of the body being at one and the same time in the world and of the world. It is the undivided nature of the ‘sensing’ and the ‘sensed’ that, Merleau-Ponty believes, characterises the presence of the human body and its ‘strong system of exchanges’ (Merleau-Ponty cited in Johnson, 1993, p.125). These problems are mirrored within the world, and so Merleau-Ponty (1964a) proposes the idea of an immersed body.
The notion of seer and seen is elucidated by Rowley (2007) in relation to subject/object relations. She refers to the intertwining of subject and object as ‘a circuit of outside/vision to inside/movement’ (Rowley, 2007, p.48) that she characterises as a position of reversibility: at one and the same time as a seer in the subjective world and an object that is seen by others (Rowley, 2007). The artist’s ‘world’ can then be thought of as one that is founded on the visible and mediated through the body.

Although Merleau-Ponty focuses primarily on painting, his conceptualisation of the integral nature of the embodied experience along with the activity of making, speaks directly to drawing and its practice. Additionally, as contemporary practices blur the lines between disciplines, it must be remembered that Merleau-Ponty was writing at a time when these boundaries were more defined and came with their own histories. This is evinced through the illustrations included within the essay ‘Eye and Mind’, which are predominantly by canonic artists from early modernist movements in western art, including Paul Klee (1879-1940), Nicholas de Stael (1914-1955), Paul Cezanne (1839-1906), Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966), Henri Matisse (1861-1954), Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) and Germaine Richier (1902-1959). It is interesting to note that at the time of Merleau-Ponty’s writing of ‘Eye and Mind’, all of the artists were dead apart from Alberto Giacometti. This is despite Merleau-Ponty living in the middle of the 20th century in his later years—a time of great societal and artistic change. However, in discussing Merleau-Ponty’s ways of thinking about artists working and the works themselves, his ideas go beyond the formalities of categorising works according to their form and materials and instead illuminate particular ways of thinking and acting.
Merleau-Ponty’s ideas are pertinent to this study because, if phenomenology’s primary aim is to ‘describe’ (as discussed earlier), then the body could then be said to mediate this ‘lived experience’ through its presence as both seer and seen. This act of mediation, or duality, offers the potential to bridge the gap between description and interpretation and enables object, activity and outcome to be viewed as something that is concurrent and intertwined within drawing practice and its outcomes. These ideas are specifically extended towards drawing. As drawing engages the body in transcribing experience internally, it is then externalised and made visible on the surface. It is this oscillation between internal and external that the research aims to investigate. Within my own personal practice, my intention has been to go beyond the appearance of the landscape and to reveal or make visible my experience of it. This approach is embodied in Paul Klee’s (1961, 1973) concern with the process through which a ‘point becomes a line, a line becomes a plane, and a plane becomes a body’ (Klee cited in Butler & De Zegher, 2011, p.38). It is rooted in Klee’s idea that: ‘Art does not reproduce the visible; rather, it makes visible’ (Klee, 1961, p.79). In referring to the process of drawing, Butler and De Zegher use the term ‘body’, not in the literal sense but in reference to form. Here we see the connection being made explicit, as the corporeality of drawing makes visible the ‘lived experience’. In both Paul Klee’s and Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s ideas we see a concern for the point at which experience and consciousness meet (Prosser, 2004). This point of intersection is revealed through drawing; it is not passed by in reflection, but rather picked up and utilised. It enables drawing to move beyond appearances and to reveal more of the world and our place within it—to make the invisible visible.

Similarly, John Dewey (2005) in *Art as Experience* considers that the artist’s subjective experience of the world, as self and world, can ‘qualify experience with emotions and ideas so that conscious intent emerges’ (Dewey, 2005, p.36). Dewey’s writing explores the potentialities of experience, which encompasses the artist being in the world, but also within the activity of making. He elucidates connections between the external and internal, the world and thought, the object of experience and the object (drawing) which resonate with ideas in Merleau-Ponty’s ‘Eye and Mind’ (1964a). Both Merleau-Ponty (1964a, 1964b) and Dewey (2005) consider the relationship between the internal and the external to be foundational in terms of how the artist both sees and responds to the subjective experience of both self and world.

Drawing, as considered within these theoretical frameworks, reveals a mediated experience of the world. Both the lived experience and the body are intrinsically linked with the drawing’s outcome, as the artist’s way of ‘seeing’ reaches beyond appearances, moving from description towards interpretation. The activity of mark making, undertaken outside ‘in-the-world’, dissolves the boundaries between the self and the object. As marks are transposed externally onto the paper, and internally as memory, drawing incorporates the past, present and future, so that they exist alongside one another in that moment of creation. The activity of drawing generates its own
source, driving itself; recreating the world as memory and as a conjectural possibility of the future. Thus, it becomes possible to reflect on how a landscape might manifest itself within an interpreted form. As meaning emerges through an embodied knowledge within drawing, so ‘natural phenomena [are transposed] from that qualitatively undifferentiated condition that we call “life,” into objective and internally focused concepts’ (Huebler, 1969, p.173). Within this context, drawing and the drawn can be said to operate as a dynamic and experiential living process that moves between and across conceptual constructs.

2.5. Drawing on the Landscape

Within these phenomenological contexts we are led to ask: what is the significance of the landscape within drawing practice? The phenomenological ways of thinking outlined above offer ways of considering a relationship between landscape, activity and outcome. The artist’s connection to the landscape, it will be argued in this section, reveals the experiential connection between embodied experience and the activity of drawing.

In *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard (1994) proposes that the mind is given form through the places and spaces in which we dwell. He believes that these places shape and influence our memories, feelings and thoughts and asserts: ‘Je suis l’espace où je suis (I am the space where I am)’ (Bachelard, 1994, p.137). Bachelard explores the idea of the public and private spaces in a domestic house to investigate the interplay between experience, consciousness and memory. He postulates that different spaces engage and affect conceptions of the internal and external and influence experience and memory. If indeed, as Bachelard claims ‘I am the space where I am’ (Bachelard, 1994, p.137) then the specificity of the landscape must also be considered in its relation to individual artistic practice. Likewise, Merleau-Ponty (1964b) in his essay ‘Cézanne’s Doubt’ contends that it is the essential experience of the landscape that demonstrates the intimate connection of body and experience. In this discussion, he refers to Cézanne’s conversation with Emile Bernard in which the artist states that ‘The landscape thinks itself in me and I am its consciousness’ (Cézanne cited in Merleau-Ponty, 1964b, p.17). From this perspective, both the artist and the painting or drawing, become then not a representation but instead an extension of it, or ‘a trace of body/consciousness/world in a continual process’ (Rowley, 2007, p.48).

These ideas are echoed by Jeremy Hooker (1987) who believes that as ‘the artist is inward with the otherness of the landscape’ so this ‘inwardness’ enables the paradox of the intimacy of experience to be explored from a distance (Hooker, 1987, p.11). He proposes that it is ‘this degree of estrangement [that] renews the world, and may transfigure it’ (Hooker, 1987, p.11). This ‘distance’ can be utilised to separate the immediate involvement with landscape from the ‘lived experience’ (Husserl in Moran 2005: Dilthey, 1985, 2010), as the artist considers, or is conscious of, that ‘place’ and its subsequent interpretation.
Similarly, Alison Rowley (2007) in *Helen Frankenthaler: painting history, writing painting* specifically explores the artist’s connection with the landscape. She contends that Helen Frankenthaler’s ‘break through’ work, *Mountains and Sea* (1952), demonstrates this reciprocity. The work was produced after a holiday that Frankenthaler took with Clement Greenberg to Nova Scotia in 1952. Rowley postulates that the series of drawings and paintings that emerged from this trip owe a debt to Cézanne in that Frankenthaler had been influenced by the 1952 exhibition in Chicago of his work (Rowley, 2007). In the chapter entitled ‘A Spatial Feeling Connected with Landscapes’, Rowley argues that Frankenthaler’s work based on the Nova Scotia trip points to her reengagement with landscape through her ‘situatedness’, a state that could only be achieved through being in a particular landscape. Frankenthaler herself admits that: ‘I see most of my paintings as landscapes or vistas, changing views, motion caught. I get some of my ideas from making studies outdoors or just noticing the designs and complications of nature’ (Frankenthaler cited in Rowley, 2007, p.45). Frankenthaler expands on this connection in an interview with Henry Geldzahler for *Art Forum* in 1965:

> In 1952 on a trip to Nova Scotia I did landscapes with folding easel and equipment. I came back and did the ‘Mountains and Sea’ painting and I know the landscapes were in my arms as I did it. (Frankenthaler cited in Rowley 2007, p.45)

Here, Frankenthaler makes explicit the corporeal link between the activity in the landscape and working in the studio. Her statement that ‘the landscapes were in my arms as I did it’, when viewed in conjunction with Bachelard (1994) and Merleau-Ponty’s (1964b) assertions, opens up the possibility of levels of consciousness intertwining and working alongside each other, being essentially founded in the experience of drawing/painting in the landscape itself.

Rowley acknowledges Merleau-Ponty’s essay ‘Eye and Mind’ (Rowley, 2007) by referring to his argument for a mode of thinking which is located ‘at the site of the body as it is lived in association with things in the world’ (Rowley, 2007, p.47). It is this relationship between body, landscape and mark making activity that reveals what is ‘the normally invisible ground of the visibility of things as we see them in our everyday lives’ (Rowley, 2007, p.49). Frankenthaler, when working in the studio, engaged in the process of ‘making visible’ by connecting the Nova Scotian landscape through the intertwined movement of ‘eye and hand’, which Rowley specifically locates ‘in the painted marks of the sketches made in situ’ (Rowley, 2007, p.52). As Rowley suggests, artworks exist for artists primarily as ‘present, phenomenological worlds, perceptual fields within whose vision the painter comes to exist as painter’ (Rowley, 2007, p.54).

Collectively, these ideas inform my study in its exploration of the ‘lived experience’ (Dewey, 2005; Merleau-Ponty, 2006; Dilthey, 2010) and its consideration of the experience of the landscape. Although Rowley (2007) and Merleau-Ponty (1964a, 1964b) refer consistently to painters and
painting, if we return to phenomenology as a ‘style of thinking’ (Merleau-Ponty, 2006, p.x), drawing is not excluded. Drawing could in fact be considered a fecund site for evincing the connection of landscape, the ‘lived experience’ and drawing practice.

2.6. Practical Contexts
Practice-based research takes many forms, so within the expanding frameworks of what constitutes practice-based research, I will focus on the writings of Patricia Cain (2010) and Angela Rogers (2008). In common with my own situation, both are practising artists and their research evolved from a need to understand their own experiences of drawing more fully. Both incorporate aspects of their own practice as an integral component of their research, and the theoretical frameworks they employ are underpinned by an engagement with philosophy. Both artists explore the notion of generative enquiry, and their importance for my study lies in the fact that they are artists examining and sharing their own research and subjective practice in an academic research-based context.

Patricia Cain, in Drawing: The Enactive Evolution of the Practitioner (2010), a book developed from her PhD research, uses a practice-based methodology to investigate the inter-relationship of drawing, cognition and intuition. Cain’s methodology focuses on drawing as an act of ‘becoming aware’ through which she asks the question ‘Can I embody another artist’s thinking process by copying his drawing?’ (Cain, 2010, p.113). Cain’s writing and practice explores the experience of making drawings from a personal point of view as she compares and analyses her process and methods in relation to the work of Richard Talbot and Oliver Zwink. Building on the writing of Francesco Varela (1991), she examines the theoretical underpinnings of her own drawing practice.

Drawing as a ‘knowledge-constituting process’ (Cain, 2010, p.31) is investigated through her application of a method described as ‘enactive copying’. Working alongside Talbot and Zwink, as well as independently, Cain sought, through her inquiry, to discover the nature of the ‘generative’ within drawing through commonalities of experience. The copying of work revealed to Cain the nature of the individual’s experience of drawing practice. Cain suggests that the experience of the individual is pivotal to the production of relational knowledge, as what comes to be known is ‘enacted’ (Cain 2010). She asserts that it is through a bodily history of the individual that experience is always ‘at any given time and place... in the first person’ (Depraz et al. cited in Cain, 2010, p.59). Cain traces the basis for examining experience in the first person through ‘enactivism’ (Cain, 2010), a process that gives prominence to an individual’s ability to define their own perspective of the world. She develops these ideas through an investigation of ‘cognition’ in the first person, since direct knowledge of subjective experiences stems from ‘our first person access to them’ (Cain, 2010).
A consideration of Varela’s writings led Cain to an awareness of how the body operates as a ‘lived experiential organism’ which facilitates an understanding of how the embodiment of knowledge from experience might occur (Varela et al., 1991). In addition, Cain examines Varela’s fusing of the centrality of the lived body, in terms of ‘enactive emergence’ and suggests that there needs to be a phenomenological emphasis on experience ‘as a means of understanding mental states’ (Cain, 2010, p.59) if one is to begin to explain ‘the subjective nature of our experience’ (Chalmers, 1995, p.201). Cain extends Varela’s notions of the necessity of describing what we experience as we experience it, as opposed to the philosophical tendency to produce ‘theoretical discourses about experiences rather than recapture them’. She argues that ‘our’ description of experience becomes part of a continual connection between ‘physical structure (outer) and lived experiential structure (inner)’ (Cain, 2010, p.60). This continual connection between experience and the description of experience means that not only the act of making, but the conscious observation of the act becomes a part of the experience itself. This notion has direct implications for my own research in that it allows both the experience and the experience of making to become sites that may reveal both descriptive and interpretative insight. As the external is internalised and the internal externalised, new ways of considering the relationship between drawing and its interpretation of the subjective are able to emerge.

Cain draws on Varela’s consideration of ‘awareness’ as being a meta-cognitive state which, she believes, is inherent in the first person experience and allows us to ‘examine that which we live through’ (Cain, 2010, p.59). Her methodology is further developed through interviews with the practitioners whose discoveries about thinking had emerged from drawing. It is her interviews with artists Oliver Zwink and Richard Talbot that provide the basis for her critical observations of how those artists identified and described the cognitive processes that they employed during the activity of drawing. The questions raised through this process were subsequently developed through an examination of personal experience, using herself as a subject.

Cain’s question of ‘Can I embody another artist’s thinking process by copying his drawing?’ (Cain, 2010, p.113) provided the framework as she proceeded to copy drawings of both Zwink and Talbot. Cain asserts that her detailed dissection of the activity of drawing—in both the first person and the third person—revealed the ‘dialectic’ of body and mind and allowed her to understand more fully the process of thinking employed by the two artists. She identified stages of thinking as the drawings studied moved from the ‘representational to the processual’ (Cain, 2010, p. 251). As a result, her inquiry became intensively skills-based as she attempted to recreate both line and its stages of development in the drawing process. Cain believes that her discoveries regarding ways of thinking emanate from this process which she termed ‘enactive copying’ as she recreated the method of the artist rather than ‘transcribing what he [the artist] said’ (Cain, 2010, p.251).
For this reason, her methods, methodologies and conclusions are intimately bound up with the physical experience of copying and the experience of being with, and entangled in, the work of Zwink and Talbot throughout the course of the inquiry. However, it is Cain’s articulation of the subjective experience within, and through, her drawing that demonstrates its ability to deconstruct and reconstruct complex modes of thinking and understanding of experience. Her systematic approach to analysing, critiquing and developing her own work suggested how different methods and methodologies could be applied within my own research whilst her systematic recording of her practice—and the subsequent developments—indicated how these strategies could be further developed within my own enquiry.

These writings on practical theory illustrate the connections between practical engagement and living process, identified by Bolt (2010) and expanded upon by Cain (2010). Similarly, Angela Rogers, in her (2008) PhD thesis titled *Drawing Encounters*, situates her art-based research within an examination of the ‘dialogic’ (Rogers, 2008) of drawing. Rogers used a variety of settings and situations with different individuals to initiate her drawing encounters. She interacted with different people, some she met by chance and others she knew, to initiate co-operative drawings. She drew with these individuals on the same piece of paper as they took turns to observe each other drawing and subsequently respond visually, taking turns to draw. Participant feedback was garnered through a series of survey questions and Rogers’ responses were noted in a journal. She developed a method of visualising her analysis through a large scale ‘mind-map’ (Rogers, 2008, p.34).

Rogers frames her critical approach within the context of David Bohm (2004) and Martin Buber’s (1970) writings concerning dialogue and encounter. These authors contribute to her study by examining how creative practices such as writing and drawing can translate particular experiences in ways that other methods are unable to do. Rogers’ explication of the intimate connection between writing and drawing as methods for discovery reveals differing interpretations and experiences can contribute to a more multi-faceted understanding of subjective experience.

Rogers’ study has relevance to my own because through her research approach she sought to expand understandings of the drawing process as a methodology of creative enquiry: articulating the role of drawing as a research strategy and generative practice. Her use of drawing and writing provided a way in which my own personal practice could be developed within the enquiry and echoed Bolt’s (2010) argument concerning the importance of the written exegesis within the context of the creative outcomes. Buber’s work addresses ‘aspects of human relations that cannot be thought or spoken about in an appropriate way’ (Rogers, 2008, p.15), whilst Avnon (cited in Rogers, 2008, p.16) notes that writing can be used as a ‘vehicle of seeing and of listening’ in direct relation to what is present. Rogers, who focuses on Buber’s largely theoretical writing, identifies
the gap between the spoken and the implied as a place that is still largely ‘uncomprehended’—arguing that drawing is closer to thought than to speech and, although drawing is temporal in its nature, the activity clarifies incoherent inner images and provides ‘a record of the thought stream’ (Rogers, 2008, p.11).

In common with Bolt (2010), Rogers suggests that the effectiveness of drawing as a research and ‘thinking tool is due to its haptic qualities’ (Rogers, 2008, p.36). Rogers identifies a correlation between haptic engagement and increases in the scale of her research drawings. She directly links this increasing scale with the body becoming more involved, suggesting that the process ‘becomes more immersive as sensory stimulation is enhanced’ (Rogers, 2008, p.36). Her own large scale research drawings are seen as repositories of thoughts, ideas and feelings that refer to the overt and inexpressible, the floating and the fixed, which, as a feature of her drawing, allow her to generate understanding.

Rogers’ research drawings operate on different levels; as both a commentary on drawing and encounter and a demonstration of drawing research practice. This personal experience of drawing, its methods and methodologies, directly informed her approach to the participant research within the enquiry, since the questions that arose in the course of her personal practice formed the basis and structure for deeper levels of participant involvement. Her research reveals the complex nature of drawing activity in revealing meaning and intention. Significantly, in seeing drawing as a dialogic tool, Rogers acknowledges the possibility that the outcomes may reveal meaning through the interchange between artist and participants—echoing themes identified earlier, such as bodily engagement (Bolt, 2010), the relationship between artist and viewer (O’Riley, 2006) and the living process of research (Cain, 2010). These ideas are pertinent to my study because they are characteristic of practice-based research whilst the different approaches they offer demonstrate the diversity of avenues of exploration open to the artist/researcher.

2.7.Drawing and Phenomenology

Both Cain (2010) and Rogers (2008) relate their research to the writings of theorists in order to address the complex questions with their own practice. The writing of Geoffrey Bailey (1982), Bill Prosser (2004) and Deborah Harty (2012) examined in this section explores the connection between drawing, research and phenomenology.

In 'Drawing and the Drawing Activity: A Phenomenological Investigation', Geoffrey Bailey (1982) examines the phenomena of drawing from this philosophical standpoint. As phenomenology returns to the lived experience, particular ways of thinking are evinced through and by the process of drawing. Bailey considers whether drawing, through the ‘draughtsman’, makes actual or visible a ‘perceptual interchange’ through reflecting on the world. This idea would seem to have
been built upon by Rogers (2008) although Bailey (1982) cites his research firmly within a more traditional sphere of drawing practice—the artist as draughtsman. Like O’Riley (2006), Bailey views drawing as a process that constitutes a move towards meaning. He sees meaning as a movement that is evident in the imaginative engagement that ‘brings time and space together’ (Bailey, 1982). Bailey believes that drawing, as ‘image in form’ demonstrates this move from the ‘lived experience’ to a consideration of that experience. This then, he argues, establishes the order and sustainability of the ‘drawing’s world’ and constitutes the move towards meaning. These ideas echo Sullivan (2010) and Barrett and Bolt’s (2009) notions of the inter-relationship between theory and emergent practice as well as O’Riley’s (2006) assertion that meaning emerges through the process of making.

Bailey places these philosophical discussions within the context of the drawings of five other ‘draughtsmen’ and their own drawing activity, rather than his own subjective experience of drawing. In this instance, Bailey can only be considered to be the observer and his discussions are knowingly framed within these parameters. In maintaining that the ‘draughtsman is a phenomenologist’ (Bailey, 1982, p.3), Bailey cites the process and activity of mark making as a route that involves ‘the interrogation of how things are’ (Bailey, 1982, p.3) that establishes the ontology of drawing, and therefore functions as a phenomenological concern. In light of this, he asserts that it is impossible ‘to think that by looking at what we have drawn, we could come to know what we have seen’ (Wollenheim, 1973, p.10 cited in Bailey, 1982). He considers how drawing may reveal ‘what is seen’ through the notion of ‘ambiguity’ and ‘uncertainty’ which, Bailey contends, arises ‘from the fact that we can, through the image, hypothesise, we can preview events and can cast forward an intention’ (Bailey, 1982, p. 136). In so doing it is our imaginative ability to form an image of the possible which creates a tension between the actual and the possible, with the whole as a ‘situational concern’, that ‘funds the whole experience of creating itself’ (Bailey, 1982, p.136). These themes of uncertainty and ambiguity within the process and activity of making, reiterate the connections within practice-based research made by Sullivan (2010), O’Riley (2006) and Barrett and Bolt (2009). Bailey makes the specific connection with the phenomenology of the experience of making. This is explored in more depth by Bolt (2010) through the notion of ‘praxial knowledge’ (Bolt, 2010) attained through working with particular materials and processes of making.

The relevance of phenomenological thinking is examined by Bill Prosser (2004) in his doctoral thesis *An Archetypal Psychology of the Ordinary: An Investigation Through Drawing*. In contrast to Bailey (1982), who studied the work of others, Prosser produced a series of autobiographical drawings that gradually evolved into detailed images of his room. Prosser’s thesis takes the form of five essays, each of which addresses aspects of his drawings. It is accompanied by a ‘parallel text’ (Prosser, 2004) operating as a framework within which the drawings
can be viewed, but remain independent. Methodologically, Prosser combines philosophical theory, art history and creative writing within the text in order to consider the ordinary and ‘everyday’ of experience. The drawings and the writing address the dilemma of recording the ‘epiphanic subtleties of everyday experience’ (Prosser, 2004, p.2), within an open and imaginative engagement. This approach to writing and drawing, as well as the thesis, which becomes an artefact in itself, reiterates the connection between writing and drawing (Buber, 1992) and the symbiosis of the exegesis and the outcome (Bolt, 2010).

Prosser’s study demonstrates practice-based research’s ability to create and extend ways of working, thinking and articulating research outcomes. Throughout the study his practice is examined as a way of knowing the world and, through its connection to ‘practical knowledge’, to reveal new understandings. Through the drawings, Prosser attempted to elicit the ‘nuances contained within the habitually passed over’ corners of his room (Prosser, 2004, p.ii). He proposes that the drawings are founded on a ‘common phenomenological observation’: that we are unaware of the things that we are most familiar with. However, Prosser believes that ‘phenomenology is determined not to be either a science of objects or the subject, but that of experience: it concentrates upon where being and consciousness make contact’ (Prosser, 2004, p.6).

This is an important distinction within the context of my research. The phenomenological focus of my study considers the ‘lived experience’. Prosser characterises experience as being intentionally directed. This implies an active stance that is located within the subjective. He asserts that phenomenology identifies this point of contact as ‘intentionality’, which is a reciprocal dependency. He argues that when consciousness is directed towards objects in the world it can only be experienced through being constituted by this ‘very intentionality’. The phenomenological task is to concentrate on phenomena that offer themselves as intentions of consciousness ‘and which manifest their meanings by doing so’ (Prosser, 2004, p.12).

These ideas have implications for my research in their revelation of modes of consciousness that may exist within drawing. How drawing is initiated and directed needs to be placed within the context of personal drawing practice. Prosser’s own drawings, which locate themselves within a specific art historical context of realism, are offered as an illustration of the phenomenological principles he has sought to examine. However, the difficulty lies in Prosser’s attempt to uncover the ‘familiar’ and overlooked. By focusing, intentionally, on these objects, surroundings and events as they emerge into the reflective, conscious domain they are, therefore, rendered visible—and paradoxically, no longer familiar and ‘overlooked’.
Prosser believes that Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological enquiries and the notion of the ‘phenomenal missing body’ are concentrated through his consideration of the ‘primary physical sense’ of sight (Prosser, 2004). Drawing on these ideas of the visual encounter, Prosser argues that the point of contact is expressly mediated through the living body. In referring to the body Prosser, like Rogers (2008), makes specific the corporeal connection between drawing and thinking. These ideas are relevant for my study as they begin to point to the connections between perception, in this case sight, and how drawing might facilitate thinking.

Similarly in critically examining the connection between drawing, consciousness and the body, Deborah Harty (2012) in her paper ‘drawing//phenomenology//drawing – an exploration of the phenomenological potential of repetitive processes’ asserts that the repetitive processes of drawing are phenomenological; recording ‘both movement of the drawer’s mind and the drawing’s own making’ (Harty, 2012, p.1). In common with Prosser (2004), Harty utilises personal drawing practice to examine states of consciousness within the activity of drawing. She notes that ‘whilst the processes [of drawing] may differ, each induced a particular fluctuating state of consciousness’ (Harty, 2012, p.1). These observations provided the basis for several texts which sought to articulate the nature of states of consciousness while drawing. Harty defines these states as fluctuating ‘between awareness of being connected to the environment—a disconnection of the mind to the point of loss of awareness and conversely a heightened awareness of self within the environment’ (Harty, 2012, p.3).

Although Harty does not consider the remit of the paper to be the study ‘consciousness per se’, she nevertheless adopts Velmans’ (1996) standpoint of reflexive monism as the lens through which drawing practice can be considered. Velmans’ contention is that:

The ‘contents of consciousness’ encompass all that we are conscious of, aware of, or experience. These include not only experiences that we commonly associate with ourselves, such as thoughts, feelings, images, dreams, body experiences and so on, but also the experienced three-dimensional world (the phenomenal world) beyond the body surface. (Velmans cited in Harty, 2012, p.3)

Harty uses Velmans’ definition to discuss a conception of ‘a third category’ of consciousness that she characterises as a ‘fusion’ of both the internal and external. The first two categories are: ‘internal phenomena—somatic and psychic; [and] external phenomena—the drawing and environment within which they are present’ (Harty, 2012, p.3). This ‘fluctuating state’, or third category, Harty believes, fuses both internal and external phenomena, which results in the loss of the ‘self’, erasing the boundaries between inside and outside. She argues that a distinctive aspect of this fluctuating state is not a loss of self-awareness ‘but a loss of the awareness of the self as something separate from the environment’ (Harty, 2012, p.4). This then moves towards ‘another
form of knowing that is strangely familiar’ and yet not founded in a part of recalled experience. Harty acknowledges the difficulty in determining where the self exists and whether it ‘incorporates the external elements as if they were internal or whether the self transcends the internal to become fused with external elements’ (Harty, 2012, p.4). She contends that it is the repetitive process of drawing that induces this ‘state of fusion’ that results in the ‘loss of the self’ within this mode of experience.

In considering that which is not recalled within experience, Harty draws on the writing of Bollas (1987) in order to investigate the relationship between experience, ‘fusion’ and recall. Harty suggests that a state, or mode, of consciousness that includes the state of ‘fusion’ can be generated by ‘either the experience of nature; the experience of an artwork; the experience of a repetitive physical activity’ (Harty, 2012, p.6). These ideas seem to connect notions of embodied experience directly with its cognitive correlates. In exploring in more depth that state of awareness, or ‘fusion’ through creative activity, Harty considers whether the research of Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990), and Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1988) in which fluctuating consciousness is called ‘flow’, and the research of Dewey (1934), Bollas (1987) and De Bolla (2001) examining ‘aesthetic response’ and ‘aesthetic experience’, are in fact describing the same ‘state’ which is referred to in different ways within different contexts.

Drawing on this research, Harty explores conceptions of ‘flow’ and its characteristics to explain aspects of the drawing experience. Through her drawing research, she identifies ‘rhythm’ as a significant factor in both inducing and recording, through drawing, this state of ‘fusion’. Harty frames these considerations with the contention that drawing’s immediacy has the ability to record the trace of the drawer, as a trace of the physical act and a trace of the thinking process ‘through the rhythm of marks on the surface’ (Harty, 2012, p.12). She argues that this rhythm in drawing, the marks on the surface, record the deviating and fluctuating states of consciousness through the path across the surface. It is this direct recording, Harty contends, that establishes drawing’s phenomenological status as ‘the state of consciousness through [which] the process of drawing is made possible’ (Harty, 2012, p. 13).

In identifying phenomenology as being used for ‘the first-person experience of conscious states’ Harty (2012, p. 13) refers to ‘drawing as a phenomenological process’. These discussions are related to the work of Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty and Harty concludes that phenomenology is a tool that can be used within the creative process for considering the phenomena of states as they appear in consciousness. In stating that the repetitive processes of drawing ‘are phenomenological’, Harty connects a physical act with a state of consciousness and with a way of thinking. Of significance to this study, Harty utilises Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological conception of the body as a starting point for considering how the world is mediated. Harty proposes that artists are able
to communicate a specific ‘mode of being-in-the-world’ through the work in which the ‘body is mediator between the state of consciousness and the marks left on the paper through drawing’ (Harty, 2012, p.16). She asserts that, ‘The identified fluctuating state of consciousness induced by the repetitive action of drawing is visible in the marks drawn on the surface’ (Harty, 2012, p.18). In such instances the surface, she believes, records the rhythmical and repetitive process, the state of consciousness of the drawer as well as the ‘drawing’s becoming’ as it emerges.

Harty’s conceptions of how consciousness might manifest itself within drawing practice have significant implications for my enquiry. Her analysis of modes of consciousness which exist within drawing activity demonstrate the complexity of the connections between the experience of drawing and its cognitive correlates and eloquently illustrates how drawing and ways of thinking about personal practice contribute to an in-depth understanding of how embodied experience might manifest itself in drawing. She elucidates ideas identified by Sullivan (2010), Barrett and Bolt (2009) and Bolt (2010) that posit art-based practice as a methodology for revealing ways of thinking and making. Harty, as well as Cain (2010) and Rogers (2008), demonstrates that systematic enquiry underpinned by philosophical analysis enables the artist/researcher to rigorously examine the foundations of personal practice. These ideas resonated with my own research and offered conceptions of how the study might be shaped to consider the interconnections of mind and body, drawing and personal practice.

2.8. Practice Contexts

It is within these conceptual frameworks that I have chosen the work of three artists, Ana Pollak, Fabienne Verdier and Monika Gryzmala and one architect, Peter Zumthor, to examine in greater depth. Each body of work offers my enquiry the opportunity to relate aspects of personal practice and its outcomes to the theoretical and practical strands of the research. In common with this study, each practitioner considers the contemplation of the landscape, or place, as fundamental to their practice. Working methods vary, but a common theme that emerges is how landscape, or place, invades consciousness through the lived experience. In analysing the work of others, the enquiry establishes itself firmly within the context of emerging conceptions of drawing activity and connections to the landscape. Zumthor, Verdier, Pollak and Gryzmala all utilise notions of place and experience within their work, however their creative outcomes demonstrate how contemporary practice enables these concerns to manifest themselves in diverse working methodologies and outcomes.

**Ana Pollak. Landscape and the place of the studio**

The work of Ana Pollak aims to capture the illusory and shifting atmosphere of the landscape (Pollack, 2017). Her site-specific drawings are used as a source, within the studio, to explore the changing environment, the delineation of space and the intimacy of gesture. Pollak’s work can be
said to be situated within a more traditional conception of drawing that is predicated on the use of materials such as paper, graphite and charcoal. Pollak’s work is essentially tied to the intimacy of personal experience. She initially works in situ, sketching and making notes, before moving to work in her studio. Her drawings of the Hawkesbury River near her home on Dangar Island, New South Wales, capture the mood and atmosphere of that landscape: oyster beds, tranquil waters, the fog and mist of the early morning. A deep engagement with place is central to Pollak’s work. The area that she works within can only be reached by water. The artist rows her boat out into the river before sketching what she sees. Referring to her subjective experience of the environment in which she sketches she states: ‘If you’ve got the tide with you and the wind behind you … it can take anything from about 20 minutes to about 40 minutes.’ She adds: ‘It’s a vast space and the oyster stakes are quite amazing to see. They have this lovely skeletal delineation’ (Pollak cited in Schwartzkoff, 2007, p.1). Pollak’s working process emphasises the connection between what is seen and what is experienced.

Returning to her studio on Dangar Island, Pollak works directly onto rice paper with graphite to produce drawings from the sketches made on the river. Giving a luminous fragility to the images, the skeletal frameworks emerge and retreat within the shifting light and shadow. The reduced means and minimal marks are ‘seductively beautiful’ (Cross in ANU, 2008, p.45) resonating across the plane of the paper. Pollak’s personal encounters with the Hawkesbury River and its oyster beds reveal a calm, atmospheric expanse that is pierced by the stays of the man-made atrophied structures. The process of experiencing, drawing, remembering and redrawing engages Pollak in considering the essential elements of isolation and intimacy that are revealed within the final drawings. The temporality of the experience, the atmosphere and specificity of the landscape are intertwined with conceptions of the ineffable, whilst the distinctiveness of the place becomes amplified through the working methods, in a sense tying the drawings to that location.

In the series of drawings, Flux 3, Pollak responds to the ‘reduction of visual stimulus’ (Pollak cited by Cross, 2008, p.45) as the experience of being immersed straddles the modalities of place and time. As Pollak observes:

The mind slows down because the eyes are not engaged with so many things and you get into this meditative way of being… you reduce what you are putting down to the barest essentials.

(Pollak cited by Cross, 2008, p. 45)

Within Pollak’s practice the absorption, within the narrow confines of the activity of each drawing, enhances the experience; heightening perceptions of light, atmosphere and of being in a specific moment. In her large-scale graphite drawings, such as Study for Mullet Creek and Mullet Creek (Figure 2.3), Pollak plays with scale and proportion, and creates a sense of immersion for the viewer by extending the image beyond the field of vision. The marks themselves create measured
spaces, or silences, as large sweeps of paper go untouched. Gradations and veils of tone alternate within the rhythms of space and the almost scribbled notations. Through the ‘vaporous shroudings’ (Cross, 2008, p.45) the silence takes on an almost palpable presence, as the focus slips and shifts, seemingly rolling across the paper. The interface between the sky and water, the softness, the quietness of the shifting vapour envelops the viewer, creating an indelible impression of something that is happening in which we are involved.

![Image](image.png)

**Figure 2.3.** Ana Pollack. (Above): *Study for Mullet Creek* (2007). Graphite on white wove paper. 30.0 x 84.4 cm sheet. (Below): *Mullet Creek* (2007). Graphite on rice paper. 100.0 x 240.0 cm sheet. Art Gallery of NSW collection.

In viewing the drawings, the viewer is reeled into the intimacy of the delicate marks on the surface, consuming one’s attention in the sparse detail of the fragile graphite strokes. As the gaze moves from one structure to the next there is a sense of navigating across the surface of a familiar but alien terrain. As the whole of the drawing comes into view the viewer is caught by the ineffable atmosphere and distinctness of place evoked by the images.
Pollak’s work begins with perceptual experience and the relationship between this encounter and its reinterpretation through drawing is explored within the studio environment. The working process of getting in the boat, rowing out across the river, drawing, photographing, making notes (Art Gallery of NSW, 2016), immerses the artist in the landscape, and this becomes a ‘lived experience’. The totality of this experience forms the basis of the studio drawings. This working methodology points to the artist’s intimate involvement with the landscape, so that drawing in situ heightens awareness within the confines of an embodied experience. The distance created by relocating the work to the studio environment is used to separate this immediate involvement with landscape and the ‘lived experience’ (Husserl in Moran 2005; Dilthey, 1985, 2010) that considers or is conscious of that ‘place’ (the Hawkesbury River), and its subsequent interpretation through drawing.

A unity or coherence emerges through the relationship of the studio drawing to the environment itself. The dichotomy of Pollak’s drawings can be seen as both an expression of the immediacy of experience as it arrives almost unmediated on the paper, in contrast with the carefully considered and reflective economy of mark. The clarity of the imagery, the proximity of the water and the sky, and the reductive pictorial means, both elemental and abstract, connect landscape, experience and memory.

**Monika Grzymala. Generative Drawing**

Monika Grzymala is a Polish-born artist living in Germany. Her installations encompass notions of form, line and space and her site-specific works extend conceptions of drawing beyond two-dimensions. Using tape, wire and clay she explores line and mark, responding to the conditions and architecture of a given space. Conventions of line, mark and surface are subverted by the use of relatively inflexible and rigid materials and it is the fixed nature of the media that defies the fluidity and uncertainty of conventions of drawing. Grzymala’s use of materials and space challenge the definition of her work as ‘drawing’.

Grzymala’s practice explores drawing’s connection to the immediacy of thought and the concept of generative practice. As she draws into a room, walls, floors and ceilings begin to be defined by the space between. The rigidity of materials is transformed by the drawing and the hard-edged planes of plaster, glass and concrete are mediated by the ebb and flow of the artist as she moves across and around, the emerging space. The harmony of materials and process, in responding to the particularity of that place, redefines, or re-articulates, those forms that occupy the space. As line weaves sculpturally along walls and ceilings, expanding into the three-dimensionality of the space, the drawing interconnects, compressing line, disappearing only to reappear with momentum. From the viewer’s perspective, Grzymala’s drawings envelop not only the space but the person within it. Grzymala’s work emphasises the hybridity that can be contained within artistic practice,
and involves a reorientation of materials and compositional structures. In dismissing conventional surfaces and radically incorporating space, Gryzmala challenges classical models of making. The artist creates a space in which viewing and interacting become essential to the continuing performative act of experiencing the work.

The extension of drawing into a third dimension allows line and mark to re-interpret and reinvent space. Grzymala’s approach begins with drawing on paper (Winkel, 2011) without her necessarily having seen the space. Marks with tape, graphite and pen are used by the artist so that ideas take shape, but it is not until the installation begins that the site-specific work materialises. Figure 2.4 shows an example of her work Raumzeichnung (stone and the song of silence) as installed at the Reykjavik Art Museum in 2016. In describing her working method Grzymala emphasises the importance of the questions she asks herself when preparing a project, remarking:

I’m also asking myself questions like Okay, I will start with something like hatching/section lining and then we’ll see how I install it in the space. Do I hang it down from the ceiling or is it just on the wall or do I place it on the floor? This is like a vocabulary of lines for me, it travels with me and helps me to make the first decision when I arrive. (Grzymala quoted in Yarish, 2009, p. 76)

Here, Grzymala makes specific the connection between thinking and acting within the drawing itself—the drawing is describing its own world—as thought becomes tangible through the materials. Within the specific phases of the installation it is possible to see the drawing as thought being guided by the hand. The generative practice of drawing, interpreting and responding to the location is integral to the work itself, as is the act of performativity, as Grzymala asserts:

it is a performance. This is why I describe my work sometimes in kilometers of used tape, because I think that these kilometers that I leave behind in the process of developing a new three-dimensional drawing best describe the physical but also the mental work I’m doing there. And the duration – time is a very important component of my work. (Grzymala quoted in Yarish, 2009, p. 76)

Through the process of drawing, reconstructing space, documenting and dismantling the drawings Gryzmala explores the notion of the corporeality of drawing. The embodied experience is inherent as the artist recreates and redefines the space for both artist and viewer.

The nature of the installation changes over time, as gravity and interaction affect the materials. Lines sag and droop, recapturing form but subverting the previous momentum as dynamism stalls and is suspended within the intricacies of the line and space. Within the activity of drawing, the generative performative act, line begins to generate its own presence. The artist is enmeshed within the experience of the drawing, however the line, in re-defining the space, reveals differing
spatial relationships. The space itself becomes a part of the immersive experience of both drawing, seeing and thinking. The final pieces exist for short periods of time before being recorded through photography. Once dismantled the image becomes the record and the remaining two-dimensional reality.

Figure 2.4. Monika Grzymala (2016). Raumzeichnung (stone and the song of silence).
Site specific work made of 4.5 km black paper tape. Reykjavik Art Museum.

Gryzmala’s work can be said to exploit drawing’s corporeality as the process of working oscillates between description and interpretation. In this way, the thinking of the artist through drawing is revealed. As the lines are deposited on the surfaces, a relational space emerges which is rooted in the subjectivity of the drawing activity. Line describes the artist’s embodied experience of the space whilst at the same time interpreting the action and reaction of the working process. Ultimately in Gryzmala’s work, both thinking and drawing become an intertwined performative act that co-exist simultaneously.

Peter Zumthor. Landscape and Experience.

So what moved me? Everything. The things themselves, the people, the air, noises, sound, colours, material presences, textures, forms too – forms I can appreciate. Forms I can decipher. Forms I find beautiful (Zumthor cited in Labs-Ehlert, 2005, p.17).

Peter Zumthor’s architectural practice incorporates concerns for the landscape and form amid a fundamental interaction with the lived experience. Zumthor’s work is relevant to this study because the nature of the experiential informs the development of ideas and outcomes. Landscape and the immersive experience manifest themselves through the importance of location in situating work and the human interchange with the generated space. Each project
offers the opportunity for Zumthor to ‘explore the circumstances particular to each building—its site, its intended use—and to design a sensory experience’ (Murray, 2007, p.363). Materials, such as wood, glass, metal and concrete, shape the interaction of the building and its occupants (Murray, 2007). The direct sensory experience of the viewer defines Zumthor’s practice, as he believes that:

All design work starts from the premise of the physical, objective sensuousness of architecture, of its materials. To experience architecture in a concrete way means to touch, see, hear, and smell it. (Zumthor, 2006, p.66)

Zumthor’s intentions are to evoke associations, expectations and memories that revolve around the viewer’s interaction with their environment. His work Therme Vals (The Thermal Bath at Vals, Switzerland, 1996) incorporates pools, spas, baths and changing rooms and is located on a steep hillside 1200 metres above sea level. It incorporates the hot springs that have been used since the late 19th century and projects out from this underground source. The building is ‘a series of experiences revealed to the individual through use in space and time’ (Murray, 2007, p.364). Local stone, concrete and water from the natural hot springs are employed by Zumthor to create experiences of touch, taste, smell, sound and sight that are integral to the architecture. Murray (2007) acknowledges that:

Haptic and auditory encounters prevail: the enveloping of the body in spring water of varying temperatures; the rhythmic sound of bare feet walking on wet stone; echoes of voices and splashing water, louder in the large central space contrasting with quiet solitude in the smaller baths. (Murray, 2007, p.365)

The immersive environment alters conceptions of both form and space, as the human interaction becomes a part of the space. The materials of the building contribute more than mere functionality, stone, concrete and water interact, internally and externally and, over time they alter. Zumthor suggests that in the end, the direct experience of the materials may even surpass the idea, noting that ‘Material is stronger than idea…it’s stronger than an image because it’s really there, and it’s there in its own right’ (Speir, 2001, p.19).

Zumthor specifically extends the notion of the immersive experience of the viewer within his 2007 work the Bruder Klaus Chapel in Wachendorf, Germany (Figure 2.5). He uses light to intensify both form and space in order for the building to create meaning for the individual. Zumthor observed that ‘The idea was to seek a new space, a tiny space in a field that in the end expresses hope about human existence… At the end it was the chapel and the material and the rain and the water’ (Zumthor cited in Lynch, 2009, p.42). The building is situated on a lush green plane from which juts the geometrical stone form. The materials used are of the landscape—stone, wood, lead—reformed to heighten the immersive and aesthetic experience.
The Bruder Klaus Chapel’s stark exterior is in direct contrast to the vivid green fields. Entering through the narrow shaft, consumed by darkness, the visitor emerges blinking into the small irregular internal chamber. The interior walls are marked and charred by the wood, which was used in the construction and then burnt out. The once molten lead floor sparkles with the light dripping from the opening in the roof. Zumthor uses this light to define both the interior and exterior of the building and the tension between the interior and exterior articulates a sense of place. As Zumthor remarks:

One can be inside or outside. And that means [this]: thresholds, crossings, the tiny loop-hole door, the almost imperceptible transition between inside and outside, an incredible sense of place. (Zumthor cited in Labs-Ehlert, 2005, p.47)

Zumthor’s practice centres on emphasising the embodied experience of both place and outcome and the Bruder Klaus Chapel illustrates the tension between the architectural form and the viewer’s interaction with the immersed environment. The sense of place, within the landscape, begins the process of interaction as, although the building stands apart, at the same time it is an integral and intimate part of the landscape. As the viewer enters the chapel through the small door the smallness of the interior provides an enveloping space. The remaining smell of the burnt wood invades the space as the clouds wash across the small opening in the roof. Externally, the scale of the building cloaks the individual in its massiveness and one’s senses are pervaded by the smells, sights, sounds and feel of the landscape.

The intense experiences contained within Zumthor’s work point to the importance of the specifics of place, of viewer and viewed, which all takes place within the created space. The sensory connection between viewer and creative outcome evinced in Zumthor’s work has resonance for my own practice and the direction of the research. How the viewer engages with the creative outcome is influenced by the viewer’s own immersed experience. In applying this strategy, it is hoped that the creative outcomes of my own research might share with the viewer aspects of the
immersive nature of drawing practice. Ultimately, in common with Zumthor, the starting point for the work begins and ends with the embodied experience of the landscape.

**Fabienne Verdier. The Experience of Nature.**

Fabienne Verdier studied calligraphy in China for ten years with a master calligrapher before returning to France and establishing her studio. Her training in the Chinese Taoist tradition of calligraphy focused on the abstract conception of line and form. For Verdier nature and the landscape provide the inspiration for her drawings, which are furnished by ‘listening’ to nature and referring to the purposeful spirit found in the natural environment. Her aim is to incorporate these experiences within the quality of line and form within her drawings. She contends that the emergence of abstraction within her large scale work is non-accidental, and that the large gestures and marks from the fluid paint she uses, are rooted in the intentionality of intuition (Verdier in Kidel, 2012). These ideas were explored in a documentary by the filmmaker Mark Kidel (2012), created as Verdier travelled up the coast of Norway on a boat. During the journey she drew incessantly and maintained this was essential to her experience of the landscape (Figure 2.6).

![Figure 2.6. Fabienne Verdier drawing in Norway (2012). Still shot from the film Peindre l’instant by Mark Kidel. Reproduced with permission of Mark Kidel.](image)

The drawings from the Norwegian voyage demonstrate a bold and assured use of line. The images contain subtle references to Chinese traditions of painting but move into a new space as the stark, dense line describes the harsh, barren mountains of the Norwegian fjords (Figure 2.7). Verdier’s drawings from different locations are characterised by her use of a thick pen and the lack of any tone. Indeed much of her work is monochromatic and the large paintings which resulted from this trip emphasise the harshness of the landscape through the off white background contrasted by the
**Figure 2.7.** Fabienne Verdier drawing in Norway (2012). Still shot from the film *Peindre l’instant* by Mark Kidel. Reproduced with permission of Mark Kidel.

**Figure 2.8.** *Memories of Norway I* (2012). Ink, pigments and varnish on canvas 180 × 241 cm. Reproduced with permission of Fabienne Verdier.
density of the black gestural marks (Figure 2.8). The significance of her initial drawings and their relationship to the final paintings is shown, Verdier believes, in the essential structure and energy of the final pieces (Verdier in Kidel, 2012). The line has force and weight and conveys the resolute solidity of the mountainous coastline.

2.9 Summary

The philosophical writings of Husserl (1970a, 1970b, 2001) and Merleau-Ponty (1964a, 1964b, 2004, 2006) offer ways of considering the artist’s engagement and ‘lived experience’ (Dilthey 2010) of the landscape. Consequently, phenomenology, as a ‘style of thinking’ (Merleau-Ponty, 2006, p. x), provides a way of considering personal drawing practice within this enquiry. Edmund Husserl’s view of phenomenology offers an important distinction between the act of consciousness and the phenomena at which it is directed (as shown in Figure 2.2), and reinforces the parallel and linear conception of object and subject. However, Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s embodied phenomenology gives an insight into the corporeal nature of experience. He argues for a ‘mode’ of experience within which the body, perception and consciousness are interconnected. This act of mediation—this ‘enigma’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1964a)—offers the potential to bridge the gap between description and interpretation and to enable object, activity and outcome to be viewed as something that is concurrent and intertwined, rather than consecutive. This dynamic and living experience is mediated through the body and challenges the notion of the subject/object divide; since the internal and external coexist (Figure 2.2).

Central to this inquiry is the notion of the seer and seen. If phenomenology’s primary aim is to ‘describe’ then the body could be said to mediate this descriptive ‘lived experience’ through its presence as both seer and seen. Merleau-Ponty (1964a) contends that it is through contemplating a connection between the seer and the seen that our experience of the world is ‘opened up more fully’ (Johnson, 1993, p. 124). Merleau-Ponty (1964a, 1964b, 2004, 2006) also asserts that it is the ability of the body to both see and be seen that enables the artist to visualise embodied experience, arguing that artistic practice is a mode of experience as well as a mode of ‘thinking’ and that ‘It is by lending his body to the world that the artist changes the world into paintings’ (Merleau-Ponty cited in Rowley, 2007, p.47).

Within these phenomenological paradigms, drawing admits the object to consciousness but also allows reflection and analysis of the object within the activity. Thus, drawing constitutes the distinction between the object and the act of consciousness. The drawing itself, as created object, adds another dimension to the complex subjective experience of drawing and the drawn. The activity of mark making, outside ‘in-the-world’, begins to dissolve the boundaries between the artist and the object in working towards a unified whole; marks are transposed externally, onto the paper and internally, as memory of that ‘lived experience’.
The viewpoints discussed in the section Practical Contexts informed my research framework. They established the validity of drawing as an investigative method and suggested how drawing can reveal both the consciousness of the drawing and the drawn (Rogers, 2008; Cain, 2010; Harty, 2012). By employing ‘enactive’ copying to understand processes of thinking during drawing, Patricia Cain (2010) proposes that drawing is an act of ‘becoming aware’. In establishing drawing as a method of investigating cognition, Cain’s research demonstrates how practice and theoretical interchanges can challenge, explore and develop different understandings of thinking that are evidenced within practical activity. Harty (2012) also employs studio practice to consider the phenomenology of drawing. In detailing a state of consciousness she calls ‘fusion’, Harty identifies a ‘third’ mode of consciousness that fluctuates between the internal and the external self and world. In this sense, the ‘mode of experience’ is something that can be entered into or generated by the drawer and would seem to have meditational resonances. Harty makes the case for a different mode of consciousness that exists within the process of drawing and which is itself a ‘lived experience’. Similarly, Prosser’s (2004) study indicates how a phenomenological way of thinking about experience can offer insights into the modes of thinking that operate within drawing.

The discussion in this section of art practice as research and the phenomenology of drawing establishes theoretical and practice-based contexts in which my study can be placed.

In the section Practice Contexts, the range of processes employed by Pollak, Gryzmala, Verdier and Zumthor provide a small example of the diversity of contemporary creative working methods. Each practitioner has developed a working methodology that explores notions of landscape or space and which builds upon the embodied experience of both artist and viewer. Each offers the possibility of considering how the generative act of making, transforms the ‘lived experience’ of both artist and viewer. Zumthor and Gryzmala’s work incorporates the interaction of the body within space into the final outcome. Zumthor’s work stands solid and immovable with the landscape, whilst Gryzmala’s work is founded in a conception of temporal engagement of which only photographs retain the trace after the installation is dismantled. Pollak’s work seeks to examine personal involvement with the landscape through an interpretation of that experience. Her work is more intimate, shy almost, and yet communicates with an affective strength. Verdier’s work utilises an economy of line in both sketches and final paintings which incorporate energy and a monumentality through their starkness. All of the artists utilise description and interpretation within their work, just as all four elate their work to the specifics of place. Each practitioner reveals the nature of the personal subjective as the embodied experience is employed to reveal differing conceptions that are evinced through the divergent outcomes.

The diverse nature of the outcomes examined here, has offered my study the opportunity to move beyond disciplinary boundaries in considering how working methodologies can be used to explore, think and create. The artists have incorporated multi-faceted conceptions of landscape,
place and embodied experience relevant to my enquiry, including a consideration of the nature of personal experience and how that might manifest itself through creative activity and outcomes. Discussion within this chapter has highlighted a central idea of the embodied experience of the landscape which conjoins experience, drawing and the drawn. This conception of the role of the self in mediating experience has informed the direction of the research and its outcomes.

The following chapter examines the approaches employed to examine how embodied experiences of the landscape are enacted within my own drawing practice. Within my practice, both act and activity are predicated on a multifaceted working methodology which is outlined in Chapter Three, building on the ideas and themes identified in Chapters One and Two. The different ways of working and thinking within the study are clarified in relation to practice-based research, which is the third theme identified in Chapter One as central to this enquiry.
Chapter Three

3.1. Methodology
Building on the introduction to this study in Chapter One, in Chapter Two phenomenology's relevance to the research was outlined. The work of seminal authors such as Husserl and Merleau-Ponty—along with their philosophical approaches to experience—were considered as both a way of thinking about practice and as a means of providing the tools for describing subjective embodied experience as it is lived. The enquiry was contextualised within the wider field of contemporary drawing research and practice, through an examination of the approaches of relevant practitioners who have examined drawing as research. This was extended through a focused discussion of the work of four artists whose work responds to place and space and engages with the embodied experience of artist and viewer.

In this chapter practice based research is discussed because it is central to the development of the research methodology. The first section outlines the characteristics of this methodology and its relevance to this study. (Then indicate that you will outline how you adapted these ideas to inform the specific methods that enabled you to explore your questions in practice. Then indicate that the final section provides your reflections on that practice, noting that because this is an iterative process, reflection was integral to your approaches). In the second section, The Methodology in Practice, I will indicate how the ideas have informed the methods and specific approaches that enabled me to explore questions relating to in my practice. The final section provides my reflections on practice which, through the iterative process, became integral to my approaches.

3.2. Practice-based Research
Arts-based research is a discipline which explores the interconnection between theory and arts practice. It can be characterised as a form of ‘generative enquiry’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009) that draws on subjective and emergent methodologies in creating artefacts. The importance of practice-based research, its value and reliability is founded in the notion of praxis (Jones, 1980; Frayling, 1993; Scrivener, 2002; Biggs, 2004; Barrett & Bolt, 2009; Sullivan, 2010; Bolt 2010). Practice-based research engages the researcher in paradigms of reflection, analysis and interpretation that, in turn, influence outcomes. These approaches move the conception of research away from the more traditional methodologies and methods that are found in other
disciplines. Often, when the creative process begins, the end is undetermined and unknown. Consequently, within this framework, there ‘has to be permission to admit what you do not know’ (Graham, 2000, p.50) as well as openness to creating something that tests and challenges ideation, making and personal assumptions.

The importance of practice-based research, its value and reliability is founded in the notion of praxis (Jones, 1980; Frayling, 1993; Scrivener, 2002; Biggs, 2004; Barrett & Bolt, 2009; Sullivan, 2010; Bolt 2010). Practice-based research engages the researcher in paradigms of reflection, analysis and interpretation that, in turn, influence outcomes and can be characterised as a form of ‘generative enquiry’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009). Often, when the creative process begins, the end is undetermined and unknown. Consequently, within this framework, there ‘has to be permission to admit what you do not know’ (Graham, 2000, p.50) as well as openness to creating something that tests and challenges ideation, making and personal assumptions.

In his seminal book Art Practice as Research, Graeme Sullivan presents ‘a theory of art practice as research’ (Sullivan, 2010, p.xix) arguing that visual arts research principally creates new knowledge through its ability to enable us to understand the world as we live it. It is this experiential connection to the world that allows us to gain a more rounded and holistic view as knowledge and understanding emerge through creative practice. One of Sullivan’s central themes is the interrelationship between experiences and the works emanating from them. It is this connection which, Sullivan argues, underpins both research and arts practice:

The meanings that artists make from their imaginative investigations are not only collected from their encounters with things around them but they are also created in response to their experiences. (Sullivan, 2010, p.xii)

It is also this duality that, Sullivan believes, differentiates artists and arts practice from more traditional research modes, so that arts-based research develops new understandings from ‘what we don’t know’ and in so doing ‘profoundly changes what we do know’ (Sullivan, 2010, p.xii).

Thus, practice-based research is conceived as a dynamic, living process that develops and informs outcomes. This is particularly pertinent to my study as it focuses on the interconnection between encounter and creative artefact in the context of praxis.

Sullivan’s illustration, Figure 3.1 below, demonstrates how the complex strategies of critical and creative thinking interconnect within visual arts research. The diagram shows how, at any one time, a variety of approaches can be utilised to visualise new ways of thinking, reflecting and enacting. As Sullivan notes: ‘When questions and issues are raised that require imaginative inquiry, they open up a range of forms, ideas, and actions through artful and critical study’ (Sullivan, 2010, p.193). One of the main principles to emerge as a result of art practice positioning itself as research is
the connection between ‘creating and critiquing’. These practices, Sullivan believes, form the basis through which new ideas are formed, investigated and realised. It is this purposeful, systematic analysis and reflection that offers the opportunity to create new understandings ‘from a position of personal insight and awareness’ (Sullivan, 2010, p.192). Thus, practice-based research is conceived as a dynamic, living process that develops and informs outcomes. This is particularly pertinent to my study as it focuses on the interconnection between encounter and creative artefact in the context of praxis.

**Figure 3.1.** Sullivan’s diagram illustrates how visual arts practices connect, at differing points, creative and critical thinking within a research framework (Sullivan, 2010, p.193).

This depth and complexity shapes new knowledge through what is known, but also through conceptions of ‘what is…what might be and what ought to be’ (Brent Wilson cited in Sullivan, 2010, p.197). Consequently, practice-based research requires the ability to think in new ways that, Sullivan argues, are implicit within the process of ‘making’ art. As experiences are analysed and reflected upon, their subsequent emergence within the creative process can be said to inform the conceptualising of visual ideas in such a way that it posits ‘experiences as a site for knowledge and understanding’ (Sullivan, 2010, p.195). This process of visualising ideas as a critical and creative act, is founded in, and mediated through, the individual which constitutes an important aspect of my enquiry. (Sullivan, 2010).

In a similar vein, Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt explore the complex and multifaceted nature of arts-based research in their book *Practice as Research* (2009). They contend that the diversity
of methodologies, methods and outcomes available to artists expands conceptions of what research might be, as do the aspects of thought that are evinced through the process of making. In common with Sullivan (2010), Barrett and Bolt (2009) identify the importance of this mode of knowing through its ability to highlight ‘the crucial interrelationship that exists between theory and practice’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.1). Significantly, their exploration of the philosophical and theoretical paradigms utilised by artists for practice-based research, supports their assertion ‘that knowledge is derived from the senses’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.1).

By its nature, creative enquiry is unpredictable, innovative and challenging and, rather than undermining its validity, these characteristics contribute to its ability to engage with philosophical and theoretical paradigms in a meaningful way. Like Sullivan (2010), Barrett and Bolt (2009) argue that it is the personal and the subjective nature of arts-based research that offers alternative modes of investigation. Bolt's (2009) notions of ‘materialising practices’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.5) make explicit the corporeal connections between thinking and practice, as outcomes reveal the constituting relationship of ‘emergent work as enquiry’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.5). It is these particular ways of considering the complex connections between arts practice, theory and practical outcomes that inform the ability of practice-based research to reveal knowledge through the process of making.

An important concern is how the visual arts researcher might avoid self-valorisation in these subjective contexts. Barrett believes that it is through developing an understanding ‘of both studio enquiry and its outcomes as process’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.135) that the roles of artist/researcher offer an opportunity to bring a ‘critical distance’ through the notion of ‘author-and-work’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.137) which:

as a mode of existence, circulation and functioning of certain discourses within society requires us to consider not whether the work is “good” or “bad” but to focus on the forms the work takes and the institutional contexts that allow it to take such forms.

(Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.137)

An important concern within practice-based research is how the visual arts researcher might avoid self-valorisation in these subjective contexts. Barrett believes that it is through developing an understanding ‘of both studio enquiry and its outcomes as process’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.135) that ‘the artist as a researcher and the artist/critic as a scholar’ can comment ‘on the value of the artistic process as the production of knowledge’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.135). Barrett frames these discussions with reference to Michel Foucault’s 1969 essay ‘What is an author?’ Foucault’s ideas, Barrett suggests, offer the artist/researcher an opportunity to bring a ‘critical distance’ through the notion of ‘author-and-work’ (Barrett &
Bolt, 2009, p.137) which:

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requires us to consider not whether the work is “good” or “bad” but to focus on the forms
the work takes and the institutional contexts that allow it to take such forms. (Barrett & Bolt,
2009, p.137)

Engaging critically with these ideas allows the researcher to develop a framework through which
he or she can reflect in a more distanced way on how practice functions, operates and connects
theory and practice. Barrett and Bolt’s articulation of the important link between theory and
practice has implications for my own study. A number of philosophical paradigms are used within
the research to examine the connections between drawing practice and outcomes in a systematic
and methodical manner and it is the conception of ‘emergent work as enquiry’ (Barrett & Bolt,
2009, p.5) that provides a foundation for the study in investigating the connection between
experience, ideation and outcome.

Similarly, in Heidegger Re-framed (2010) Bolt postulates that discovery is revealed through a
‘praxial knowledge’ attained through working with particular materials and processes of making.
advocates caution in ‘objectifying’ practice-based research if an ‘objectifying of what-is, becomes
codified in the research procedure’ (Bolt, 2010, p.148) and so reduces and abstracts the research
from our interaction with the world. Discovery, she postulates, is revealed through a ‘praxial
knowledge’ attained through working with particular materials and processes of making. Therefore,
‘In practice, the emergent nature of revealing requires that the artist-as-researcher be attentive
to what emerges in and through handling, rather than preconceive what will happen’ (Bolt, 2010,
p.151). Bolt contends that the writing of the thesis or exegesis emerges as a distinctive and
complementary aspect of art-as-research. Nevertheless, in stressing Heidegger’s emphasis on the
importance of language, which, ‘by naming beings for the first time, first brings beings to the world
and to appearance’ (Heidegger cited in Bolt, 2010, p.156) she suggests that, in such an analysis,
it is essential to be wary of fixing ‘the work in place as something rigid’. Bolt believes that it is
the investigation of the interconnection of artist-researcher and practice-theory that enables
‘our practical engagement’ with art to become ‘a living process through which a ‘situated truth is
unconcealed’ (Bolt, 2010, p.157).

Barrett and Bolt’s articulation of the important link between theory and practice has implications
for my own study. A number of philosophical paradigms are used within the research to examine
the connections between drawing practice and outcomes in a systematic and methodical manner
and it is the conception of ‘emergent work as enquiry’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.5) that provides
a foundation for the study in investigating the connection between experience, ideation and
outcome. Bolt’s conception of ‘praxial knowledge’ also has implications for the research in relation
to the role of formal considerations in the drawing process. The tacit knowledge contained within practice is difficult to separate out but can be said to be informed by memory and intuition operating within the expert practitioner. I acknowledge a long engagement with drawing and the landscape however both the inherent understanding of my drawing and intuitive responses were challenged, as I discuss later in this chapter in the section on Canberra, when I engaged with the unfamiliar and unknown.

Clearly, Bolt’s notions of ‘praxial knowledge’ and discovery within the process of making have direct implications for the study. This led me to apply methods enabling me to capture that which emerged in a systematic way, whilst at the same time allowing the creative practice to move itself forward as a dynamic investigative process. Merleau-Ponty’s notion of seer and seen (1964a) was also used to develop ideas of ‘critical distance’ within personal practice which I have discussed in Chapter Two. To this end, strategies were developed which allowed subjective, immersed artistic practice (that of the artist/researcher) to be viewed in conjunction with the more objective role of artist/theorist. Praxis became integral to the study, as the outcomes became enmeshed within the research process and thereby generated new ideas and ways of thinking. As these complex connections were examined, the creative work that was generated increasingly embraced the uncertainty of creative practice as it attempted to reveal how drawing interprets both the subjective and immersed world.

3.3. The Methodology in Practice

The connection between artist’s working space, methods and outcomes can considered to be sites where knowledge, understanding and meaning are created. However, these places of discovery and ways of working by the artist have not been well understood in the past (Sullivan, 2010), which is why ongoing practice based research such as this study can contribute to such knowledge. Studio practice, Sullivan asserts, ‘is a central site where visual arts research takes place’ (Sullivan, 2010, p.72). Drawing in situ and subsequently in the studio, I will argue, creates very different circumstances for drawing and what it reveals, in that the move between landscape and studio mirrors the move from description to interpretation. Consequently, these two places became the locations for considering just how drawing describes and interprets experience. To better understand this shift in understanding, a number of methods were chosen to investigate how this move might be manifest in the drawing process and its outcomes.

As Merleau-Ponty (2006) observed, phenomenology lends itself to practice-based research through its emphasis on understanding our experiences in the physical world. In this project, the ‘experience’ of drawing both in situ and in the studio is described and reflected upon purposefully and systematically in order to provide insights that may further inform practice. The phenomenologically based system of first-person inquiry places at its heart the subjective
experience of the artist and provides an important tool for distinguishing between the act of consciousness and the phenomena at which it is being directed (Figure 2.1). Similarly, drawing not only involves describing the object, or the phenomena, but it also brings about an emerging consciousness and understanding of that object. It is this distinction that offers a way of considering the experience of drawing through both activity and creative outcome. Consequently, drawing’s duality as both object and activity enables it to be employed to describe the immersed experience of landscape and to ‘describe how it describes’ (O’Riley, 2006, p.2).

Reflection on the differing experiences of drawing in the landscape and in the studio is a central aspect of this study, as drawing in these environments differs so significantly. My personal drawing practice investigates the immersed experience of the landscape and begins with direct observation en plein air before moving to the studio, where both phenomenological descriptions and drawn descriptions are used to consider the initial experiences of drawing in the landscape. The physical move to the studio has been characterised by very different ways of working and thinking, in that the distractions (if they may so be termed) of the location: the climate, the prevailing weather and any number of other lesser factors (for example insects, failing light, temperature and so on) are removed from the equation. In the studio, the direct ‘lived experience’ of the landscape and drawing in it is suspended. The physical and psychological experiences of place (cold, hard, isolated) embedded in memory, as well as the sensory (sight, sound, smell, taste) memories of the locations are then replayed and relived in the mind and, from this process, a whole range of different understandings and interpretations emerge. For this reason, Merleau-Ponty’s (1964a) notion of the seer and the seen can be seen as a key concept within this process. In his conception of experience (Figure 2.2) the body is the agent through which both internal and external experiences become conjoined, since the body mediates the interaction of object and subject through the paradox of simultaneously being both the seer and the seen.

From this standpoint, it becomes possible for the research to explore the drawer/drawing’s complex engagement with the world through the immersed experience of drawing, since drawing’s corporeality can be said to explicate this connection of world and body through marks made on a surface. Within these contexts, personal drawing practice, as a reflexive and reflective way of thinking, incorporates an embodied world and involves a living process through which its meaning emerges (O’Riley, 2006). It is against this background that my research investigates how drawing functions as a process of mediation; offering opportunities to describe and interpret experience through drawing. In building on Merleau-Ponty’s (1964a) notion of seer and seen, it is possible to examine my practice through the ‘lived experience’ (seer) and interpretation (seen). Figure 3.2 illustrates this synergistic relationship, with drawing positioned as the central connecting element.
Figure 3.2. The intersecting themes of the research.

This approach builds on the themes already identified within the research (Figure 1.3) through the introduction of a number of methods that capture instances of drawing activity in order to reflect and analyse activity and outcome. The idea of seer and seen can thus be explored in a multi-layered way, through ‘objective’ filmed recordings of drawing activity and ‘subjective’ descriptions of the experience of drawing. This approach allowed my drawing practice to be viewed from the standpoint of both artist and researcher.

My practice-based approach situated the artist as researcher at the centre of the inquiry (Sullivan, 2010; Barrett & Bolt, 2009). The dimensions of reflection and reflexivity enabled a structure to be developed that facilitated a reshaping of thinking and practice in the light of personal discovery. Figure 3.3 illustrates the cycle of research and reflection, which developed as a result of this approach. The first iteration of the process began with drawing in the landscape (shown in Figure 3.3 at the top of the diagram) before moving to the studio and then returning to the landscape to begin a new set of work. The working process involved reflection within the activity of drawing as well as after the event. This was mirrored in the cycle through specific points at which the process and outcomes were analysed.

As each cycle came full circle, the new knowledge that emerged from the process was built upon in the next iteration. This approach to the research can be described as the practical application of theory and acquired knowledge /experience. Since one cycle was clearly not enough to answer questions in sufficient depth, a three-stage process was implemented as shown in Figure 3.4.
can be seen in Figure 3.3, each cycle is shown larger than the one preceding it and refers to action research models (McNiff, 2013). This is done to illustrate the increased knowledge, experience and further questions that arose from the reflection on, and analysis of, the work and observations that resulted from the previous cycle. As issues arose and viewpoints altered, each stage developed to address, reflect and build on these concerns. Each stage was reflected upon and methods developed which show more clearly the connection between in situ and studio and the immersed embodied experience of the artist.

Figure 3.3. The methodological research cycle used in this study.

Figure 3.4. The three-stage model used in this study. Each stage completes a cycle of research before moving to the next.
3.4. Methods and Approaches used in the Creative Component of the Study

My research sought to study drawing practice as it occurs both in situ and the studio in a systematic way and to compare and contrast a series of drawing experiences undertaken in both Europe and Australia. Although the drawing work undertaken in the UK and Austria began before the research project presented in this exegesis commenced, the processes used in these studies were carefully analysed and replicated during the Australian and additional UK component of the study. Because initial drawings in the landscape are characterised by an emotive response to certain places, the challenge early in the project was to develop methods that were sympathetic to practice rather than being intrusive and which, at the same time, aligned with the creative working process. To this end, a range of strategies, outlined in Table 3.1, were developed and used to document my practice both in situ and in the studio and which incorporated a multi-stage process of reflection. I believe that the different methods developed to do this assisted in capturing the multi-faceted nature of the drawing experience.

Over many years of personal practice, I came to realise that I had unconsciously developed a process of identifying a particular place or landscape for my drawings based on a series of initial visits—often prompted by some instinctive or subliminal response to my first encounter with the location. Subsequent visits usually involve sitting and waiting, listening and walking and trying to absorb the atmosphere of that particular place—and not all result in my returning to draw. When I do feel the need to return, I make a large number of sketches, notes and drawings on paper and in sketchbooks before moving to the studio. In the studio, I then work on a series of drawings that are related to that particular landscape or place. For the study then, I understood that it was essential to continue to use the same working methodology, drawing in the landscape before moving to the studio. Each stage of the research involved three different landscapes or locations, nine in total. The methods and approaches used to ensure this continuity of practice are listed below in Table 3.1.

Photography and writing have always been integral to my practice and, in this study, they are used as both an observational tool and a way of reflecting on the research process. Throughout the project, a descriptive journal was used in the field to describe the immediate experience of the landscape and as a tool for spontaneously recording sketches, thoughts and ideas. To support this, locations were extensively photographed and described alongside collated drawings from each place.

Video and audio were used in the second stage to record the activity of drawing and to capture both the visual and environmental aspects of the site and, in some instances, the recordings captured more than was at first expected. For example, some video captured on the Yorkshire moors contained almost unusable audio due to wind noise—at first this seemed like a technical
Table 3.1. Methods and approaches used the research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In situ</th>
<th>In the studio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptive Journal</strong>: field notes, sketches and written description of drawing experience.</td>
<td><strong>Drawings</strong>: creative outcomes executed in the studio based on memory and reference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drawings</strong>: creative outcomes executed in situ.</td>
<td><strong>Photographs</strong>: of studio and the drawings, which developed from being in situ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Photographs</strong>: to record the landscapes and resulting drawings.</td>
<td><strong>Video / Audio recordings</strong>: of the drawing activity in the studio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video / Audio recordings</strong>: of the landscape and of the drawing activity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Journal</strong>: Written reflection, analysis and interpretation. Reflection and analysis of drawing activity in situ and in the studio and the creative outcomes so produced. These may take many forms, including recorded comments (audio or audio visual), photographic references, online discussion with peers and colleagues through email and other internet media.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

failure on my part (not accounting for it or dampening it)—but the audio later revealed itself as a powerful reminder of the constantly gusting, icy winds that occurred on some days. Within the study, video functioned on a number of different levels. The video recordings of drawing in situ and the studio also illustrated the different sensory qualities incorporated in each form of drawing experience and also offered an ‘objective’ view of the work as it progressed. In providing an opportunity to observe myself drawing, video recording revealed the importance of movement and gesture and made clear how they differed in different locations and impacted directly on the creative outcomes. These video and audio recordings became increasingly important during the second stage of the research as I found that photographs of drawings did not give enough information for me to reflect on how I drew. In introducing video and audio in the second stage, a single camera was focused in close-up on the drawings themselves. In the third stage this approach was developed and two camera positions were used. The first camera concentrated on the drawing and the second was positioned further away in order to capture the whole scene and activity within it. This made it possible to observe what I was drawing as well as how I was drawing.

The videos and audio recordings of drawing activity, along with the photographs, drawings and extracts from the descriptive journal have been subsequently collated into a reflective digital journal, a copy of which accompanies this thesis. Being engaged in drawing practice and writing about it were substantially different from viewing video and photographs of the activity and the creative outcomes, in the same way that deliberately invoking an awareness of the relationship between seer and seen allowed distance and different perspectives between artist and viewer to emerge. The process of reflecting and analysing the video record of an activity provided a very different standpoint, in that in the role of artist / researcher I was able to view my own physical practice from a “disembodied” location. The ability to consider the physical aspects of
creative practice from a number of different external perspectives provided a powerful tool with which to uncover the nature of the interaction between landscape, embodied experience and its interpretation through drawing. Digital media were incorporated within the project to develop alternative ways of viewing personal practice. It is acknowledged that employing digital technologies does not constitute an 'objective' view as the researcher will inevitably be involved in the process in the selection and framing of a particular viewpoint. Nevertheless, the use of digital media enabled another mode of reflection from the position of the seen. The video, audio and journalling over the period of the study have created an archive of personal experience and it was through the different viewpoints that I framed my decisions.

The Descriptive Journal
As is common in most forms of visual arts practice, a working journal was maintained throughout the project to describe my personal thoughts, observations, inspirations and experiences of drawing and being in the landscape. The contents of this journal consist of written reflections on activities, ideas, sketches and drawings created in response to particular places and environments and, like a diary, the journal attempts to convey the 'lived experience’ (Dilthey, 2010) as far as possible from the first person point of view.

For this project, the journal is made up of a series of A5 library cards (they originally come from an actual library filing system and still contain bibliographic information from their former use) and were overwritten and added to throughout the study, as shown in Figure 3.5. This particular system allowed the journal to be regularly updated and extended without compromising the process of recording and revision, aesthetically and conceptually, and the use of the library cards correlated to the layering of knowledge and information over time and space. This approach was taken because, for me, the creative process often happens in bursts and outside the formal structure of regular diarising. It also assists in facilitating the cyclical (but occasionally irregular) process of reflection that is characteristic of practice-led research. The descriptive journal covers the years between 2010 and 2016 and locations are dated according to drawing activity in those places.

Drawings
Within the study it was the drawings that intimately described and interpreted the personal experiences of the landscape and studio work. It is the drawn outcomes from the landscape and the studio work that provided the means to explore the different strands of inquiry that informed the research. The drawings captured the complex and intricate processes of thinking and making and the immediacy of them directly connects me to the marks made on the surface. For practical reasons, drawings in situ were typically characterised by small, intimate sketches made with graphite and charcoal, but it was the move to the studio that resulted in the creation of drawings
on a much larger scale and for which I used a much broader variety of media and approaches. As creative outcomes in themselves, all of the drawings present to the viewer my experience of being in a particular place at a particular time. They chart the relations between the internal and external aspects of my drawing process and demonstrate how meaning emerges through the move between description and interpretation. It is through the drawings that I most directly recorded my immersed experience and visualise my place in the world.

Figure 3.5. An example of an A5 card from the descriptive journal.

Photography
Photographs from the landscape and studio are used to give an insight into the contextual location of the drawing activity and provide a record of the physical characteristics of the location or activity at a given point in time. The photographs of drawings, notes and journal entries act as a record of the outcomes resulting from the ‘situated’ practice—in both the landscape and the studio. This approach allowed for the possibility that captured images might be viewed as evidence that is apart from the lived experience, translated observations and personal memory of that time or place. Although no photograph can ever be considered to be purely objective—by virtue of the conscious decision to compose and capture it—photography can still provide another platform from which the world can be studied. Consequently, the photographs taken in association with this project were intended to be used within the digital journal as an additional means by which to consider in greater depth how embodied experience and creative outcomes are connected.

Audio and Video
As with photography, audio and video recordings are used within this research to record the process of drawing as well as to capture the embodied activity of the drawer. Unlike photography,
video (and its associated audio) provides an external, time-based platform for later study. Shifts in lighting and changes in the environment, the development of a drawing and the changing physical relationships between the artist and the work (for example, as I became tired) provided sources of information about the work, the artist and the project not always apparent in other recording methods. As noted earlier, initially these recordings focused on either the drawing or the drawer, but later in the study dual camera positions were used to capture both simultaneously. The physical and sensory qualities captured by video also helped reveal the contrast between location and studio. The video often emphasised the varying levels of physical involvement and the differences in gesture that occurred in the different locations which developed insights into the emerging and changing embodiment of practice.

The Digital Journal

The digital journal was used as a method for collating the information contained within the videos, photographs, drawings and the descriptive journalling and was a format that contained all of these elements alongside additional written reflection and interpretation. As is characteristic of all practice-based research, journalling is an active process that, in itself, acted as a form of reflection. The digital journal was compiled according to initial experiences of the landscape and the subsequent drawings and activity that resulted from it. This collation mirrored the overall working process and thereby enabled me, in the capacity of ‘artist as researcher’ (Bolt, 2010) to trace the developmental process within each component of the study. The digital journal was written and collated between 2014 and 2017 and extracts in the text are dated accordingly.

3.5. The Three Stages of the Study

The three stages of the study (Figure 3.4) evolved in response to a number of ideas that arose during the preliminary planning of the project. The first stage began by mirroring existing drawing practice. As issues and ideas developed, subsequent stages looked in increasing detail at both the drawing activity and the outcomes of the process as they emerged both in situ and the studio. The following sections illustrate how these stages unfolded.

Stage One (2010-2011)

The initial stages of the study, shown in Table 3.2, examined drawing from the perspective of a practicing artist in three different locations—Niederau in Austria, Sunderland Point in England and Canberra, Australia—and it was these drawings that informed the subsequent studio work and which inspired this study. These first, exploratory, stages involved going out into the landscape, drawing and attempting to capture the full sensory experience of engaging with place through drawing. These early drawings were recorded through photography, as was the site itself. The same process was then used to record my later studio activity. Looking back, I can say that initially, the landscapes of Niederau and Sunderland Point were described within the drawings through
a distinctive linear connection of the forms. In these in situ drawings, I used only graphite and focused on a specific aspect of the landscape. I remember sitting extremely still, with my attention focused only on the small drawings as I looked out at the landscape and back to the sketches and notes. These small drawings responded directly and immediately to the physicality of the experience: the sky, wind, rain, frost, sun, sound and, overwhelmingly, the cold, all contributed to an almost visceral connection to the land. This immersive experience became all absorbing and, as different layers of expectation and comfort were peeled away, my attention began to focus on very specific aspects. This profound immersion, within the narrow confines of the activity of each drawing, enhanced the experience significantly—heightening perceptions of light, form and of being in a specific moment.

Table 3.2. Methods used in Stage One of the research.
On returning to the studio, I instinctively increased the scale of the drawings and limited colour was introduced. The linear connections between the forms were further emphasised through using charcoal instead of graphite, increasing the contrast between the elements of line and the subtle colour palette in use. Later, in reflecting on the photographs of the actual landscape and the drawings I had made both in situ and in the studio, I was struck by the differences in materials and scale. The drawings made on site were small, intimate and monochromatic, whereas in the studio the drawings dramatically increased in scale and I introduced washes of colour. This observation led me to consider how my situation, as an artist working physically within the natural environment, practically influenced the drawing process on site—as opposed to how I might work within the (relatively) controlled environment of the studio.

It was at this juncture that I was presented with an opportunity to go to Canberra for a week. I emerged from a British summer into the end of an Australian winter. I drew frantically for a week—determined to commit my experiences to memory—knowing that these would later become something in the studio. The sketches made in situ varied greatly, but were all characterised by a different approach to colour. I had not used such vibrant colours in my initial drawings for many years.

Looking at the drawings on my return to the UK I was entranced as the vivid experiences returned through working in the studio. The large scale of the drawings remained, but gesture and movement combined with colour on the surface of the paper to create dramatic images that reflected an experience of place different to those in the UK and Austria. In order to try to understand this change more fully I felt that filming my drawing in situ and the studio would allow me to view my practice more objectively. The video subsequently captured enabled me to record the sensory experience of drawing as well as the gesture and movement involved. The knowledge and understanding that emerged from this process of acting and reflecting challenged my assumptions of what I was drawing and why. And so my research question emerged: What is the relationship between experience and its reinterpretation through drawing?

Stage Two (2011-2013)
The second stage, shown in Table 3.3, continued the methodology of working in situ and the studio but expanded the recording of activity beyond photographing the sites and the drawings themselves to incorporate directly filming my drawing activity. The descriptive journal was again used to record ideas and describe the situated experience of the landscape and to better develop the concept of seer and seen. As I recommenced the research cycle I wanted to consider more carefully the sites of all my drawing and, as I contemplated
a permanent move to Australia, two sites in England became increasingly important for emotional reasons. These were Jubilee Moor in the north west of England, which is a few miles from where I lived and East Head on the south coast which was closely connected to memories of my father.

Table 3.3. Methods used in Stage Two of the research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage Two</th>
<th>Jubilee Moor (UK)</th>
<th>East Head (UK)</th>
<th>Pumicestone Passage (Australia)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive Journal/Sketchbook</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written notes, descriptions, sketches and drawings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawings in Situ (photographs) SEER</td>
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<td><img src="image5" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawings in the studio (photographs) SEER</td>
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<td><img src="image8" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image9" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video and audio of drawing in studio SEEN</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection and analysis</td>
<td>Collated</td>
<td>Collated</td>
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As the drawings of Jubilee Moor and East Head developed, it became clear to me that there was a shift away from the more linear re-drawing evidenced in the first stage. Again, the studio drawings were on a large scale and used colour, yet it appeared to me that the emotional connection to each landscape was being heightened through the process of drawing in situ and in the studio. The studio drawings became an extension of the experience rather than just a re-living of it. In the digital journal I also began to reflect on, and analyse, practice and outcomes within these contexts.

From this reflective process, it became clear that the immersed activity of drawer needed to be considered more carefully in conjunction with the marks made during that period of immersion, if any meaningful understanding of the process was to be derived. The video recording of practice revealed that it was possible to show only one of these aspects at a time—the process of mark making or the physical activity of the artist in relation to her surroundings. Thus, it was the process of reflecting in the digital journal that made me aware of the need to separate more systematically what I was drawing from how I was drawing. A single fixed video camera was not able to capture either the physicality of the drawings as they were made or my physical and intellectual immersion accurately enough. As my understanding developed, I became more interested in understanding how this immersed experience was being incorporated into the drawings themselves, in a way that went beyond marks on the surface of the paper.

Stage Three (2015-2016)
The reflections and developing praxis in stage two led to a deeper understanding of the complexity and interconnected nature of acting, interpreting and reacting that occurred within drawing itself. By this stage, a number of conceptions relating to interaction with the landscape had also developed. Rather than capturing specific places, I had shifted my focus to my new home on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland from which I began to consider more deeply the immersed and sensory experience of drawing in the landscape. Stage three continued to document activity and process using the methods described earlier, but with an increased understanding of the need to differentiate documentation methods to accommodate the notions of seer and seen as far as possible. As can be seen in Table 3.4, personal discoveries led to methods being expanded. In this third stage, two cameras were used to film the drawing activity and the outcomes separately, in order to better help reveal the nature of the immersed experience of the body and the connection to movement and gesture contained within drawing. Within this stage of the enquiry, the move between description and interpretation was examined in more depth and as work shifted between the description of the landscape in situ and interpretation in the studio, the embodied experience of drawing and the process of documentation became an integral part of the activity of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage Three</th>
<th>Yandina</th>
<th>Bald Knob</th>
<th>Noosa North Shore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptive Journal/ Sketchbook</strong>&lt;br&gt;Written notes, descriptions, sketches and drawings</td>
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<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video and audio of drawing in situ</strong>&lt;br&gt;(drawing)&lt;br&gt;SEER</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video and audio of drawing in situ</strong>&lt;br&gt;(activity)&lt;br&gt;SEEN</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Drawings in the studio</strong>&lt;br&gt;(photographs) SEER</td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Video and audio of drawing in studio</strong>&lt;br&gt;(drawing)&lt;br&gt;SEEN</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video and audio of drawing in studio</strong>&lt;br&gt;(activity)&lt;br&gt;SEEN</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection and analysis</strong>&lt;br&gt;– Digital Journal</td>
<td>Collated</td>
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making; revealing the complex subtleties of the body’s immersed experience. In this way the creative outcomes encompassed acting, reflecting and re-acting. At all stages the digital journal was employed to reflect on approaches and ways of making which illustrated the multifaceted connections between thinking and drawing.

3.6. Reflection on the Creative Project

**Stage One**

This section outlines the evolution of my research process. In this first stage, I had developed a framework for the study but I had not considered how the sites or landscapes would be chosen. Consequently, this section will reflect on the often circular process of development as aims and goals began to emerge from the process of research. The non-linear nature of creative practice added a number of challenges to the study: not being able to return to sites, poor photography and landscapes choosing me rather than the other way round are a few examples of the issues encountered. To address these challenges, a number of methods were adopted and adapted to enable forms of recording and documentation to better include reflection as an on-going dialogue in the drawings. Although drawing is an intimate part of who I am, only certain sets of drawings moved to the studio to be worked upon and, during the initial stages of the project, numerous drawings were made but did not progress to the studio. In order to preserve my continuity of practice it was important not to force drawings for the sake of the research but to work within the bounds of this non-linear progression.

**Neiderau, Austria**

I began the practice-based component of the research process in Neiderau, Austria. On a skiing holiday, I took time out and found a quiet and isolated place on the mountain to draw, wanting to take time to appreciate the bright light, the cold crisp snow and its effect on the landscape. I enjoyed more and more these wanderings across the mountains and began to take photographs as a record for myself alongside and in support of the activity of drawing. I particularly noticed how drawing focused my attention on different aspects of the landscape and commented on this in the digital journal:

I settle myself to draw, encumbered by my bulky clothes to keep out the bitter cold. It is -19. The air is dry and crisp, I feel the chill creeping up my back, and I focus on the light. The hard clear light which defines the space. The clear air means that I can see for miles across the mountaintops—I feel as if I am on top of the world. The intense light creates dense blue and purple shadows as the dark green of the trees retreats to a velvet black. The white snowdrifts reflect the milky clouds, which drift across the azure sky. As I draw the pencil moves from one form to another, tracing the relationships between each dip, hollow and projection. I draw quickly as the cold seeps into my fingers, grabbing at the graphite, leaching across the surface...
of the paper. I huddle further into my jacket, I turn my head from one side to another, my eyes connect the stark forms as they emerge from the snow. The activity of drawing involves me in the landscape; I become a part of it, less an observer and more of a participant. (Extract from author’s digital journal)

To start, I had to try to lose everything but the place I was in. Slowly, the colours of the pine trees and their purple shadows began to gather my gaze and I could begin to draw. I had no preconceived idea about what I would do with these drawings when I returned, so I allowed myself the pleasure of quietly gazing as my eyes wandered over the mountains and the paper. These drawings were graphite and biro on small notepads and sketchbooks, as these were easily carried (Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6. A page from the author’s descriptive journal from Neiderau, with in situ drawings.

On returning to my studio, I looked through my sketchbooks and realised that the drawings themselves took me back to those experiences on the mountain. I could feel the cold and clearly remember the harsh, cold white light of the snow. In considering these drawings, I contemplated how different experiences might affect the studio drawings. However, it took quite some time for any response in the studio to come to the fore. The more I waited for a drawing to arrive, the further away it seemed. Since the creative work did not follow a linear path, I decided to move on to another site. I think the pause was due to a certain hesitancy about the direction the drawings should take. I didn’t want to change my working practices but I also didn’t want to draw just because I thought I should; I needed to allow the ideas to ‘roll around’ in my head for a while. I decided to wait.
**Sunderland Point, North West England**

Taking some larger sketchbooks and more varied materials, I ventured out to Sunderland Point, in Lancashire, north west England. Sunderland Point is known for its tidal landscape, a landscape that has a timeless quality and which I had visited many times—but had never drawn there. I took careful note of the tides and settled myself to draw overlooking the estuary. It was a totally different landscape from Austria as my digital diary from the time records:

> Clear, bright hot sunlight: the smell of salt and seaweed. The spit of land is cut off at every tide. I wait to cross the sandbar - the retreating tide leaves traces of mud, sand and seaweed across the path. As I walk along the shoreline, past a row of cottages the sun begins to burn through my clothes. The hamlet is quiet, only the lap of the tide can be heard. Time seems to be suspended with the retreat of the sea, waiting to be cut off again, safe and secure from the outside world. I choose a bench overlooking the estuary, as the sun is hot now. The tide leaves boats tilted at impossible angles and stuck in the quicksand. Dark green seaweed lines the shore; tree trunks emerge from the water on the retreating tide. They seem to be from another time, stripped bare by the water, sunken, wrought. The groynes wade into the shallows marking safe passage for those that dare to meet the water. (Extract from the author’s digital journal)

The drawing experience at Sunderland Point differed in almost every aspect to that of Neiderau. The experiences were almost total opposites and yet, when I returned to the studio and looked at the drawings, I was transported back to Sunderland Point by the sensory experiences which the drawings had released (Figure 3.7)

![Image](image.png)

**Figure 3.7.** Biro and watercolour sketch from Sunderland Point (2011).
This physical distance between drawing in situ and drawing in the studio became a way of separating the immersed experiences. Drawing in situ placed me clearly in the role of the seer and the experience of the studio that of reflecting on and reacting to the seen and this approach enabled work to be viewed both subjectively and objectively. This was the first instance where I considered both what I had drawn and how I drew it.

In the studio, I found that I needed significant time to think about how these different experiences might begin to work as studio drawings, particularly if the concept of moving between the roles of seer and seen would be integral to how I viewed these experiences and their outcomes. I began my first studio works with a series of large drawings that explored the drawings made in Neiderau, as I felt I needed to return to these drawings before moving on to Sunderland Point—even though memory of the latter was still much clearer. In returning to the earlier experience of Neiderau, I found I had to concentrate in order to return myself to the mountains, a process that required shutting out all other distractions as far as possible. As I worked, the small sketches made with graphite and biro developed into large-scale drawings of up to two by one point five metres (Figure 3.8).

Charcoal and washes of colour were applied in broad sweeps to allow the denser forms to emerge, appearing to grow out of the flat white planes of the paper’s surface. As I worked I became intrigued about my impulse to use colour, since the sketches had only been small, with stark pencil and biro marks, and I only looked quickly at the sketches before beginning to draw. This need for referencing soon became unnecessary as the drawing experience began to replay in my head. I employed large gestural sweeps of colour as a foil for the charcoal structures of the trees. As I worked the experience was recalled, almost like a video and, as I drew, my consciousness flitted between the remembered experience and the lived experience of the studio. I found that the drawing had begun to drive itself as I oscillated between these modes.

These observations resonate with Harty’s (2012) proposition that drawing practice allows an examination of states of consciousness. She describes these states as both an ‘awareness of being connected to the environment—a disconnection of the mind to the point of loss of awareness and conversely a heightened awareness of self within the environment’ (Harty, 2012, p.3). Harty postulates that the mind and body fluctuate between these modes. However, I have found that in my own drawing practice these states co-exist and are congruent and readily seen. To these two states, a third is added. This third state, which runs alongside, is one of being aware of the activity of drawing. This experience is different from the immersed experience in that I am able to view my drawing activity at a distance, as an activity that is seen.
These studio drawings always commenced with the in situ sketches, before taking on a life of their own as they progressed. The same oscillation between remembered experience and the lived experience of the studio manifested itself in the physical movements of drawing on a large scale.

In working on the larger scale for Sunderland Point (Figure 3.9), the colour became highly active as it moved itself across the surface of the paper, shifting and dissolving before it settled. The final stage of the work though, was a return to drawing with charcoal and pastel, retracing the process of the original sketches as I recalled memories of myself sitting at the side of the estuary. These first two sets of drawings had begun to address some the questions of the research: What do I draw? Why do I draw? And how do I draw? The process of reflecting and analysing through using the idea of seer and seen had already begun to reveal aspects of my drawing that I had not considered before. These initial observations indicated that drawing could both describe and interpret my experiences in the landscape—a process intimated by Bailey’s (1982) notion of ‘imaginative engagement’ which, he argued, demonstrated a reflective move from the ‘lived experience’ to a ‘consideration’ of that experience.

A **unexpected visit to Canberra**

Whilst contemplating these insights, I was offered the chance to travel from the UK to Canberra. Having arrived late at night, I emerged on the first morning at 7 o’clock to find a warm, brightly lit and unfamiliar place. I was immediately struck by the warmth of the sun, the smell of the Eucalyptus and the bright, clear light. I felt a sense of great excitement and of wonder at the unfamiliarity of this environment, a sense echoed later in my digital journal from that time:

> Hot baked earth, bright spring sun and the sweet smell of Eucalypt and Myrtle. I can feel the warmth of the sun on my skin as I emerge, blinking, blind into the glare of the morning.
breeze ruffles the crisp dry leaves of the Eucalyptus—the smell of sun-soaked earth mingles with unfamiliar scents. I am amazed by the light—everything is awash with it, over exposed even early in the morning. It is spring here in the Southern hemisphere; I feel a gulf between the hard grey sky I have left and the intensity of the blue here. As I sit ready to draw I realise I have to reflect on how to draw—the unfamiliar shapes and colours challenge my habits and history. This astonishing landscape, the huge trees crowned with halos of tough, brittle leaves, the soft wash of the yellow and white flowers on the shrubs. Ants, initially put out by the presence of my feet, make new tracks over my shoes. It is hot, bone warming, the sun beats down on my back—I feel it through my clothes. The light defines the forms in the landscape with sharpness and precision that gives the feeling of timelessness. (Extract from the author’s digital journal, 2014)

I drew manically at every opportunity, never knowing if I would return again to Australia. As I drew, I realised that I had to relearn to use the materials I was familiar with—to draw new forms, capture a different light, the saturated colour and the endless sky (Figure 3.10). It did not occur to me that this trip would be something that might affect my research journey or that subsequent studio drawings would have such an impact on my ways of working. I just drew and drew and drew. I took many photographs and a few snatches of video.

**Figure 3.9.** Sunderland Point (2011) studio drawing. Charcoal, graphite, pigment and pastel on paper. 250 cm x 200cm.
On my return to the UK I kept revisiting the situ drawings to re-live the experiences of Australia. I could smell it and feel it through my drawings, and it was this reaction to the drawings that really caught my attention. I understood that I was using the process of drawing to commit those experiences to a deeply internalised set of memories. In recalling memory through drawing, I realised I was revisiting places through heightened perceptions of smell, sight, touch and sound, and once again I was reminded of Harty’s (2012) assertion that the act of drawing heightens perceptions as well as awareness of them in the environment.

Almost immediately, my experiences of Canberra spurred on a series of large scale studio drawings. I not only wanted to recapture that place, but to return again and again to my time there. I began to realise that this trip had developed a critical significance within my art practice. I had been forced to relearn both how to see and to draw during my brief visit to Canberra—to understand just how the spindly white arms of the Eucalypts ended in a round clump of silver grey leaves, how to capture the sweeps of acid yellow and purple dotting the golden plains or how to recreate the green and purple forms of dense woods or the span of the horizon as the sky meets the land (Figure 3.11). Not only did these experiences have to be disentangled in my head, I had to concentrate on unravelling them in order to begin to draw in the studio. Instinctively, I chose a large scale again and began to work only with colour on the floor. Before each colour was applied I thought long and hard about its shape and use in the drawing.
I worked quickly on the large studio drawings each one exploring different aspects of my time in Canberra. Large brushes were used to apply the pigment and, as it was important to me not to rework the image, each mark had to be deliberately right and possess the energy to stand by itself on the surface, as shown in Figure 3.12.

As I worked on this series of drawings the marks became sparser across the surface as I tried to strip away the irrelevances and concentrate on the essence of that experience. The physical response became as significant to me as the waiting period before the mark was made. I had to focus single-mindedly on how individual expressions of place could be conveyed through mark and colour. The Canberra experience provoked a critical shift in both my thinking and practice. As I reviewed the drawings I began to understand that I had shifted away from the descriptive towards the interpretive. This was emphasised not only by the move between locations, but the move between in situ and the studio. The Canberra in situ drawings made clear that the initial function of drawing for me was to remember and describe—rather than to record. The studio drawings then took on a more interpretive aspect—as an enacted memory as well as artefacts possessing a life of their own.

Stage Two
During stage one of the study I had become intrigued by the physicality of the studio responses and how they engendered a connection and a re-visiting of place. The large scale of the drawings remained, although increasingly I began to combine gesture and movement with colour on the surface of the paper to create dramatic images that reflected an experience of place that was different from those in the UK and Austria. In order to try to more fully understand this change, I decided that filming my drawing in situ and in the studio would allow me to view my practice more objectively and better elucidate the notion of seer and seen within my drawing practice. The videos would enable me to record the sensory experience of drawing as well as the gesture and movement involved and would enable me to see how I drew in different locations. As discussed in Chapter Two, the concept of seer refers to the immersed experience of the artist and the drawn outcomes. The use of an externalised point of observation, such as afforded by video and photography, allows the more objective stance of the seen to add different insights by enabling the viewing of practice from a distance. As illustrated in Figure 3.2 these notions of seer and seen relate directly to experiences of landscape and drawing. Engaging with drawing’s duality in the capacity of both seer and seen and being able to broadly look and look at oneself looking, makes visible a distinction between the object and the act of consciousness.

As I recommenced the research cycle, it became clear that I needed to consider more carefully the sites of my drawing. By now, I was beginning to contemplate a permanent move to Australia and, as a result, two sites in England became important to me—for personal and emotional reasons—and so I chose to focus on them as sites for the second stage of the
Figure 3.11. Sketchbook drawing of Eucalyptus trees, Canberra (2011). Graphite on paper. 22cm x 20cm.

Figure 3.12. Studio drawing of Canberra (2011). Graphite and pigment on paper. 140 cm x 100 cm.
study. These were Jubilee Moor in the north west of England, a few miles from where I lived and East Head on the south coast of England, which was deeply connected to memories of my father.

**Jubilee Moor, Lancashire, North West England**

As the cold weather settled in for the winter I began drawing at Jubilee Moor. The weather was clear but cold and as I settled myself I was initially conscious of the camera, but this soon receded as the landscape came to meet me. As I sat I felt the cold rise up my back and my feet begin to numb. It was frosty, windy and the ground was frozen hard. The moor was bleak, heather clumps rose from the hard earth and the wind dragged the clouds across the top of the hills. I focused on the forms and their interconnection, as shown in Figure 3.13.

The hard light defines the forms as they jostle for my attention as the drawing begins to show the interconnection between the planes and angles. Soft heather and bracken contrasts with the hard granite—everything is motionless, waiting for the cold to pass. The landscape seems suspended...waiting as I gather it inside. The process of mark making intensifies the experience—I draw quickly as my fingers begin to numb with the cold. The dense forms seduce my gaze. I am drawn to their solidity—sitting, perched on the edge of the rocky escarpment, they brood. The heavy light settles on the forms. The dove grey sky releases the first few flakes of snow - small and crystalline because of the cold. Gently they drift down and settle on the iron-hard earth. I become conscious of my breath...vaporous clouds emerge into the landscape as I gather in the memory of what the place feels like, smells like, sounds like, tastes like. (Extract from the author's descriptive journal, 2011)

I drew quickly as the cold gradually stiffened my fingers too much to draw. I returned to the studio and again began with large scale drawings. I also recorded the making of these drawings. I started with graphite and graphite powder, the colour had disappeared. The drawings were hard, thin and brittle somehow—not what I had thought would appear. I was dissatisfied but did not know why. However, when I reviewed the video, I was struck by my body language and approaches to drawing in the studio. I saw that I hesitated before beginning to draw and I recalled myself flitting back to the experience on the moor. However these remembrances seemed almost to be a re-drawing of the original sketches (Figure 3.14). I was dissatisfied, as they seemed only to be a skeleton of the more visceral experience encountered on the moor itself. I thought about that day with the wind, the bleak drifts of heather and the cold. I began again and decided not to use graphite but to try to get a sense of the panorama through expanses of colour. Muted greys and blues began to cover the paper in broad washes. I applied different layers to try to get a sense of the subdued light. I then worked back into the drawings with pastel and pigment.
Figure 3.13. Author sketching at Jubilee Moor (2011).

Figure 3.14. Jubilee Moor studio drawing (2011). Graphite and graphite powder on paper. 140 cm x 100 cm.
This created the effect of the low hanging grey sky and the mossy moor rising to meet it. The layering of the colour re-created the atmosphere of the moor more effectively, as shown in Figure 3.15. The dense areas of pigment created contrasting forms to the steely grey washes of the skyscape. To me, these subsequent drawings were more successful as they better expressed the experience on the moor.

I was interested in how reviewing of video had allowed me to see the initial drawings from outside the process more objectively, and made it possible for me to navigate a way forward. This new direction enabled me to return to the experience of the moor itself rather than the action of re-drawing. With a new-found confidence from these ways of thinking and doing, I began drawing on a large scale again. I felt that it was important to return to the sensory experiences on Jubilee Moor not to just remember what I drew. I had to strip away the layers in order to focus only on this. This way of working allowed the landscape to become present in the studio as I relived my time in that place as it made its way onto the paper (Figure 3.16). Being in that place rather than of it; seer rather than seen.

**East Head, South East England**

For the second site for Stage Two of this study I travelled to the UK south coast, eager to see the places where my dad holidayed as a young child. The light was sharp and clear as we reached East Head, near Chichester in England. The wind was brisk, pushing white and grey clouds out to sea. The smell and the taste of the salt in the air were invigorating and I imagined my father, as a young boy in his shorts, poking about in the rock pools looking for fossils and crabs. I think that I was trying to keep in touch with him through this place. As I walked around the headland, the wind picked up as I faced it and the sea began to chop and slap against the groynes jutting out to sea. The gulls shrieked as the storm clouds gathered. I sat on the sand to draw the structures and surfaces as they intertwined around the headland and into the estuary (Figure 3.17). A feeling of heaviness engulfed my thoughts, weight bore down—I felt it inside, in my chest. Gone were the thoughts of my dad as I became immersed in the smell of the sea, the pull of the wind and how the sand felt under my feet.

As I drew I tried to focus on the expanse of the landscape before me and I began to use watercolour washes to describe the surfaces and textures as they became increasingly apparent to me. I noticed that the marks and colours had returned, possibly influenced by my visit to Canberra. I had more confidence now—the colour began to come forward as one of the most important aspects of what I saw before me. Both the light and the colour began to define the forms that jostled before me and, as the wind increased, the breaks in the cloud flooded the estuary with intense ochres, lime and dark greens (Figure 3.18). As the tide turned, the silty, sandy waterways quickly began to fill with ribbons of ocean and, as the wind shifted, the dark grey clouds tumbled
Figure 3.15. Jubilee Moor (2011) studio re-drawing. Pigment, watercolour and graphite on paper. 33cm x 24cm.

Figure 3.16. Jubilee Moor (2011) studio drawing. Pigment, watercolour and graphite on paper. 140cm x 100cm.
over the horizon. Quickly, the colour became muted and overcast. As I drew, I began to ask myself a number of questions—what was it that I was trying to capture of this place? What was the connection I was trying to unearth? Was it my connection to my father on his imagined holiday—or something else entirely? I was at one with and, at the same time, existing in both the past and the present.

Figure 3.17. East Head Estuary (2012) sketch. Graphite on paper. 40cm x 26cm.

Figure 3.18. East Head Estuary (2012) sketch. Graphite and watercolour on paper. 40cm x 26cm.
In the last of the drawings I returned more fully to the use and experience of colour. Noticeable were the sweeps of green, yellow and ribbons of blue. These large drawings of East Head were interesting as I viewed them in context afterwards. The triptych shown in Figure 3.19 has a more sombre presence than the final drawing, shown in Figure 3.20. Here, colour is more effective but the freedom and energy of the marks in the triptych are more successful. I think, on reviewing the videos of my studio work, that I was beginning to rely on familiar mark making and wash techniques. As the drawings developed it became clear that there was a shift away from the linear re-drawing of the early sketches in that I felt that the emotional connection to the landscape was heightened by the process of drawing, both in situ and in the studio. However, contrary to my expectations, it was not memories of my dad that came to the fore at East Head Estuary. Although I had gone there looking for memories of my father, these had not materialised, and I think that this was the source of the sadness I associate with these drawings. The studio drawing became an extension of the experience rather than just a re-living of it, which was reflected on in the digital journal:

The process of drawing in situ, I think, was initially about describing the particular place. This description was both internalised in full technicolour and yet in externalised form it was in monochrome. The act of drawing was also an act of committing to memory. This translated itself in the studio drawings into a process of remembering and re-drawing. The process was re-lived physically as well as mentally. In considering how these processes and practices interact I can see, through the videos of drawing, that I have begun to move beyond the descriptive. This manifests itself through the use of colour as well as scale. Although drawing in the studio revisits the experience of drawing in situ, it now also moves beyond describing ‘that’ experience in ‘that’ particular place. Is this then a movement in thought that is reflected in the movement towards and interpretation of the experience of drawing in situ? (Extract from the author’s digital journal, 2015)

Pumicestone Passage, South East Queensland, Australia

Shortly after the East Head drawings were completed I moved to Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast of Queensland, Australia. It took some time for me to get back to drawing—everything was an aesthetic feast—the sun, the sea, the beach, the hinterland, the trees, the wildlife. I had to mentally settle myself and return to familiar ways of working. In exploring this new environment, I made many trips to different locations, but it was a boat trip that triggered a new body of work.

I took the boat down to the Pumicestone Passage and moved slowly out into the river, the slap and roll throwing up a spray as I navigated the sand bars and markers. I moved further down the passage and the wind whipped across the water, the sun sparkled on the choppy surface as the tide rolled away. Following a creek, the wind quickly dropped, since I was
sheltered by the dense trees on the bank. It was quiet...the water slapped against the hull, the wind rustled the trees. I took water from the creek and began to draw. Under the canopy it was warm and, although it was still early, the sun was already hot. The trees at the edge cast short shadows onto the water (Figure 3.21) and the inlet smelled of boggy saltwater, damp and musty, stirred up by my arrival. Fish jumped in the shallow shadows. I felt cut off, isolated, as if watched by a brooding presence from the dense and impenetrable banks.
In the studio I began to contemplate my experience of the Pumicestone Passage. I had felt a different kind of connection to that place. Some of the feelings evolved from my using the boat to see an alternative view of the landscape. I had felt an intruder, watched by the dense forms that lay along the bank. As I moved further down the inlet, drawing in different places, I remembered the importance of the feeling that I was on a journey into the unknown. When approached from the water the land took on a different perspective and feeling and, to further explore these feelings, I began to draw on board in monochrome with ink (Figure 3.22).

To try to understand the connection between conceptions of remoteness and isolation, the layers of ink and paint were applied thinly in order to allow marks to re-emerge from the drawing process. Lines traced the forms through which the shifting structures on the waterway were revealed. The sparsity of the drawings refers directly to the feeling of separation and remoteness from the landscape that I felt at the time.

Watching the videos of myself drawing in situ and in the studio, I was struck by the way that the drawings had become a process. I recalled the shift in thinking as I dispassionately observed myself drawing. As the marks evolved on the paper, I recalled memories coming to the fore as the drawing began to define or show itself, but that these memories dimmed as I worked and the lived experience of drawing in the studio exerted itself. This was revealed in the video through the long contemplative gaps in activity as I drew, waited and then drew again. The extended pauses in activity that occurred in the studio were in marked contrast to the videos taken in the landscape. In situ, the activity was relentless as I moved quickly from one sketchbook to the next. The video
and audio of the in situ recordings revealed another difference between them and the studio drawings, which occurred in almost total silence compared to the noise and activity captured in Pumicestone Passage. The studio recordings are extremely quiet with the only sounds being generated by materials on paper. The final drawing, Figure 3.23, has a brooding quality due to the contrast between ink and pastel creating depth in the dark forms.

In the Pumicestone Passage series, I shifted away from the use of strong colour and the tones were more earthy and brooding, emerging through a process of layering of ink, pastel and watercolour wash (Figure 3.23) but the process of re-drawing was beginning to take on more significance. These later drawings show more connection to the original sketches. The initial linear studio drawings can be understood as a stage where the move from description to interpretation is articulated most clearly. Some drawings were successful, some were not and needed to be reworked, but each one explored an aspect of the experience of drawing in situ and in the studio.

In Stage Two, the drawings and my reflection on activity raised questions about the move from description to interpretation. I had begun to understand that there was a process of reflection-in-action being used and this had shown itself through the drawings and the videos. Drawings in situ...
Figure 3.23. Pumicestone Passage studio drawing (2013). Ink, pastel and watercolour on paper. 140cm x 100cm.

were on a small scale and worked on quickly and intensively. The first studio drawings reverted to a linear form as the experience of drawing was re-lived and which I called re-drawing. Re-drawing was characterised by an almost imitative reworking of the situ drawings. They had no of the life and experience that I was remembering as I drew but for each set of drawings for each place these ‘re-drawn’ images had emerged. The subsequent studio drawings then moved to a more interpretive stance.

In reviewing the video recordings, it became apparent that the viewpoint from a single, fixed camera did not always allow me to see the detail I required for analysing my process. Because I was working alone, the camera could be set to focus on me, as the artist, or on the work, but not on both in any meaningful way. In order to more clearly see the drawings as they emerged, I determined that two camera positions were needed in the next stage—one focused on the drawing and the other focused on my activity. A wider view could be gained by positioning one camera further away which could be used to capture my broader movements, whilst a second camera could focus on the work surface itself. This would give two differing viewpoints of the same activity and allow the overall experience to be reflected on more fully, allowing me to see not only what I was drawing, but how, and how this changed in the move between locations.
These observations brought to my attention that, using only a single viewpoint, I could not fully see or understand how I interacted with my work in the landscape and in the studio. The use of multiple camera viewpoints is in keeping with Merleau-Ponty’s notion of the multifaceted nature of experience. These multiple viewpoints reinforce the more objective stance of the researcher through providing opportunities to stand back from drawing activity and the immersion in the landscape.

**Stage Three**

Stage Three represents the third iteration of the research process. Having determined that further investigation of the process of internalisation and externalisation would be revealed through looking in more depth at the immersed experience of the body, this stage was designed to enable me to see more clearly how I draw, as well as what I draw. Some of the difficulties experienced previously included the inability to repeat videos, experiences and drawings, whilst several visits had not resulted in any studio-based work, or the videos of drawing in situ or the studio had the wrong focus, light level or simply ran out of battery. These were recognised as a natural part of the learning experience and, naturally, could be corrected for on the basis of experience. In this stage, more focus was placed on the landscapes themselves and how and why they were chosen. Previously, the landscapes had seemed to choose me or to arrive unbidden. At this point, I wanted to examine my drawing far more closely in the light of my increased interest in how colour was being used within the drawings. Consequently, I began to specifically choose locations that had dramatic colour embedded within them. To provide a more comprehensive understanding of the environment itself, the video recordings made in situ were also set up to capture more of the surrounding landscape than previously. I believed that this, combined with the extra camera used in capturing my immersed activity, would increase opportunities for, and the quality of, my observations and reflections.

**Yandina, South East Queensland, Australia**

I chose Yandina as a site for drawing because of its isolation and overgrown, dramatic hilly landscape. As I walked up the hill, the ground turned from scrubby grass to boulders and pine trees. My cameras and bag were heavy and the weather was warm and humid, so I stopped half way up to take off my jumper and look at the climb ahead. Steep, rocky gullies revealed how the water ran in the wet season, carving great channels into the hillside. As I reached the top, I turned and saw lush green ridges across the valley, whilst overhead the sky was a brilliant blue with white clouds scurrying above me. I thought briefly about snakes and spiders as I found a place to draw, since the grass was tall, taller than me. I could feel the perspiration prickling on my skin. I began by drawing the opposite valley (Figure 3.24).
With the increasing heat, fewer and fewer clouds came across the ridge until only a perfect, clear blue sky was visible. I concentrated on my immediate surroundings rather than the panorama. The grass was a vivid green with sandy heads, the sky intense blue and I smelled myrtle and heat on the breeze. As I drew, I was transported back to my childhood, playing with Sharon, my best friend, on the field behind my house, hiding in the grass. We used to lie on our backs looking at the sky, dreaming and sharing until it was time for tea.

I think that because of the nature of the landscape around me I feel submerged in it—sheltered in my grass hideaway—looking up at the sky I see the nodding heads of the grass moving slowly with the breeze. Time seems to move more slowly enmeshed in a landscape which seems almost timeless. Drawing begins by looking at the structures and colours that surround me. Rather than the large vistas I am drawn to, I focus on small areas and the connections I see unfurling before me. (Extract from the author's descriptive journal, 2015)

This focus, as noted above in my descriptive journal, reminds me that this session of drawing became more intimate and contemplative than the previous ones. Perhaps this was due to my position, deep in the grass, or the childhood memories that it inspired. The sketchbook drawings were filled with colour (Figure 3.25), more so than in the past and gone was the wide panorama that I usually favoured. From this session of drawing several questions arose. How would this different approach to place affect the studio drawings? What would the video from two different standpoints show? For the first time, drawing in situ called forth memories, so how would this interact with the studio drawings, if at all?
In the studio I again began drawing on a large scale, with colours that were at the forefront of my mind. However, as I drew I instinctively felt the familiarity of the movements and marks I was making. On reviewing the videos of the drawings, I could see there was a similarity to the Canberra studio drawings. Clearly, the large sweeping gestures I observed did not reflect the intimacy of the original experience (Figure 3.26). I also realised that I had missed out the middle phase, the re-drawing, that I had identified in Stage Two. As a result, the drawing is brash and insensitive to the immersed experience. To address this, I decided to move to a smaller scale using more muted colours. Layers of these colours built themselves up almost as a reflection of the memories that the experience had prompted. One drawing explored the memories of sketching the sloping hillside opposite where I sat (Figure 3.27), whilst the other grew out of the experience of being nestled in the grass (Figure 3.28).

These later Yandina drawings show again how, in the studio, I initially described the experience before moving towards a more interpretive stance. For the second drawing, I had to clear my mind more carefully before beginning to draw and so allow the intensity of the colours, forms and memories to return. I struggled to think clearly about the drawings from Yandina, since the experience was so different from my usual drawing situations. Normally, I tended to favour working with open skies and large vistas and this experience differed in virtually every way.

I believe that this was because I had begun to choose locations for different reasons—I specifically chose Yandina for its isolation and the colours in the landscape—whereas previously I had waited
Figure 3.26. First studio drawing from Yandina (2015). Pigment on paper. 175 cm x 150 cm.

for the location to choose me, that is, for me to be inspired by it. This change of focus clearly changed how I approached my studio work. I had inadvertently missed out the re-drawing stage and this had a ‘knock-on’ effect, suggesting to me that there was a definable process at work. Later, watching the videos of the in situ drawings I saw that I had focused closely on the surroundings and drew almost without looking at the paper. For me, the act of drawing is also an act of deep remembering. This may explain why I don’t refer to the field drawings when in the studio. However, in this process, I also need to include the process of re-drawing. Re-drawing recalls different aspects of the landscape of which I am unaware at the time.

Bald Knob, near Maleny, South East Queensland

It took some time to find my place at Bald Knob on the Sunshine Coast. I had drawn in a few places, but none had given me a particular connection that I felt I needed to work with in the studio. As soon as I sat and began to draw I thought that this would come to something, so I tried to focus on what had drawn me to this place. I was at the highest point of the range and could see the inlets of Pumicestone Passage as ribbons of pale blue. The hills ran along the horizon before dropping off steeply into the valley. Furrows cut from the rock were deep green, blue and purple in their shadows and the crags fell away to soft interlacing layers of woodland, dotted with the
acid green of pasture in high summer. The air smelled clean, but had a haze towards the horizon brought on by the humidity. The colour was saturated, heavy, waiting for the rains to come.

I had to work quickly as the light and shadow changed constantly with the cloud cover. One minute the dark shadows of the trees became illuminated forms which rose towards the sky. As clouds passed in front of the sun, bright purple hues jumped from the interlocking forms. I traced
the layers of the landscape before moving to broad sweeps of colour. The layers built on top of one another, as can be seen in Figure 3.29. These drawings were less descriptive than in the past and I think this is because of the need to work quickly due to the rapidly changing light. In other places, the clear blue sky had allowed me to work more slowly, which led to more preoccupation with the form. Working quickly at Bald Knob led to a number of larger drawings which explored different aspects of the view, as seen in Figure 3.30.

Back in the studio, drawing was carried out on a small scale, since I wanted to more thoroughly explore the stage of re-drawing I had identified earlier, before moving to a larger scale. I began with an initial oil sketch, shown in Figure 3.31, but the colour was too heavy and dense and did not produce the overlapping layers (that allowed marks to show through) that I was seeking to achieve. Although it was not what I was expecting, the oil sketch was what I now called re-drawing. This drawing was pivotal as it showed the process of re-drawing had become embedded in my

**Figure 3.28.** Studio drawing from Yandina (2015). Pigment and pastel on panel. 92cm x 92cm.
**Figure 3.29.** In situ sketch from Bald Knob (2016). Watercolour and ink pen on paper. 28cm x 22cm.

**Figure 3.30.** In situ sketches from Bald Knob (2016). Watercolour, graphite and pastel on paper. Various sizes.
practice. Nevertheless, the sketch helped me to understand some of the issues I was interested in, in relation to the act of drawing in situ. The video recordings revealed that the process of shuffling through my memory was certainly happening before I began a subsequent set of studio drawings. There were long pauses in activity and I could recall that I was replaying the experience mentally, examining it in detail before I made marks on the paper. My application of colour started in a tentative way and was built up in semi-transparent layers. Through gestural marks I tried to capture a sense of the expansiveness of the original location and the quickly shifting light.

In the last studio drawing from this series, shown below in Figure 3.32, I sought to subvert my reliance on large gestural marks because these often created quite dense forms (as can be seen in Figures 3.23 and 3.26). What I produced from the Bald Knob series was a more nuanced layering and intermingling of forms, which were knitted together in new ways. I dripped and poured the pigment, allowed it to dry and then used large rollers to blend layers of semi-translucent colour, working wet on wet. This caused the pigments to move across the surface almost as if they had a will of their own. Areas were later reworked with dry media to emphasise surface texture and to enhance the layering of the forms within the composition. Cold wax, pigment, water, pastel and acrylic were all used to encourage the layers to divide and separate.

The oil sketch (Figure 3.31) did not reflect what I saw and felt that day or achieve what I had intended and I identified as being a re-drawing. The small drawings (Figure 3.30) were closer to my impressions of Bald Knob—but it was the final drawing which truly captured the saturated colour and the moving, colour-defined forms that I had seen before me (Figure 3.32). The process informing this work, although new to me, mirrored the changing landscape by harnessing the temporality of the shifting materials used in the drawing itself. On reviewing the recordings of the studio work, I noticed that I spent much more time waiting for the materials to work across the surface than I had ever done before.

Previously, studio drawings had developed in my consciousness as each mark was made. In situ, drawings consisted of highly intentional and focused marks, which embodied the landscape as I saw it, using a well-rehearsed and well-understood visual shorthand. These drawings required a process of being internalised before they could properly emerge onto the surface in the studio. In contrast, the newer drawings made in Australia are still a bit of a mystery to me, since they begin with an idea rather than an attempt at producing a re-telling of the landscape. The central idea, I think, is built upon an accumulation of different aspects of place—in this case, Bald Knob. What was seen was the acid green of the pastures, the dark purples and greens of the trees set against the blue of the sea and the sky. But, along with this, I could also feel the heat of the day, a landscape that waited for the rain—the promise of a roiling sky as the rain changed the landscape briefly.
Figure 3.31. Studio oil sketch of view from Bald Knob (2016). Oil on canvas. 60cm x 40cm.

Figure 3.32. Final studio drawing of view from Bald Knob (2016). Pigment, acrylic and pastel on canvas. 177 cm x 102 cm.
As seer, I became increasingly aware of how the changing process of drawing altered both what and why I drew. The stages of in situ and in studio drawing were now joined by an intermediate stage, a stage I saw as re-drawing. In this stage, which happened in the studio, as I drew I was recalling different aspects of the landscape experience. The depth of observation in situ allowed space for a different recalling of the sensory experiences in the studio—the heat, the longing for rain, the promise of the clouds—these were the elements that were evoked during the process of re-drawing. The embodied experience revealed in this stage then became the starting point for the subsequent larger drawings. I determined that this approach needed to be explored more carefully in the final location.

Noosa North Shore, Sunshine Coast, Queensland

As I waited for the ferry to Noosa North Shore, I became excited about drawing there. I had returned to this place as I had felt a pull back to the huge sky and long stretches of golden sand I had encountered earlier. The day was windy and I knew drawing would be a challenge, but I drove to the beach and settled myself against a sand dune and tried to shelter from the wind. The water was choppy, waves pushed onto the sand by the wind. The clouds moved quickly giving bursts of colour as the sun was revealed, the sea becoming aqua, green and turquoise under its gaze.

Layers of colour emerged from the sea, sand and sky. As I drew I became fixated by the shifting horizon, noting that as the light changed the colour changed and the place where the water meets the sky shifted. It seemed that even before I could get colour on paper, everything had changed. Figure 3.35 shows me drawing in situ during this initial session.

Drawing at Noosa was challenging, as the wind and the fast changing light caused numerous problems. Despite the difficulties, the experience of the beach, the rawness of the wind and the brilliance of the changing colours was exhilarating and, although the cold and blustery day was unusual for the time of year, it brought with it more depth to the sea, sand and the sky. The clear, bright light was a result of the summer humidity clearing and the light shimmered and showed itself in great bursts of dazzling colour. As I sat on the beach, battling to get the drawings down on paper, I had to work extremely quickly before the vista before me changed. This heightened my awareness of the shifting sea and clouds, how the sand blasted my face and settled in everything, including the paint pans. I could smell and taste the salt of the air. Interestingly, in retrospect I would concede that the drawings from this session at the beach (Figure 3.33) did not seem to visually capture the dynamism of the experience. However, when I returned to the studio to begin work—the recollected experiences brought into sharp focus the brilliance of the colours. I could remember sitting and watching the sea change from turquoise to green to a sparkling azure blue as the clouds passed in front of the sun.
This series of drawings was intended to explore in depth the notion of re-drawing that I had identified subsequent to my work at Bald Knob. Consequently, back at my studio, instead of moving straight to large-scale drawings, I worked at smaller scale and concentrated more on recalling the sensory experiences of Noosa North Shore (Figure 3.34). This new approach allowed a clearer focus on the colour I had experienced and my fascination with the moving horizon. In an attempt to capture this movement, I began to carefully layer colours to give the impression of the shifting nature of the colour. Memories of the horizon, which seemed to emphasise the huge sky above me and which surrounded and enveloped me, came flooding back. I felt as if my head was opening up in some way in order to allow this intense colour to permeate my whole being.

I completed several of these sketches before I decided to move onto a larger scale. I began two large narrow but long drawings in order to try to capture the huge vista that kept replaying itself in my head. The ochre and pale yellow of the sand was a foil, in my mind, for the saturated blue (Figure 3.35). As I began to draw, I quickly realised that the dimensions of drawing meant that I had reached the limits of my physical drawing range—in other words, I now had to move my whole body across the surface to make continuous marks. Watching the video replays from these drawings made it evident to me that this need for physical extension forced me to seriously consider how and why the marks were made.
**Figure 3.34.** Studio drawing of Noosa North Shore (2016). Pigment and pastel on paper. 32cm x 29cm.

**Figure 3.35.** Studio drawing of Noosa North Shore (2016). Pigment and acrylic on canvas. 177cm x 102cm.
The stylistic and process-based breakthrough that had occurred in the Bald Knob session seemed to be continuing. The change in what I was recalling came to the fore again in the Noosa North Shore re-drawings, culminating in a large, final drawing of just over two metres by 190 centimetres, which can be seen as Figure 3.36. For this drawing, canvas had to be used as I could not find paper big enough or strong enough and because I also wanted to move away from the bright white of the cartridge paper. For this drawing I worked on raw canvas and, as a result, the inks and pigments moved and bled in different ways to the less absorbent paper, allowing successive layers to be applied after each had dried. Although I wanted to create a sense of depth, I also tried to give a glimpse of the expansive horizon stretching to either side, as well as an indication of the vastness of the sky above, whilst simultaneously capturing the shifting light and colours as they played across the surfaces of the water and the sand. This drawing moved me away from the focus on the horizon and, I would argue, has more energy and drama than the two previous large drawings (Figure 3.36). As I reviewed the drawings and the videos of drawing at Noosa I recalled the flashes of intense light as the clouds cleared momentarily. I wanted to introduce an element that shimmered and which was affected by the light and shadows around it. I had used copper leaf in a couple of smaller drawings as it changed and oxidised as the wet pigments dried. I used it in the final drawing as a foil for the flat, soft areas of wash and to interpret visually my recollection of the intense flashes of light and colour which appeared intermittently as I was drawing at Noosa.

Figure 3.36. Final studio drawing of Noosa North Shore (2016). Pigment, acrylic, copper leaf and pastel on canvas. 214cm x 191cm.
3.7. Observations

Looking back through the three stages of the creative research it is clear that the body of work continually developed and changed, both in terms of the process and the understanding of the work. Some developments came quickly, whilst others waited to show themselves and were dependant on shifts in understanding and adaptations to physical places. I learned that I need to patiently wait if I am to really 'see' both place and landscape. The temporal immediacy of drawing in situ is, to some extent, subverted by the longitudinal temporality of studio work. The transition from working in situ to working in the studio, in moving from description to interpretation, I would argue, demands a significant change in one’s ways of thinking.

In the first stage of the study, the move from in situ to in studio involved a physical change, yet it also required my thinking to focus principally on the activity of drawing. I acted primarily as what Merleau-Ponty describes as the seer. I could retrace the marks in my mind and this internalised a memory of place and drawing—I was back, immersed in the landscape and able to recreate what I had seen using a suite of marks and gestures built up over an extended period of time. In the second stage, what I recalled in the studio had begun to change. As I remembered the experiences and reviewed the videos, photographs and journals made during the in situ drawing period what arose in me were vivid impressions of the sensory experiences I had undergone at the locations themselves. This I identified as a deeper mental activity in which preliminary drawings, memories (both physiological and psychological) and experiences were recombined in a process I have termed ‘re-drawing’—a mental activity that occurred in the calm of the studio—and which needed to transpire before the larger drawings, especially those demanding more extensive physical engagement, could take place. The long pauses evident in the video recordings make this process highly visible.

In the third stage of the study, by which time I had settled in Australia, my practice became increasingly influenced by the newness of my environment and my overwhelming experience of colour and light. As I focused on the notion of acting in the capacity of the seer, my heightened perceptions working in situ furnished me with rich and textured experiences that were closely documented in my physical and digital journals. Videography and photography were used extensively in this phase, but could never capture the intensity of the physical experience. In the studio, the process of re-drawing based on the work at Bald Knob and Noosa North Shore took on more significance and became a way of externalising those mediated experiences in the landscape. This allowed me to move to a much larger scale, based on ideas that had been already explored in the smaller studio drawings. In this stage, I felt I was beginning to mentally to strip away and record everything but that which had been truly ‘seen’.
3.8. Summary
In this chapter I have outlined the methodology and methods employed and reflected on the research process, locations and outcomes as both artist and researcher. The significance of the position of artist and researcher in this unfolding journey has led to new knowledge and understanding of my personal practice. The phenomenological approach has initiated different ways of thinking and exploring within my work and offered insights into artistic practice through glimpses of the experiential and reflective world of the artist.

The research question ‘What is the relationship between experience and its interpretation through drawing?’ has shaped both the methodology and methods used. The methodology of practice-based research has enabled questions which arose to be investigated and built upon through the three-stage approach. The focus on the phenomenology of the ‘lived experience’ has revealed critical aspects of my drawing that have lain unnoticed until now. The study has contributed to an unravelling of the complex nature of the experiential within my drawing. The new understandings that have surfaced as a result of the work in the three stages have enabled me to place the immersed experiences of the landscape more firmly at the centre of my subjective practice.

The methods of photography, video, drawings, descriptive and digital journal became integrated into the on-going research process. Reflecting in the digital journal made me aware that there needed to be a distinction between what I was drawing and how I was drawing. By employing Merleau-Ponty’s notion of seer and seen I was able to view activity and outcomes at a distance and so more objectively. The objectivity provided by adopting the different positions of seer and seen provided insights into my physical involvement with the process of drawing as I was able to view myself drawing and remember what I was thinking and feeling at the time.

This on-going critical dialogue contained within the journals and films of activity led me to go beyond my initial drawing practice. As the study progressed drawing in situ remained the beginning point and the move to the studio enabled a particular way of thinking about the experience of the landscape. However, I have discovered that the intensity of aspects of the immersed experience became more significant in the later drawings. The intensity of sound, heat, cold and light all contributed to the corporeality of the drawing experience. In the third stage of the study, I explored in more depth how this was interpreted within the creative outcomes.

As the work moved from description to interpretation I learned that I perform a bridging process which I have referred to as re-drawing. This process, which I examined in depth in Stage Three, is a way in which drawing activity altered how I thought about a situation. The process of re-drawing, as a point between description and interpretation, changed what I recalled and this led in turn to a change in how this was interpreted.
In Chapter Four, I discuss the findings of the study in relation to the key writings and ideas explored in Chapters One and Two. I also consider how my research question ‘What is the relationship between experience and its interpretation through drawing?’ has been answered, and I reflect on the research journey and its implications for the exhibition of creative outcomes which accompanies this exegesis. I also address some questions that arose through the study and consider future directions: will this change observed in creative outcomes continue in my on-going practice? How will I use what I now understand in future drawings? How can the idea of re-drawing be further explored? Do other artists experience a similar process?
Chapter Four

4.1. Overview of Research

‘A painting is not a picture of an experience; it is an experience’ (Mark Rothko cited in Seiberling, 1959, p.82).

In Chapter One I introduced my primary research question: What is the relationship between experience and its interpretation through drawing? Although the question arose as a result of the dissonance between my teaching and artistic practices, educational contexts have not been examined within this study. I felt that in order to move forward with my teaching it was important to firstly understand more fully my artistic practice. It was my intention that the findings and outcomes of my research would then inform future learning and research.

In Chapter One, contemporary contexts were discussed as well as the structure of the exegesis. In the first section of Chapter Two, Situating Contexts, the writings of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty were discussed in relation to the immersed experience of drawing and the landscape. These ways of thinking helped to clarify the complex strands of consciousness, memory and the immersed body which would seem to coexist within drawing practice. Drawing was considered as not only an act of describing an object, or phenomena, but also entailing an emerging consciousness of that object.

Merleau-Ponty’s notion of ‘Seer and Seen’ was introduced as a central concept within this study. It entails a paradoxical position through which the artist/body is simultaneously looking at all things (seer) as well as looking at itself (seen). Employing this approach allowed me to engage with my drawing practice from different perspectives, as the roles of artist and researcher diverged. It enabled an ‘objective’ viewpoint, the seen, to be introduced, countering the subjective experience of the artist and thereby avoiding ‘self-valorisation’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009). It provided a framework within which I could operate as artist/researcher to objectively investigate ‘the value of the artistic process as the production of knowledge’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.135).
In the second section of Chapter Two, Practical Contexts, the interconnection between drawing, landscape and phenomenology was examined, and the chapter considered how selected contemporary practice encompassed these notions. An examination of the diverse work of Ana Pollak, Monika Gryzmala, Peter Zumthor and Fabienne Verdier demonstrated how an underlying preoccupation with landscape and immersed experience led to discrete creative outcomes. The differing intentions and variety of working methods employed by these artists provided a sense of the complex nature of creative enquiry and how this is manifested within artistic practice.

In Chapter Three the methodological framework of practice-based research, and the methods and approaches used in the enquiry were outlined. I described how I undertook to maintain a continuity of practice throughout the study, which developed and grew, as is characteristic of practice-based research. Each of the three research stages (see Figure 3.4), encompassed a variety of methods of recording and reflecting in illuminating the perspectives of seer and seen. Stages two and three in this iterative process involved the introduction of additional reflective methods, enhancing the perspective of the seen. The variety of methods employed in recording and describing activity in the landscape and studio allowed me to consider different aspects of each experience. This research approach facilitated increased understandings of the interconnection between encounter and artefact, and revealed how complex activities of thinking and acting combined to inform the creative outcomes. The experiences of both landscape and studio were described and reflected upon alongside examples of the creative outcomes generated in situ and in the studio. Applying the notion of seer and seen allowed for a critical distance to be established. I was able to step back from the intense drawing experiences and 'see' myself and my drawings more objectively. The approaches I employed informed my practice-based research. They provided opportunities for both 'creating and critiquing' (Sullivan, 2010) and enabled ideas to be initiated, explored and realised. The different research phases were systematically and rigorously analysed and reflected upon, which led to an enhanced understanding of both 'studio enquiry and its outcomes' (Barrett & Bolt, 2009, p.135).

In this final chapter, I discuss my research findings in response to my research question: What is the relationship between experience and its interpretation through drawing? I reflect on the research process and reposition the study in relation to the key writers and artists discussed in Chapters One to Three. Additionally, I discuss how the knowledge and understanding that emerged from the methodological approach, and the subsequent reflection on practice, provided insights into the nature of my drawing activity. The chapter also considers how the role of artist and researcher, seer and seen, assumed another dimension when I undertook the process of curating the research outcomes for the final exhibition component of this research project. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of this study for drawing as both practice and research and future research directions are identified.
4.2. Praxis

The process of reflection, which is central to practice-based research, has been fundamental in enabling me to address the research questions and involved systematic critical analysis of activity and outcomes. In my study, the sites of the initial drawings and that of the studio provided spaces in which to examine intention, meaning and the role of experience in creative practice. To address the questions that arose from examining my own drawing practice: ‘Why do I draw?’, ‘What do I draw?’ ‘How do I draw?’ I found Sullivan’s observation that ‘the meanings that artists make from their imaginative investigations are not only collected from their encounters with things around them but they are also created in response to their experiences’ (Sullivan, 2010, p.xii) particularly pertinent to my study. It was this dynamic and corporeal paradigm that allowed me to investigate, understand and create the world around me and which enabled knowledge to emerge through my creative practice.

My investigations of the questions ‘what’ and ‘how do I draw?’ have led me to a more comprehensive understanding of the significance of the physical within the ‘lived experience’ of drawing. The three themes of the research that emerged within the initial stages of the study – practice-based research, landscape and phenomenological thinking – provided a framework which focused my reflective practices in unravelling the complexities of immersed experience and its manifestation through drawing. In Section 1.3, I also proposed that drawing conjoined landscape, experience and the self and I visualised this concept through a diagram, re-presented here in Figure 4.1.

![Figure 4.1. How drawing conjoins artist, landscape and experience.](image-url)
Through the evolving research phases I began to experience this idea in practice when I perceived that the complex relationship between sensory experience, landscape and creative activity was coalescing on the paper. This multi-layered experience became clear through the writings in my descriptive journal. Until I began to describe how I felt as I drew, the importance of my body in synthesising the different aspects of drawing was not clear to me. This was reflected in observations such as my writing about drawing in Niederau:

I settle myself to draw, encumbered by my bulky clothes to keep out the bitter cold. It is -19. The air is dry and crisp, I feel the chill creeping up my back, and I focus on the light. The hard clear light which defines the space. The clear air means that I can see for miles across the mountaintops - I feel as if I am on top of the world. The intense light creates dense blue and purple shadows as the dark green of the trees retreats to a velvet black. The white snowdrifts reflect the milky clouds, which drift across the azure sky. As I draw the pencil moves from one form to another, tracing the relationships between each dip, hollow and projection. I draw quickly as the cold seeps into my fingers, grabbing at the graphite, leaching across the surface of the paper. I huddle further into my jacket, I turn my head from one side to another, my eyes connect the stark forms as they emerge from the snow. (Extract from author's descriptive journal - Neiderau, 2010)

Reflections such as this revealed the interrelationship between seeing, experience and the self, manifest through my drawing practice. It was the initial sensory experience of drawing in situ that furnished recollections in the studio with depth and vitality.

Figure 4.2 is a visualisation of the different strands that were identified and shows the process through which creative outcomes developed. As the landscape was described through drawing the lived experience was internalised as memory, which was then externalised in the studio. These studio drawings become the interpretation of outcomes which had originated in the landscape. Through the reflective processes of drawing, recording and observing I undertook throughout this study I came to see how the experiences of drawing in situ combined levels of noticing which seemed to become internalised as a memory. Additionally, I came to understand that there were sensory aspects that emerged as I described my experience within the landscape through drawing. The immersed experience of the landscape and drawing in it became reciprocal processes which both created and interchanged between the internal and external experience. The conceptual shift from description to interpretation that occurred in the physical move from in situ to studio, and evolved through the cycles and stages of the research, was founded in these initial observations through the process of what I called noticing.
4.3. Noticing

The reflective journal became an important tool in helping me to understand the mediated experience of noticing. This could be seen in the written descriptions of particular places, for example:

The activity of drawing involves me in the landscape; I become a part of it, less an observer and more of a participant. As the light and the colour seep into my head I feel a lightness, my drawing speeds up, I turn another page and try to capture the feeling of space, endless sky and the clarity of the light as it defines the landscape which is emerging before me. (Extract from author’s descriptive journal, Neiderau, 2010)

This extract shows how I was able to simultaneously feel immersed in the landscape, to look at the landscape, and also to focus on what I was drawing. As I drew the process of noticing meant that every mark made on the paper was committed to memory as well as the experience of the landscape. This process of internalisation as memory has echoes of Harty’s (2012) notion of ‘fusion’ within drawing activity. She notes that as the external is incorporated internally a mode of experience emerges where there is a loss of awareness of the self which is directly facilitated by the process of drawing. This direct recording, which begins in the landscape reinforces drawing’s
phenomenological status, as lived experience. But, as Harty (2012) believes, it is a particular state of consciousness that ‘makes drawing possible’ (Harty, 2012, p.13). As I drew in the landscape the process of noticing brought sensory perceptions to the forefront. The marks on the page retreated as the cold, the light, the clouds, the heat, the smell of the landscape moved to the foreground. I would liken these experiences to Sale and Betti’s (2004, p.4) notion of ‘insightful glimpses’ in that the process of looking and noticing allowed for a more holistic engagement with the world. As I noted in my journal, ‘I feel enveloped, lost, insignificantly enmeshed in the world before me’ (Author’s digital journal, Canberra, 2011). These insights or ‘glimpses’ are, I think, what I was essentially searching for as I drew. Drawing allowed access to a more fundamentally engaged world, conveyed in comments such as: ‘I feel privileged to be able to look into the heart of things and return changed, renewed and invigorated. I see a world and I am a part of it’ (Extract from author’s digital journal - Canberra). These glimpses gave me insights that went beyond the descriptive. The process of drawing extended my initial experiences by recording the immediate whilst at the same time internalising the subtleties of the subjective experience.

If I return to the notion of drawing conjoining self, landscape and experience (Figure 4.1) then I contend that drawing activity in situ internalises these aspects as discrete elements as shown in Figure 4.3 below. These elements seem to be distinct but reciprocal and initiated by the act of drawing. Drawing in situ allowed me to see a reality in which I was present within the temporal landscape. As I drew, time became irrelevant, the focus was solely on what I felt, smelt, saw, touched and tasted. Drawing heightened these perceptions and they were internalised as a memory. The intensity of these experiences was reflected in the small and contained nature of my drawing pose when I was in situ as everything was concentrated inwards. Having a few materials set out close to hand enabled me to sit still, intensely absorbed, or consumed, by what was before me.

Figure 4.3. Diagram illustrating the author’s conception of the reciprocal interchange of noticing.
4.4. Awareness

When I moved to the studio I began by recalling the experience of drawing and the experience of the landscape. The video recordings of me drawing in the studio initially triggered my understanding of these processes. As I looked at myself drawing I could remember what I was thinking about and how I was thinking. In the studio I recalled the experience of the landscape as well as the drawing activity in that particular place. These two strands of awareness were then joined by the drawing experience of the studio. The initial in situ drawings were not referenced when I drew in the studio—although they existed they were not the starting point. Once the in situ sketches were inscribed on the surface/paper their subsequent role seemed to be in engendering memories. The internalisation of the experience of drawing in the landscape was promoted by the activity of drawing. As a result, in the studio, what was recalled was the experience of the landscape and drawing process rather than the sketches. This was a significant finding within the study as it revealed that the in situ drawings provided the basis for noticing and for these impressions to be subsequently internalised as memories.

Reviewing the photographs and videos of drawing activity provided valuable insights into different aspects of the physical process of drawing. In situ my pose was very still and contained whereas in the studio free movement and large gesture characterised much of my approach. These observations resonate with Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s conception of the interchange between body and world to mediate experience. Merleau-Ponty argues that it is the process of mediation which enables the interpretation of perceptual experience and thence leads to ‘analytic reflection’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.237), and it is this interchange that provides the basis for developing knowledge.

The ideas of noticing and awareness demonstrated the significance of the initial instances of in situ drawing in encompassing the experience I had of the landscape and its description and internalisation. This was echoed in my descriptive journal in which I began to explore how drawing articulated an internalised memory of an immersed experience. This was highlighted, I believe, by my trip to Canberra and signalled a point of critical departure in relation to my drawings of that experience, which I reflected on in the digital journal:

On returning to the UK I was eager to re-live my experience in Australia. As I drew what I recalled were the smells and the light – in remembering the perceptions became intensified. The colour leapt off the smooth white of the cartridge. I couldn’t remember a time when I had been so consumed by the intensity of the colour on the paper. When looking at the drawings as a series I am struck by their new way of working but also their new way of interpreting the intensity of the experience. (Extract from author’s descriptive journal, Canberra 2011).
My developing understanding of the significance of the initial sensory experiences in situ allowed me to consider more fully Merleau-Ponty’s (1964a) conception of seer and seen within the bounds of a mediated, immersed experience. The drawings of Canberra showed a development in terms of the palette used but also the importance of gesture and mark in capturing those moments in the landscape up to this point, the end of Stage One, as illustrated in Table 4.1. The studio drawings had moved away from the reference to structures within the landscape and condensed or visually simplified the immersed experience of drawing in situ.

**Table 4.1.** Selected creative outcomes from Stage One of the research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Situ</th>
<th>Studio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Niederau, 2010</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland Point, 2011</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra, 2011</td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These aspects were more pointed because of the heightened experiences of visiting Australia and also the move back to the studio which facilitated my recollections of the intensity of immersion in the landscape.

As Stage Two progressed the photographs and videos of my drawing practice emphasised the differences between the drawing processes in situ and in the studio. The contained and intimate process of in situ work contrasted with the large physical drawings in the studio and I was reminded of Meskimmon’s assertion that ‘The moment of drawing, as an act of relating, is one sustained engagement, of unwavering attention’ (Meskimmon cited in Sawdon and Marshall, 2012, p.xi). By watching myself draw, reflect and draw again in the studio, I noticed how long was spent in contemplative thinking and recalling, before marks and gestures were made on the paper. As the drawings in Stage Two progressed, the focus on colour and mark became more sustained, as shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2.** Selected creative outcomes from Stage Two of the research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Situ</th>
<th>Studio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jubilee Moor, 2011</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Head, 2012</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumicestone Passage, 2013</td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Table 4.2, it is possible to see more clearly the visual foundation of the studio drawings which developed from the in situ drawings. For example, in the drawings of Jubilee Moor the descriptive in situ drawings include muted colours with a strong emphasis on line as structure. In the studio drawings of Jubilee Moor the layers of colour flow over the surface and are contrasted by the dense forms created by the dark pigments. Large gestural sweeps have been used to enhance the impression of movement across the surface. These connections were more coherent than in the drawings of Stage One as shown in Table 4.3. The descriptive line in the situ drawings emerged in the studio drawings, in Stage One, as a re-drawing of the experience, whereas, in Stage Two, the marks and forms reflect a more interpretive stance and gesture plays a more significant role as shown in Figure 4.4.

Towards the end of this second stage I began to focus on the notion of ‘re-drawing’. My understanding of this process had emerged through reviewing the videos, particularly when I took on an objective stance by viewing my work through the lens of the seen. It was at this point that I came to realise that there was an intermediate stage apparent within the studio drawing process as shown below:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{In situ drawing (seer)} & \text{Re-drawing (studio based)} & \text{Studio drawing (seen)}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{descriptive} & \text{descriptive and interpretive} & \text{interpretive}
\end{array}
\]

As I reviewed the photographs and video I began to understand why certain studio drawings were unsatisfactory in re-visualising my experience in the landscape. In reading through my notes, I realised that I had remarked on this transitional phase in my descriptive journal some time before I
Table 4.3. A selection of the creative outcomes of situ, re-drawing and studio drawing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage One</th>
<th>Situ</th>
<th>Re-drawing in the studio</th>
<th>Final studio drawing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neiderau, 2010</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland Point, 2011</td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra, 2011</td>
<td><img src="image7.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image8.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image9.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage Two</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jubilee Moor, 2011</td>
<td><img src="image10.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image11.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image12.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Head, 2012</td>
<td><img src="image13.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image14.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image15.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumicestone Passage, 2013</td>
<td><img src="image16.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image17.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image18.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
fully understood the significance of these re-drawings:

The first graphite drawings have lost the vitality which was present in the situ drawings. As I draw the remembered experience sits alongside my recall of the perceptual experience: the cold, the sound of the wind. The resulting drawings in the studio have lost their energy and have become a pale imitation of the act of drawing on Jubilee Moor. The feeling of density and movement in the situ drawings has dissipated. I am dissatisfied with their static nature.

(Extract from artist’s descriptive journal, Jubilee Moor, 2011)

Review of the early video recordings subsequently revealed that this process of re-drawing began in the studio and was characterised by long reflective periods before drawing commenced. The videos showed that of the 30 minutes that had been filmed only four or five minutes were spent actually drawing. At the time some of the earlier recorded drawings emerged, I was dissatisfied with the outcomes because they tended to be similar to the small sketches and were merely on a slightly bigger scale. The marks made often replicated those made in the landscape and line described forms in similar ways. But it was through closely reviewing this process of roughly re-tracing the sketches that I came to understand the mental and physical process of re-drawing.

I realised that a developmental stage was evident, a stage which embodied a different way of thinking about and interpreting experience. As I reviewed the videos I recognised that in the studio I was actively recalling the sensory experience at the same time as remembering the drawing activity. The recollection of experience within this mode of thinking enabled me to initiate a different kind of drawing, a way of re-thinking my experiences in the landscape and its emergence as a particular stage within the creative process, one which demonstrates an exploration of ‘experiences as a site for knowledge and understanding’ (Sullivan, 2010, p.195). The recollection of the drawing experience and the recall of the experience of the landscape had become deeply internalised. These then became externalised through the process of re-drawing, as illustrated in Figure 4.5 below.

Recollection of the actual drawing experience, along with the physical and psychological experience of the landscape blend intellectually and emotionally during the mental process of redrawing. Again I was reminded of Harty’s notion of oscillating consciousness as a ‘fluctuating state,’ a state which she describes as fusing the internal and the external and which is characterised by a ‘loss of the awareness of the self as something separate from the environment’ (Harty, 2012, p.4). Although I reflected on how I personally moved between the present and the remembered experience, it was clear to me that the experience in the landscape and the act of drawing in that place were synchronous rather than fluctuating. I perceived that the in situ drawing was characterised by a process of noticing, which had
progressed through the activity of re-drawing to become awareness, through a form of aesthetic synthesis. If drawing in situ describes, then re-drawing can be said to be a process of thinking and acting which both describes and interprets.

Figure 4.5. Author’s illustration of the synthesis of memory and experience that was experienced in the re-drawing phase in the studio.

I would argue that Harty’s notion of the self that ‘transcends’ (Harty, 2012, p.4) either the internal or external in drawing activity is something that is reflected in my notion of re-drawing. However, I contend that as drawing moves from description of experience to interpretation of that same experience, through re-drawing, the self becomes enfolded in the conflation of the internal and external. That is, the self becomes indivisible from the memory. This state of immersed awareness is what facilitates the move towards interpretation within drawing activity and could be said to transcend the original lived experience of the landscape.

This re-drawing and re-thinking of my experience in the landscape is evident in the drawing outcomes, as shown in Table 4.3. The process of redrawing in the studio within the first two research stages linked, or bridged the gap, between in situ experience and subsequent transformational drawings in the studio, as can be seen in the drawings of Pumicestone Passage (Table 4.3). As the research cycle developed, the significance of the re-drawing became more
evident, because in the final studio drawings I began to interpret my experience in that particular landscape. The drawings of Jubilee Moor as they move from in situ to re-drawing and final studio drawings demonstrate how the stage of re-drawing strengthens the final drawings and allows for a more assertive and assured interpretive drawing to emerge.

4.5. Consciousness

In Stage Three, reflecting on the drawing outcomes enabled me to see that this relationship between immersed experience and the act of re-drawing was a central component of my practice. It had become a necessary stage that I had to go through, and was a way of processing the large amount of information that had been gathered in situ. Reflecting on the videos of in situ and studio work allowed me to understand more comprehensively how the differing perspectives of seer and seen offered insights into the stage of re-drawing.

The sites in Stage Three had been chosen because of the shifting light and colour and the extra camera viewpoints used in these locations enabled my ideas about these drawing phases to be investigated in more depth. One camera angle showed how I drew in the landscape and what I focused my attention on, while the other camera focused on what I was drawing in my sketchbook. During this third stage the in situ sketches and activity were still contained and retained a small format but my use of colour and line were more prominent, assured and cohesive in this small format.

In the large studio drawings, my gestures developed and was manifest themselves in larger fields of colour. Table 4.4. shows the creative outcomes in Stage Three of the research and illustrates how the move from description to interpretation had become more assured, an outcome which I attribute to the process of re-drawing within the research cycle. The Bald Knob drawings demonstrated the move from description in situ, to re-drawing and on to interpretation in the final studio drawing (Table 4.4). In most of the outcomes, line retreats into the background and is consumed by areas of colour. The layers of pigment and acrylic produced a sense of depth that moved on the paper or canvas and contributed to the shifting perceptions of space and light in the drawings. In this way, my drawing had moved from Huebler’s (1969, p.173) ‘undifferentiated condition’ towards an interpretation of the immersive experience of the landscape, which had become evinced by the colour on the surface.

In this last research stage, there was a change of focus in the final studio drawings derived from my field studies at Yandina, Bald Knob and Noosa North Shore. There was a clear move away from the large gestural movements and increasing scale I had associated with the immersed experience of the body (Rogers, 2008) and a new focus on using softer stains and
bleeds through which a sense of the landscape emerged. I found this significant because I had consciously allowed the drawing to move out of my control as it began to order and sustain the ‘drawing’s world’ (Bailey, 1982, p.137).

**Table 4.4.** Examples of in situ drawing, re-drawing and studio drawing in Stage Three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage Three</th>
<th>Yandina, 2015</th>
<th></th>
<th>Bald Knob, 2016</th>
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<th>Noosa North Shore, 2016</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

The focus on colour, the chosen sites and the investigation of the process of re-drawing had an impact on the drawn outcomes. As can be seen in Table 4.4, the colour in the sketchbooks became increasingly more vivid and this was amplified in the intermediate stage of re-drawing. In the final drawings the move from description to interpretation had become more sustained as the colour began also to represent my experience of drawing in that place visually. Comments in my digital journal revealed how I had become aware of a need to find different ways of working in order to reflect the changing ways of thinking:

> As I began drawing in the studio it was this layering of colour which I wanted to explore. I began by trying to move away from the temptation to define these layers horizontally. I could feel a draw to those familiar marks and physical expressions of previous drawings. My ideas of place had moved on and I now had to respond differently to these ideas. (Extract from author’s digital journal, 2016).
The large studio drawings had moved forward from the stage of re-drawing. As I watched the videos of my drawing in the studio on these large scale images I was able to remember what I was thinking and how that had changed from the re-drawing stage. The recollection of drawing experience, recall of the landscape, the self and the experience of re-drawing had become a single entity. That is, the physical and sensory experiences, as well as the mental processes, had melded into an intuitive, almost instinctive response. There was no fluctuation or oscillation between these modes but a kind of equilibrium. I experienced this wholeness, this openness, both physically and mentally as a particular form of consciousness where the mind and the body were synchronised and perfectly balanced (see Figure 4.6). This mode of thinking then became the starting point for the final drawings created in this stage.

![Figure 4.6](image_url)

*Figure 4.6.* Identified modes of thinking and acting which occurred in the final studio drawings.

The drawings had moved from description to interpretation through the process of re-drawing. The act of noticing that occurred in situ had become a deeper awareness during the process of re-drawing—before a sense of Zen-like open consciousness appeared in the final drawings. The conscious self and the mediated experience are at the core of this process, but it is the complex interplay between these internal and external rhythms that enables the experience to be synthesized, separated and sublimated before any marks are created. Drawing at this stage had clearly become a reflexive and generative process, a process which had enabled this embodied relational consciousness and which for me revealed a ‘subjective truth’ (Wahrheit)—something that indeed ‘opens up a world’ (Heidegger, 1971, p. 40).
On this basis, the research drawings then can be viewed as a process or way of thinking about the lived experience. The videos of practice revealed that the move from description of the ‘lifeworld’ (Moran, 2005) or ‘lived experience’, to a progressive interpretation of the subjective experience, is clearly mediated by the body. Close watching of myself engaged in the activity of drawing disclosed the relationship between experience and its interpretation through the intermediate stage of re-drawing. Re-drawing had become a necessary process, which was both descriptive and interpretive. This allowed the final drawings to provide a progressive interpretation of the landscape and to make actual or visible a ‘perceptual interchange’ (Bailey, 1982, p.3) through the process of intensively reflecting on the world.

4.6. Rationale for the Exhibition

The final component of this research project was to introduce the work as an exhibition that showed both process and outcomes. It was important, personally, that the exhibition represented visually and aesthetically the visual research outcomes and the immersed experience of the artist. I wanted to ensure that the different methods and findings of the study were combined/included to reflect the research journey that had taken place over many years and in different countries. The exhibition was held at the University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery, at Sippy Downs, Queensland, from 23rd January to 11th February 2017.

I began by assembling all of the work produced over the period of the study and grouped it into the locations visited (Figure 4.7). When considering which sketches, photographs, videos and drawings to include I found that questions about selections and how they might be displayed emerged. Occasionally, drawings that I particularly liked did not contribute enough to the story of the research to be included, whilst different judgments were necessary to suit the needs of a more conventional curatorial process—in other words, to balance the need to evidence the research process for those interested in the exhibition from a primarily academic perspective with the need to accommodate a more lay (and much wider) audience of gallery visitors. However, because this balance between research and exhibition was so critical, some outcomes that I would otherwise have deemed to be less successful aesthetically, were selected because they added further insight into aspects of the research process. In this light, Merlot-Ponty’s notion of seer and seen took on yet another guise as the subjectivity of personal preference was weighed against objective curatorial outcomes for the exhibition.

In order to help inform the research side of the exhibition, I wanted the exhibition to show the viewer the research through an engagement with the narrative of the unfolding research process. It was important to me to include instances of drawing both in situ and in the studio and to
construct environments which reflected the different working methodologies and methods of drawing in each place. As the planning took place, it became clear that my habit of using different sketchbooks and paper at different locations could be used to advantage. Because I wanted to create a narrative built on the visits to each place and then show the resulting studio drawings, I would not have been able to show the sketchbooks for each site if I had worked in a logical way and limited myself to just three or four books. It was important to display the sketchbooks in order to show the different qualities of the drawings, such as the hastiness as the light changed, the running colours and the impromptu spidery pens and pencil sketches. These were displayed in cases alongside the studio drawings and sections of writing from the descriptive and digital journal (Figure 4.8).

At two strategic locations in the exhibition, I included videos of the in studio and in situ experiences. In selecting the videos, I was again challenged about which videos contributed most meaningfully to the narrative underpinning the exhibition. Although the videos recorded the process of drawing, as well as the sensory experiences in situ, there were not entirely successful for a number of reasons. Some of the visits recorded have not, as yet, resulted in any studio based work, some of the videos of drawing in situ or in the studio had the wrong focus or light level, or the camera ran out of battery or kept blowing over in the wind (I'm not a videographer). Even so, after the videos were curated, the more relevant of them were set up to ran concurrently and on a loop, so that gallery visitors were able to watch the progress of the in situ drawings alongside the corresponding studio drawing. The video and audio of situ and studio were an important aspect of the research which allowed a more objective view of practice and which led to new insights. Of particular importance was the contrast between the sounds captured in the landscape

**Figure 4.7.** Photograph of authors studio showing sketchbooks selected for exhibition.
and the quiet of the studio (and of the gallery). To achieve this, the videos were displayed on two large adjacent monitors, provided with headphones, as can be seen in Figure 4.9.

**Figure 4.8.** A selection of the sketchbooks on display in the USC Gallery.

**Figure 4.9.** Photograph showing the videos of drawing in situ and the studio in exhibition.
It was intended that the final exhibition would contribute to an understanding of the immersed world of the artist and would show how particular experiences informed the creative outcomes. The exhibition was presented as a literal journey to specific sites and a conceptual journey, suggesting how visual arts research can develop new knowledge and understanding—in this case, through a systematic reflective investigation of the complexities of the mediated experience of both drawing and the landscape.

4.7. Reflections on Practice

The meanings that artists make from their imaginative investigations are not only collected from their encounters with things around them but they are also created in response to their experiences (Sullivan, 2010, p. xii)

My intention at the beginning of the inquiry was to try to understand challenges that arose as both an artist and teacher. The dissonance between these two modes created tensions because of my view that drawing is a multi-faceted way of understanding the world that goes beyond the descriptive. I felt that I needed to understand my own work and thinking process more comprehensively—so continually informing this project in the background was a personal belief that an on-going personal practice informs and supports teaching and learning. In order to understand my own work more fully I felt it was necessary to examine the fundamental role that drawing specifically occupied within my practice. This focus had developed over many years, but this was the first time I had considered in any depth why I draw, what I draw and how I draw.

My initial investigations into my primary research question—What is the relationship between experience and its interpretation through drawing? facilitated the emergence of three themes from the complex web of thought and action that constitutes personal practice. The first theme was that of utilising practice-based research as a way of critically analysing ongoing practice. The second was that of understanding the role of the landscape and its place at the forefront of my creative practice. The third theme was the nature of the lived experience and its influence on my work. These developed into an engagement with phenomenology as a way of thinking about the corporeal complexities of consciousness which would seem to exist within drawing. The engagement with philosophy allowed new ways of thinking, seeing and acting to be articulated within my drawing practice. The focus on the subjective experience enabled me to consider drawing as a way of discovering and understanding which, in turn, opened new avenues of investigation. Conceiving of drawing as a methodology enabled me to dig deep into the foundations of my practice and emerge with new understandings of the place of the body within the complex strands of consciousness. By applying Merleau-Ponty’s (1964a) concept of seer and
seen, I was able to engage in a more objective analysis of both the act of drawing and the drawn. In this way, I was able to connect theory and practice through an analysis of both description and interpretation of drawing activity and its outcomes.

The moves between situ and studio and, on a much larger scale, the UK and Australia, brought to the fore insights into the importance of sensory experiences when drawing. This was manifest in the experiences of the diverse landscapes of Australia and the UK and was first revealed more fully to me through my visit to Canberra. This study has shown how perceptual experiences of drawing in situ were described through the drawing and investigated more fully as an interpretation emerged within the studio. Through an analysis of the creative outcomes and reflections from these different sites, the study has revealed how an immersed sensory experience of the landscape, or place, influences the process of thinking and drawing. I contend that the interchange of body and world that occurs through these experiences reflects Merleau-Ponty’s (1964a) notion of the body as a mediator of complex perceptual experience that is both dynamic and ongoing.

By adopting the different perspectives of seer and seen, and employing methods that allowed me to reflect on my practice, I observed clear differences between the drawing process in situ and in the studio. I saw that the intense and intimate process of drawing in situ was characterised by an economy of movement on my part. This allowed my focus to be solely on the sensorial experience of the landscape. The process of drawing committed both experience of place and the experience of drawing into a rich and multi-faceted memory. In the studio these experiences were retrieved from deep inside, they tumbled out allowing different aspects of the landscape and experience to come to the fore. In the studio the process of thinking, reflecting and working was more measured, and much slower. As I drew in the studio, I came to understand more fully Frankenthaler’s assertion that ‘I know [that] the landscapes were in my arms as I did it’ (Frankenthaler cited in Rowley 2007, p.45). In my mind the landscape was there before me, real in its vividness, I could smell it, see it and hear it. My experience resonated with Cézanne’s observation that ‘The landscape thinks itself in me and I am its consciousness’ (Cézanne cited in Merleau-Ponty, 1964b, p.17).

In the first stage of the study my interest in how drawing was shaped by the immersed experience of the landscape was investigated through drawing at Neiderau in Austria, Sunderland Point in England and Canberra in Australia. These diverse experiences of drawing revealed that heat, light, smell and sound were intimately bound up with the drawing process. The drawings done in situ of each place were predominantly descriptive and monochromatic. However, the move to the studio was characterised by a shift to a large scale and the use of a more diverse range of materials. Through investigating this change the notion of re-drawing emerged as a particular way of re-experiencing the immersed impressions of the landscape.
Through the various research stages I became increasingly aware of the ways in which my drawing was changing and I was challenged to extend my practice. In Stage Two, as I drew in the familiar landscapes of Jubilee Moor and East Head, small elements were changing. I was seeing the landscape in a different way and I became more confident in my use of colour and gesture in the studio drawings. The series of drawings of Pumicestone Passage that I created after I moved to the Sunshine Coast in Australia revealed a transition from the muted colours and light of England to a bolder use of colour and heavy mark making, which I first identified in the Canberra drawings. As I drew in the studio I had to make myself leave behind the known ways of working and try to allow the drawings to find their own way. In the case of the Pumicestone Passage drawings, this resulted in bigger, stronger forms with glimpses of the intense colour evident in the Passage.

In the third stage of the research I became increasingly interested in the use of colour within the drawings. Initially, in Stage One, drawings were predominantly monochromatic in situ and often in the studio as well. Frequently these followed similar mark-making processes—only on a larger scale—and it was these observations which led me to identify the stage of re-drawing. This focus on colour may have happened through my continuing practice, although I think that the relentless questioning and development of my practice-based research had taken the drawings in a new direction. It has also changed my in situ drawing processes. I began to use colour consistently. I looked for it in the landscape and this approach actively influenced the subsequent sites that were chosen. The resulting studio work often had a large scale, however I saw that through the act of recollection I had introduced a more uninhibited approach to the studio drawings. The gestures were still large, but also layers and washes were encouraged to blur and mingle as I attempted to capture the changing light and colour of each place. The Stage Three drawings of Yandina and Bald Knob demonstrated this process of layering but also marked a point where I allowed the drawings to drive themselves more fully. As I reviewed the videos I noticed that the pigment and stains moved across the wet paper or canvas as if free from my direction.

In the last group of drawings of Noosa North Shore, I extended this approach to begin without preconceptions of the drawing and commencing work with only the memory of that landscape. In this series of re-drawing and studio drawings I concentrated only on the experience of the landscape and the activity of drawing; to phenomenologically focus only on those experiences. It was often a difficult task to clear away my assumptions, intentions and self-imposed pressure to perform and to live only in those streams of consciousness. However, drawing’s duality of being at one and the same time both object and activity enabled me to both describe and interpret the immersed experience of the landscape as these stages progressed.

Again, Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s (1964a) notion of the seer and seen was useful in enabling me to establish a critical distance between the role of artist and that of researcher, so that the
intense subjectivity of the process of drawing could be separated from the drawn outcomes. I perceived that this complex relationship of object and consciousness was founded in an embodied experience and also mediated by the body. In this mode, the body was immersed in the world but also separate from it. These modes differed between working situ and in the studio. I found that in the landscape I was consumed by it and became a part of it and, as I encountered the intensity of the subjective experience of becoming the seer, I entered a state which I began to call noticing.

In the studio I could experience the intensity of the recalled drawing activity, but I could also focus on different aspects such as colour, heat or the feel of the hot breeze and so I adopted the more objective stance of the seen, intertwined with, and informed by, the recollections of the seer—a mode I began to call awareness as it emerged in the intermediate stage of re-drawing. Once I understood this, it became clearly noticeable when I reviewed the photographs and videos of drawing activity gathered during the duration of the study. In utilising the body’s ability to see, as well as to see itself looking, this complex relationship was evinced in the drawings themselves. Subsequent analysis of my reflective processes and the drawn outcomes also demonstrated how it is possible to have different levels of thinking and experiencing co-existing as activity takes place. The study has also revealed how these modes changed in different geographical locations as well as in the move between working in situ and in the studio.

As the drawings moved to the more interpretive final studio drawings, I felt that consciousness of these different aspects had coalesced. This coalescence was characterised by a synthesis of the remembered experience of drawing, the experience of the landscape itself and, the experience of re-drawing becoming whole. As it did so, this multi-faceted consciousness, or openness, enabled the studio drawing to develop an interpretive life seemingly of its own. This mediated experience functions on a number of different levels and, within this study, I hope I have shown how drawing conjoins experience, landscape and the self through concurrent strands of noticing, awareness and consciousness. The research methods have clarified how this interchange varies considerably between in situ and studio environments and enabled me to discover that it was through the move between description and interpretation that drawing connected mind and body within my practice.

4.8. Future Directions
Understanding of the stage of re-drawing reveals how the modes of consciousness, memory and experience contributed to an awareness of why and how I draw. As this notion crystallised, new questions arose: do other artists work in the same way? Is it possible to identify re-drawing in the work of other artists? Is it a common phenomenon or something that happens only certain cases or with particular artists? Some preliminary research suggests aspects of this approach in the work of artist Fabienne Verdier, outlined in the book *Fabienne Verdier: Palazzo Torlonia* (Thierolf, Fouache & Chancel, 2011) which documented the working
processes of the artist as she developed a large installation of wall mounted panels for the Palazzo Torlonia in Rome, Italy.

Verdier’s work has parallels with my study through her use of drawing in the landscape, as discussed in Chapter Two, as the starting point for her interpretive drawings and paintings. The text and photographs of the Palazzo Torlonia project document the stages as she worked and are recorded in the accompanying film *Flux* by Philippe Chancel (2010). Verdier drew intensively in sketchbooks as she researched and planned the work. The film then documents stages of the drawing process in between the sketchbooks and the final pieces. Verdier can be seen using water to trace with her hands over the surface of the panels (Figure 4.10). Line, movement and mark are reviewed in this way before beginning the final paintings. This approach I would liken to my notion of re-drawing in that the multi-faceted information that she had gathered from drawing in the landscape and her sketchbooks is synthesised by this process of tracing with water.

![Figure 4.10. A photograph of Verdier tracing the image before making the first mark.](image)


For Verdier, the monumental scale of the paintings required new solutions to techniques and the use of equipment. The scale of the work influenced her working methods, particularly her mark making. Verdier’s painting process in creating the panels, as shown in Figure 4.11, demonstrates how the immersed experience can become an extension of the body. The sheer physical scale and dimensions of the brush and the panels meant that the marks represented her embodied thinking.

Verdier’s approach, as documented in photographs and films, provides an example of how this idea of re-drawing, or processing, might be present in the working methodology of other arts.
practitioners. Future research possibilities present themselves through a study of how common these modes of thinking and working might be and how they manifest themselves in the work of others. The significance of the 'lived experience’ for developing ways of seeing and thinking could be explored through an examination of the working practices of different artists.

Figure 4.11. A photograph of Verdier working on the panels for the Palazzo Torlonia, Italy. Photo credits: Philippe Chancel, 2011. Reproduced with permission of Fabiene Verdier

The implications for my study reach beyond the subjectivity of personal practice. The iterative nature of my arts-based research has uncovered new ways of thinking, understanding and interacting in the context of drawing practice. Drawing as a form of enquiry has led to new insights and understanding of my drawing practice and, as Sullivan notes, it is ‘the impulse to know [that] compels people to make art’ (Sullivan, 2010, p.65). My research also offers the opportunity for other researchers to gain an insight into how arts practitioners think, act and come to know.

My research journey has enabled me to address the question of how lived experience is interpreted through drawing. Initially, I had a belief in the importance of drawing and I believe I have gone some way in establishing its corporeal connection to the immediacy of thinking. Through my examination of the sensorial modes of consciousness that are intertwined within drawing, I have revealed how experience is mediated through processes that I have termed noticing, awareness and consciousness. These different modes of thinking moved drawing from in situ to studio and from description to interpretation. The gap, I discovered, between describing and interpreting was bridged through the process of re-drawing.

This study has shown how drawing can operate as a methodology through which knowledge and experience emerge. It has demonstrated how drawing enabled me to question and investigate the
possibilities of experience, knowledge and understanding through a return to the lived experience. The phenomenological parallels in the study originated with the philosophical consideration of experience as it is lived. Phenomenological thinking, within the study, enabled a direct description that gradually revealed to me an understanding of how my body mediated these experiences. The perspectives of seer and seen introduced ways of thinking that allowed me to balance the intense subjectivity of my artistic practice with the objectivity of the researcher. It was this approach which revealed how the levels of consciousness, embodied experience and memory were present in drawing activity and outcomes. Importantly, I have found that the body also mediates these experiences as they became an internalised memory. I have shown how the process of re-drawing in the studio synthesises and interprets experiences before the final studio drawings are commenced, thereby demonstrating how the modes of noticing, awareness and consciousness become manifest in visual form as the outcomes of my drawing practice.

The ideas and processes that have been revealed in my study demonstrate the dynamic nature of practice-based research. It is through theory in practice, or praxis, evidenced through a ‘critical process of enactments’ (Sullivan, 2010, p.193), that new knowledge and understanding has been generated, providing valuable insights into the nature of drawing practice.

My body is the fabric into which all objects are woven, and it is, at least in relation to the perceived world, the general instrument of my ‘comprehension’ (Merleau-Ponty, 2006, p. 273)
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Appendix

Examples of descriptive writing, sketches and cards from the author’s digital journal.

A page from the digital journal showing a selection of cards from the descriptive journal.

A page from the digital journal showing in situ sketches (Neiderau, 2010).
Sunderland Point, studio drawing

In order to experiment more with the nature of the fluid gestural mark and colour I used Japanese rice paper. This paper absorbs colour quickly but also continued to move across the surface after the brush or cloth had been removed. The delicate nature of the paper seemed to emphasize the strong gestural marks and allowed the water to drag and dissolve areas of colour over a long period of time. I then moved to working on the larger paper again in part to exclude the field of vision but also to try to combine the process of painting the described forms using graphite with the use of colour in washes. I realised quickly that commitment to the mark was crucial and no re-adjustment could be made.

Working in the studio in this way allowed me to consider more carefully what was taking place in the moments before a mark could be made. I remembered the process of drawing in that particular place which ran alongside my memories of how the day felt - the heat, the smell, the feel of the sand, the sounds of the water and the birds. These memories ran alongside each other in my head as I prepared to mark the paper. I had to wait, just as I had to wait to draw in situ, until a point came where both the experience of drawing and the perceptual memories confluenced - then and only then could I begin to draw.

A page from the digital journal which records studio drawing from Sunderland point, 2011.
I see birds skipping across my sky window, the grasshoppers hum, bees and flies visit the flowers and the grass stems criss cross over me.

I lie back and make shapes from the clouds. As it gets hotter fewer and fewer come across the ridge until it is only clear blue sky. I begin to concentrate on my immediate surroundings rather than the panorama. The grass is a vivid green with sandy heads, the sky blue and I smell Pylone and heat on the breeze.

As I draw I am transported back to my childhood, playing with Sharon on the field behind our house. I hide in the grass. We used to lie on our backs looking at the sky, dreaming until it was time for tea.

I am intrigued that this session of drawing is more intimate and contemplative than others. I also wonder why this session has brought memories from my childhood to the surface.

A page from the digital journal which contains in situ sketches from Yandina (2015) and descriptive writing.
A page from the digital journal which records the experience of drawing in situ at Noosa North Shore, 2016.

Noosa North Shore, Sunshine Coast, Queensland, 2016

I have made the trip up to Noosa North Shore. As I wait on the ferry I am excited about drawing here. I have returned as I felt a pull back to the huge sky and long stretches of golden sand.

The day is windy and drawing will be a challenge. I drive to the beach and settle myself against a sand dune, trying to shelter from the wind.

The clouds move quickly giving bursts of colour as the sun is revealed. The sea becomes aqua, green and turquoise under its gaze.

A page from the digital journal showing in situ sketches, card from the descriptive journal and a photograph of the location at Noosa North Shore (2016).