

## Chapter Four

*Case Studies*  
(METHODS/Part 2.)

## Preface to Chapter Four

In this chapter, I deepen my examination of drawing practice as research method by citing specific *case studies* and examples of drawings produced as part of this project. The drawings included here are the primary source for my findings and subsequent contribution to knowledge around drawing practice. The research analysis is also applied to address drawing's expression as adaptation in perception, as found in practice examples by other artists: Richard Diebenkorn, Louise Bourgeois, and Paula Rego.

### Case Studies/Part I: Observations

#### **Premise: On Observation and Seeing Otherwise**

My project employs drawing practice to explore alterations in the perceptual field, as accessed by shifts in the posture of looking within drawing. Such perceptual alteration is also found in other occasions of embodied activity, ones that require or initiate adaptation in the deployment of vision, that then allow for us to discern and describe more subtle or peripheral elements of the perceptual. I contend that such alterations in postures of perception are inherently accessed, articulated, as well as requisite, in the process of drawing. It may also be that among the underlying unknowns disclosed through drawing is the interior self; as drawing can recover or uncover into lasting form, what was previously only contained as vague shades of transient knowledge within interior visualisations. When we speak of representation or drawing from observation; this often implies an assumption that the drawing's surface appearance will match our interpretive habits of seeing into the external. However, the drawing's imagery can be fashioned to reflect a truer breadth of vision's sensory content—and this circumstance of expression comes nearer to the truth of how *seeing-for-drawing* actually works. Within the posture or projects of observational transcription, there is opportunity to discern what is missed by 'reality'—missed when we merely look to fulfil everyday outcomes of function and expectation.

#### **1. Self-Portrait and Self-Reflection**

As previously stated, both artist and viewer may come to drawings, that are considered representational or figurative—as made from direct observation—with the preconception that its record will conform to some conventional measures of how we believe the perceived world would or should look. However, I maintain and demonstrate here that the inputs of our ordinary adventures in sight, can include sensory elements far more complex and varied than embraced by those assumptions, and their access is based upon our capacity to adjust the manner of perceptions necessary to take these in. My research finds that such additional data—always potentially available to observation—is located via drawing's capacity

to position a view onto the world through which we can then discern the unexpected, along side the expected. Thus, there is variation in what constitutes an observation, and more than a single way to apprehend the world before our eyes. I illustrate this point here by considering two very different drawings (**Figures 4.1** and **4.6**), both of which depict ostensibly identical subject matter: the self-portrait.



Figure 4.1. *Self-Portrait* (2011)



Figure 4.2. *Self-portrait with Wedgewood* (2012)<sup>1</sup>

The first of these drawings (**Figure 4.1**) conveys a description that adheres more closely to ideas of the face, as customarily observed and portrayed, and in contrast to my second example. In this first sketch, facial likeness dominates and is, in fact, the sole *subject*; approached and accessed as traditionally understood self-portraiture: a description from a reflection in a mirror. There are only minimal additional markings here, and these serve to indicate surroundings, to establish depth and location cues for ‘reading’ the composition. The logic of a drawing is always constructed through imagining; therefore, ancillary shapes, while borrowed from the observed field, need not convey any practical purpose or account for their identity from the physical world. These forms only materialise to the extent that their marks lend to layers of visual interest—for directing the eye’s path of engagement within the ‘picture world,’ and nothing more. (Further evidence of such compositional scaffolding is addressed in the next section, in discussion of figure drawings by the American abstractionist, Richard Diebenkorn: **Figures 4.3** and **4.4**). What I argue is that the formal perceptual strategies, which are ascribed to drawing, developed from even more pervasive shifts or extensions within vision and imagination. These more universal and common perceptual shifts are what was extrapolated into drawing’s rules of engagement, and distilled into selected visual targets; as in: negative and positive shape/space, perspective and

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<sup>1</sup> **Volume Two: Plates 1 & 2.** *Self-Portrait*, 2011. 11.5 x 8 inches, Pencil on paper & *Self-Portrait with Wedgewood*, 2012. 11.5 x 16 inches, Pencil on paper. (Work of the Author.)

proportion, contour, value and composition. The premise of composition, in particular, seems a correspondent acknowledgement of the sum total of various and subliminal visual decisions, that animate the dynamics of how we see our way through all our constructed interpretive pictures of the world. The rules of drawing are undoubtedly, if not also unconsciously, devised to elicit qualities of adaptive perceptual orientations or understandings, from which they arise.

## **2. Richard Diebenkorn: Two Figure Studies**

American painter Richard Diebenkorn (1922-1993) was best known for urban landscapes—painted visions, extracted from observation, into expressions that increasingly tipped toward abstract contemplation and ultimately into purer abstractions of referenced light, shape and colour. A series of figure drawings,<sup>2</sup> executed between 1958 and 1967, show evidence of how the observed objective detail becomes enlisted as functional detail to support perceptual balance within a discrete picture world—without regard to utilitarian identity in the external domain, from which it was first seized upon by (his) vision. In these drawing compositions are included components drawn (out) from the physical environment in which the models sat. The subject-figure of each drawing is oriented toward the right-hand edge of the format. Additional detail is inserted in upper-right edges of the drawings, edited and portrayed *only* in so far as these serve their purpose in the picture(ed) world; rather than in conveying information and/or completing reference as to the external physical source. Here, the sole purpose is to guide the viewer's gaze through the contained space of the drawing. **Plate 32 (Figure 4.3)** incorporates what appears to be a doorknob—but a doorknob without its accompanying door or anything to open. Such elements exist solely to serve necessities of rendering the drawing interesting, sustaining a dynamic rhythm of vision within its frame. These details—*first* seen by the artist, thereafter experienced by the viewer—are received by adapting the posture of perception. Even if the rest of that door was drawn to accompany that knob, it would still never open, nor would a description of its form be required unless it aided a pictorial purpose. Within such projects of looking, reception and depiction of the object functions only to advance expressions of vision, through the imagined world of the drawing.

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<sup>2</sup> *Richard Diebenkorn: Figure Drawings*. New York: Acquavella Contemporary Art, Inc., 1996.

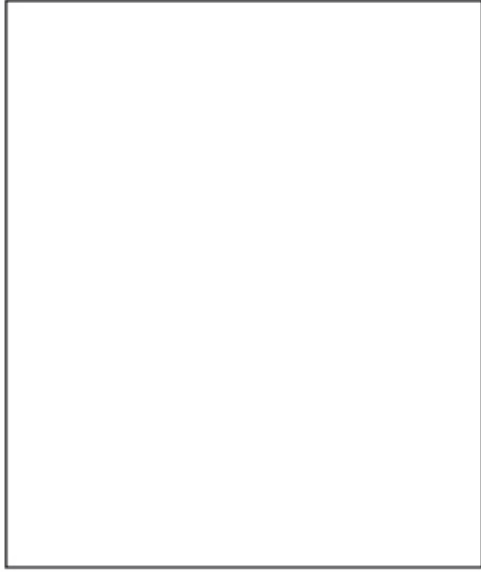


Figure 4.3. Diebenkorn 'Plate 32'<sup>3</sup>

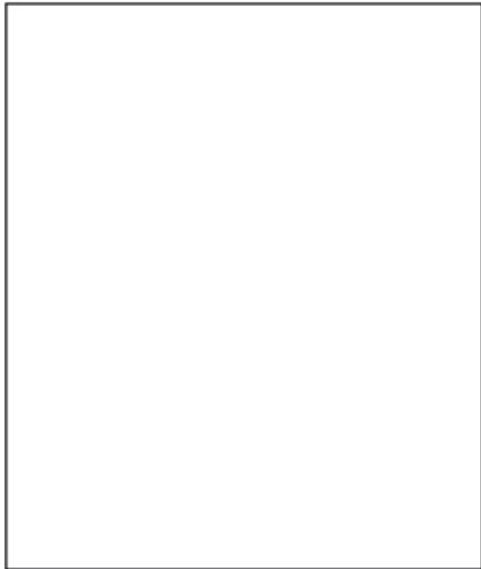


Figure 4.4. Diebenkorn 'Plate 46'<sup>4</sup>

### 3. Two Heads Becoming Better than One

The second self-portrait drawing (*Figures 4.2 and 4.5*), offered as comparison, was also fashioned from direct observation, and does not include any element other than what was seen within the corresponding visual field. Despite having been composed in a single event of looking, this portrayal challenges expectations around how a face (and portrait) is typically viewed and transcribed. Reflective material here offers a greater potential for visual ambiguity; so this self-likeness discloses more faintly on the layered glass panes of museum display cases, and in optical competition with the actual solid

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<sup>3</sup> *Volume Two: Plate 32.* Ibid., Richard Diebenkorn. *Untitled*, 1967. 17 x 14 inches, Charcoal on paper.

<sup>4</sup> *Volume Two: Plate 33.* Ibid., Richard Diebenkorn. *Untitled*. 17 x 14 inches, Pen, ink and wash on paper.

forms that were arrayed and displayed before me, as I drew. The deception of the mirror, of course, highlights yet another adapted view, one that describes the sense of (physical) self as being external and other to the self—thus the mirror’s principal purpose is to deliver a functional illusion to vision. By contrast, those glass cases are primarily intended to protect, rather than reflect. Any additional visuals are the inadvertent epiphenomena of the protective material’s sheen, and we are conditioned to ignore supplementary shimmers and intrusions to vision, if surface lustre catches traces of adjacent forms, while looking at the contents of the case. When encountering such displays with more normative intentions of viewing, the project of seeing the exhibited items overrides conscious cognition of extraneous reflections that lie outside the directed project of perception.

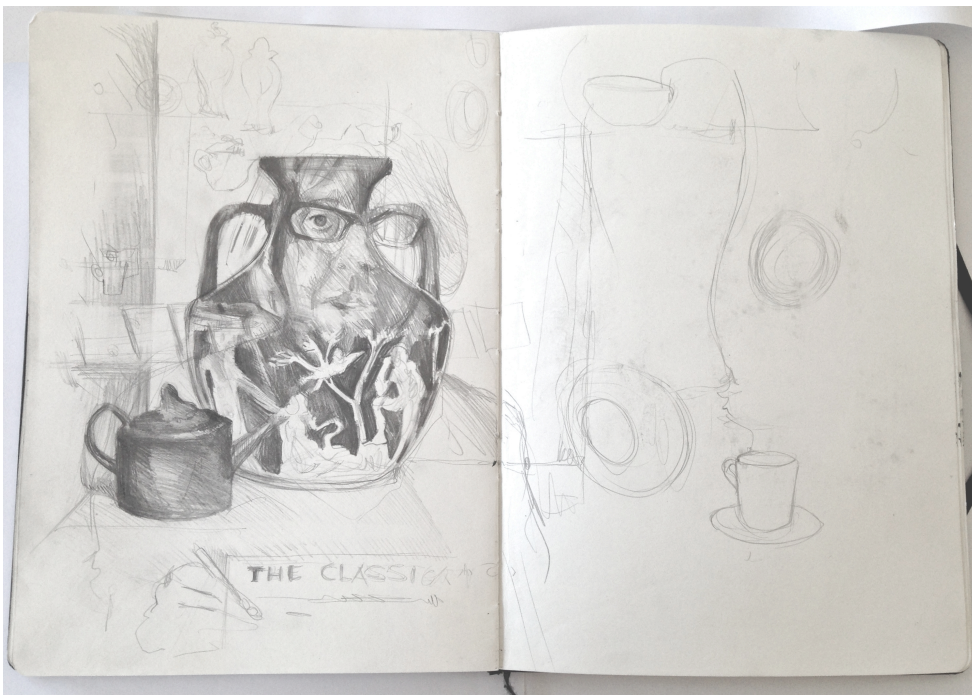


Figure 4.5. *Self-Portrait from Observation #2 (2012)*



Figure 4.6. *Self-Portrait (2011)*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *Volume Two: Plate 1 & 2.*

#### 4. Imagining Representation

When through the water's thickness I see the tiling at the bottom of a pool, I do not see it *despite* the water and the reflections there; I see it through them and because of them. If there were no distortions, no ripples of sunlight, if it were without this flesh that I saw the geometry of the tiles, then I would cease to see it as it is and where it is...<sup>6</sup>

A collaborative drawing project,<sup>7</sup> undertaken with a fellow drawing researcher, provided the opportunity to access and analyse a broadened definition of what can constitute the visual field of an observational drawing; initially, by facilitating a slowing of the gaze, and later, by revealing and encouraging purposeful and playful re-directions of the application of perception. This project commenced a few months after the first self-portrait discussed (**Figures 4.1** and **4.5**), and marked an evolution in how I came to engage looking within this series of dedicated observational drawings, which culminated in the second self-portrait discussed (**Figures 4.2** and **4.6**). During this period, as I approached drawing more as a medium of research than as a tool for representation, my disposition of perception when '*drawing from life*' moved beyond efforts and affirmations of realism, manoeuvred away from assumptions or hierarchies of input importance. As a result, my encounters in the visual through the drawing process, allowed me to *re-cognise* more of what I saw and to embrace into my graphic accounting, a sweep of visual data that was always there, but ordinarily marginalised.

At the time of this particular project, I had not anticipated that its outcomes would impact so directly on the practice queries of my research. This joint drawing venture took us to a local museum's natural history exhibits, a setting where I would not normally choose to draw. However, finding myself there, I randomly selected a spot to settle and commenced drawing—rather arbitrarily—from the animals and objects displayed before me in their protective cases. As always, as I started to draw, I also began to modify my attitude of perception into one that accessed and allowed for drawing. Only then, did other features in my visual field become apparent; features and traces that typically remain beyond the intentions and, thus, the attentions of museum-goers, when viewing the objects on exhibition. I began to notice and mark from more varied reflections or impressions made visible because of the glass display material; looking through and beyond what was presented as foreground, to see unintended and unattended visual content. Through alterations in perceptual disposition, I observed and drew reflections before me; even traces cast by items that were, in fact, located behind me, rather than in front of my gaze. The collected shapes, reflections and distortions all comprise layers of data that present within my field of vision—but as the lesser visual elements, which are routinely edited out by the habits of making cognitive or

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<sup>6</sup> Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "Eye and Mind," *The Primacy of Perception*. James D. Edie, editor, Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1964. p.182.

<sup>7</sup> Black, Stephanie Dr. & Imperatore, Lynn. "Drawing into Knowing: A Natural History" *DRN Conference Proceedings 2012*, pp. 101-130. (Accessed, 3 Nov 14: <http://www.drawing-research-network.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/DRN2012Proceedings-v4MediaRich.pdf>)

narrative sense from the raw material of perception.

As Maurice Merleau-Ponty noted, in “Eye and Mind”, perception comes out of the totality of what constitutes or imbues a visual field, rather than despite it; a concept echoed in Crowther’s description of the *transperceptual*. Within my expanded appreciation of this visual field, I discovered that as I drew, and only because I drew, I became increasingly aware of multiple layers inhabiting that field. This realisation facilitated fuller comprehension of vision’s application; of how—by habit—we look through and past myriad configurations or potentials within the perceptible, in order to isolate the selected focus of attention. We unconsciously prioritise perceptual hierarchies because, inside ordinary fleeting events of vision, it is difficult to hold or account for the various levels simultaneously. Yet, at the same time, *transperceptual* components are woven through these informational textures, and are what make perception possible. Even while we overlook what is deemed insignificant to immediate purpose, these subtle and peripheral emanations are nonetheless existent as potential visual data—not unlike the muted constancy of my visual snow,<sup>8</sup> which, in truth, is only something I notice when I direct attention to its presence. Thus, in making these museum sketches, as I became more sensitised to the layered diversity of visual information available there, I deliberately adopted alterations in my strategy of looking. Those adaptations allowed me to draught additional distortions and layers into each composition; gathered as I consciously shifted the focus of my eyes back and forth and around the singular visual field.



Figure 4.7. *Zebra at Museum*<sup>9</sup>



Figure 4.8. *Pachyderms at Museum*<sup>10</sup>

Initially, these sketches were awkward and tentative; their results not all that different from my previous straightforward renderings of an intended ‘subject’ on view, with additional visual

<sup>8</sup> See: *Chapter Three, Part IV*’s discussion of aura/occlusion *visual snow* as demonstration of the *transperceptual* within the drawing practice and research.

<sup>9</sup> **Volume Two: Plate 34.** (Work of Author.) *Figures 4.7 - 4.12*, 2012, Pencil on sketchbook paper (11in x 8.5 in.)

<sup>10</sup> **Volume Two: Plate 13.**



elements included solely as visual device to ground and prioritise the more primary subject in the composition. In those instances, those features were *still* marked from hierarchies of attention, that weighted the details at the points of convergence with the edges of the primary subject/form, and then would proceed to soften or diffuse as their traces moved toward the outer edges of the drawing. It is beneficial to examine these less successful drawings, as they corroborate the presence of unconscious representational inclination, biased toward more conventional benchmarks of success within drawing. In such models of success, elements from vision become included (or omitted) to reinforce a privileging of represented subject, as part of compositional strategy (see: Diebenkorn's drawings, **Figures 4.3** and **4.4.**). Thus the zebra's case (**Figure 4.7**) is partially referenced to indicate perspectival location; while the pachyderms (**Figure 4.8**) are grounded within a shape, provided by the frame of their partition.

Those less-satisfactory outcomes, from early in this project, offer comparative measures for the later drawing results—the ones that became increasingly experimental and, therefore, successful research data. I returned to draw from this subject matter on several subsequent occasions; each time adapting my disposition of looking into more deliberately stylised manners. With each ensuing session, the layered shifts in seeing and chronicling became easier to access, as was the ease with which the drawings captured less expected or confining interplays of observation and expression. My vision glided back and forth through strata of focus with increasing fluidity, while my hand marked out the composition from varied omnipresent impressions: all detected, or drawn, from the distinct visual field. Once I glimpsed my reflection among the layers, I began to play with deliberately fractured self-portraiture: self reflected among hippos, with raccoon, then with bald eagle—the latter two as self-portraits within the fauna of (my native) North America.



Figure 4.9. *Self-Portrait with Pachyderms*<sup>11</sup>



Figure 4.10. *Self-Portrait with Raccoon*<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Volume Two: Plate 14.* (Work of author.)

<sup>12</sup> *Volume Two: Plate 35.* (Work of author.)



Figure 4.11 .Self-Portrait with Beaver



Figure 4. 12. Self-Portrait with Birds<sup>13</sup>

However, though the process of drawing itself became more fluid, I noticed that it became increasingly taxing to maintain this unaccustomed degree of perceptual and cognitive motion—shifting through levels of visual attention, not relaxing into *more* familiar comforts of a steady attitude and interpretation in the gaze. I experienced a kind of vertigo from my continuous motions around levels of looking,<sup>14</sup> as the strategies in vision applied sidestepped more accustomed and

<sup>13</sup> **Volume Two: Plates 36 & 37.** (Work of author.)

<sup>14</sup> In “Motion Sickness” (*Practice Nursing*, Vol. 17, No 1, 2006, pp. 25-26), Shelley Peacock writes that motion-induced vertigo “is a normal response to the perception of motion and the primary cause...a mismatch between converging sensory signals...Virtually all people are susceptible to motion sickness if exposed to unfamiliar motion which is of sufficient intensity and duration,” while Robert Kennedy and Julie Drexler note in “Research in visually induced motion sickness” (*Applied Ergonomics*, Vol. 41, 2010, pp. 494–503) that “Motion sickness symptoms have been documented since early history and similar symptoms may occur during and subsequent to exposure to some types of visual displays. Even when there is no physical motion, visually perceived motion can result in many of the same symptoms as motion sickness and are thusly classified as visually induced motion sickness (VIMS)”.

balanced workings of sight. Still, the drawing process *itself* was freer and surer with each session and, in the marking and making activity of the hand, the drawings demonstrated intended alterations of looking, which themselves were deviations from the conventions of modifying vision for drawing—as familiar to me from long involvement in process and teaching of drawing. The strategy I'd assumed here had actively sought and privileged manifestations even further beyond the bounds of routine vision. Sometimes, in the last drawings of a session, to lessen the spin of vertigo, I'd unwind by dropping out a layer or two from my focussed efforts, and direct my gaze at just one or two strata: a solid form with its cast shadows, some hints of reflection or distortions in the glass.

Over several decades and into the early stages of this research, my practice was concentrated around figurative descriptions of purely imaginary and/or interior views: using dreams and memory as source. Now, in engaging percept-based drawing at the museum, I became aware of how drawing from observation catches and discloses transcriptions, which are also liberated from fixed ideas of an authentic apprehension of the object. This occurs, in part, because the *percepts* already inhabit the spatio-temporal external; they are there, as physical reality, whether or not sight targets them. When composing an observational drawing, I am not concerned with affirming the material existence of the external subject. As in the Diebenkorn figure studies, I am free to employ visual elements only in so far as they serve the purposes of drawing—without responsibility for the factual conditions of their existence. Here again—Wollheim's criteria of the *interesting drawing* is pertinent—as the interesting discloses as a quality in the drawing itself, which is not necessarily the same, nor even dependent upon, plastic accuracy or completeness of depiction. It will not matter to the drawing's purposes, whether observed items are partial or even wholly edited out, the facts of their existence were never reliant upon drawing's illusions to give them flesh—unless the detailed a design or schematic is central to the drawing's purpose. In the drawing, the revelation delivered is the imagination's response to external reality.

### **Case Studies/Part II: Representing Imagination**

By confirming the primacy of imaginative cognition within all drawing, including the observational, I also deduce a seemingly inverse attribute operating in (my) practice endeavours that seek to fix the imaginary as if a *percept*. Thus, in drawing to describe the illusory into pictorial form, I take great pains to mimic interior impressions, so as to appear as fully fleshed-out representation—to render these as more enduring and tangible than the internal trace or flickers of their origin. Drawings, derived from imaginative sources alone, appear to be marked out into a greater density and fullness

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than I will accord the physically discernible subject.<sup>15</sup> An observational drawing commences and grows from grasping at shapes, attending rhythms in vision of the here and there of the visual field, and progressively discovering still more shapes in response—doing so to uncover a visual ‘conversation’ of elements and aspects within that perceptual experience. In ostensibly *realistic* drawings, additional marks might find their way to the page because they seem somehow intuitively pleasant or necessary (i.e., Diebenkorn’s doorknob)—appearing for reasons not consciously understood that may or *may not* be generated by direct impressions of sight. This occurs because drawing, even if initiated from a view on external experience, will always disclose as an interior, re-imagined response, that is facilitated by shifting dispositions in perception, which are necessitated by the drawing process itself. Drawing progresses as an activity of dynamic balances, a fluid choreography between internalised sensibility and outward look, a perceptual exchange where the externally seen is transposed through interior vision. The interplay of hand and eye is not merely about specific data reproduced as faithful copy; it is about the wonder that occurs in looking and in affecting a perception that is more than simply the recognisable product of looking.

I derive this information about (myself) drawing, and about the differences in the contemplation of percept and observation of internal imagery, only by witnessing myself within acts of drawing and then considering the drawing as result. David Rosand, when addressing the imaginal graphic *invenzione*<sup>16</sup> of 18<sup>th</sup> century Italian artist Giovanni Battista Piranesi (See: **4. Further Crossing: Carceri**), notes the fantastic expression as being “dictated by its own regulations” which “involve the operations and materials of art,” whose “rules include an inversion clause...allowing a reversal of roles”. Here then even the “(p)aper may become...active agent...establishing or undermining mimetic truth: when lines assign a new reality to surface.”<sup>17</sup> So, while I cannot unequivocally assert that this inverse of attention to detail—as I describe within the *imaginal* versus the observed in drawing—is a differentiation that is true or common to other drawing practitioners, I mention it here because it is another thread of knowledge around perception, which has *only* become disclosed from within drawing’s altering view into the visual. What do I see? What have I sensed? Wollheim’s ‘interesting drawing’ posits its premise around how the world can appear to the artist engaged in drawing, that comes to reveal something of perception, over and above efforts to convey generic accuracy. Drawings that accomplish the latter are plentiful—but not necessarily

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<sup>15</sup> This, of course, follows the logic of Paul Crowther and David Lewis-Williams: that the impulse towards art is out of a need to fix fleeting impressions into external and physically independent expression. See: *Chapter One*, for discussion of Crowther’s *picturing* and Lewis-Williams on the origins and anthropology of art-making.

<sup>16</sup> Rosand, David. *Drawing Acts: Studies in Graphic Expression and Representation*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2002, “*Invenzione*, the basic test of artistic creativity throughout the Renaissance...in these images, content...seems subject to the rules of some improvisational game.” (p. 279)

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 279-280.

interesting. By raising criteria for an *interesting drawing*, Wollheim asserts that not all drawings cross this threshold. *What else then can/does a drawing bring into the visible?*

## 1. Dream Glossaries and Other Oneiric Crossings

If you draw from your head...there isn't anything, anything more intimate and more truthful than that possible. Whereas if you turn it into a painting it becomes something else, it becomes a show-off, but those little things you do for yourself mean the most. Drawings are very personal. Drawings are more important than anything really.<sup>18</sup>

The central argument of this research is one that positions drawing as curious facility, accessed only through altering applications of perception. Such alterations then may open onto inputs, which appear to be outside or apart from what we generally acknowledge or anticipate by normal operation of vision. Hence, it is strategically appropriate to include considerations of other common, embodied, while visually transforming phenomena; for example, our sleeping life and its accompanying perceptual variations. Sleep has breathed its direct influence into my drawing practice for nearly twenty years, and was primary practice source as I commenced this project. While the content and scope of my research has broadened, the perceptual material of sleep and dream remains integral, as I contend that drawing and sleep share properties that access the operations of imagination, or the *imaginal*, as encountered within everyday event.

If we regard sleep as a visionary opportunity and alteration, as our closest and most consistent entry to a simultaneously common while private interior embodied state,<sup>19</sup> we acknowledge a regularly entered perceptual state that un-enforces cognitive expectation. Here, we perceive a differing attitude of experience than that which keeps us convincingly among those who Virginia Woolf called 'soldiers in the army of the upright'. Gaston Bachelard, in his essay '*Oneiric Space*', conjured the geography of nocturnal life as a celestial orb; whose paradoxical condition is entirely contained within the boundaries of the singular physical body. He proposed a model for describing the eyelid as a *veil* against which we project, expand, and confine the perceptual life of our nights<sup>20</sup>. Once viewed in his definition as peculiar accessory of inhabited flesh, I find it difficult to consider the eyelid as possessing any alternate meaning for its fleshy folding over our eyes.

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<sup>18</sup> McEwen, John. *Paula Rego: Behind the Scenes*. London & New York: Phaidon Press, 2008. p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> Eastern tradition has maintained a more receptive understanding of dreamless or deep sleep as perceptual experiences, rather than as states of absent or non-being. In texts like the Upanishads—and traditions such as Tibetan Buddhism—deep sleep is regarded as 'pure objectless consciousness' or profound meditation. (George Gillespie, "Dreams and Dreamless Sleep", *Dreaming*, Vol.12, No. 4, 12/2002. pp 181-202). Ramesh Kumar Sharma of University of Delhi provocatively challenges our tendency to disregard deep sleep as tangible experience—simply because we cannot consciously recall it. He notes that the effects of sleep are apparent upon awakening and, while we may determine dreams to be illusion when awake, we still believe our sleep to be real. ("Dreamless Sleep and Some related Philosophical Issues", *Philosophy East & West*, Vol. 51, No. 2, 4/2001. pp. 210-231)

<sup>20</sup> Bachelard calls the eyelid 'a veil...cast not upon the world but upon ourselves by the bounty of sight, a veil...no larger than an eyelid. And how dense are the paradoxes conjured by the thought that this eyelid, this terminal veil belongs as much to the night as to ourselves... Our eyes then themselves possess a will to sleep...' Bachelard, Gaston. *The Right to Dream*, pp. 172-173.

## 2. Louise Bourgeois: Drawing the Entoptic /Drawing (the self) to Sleep

Artist Louise Bourgeois was insomniac, to the extent that she devised a specific nocturnal drawing practice—to occupy the space of interiority into which sleep might be coaxed from drawing’s quieting shifts and shadows of perception. Propped in her bed, scrawling with biro pen (mostly red) onto ordinary lined notebook paper or blank sheet music, tracing gestures and patterns: an artistic adaptation of the sheep counting strategy. In her case, the sheep remained in the room, as the strewn, crumbled, and folded records of her solitary engagement with that state of dark deprivation. The textures and drives of these works were different than her daytime studio production. Front and back on scraps, obsessive and doodling, *The Insomnia Drawings*<sup>21</sup>, (**Figures 4.13** through **4.18**)<sup>22</sup> as altered re-visioning through drawing, represent Bourgeois’ attempt to dialogue with sleeplessness; to negotiate a substitute for a sensation of rest which chronic insomnia denied her. The haptic immediacy of drawing, with its modifications of perception—which are not unlike the trance visions of hypnagogia at sleep’s threshold—seemed an ideal medium for such endeavor. Bourgeois chose her night media for its ease of handling in bed; nothing cumbersome or messy like daytime materials of paint or sculpture. Frequently, her Parisian childhood was referenced on ‘the gridded paper of the French notebook. The grid is very peaceful.’<sup>23</sup> At night, she attended personal memory as soothing reverie—often recalling the murmuring music of the rivers running through her long life: Paris’s Seine and New York’s Hudson.

Bourgeois insisted her daytime studio work was largely about solving problems and working out other mysteries that remained as puzzles from her past—while she maintained that her purpose in the nocturnal insomnia practice was not ‘art’. Instead, she regarded these night drawings as markers of each new day, if not a form of rest, than a transition that prepared her to rise again to diurnal activity. Bourgeois also kept three kinds of diary: written, spoken (tape recordings) and drawing, insisting:

(T)he only diary that counts is the drawing diary. I do the drawing during the night when I’m propped up in bed with pillows. There may be a little music or the hum of the traffic on the street. I preserve my drawing ‘diaries’ most preciousely. They relax me and help me fall asleep.<sup>24</sup>

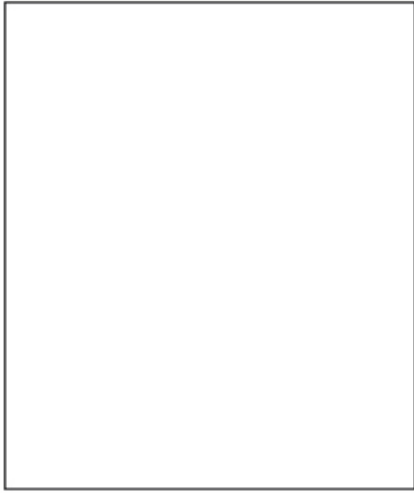
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<sup>21</sup> *The Insomnia Drawings*<sup>21</sup>, 220 works on paper produced in 1994 and 1995. Bourgeois, L. (1994-1995) From: *The Insomnia Drawings*, Red ink on lined paper (approx. 8.5” x 11”), Daros Collection, Zurich, Switzerland

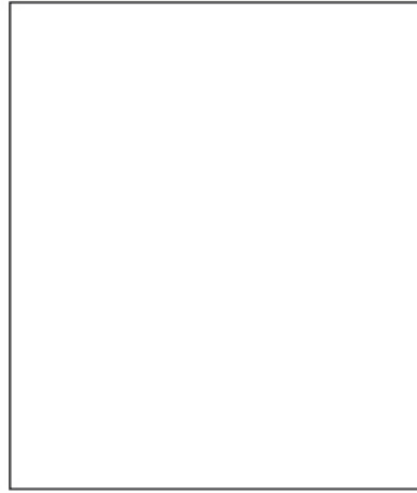
<sup>22</sup> Bernadac, Marie-Laure & Bronfmen, Elisabeth. *Louise Bourgeois: The Insomnia Drawings, 1994-1995, 2 Vol.*, (New York & Zurich: Peter Blum Editions & Scalo, 2001)

<sup>23</sup> Bernadac & Obrist, *Louise Bourgeois: Destruction of the Father/Reconstruction of the Father*, p. 305.

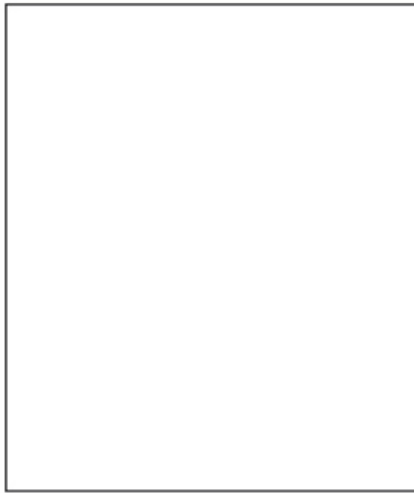
<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 305.



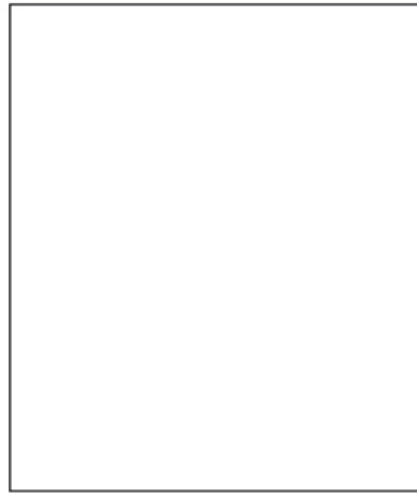
**Figure 4.13.** *(front)*



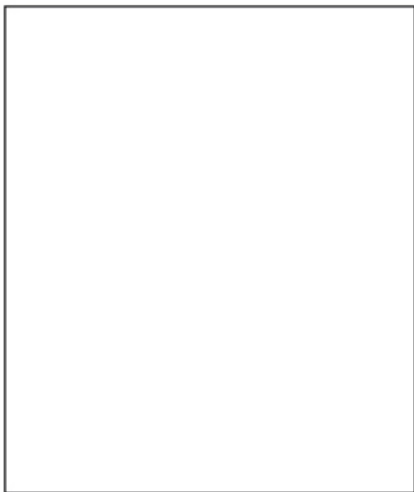
**Figure 4.14.** *(reverse)*



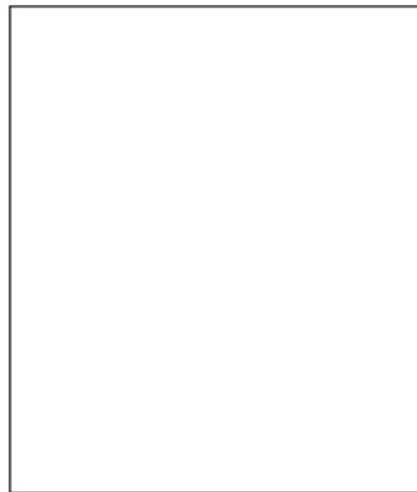
**Figure 4.15.**



**Figure 4.16.**



**Figure 4.17.**



**Figure 4.18.**<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Volume Two: Plate 38, 39 & 40.*

### 3. Hypno-Glossary

Over this period of research, I continued my practice engagement with sleep and dream-related image explorations. One series undertaken was *Hypno-Glossary*: collected images of dream and hypnagogic visuals (**Figures 4.19** through **4.22**). I initially intended this image lexicon to feed into later, more developed compositions; but found that once I had fleshed out these *re*-collected traces into the initial drawings, I was no longer particularly disposed to draw (from) these same sources again. This same sense of disconnection, coming in the attempt to draw (again) upon secondary image data—from a further step removed from direct affective observation—is addressed in greater depth in **Case Studies, Part III, No 2: (Re-Presenting Imagination) Seeing Doubled: Florence and Siena**. There, as well, I found that my subsequent attempts at transcription from reproductions failed to become of interest to my imagination, as it was approached *after-the-fact* of drawing from the primary emanations of the original source. Here, in *Hypno-Glossary*, the journal drawings signified *re*-presentations, which were fabricated from what had *only* previously been glimpsed in my imagination. As noted in the previous discussion of the observed versus the imagined within (my) drawing practice, the drawings of oneiric construction assumed a certain strictness of reproductive definition and detail; as if, in the activity drawing, I am compelled to complete and compensate for the fragile transience of initial source, through composing these into more solid and ‘realistic’ accounts.

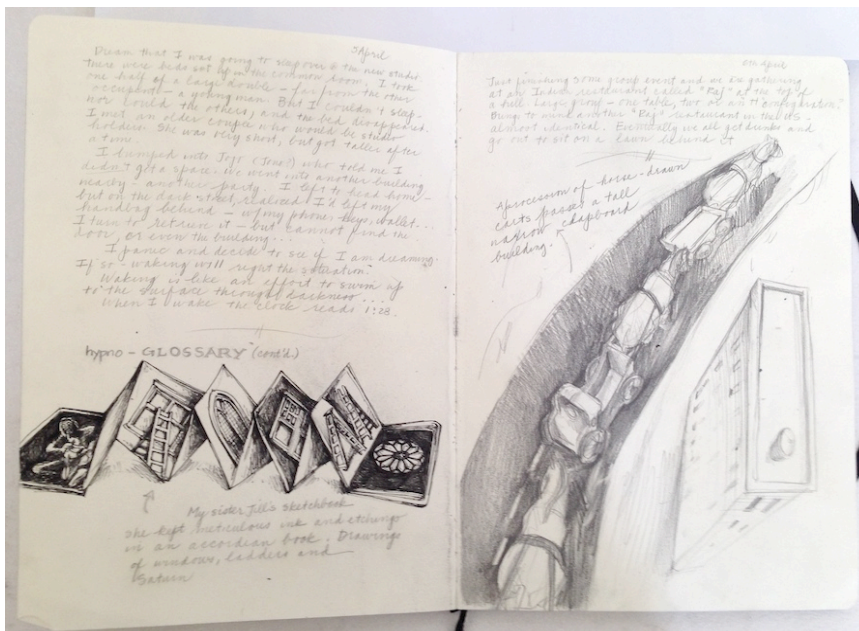


Figure 4.19. *Hypno Glossary* #1



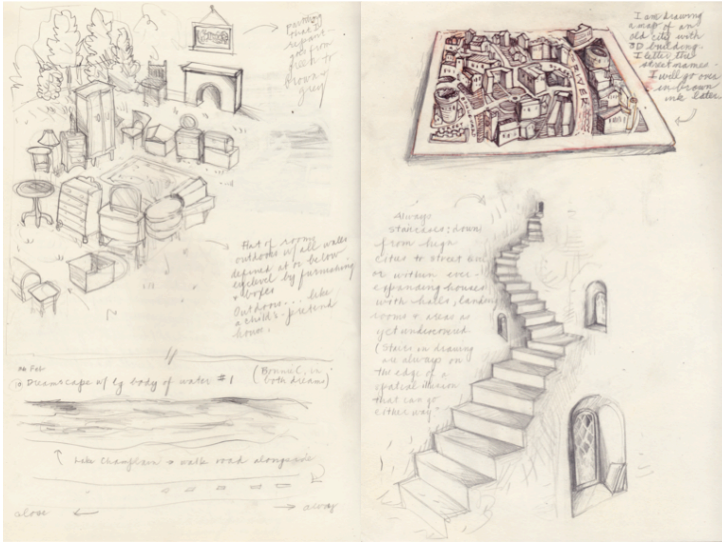


Figure 4.20. Hypno Glossary #2<sup>26</sup>

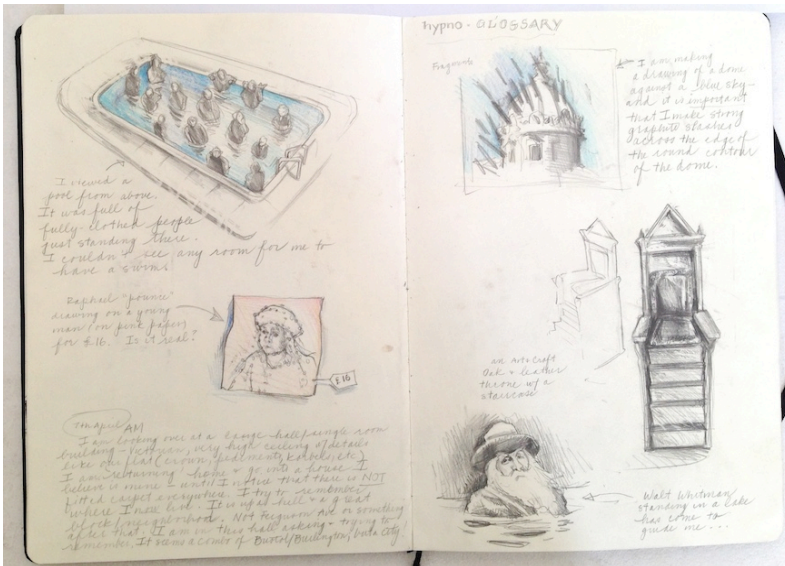


Figure 4.21. Hypno Glossary #3

<sup>26</sup> Volume Two: Plates 41 & 42. (Work of author.)

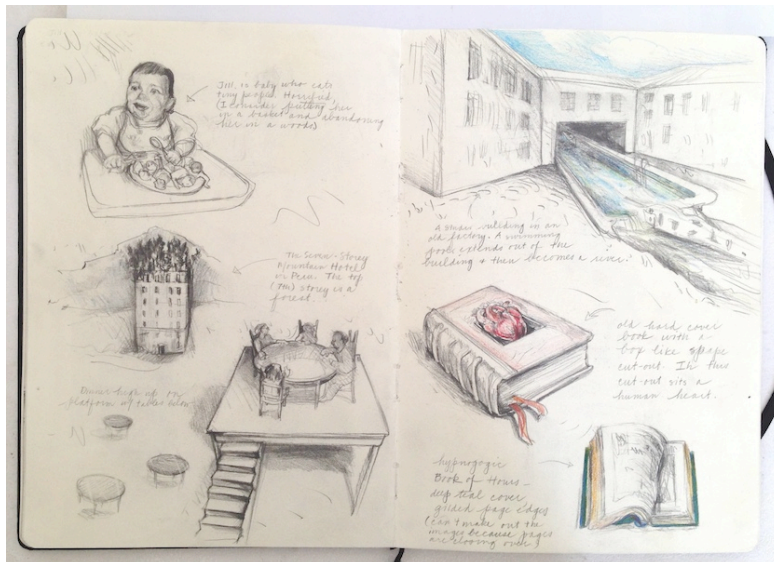


Figure 4.22. *Hypno Glossary #4*<sup>27</sup>

#### 4. Further crossing: Carceri

Another thread, revealed as interaction between dream and drawing, is a bit more difficult to quantify. Nevertheless, it is worth noting, in that it challenges assumed perceptual orderings and understandings of time as a linear forward progression which privileges apparent daytime fact over those we know from sleep and dream life. Because I have always favoured the dream-like compositions of European narrative art traditions, particularly those of Italian or Renaissance work, I made some transcriptions from the complex compositions of Piranesi's *Carceri*<sup>28</sup> (Figures 4.23 and 4.24). I selected these primarily for their graphic similarity to drawing, before considering that these prints, as subject matter, were disclosed from the fictitious terrain of Piranesi's own imagination. Additionally, I had not—nor could I—anticipate that those imaginary prison spaces would then weave themselves as settings in my subsequent dreams, thus effectively doubling—or even tripling—imagination's transcription; that is, if we recognise correspondence between dreaming and drawing processes for similarity within a shared image-generation capacity. In discussing Piranesi's "representations beyond reason," and *Carceri* in particular, David Rosand acknowledges these as "exercises in invention but also in drawing...Piranesi's etching technique records the motions of his drawing hand, and it is precisely in these motions that we sense the inventive impulse behind many of his compositions."

<sup>27</sup> *Volume Two: Plates 43 & 44.* (Work of author.)

<sup>28</sup> *Carceri (Imaginary Prisons)* by Giovanni Battista Piranesi is a series of etchings executed between 1745 and 1750. Interestingly, another of his *imagined* bodies of work is *Vedute (The Views)*, etchings of Rome's architectural ruins graphically rendered with a faithful re-imagining of their missing portions.

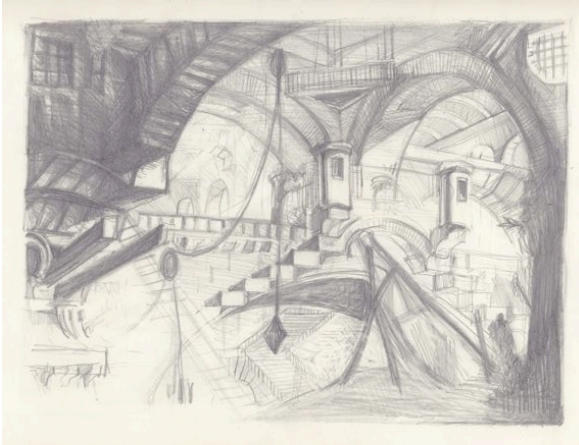


Figure 4.23. *Carceri #1* (2010)



Figure 4.24. *Carceri #2* (2010)<sup>29</sup>

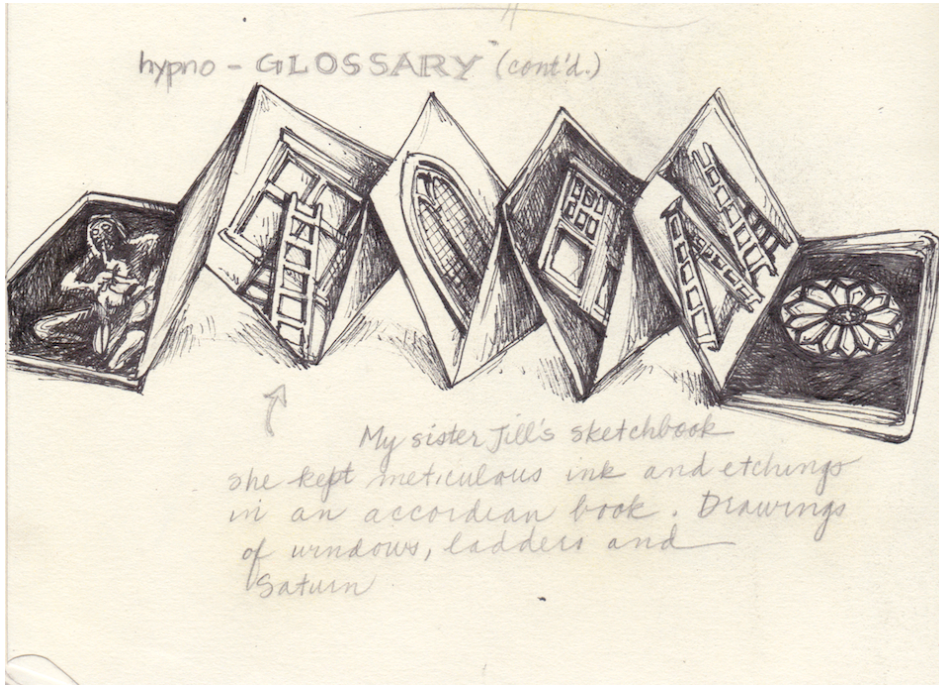
## 5. Look again: Drawn to remember

**a. Sibling Reveries:** Encounters with existing image documentation, through drawing transcription, can open onto new iterations of imaginative impression. In this instance, the passing of a disabled sister (in 2012) returned me to childhood photos, to looking anew *at* or *into* these through drawing. In addition to facilitating affective resolution of this event, it was from this process of drawing that I came to notice and interpret the truer nature of my early myopic squint as discussed in **Chapter Three, Part III: 1 Rendering Aura**. Along with the drawings of *Sibling Reveries*,<sup>30</sup> I also found altering *imaginal* connection to this sister, as a theme of life-long, recurrent dreams; where she would reveal her developmental limitations to be an elaborate ruse and convey instead remarkable feats of intellect and ability. Thus in my dream world my perception of my sister Jill, and her handicaps,

<sup>29</sup> **Volume Two: Plate 45.** (Work of author.)

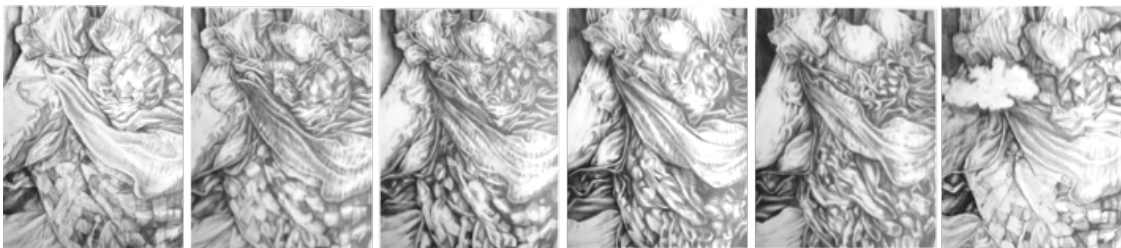
<sup>30</sup> See: **Volume 2. Appendix: Sibling Reveries**

altered, and one such dream is included in the previously mentioned *Hypno-Glossary*: **Figure 4.25** (detail of **Figure 4.19**). Here she shows me a concertina book she made of her own artwork, including: an etching after Goya's "Saturn Devouring his Children", drawings of windows and ladders, and an ink study of the rose window in Chartres cathedral.



detail Figure 4.19. Jill's book<sup>31</sup>

**b. Bed (de)gradations:** This was another ongoing project, that I began early in the research, in drawings initially based on snapshots of my unmade bed after a restless night of insomnia. I would begin each series by copying the photo image as faithfully as I could, then I would make subsequent drawings that copied each preceding drawing. The changes over these progressive depictions, which dealt with an ostensibly identical image, offered insight into the transformative character of the individual visualising apparatus as imagination. As transcribed into drawing, even within an intention of representational mimicry, the images became increasingly altered from the source.



See: Figure 3.4 "Bed Degradations, No. 1 – 6", 2010/Graphite on paper, 9 in x 6 in each<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> **Volume Two: Plates 41.** (Work of author.)

<sup>32</sup> **Volume Two: Plate 15.** (Work of author.)

### Case Studies/Part III: Re-Presenting Imagination

#### 1. Paula Rego

Paula Rego has been making images out of stories since she was a child...stories...not reproduced from life as observed or remembered, but goes-on in the *camera lucida* of the mind's eye.<sup>33</sup>

The British-Portuguese artist Paula Rego locates her artistic vision within graphic storytelling. The architecture of her expression—in prodigious outputs of drawing, print and pastel—is composed from the markings of a drawing hand, which seeks its realisation within a figurative observational approach (**Figures 4.27** through **4.32**). What is pertinent to the research interests here, lies with the unique creative strategy, which Rego employs to that end. To craft her graphic illusions, she will first construct elaborate three-dimensional facsimiles or stage-sets, but these merely serve as visual scaffolding for her ultimate *imaginal* goal. That is only fulfilled by directing her attention beyond those mediating props or arrangements; into visions transformed through drawing,<sup>34</sup> received and resolved within that two-dimensional format. Rego's method thus confirms my research proposition of imagination as central force or participant within all drawing, even those composed from direct observation.

Working in ways that recall traditions of Renaissance storytelling, Rego draws inspiration from her affection for storytelling; from other sources of narrative invention: literature and theatre, nursery rhymes and fable, and parable commentaries around historical or religious stories. Rego draws out of those imaginal source materials, not in order to represent, replicate or generate didactic visual replicas of the linguistic version, but to locate and extend her affective response into fresh recognitions as pictorial report. Her accomplishment then is in her doubling of imaginative sources to fashion re-imaginings—not confined into stale or strict illustrative dictates— but instead revealing novel visions, or re-visioning, wrought from the perceived overflows of expressive content.

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<sup>33</sup> Warner, Marina. 'An artist's dream world' *Tate Magazine*, Issue 8. 2003. Available from: <http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/an-artists-dream-world-paula-rego> (Accessed 21 March, 2013).

<sup>34</sup> Rego often works in pastel, technically considered to be a *painting* technique – but does so because the immediacy of marking in pastel is more like the directness found in *drawing*.

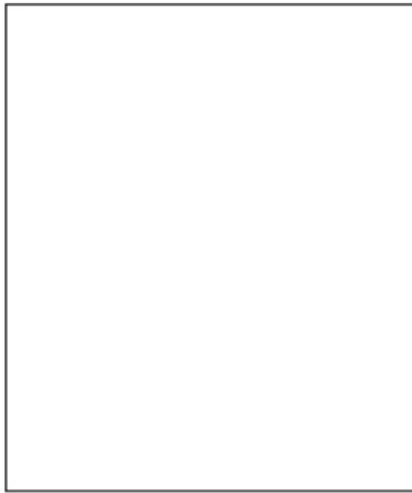


Figure 4.25. Paula Rego. *The Pillowman*, 2004  
Pastel on paper on aluminium, 180 x 120 cm<sup>35</sup>

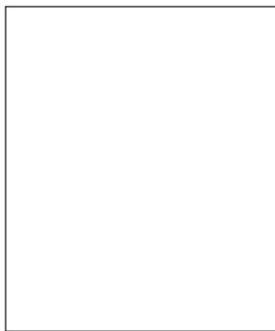


Figure 4.26. Paula Rego. *The Pillowman*, 2004 (Prop)

Storytelling is magical and stories are miraculous, in that their transformation is endless.  
By telling stories...enters that infinite mystery; and the key to her storytelling is the studio.<sup>36</sup>

Rego's making process relies on direct observation. Hence, a critical stage in her image-making, she arrange elaborates stage sets of dummies, costumes, props; never as the end result, but as intermediate step (**Figures 4.26, 4.28** and **4.30**). Live models then populate these scenes in repeating figuration; a method which parallels the multiplication of devotional characters found in *continuous narrative* traditions of Renaissance Christian art. For Rego, the meaning and message of her expressions is only reached through translations into drawing, print, or the tracings of pastel: a medium chosen for its application through tactilely-direct markings similar to drawing. Her tableau vivant installations are simply dormant notational structure, rather than ultimate utterances of her imaginative world. That world reveals itself through the process of drawing; in the tracks of the hand across a surface and in the additional shifts and nuances of perception, where drawing practice allows her to detect something beyond the barriers of material prop. Rego breathes life into drawing—and in this alchemical collaboration of eye and hand—the life of a newly crafted vision enters the realm of the seen, only then

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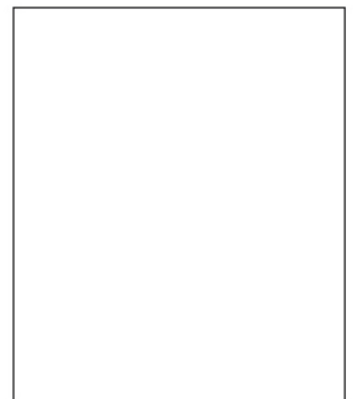
<sup>35</sup> **Volume Two: Plate 46.**

<sup>36</sup> McEwen, John. *Paula Rego: Behind the Scenes*. p. 8.

reaching and embodying its affective destination (**Figures 4.27, 4.29 & 4.31**). This notion of the *imaginal* doubling, occurring when drawing as response to other artists and creative expression, is affirmed by my own drawing practice, and addressed in the next section (***Seeing Doubled: Florence and Siena***). There I present and analyse drawings uncovered in my own practice—in the unintended, but telling, pairing of sketches made from sources encountered on visits to Florence and Siena, in 2006 and 2012.



**Figure 4.27.** Paula Rego. *Human Cargo II*, 2007  
Graphite, conte and wash on paper, 163 x 163 cm



**Figure 4.28.** Paula Rego. *Props for Human Cargo*, 2007



Figure 4.29. Paula Rego. *The Muses*, 2007  
Graphite and conte pencil on paper, 137 x 102 cm <sup>37</sup>



Figure 4.30. Paula Rego. *Props for The Muses*, 2007

## 2. (Re-Presenting Imagination) Seeing Doubled: Florence and Siena

To create an image is to renovate our power of seeing the world which for so long has been smothered in lazy familiarity.<sup>38</sup>

Hans Hofmann, German-born abstract expressionist and teacher, wrote that the substance of art is “determined by the quality of its growth.”<sup>39</sup> Thus he references subtle yet fundamental traces, within the artefact as potential articulations, and extended beyond its material or temporal origins. It is in this manner, actualised in each succeeding contact and conversation with the viewer, that a work extends and exceeds its inception, through repeated events of reception. Therefore, “(i)n the passage of time, the outward message of the work may lose its initial meaning; the communicative power of its emotive and vital substance, however, will stay alive as long as it is in existence. The life-giving zeal in a work of art is deeply imbedded in its qualitative substance...(t)he *Real* in art never dies...”<sup>40</sup>

Artistic traditions of transcription sustain and intensify the impact of the ‘*Real*’—through practices like drawing that amplify the creative conversation between present practitioner and what endures in the work of other, earlier artists. In my own research, this understanding was explicitly corroborated by discoveries made from drawings produced during visits to Florence and Siena; cities and sites I had visited, on two occasions, over the past decade (2006 and 2012). On each visit, I filled sketchbooks with my drawing notations, derived as direct contact and response to Renaissance masterworks. In the face-to-face encounters with certain works, I was compelled to sketch—as if summoned by undiminished potencies in expression that were carried and communicated to me through specific aspects of those

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<sup>37</sup> **Volume Two: Plates 47 & 48.**

<sup>38</sup> Bachelard, Gaston. *On Poetic Imagination and Reverie*. Putnam, CT.: Spring Publications, 2005. p.

<sup>39</sup> Hofmann, Hans. “The Search for the *Real* in the Visual Arts”, *Search for the Real and Other Essays*. p. 48.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.



works. On each visit—though separated and forgotten in the gap of years—my hand had reached after particular dynamics and discrete details, and I drew in response to living energies witnessed there, attended and translated in the rapid choreography of my sketches. Crowther attributes the continued engagement with art objects to a trait he identifies as *presentness*.<sup>41</sup> As such, the characteristic animating forces, like Hofmann’s ‘*Real*,’ persist over and above the temporal origins of artefact or artist, to signal its enduring vitality over time. My sketch notations were not motivated by a desire to simply record what Ehrenzweig called the ‘sterility of the copy’<sup>42</sup>; but instead are indication of the instinctive urgency of *thought-made-visible* within drawing; of thought which discloses in dialogues carried on solely within *imagery*. Here, I must emphasise again that, unlike Bolt’s focus on an idea of a *performativity*, attached and acting chiefly as part of the artefact, my research follows the expressive activity which originates and extends into the imagination of the artist/observer, when receiving and responding to the visual messages of another imagination, from another artist’s singular (rather than cultural) articulation, as it continues to transmit that unique moment of expression. The lure of these Tuscan art encounters echoed my childhood museum excursions—where I first experienced *presentness* in contact with art, and where I first summoned the absent artist, to conjure the traces and spaces of their creative impulses. By drawing, strategies of attentiveness access greater vibrancy and immediacy; its process calling forth shifts in perceptual posture that allow the (present) artist to seek and see beyond surface, to deepen the exchange with past master, in what John Berger describes as a “ferocious and inarticulated dialogue”<sup>43</sup>.

I returned from the latter trip, in April 2012, with sketchbooks filled with my recent responses to vivid depths in Renaissance masterworks; including the graphic chronicle of a rather manic seven-hour session of looking/sketching in the Uffizi. Those reactions arose as an intuitive impulse to draw; commencing without any pause for interpretation or intervention of conscious thought. Vision summoned vision; called by “another person’s selective interpretation of the visible...liberated from immediate existential pressures, and from the vicissitudes of time.”<sup>44</sup> With pencil in hand, odd and isolated moments and gestures exerted their curious pull: whether the singular vivid figure in the compositional crowd, the backside of an altarpiece panel, or a detail of design configuration that propelled an improbable and miraculous narrative. “Every expression-medium has a life of its own.

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<sup>41</sup> Crowther, Paul. *Phenomenology of the Visual Arts (even the frame)*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009., p. 57.

<sup>42</sup> Ehrenzweig, Anton. *The Hidden Order of Art: A Study of Psychology in Artistic Imagination*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967. p. 48.

<sup>43</sup> Berger, John. “A Professional Secret”, *Berger on Drawing*, Aghabullogue, C. Cork, Ireland: Occasional Press, 2005.

<sup>44</sup> Crowther writes: “Through such space, we can explore another person’s selective interpretation of the visible...at a publically accessible level...liberated from immediate existential pressures, and from the vicissitudes of time.”(Crowther, Paul. *Phenomenology of Visual Art (even the frame)*. p. 58.)

Regulated by certain laws, it can be mastered only by intuition during the act of creating...(t)his quality is the opposite of illusion; it is the reality of the spirit."<sup>45</sup>

Once home, I came across some older sketchbooks—the forgotten records of my prior visit to those same sites. I was fascinated to discover that on that previous occasion, my eye and hand had responded—not only to the *same works*—but even to the *same* specific, isolated, and peculiar details I had drawn (from) on my recent visit. From this discovery, I can only conclude that—in meeting with these powerful records of an artist’s perception and interpretation, however remote in time—engagement through the perceptual posture and process of *drawing* animates and amplifies the quality of exchange with those embodied expressions that results in the doubling of the imaginative iterations. It is not a matter of *which* detail I *saw* or *chose* or *approached*, but that these are still somehow fertile as visions; still calling out to imagination. However, I would *also* assume that someone else, equipped with pencil and pad to hand, would *listen* to different works, or *hear* works differently; their rhythms of response induced by *other* trace and emanations. What my doubled sketches substantiate—with their mirroring acknowledgements through drawing—is evidence of the “ferocious and inarticulated”<sup>46</sup> latent power, which exceeds surface and subject and whispers through the centuries in perceptual resonances, which are not immediately apparent, nor wholly contained by the details of surface designs.

Indeed, the artist’s trace-gestures can inhere...for as long as the work endures – and this of course can be far beyond the creator’s lifetime.<sup>47</sup>



Figure 4.31. Filippino Lippi “St John the Evangelist Resuscitating Drusiana”<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Hofmann, Hans. “Excerpts from the teaching of Hans Hofmann: On Relation”, *Search for the Real and Other Essays*. p.63.

<sup>46</sup> Berger, John. “A Professional Secret”, *Berger on Drawing*. p. 77.

<sup>47</sup> Crowther, Paul. *Phenomenology of Visual Art (even the frame)*. p. 83.

<sup>48</sup> Fresco, Strozzi Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence (accessed 12/8/2014, [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Filippino\\_Lippi\\_-\\_St\\_John\\_the\\_Evangelist\\_Resuscitating\\_Drusiana\\_-\\_WGA13154.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Filippino_Lippi_-_St_John_the_Evangelist_Resuscitating_Drusiana_-_WGA13154.jpg)) (**Volume Two: Plate 49**)



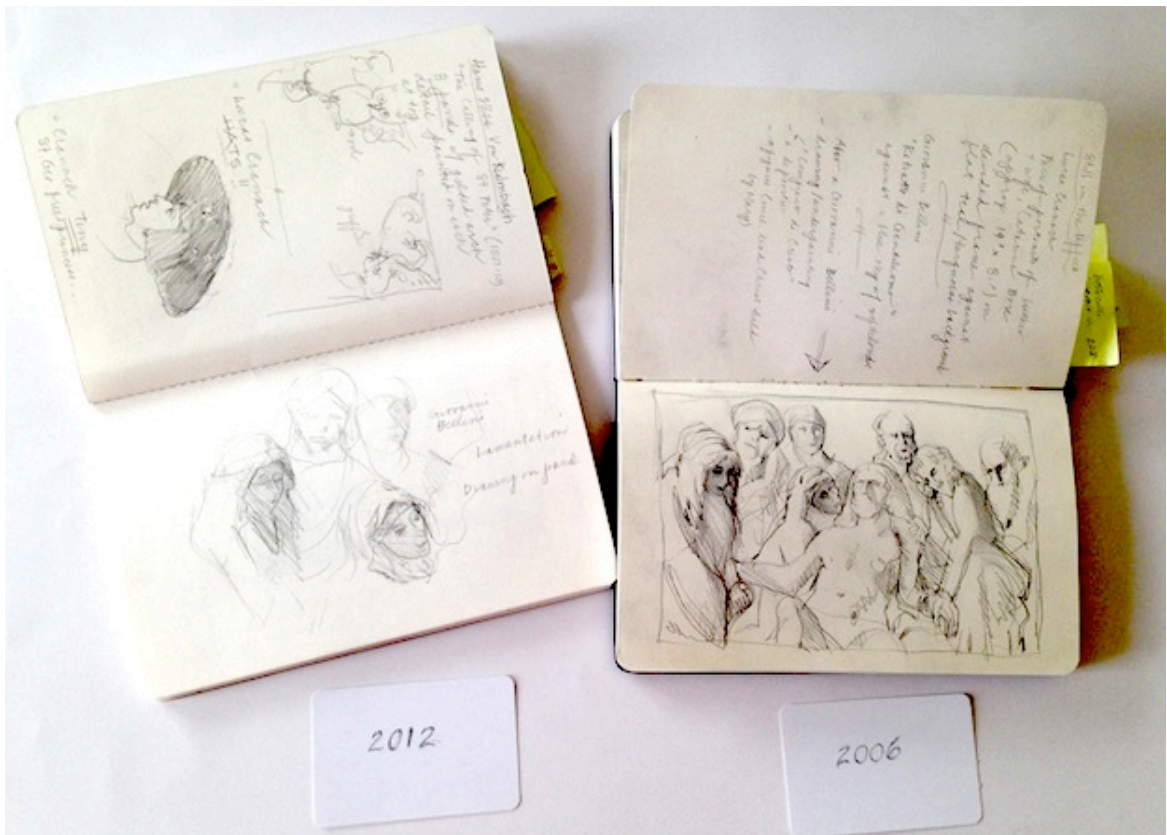


Figure 4.34. After Bellini's Lamentation/2012 & 2006



Figure 4.35. Sandro Botticelli "Madonna and Child with Six Saints"<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Tempera on Panel, 170 X 190 cm, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (Accessed 22/10/2012, <http://2008remodel.wordpress.com/2008/05/06/madonna-and-child-by-botticelli/>) (Volume Two: Plate 51)



Figure 4.36. After Botticelli's *Magdalene*/2012 & 2006



Figure 4.37. Back of Triptych by Giovanni di Paolo



Figure 4.38. Giovanni di Paolo "St. Ansansus triptych"<sup>51</sup>

Where the most thorough possible interpretation occurs, where our sensibility appropriates its object while... quickening that autonomous life, the process is one of 'original repetition'. We re-enact, in the bounds of our own secondary but momentarily heightened...consciousness, the creation by the artist.<sup>52</sup>

Following the revelations of this paired collection of sketches, I attempted to extend connection and curiosity around the original sources, by revisiting these same works in efforts at transcriptions from reproduction; but here my drawings (along with my interest) languished on the page. George Steiner addresses "(i)nterpretation, as that which gives life beyond the moment and place of immediate utterance or transcription,"<sup>53</sup> that is, as reply that effectively sustains and honours original source—adding to it's growth (Hofmann), rather than its stasis. My copies from the reproductions quickly paled in comparison to the perceptible potency that pulsed from the original emanations; whose proximity had evoked my fervid *imaginal* response. It also may be that a comparative contemplation of facsimile, undertaken while still affectively recalling the impacts of contact with original, could only further deflate my capacity to see into or beyond mere copy. Reproductions are notations that convey information regarding surface detail and data—they cannot carry the same exigent calls to imagination found when meeting an artwork face-to-face. Certainly, it is the work's true embodied *presentness* that motivates scholars to honour and study, and to reproduce. This primary energy can only be fully embraced and imparted in the firsthand encounter with authentic artefact; the place wherein the artist's eye and hand

<sup>51</sup> Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena (Accessed 12/8/2014, <https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk>) (**Volume Two: Plate 52**)

<sup>52</sup> Steiner, George. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. London & New York: Oxford University Press, 1975. p. 26

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

endures. Secondary sources exist for reference; the stand-in produced by circumstances of separation from the palpable force fields alive in masterworks. Reproductive documentation subtracts the “emotional power that is bound up with a great master’s technique,”<sup>54</sup> and then can only hint at primary impact. Similarly, if the subsequent artist’s copy attends exterior detail alone—even as accomplished imitation of a master’s hand—it too will fail to engage or transmit the animating impulses that lie beyond the surface of that artwork. This assertion of an animating vitality is Ehrenzweig’s *primary processing*,<sup>55</sup> and what Hillman referenced when he declared imagination as the *thought of the heart*.<sup>56</sup> In contrast to the dynamic investigations of my sketching from original sources, my subsequent transcriptions from reproduction only professed into studies of surfaces. Reference to superficial data in a work is, after all, the purpose served by the reproduction.

Again, what these findings confirm is that—just as exceptional works of art surpass the stories recognised on their surface—there is an adapted capacity of perception, accessed within drawing, as an adaptation and alteration in sensory experience which both precedes and supersedes the specific code of visual modifications, comprised by drawing’s instructional canon. Thus, it was a dialogue between conventions, which attended my subsequent drawing of the reproductions. From that muted exchange, I could only produce perfectly adequate copies of copies; but I could not access or achieve the breadth of perception, that is available and palpable in the *presentness* of the original source.



Figure 4.39. *Drusiana transcription/2012*<sup>57</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Ehrenzweig, Anton. *The Psychoanalysis of Artistic Vision and Hearing*, p. 48

<sup>55</sup> Ehrenzweig subjects the previously psychoanalytic understanding of *primary process* to “revision...due partly to the need for accommodating the facts of art” which “suggest forcibly that the undifferentiated matrix is...far superior to the narrowly focused conscious processes, if only because of its wider focus that can comprehend ...structures irrespective of their order in time and space.” pp. 260-261. (Ehrenzweig, Anton. *The Hidden Order of Art: A study in Psychology of Artistic Imagination*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: Univeristy of California Press, 1967.)

<sup>56</sup> Hillman, James. *The Thought of the Heart and the Soul of the World*. Putnam, CT: Spring Publications, 1992.

<sup>57</sup> **Volume Two: Plate 53.** Work of the author.

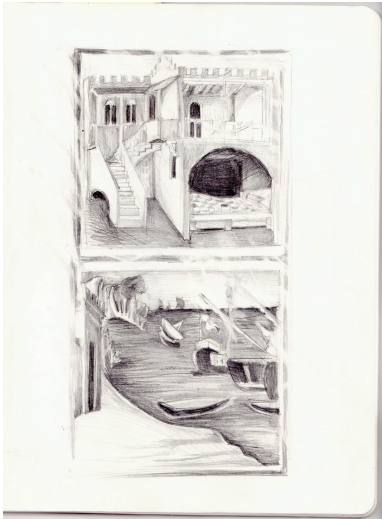


Figure 4.40. *Nicolas of Bari transcription/2012* <sup>58</sup>

Bachelard wrote “imagination is not...a faculty which fabricates images of reality; it is a power which forms images which surpass reality in order to change reality. It is the power of a sur-humanity.”<sup>59</sup> It would appear that proximity to such masterworks facilitates apprehension of transformative features, which transcend the obviousness of information detected from the surface schema alone. Even in patently religious works—for example, the devotional works referenced here—revelation abides in the mystery and mechanisms of their image-generation, rather than as archaic chronicles of faith-based mythologies. These Renaissance masterpieces are art-historically revered tableaus; enduring visual formats that conjure and fix the fleeting pictorial imaginings of beings and events, which were unlikely to have ever been experienced in physical fact (*percept*). Hence, the reverence brought to and through these images honours what is imagined, re-imagined and conveyed, in the pursuit of a work of art. If a vision, transposed into drawing or painting, describes a view to beyond what is knowable as a *percept*, then it is the activity of the art process that allows this to arrive and express into the realm of the seen. Rather than reading these to be affirmations of religious conviction, what I see in such endeavours is a devotion to our mutual *imaginal* life—revealed by graphic inventions that commune and communicate with us still. To Hofmann, a work of art was “finished, from the point of view of the artist, when feeling and perception have resulted in spiritual synthesis,”<sup>60</sup> disclosing “a world in itself...a spiritual life—a picture with a life of its own—through which it can become a work of art.”<sup>61</sup> By viewing these significant expressions of interior vision, this shared inner life persists and perseveres in human consciousness.

### 3. Seeing Subtext: Predella, Maps & Scrolls

<sup>58</sup> *Volume Two: Plate 54*. Work of the author.

<sup>59</sup> Kearney, Richard. *Poetics of Imagination: Modern to Postmodern*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998. p. 101

<sup>60</sup> Hofmann, Hans. “Excerpts from the teaching of Hans Hofmann: On Relation”, *Search for the Real and Other Essays*. p.63

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.42.



The term *predella*<sup>62</sup> denotes a structural element, which was commonly included in altarpiece formats of the Renaissance. Altarpiece configurations—particularly the multi-panelled polyptych depiction of multiple, simultaneous and/or impossible scenes and characters—have been subsequently borrowed and adapted by contemporary artists as formats for accessing and addressing (secular) views of complex subject matter through re-imagination. Stanley Spencer devised his chapel memorial at Burghclere to allude to earlier devotional spaces, like Giotto’s Scrovegni Chapel. Paula Rego—as Associate Artist at London’s National Gallery—produced her *pala*<sup>63</sup> fantasy of *Crivelli’s Garden*,<sup>64</sup> for the café in the museum’s Sainsbury Wing. Rego was also included when the National Gallery invited “twenty-four great artists of our time to converse with the greatest artist of all time” and from “the fruits of those conversations” mounted the exhibition: *Encounters: New Art from Old* (2000).<sup>65</sup>

Within my own practice pursuits, and prior to the current practice in this research, I had utilised polyptych arrangements for specific large *imaginally*-sourced drawing projects. Over time, I have come to prefer the quiet pictorial attribute inferred by the *predella*, as evocative structure of subtext. In traditions of devotional or ecclesiastical art, *predelle* offered additional commentary on the main altarpiece narrative; below, smaller, secondary, and often only tangentially related to the main event portrayed in the panels above. While the iconography of the central panels of altarpieces were dictated by the church or patron of the commission—which were contractually specific to the details of the who, what and how of pictorial presentations it is believed that *predelle* could encompass more inventive and personal interpretations on the part of the artist(s). Hence, I chose the *predella* as theme and title—a structure that omits overstatements of any altarpiece declarations, which might hover above. Here, it becomes a symbolic format for exploring crossovers of dream and memory (**Figures 4.41 through 4.44**): as a design ‘trope’ for framing freer expressions of the interaction of perception and the imaginary. More recently, these long pieces have also evolved into configurations that reference and resemble aspects of maps—mounted on cloth scrim, and foldable, like old ordnance maps (**Figure 4.44**). I have found that these drawings, contained and comprised in extended horizontal formats, also open out imaginatively to allow for more temporally ambiguous compositions. In this way, these are like the *pala*

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<sup>62</sup> A definition of *predella* (pl. *predelle*): “The horizontal base of an altarpiece often decorated with narrative images related to the saints depicted in the altarpiece above.” Nethersole, Scott. *Devotion by Design: Italian Masterpieces before 1500*, London: National Gallery Co. Ltd., 2011. Glossary, p 125.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125. “*PALA (PL. PALE)* A single-field altarpiece usually with a rectangular, unified painted surface and a classicising frame. A *pala all’antica* is one inspired by antique motifs.”

<sup>64</sup> Paula Rego “*Crivelli’s Garden*” 1990-91, Acrylic on paper lid on canvas; Two panels: 190cm x 500 cm. The painting represents Rego’s re-visioning of “women saints that appear...in the...collection” enacted by female gallery staff, and thus “(r)real people became saints, because I used real people as models”. McEwen, John. *Paula Rego, 2nd Edition*. London: Phaidon, 1997, p.256.

<sup>65</sup> Morphet, Richard, ed. *Encounters: New Art from Old (Catalogue)*, London: National Gallery, 2000. The project and exhibition included Rego on Hogarth, and Louis Bourgeois on Turner. In the foreword to the catalogue, Neil MacGregor writes that “to look at a painting through the eyes of an artist is, in many cases, to discover a new painting or perhaps, more accurately, to be reminded that great paintings are inexhaustible, and always have more secrets to yield.” p. 7.

format of older religious work—and the episodes of inner perception: whether dream, memory or reverie—are acknowledged into combinations that reveal along their own peculiar perceptual timeline.



Figure 4.41



Figure 4.42



Figure 4.43



Figure 4.44<sup>66</sup>

#### **Summary for Chapter Four: Case Studies**

In this chapter, I continued my examination of practice methods through specific examples contained within *Case Studies*. The drawings produced for this research—as discussed here— are indicative of a

<sup>66</sup> *Volume Two: Plates 55, 56, 57 & 58.* (Work of author.)

larger body of work that comprises the primary source material for the findings and subsequent contribution to knowledge in drawing practice. In the next, and concluding chapter, I will review the premise and findings of the research, as established by the previous chapters; in order to outline and substantiate my contribution to the field and to understandings of drawing, as derived for this research.