Constructing the shitting citizen: the promise of scatological art as environmental and social activism / Deanna Grant-Smith

Abstract: Art activism uses visual and performance art to promote social and environmental agendas. In this paper, I explore attempts to raise awareness of sanitation issues at the global, local and personal level using scatological art. I focus on the successes of the open-air public art exhibition set up in the Brisbane (Queensland, Australia) central business district to celebrate World Toilet Day in 2008. The art in this exhibition featured included one hundred toilets decorated to raise awareness of global sanitation issues and the distribution of promotional materials featuring scatological images including postcards and stickers. Given the subject matter and intent, the toilet art and promotional materials presented at the One Hundred Toilet exhibition can be seen as an example of scatological art employed for the purposes of social and environmental activism. Through the One Hundred Toilet exhibition, I consider the political aims and activist potential of using scatological art to progress social and environmental agendas and consider how this kind of 'shit on show' approach can contribute to the construction of the shitting citizen; one who is simultaneously responsible for and responsive to managing the waste that they produce and recognising and responding to broader sanitation issues.

Key words: Ecocriticism; culture studies; urban studies

Introduction

<1> The prevailing tendency in modern Western culture either to laugh or turn away in shock and disgust at the sight, smell, or even reference to the processes of bodily elimination and their products has largely overwhelmed all attempts in the direction of a more unqualified, sober attitude toward the excremental, particularly in the aesthetic realm. (Chu 1993, p.42)

<2> Under our conventions, talking about shit openly or covertly is an act of social and psychic revolt. (Adams 1997, p.128)

<3> Despite its pervasive presence in our daily lives, excrement isn’t something that we like to think about, let alone talk about. As individuals we try to deny both the existence of excrement and our role in its production. Whether it is through our daily ablutions rituals, or the effortless flush of a toilet, we live in a society where excrement is cleanly and efficiently removed from our lives and minds without a second thought. As a general rule, the luxury of being able to divorce ourselves from the waste we produce allows us to maintain an unchallenged physical and psychological distance from our waste and from any environmental, social or ethical impacts related to its disposal. But what happens when [sh]it rears its ugly head and demands discussion?

<4> Talking about toilets, sanitation and excrement is generally not high on the list of acceptable topics for polite conversation. Unlike social infrastructure issues such as water supply, which receive considerable media attention and government support, nobody talks about sanitation because it isn’t “sexy” (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2008). Despite the well documented public health, environmental and social consequences of poor sanitation around the world (WSCC, 2002; SIWI, 2005) the subject of sanitation, and the management of faecal waste in particular, tends to be denied on a policy-making level because policy-
makers, politicians and the general public are reluctant to engage publicly
or privately with excremental issues (Dellström Rosenquist, 2005, p. 345).
As a result, the public promotion of excremental issues is both politically
Courageous and deliberately defiant because “sanitation is unglamorous and
taboos are obstacles, [and] politicians almost anywhere would rather be
seen opening a water treatment plant than a toilet” (Mottram, 2008).

As a response to the political and public reluctance to engage with
sanitation issues the World Toilet Organisation was founded to improve
toilet and sanitation conditions worldwide and to encourage debate on
sanitation issues. Through the World Toilet Organisation, founder Jack Sim
set about making sanitation issues relevant and putting them front of mind
for politicians, policy-makers, users and the general public. An example of
the innovative approaches adopted by the World Toilet Organisation to
promote sanitation issues include the introduction of the international
Happy Toilet Program which recognises and rewards the provision of good
quality sanitation infrastructure. The Happy Toilet Program is a star-
grading initiative for public toilets which focuses on design, cleanliness,
maintenance, effectiveness and overall user satisfaction. In Singapore,
toilets awarded ‘happy’ status are promoted through the Restroom
Association Singapore website and an online LOO locator map. Toilets which
meet the standards set by the Happy Toilet Program are presented placards
which are prominently displayed within the toilet facilities and can be
used as a promotional tool by the establishment who owns the toilets
(Restroom Association Singapore, 2008).

The efforts of the World Toilet Organisation to improve sanitary
conditions across the globe are also advanced through World Toilet Day.
World Toilet Day events are held around the world on 19th November each
year to bring the unspeakable topic of sanitation to the attention of
politicians, policy-makers and ordinary people around the world and to
break “the silence about an embarrassing topic” (WTO, no date). World
Toilet Day events often use visual and performance art to attract public
attention and to promote key sanitation messages. For example, the issues
associated with open defecation were promoted through the travelling
exhibition Where would you hide? featuring 26 life sized orange defecating
silhouettes (Sanitation is Dignity, no date) and the international Big
Squat which saw participants around the world squat in public places for
one minute (WTO, no date).

Celebrating World Toilet Day in Brisbane through art activism

In 2008, the Australian city of Brisbane hosted an open-air public art
exhibition in the heart of its central business district to celebrate World
Toilet Day. The art, featured in prominent locations across the busy
pedestrian mall in Queen Street, attracted a great deal of interest and
surprise from passers-by. Some surreptitiously glanced at the art works as
they hurried by. Others lingered to take a closer look while those beside
them attempted to conceal their discomfort and embarrassment. The reason
for the diverse reactions is that the art featured in this exhibition was
one hundred toilet pedestals decorated to raise awareness of global
sanitation issues.

By using scatological art to celebrate World Toilet Day 2008 the
organisers of the One Hundred Toilet exhibition hoped to raise general
awareness of sanitation issues and to inspire others to take action against
poor sanitation by supporting organisations that deliver sanitation to
developing countries such as WaterAid Australia and the World Toilet
Organisation (Taylor, 2008).

With the support of Engineers Without Borders and a number of other
not-for-profit, government, university and business organisations and
individuals, new toilet pans were donated and decorated for display at the exhibition. The challenge to decorate the toilets was
distributed through organisations such as the Queensland Environmental
Activist Network Group and the Art Action Union who asked their members to
“be funny, be serious, be gross, be active and aware” and to develop
artwork centred around the toilet (aka. loo, crapper, shit-house,
poo room, WC, out-house, john, bathroom etc.) as a celebration of
the ability to manage our personal waste in a systematic way.
(AAU, 2008)

That community groups, environmentalists and artists were intimately
involved in the One Hundred Toilet exhibition is not surprising as these
groups are often central in promoting important social and environmental
issues. However, in this instance, although some have noted that
politicians are often reluctant to be associated with sanitation (e.g.
Mottram 2008; CourierMail 2008; McMullan 2008a), the federal Parliamentary
Secretary for International Development Bob McMullan embraced the opportunity to raise awareness of sanitation issues in the Asia-Pacific region by breaking the “toilet taboo” and personally launching the One Hundred Toilet exhibition (AusAid 2008a). News reports and media releases showed McMullan cheerfully having his picture taken alongside both the organisers and the decorated toilets (AusAid 2008b, McMullan 2008b). In his formal role and informal interactions he was well informed and clearly passionate about highlighting sanitation issues as both a social and environmental concern. Noting that approximately 75,000 children die every year from diarrhoea in South-East Asia and the Pacific alone McMullan remarked

This exhibition is a timely reminder that more needs to be done to ensure dignity and health is accessible to all through good toilets and sustainable sanitation. Toilets are a very serious consideration in developing countries where hygiene can be the difference between life and death...Decent sanitation is also a fundamental prerequisite of gender equality. (AusAid 2008a)

That a prominent federal politician, and non-traditional allies such as engineers, artists and environmentalists came together to promote sanitation issues on World Toilet Day is an incredible achievement and testament to the commitment of the organisers, particularly when the taboo subject matter is considered. However, the organisers recognised that while using scatological art was likely to attract media and public attention it was also a bold move which had the potential to alienate the very public they hoped to influence. The remainder of this paper considers the risks of using scatological art as an activist tool to promote important social and environmental issues and the potential for such an approach to have a more lasting impact on those participating in events like the One Hundred Toilet exhibition.

Figure 1: Images of the One Hundred Toilet exhibition, World Toilet Day 2008, Brisbane, Australia

Scatological art: a bold statement or last resort?

Scatological art is art which features urine, faeces and/or the corresponding acts of urination and defecation. Examples of scatological art are wide ranging and include literary, performance, cinematic, visual and photographic media. Despite a belief by some that an interest in scatological art is a new phenomenon, historic examples range from Traviès’ and Daumier’s scatological images of the French Monarchy in the mid-19th century (Weisberg 1993a) and Ensor’s late 19th century paintings (Canning 1993) through to Swift’s 18th century excremental satire in Gulliver’s Travels (Stallcup 2004) and Rabelais’ 16th century Gargantua and Pantagruel (Baktin 1984). Contemporary examples include the gleeful vulgarity of South Park (Gardiner 1993), Piero Manzoni’s Merda dàrtista (Silk 1993) and Andres Serrano’s controversial photographic images (Young 2000).

These diverse examples demonstrate that while scatological art is often adopted for comedic or shock effect in many cases beneath this superficial veneer, there is also often a coded political significance insinuated in these scatological images that delivers political and social critique or moral lessons (Chu 1993). This is because in its essence, scatology offers the artist the opportunity to shock the public by confronting it, often in a grossly explicit or hyperbolic way, with an aspect of human life that in Western culture has long been and continues to be taboo (Chu 1993:41).
Scatological art allows excrement’s symbolic and abject dimensions to be fore-grounded by the artist and positioned as ‘grotesque’ (Bakhtin 1984) to make political statements, draw attention to certain elements of society or the human condition and paradoxically to make the work accessible to a broad public (Weisberg 1993a). Travèes, for example, used scatological references as a way of creating visual puns that subtly criticised class and the role of the king in society in a way that he believed would be accessible to the broadest public (Weisberg 1993a) because what the French populace saw in these images “was their own language in visual form...[so] there was no need to be literate to know what was being said about power and exponents of power” (Gandleman 1989:20).

Unfortunately, despite egalitarian intent many attempts to highlight important social issues or to unsettle accepted power structures through scatological art are often rejected out of hand as being as puerile or unnecessarily inappropriate or offensive. For example, despite the fact that Swift clearly offers a satire of the accepted social structures at the time through his scatological prose in the unabridged text of Gulliver’s Travels, Jackie Stallcup (2004) suggests that the scatological elements of Swift’s work are often excised in children’s editions particularly “to maintain an adult-child dichotomy characterized by power differentials” (87). By way of contrast it is these very scatological themes which are capitalised on by the ‘children’ in South Park through the flatulent characters Terrance and Phillip and Mr Hankey the Christmas Poo who are used to satirise American-Canadian relations and the commercialisation of Christmas respectively. While it would be tempting to suggest that perhaps in today’s society these views are slowly being changed it would be presumptuous and naïve to suggest that there is broad acceptance of South Park as being appropriate viewing for children or that its predominantly male audience is even aware of its political and satirical undertones.

A timely reminder of Western society’s general reluctance to engage with scatological art, regardless of its political or satirical intent, is the controversy surrounding Serrano’s Piss Christ which depicts a small crucifix submerged in a glass of the artist's urine and possibly some of his blood (Young 2000). While it has been argued that Serrano’s “deliberately provocative” (Fisher & Ramsay 2000:140) juxtaposition of crucifix and urine provides a critique of the commercialisation of religion (Canning 1993:47) recognition of this overtly political statement did not prevent some from seeking that the piece be banned from exhibition in Australia due to its perceived offensive nature (Fisher & Ramsay, 1997;). While it has been argued that this reaction was based on the belief that the piece of art was regarded as being inappropriately blasphemous (Casey, 2000), the reaction to Serrano’s Piss Christ underscores society’s generally negative view of excrement and other bodily fluids. Had Serrano’s crucifix been immersed in tartrazine water and the photograph were instead titled Icon, our response to it would, of course, have been very different even if it looked much the same; indeed it might well have seemed a rather kitsch piece of religious piety and would certainly not have been shown as part of a major exhibition. (Fisher and Ramsay, 2000:155)

What is common throughout these examples is that scatological art can be seen as an act of desperation in which the shock tactics used to make a political statement can “frequently have the dual and seemingly contradictory purpose of attracting attention and causing alienation” (Chu 1993:41). As a result scatology can simultaneous be viewed as a way of making a bold political statement and attracting attention to important social or environmental issues and as a potentially distancing act of last resort. This is certainly true of World Toilet Day and the suite of events featuring scatological art which are routinely used to celebrate it.

Scatological art as a challenge to attitudes about the body’s excretory capacities

It is no surprise that people are generally uncomfortable with the topic of sanitation, but what is unexpected is how many find unashamed reference to a piece of infrastructure as mundane as the toilet or an act that all living creatures engage in as socially and culturally inappropriate. Even the naming of World Toilet Day is seen as being somewhat controversial with Matt Gurney (2009) opining in the National Post “Couldn't they have called it Right to Hygiene Day?” as if this would lend a more dignified and appropriate tone to the important issues being highlighted.

It would be tempting to suggest that the problem is more with Gurney’s personal fascination with the toilet than with the idea of World Toilet Day
per se. However, there is clearly some truth in his contemplations which
prompt him to suggest that the use of the word toilet ensures media
coverage because “we’d never write about Hygiene Day or International
Sanitation Day”. But as Gurney (2009) notes this attention can come at a
price where the use of the word toilet ensures that “no one takes a good
cause seriously”. Given society’s attitude toward excrement there may be
some substance to his concerns.

Scatological sociologist David Inglis’ (2000) approach to theorising
excrement provides a broad framework which helps to explain the complex
interrelationship between the ways we think about, talk about and manage
excrement, and the infrastructure on which these practices depend. Inglis’
framework sees this interrelationship comprised of three distinct but
related elements. A symbolic element which influences the ways we think
about and respond to excrement, a practical element consisting of the ways
we talk about and manage our interactions with excrement, and finally a
material element which considers the infrastructure used to support these
interactions.

The symbolic element forms the foundation of and influences the ways
we think about and respond to excrement and the “the defecatory capacities
of the body and the faecal material produced” (Inglis 2002:210) or put
indelicately, the ways we think about shit and shitting.

Because excrement is negatively charged in Western society our verbal,
olfactory and physical encounters with it elicit feelings of disgust and
embarrassment. Inglis (2000:43) argues that accepted excretory practices
are generated on the basis of such views about excrement. As such as a
society and as individuals we tend to try to deny the body’s excretory
capacities (Inglis 2000:43) and have developed a system of practices which
support this ideal and include accepted defecatory behaviours and disposal
practices and accepted ways of speaking about such matters.

Due to our negative feelings toward excrement (Inglis 2000:3),
accepted defecatory practices rely on ways of talking about excrement that
are indirect, circumlocutory and rely heavily on the use of euphemism and
avoidance (53). Similarly, these behaviours and practices are based on the
symbolic meanings that we attribute to excrement (Weinberg & Williams
2005:316) which determine the socially acceptable ways to carry out
defecation in terms of time, location and receptacle. These practices, as a
general rule, “reflect the degree of emotional repugnance that exists for
the sounds, smells, and sights of defecation” (Weinberg & Williams
2005:316) and as such require that we undertake such matters in private and
avoid excrement whenever we can. This avoidance is also characterised by a
low tolerance to olfactory or visual encounters with excrement and is
supported by practices to disguise the presence of excrement such as
deodorisation (Inglis 2000:53) or perfuming, the ultimate in olfactory
euphemism.

The sanitation infrastructure put in place to manage these
interactions facilitate a physical, emotional and discursive distancing
from our excrement and the excrement of others. Consequently, the toilet is
more than inconsequential infrastructure. Our negative attitudes toward
excrement make the toilet a “marginal and dangerous place because it is
representative of our embodiment and our pollution” (C. Gurney 2000:66) and
as a result in many respects no more appropriate for public discussion and
consideration than excrement itself.

Shit on show at the One Hundred Toilet exhibition

All elements of Inglis’ framework—, the symbolic, the practical and
the material—rely on and support excrement being kept out of sight and out
of mind. Scatological art presents a direct challenge to these accepted
notions of faecal invisibility. However, it is important to note that this
does not mean that there is no room for opening up discussions about
sanitation. The success of the One Hundred Toilet exhibition and the
willingness of a range different actors, activist, artist and politician
alike to become engaged is living proof that “ideas about faeces and how
they should be managed change historically, and are not fixed immutably
forever” (Inglis 2002:209). What we need to do is find a way to create this
change. This is what the One Hundred Toilet exhibition set out to achieve
by putting shit unambiguously on show.

Mikhail Bakhtin’s (1984) work on the carnivalesque qualities of
excrement is important for understanding the approach to scatological art
as political statement employed by the One Hundred Toilet exhibition.
Bakhtin’s understanding of excrement through the politics of carnival
(Stallybrass and White 1986) emphasises a more positive and celebratory
image of excrement and its subversive power (Cortez 2005:6). The brightly
decorated toilets and their sometimes irreverent, audacious and at times confronting decorative themes invited a carnival atmosphere, as did their placement in the middle of a busy public thoroughfare during the lunch-time rush. Through the presentation and positioning of the art work, both the positive and dangerous elements of sanitation were unapologetically on display. A gleaming white line of undecorated toilet pedestals was juxtaposed against humorous entries calling for more “dunny love” and more confronting art works depicting shocking images including a faeces encrusted pacifier in a toilet bowl to draw attention to the implications of poor sanitation for children in developing countries.

<27> It is important to remember that while the decorated toilet pedestals were clearly the visual cornerstone of the exhibition, it’s activist goals were supported by the distribution of provocative postcards and stickers promoting global sanitation issues. Even more than the disembodied toilet infrastructure that formed the visual foundation of the exhibition, these postcards and stickers featured representations of people that were directly associated with shitting; either in terms of engaging in or observing the act of defecation (figures 2 and 3). This celebration of ‘shit on show’ is a direct denunciation of the incongruence, ridiculous denial and preposterous disconnect that something most people do at least once a day can only be used to challenge, shock or satirise. It is this common public denial of the body’s excretory capacity, as demonstrated through the toilet signage we employ in Western society, that formed the basis of art work the insanitation sticker distributed by the event organisers.

<28> Rather than using the more obvious symbol of a toilet most Western toilet signage instead represents intended users through the use of an abstracted image of the human form using geometric shapes. This iconic signage is used to differentiate the toilet infrastructure to be used by men or women, and ‘gender-free’ disabled users but does not give any indication as to the intended purpose for entering the signed space. The explicit representation of actions associated with using a toilet are generally reserved for men and even then are used to indicate a space where only urinal facilities are provided (e.g. through the comic image of a urinating man (Ciochetto 2002: 218)). By contrast, the insanitation sticker distributed at the One Hundred Toilet exhibition employs images which move beyond the traditional stylised representations of a standing man or woman to represent the presence of toilets to include the image of squatting person who can only be imagined to be defecating.

<29> While this image is controversial and explicit, it is through this genderless defecating image one can begin to reconnect with the idea that we all shit. This image refuses to hide the act of defecation, instead choosing to use it as a social leveller, as something which we all share, a common humanity and animality. But is it enough to simply recognise that we all shit? Surely the environmental and social ambitions of organisations like the World Toilet Organisation requires that those attending the exhibition open their eyes not only to the global sanitation crisis by reflecting on society’s sanitation needs and desires but to also consciously reflect on the sustainability of their own personal toiletry practices.

Figure 2: WASH postcards distributed at World Toilet Day, 2008, Brisbane Australia
Creating the shitting citizen

<30> World Toilet Day is about looking for 'openings' through which to change attitudes, behaviour, and practices about sanitation at a local, global and personal level. By moving the problem of sanitation from simply being a public health or environmental problem to one which considers its cultural and social dimensions, we are reminded that the way we talk and think about waste has a strong relationship to the range of solutions that we can both conceive and enact. This understanding and acceptance of our own personal consumption, waste accumulation and disposal practices is the foundation for bringing about more conscientious, ethical and sustainable waste 'management' solutions (Hawkins 2006). Is there a place for scatological art to help to transform individuals into citizens who have a conscience about the waste they and others produce and the way that it is managed?

<31> Scatological art has the capacity to help us as individuals and as a society, to begin to acknowledge and embrace the destabilising presence of shit in our lives in a way that begins to “open up other ways of thinking about the social regulation of our relations with waste beyond command moralities” (Hawkins, 2001:8). Inglis' work shows us that acknowledging the disgust we feel toward excrement can help us to understand and change our reaction to it and the broader issue of sanitation. However, the shame that comes with engaging with excrement on a linguistic, social or practical level offers very little on the road to sustainability and improved sanitation outcomes.

<32> Scatological art forces us to talk about excrement. Talking about excrement can help to develop a “nascent political self-consciousness” or “shamelessness” (Cortez 2005:1) which allows the freedom to question not only our attitudes towards the excremental but also to begin to question the practices, behaviours and infrastructure that serve to distance us from our excrement and forces us to act in a social and ecological vacuum, isolated from a knowledge or responsibility for the impact of our actions (Cortez 2005:21). In short, it is through talking more freely about shit and shitting that we can begin to recognise ourselves as citizens, who can begin to think and act for collective good rather than exclusively (Wolin 1982: 21). Scatological art, such as that presented at the One Hundred Toilet exhibition, seeks to recreate participants as shitting citizens.

<33> The presence of the scatological art helps to create a space where sanitation issues can be presented and discussed in a 'shameless' way, for it is only through this shamelessness that we can begin to construct the idea of the shitting citizen; one who is simultaneously responsible for and responsive to managing the waste that we produce.

It is only as shitting citizens that we can begin to become open to acknowledging and beginning to understand our relationship with excrement and begin to “think about what we are doing” (Hawkins & Muecke 2003:xvi), and ultimately to change sanitation practices. Taking shame out of the equation, means that we can talk about and find new sanitation solutions together as a society, thus moving from being individuals who deny our own excrement to becoming shitting citizens (or shitizens as one of my colleagues remarked on reading this paper).

Conclusion

<34> For the most part excrement is “unspeakable and unscriptable, outside the realm of official representation” (Anspaugh 1994:74) in Western culture. It is for this reason that scatological art has the power to make the personal political through an artistic lens. Scatological art can serve as a stimulus for discussion and change in both art and society at large (Weisberg 1993b:19). The increasing public acceptance of events such as World Toilet Day and the One Hundred Toilet exhibition is a step toward this place as it begins to chip away at people’s discomfort with the topic of excrement by making it a legitimate topic of political, personal and artistic interest.

<35> However, getting people to accept or even discuss excremental issues
can be problematic as demonstrated by the experience of the editors of a special edition of Postcolonial Studies devoted to the toilet. The call for papers for this special edition was met with a flood of responses, “the majority inappropriately condemnatory” (Dutton, Seth & Gandhi 2002:139) and questioning the seriousness and appropriateness of the topic. Although the editors had the courage to continue with the issue as planned, sadly rather than confront their detractors head on, they backed away from the topic in defence of their ‘pure’ academic credentials claiming the truth is that ‘shit’, as it were, was never our principal focus...There were to our minds many complex, competing and divergent ‘uses’ of the toilet, and hence stories to be told about it. (Dutton, Seth & Gandhi 2002:139-140)

However, shying away from speaking about taboo subjects, simply because they are taboo is as much an avoidance of responsibility (Sieber & Stanley 1998:55 in Horwood & Moon 2003:108) as our tendency to deny the body’s excretory capacity and the potential social and environmental impacts of this denial. Unlike Dutton, Seth and Gandhi’s (2002) foray into the toilet, excrement was, and could only be, the unequivocal focus of the One Hundred Toilet exhibition as it openly explored the transformative potential of the scatological based on its ability to address excrement directly and in a 'shameless’ way (Cortez 2005). By basing the exhibition on the foundation of scatological art, the organisers embraced the idea that if we want to move forward to a position where we can begin to imagine new ways to deal with sanitation issues “only a new coprophilic style can save us” (Gunn 2006:90); one which allows the open expression of ideas, lifts taboos surrounding these issues and demonstrates that excrement is a serious field of study (Weisberg 1993b:18) and of artistic endeavour.

Scatological art has the power to make public what was once private and can offer a way to manage and over time eliminate the shame associated with engaging with excremental ideas. Scatological art can provide the basis for turning it into something more productive by finding new ways of connecting with it and making it once again spoken about and speakable. The power of adopting scatological art as activism is it has the potential to bring together diverse interests for a common cause, interests that normally would not be able to share a political space on such issues. The One Hundred Toilet exhibition found engineers working with public relations people and politicians and artists to raise awareness of sanitation issues. This unconventional and interdisciplinary approach was able to harness the value of scatological art to make a profound political statement.

The controversy associated with scatological art may well be one of its strengths. Confronting as they may be, as Bob McMullan (2008a) notes “efforts like these will keep people talking about the need for improved sanitation” which is more than half the battle in raising awareness of unspeakable topics like sanitation.

As shown by the success of World Toilet Day in raising awareness of sanitation issues the political aims of using scatological art to progress sanitation aims through ‘shit on show’ can contribute to the construction of the shitting citizen; one who is simultaneously responsible for and responsive to managing the waste that they produce and recognising and responding to broader sanitation issues.

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Epilogue

Based on the success of the One Hundred Toilet exhibition, scatological art was once again used to celebrate World Toilet Day in 2009. Rowan Barber, one of the organisers of the 2008 One Hundred Toilet exhibition, celebrated “having a designated place to poo” by fasting, meditating and praying while symbolically sitting silently on a toilet pedestal in the Brisbane central business district. While this scatological performance art received notably less media attention than the One Hundred Toilet exhibition, its quiet personal approach continues to contribute to breaking down taboos about
sanitation and getting people talking about the issue.

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