The Agency of Papercutting in the Post-Digital Era

Pamela See
BVA, M.Bus (Comm)

Queensland College of Art
Art, Education and Law
Griffith University

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For my beautiful daughter 茉莉花 who accompanied me on this journey through the millennia in search of the diffracted light.
Abstract

In 2010, the chief curator of the Museum of Art and Design in New York, David McFadden, posited a ‘renaissance’ in the application of paper as an independent medium. The international instatement of papercutting into contemporary art sectors commenced in North America during the mid-1990s. This movement was associated with the transition from digitalism to post-digitalism. The materiality of paper was considered antithetical to the non-materiality of digital art. A more recent global survey of paper as an independent medium, The First Cut, was organised by Manchester Art Gallery in 2012. It was the same year the term ‘post-digital’ was applied to paper by Alessandro Ludovico in The Post-Digital Print: The Mutilation of Publishing Since 1894.

Using the paper as independent medium movement as a fulcrum, this doctorate employs an arts-based research methodology to explore the applications for this image-making technique in the post-digital era. A selection of the artworks utilise papercutting traditions that are both chronologically and geographically distinct. A primary example is the application of both silhouette portraiture and Foshan papercutting to critique Chinese emigration during the nineteenth century. This culminated in two series, exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra and the Chinese Museum in Melbourne respectively.

A key research tangent involves separating the materiality of ‘paper’ from the technique of ‘cutting’. It explores the role of perforating paper in the development of digital technology. The creation of punch cards for the Jacquard weaving loom during the early nineteenth century directly informed the invention of computer data tapes during the mid-twentieth century. The subsequent artworks utilise post-digital technology to translate papercut motifs into a variety of media, including vector-based animation, computer-aided design knitting, laser etched sandstone, laser cut steel, and 3D printed sculpture. These artworks were exhibited in a variety of venues, including the State Library of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia; ADGY Cultural Exchange Center, Beijing, China; Arteriet, Kristiansand, Norway; and the Museo de Gustavo de Maetzu, Navarra, Spain.
Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signed ____________________________

Date ___17 July 2020___
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Introduction

Between the mid-1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century, papercutting was reinstated into the contemporary art sectors of North America and Europe. In 2010, the chief curator of the Museum of Art and Design, David McFadden, posited the arrival of “a virtual renaissance of interest in the use of paper as an independent medium beyond collage.”

This statement appears in the catalogue of Slash: Paper Under the Knife, an international survey of paper artwork, where papercutting is explicitly referenced as a technique. A method of image-making, papercutting involves the creation of a concatenation of holes in a thin ‘manufactured’ substrate. At prima facie, it developed in the agricultural region near the Yangzi River, China, between the fourth and sixth centuries.

However, the incising of ‘paper’ to record information dates back to the First Dynasty of Egypt (c. 3150–c. 2890 BCE). Within three centuries of Sumerians developing a writing system, the pictograms of phonetics were cut into papyrus parchment. This presented a more portable alternative to the carving of clay tablets.

The earliest reference to the technique in China is manifested in the Sun and Bird Gold Foil. The artefact, thought to have served a magico-religious function, was created in Chengdu during the late Shang Dynasty–Early Spring Autumn Period (1200–600 BCE).

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2 Ibid., 12.
7 Chengdu Jinsha Yi Zhi Bo Wu Guan, The Jinsha Site. 1st ed. (Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2006).
Papercutting also plays an integral role in the folklore of the Western Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). A shaman in the court of Emperor Wudi summoned the spirit of deceased concubine Lady Li by using a lantern and her likeness cut out of hemp parchment.  

The invention of modern pulp-strained paper is attributed to the Chinese eunuch Cai Lun in 105 CE. The spread of this new substrate catalysed the evolution of distinct papercutting traditions from existing subtractive methods of image-making. For example, *Scherenschnitte* in Germany was originally cut from the leather of unborn calves. *Papel Picado*, Mexican for paper china, is a tradition derived from the cutting of ‘Amantl’ or tree bark parchment.

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The notable contrast between Chinese papercutting and its Western counterparts, which preference contour, might be attributed to the latter’s invention of linear during the fifteenth century. Linear perspective, as developed by architects and artists such as Filippo Brunelleschi, negated the requirement for complex patterns. Papercutting in Europe gradually transitioned from intricate devotional lace pictures during the early Renaissance to silhouettes after the French Revolution. Early papercuts depicted religious figures, such as the Virgin Mary, which were created in vellum by nuns in the Rhineland between Switzerland, Germany and France. Up until the sixteenth century “cutwork” was restricted to ecclesiastic purposes and taught in convents. Lace, which superseded it, “at its best died amongst the muslin folds in which the beautiful Queen [Marie Antoinette] clothed herself” during the eighteenth century.

The eighteenth century is also considered the golden age of Silhouette portraiture. It remained a significant method of recording information until the invention of daguerreotype photography during the nineteenth century. The French term results from a sarcastic association of the process of cutting portrait shades with the French Minister of Finance under Louis XV, Etienne de Silhouette (1709–1767). He imposed taxes on every aspect of French life, including the cheapest portrait form: the cut-paper shade. The amateur papercutter levied taxes on exterior signs of wealth, including painted portraits, as an austerity measure.

The popularity of papercut portraits can also be attributed to a revival of the medieval ‘science’ of physiognomy. In 1775, theologian Johann Casper Lavater published his first edition of Essays on Physiognomy: For the Knowledge and Love of Mankind. Lavater

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13 Shadur and Shadur, Traditional Jewish Papercuts, 15; and, Schläpfer-Geiser, Scherenschnitte: Designs and Techniques for the Traditional Craft of Papercutting, 121.
15 Emma Rutherford, Silhouette (New York: Rizzoli, 2009), 36.
17 Ibid.
believed that the lines of countenance through which the character of a sitter might be elucidated, were most accurately recorded using physiognomic trace machines. The apparatuses were comprised of a candle, a seat and a screen.

Figure 2. The Silhouette Chair

Figure 3. Cut-out by Edouart of Tsernycaathaw, Chief Speaker of Five Nations, from the Redskin tribe that is indigenous to Massachusetts

In many instances, a silhouette portrait is the only remaining reference to a person living during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.\(^20\) This was particularly evident in America during the antebellum period (c. 1789–1812). A primary example is the portrait of “Flora,” an indentured nineteen-year-old.\(^21\) It was part of the documentation exchanged during her sale from Benjamin Stratford of Connecticut to Margaret Dwight of New Haven on 13 December 1796.\(^22\) French national Auguste Amant Constant Fidele Edouart (1789–1861) was estimated to have produced 3800 full-length portraits in North America between 1839 and 1849.\(^23\) This included sixteen portraits of Indians indigenous to Massachusetts.\(^24\) The Quakers in Philadelphia were among his clientele; the “plainness” of silhouettes appealed to this demographic, who maintained their preference for this method of portraiture after the introduction of daguerreotype photography.\(^25\)

![Image of silhouette portrait](Figure 4. Unidentified artist, Flora, 1796)

When McFadden posited a renaissance in paper as independent medium in his 2009 catalogue, he was not making reference to a decline in papercutting between the

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\(^{24}\) Jackson, *Silhouettes*, 56.

nineteenth and twenty-first centuries. It was a critique on materiality; more precisely, the “dematerialisation” of the digital era.\textsuperscript{26} This was substantiated with a reference to ‘the paperless office’. The trope originated from the article “The Office of the Future,” published in the June 1975 edition of \textit{Business Week}:

[George E.] Pake says that in 1995 his office will be completely different; there will be a display terminal with a keyboard sitting on his desk. “I’ll be able to call up my files on screen, or press a button... I can get my mail or many messages. I don’t know how much hard copy [printed paper] I’ll want in this world.”\textsuperscript{27}

Pake was the head of Xerox Corporation’s Palo Alto Research Center in California. The curators of a second international survey of paper artwork in Manchester 2012 titled \textit{The First Cut: Paper at the Cutting Edge}, Natasha Howes and Fiona Corridan, concurred with McFadden: the myth of the paperless office had “never quite materialised.”\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{26} Frank Popper, \textit{Art of the Electronic Age} (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 158.
The mid-1990s did, however, see the emergence of silhouette artist Kara Walker. In 1994, the Drawing Center in New York exhibited a life-sized papercut panorama created by Walker titled *Slavery! Slavery* (Figure 5). Heralded as a revelation, her provocative compositions employed antebellum silhouettes to address racial stereotypes in the imaginings of the American public. In 1997, she became the second youngest recipient of the highly coveted Macarthur Foundation Fellowship, also known as a “genius grant.” In 2007, the Whitney Museum of American Art staged a full-scale survey of her artwork, and she was listed as one of *Time Magazine*’s 100 most influential people in the same year.

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The acclaim for Walker’s artwork catalysed a transatlantic revival of papercutting. The implications included recontextualising the technique from a folk art to an accepted contemporary medium.  

34 During the 1970s, the categories of folk art and craft became synonymous with being “void of quality”.  

35 Folk craft was often applied to the cultural practices of women, “ethnic minorities” and the working class.  

36 The legitimisation of silhouette papercuts by Walker subsequently, provided the representatives of these marginalised communities agency within contemporary art circles. Other key proponents of the movement include Robert Ryan from the United Kingdom, Andreas Kocks from Germany, Peter Callesen from Denmark, and Yuken Yeruya from Japan.

Figure 6. Andreas Kocks, What a World, 2014

34 Rutherford, Silhouette, 221-235.  
36 Ibid.
The latter of the aforementioned international surveys of papercutting, *Th First Cut*, is also the most recent. It coincided with the first application of the term ‘post-digital’ to the medium of paper, which occurred in Alessandro Ludovico’s *Post-Digital Print: The Mutation of Publishing since 1894*:

not only did the paperless office fail to happen, but the production and use of paper, both personal and work-related, and generally speaking the printed medium, have actually increased in volume.\(^{37}\)

The revival of papercutting, as a movement between 1994 and 2012, served a function during the transition between the digital and post-digital. This doctorate examines the continued agency for papercutting, as both symbolic capital and vehicle to access computer aided manufacturing (CAM). The latter includes engaging a range of digital media from 3d printing, intimately scaled metal sculpture, to lasercutting components for monumental interactive public artwork.

The post-digital era is an epoch defined by the ubiquitous integration of digital technologies—technologies that are, paradoxically, undemocratically distributed. During field trips to China in 2005–6, 2016–17 and 2019–20, I documented the effect of these technologies on papercutting in China, with a particular focus on computer numerical control (CNC) technology.

This introduction chapter has provided an overview of the research area. Chapter 1 will examine the precedence of papercutting as a research method in qualitative research. It will also consider the potential for chrono-geography to be used as a reflexive device. Chapters 2 to 4 will focus on a post-digital predilection to the handmade and the associations of analogue technologies, such as papercutting, with political resistance. The ethnographic nature of papercutting will be a primary focus. Chapters 5 to 8 will explore the potential for papercutting to provide mechanical access to post-digital technologies, such as additive manufacturing and CNC cutting.

Chapter 1: Research Methodology

To investigate the continued agency of papercutting in the post-digital era, this doctoral project employed an arts-based research methodology, with the technique of papercutting the primary method for investigation and reflection. Creative arts research is a relatively new epistemological model that emerged in the mid-1990s and is now universally accepted in Australia, the UK and Europe.\(^1\) By contrast, papercutting as a research method has precedence in both the humanities and sciences.

The Precedence of Papercutting in Qualitative Research

In 1929, Polish ethnographer Dr Gizela Frenkel published her first article about papercutting titled “Wycinanka zydowska w Polsce” [Jewish Papercuts in Poland].\(^2\) After the holocaust, the curator of the Jewish Historical Institute and a “scientific employee” at the Haifa Museum of Ethnography and Folklore became dedicated to reviving Jewish papercutting.\(^3\)

In 2004, the Long March Group, with the assistance of the Yanchuan Country government, undertook an ethnographic study in the Shaanxi province.\(^4\) They engaged the population, numbering approximately 180,000, in a papercutting survey designed to investigate the effects of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese Communist Party policy of social mobilisation, and contemporary commercialism.\(^5\)

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\(^2\) Shadur and Shadur, *Traditional Jewish Papercuts*, 75.

\(^3\) Ibid.


\(^5\) Ibid.
Figure 7. This image is data collected as part of The Great Survey of Paper-cutting in Yanchuan County in 2004
Figures 8–9. Edgar Rubin used cutout forms in his experimentation on human beings during the early twentieth century (left). The figure (right) which has become known as Rubin’s Vase, was first published in his doctoral thesis *Synoplevede Figurer* in 1915.

The founder of Gestalt Theory, Edgar Rubin, used cutouts in his experiments on human beings in his PhD dissertation, *Synoplevede Figurer*, which was published in Copenhagen in 1915. Similarly, by the 1910s, neurobiologists were using cutouts to test the capacity for pattern recognition and memory in a number of species. By the mid-1950s, the animals tested included rodents, primates, fish, birds and molluscs.

Figure 10. Purdue General Test. It demonstrates the use of symbols with a ‘cutout’ aesthetic in experiments on animals such as cats, monkeys and squirrels.

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8 Ibid.
Between 1939 and 1944, early computers developed by Professor Howard Akin from Harvard University utilised perforated paper to store and process information. The technology was conceived in 1806 by Joseph-Marie Jacquard, inventor of the first automated weaving loom. The influence of papercutting on computer science is also evident in the development of image segmentation algorithms between the mid-1960s and the mid-2000s. Functions such as “lazy snapping” digitally mimicked the cutting up of images using scissors.

The Application of Papercutting in Arts-Based Research

Papercutting is sympathetic to a number of established research methodologies, including narrative inquiry and visual phenomenology. In this doctorate, the agency of papercutting in the post-digital era will be examined in respect to:

(i) The mechanical accessibility to post-digital technologies enabled by using papercutting as an image-making technique
(ii) The potential for using papercuts to create chrono-geographically-specific representations that are reflexive in intent.

12 Leavy, Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice.
Mechanical Accessibility to Post-Digital Technologies

Papercutting played an integral role in the evolution of several technologies ranging from screen printing during the Tang Dynasty (430–907 CE) to digital image segmentation during the 1960s. Subsequently, it can be inferred that papercutting can provide an arts practitioner access to a variety of media that have become ubiquitous during the twenty-first century. The technologies tested in this doctorate include screen printing, ceramic modelling, digital knitting, digital animation, CNC routing, and additive manufacturing.

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Figures 14–15. Experiments undertaken in this doctorate, but were not exhibited, included screen printing using handcut ‘easy-cut’ paper and porcelain
Chrono-Geographically-Specific Papercutting as a Reflexive Device

In this doctorate, ‘agency’ will be interpreted as ‘symbolic capital’ in reference to the theories of structuralist Pierre Bourdieu. Both arts-based research and participatory action research methodologies were nascent when he investigated the concept of ‘reflexivity’ during the 1990s.\textsuperscript{14} In his essay *Social Space and Symbolic Power*, Bourdieu wrote:

> symbolic power has to be based on the possession of symbolic capital... symbolic capital is a credit, it is the power granted to those who have obtained sufficient recognition to be in the position to impose recognition... symbolic power is a power of consecration or revelation, a power to conceal or reveal things which are already there.\textsuperscript{15}

Most significantly, Bourdieu posited that “symbolic effectiveness” was relative to “the degree the vision proposed is based on reality.”\textsuperscript{16}

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 16.** These diagrams illustrate the relationship between reality, symbolic capital and symbolic power in accordance with Pierre Bourdieu’s theories


\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
The dogma of ‘reality’ will be examined in the context of Bourdieu’s Marxist structuralist counterpart Louis Althusser. In his essay *Ideology and the State*, Althusser wrote:

> We commonly call religious ideology, ethnical ideology, legal ideology, political ideology, etc… these ‘world outlooks’ are largely imaginary… However, whilst admitting that they do not correspond to reality, i.e. that they constitute an illusion… they only need to be ‘interpreted’ to discover the reality of the world behind their imaginary representation of that world (ideology = illusion/allusion).17

The symbolic effectiveness of papercutting lies in its ubiquitous integration throughout human history. The medium played a formative role in many ‘world outlooks,’ from fourteenth-century *Scherensnitte* devotional pictures in Western Europe to *Mon Kiri* identification crests of the Muromachi (1336–1573) period in Japan.18 The latter evolved into a form of corporate branding during the Meiji Period (1868–1912).19

Contemporary artists utilise this symbolic capital through the careful appropriation of chrono-geographically-specific papercutting styles. The pre-eminent papercutting artist in North America during the digital era, Kara Walker, effectively drew on the symbolic capital of silhouette portraiture. According to Emily Jackson, the medium was prevalent in Massachusetts during the antebellum period.20 Walker developed her distinctive interpretation of the craft while undertaking her Master of Fine Arts at the Rhode Island School of Design.21 The ‘revelation’ in the late twentieth century dialogues of the self-proclaimed “Negress” lay in their consecration by the museum and gallery sector.22

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22 Walker et al., *Kara Walker: Narratives of a Negress*. 
In 1927, British analytical philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote in *An Outline of Philosophy*:

Let us coin a word, ‘chrono-geography’, for the science which begins with events having space-time relations and does not assume at the outset that certain strings of them can be treated as persistent material units or as minds.23

That specific styles of papercutting can symbolise a time and place can be explained through the theories of Claude Levi-Strauss. In the chapter “The Science of the Concrete” of *The Savage Mind*, Strauss describes “mythical thought” as “bricolage” which is constructed by a “bricoleur.”24 “Interlocuter” is a particular term used by Levi-Strauss to describe the “materials” and/or “instruments” of a “bricoleur.”25 Thus, space and time, in reference to Russell, are interlocuters in the bricolage or mythical thought that constitutes specific styles of papercutting. A contemporary bricoleur may, in turn, utilise the style as an interlocuter.

**Figure 17.** In accordance with the theories of Claude Levi-Strauss and Bertrand Russell, these diagrams illustrate how ‘Shades’ cum ‘Silhouettes’ became a chrono-geographically-specific style,

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which was later employed as an interlocuter by a bricoleur to bricoler bricolage or mythical thought instating the contribution of Chinese Australians to the cultural landscape

Many of the artworks in this doctoral project rely on the symbolic effectiveness of chrono-geographically-specific papercutting styles for their agency. The major project outlined in Chapter 3, *Making Chinese Shadows*, utilised both silhouette portraiture and Foshan papercutting. Silhouettes continue to occupy the imaginings of the Australian people as an early Victorian era form of portraiture from Europe. The technique becomes a reflexive device when a distinctly Chinese profile is cut. It entails that Chinese Australians are worthy of being acknowledged in the European rhetoric. The ensuing ‘revelation’ is that both Chinese and Europeans are of equal social standing.
Chapter 2: Handcut Paper as Narrative Inquiry

In 2017, the Museum of Brisbane re-exhibited one of my works from their collection titled *Perched (gazing in...)*. In 2005, I produced the installation for the touring exhibition *Echoes of Home: Memory and Mobility in Recent Austral-Asian Art*. It was my second exhibition in an institution, the first being at the Queensland Art Gallery as part of the Staterspace Program for young and emerging artists. My first papercut installations utilised narrative inquiry. The process of reflection constitutes the retelling of content and “restor[ying]” of structure.¹ Within a European context, the prevalence of this methodology is evidenced from Hans Christian Anderson during the nineteenth century to Ed Pien during the twenty-first century.² The latter demonstrates that both narrative inquiry and papercutting continue to have agency during the post-digital era.

Figures 18–19. *Perched Gazing In...* 2005. It was exhibited at the MoB for the second time in late 2017 early 2018. The artwork was exhibited as part of the touring exhibition *Echoes of Home: Memory and Mobility in Austral-Asian Art* (right) in 2005

*Perched (gazing in...)* consists of twenty-six papercut pigeons roosting on and flying in between two lion statues. The style of statues appropriates the Chinese-style bronze statues at the entrance of the Forbidden Palace and the Medici-style bronze statues at the entrance of City Hall. The allegory symbolised the duality of my cultural heritage as a second generation Australian. In the exhibition catalogue, curator Christine Clarke wrote:

> personal stories can provide a glimpse into some of the heterogeneity of cultural influences from throughout the Asian region... Mainstream public discourse in Australia, is however, still bound my binary oppositions such as self/other and Australia/Asia.... there still remains superficiality when it comes to further notions of Australia as a blend of various cultural elements.³

The 2017 exhibition *Our Collection: Journey to Into the Asia Pacific* similarly brought together narratives that functioned as a collective dialogue to affirm the affinity of Brisbane with South East Asia.⁴

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This chapter examines a number of compositions that utilise papercutting as a method of narrative inquiry. Their being selected for exhibition is a measure of their symbolic capital. Was it in the perceived auto-ethnographic nature of the papercut medium or were the narratives considered to be of value? How did the narratives of the artwork contribute towards the collective dialogues specified in the curatorial rationales of their respective exhibitions? The continued agency of papercutting as a methodology is inherent to the answers of these questions.

**Exemplars: Cai Lanying and Hou Yumei**

Although Cai Lanying and Hou Yumei cannot be classified as installation artists, their papercuts were typically used as ephemeral displays directly applied to walls. Their practices exemplify the auto-ethnographic capacity of Chinese papercutting.

In the second volume of the *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women*, Lily Xiao Hong Lee writes: “when she wants to express herself, she turns to her scissors; like any woman of her age and circumstances, Cai Lanying cannot read or write.”

Cai Lanying was born in Hebei Province in 1918. She began papercutting window flowers at the age of eight. She used the medium to document her daily life over the next seven decades. In her twenties, she joined the Chinese Communist Party. She became the head of the Women’s Federation in her village. The content of her papercut compositions included illustrations of folklore, depictions of community celebrations, and accounts of farming practices. She also recorded aspects of her family life, from teaching her children to disputes with her husband. Lanying received national acclaim for her papercuts, with the

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7 Ibid.
8 Shen Zhou Xue Ren 35-46 (1993), 22.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
Excellent Creation Award at the first China Folk Art Exhibition in 1989 among her accolades.\textsuperscript{13} In 1996, Lanying was acknowledged by UNESCO as a “Master of Folk Arts.”\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Figure 21.} Cai Laiying. \textit{Push Grinding} [Year unknown]

During the 1980s Folk Art Revival in China, Hou Youmei (b. 1952) was discovered by the director of the Arts Center of the Masses in Tonghua City.\textsuperscript{15} She was subsequently educated at the Lu Xen Academy of Arts between 1985 and 1987. Born in Jilin Province, Yumei learned papercutting from her mother, who was of Manchurian ancestry.\textsuperscript{16} Presently residing in San Francisco, Yumei has exhibited extensively throughout Europe and Asia.\textsuperscript{17} She is best known for her narratives examining Manchurian folklore.\textsuperscript{18} Her compositions subtly reference Manchurian customs, such as the requirement to remove one’s shoes upon entering a house. Another papercut depicts a Manchu “gesture of greeting.” Chinese papercutting is a repository for oral histories and maternal tradition.\textsuperscript{19}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{13} Ibid.
\bibitem{14} Wang Yu Tao, “Heibei–Cai Lanying,” 剪纸爱好者 10 July 2013, accessed 22 February 2019, \url{http://jfzfan.net/thread-8678-1-1.html}.
\bibitem{15} Mareile Flitsch, "Papercut Stories of the Manchu Woman Artist Hou Yumei," \textit{Asian Folklore Studies} 58 (2000): 355.
\bibitem{17} "Hou Yumei’s Page," \textit{Chinese Cultural Foundation of San Francisco}, 20 November 2018, \url{http://www.cccgallery.org/profile/HouYumeihuymi}.
\bibitem{18} Flitsch, "Papercut Stories of the Manchu Woman Artist Hou Yumei," 356.
\end{thebibliography}
Figure 22. These cutouts are an abstract from Hou’s volumes of papercuts in homage to Nurhachi, founder of the Qing Dynasty. The illustrations depict his discovering ginseng with the aid of a tiger.

**Graft**

The papercut compositions in the series *Graft* were exhibited in a group exhibition titled *Tradition Now*, curated by Kevin Wilson and staged at the Philip Bacon Heritage Gallery at the State Library of Queensland (SLQ) between 18 June 2016 and 5 February 2017. The exhibition used narrative inquiry to address issues associated with the migrant experience.²⁰

*Graft* used chrono-geographically-specific representations of Foshan papercutting and silhouette portraiture to illustrate the journey of three generations of my family from Fujian Province to Queensland. The silhouette portraits in this artwork depict profiles which were approximated from family photographs. Depicting flora and fauna, in a totemic context, is an attribute of Chinese papercutting. In this series, they have been used as geographic elements.

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markers. Chapter 3, which focuses on ‘visual anthropology’, thoroughly examines the mechanics of the papercutting techniques employed.

The first papercut composition within the triptych depicts my grandfather in Putian, Fujian Province. This is symbolised by a Chinese papercut of a lychee branch. Putian is referred to as “The City of Lychees” due to the economic significance of the crop. My grandfather left China around 1930, amid the conflict between the Communist Party and the Kuomintang. He was aged twelve. His leaving “with only his pants” is an anecdote I heard repeatedly during my upbringing. It was an allegory for self-reliance. After arriving in Malaysia, my grandfather operated a bicycle repair stall. My grandmother, who lived across the road from his family in Putian, was sent to Kuala Lumpur by my great-grandmother. My father was the second of seven subsequent children. Together, they invested in the burgeoning rubber industry of the 1930s, which was considered “the plastic of the nineteenth century.”

As such, the second papercut composition shows a portrait of my father emerging from a rubber flower motif. My father was sent to Australia for his secondary and tertiary education during the first iteration of the ‘Columbo’ era. He returned to Malaysia to contribute towards the family business as a manufacturing accountant. He met my mother who was a plant pathologist. The silhouette likeness of my mother has been incorporated into a chicken. This is a reference to her involvement in poultry farming from a young age. The chicken is depicted walking towards the flower.

Figures 23–24. Installation photographs of *Graft*, which featured a vector-based animation juxtaposed with the papercuts used to create them. Images supplied by the State Library of Queensland.
Figure 25. *Graft* (second section), 2016

Figure 26. *Graft* (third section), 2016
My parents married shortly after my maternal grandparents contracted leprosy. They moved to Australia to begin a new life in 1976. My father’s decision to leave the family company was against the cultural conventions of the time.

The third and final papercutting composition contains portraits of my brother and I emerging from a branch of citrus. One of the companies my father worked for after immigrating to Australia was Orford’s in Toowoomba. Orford’s manufactured a range of soft drinks from the citrus farmed across the Granite Belt.

All of the species depicted within the artwork were cultivated by my family. Subsequently, the narratives explored in this artwork function both as a personal dialogue and as symbolic capital. This process of “connect[ing] the autobiographical and the personal to the cultural, social and political” was described by Carolyn Ellis in *Ethnographic I: A Methodological Novel About Autoethnography.* According to Ellis, autoethographers constitute both authors and subject. Both “observer” and “observed,” they are an “intersection of the personal and the cultural.”

Using papercutting in an autoethnographic context responded to the curatorial rationale of *Tradition Now,* which specified the reflexive application of “story-telling” to create “new family heritage and tradition.”

### Beneath the Bauhinia

In 2018, a series of my work entitled *Beneath the Bauhinia* was selected for the exhibition *Postcards from Asia* staged at The Centre in Beaudesert, Queensland, from 22 June to 5 September. The exhibition was part of the Scenic Rim Council cultural program *Windows to the World,* and was curated by Irene Girsch-Danby. Contributors to the show were asked, “If you could write a postcard from Asia, what would it contain?” The other selected artists were photographers.

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27 National Gallery of Australia, “*Tradition Now.*”
Figure 27. A component of the *Beneath the Bauhinia* series 2016

Figures 28–29. Another part (top left) of the *Beneath the Bauhinia* series, this component was created in 2017. They were installed at The Centre in Beaudesert (top right), June–September 2018
The papercut installations are vignettes illustrating aspects of the Chinese communities in Hong Kong and Queensland. The bauhinia motif is used as a chronological and geographic marker. The species *bauhinia x blakeana* was discovered in 1880 by Jean-Marie Delavay, a French Catholic missionary. The hybrid of *bauhinia variegata* and *bauhinia purpurea* was cultivated at a facility presently known as Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens. It is the floral emblem of Hong Kong and the central motif of its flag.

The species was named in honour of Sir Henry Blake, the governor appointed to Hong Kong at the commencement of its ninety-nine-year lease to the United Kingdom. Sterile, all of the specimens are thought to have been propagated from Delavay’s original clipping. The species has a continued physical presence in the Australian landscape. By virtue of its namesake, it also has resonance for Queensland residents, as Sir Henry Blake was meant to have been instated as Governor of Queensland in 1888. However, his appointment was thwarted due to “stiff opposition” from the state’s Irish population.

The narrative in the series questions “What have the bauhinia flowers witnessed?” The depictions of contemporary diaspora Chinese communities were created from photographs taken in Queensland between 2012 and 2015. Historical imagery was sourced from online publications posted by organisations such as The Industrial History of Hong Kong Group and British Pathe. My papercut installations contributed a historical context to the exhibition. Their symbolic capital also resonated in providing a female voice in a predominantly male dialogue. This was not only reflected by my literally being the only female contributor, but

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31 Ibid.
32 Geoffrey Robley Sayer, *Hong Kong, 1862-1919: Years of Discretion: A Sequel to Hong Kong. Birth, Adolescence, and Coming of Age* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1975), 80.
33 Asher, "How a Weird Hybrid Plant Ended up on the Flag of Hong Kong."
35 Ibid.
the medium itself being historically engendered. For example, the communist party engaged papercutting as a language of a female proletariat with varying levels of literacy.  

_Windmills of Your Mind_

Staged between 6 November and 22 December 2017, the group exhibition _Windmills of Your Mind_ at the Queensland State Archives (QSA) was an initiative of Rowena Loo, Manager of Client Services, Collections and Access. The curatorial rationale revolved around a particular landmark in Spring Hill, Brisbane, asking “What historical events could have been seen from the Windmill on Wickham Terrace?” A majority of the selected artists employed a form of narrative inquiry.

*Figure 30.* A5 size preliminary sketch in preparation for an exhibition at the QSA. However, the curator indicated a preference for papercuts

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Figure 31. “Individual Chinese on the street were confronted and every vehicle ‘from carts to trams that contained Chinese’ was stopped and disrupted by the crowd,” 2017

Figure 32. The papercuts were placed inside a glass cabinet at the QSA for their exhibition Windmills of Your Mind in late 2017
I responded to a riot that occurred at 8am on Saturday, 5 May 1888. The historical event was described by Graeme Davidson in *Brisbane: An Unruly History* as “possibly Australia’s worse episode of mass violence.” Armied with “road metal, and a volley of heavy stones,” a crowd of “larrikins” attempted to “oust the Chinese” from the city and Fortitude Valley. At the time, the population of Brisbane was approximately 100,000 and the Chinese population constituted 0.23 percent. The Chinatown of Brisbane was originally situated in ‘The Frog’s Hollow’, the area between Elizabeth Street and the Botanic Gardens.

There remains limited visual documentation of the event. My process of pictorial reconstruction began with appropriating the imagery narrating the anti-Chinese violence occurring in North America. The titles of my artworks draw from passages from the aforementioned book: “None of the Chinese establishments in town were left unvisited” and “Individual Chinese on the street were confronted and every vehicle ‘from carts to trams that contained Chinese’ was stopped and disrupted by the crowd.”

The third artwork selected by Loo—*The Bulldogs drove out the pugs whilst the kangaroos looked on from afar*—is also an example of narrative inquiry. However, it employs the device of allegory. The European population was symbolised by British bulldogs. The besieged Chinese community is connoted by a Pekinese dog. The breed had been introduced to the United Kingdom two decades prior, the first being gifted to Queen Victoria after being “retrieved” from the Summer Palace in 1860.

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39 Ibid.
42 Evans and Ferrier, *Radical Brisbane: An Unruly History*.
44 Evans and Ferrier, *Radical Brisbane: An Unruly History*.
The narrative in the title references contemporary sporting headlines. The association is intended to highlight the arbitrary nature of the conflict which, at its peak, engaged 2,000 European settlers.\textsuperscript{46} The violence erupted after a “Chinaman” struck a “boy” who he accused of stealing from his store on Albert Street.\textsuperscript{47} The riot formed part of a “wave” of anti-Chinese sentiment, which Davidson described as “the most concentrated attack of xenophobia in Australia’s colonial history.”\textsuperscript{48} The relationship between sport mascots and totemism is examined further in Chapter 3.

The medium of papercutting provided a vehicle to insert a Chinese perspective into this dialogue of European settlement. The symbolic capital of the artworks examined in this chapter resided in the capacity of Chinese papercutting for narrative inquiry. It was through practising the medium that I was able access these, and many other, contemporary art forums. Inserting dialogues about the Chinese community reifies its position in Australian history. Therein lies the continued agency of papercutting. It can be employed as a form of ‘visual anthropology’.

\textsuperscript{46} Evans and Ferrier, \textit{Radical Brisbane: An Unruly History}.
\textsuperscript{47} "The Anti-Chinese Riots in Brisbane," \textit{Queanbeyan Age}, 4.
\textsuperscript{48} Evans and Ferrier, \textit{Radical Brisbane: An Unruly History}. 
Chapter 3: Visual Anthropology

The artworks *Dogs Dust Swans 2016* and *Hawks Down Eagles 2015* were exhibited as part of *Too Close to Call*, an exhibition about sport, staged at Pine Rivers Gallery from 31 March – 13 May 2017. The titles referenced the media headlines associated with the respective Australian Rules Football Finals. The artworks use Foshan papercutting to illustrate the outcomes of the football games, equating the narratives to folklore. The depicted mascots functioned as totems.¹

Totemism, according to structural anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, is a form of “social organization and magico-religious practice” that associates “groups” with “animate or inanimate things.”² In the context of sport, totems provide a vehicle for fans affiliated with geographic locations for jingoism. This is manifested in “primitive” and “ritualistic behaviours” such as war cries.³

The relationship between totemism and sporting teams has been a contentious issue in North America since the late 1960s.⁴ Totemism developed out of a human desire to emanate qualities of other species it admired, such as a bucking bronco.⁵ In 1968, the National Congress of American Indians launched a campaign directed towards sporting organisations such as the ‘Washington Redskins’ and the ‘Cleveland Indians’.⁶ The cultural inappropriateness of this phenomena was addressed in *The Sociology of Sport*: “Native Americans, however, are human beings, not wild animals. Using imagery of Native people as though they are fearsome, savage beasts is racist.”⁷

⁵ Strauss, *Totemism*, 127.
⁶ “Ending the Era of Harmful ‘Indian’ Mascots.”
In a report commissioned by the Oneida Indian Nation titled *The Harmful Psychological Effects of the Washington Football Mascot*, psychologist Dr Michael A. Friedman concluded:

> [Native Americans experienced a] worsening of self-concept and an increase in psychological distress when viewing even neutral images of Native American nicknames/logos. These results suggest the causal role of exposure to Native American in explaining the findings Native Americans report significantly lower self-esteem than Caucasians.8

Nearly two decades on, despite being labelled “dated” and “offensive”, the Washington Redskins have retained their controversial name.9 The team owner, American businessman Dan Sydner, described the application of the totem as a “term of honour.”10

That the term “totem” is an anglicised term from the Ojibwe, an indigenous people of Canada, is no small irony.11 Levi-Strauss discuss totemic symbols in terms of “bricolage.”12 It is “Bricoleur,” the “science of the concrete,” that “precondition[s]” “totemic classification.”13

In terms of Bourdieu’s structuralism, totemic signs are the symbolic capital and are created by groups in possession of symbolic power. The effects of “Native American” mascots are a testament to the reflexive capacity of totemism.

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10 Ibid.


13 Ibid.
Papercutting developed as a magico-religious practice.\textsuperscript{14} Totemism remains evident in decorative applications in present-day China. The decoration of ceramics during the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE) using plum blossoms papercuts is a primary example.\textsuperscript{15} Plum blossoms symbolised feminine beauty.\textsuperscript{16}

Totemism, as a system for social organisation, is integral to structuralist anthropology. The arts-based research method of visual anthropology involves a similar process of subject/object identification, categorisation and analysis.\textsuperscript{17}

This chapter will investigate the application of papercutting as a method of visual anthropology. In addition to its capacity to record, compile and disseminate information, the mechanics of the medium will be examined in reference to its materiality and techniques.

\textsuperscript{14} Zhang, \textit{The Art of Papercuts}, 1.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 12.
\textsuperscript{17} Leavy, \textit{Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice}, 218.
Materiality

*Open. Cut. Mine.* was a solo exhibition staged 27 April 2017 to 17 June 2017 at Gympie Regional Gallery. It was part of the Q150 celebrations run by the Gympie Regional Council, to commemorate the discovery of gold by James Nash in 1867, an event that reportedly “saved Queensland.” Prior to this, the colony was facing insolvency due to the liquidation of Agra and Masterman’s Bank, which was financing capital works, such as the building of railways. The situation was exacerbated by drought. The exhibition *Open. Cut. Mine.* explored a variety of Queensland primary industries, including gold mining, coal mining and wool production. Subsequently, the symbolic capital of the materials became important syntagms in embracing the practiced-based paradigm of visual anthropology.

On 31 March 1943, Henri Matisse wrote:

> This afternoon... I have the conviction of having witnessed the great breakthrough in colour for which I have been waiting for... drawing with scissors on sheets of paper coloured in advance, one movement linking line with colour, contour with surface... The cut-out paper allows me to draw in colour.

I employed this principle to ‘draw’ in a number of materials, most pertinently gold. I created a series of gilded papercuts using twenty-four carat gold leaf, arches water colour paper and acid-free glue. The subjects are invasive species introduced to Australia prior to federation. At the decline of the goldrush, prospectors diversified into a number of agrarian industries. Rabbits, buffalo and pigs were among the introduced livestock. The technique of applying gold to papercuts has precedence in late eighteenth-century silhouette portraiture. It is referred to as “bronzing.” A further visual anthropological reference can be made to the cutting of gold foil in the late Shang – early Spring Autumn period.

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21 Brown and Ferguson, *The Gympie Gold Fields 1867-2008*, 5; Mate, "Gold."
24 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Chengdu Jinsha Yi Zhi Bo Wu Guan, *The Jinsha Site*. 
Figure 34. *Carp*, 2016

Figure 35. Installation view of the gilded cutouts at Gympie Regional Gallery for the solo exhibition *Open. Cut. Mine*. 2017
Humanity’s attempt to understand the relationship between ‘materiality’ and ‘immateriality’ is fundamental to the development of history. This is evidenced by the marks incised into Yang-shao funeral urns (c. 4800–4200 BCE) during the Neolithic era, a precursor to Chinese characters that pre-dates the appearance of oracle bones.\(^{28}\) In Egyptian, the term for sculptor means “one who keeps alive.”\(^{29}\) Religions, including Buddhism and Christianity, critique materiality.\(^{30}\)


\(^{30}\) Ibid., 1.
The principles of materiality can be understood in the context of Structural Marxism. In *Theses on Feuerbach*, written by Karl Marx in 1845 and posthumously published by Ludwig Engels in 1888, it is stated:

The highest point reached by contemplative materialism, that is, materialism which does not comprehend sensuousness as practical activity, is contemplation of individuals and of civil society.

The standpoint of the old materialism is civil society; the standpoint of the new is human society, or social humanity.

The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.\(^{31}\)

This was interpreted by Johannes Beetz in *Materiality and Subject in Marxism, (Post-)Structuralism, and Material Semiotics* as follows:

In other words, material reality is merely an object of passive contemplation and observation and not of practical activity... Marx proposes an active subject that is not just conditioned by reality but shapes the world it lives in. The material world cannot be understood as dissociated from human activity.\(^{32}\)

Bourdieu regularly made the distinction between “material” and “symbolic” capital. However, he also demonstrated an economy between the two: “symbolic capital, which in the form of the prestige and renown attached to a family and a name [is] readily convertible into economic capital.”\(^{33}\)

Papercutting in the context of Matisse’s concept of “drawing with scissors... [enables one to] draw in colour” transforms materials into symbols.\(^{34}\) This is as opposed to other image-making techniques that rely on using materials to create symbolic representations, more often than not, of material objects and/or subjects.

This cultivation of objects into symbols epitomise the association between papercutting and visual anthropology. An example of a practitioner employing papercutting to transform materials of pre-existing symbolic value is Yuken Teruya.


Yuken Teruya employs kirigami, a form of papercutting that emerged during the Edo Period (1603–1868), to evoke the symbolic capital of materials sourced while living across New York, Berlin and Okinawa. He folds and cuts the likeness of trees that he photographed into objects ranging from toilet paper rolls to the bags from multinational corporations. The subsequent artworks have been celebrated for their critique of consumerism and environmental degradation. He has featured in both the 18th Biennale of Sydney and the 5th Asia Pacific Triennale in Brisbane.

![Image of Yuken Teruya's artwork](image)

**Figure 37.** Yuken Teruya *The Forest* 2006

It is significant to note that the principle of materiality can be applied to all paper, irrespective of whether it has been repurposed or recycled.

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The papercut artwork *Tears... for the Patriotic*, exhibited at Newcastle Art Gallery as part of *Between Two Worlds* from late 2019 until 2020, embraces the symbolic capital of a reprinted Chinese political poster. It was depicted breaking into catkins willow leaves. The flora was broadly propagated by the People’s Republic of China (PRC) as part of its “afforestation” program that commenced in the 1960s.\(^{39}\) This homage to an aging generation of Chinese communists was created in 2008.

Conversely, *100s upon 1000s*, which was exhibited at QCA as part of Sustainability Week celebrations in September 2019, embraces the symbolic capital of a recipe book retrieved from a Hare Krishna restaurant. The pages were removed and recycled using a Hollander. The subsequent papercuts depicted military from World War II and livestock. It references a statement made in 1974 by the founder of the Hare Krishna movement Abhaya Charanarvida Bhaktivedanta Svami:

> Every ten years, fifteen years, there is a big war and wholesale slaughter of the whole humankind. And these rascals, they do not see it. the reaction must be there. You are killing innocent cows and animals. Nature will take revenge.⁴⁰

Materiality was an important point of discussion when I met with the staff of the Huaxia Papercutting Museum in early 2020. The first papercutting museum in China, it was founded by Master papercutter Qiao Jian Bai in 2000.⁴¹ With an ethnographic emphasis, it has a collection of over 10,000 papercuts produced by practitioners from all over the country.⁴² I was invited to contribute as their first overseas Chinese papercutter.

Among the accepted donations were a papercut fish cut from black cotton, a papercut blue sandalwood flower cut from Xuan paper, and a bamboo flower cut from bamboo paper. Whereas the cotton rag was made from a t-shirt at QCA using a style of papermaking that entered Europe via the Middle East during the twelfth century, the latter two were cut from papers produced in Southern and Eastern China respectively. Xuan paper contains a mixture of blue sandalwood (*Pteroceltis tatarinowii*) and rice straw.⁴³

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⁴² Ibid.
Figures 42–46. Whereas the eponymously titled *Blue Sandalwood* and *Bamboo* (bottom left) were created from locally produced papers, *Eating Happiness...* (top right) was cut from cotton rag produced at the QCA (top left). The strips of blue sandalwood inner bark (bottom right) were on display at the Xuan Paper Cultural Park in Anhui. In the allegory illustrated, prawns are a Chinese symbol for happiness and a goldfish is a Chinese symbol for fiscal wealth. The western paper provides a context of cultural imperialism.
Techniques

Between 2006 and 2009, no less than sixty regional variations of Chinese papercutting were inscribed into the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In 2014, the University of Leeds published a PhD dissertation by Yu-Chun Huang titled “Origin, Classification and Evolution of Chinese Papercutting.” The criteria used by Huang to classify the traditions included geography, tools, materials, subject matter and application. In the analysis of a number of regional styles, an approximate time of inception was also provided.

Foshan papercutting was specified to have emerged during the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE). The style is endemic to my maternal home province of Guangdong. “Precise linear quality” and “realistic artistic expression” are among its attributes. This may reflect Canton becoming a centre for “European classical academic high art” from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries. During the Qing Dynasty (1636–1912 CE), Foshan papercutting also became the first style to be exported from China.

Figure 47. Typical example of Foshan papercutting

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44 Yu-Chun Huang, “The Origin, Classification and Evolution of Chinese Paper Cutting,” 94.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid., 170.
50 Ibid., 26.
The tools and materials typical to Foshan papercutting may reflect its relatively later emergence. Knives with blades of a variety of shapes and sizes are used to cut both paper and thin copper foil. The cutting boards are typically fashioned out of wax.

Figures 48–50. (Top) Foshan papercutting, Folk Art Institute in Guangdong Province, 2011. Bamboo paper production (bottom left) became prevalent during the late Tang Dynasty. It declined due to the introduction of western pulped-wood methods of paper production during the Qing Dynasty but was revived by the PRC to meet a shortfall in supplies caused by the Anti-Japanese War (c. 1931–1945). The bamboo paper being dried on the grass (bottom left) in Laopeng Village in Hunan and a close up of one of the pieces (bottom right) demonstrate the short and stiff fibres of the paper.

52 Ibid., 30.
Following a decline in the availability of rattan during the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), bamboo became the principal material for papermaking in southern China. The earliest account of bamboo paper appeared in a book written by Li Chao during the early ninth century, titled *Tang Kuo Shi Pu*, followed by mentions in Su Yijian’s treatise on papermaking, *Wen Fang Si Pu*, during the tenth century. Bamboo paper continues to be produced by hand in Hunan, the province in which Cai Lun was born. During the seventeenth century, Song Yingxing described the production of a variety of bamboo papers in *Tian Gong Kai Wu*. However, bamboo is regarded among the “stiffer and shorter” paper fibres. These properties result in a paper that has less tensile strength and is unable to withstand the folding required to produce complex papercuts using scissors.
Figures 54–58. A detail (top left) of the gampi paper produced in Shiqiao Village in Guizhou. The author also photographed a variety of processes used in its production. They included washing long strands of the fibre in a river (top right) prior to its beating in a Hollander, dying using pigment (middle right) and sheet forming by hand (bottom right). The long fibres enable papercutters like Li Yiling to cut intricate designs using scissors (bottom right).
This is in contrast to the long fibres and subsequent high strength of gampi papers and mulberry, which are produced in Guizhou and Shaanxi respectively. The latter province is not only the birthplace of papercutting but also of modern pulp-strained paper.⁵⁹

**Figures 59–61.** Equipment dating back to the inception of modern pulp-strained paper in 105 CE are displayed at the Cai Lun Paper Cultural Museum at Long Ting in Shaanxi Province. The tomb of the inventor is also located at the site. The photographs were taken by the author in early 2020

On 9 May 2019, *Beijing Magazine* published an article about Ansai papercutting in Shaanxi Province, which stated:

The fundamental difference between papercutting in Ansai and other places lies in the scissors... Ansai papercutting does not need craft knives or other tools. A pair of scissors is enough to cut out the most complicated and elaborate patterns.60 Papercutters in Yuxian, Hebei Province, preference “carving” Xuan paper which originates from Anhui.61 While the paper dates back to the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), it was during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE) that it was “perfected” and became “famous.”62 Its broader distribution coincided with the emergence of the festively hand coloured style of papercutting for which Yuxian is celebrated.63

The region on the border of Hebei and Shanxi provinces is a locus for post-digital papercutting. In 2013, *The China Daily* published an interview with a “renowned” papercutter from Hebei,64 Zhou Shuying, who was requesting the government address the impact of CNC on papercutting mills.65 While she encouraged her colleagues to “stay close to what their ancestors have left for them in the face of technology,”66 the Guangling Papercutting Museum situated approximately a forty-five minute drive north in Shanxi, offers vocational training in papercutting.67 Founded by fourth-generation papercutter Zhang Duotang, the government-funded institution has been in operation since 2007.68

In 2020, the mills Zhou sought to preserve were notably absent from the principal papercutting precinct in Hebei. In 2010, the locale was “awarded” the title of “Chinese
Papercutting Street” by the PRC. The district was occupied by a combination of street stalls offering CNC plastic cutouts and stores lined with lasercut Xuan paper cutouts. In Hebei and Shaanxi provinces, it is not uncommon to find stores selling a combination of handcut papercuts and more modestly priced lasercut versions designed and/or produced by the same practitioner.

This hybridity is characteristic of the post-digital era. Echoing Ludovico’s observations of an exponential increase in the use of paper as opposed to its eradication, this intervention of CNC has resulted in market differentiation. Likewise, the value of handcut designs and the practitioners who created them has been enhanced as opposed to depreciated through mechanical reproduction. This was exemplified across the border from Hebei to Shanxi, where the Guangling Papercutting Museum displayed examples unprecedented in both scale and level of sophistication. These unanticipated findings may inform future artwork involving my applying the CNC cutting of paper.

69 Huang, “The Origin, Classification and Evolution of Chinese Paper Cutting,” 177.
71 Ludovico, Post-Digital Print: The Mutation of Publishing since 1894, 27.
Figures 62–66. Photographs of papercuts being produced in Yuxian in 2005 (top left and top right). This form of papercutting emerged during the Ming Dynasty when Xuan paper was “perfected” and nationally distributed. The photographs taken by the author in January 2020 document its production in Anhui province using brittle rice straw fibre combined with the inner bark of the hardwood blue sandalwood (middle right, middle left and bottom).
Figures 67–68. Lasercut xuan paper (top) could be found in the absence of papercutting mills in the principal papercutting precinct of Yuxian, which is referred to as “Chinese Papercutting Street.” It is, however, not uncommon to find a hybrid of analogue and digital papercuts designed and produced by the same papercutter (bottom)
Figures 69–72. Both the Guangling Papercutting Museum in Shanxi and the Huaxia Papercutting Museum in Hunan exhibited a broad diversity of contemporary papercuts which could not be categorised into regionally specific styles. This may, from a visual anthropological context, demonstrate a shift in the perceptions of the practitioner. They may no longer identify with the papercutting communities specified the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
Figures 73–75. Shaanxi papercuts are often appropriated to meet market demand by papercutters and corporations reproducing CNC cut plastic cutouts alike. The photograph of the window flower (top) papercuts being packed for sale was taken by the author in Xian in early 2020. The photograph of the supermarket (bottom left) was taken in 2016.

In reviewing the collections of both the Guangling Art Museum and the Huaxia Papercutting Museum, it appears that contemporary Chinese papercutters place less emphasis on perpetuating traditions and more on self-expression. Despite a deterioration of fidelity towards regionally specific styles, the medium has retained its ethnographic value due to a continued focus on narrative inquiry. Within a visual anthropological context, it could be inferred that the shift reflects that practitioners no longer identify with the communities specified in the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.72

72 Yu-Chun Huang, “The Origin, Classification and Evolution of Chinese Paper Cutting,” 94.
Shaanxi papercutting presents an exception. Synonymous with ‘traditional’, papercuts from this region are referred to as “living fossils.” The “most well preserved” of the regional variations remain broadly appropriated in response by papercutters and designers of mass-produced CNC cutouts alike.

One of the most recognisable attributes of papercuts from the Shaanxi province is the employment of “saw-tooth” patterns. The distinctive marking bears resemblance to the diagram of a “space box” in Erwin Panofsky’s *Perspective as Symbolic Form*. The stereoscopic holes in Chinese papercutting constitute a form of perspective not unlike the system of lines devised in sixteenth-century metal engraving.

Whereas Panofsky describes Renaissance pictures characterised by linear perspective as “slices of reality,” Chinese papercuts are akin to a perforated plane or surface. In his treatise on painting titled *De Pictura*, originally written in 1435, Leon Battista Alberti described a surface as “the outer part of a body which is recognized not by depth... like a skin stretched over the whole extent.” Bringing together these two contrasting yet concurrent approaches to perspective was a significant research tangent in this doctoral project.

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73 Hao, “Papercutting in Ansai,” 52.
77 Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, 60.
Figures 76–78. In her PhD Thesis from University of Leeds in 2014, Yu-Chun Huang specified six distinct papercutting marks (top). They are designed to create a stereoscopic effect, similar to the tonal lines of 16th century engravers in Europe (bottom left). Goltzius, *Bacchus* (detail) (1558-1616) Engraving. The ‘saw tooth’ cut bears resemblance to perspective diagrams by Erwin Panofsky (bottom right).

In *Breaking Ground*, a solo exhibition staged at Gatakers Artspace, Maryborough, 5 April – 5 May 2019, a number of my paper sculptures applied Alberti’s principles. These papercuts cum surfaces were joined to form paper effigies. The form of ancestral worship commenced during in the sixth century in China to address theft from burial sites.79 *For Tomorrow’s Ancestors* uses visual anthropology to project into a dystopian future where commodities such as organic wood and fish are rare. The series is a critique on environmental degradation.

79 Kurlansky, *Paper: Paging through History*. 
Figures 79–81. Paper effigies of fish and wood (top two images), created using cotton rag and glue, were exhibited under Perspex cases at Gatakers Artspace in Maryborough in early 2019 (bottom)
Figure 82. *Breaking Ground* was the title artwork for the solo exhibition at Gatakers Artspace and explored a union between the Irish orphaned female and Chinese male settlers. The arrangement enabled the Chinese immigrants to become British subjects and subsequently own land in Queensland.

The visual anthropological value of Peter Callesen’s paper sculptures lie in their contemporary narratives. The Danish artist imbues his subjects with vulnerability by embracing the fragility of the material.\(^\text{80}\) Tragedy also pervades his vignettes, as the figures “trying to escape” the compositions are “confronted with reality and failure.”\(^\text{81}\)

Figure 83. Peter Callesen, *Distant Wish*, 2006

\(^{80}\) Corridan et al., *The First Cut: Paper at the Cutting Edge*, 38.
Capacity to Record, Compile and Disseminate

My series *Making Chinese Shadows* constitutes a major component of this doctoral project. The title refers to an eighteenth-century artwork by German genre painter Johann Eleazar Schenau *The Origin of Painting: A Family Making Chinese Shadows*. This historical work evidences a connection between Chinese papercutting and the European silhouette portraiture of the neoclassical era.

![Figure 84. Johann Eleazar Schenau, *The Origin of Painting: A Family Drawing Chinese Shadows*, eighteenth century](image)

Figure 84. Johann Eleazar Schenau, *The Origin of Painting: A Family Drawing Chinese Shadows*, eighteenth century
In the four decades since the introduction of multiculturalism in Australia under the Whitlam Government, people claiming Chinese ancestry have grown to become the fifth-largest “cultural or ethnic group” in Australia. It is also a highly visible one. Newsreader and fashion icon Lee Lin Chin is a primary example of this. South Australian Labour Party Senator Penny Wong is another Chinese Australian woman to achieve salience in the media. Responsible for *The Slap*, *Nowhere Boys* and *Devil’s Playground*, Chinese Australian Tony Ayres is one of Australia’s “busiest” television producers. In 2007, Ayres wrote and directed *The Home Song Stories*. The multi award-winning autobiographical feature film documented the emigration of his mother from Shanghai to Australia during the 1970s. In 1986, Dr Victor Chang received a Companion of the Order of Australia for his “revolutionary” contribution to the “field of Heart Transplantation.”

People of Chinese ancestry indelibly shaping the Australian cultural landscape is not a recent phenomenon. It began with the arrival of the first Chinese person in 1803, a carpenter whose name was recorded as “Ahuto.” That Kylie Kwong was celebrated for culinary excellence in the 2000s was proceeded by Hung Pak Cheong during the 1900s. Immortalised by Aeneas Gunn’s *We of the Never Never*, the cook at Elsey Cattle Station has been widely regarded as Australia’s first celebrity chef. The pervasive influence of the Chinese

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community extended beyond broadening the culinary palettes of colonial Australians. They also brought carpentry skills, medicines and commerce.90

In 1919, William Morris Hughes declared that the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901—known colloquially as ‘The White Australia Policy’—was “the greatest thing we have achieved.”91 During its first four decades, it is estimated that 80,000 Chinese people departed from Australia.92 My solo exhibition exploring the resilience of the 15,000 who remained, titled Shades and Silhouettes, was staged at the Chinese Museum in Melbourne from 10 February to 17 March 2019.93 A set of sixteen portraits of Chinese Australians living prior to the policy’s implementation was also exhibited in So Fine: Contemporary Women Artists Make Australian History at the National Portrait Gallery, 29 June – 1 October 2018.94

The series is an example of visual anthropology. Papercutting has been used to record, compile and publish the stories of a community that was subjected to institutionalised xenophobia for seven decades. Through embracing the medium of papercutting, I have been able to contribute symbolic capital to a dialogue that has been restoring the symbolic power of Chinese Australians since 1973.

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90 Tracking the Dragon, A3.
93 Ibid.
Figure 85. A papercutting demonstration was staged on Sunday 10 February 2019, as part of the Shades & Silhouettes exhibition at the Chinese Museum in Melbourne
Figures 86–88. I use a variety of scissors, primary an exactor knife, a sharpening stone and a both rubber and bees wax boards in my practice (top). It is an adaptation of Foshan papercutting which uses a number of knives (left) and a paraffin wax. Occasionally, I also demonstrate image transference using a candle (right)
Figures 89–90. A set of sixteen portraits of Chinese Australians contributing to our cultural landscape before the White Australia Policy was exhibited as part of *So Fine: Contemporary Women Artists Make Australian History* staged at the National Portrait Gallery 29 June – 1 October 2018. This was followed by *Shades & Silhouettes: Papercut Portraits*, featuring seventeen portraits of Chinese Australians who endured the White Australia Policy, staged at the Chinese Museum in Melbourne, 10 February – 17 March 2019
Major Project

Each of the portraits in *Making Chinese Shadows* has a floral papercut motif symbolising the region in which the subject was born. This is accompanied by a papercut depicting an object to signify their contribution to the Australian cultural landscape. These two elements are cut using the Foshan papercutting style. A third element, of a silhouette of the subject, features in a majority of the compositions. Its absence indicates that a pictorial reference was unable to be located.

There is precedence for the use of silhouettes as a posthumous form of portraiture. The first ‘Shade’ in England was a portrait of the Queen Mary—who had died from smallpox five years earlier—cut by Elizabeth Pyburg in 1699. In this book *The Art of The Silhouette* published in 1913, journalist Desmond Coke described silhouette portraits as “funeral things.”

The aforementioned painting *The Origin of Painting: A Family Drawing Chinese Shadows* is an recreation of a narrative described in *Natural Histories* written by Pliny the Elder. The account in *Short History of the Shadow* by Victor Stoichita describes how the outcome of this process of portraiture became a “receptacle” of the “soul.” According to the myth, the daughter of Corinthian potter Butades traced the shadow of a soldier cast from a lamp. Butades then pressed clay on the wall to capture his likeness. The sculpture became a “cult object in the temple” after the demise of the sitter.

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98 Ibid.
99 Ibid., 10.
100 Ibid.
101 Ibid., 18.
With the exception of documentation of the Quakers in North America, the daguerreotype supplanted silhouette portraiture during the nineteenth century. I have employed the medium to compile the portraits as part of a greater narrative about Chinese migration. In addition to photographs, the source material for the silhouette portraits included wood engravings and paintings. The application of papercutting as a device to cohere disparate source material was used by Kara Walker during the mid-1990s. The artist noted:

I was reading bell books, Michele Wallace, Pornographic novels, looking at reference books on early American painting and portraiture... and twentieth century works by Black Artists... In a way making Silhouettes kind of saved me. Simplified the frenzy I was working myself into. Created the outward appearance of calm.

Irrespective of media, the likenesses of a majority of the subjects was recorded from the front. Travel documents like the Certificate of Domicile and Certificate Exempting from the Dictation Test (CEDT) from the National Archives of Australia (NAA) presented an exception. Subsequently, to create the silhouette portraits, many profiles were approximated. In addition to the NAA, the information about the subjects was sourced from QSA, the National Library of Australia, the John Oxley Library at SLQ, and the Chinese Museum in Melbourne. I also sourced subjects from the Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia by John Fitzgerald and Red Tape Gold Scissors: The Story of Sydney’s Chinese by Shirley Fitzgerald. The stories of a selection of individuals are included in Appendix C, which are chronologically ordered by the birth date of each subject.

103 Shaw, Seeing the Unspeakable: The Art of Kara Walker, 13.
105 Fitzgerald, Big White Lie; Shirley Fitzgerald, Red Tape Gold Scissors: The Story of Sydney’s Chinese (Ultimo, NSW: Halstead in association with the City of Sydney, 2008).
Figure 91. This CEDT is an example of the primary source material used to create the portraits
Chapter 4: Handcut Paper as Participatory Research

Participatory research emerged during the 1960s and constitutes a significant arts-based research method. Reflexivity is a core principle of participatory research, as the method "helps people to 'name,' and, consequently, to change their world." It is, essentially, a process of generating symbolic capital to imbue participants with symbolic power.

Participatory research in the health services is focused on educating and/or liberating groups in the community who are marginalised by their socio-economic background, gender and/or ethnicity. Narrative inquiry, by way of encouraging participants to share their personal experiences, is often in used in participatory research to disrupt a cycle of oppression.

Figure 92. Participatory research methods are designed to disruption this cycle of oppression by generating symbolic capital in the form of material objects like drawings or immaterial experience like processes or performances. The agency lies in using narrative inquiry to address the internally marginalised on a community level.

2 Ibid., 248.
4 Conrad and Campbell, “Participatory Research,” 248; Minkler and Wallerstein, Community Based Participatory Research for Health, 83–84.
In Chapter 13 of *Knowing Differently: Arts-Based and Collaborative Research Methods*, Diane Conrad and Gail Campbell observe:

By emphasizing emotions, personal experience and action rather than rational thinking alone, the group process ceases to convey isolated opinions, becoming instead a springboard for collective reasoning. The knowledge produced is socially heard, legitimized and added to the people’s collective knowledge, empowering group members to solve their shared problems.5

Participatory research embraces other arts-based research methods to create sites for “speaking out in resistance” and amplifying the voices of occupants.6 This manifests in a variety of media, including theatre-based performative research, photography or photo-voice projects, drawing and sculpture.7

The tendency to “channel art’s symbolic capital towards social change” is a signature trait of participatory art, in a broader context, which has roots in provocative Futurist performances from c. 1910 to the interwar period.8

Participatory research typically “begin[s] with a situation or problem” and concludes with a “process over a definitive image, concept or object.”9 However, materiality, in a Marxist context, remains an important syntagm in this research paradigm. This is with particular reference to the use of collective ‘labour’ to address the “de-alienating” effects of its “division.”10

A notable addition to participatory research is Craftivism. The term is attributed to sociologist Betsy Greer, who purchased the domain name craftivism.com in 2003.11 It can be defined as: “traditional handcraft (often assisted by high tech means of community building, skill sharing and action) directed towards political and social causes.”12

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5 Conrad and Campbell, “Participatory Research,” 248.
6 Conrad and Campbell, “Participatory Research,” 255.
7 Ibid., 252; Minkler and Wallerstein, *Community Based Participatory Research for Health*, 179.
9 Ibid., 6; Conrad and Campbell, “Participatory Research,” 249.
Greer makes a distinction between Craftivism, the feminist artwork of the 1970s that similarly radicalised “skills and objects usually associated with the domestic environment,” and its earlier iteration of appliqued banners in the suffragette movement.13

In *Craftivism: The Art of Craft and Activism*, Greer states:

> Unlike more traditional forms of activism, which can be polarizing, there is a back-and-forth in craftivism. As craftivists, we foment dialogue and thus help the world become a better place, albeit on a smaller scale than activities who organise mass demonstrations.14

Papercutting is conspicuously absent in craftivist dialogues between 2001 and 2018 and was not acknowledged in the Art and Craft Movements in Europe and North America during the nineteenth century. In 1882, the founder of the movement, William Morris, wrote in his essay *The Lesser Arts of Life*:

> here, then, we have two kinds of art: one of them would exist even if men had no needs by such as are essentially spiritual, and only accidentally material or bodily. The other kind called into existence by material needs... greater arts appeal directly to that intricate combination of intuitive perceptions, feelings, experience, and memory which is called imagination. If the case be as I represented it, even the lesser arts are well worth the attention of reasonable men.15

The categorisation of papercutting as a ‘greater art’ reflects the role of silhouette portraiture in the eighteenth-century revival of physiognomy.

During the 1970s, ‘folk art’ was ‘institutionalised’ and many varieties of papercutting were designated this new classification.16 At the time, folk art was synonymous with ‘Outsider Art’, the product of “men and women of colour, poor people, and untrained white women.”17 In the participatory research paradigm, the symbolic capital of papercutting is situated in the residual affiliation between the medium and marginalised communities.

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17 Ibid.
Papercutting as a method of participatory research remains under-utilised. The medium has a capacity for narrative inquiry. It is a recognised form of ethnology. The material of paper remains ubiquitous. Participants in papercutting workshops also required limited training to develop proficiency.

The examples of participatory research explored in this chapter largely subscribe to a model that emerged during the 1990s. Whereas resistance was a hallmark of previous iterations of participatory research, ‘neo-liberalist’ participatory art encourages social inclusivity without promoting anti-authoritarianism. ‘Neo-liberalist participatory research is not refined to marginalised sectors within the community. A number of the examples also reflect an increase in participatory art run by the education departments of museums and galleries. This trend of using pedagogic projects to enhance the experience of visitors commenced in the 2000s.

The agency provided by each of the participatory artworks will be discussed in relation to the theories of Sherry R. Arnstein, as expressed in A Ladder of Citizen Participation.

![Diagram of Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation](image)

**Figure 93.** This diagram by Arnstein stratifies levels of participation and the associated agency

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19 Ibid., 14.
The Labour Tree

The pedogeological project *The Labour Tree* with a workshop at *The Big Day of Belonging* at the SLQ on Saturday, 18 June 2018. The resulting composition was moved up to the Philip Bacon Heritage Gallery on Level 4 for the duration of *Tradition Now*. Visitors continued to build on the participatory artwork over the exhibition period. Commissioned by the SLQ, this participatory artwork was designed to engage children aged four years and upwards in a dialogue about migration. The brief also specified the symbolic application of trees in reference to family.

Embracing narrative inquiry, the children were asked to make papercuts illustrating something their families brought to Australia. The motifs, in the context of *The Labour Tree*, made reference to the ‘fruits of labour’. The material of 80gsm black cartridge paper made reference to silhouette portraiture from Europe and North America during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This approach brings together the antebellum picture-book aesthetic used by Kara Walker and the quilting practices prevalent during the period she illustrated. Collectively, the papercuts formed the shadow of a tree.

*Figures 94–95. The Labour Tree* falls into the category of pedagogical participatory art. Although it fulfilled the requirements of the SLQ to engage visitors, its rating against Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation is debatable. This was partly due to the age of the participants.
The symbolic capital of shadows is best illustrated by *Peter Schlemiel: The Man Who Sold His Shadow* written by Adelbert von Chamisso in 1814. In the narrative, a man dressed in grey entices the protagonist to exchange his shadow for a purse containing an inexhaustible supply of gold coins. The shadow is subsequently ‘loosened’, folded and rolled.

This a direct reference to the creation of shades, as interpreted by Lavater. In the abridged version of *Essays on Physiognomy for the Promotion and the Love of Mankind*, translated by Thomas Holcroft in 1880, it is written:

> What can be lets the image of a living man than a shade? Yet how full of speech! Little god, but the purest... If the shade be oracular, the voice of truth, the word of God, what must the living original be illuminated by the spirit of God.

In the narrative, Schlemiel is accordingly shunned by society. Bereft of symbolic power, the value of his gold is rendered immaterial. The antagonist conditions the return of his shadow on the further exchange of his soul. The soul and the shadow are, thus, equated in value.

This participatory artwork met the requirements for engagement specified by the SLQ. Over seventy children cut and pasted their motifs onto a tree outline fashioned out of clear plastic film. However, the quality of the participation as measured by Arnstein’s Ladder is debatable. A contributing factor was that a variety of additional facilitators were engaged. Pedagogical projects typically require a level of ‘banking’ to produce a consistent conceptual output. Its absence, on the part of a lack of direction provided by the facilitators, delegated power to the young participants. Subsequently, the composition consisted of domestic animals, plants, household objects, appendages and hearts. This could be roughly interpreted as introduced flora and fauna, products, people and love. This constitutes a very simplistic response to the question: what did migrant families bring to Australia? The exercise nonetheless demonstrated the capacity for papercutting to be used in a participatory research context.

23 Ibid., 16.
26 Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 166.
An initial foundation display of 100 lotuses was created prior to the commencement of *Botanica: Contemporary Art Outside* staged 4-16 April 2018. It is estimated that 1600 visitors to the site partook in workshops that developed this participatory artwork.

**Common Wealth**

*Botanica: Contemporary Art Outside* was an initiative of the Brisbane City Council that was staged in the City Botanic Gardens from 4–16 April 2018 as part of the Commonwealth Games Event City Festival.\(^{28}\) *Common Wealth* was a participatory artwork for the event.

This installation of paper lotus flowers was positioned adjacent to the lower lagoon near the Albert Street entrance to the gardens. It responded to the history of the City Botanic Gardens as a site for agricultural experimentation.\(^{29}\) Appointed as the superintendent in 1855, botanist Walter Hill acclimatised many species of flora, including commercial crops such as tobacco, cotton and custard apple.\(^{30}\) Lotus flowers were among the ornamentals.

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Visitors to the site were engaged in building the lotus flowers. Although the process involved paper cutting, the specific technique used was ‘zhezhi’ (折纸) or folding paper. Both a traditional design, featuring eighteen pieces of paper, and a modified version, using twelve pieces of paper, were taught. The designs, originally constructed using white paper, were used in funeral ceremonies.

To meet the requirements specified by the Brisbane City Council for the artwork to be both durable to the elements and compositable, the following materials were used: recycled 80gsm A4 cartridge paper, cotton twine and soy wax crayons.

Figure 97. The central motif had dispersed through participant intervention by day three, an important aspect of the post-colonialist narrative.

It can be speculated that floating lotus flower lanterns developed during the Liang Dynasty (502–557 CE) as an aspect of the Ghost Month celebration known as Zhong Yuan Jie (中元节) to the Taoists and Yu Lan Jie (盂蘭節) to the Buddhists. This is further evidenced by the documented arrival of zhezhi in Japan during the sixth century. The requirement of paper to be of a foldable quality would account for the relatively late emergence of the technique.

32 Ibid.
34 Kurlansky, Paper: Paging through History.
The indirect influence of papercutting in this artwork manifests in the application of Gestalt Theory principles to create an image using thousands of small components. This references the experiments by Edgar Rubin that used papercuts to investigate how human beings separate figure and ground. The ‘thingness’, or readability, of the central motif in the composition required its components to be of similar colour, density and size. The readability of the motif was also enhanced by tight grouping the lotus flowers to create a distinct contour. In a critique on postcolonialism, the participants—who were from a diversity of cultural backgrounds—broke down the central floral motif over the ten-day period.

Figure 98. Participants at the botanic gardens making floating lotus flower lanterns. It is speculated that the design emerged during the sixth century as part of Ghost Month celebrations.

36 Jorgen Pind, "Looking Back: Figure and Ground at 100," 90.
38 Ibid., 181.
The artwork also responded to the interpretations of commonwealth in an eponymously titled book written by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in 2009.\textsuperscript{39} The authors articulated a vision for “collective production and self-government.”\textsuperscript{40} They also discussed commonwealth in the Marxist context of “private property as \textit{labour}” and, subsequently, “private property as \textit{capital}.”\textsuperscript{41} It is estimated that 1600 participants willingly shared their ‘labour’ and subsequently their ‘property’ or ‘wealth’ in the creation of this artwork.

The outcome was a less than ideal example of participatory research as it fell within the “degrees of tokenism” category on Arnstein’s Ladder.\textsuperscript{42} It did, however, generate symbolic power for the Brisbane City Council and offered participants the opportunity to experience the “de-alienating” effects of shared labour.\textsuperscript{43}

\textbf{Figure 99.} A detail from the \textit{Remembering the Horseman} mural created in a regionwide program during late 2018

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., xiii.
\textsuperscript{42} Arnstein, “A Ladder of Citizen Participation,” 217.
\textsuperscript{43} Bishop, \textit{Artificial Hells}, 3.
Remembering the Horseman

The region-wide participatory art project *Remembering the Horseman* culminated an installation for the Centenary of Anzac celebrations in Queens Park in Gympie, 10 - 12 November 2018.

It involved the membership bases and students of several groups in the Gympie region, including Gympie West State School, Veteran Hall Committee, Frayed Edges Sewing Group, Kilkivan State School, Jones Hill State School, St Patrick’s Primary School, Gympie Community Place, Gympie Regional Gallery, Gympie Library, Kilkivan Library, Tin Can Bay QLD Country Women’s Association, and Tin Can Bay RSL Sub-Branch.

Between them, they produced over 2,000 papercut poppies that, similar to *Common Wealth*, engaged the Gestalt principle of figure–ground to create a mural-esque installation. The approach embraced aspects of what is colloquially known as ‘crowd art’. The use of “masses” of people, strategically coloured and positioned as “pixels” in a composition, is typical of propaganda performances staged in communist nations such as China and North Korea.44 Such a technique was applied to film in the “Face” advertisement for British Airways, produced in 1989 by Saatchi and Saatchi.45

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Figure 100. It estimated that 2000 poppies were created by the eleven community groups from kits containing materials, an educational video and a booklet.

Although the circumstances of performers contributing towards ceremonies such as the Beijing Olympic Games ceremony is unclear, crowd art tends to correlate with the lower levels of the Arnstein’s Ladder. During *Remembering the Horseman*, participation was reliant on patriotism.

Designed to promote inclusiveness, this artwork enabled the participation of a broad demographic, from four-year-old children to war veterans. They found agency in the “de-alienating” aspects of shared labour. However, regrettably, there were limited avenues to enable individuals to contribute their own symbolic capital. This was at the expense of creating a display that enhanced the symbolic power of the collective.

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The final artwork was installed in two sections, each approximately 1.8 x 5m wide. Approximately two-thirds of the poppies produced in the community were installed. Adhering to Gestalt principles, the participants were required to produce poppies of a similar size and colour. This was achieved through the distribution of kits including:

1. 135gsm Colourplan Vermillion paper
2. A USB containing a cutout animation about the Australian Light Horse and instructions
3. A large template of an Australian Light Horseman
4. Bamboo skewers
5. Wax crayons

The kits, 100 x 80 x 17cm in size, were designed to enable each participating group to produce their own Centenary of Anzac display in the leadup to the event at Queens Park.

The vector-based animation was created from papercuts, a process which will be discussed in Chapter 6. It explored the symbolism of the *papaver rhoeas*, commonly known as the red field or corn poppy. The flora grew in clusters on what was described by World War I American pilot James McConnell as “strip[s] of murdered nature.”\(^48\) The animation also discussed the origins of the Australian Light Horse in the Queensland Mounted Infantry, Victorian Mounted Rifles and the Calvary of New South Wales.\(^49\)

![Figure 101. This detail of the mural makes reference to the poem *In Flanders Fields* by John McCrae](image)


The final composition made reference to the opening stanza of the poem *In Flanders Fields* written by John McCrae in May 1915:

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.\(^{50}\)

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*Reaching for the Sun*

The artwork *Reaching for the Sun* was staged between 16 June – 23 July 2017 in the workshop area of the Noosa Regional Gallery. It was designed to enable broad community participation in the 50th anniversary of the naming of the Sunshine Coast.

Spread across a three-walled alcove, the allegory used introduced flora to symbolise the diverse origins of the people frequenting the region. The ‘seed’ element, upon which the participants built, consisted of a star jasmine from Asia and a pumpkin vine from North America.51 These first papercuts were laser-editioned from hand-cut paper compositions, a mechanical process which will be investigated further in Chapter 7. In a reference to fifteenth-century Sienese painting, silhouettes of the creepers were depicted ‘reaching’ towards a sun that is positioned outside of the pictorial plane.52

![Figure 102. A detail two weeks into the exhibition period for the participatory artwork *Reaching for the Sun* at Noosa Regional Gallery](image)

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The participatory element of the artwork commenced with a workshop with local visual artists specialising in a variety of disciplines ranging from ceramics to photography. Consistent with the neo-liberal model of participatory art, the exercise was designed to promote inclusiveness. A post-Marxist principle of “de-alienating” using shared labour was employed. The hierarchy between artist and participants was removed. The approach was designed to create a site for “democratic dialogue,” a merger of ‘academic’ and ‘popular’ knowledge that encouraged reflexivity.

![Figure 103. Three papercuts were provided to seed the participatory artwork](image)

The only restriction imposed on the contributors was a requirement to use the medium of papercutting. Papercutting was primarily employed to bring cohesion to the diversity of visual styles used by the contributing artists.

![Figure 104. Artists living in the Noosa region were invited to contribute through a workshop, including Katie Saxby](image)

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54 Ibid., 3.
Offering participants a level of ‘partnership’, as per Arnstein’s Ladder, encouraged them to pictorially identify introduced flora and fauna and, ultimately, to identify their own position as introduced elements into the local cultural landscape.\textsuperscript{57} The papercuts depicted a range of subject matter from morning glory flowers to migratory birds. The ‘landscape’ was also interrupted by constructed elements, such as industrial scaffolding.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure105.jpg}
\caption{A detail from the exhibition \textit{The View from Here} staged at Dogwood Crossing in Miles}
\end{figure}

\textit{The View from Here}

An exhibition staged at Dogwood Crossing in Miles from 29 March – 22 May 2018, \textit{The View from Here} was the culmination of two participatory art projects. \textit{Across the Prickly Fence} was a joint initiative between Griffith University and the University of Southern Queensland (USQ), which explored the contrasting constructed environments of urban and rural Queensland. \textit{Plan Bee} investigated the impact of a global decline in bee populations through the eyes of children. It was run at Dogwood Crossing, the Western Academy of Beijing, and Gympie Regional Gallery. Unlike the other participatory art projects examined in this doctorate, \textit{Across the Prickly Fence} and \textit{Plan Bee} were not commissioned by the state or local government. This allowed the participatory research model to be more thoroughly investigated.

\textsuperscript{57} Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," 217.
Across the Prickly Fence was developed in two separate workshops engaging the students of both institutions. The first was conducted by the Griffith University Library and Learning Services in The Hub. A small group of three students enrolled in jewellery and sculpture contributed. The second group larger group consisted of nine students from second-year drawing in the Bachelor of Creative Arts at USQ.

The sessions proceeded as follows: (1) students were acquainted with examples of the medium of papercutting via a PowerPoint presentation; (2) they received a health and safety briefing; (3) they received instructions in the technique of papercutting; (4) they were briefed on the topic of the participatory artwork; (5) they were encouraged to brainstorm by drawing; and (6) they created their papercuts.

The students were introduced to variety of techniques, including (1) post-digital papercutting developed by Chinese American papercutter Bovey Lee; (2) a contemporary commercial adaptation of papercutting from Weifang; and (3) a variation of silhouette papercutting developed by Kara Walker. They were offered a range of equipment and materials, including pencils, staplers, a sharpening stone, broad texta pens, and a rubber cutting mat.
The exhibition at Dogwood Crossing featured the participatory art project *Across the Prickly Fence*. Its outcomes included exhibitions at USQ (top) and QCA. The installation was created by students studying at both institutions (left and right).

The USQ students continued to develop their papercuts after the session, which were flat packed and sent to the Queensland College of Art (QCA) after a fortnight. The students at QCA applied their compositions directly to the wall. They produced a variety of organic and non-organic elements to explore the constructed environment. The element of a prickly fence was prepared and applied into the composition to demonstrate a divide between cosmopolitan and rural vistas.
This project demonstrated a more faithful application of participatory research processes, from the view of presenting a situation or problem for the contributors to address with their own narratives. Papercutting, as a medium, was used for both its material properties of bringing cohesion to disparate visual styles and its immaterial capacity as a form of narrative inquiry. The exercise provided the students an opportunity to voice their personal experiences of the urban and rural environments. The artwork, as a collective response, critiqued the effects of human intervention on the Australian outback.

Likewise, Plan Bee provided validation to its young participants. A variety of media was used to accommodate the ages of the participants ranging from seven to eleven, including: printing making, Chinese calligraphic style drawing, stop animation, voice recordings and papercutting.

Plan Bee commenced with a series of workshops staged as part of a week-long residency at the Western Academy of Beijing in January 2016. Approximately 100 children in year five, aged between nine and eleven years of age, were engaged. The following procedures were undertaken during each of the five sessions:

1. the children were briefed on the topic;
2. a verbal collective process of brainstorming was undertaken;
3. individual concept development was completed using drawing with pencils;
4. bees were printed by the children from a selection of woodblocks;
5. the prints were embellished by the children with calligraphic style drawings illustrating their concerns about the global decline in bee populations;
6. the children verbalised these ideas into audio recordings;
7. the prints and drawings were scanned;
8. the scans were traced into scalable vector graphics;
9. the scalable vector graphics were animated into sequences narrated by the audio recordings
10. the scalable vector graphics were lasercut into paper and acrylic for display in Queensland and Beijing.

The mechanics of the creation and animation of scalable vector graphics from papercuts will be investigated further in Chapter 6.
Figures 109–110. Students at Western Academy of Beijing contributed both vocal statements (left) and woodblock prints enhanced with monochromatic drawing (right).

Figure 111. The use of papercutting brought unity to the overall composition as the source prints/drawings reflected a diversity of styles.

The workshop undertaken in Gympie Regional Gallery followed a similar process, with the exception of steps 7 to 10. Instead of the animation being created remotely, the children partook in the stop animating of their sequences. The children also created elements of the animation using paper and scissors. They were provided access to a digital SLR camera, mounted on a tripod in front of a white sheet of A3 paper. They positioned the papercuts and took photographs that were sequenced together onsite using Adobe Animator.
The children at Gympie Regional Gallery followed a similar process. However, their sequences were stop animated using elements the children handcut and a supplied bee papercut. This process was influenced by films created by Lotte Reiniger in Germany during the interwar period. The German silhouette artist produced her first feature length film titled *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* between 1923 and 1926. For the film, twenty-five frames per second sequences were photographed on a glass panel using marionettes joined together using wire hinges. It preceded the release of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* by eleven years.

The animations produced by the children were exhibited both at the Gympie Regional Gallery and at Dogwood Crossing as part of *The View From Here*. Approximately half of the children responded with unique narratives about the implications of a global decline in bee populations. The other half made illustrations of the “banking” material provided, with respect to both the concepts and images. Most of the compositions demonstrated an understanding of the role that bees play in sustaining biodiversity.

These applications of participatory research embraced papercutting to cohere and amplify the personal testimonies of university and school-aged students. In *Across the Prickly Fence*, the students were able to directly engage the medium to record their narratives about the

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59 Ibid.
61 Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 166.
constructed environment. In *Plan Bee*, the medium was applied in Beijing to children’s drawings. In Gympie, it was applied directly by the children to create animations about environmental sustainability. In both instances, the participation was of a ‘partnership’ level on Arnstein’s Ladder.  

The process of exhibiting the artworks in a gallery generated symbolic capital for the participants by way of validation. The collective ‘named’ the issue of environmental sustainability from this position of symbolic power, with the intention of “chang[ing] their world.”"  

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63 Conrad and Campbell, “Participatory Research,” 248.
Chapter 5: The Post-Digital Translation of Papercutting into Digital Knitting

Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrated how papercutting can function effectively as a research method that embraces both narrative inquiry and visual anthropology. It can also provide mechanical access to a variety of crafts specified in both the Arts and Crafts movement of nineteenth-century England and the reclamation of handcrafts movement of the 1970s.¹ These include textile printing, ceramics and embroidery that, in a Chinese context, were informed by papercutting in the Tang, Song and Qing Dynasties respectively.² There is limited reference of papercutting in the European and North American craft canon. An exception to this is a 2006 article by Germaine Greer published in the *Guardian*, titled “Why Women Don’t Relax.” In it, Greer aligns a variety of papercutting with other domestic handcrafts: “they [women in the past] had to fill their hours with useless, pointless, unproductive, repetitive work: beadwork, shellwork, tatting, making cut-paper patterns and silhouettes.”³

In the early 2000s, craftivism liberated handcrafts from a 1970s post-Greenbergian association with “femininity, queerness and amateurism.” The symbolic capital of needlework is evident, from the nationalism of knitting for soldiers from the American Civil and two world wars to The AIDS Memorial Quilt project that was exhibited for the first time in Washington in 1987. Knitting has been politicised since the invention of the ‘framework knitting machine’ by Reverend William Lee in 1589. In response to his request for a patent, Queen Elizabeth said,

I have too much love for my poor people who obtain their bread by the employment of knitting to give my money to forward an invention that will tend to their ruin by depriving them of employment, thus making them beggars.

Irrespective, by the early nineteenth century stocking-knitters were reduced to penury and many resorted to machine-breaking.

The Arts and Crafts movement arguably responded to the “no-touch” morality of the Victorian era, with a focus on form, pattern and, above all, materiality. Craftivism emerged in the wake of the September 11 attack, using tactility to address the sentiments of confusion, isolation and outrage.

In *Relational Aesthetics*, written by the art critic Nicolas Bourriaud in 2002, the approach craftivists applied to yarn was surmised as follows:

the artist embarks upon a dialogue. The artistic practice thus resides in intervention of relations between consciousness. Each particular artwork is a proposal to live in a shared world, and the work of every artist is a bundle of relations with the world, giving rise to other relations, and so on and so forth ad infinitum.

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8 Ibid., 3–15.
Although the ‘founder’ of the craftivist movement, Betsy Greer favours small-scale inventions that “foment dialogue,” the proverbial piece of string extended to large scale anti-war gestures. In 2006, for example, Marianne Jorgenson collaborated with the Cast Off Knitters to cover a World War II tank in a “bright pink tea cosy” assembled from 4,000 knitted and crocheted squares. Pink Tank served as a protest against the Iraq War.

Figure 114. Pink Tank resulted from a collaboration between Marianne Jorgenson and the Cast Off Knitters. It served as a protest against the Iraq War

The craftivist movement mobilised an eclectic that “had little in common other than knitting” to address a diversity of community issues. The blankets of Patrick Hillman, an artist from San Francisco, employed a “fusion of hyper-masculine heroic persona” and “femininity and tactile softness” to address AIDS. The artworks have been associated with the AIDS Memorial Quilt project that, in October 1987, occupied a space “larger than a football field” at the National Mall in Washington D.C.

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17 Ibid; “Movable Memorials.”
Echoing sentiments of the Luddite Rebellion between 1811–1816, groups like the Revolutionary Knitting Circle elevated anti-capitalist crafting from withdrawing from consumerism by making their own clothes to mass demonstrations. In June 2002, they staged a “massive anti-capitalist knitting circle” outside a G8 Summit meeting in Kananaskis. Their knitting served as slogan-bearing banners during the day and blankets during the night. Trees at the site were also draped in “cosies” to provide them with “symbolic protection.”

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18 Bailey, The Luddite Rebellion, 139; Robertson, “Rebellious Doilies and Subversive Stitches,” 187.
Yarn

Commencing with a “happening” on 30 April 2016, Yarn was an exhibition in the children’s space at Goulburn Regional Gallery that explored the relationship between textiles and papercutting. The happening featured a set of three shorn ‘poddies’ dressed in acrylic sheep coats.

‘Poddies’ is a colloquial term applied to hand-reared sheep. A farmer living in Goulburn prepared the group for the event, as ordinary sheep are easily startled and are subsequently unsuitable for performances. The sheep coats consisted of wool flags that were commercially knitted and embroidered in Beijing. An Elna sewing machine was used to sew the flag designs to acrylic sides, which were knitted on an Empisal KH-820. The sheep coat designs were appropriated from commercial sheep covers. Typically made from nylon, the products are designed to increase yields of wool by offering protection against “fleece rot, dermatitis and fly strike.”22

Created in sets of three, the sheep coats were designed to form flags when the poddies were aligned in their pen. The three nations represented are the primary importers of Australian wool: China, France and Italy.23 The sheep were ‘installed’ in the Caroline Chisholm Courtyard, adjacent to the gallery, from 1pm to 3pm. After the happening, the sheep coats formed part of an exhibition in the children’s gallery that was staged until 30 June 2016.

Figures 118–119. Aspects of the sheep coats were manufactured in China, imported and assembled in Australia (left). The exhibition in the children’s gallery at Goulburn Regional Gallery also featured a number of papercuts of fabric (right)

The other artworks in this exhibition were a series of blue papercuts illustrating the manufacture of textiles both in Australia and China. In each composition, the textiles feature a Breton Stripe pattern. This is in reference to Coco Chanel’s “nautical” collection, that was inspired by fishermen wearing the stripes at Deauville.24 The symbolic capital of the pattern resides in its elevation from workwear to haute couture. It epitomised the aspirations of textile workers to overcome social-economic barriers.

24 Piu Marie Eatwell, They Eat Horses, Don’t They?: The Truth About the French (New York: Macmillian, 2014), 14.
This phenomenon, in a contemporary context, is particularly evident in the 2009 documentary *The Last Train Home*.²⁵ It follows the development of the Zhang family during the leadup to the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Two of the protagonists are migrant workers who leave their children in the care of their elderly grandfather in Guangan, Sichuan Province, to work in a factory in Guangzhou. Their aspiration is for their daughter and son to acquire social mobility through an education. In a character arc, the eldest child, Qin, abandons her studies to become a textile worker like her parents.

The symbolic power of *Yarn* is primarily invested in its materiality. This is in reference to Beetz’s interpretation of Marxist Materialism.²⁶ The sheep coats were largely manufactured in China using Australian wool. They were combined with acrylic, effectively rendering the garments an acrylic wool blend. The sheep that were bereft of their wool were dressed in the imported sheep coats that were, arguably, of lesser value. The artwork explores a neo-Marxist interpretation of Cultural Imperialism, whereby “trinkets” are offered in return of resources and labour.²⁷

The legacy of papercutting manifested in the garments by way of elements of the flag designs. All of the art in this exhibition reflected the historical role of papercutting in the development of printing and weaving textiles.

*Shifting the Posts*

A couple of the artworks that I contributed for the exhibition *Shifting the Posts* at The Webb Gallery at South Bank Campus of Griffith University were knitted using a Passap E6000. The exhibition, staged 27 November – 7 December 2018, brought together artists whose practices emerged during the transition between the digital and post-digital eras (circa late 1970s–early 2010s) and researchers from QCA.

²⁵ Lixin Fan, *Last Train Home* (Canada: Zeitgeist Films, 2009), Film.
My knitted compositions and a digital video game respond to an aspect of post-digitalism identified by Floridan Cramer in his article “What is ‘Post-Digital’?” published in 2014 through the Digital Aesthetics Research Center at Aarhus University, Denmark. The use of antiquated technologies as a form of resistance was among the definitions.28 Kramer wrote:

In the context of the arts, such a withdrawal seems little more than a rerun of the 19th-century Arts and Crafts movement, with its programme of handmade production as a means of resistance to encroaching industrialisation.

Such (romanticist) attitudes undeniably play an important role in today’s renaissance of artists’ printmaking, handmade film labs, limited vinyl editions, the rebirth of the audio cassette, mechanical typewriters, analog cameras and analog synthesisers.29

Knitting machines are also associated with the Maker Movement.30 In 2012, Chris Anderson described the movement in Makers: The New Industrial Revolution as “industrialising the do-it-yourself (DIY) spirit.”31 It involves the democratization of production through technologies such as 3D printers, 3D scanners, CNC routers, laser cutters, open-source hardware and open-sourced software.32 Devices to digitalise analogue knitting machines are among the open-sourced hardware available from distributors such as Arduino.33

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29 Ibid., 12.
32 Ibid., 81–109.
Figures 121–124. Although elements of the exhibition *Open. Cut. Mine.* were created using analogue looms (top right, bottom left), digital technology was used to process the papercuts into textile motifs (bottom right). Home knitting machines have varied little since the invention of the V-Bed flat knitting machine by Issac W Lamb in 1967 (top left)\(^{34}\)

Figure 125. Acrylic, Polyester and an associated animated artwork Android Dreaming on exhibition at Gympie Regional Gallery 27 April to 17 June 2017
Knitting machines and computers developed at nearly the same time. The first domestic electronic knitting machines were released in 1976, three years after personal computers.\(^\text{35}\)

In 1939, the ‘Automatic Computer Plant’ created by IBM and overseen by Aiken was described to sound like “a room full of women knitting.”\(^\text{36}\) The first fully automated jacquard knitting machine was released by the manufacturer Stoll in 1926.\(^\text{37}\) During the 1980s, knowledge of CAD became a “necessity for staying a stride in fashion.”\(^\text{38}\)

The precursors to the artworks exhibited in *Shifting the Posts* were designed on CAD software for knitting machines and fabricated on a ridged heddle loom and an Empisal KH-820. Two examples were exhibited at *Open. Cut. Mine.* at Gympie Regional Gallery, 27 April – 17 June 2017. Their symbolic capital was primary invested in the materiality of the artworks. *Polyester* was woven using the polyester yarn and depicted a stem of cotton. *Acrylic* was knitted using the acrylic yarn and depicted a falling sheep. Similar to *Yarn*, these artworks investigate the effects of the mass manufacture of synthetic garments on two primary industries in Australia.

A third artwork, *Thread*, investigates the effects of synthetic microfibres on the marine environment. This artwork was exhibited in *No Waste Form* at the ADGY Cultural Exchange Centre in Beijing, 8 October – 8 November 2018. The design of a black-neck stork was translated onto a punch-card before being fed through the Empisal KH-820. The yarn was reclaimed from a synthetic scarf purchased from a second-hand retailer. The knitting of reclaimed yarn was prevalent during the 1940s, when the “expediencies of wartime economy led to a national obsession with frugality.”\(^\text{39}\)

\(^{35}\) Guljajeva and Canet, “Interview with Varavara Guiljajeva and Mar Canet,” 71.
\(^{38}\) Ibid., 137.
The knitted compositions in *Shifting the Posts* were created on a Passap E6000 salvaged from the daughter of a practitioner who had been moved to a retirement home. The partial restoration of the machine required components sourced from interstate and overseas. The knitted compositions frequently exhibited ‘glitches’, which I addressed using hand stitching. In accordance with ‘the glitch aesthetic’, the imperfections provided an entry point for viewers.\(^40\) They make visible the mechanics of the machine knitting.\(^41\) The glitch aesthetic relates to the post-digital notion that the ‘digital’ equates to sterility and corporatisation.\(^42\) Subsequently, the imperfections have symbolic capital as signifiers of resistance by embracing antiquated technology.\(^43\)


\(^{43}\) Ibid.
The two knitted compositions in *Shifitng the Posts* illustrate a drone and a sheep. The latter is a depiction of Dolly the cloned sheep. They are part of a series titled *Redundancy Studies* and were numbered as opposed to individually titled. The content and materiality respond to aspects of New Mexico psychologist Chellis Glendinning’s “Notes Toward a Neo-Luddite Manifesto,” published in *Utne Reader* in 1990.44 This includes the principle that “All technologies are political... technologies are not neutral tools that can be used for good or evil.”45 She specifies both chemical technologies and genetic engineering technologies to be among the most destructive.46

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45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
Figure 129. A third artwork in the series was appropriated from a 19th century illustration of the Rawfolds Mill in Yorkshire, which was subject to a luddite attack on 11 April 1812. I knitted it on a Passap E-8000

All of the motifs knitted into compositions were designed using the Foshan papercutting technique. The symbolic capital of the designs has significantly increased through mechanically engaging the knitting process. This is with particular reference to the materiality of the objects produced.
Chapter 6: The Post-Digital Translation of Papercuts into Animation and Computer Games

The translation of papercuts into textiles by way of jacquard software provided a segue into digital animation and computer games. The knitted compositions in both *Shifting the Posts* and *Open Cut Mine* were juxtaposed by new media artworks that animated images generated by Wincrea knitting software. A similar animation was also exhibited as part of the inaugural *White Night Ballarat* staged on 18 February 2017.

Figures 130–131. *For Android* was exhibited on a variable message sign at *White Night Ballarat* 2017

In each of the artworks, the symbolic capital resided in the representation of sheep as a symbol of colonialism. This association dates back to the Highland Clearances in Scotland between 1810–1820, when the English Duke of Sutherland, George Granville Leveson-Gower, burned the cottages of thousands of Scottish families to establish sheep farms.¹ Although sheep were present on the first fleet in 1788, the Australian wool industry dates back to the arrival of fifteen Spanish merinos in 1796.² The initial flock died within the first year of settlement.³

³ Ibid.
This paradigm is enhanced by the materiality—or in this instance lack of materiality—in digital media. This is in reference to the syntagm of the 'bitmap'. The chrono-geographic reference to video games of the 1970s, such as Pong, symbolised technological development.\(^4\) During the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the export of technology was associated with “capitalist enterprise” and, subsequently, “Western social imaginary signification of development.”\(^5\) Therefore, it may be posited that the distribution of technology during the post-digital era is a device of cultural imperialism.\(^6\)


\[^6\] Ibid.
The video game in *Shifting the Posts* was titled *The Dream*. It is a ‘platformer’, referencing the format of games released during the early 1980s by former ‘hanafuda cards’ manufacturer Nintendo. The game mechanics involved manoeuvring the sprite, a sheep, through a cloud landscape. A cow is introduced, who is converted into a lamb when the sprite enters its hitbox. The objective of the game is to lead the lamb to the highest cloud platform, where it makes an ascension. Reflective of the origins of the graphics as papercut motifs, the characters are totemic symbols. Its quasi-religious narrative references “Mercerism,” a prevalent ideology in Philip K. Dick’s *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* from which the title of the artwork is derived.

![Figure 134. Screenshots from the video game The Dream](image)

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9 Ibid.
The interface of the game was designed using a variety of Adobe applications in the Creative Suite, including Photoshop, Illustrator and Animate. To chrono-geographically reference video games from the early 1970s to mid-1980s, the papercut motifs were scanned, translated into bitmap files in Photoshop, imported into Wincrea, imported into Animate and then coded. The text was created using Illustrator.

Although computer data tape and punch cards were progressively supplanted by inventions such as removable disks (in 1963) and memory chips (in 1967), the onscreen interface retained a jacquard-like gridded system of representation.11 This reflected the invention of raster graphics by Xerox PARC. The process was described by Anne Morgan Spalter in *The Computer in The Visual Arts* as follows:

> divid[ing] the screen into a mosaic of phosphor dots that were turned off and on by a beam that swept the screen methodically row by row. They called these rows rasters...

> Raster images require the storage and manipulation of many colour values, often as many as a million or more per image. The user creates and places a raster image in a temporary storage area called a frame buffer.12

In 1979, frame buffers were referred to as bitmaps in *Alto: A Personal Computer* written by Chuck Thacker, Ed McCreight, Butler Lampson, Robert Sproull and David Boggs.13 Although the terms are not interchangeable, the breaking up of images into “picture elements” was also abbreviated into “pixels.”14 This relationship can be illustrated by a statement in the column “ACM President’s Letter: Pixel Art” written by Adele Goulberg and Robert Flegal in 1982, as “a bitmap which indicates the black and white cells or pixels of the image being represented.”15

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To access the symbolic capital of the bitmap, I used Wincrea to recreate the distinctive ‘low resolution’ aesthetic. Like many jacquard weaving computer applications, Wincrea translates motifs into rows and stitches. The grid was used to signify frame buffers.

Figure 135. A screenshot of Wincrea, demonstrating how the gridding of bitmap images into rows for knitting resembles enlarged frame buffers

Whereas action script was used to create The Dream, the sheep animations at White Night Ballarat and Open Cut Mine were sequenced together frame by frame. For Android and Android Dreaming, in Ballarat and Gympie Regional Gallery respectively, were continuations of the series referencing Philip K. Dick. They introduced an element of repetition to signify cloning. The sheep are illustrations of ‘Dolly,’ who resulted from experiments at the Roslin Institute in the University of Edinburgh. She was “the first mammal to be cloned” in 1996.

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17 Ibid.
Both animations are looped sequences featuring sheep entering and leaving the screen. In *For Android*, which was situated at an intersection in Ballarat, Dolly is depicted walking across the large LCD screen. In *Android Dreaming*, played on a wall-mounted monitor, Dolly is shown falling as per a sequence in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, where a goat is pushed off a rooftop. *For Android* explores the distribution of technology as a form of cultural imperialism. Both animations explore the detrimental effects of technological determination outlined in Glendinning’s “Notes Toward a Neo-Luddite Manifesto.” In addition to “genetic engineering,” she favoured the “dismantling” of other “destructive technologies,” such as “computer technologies” and television.19

![Figure 136. Cory Arcangel, Super Mario Clouds v2k3, 2003. Modified computer game, Whitney Museum of Art](image)

The appropriation of “outmoded computer games” is a signature of quintessential post-digital artist Cory Arcangel.20 From turntables to plotter pens, Arcangel repurposes detritus that result from the rampant technological development of the digital age.21 His exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2011 titled *Cory Arcangel: Pro Tools* explored

19 Ibid.
21 Spears, "I Sing the Gadget Electronic."
video games from the 1970s onwards. The exhibition included an installation of *Super Mario Clouds*, a series which he commenced in 2002. Of his animations, Arcangel said, “a lot of my work isn’t really about playing. It’s about watching video games.” He was described by Barbara London, an associate curator in the Museum of Modern Art, as “the first in a young generation of digital hackers to really enter the art world.” Arcangel studied coding as part of an electronic music course at the Oberlin Conservatorium of Music in 1996. Prior to this time, he created animations by cutting and pasting graphics from video games.

Two of my exhibitions staged in China during early 2017, 帶走黑夾 and *Three Contained*, featured papercuts translated into vector-based animations. The opening of 帶走黑夾 featured the site-specific installation *Fly-by*. It consisted of a looped animation of the Ardeidae projected using a 8500 lumens Panasonic machine onto fog generated by a Chinese 1000w machine. The Ardeidae family includes both herons and egrets. When their routes are affected by metrological events, the intermittent/exploratory migrators settle upon discovering favourable conditions. Similar behaviour is exhibited by humans. According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, calamity catalysed the migration of over sixty-five million people in 2017. For Chinese audiences, however, the symbolic capital of the artwork resided in the birds being a symbol for longevity. Visitors to the installation also read the sequence as a critique on air pollution.

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24 Heilmann, "Cory Arcangel."
25 Spears, "I Sing the Gadget Electronic."
27 Heilmann, "Cory Arcangel."
29 Ibid.
Figures 137–139. These are photographs (left) of *Flyby*, a Happening that occurred at Heiqiao Art Space on 14 January 2017 in conjunction with the 带走黑桥 opening. The original papercuts (top) were traced by Avantix
Figures 140 – 142. A series of papercut installations and animations derived from them were exhibited in *Three Contained* art Egg Gallery in Caochangdi 26 February – 9 April 2017 (top, left). A still from *Perfume*, 2017
The second exhibition, *Three Contained*, was staged at Egg Gallery at Caochangdi, 26 February – 9 April 2017. A group exhibition, it also included the artwork of Cai Jin and Tao Aimin. Animations were played on a tablet beside the array of papercut installations used to create them. Their central theme was the role of bees in maintaining global ecosystems. According to “Why Are Bees Important? You Asked Google—Here’s the Answer,” an article written by Alison Benjamin in the *Guardian* in 2015, bees pollinate 84 percent of the crops grown for human consumption. Bees also indirectly sustain the meat and dairy industries by pollinating the vegetation consumed by livestock.

The compositions and animated sequences were titled *Perfume, Tea* and *Medicine*. In addition to bees, the floral motifs employed were jasmine, chrysanthemum and poppies. In each narrative, a bee is depicted pollinating, followed by the flowers being mechanically processed. In *Tea*, for example, the florals are illustrated falling into the formation of a vessel. They shake, rise and rotate to indicate water being added. To indicate consumption of the tea, the flowers fall to the bottom of the unseen vessel at the completion of the sequence.

The symbolic capital of the papercuts cum animated sequences resides in their association with “oriental shadow theatre.” Shadow puppetry is a separate tradition in China, known as 皮影, which is directly translated into English as ‘leather shadow’. In respect to the Western Han Dynasty folklore surrounding Wudi and Lady Li, its origins are shared with 剪纸 or Chinese papercutting. Folk art emerged between the first and second centuries and was popularised during the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE). Oriental theatre was present in.

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33 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
the Middle East by the thirteenth century and in Europe by the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{38} German animator Lotte Reiniger is considered the “creator of silhouette film.”\textsuperscript{39}

![Figures 143–144. (left) Animator Lotte Reiniger filming The Adventures of Prince Achmed between 1923 and 1926. (right) A still from the film](image1)

A contemporary exemplar for animated paper silhouette style animation is activist and artist Paul Chen. His breakthrough series of seven artworks was titled \textit{1st Light}.\textsuperscript{40} The installation responded to the post–9/11 political and religious tumult.\textsuperscript{41} The projection, positioned on the floor, “insinuates a shaft of light from a window” through which “shadowy objects and figures… float or fall.”\textsuperscript{42} The apocalyptic narrative references ‘the rapture’ in Christian dogma.\textsuperscript{43} The symbolic capital of the artwork also resides in references to classical Greek philosophy, by way of Plato’s Cave, and Renaissance geometry, by way of Alberti’s window.\textsuperscript{44} The dichotomy of his applying papercuts to the post-digital digital medium of vector-based animation also reflects the cultural heritage of the artist. Born in Hong Kong, Chan moved with his family to Nebraska in 1981, when he was a young child.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{38} Shadur and Shadur, \textit{Traditional Jewish Papercuts}, 14.
\textsuperscript{39} Pidhajny, “The Adventures of Prince Achmed.”
\textsuperscript{42} Lindsay, “Paul Chan,” \textit{Museo Magazine}.
\textsuperscript{43} Xiaoping Lin, \textit{Children of Marx and Coca-Cola: Chinese Avant-Garde Art and Independent Cinema} (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010), 228.
\textsuperscript{44} Lindsay, “Paul Chan, ” \textit{Museo Magazine}.
I used the same software in the creation of both the vector-based and the bitmap animations. However, the vector-based animations required the papercuts to undergo one of two processes to be converted into SVG files. In *Fly-by*, the papercuts were hand-traced by a technician at Scanning Conversions. The papercuts were scanned at 300dpi. The technician used a mouse to create a series of points, called vertices, through which a spline curve was formed.\(^{46}\) I converted the majority of papercuts in *Three Contained* using a function of Adobe Illustrator called ‘Image Trace.’ It used algorithms to apply a “threshold” to the scans of the papercuts and then “enforce connectivity” to create boundaries.\(^{47}\) The technology is also referred to as “Intelligent Scissors” or “Lazy Snapping.”\(^{48}\) Lazy Snapping was designed emulate the cutting of images from “magazines or picture books” using scissors.\(^{49}\) Intelligent Scissors was intended to provide an alternative to “inaccurate and laboriously unacceptable” hand-tracing.\(^{50}\) Edge detection technology dates back to the invention of the Roberts Cross algorithm in 1965.\(^{51}\)

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\(^{48}\) Xu, Kaplan, and Mi, "Computer-Generated Papercutting," 345.  
\(^{49}\) Yin Li, Jian Sun, Chi-Keung Tang, and Heung-Yeung Shum, "Lazy Snapping," 303.  
\(^{50}\) Mortensen and Barrett, "Intelligent Scissors for Image Composition," 191.  
Figure 146. An example of a papercut being hand-traced into a scalable vector graphic

A vector is defined as “a line with direction.” Reflective of the “philosophy of mathematics” being associated with “infinity,” vector graphics have the capacity to be rescaled without loss of detail. The ability to make “logarithms and trigonometric” was the primary function of computers from the *Analytics Engine* created by Charles Babbage in 1833. This precursor to “modern” computers had the capacity to input, store, process and output information. Prior to the invention of “Interactive Graphics” in 1963, computers operated using plotters, not unlike “Etch-a-Sketch machines” that could, effectively, only draw vectors.

Subsequently, vector-based technology predates the development of bitmaps by a decade. When papercutting is combined with vector-based animation a chrono-geographically-specific reference to Oriental theatre is emphasised. Bitmaps, through frame buffering, are visual manifestations of the legacy of the jacquard punch-cards. Both methods of constructing animations carry significant and distinct symbolic capital.

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55 Ibid.
56 Ibid., 13–24.
The last application of papercutting discussed in this chapter brings together both vector-based animation and the interactivity of video games through the medium of augmented reality (AR). Dr Ivan Sutherland, who invented ‘Integrated Graphics’ as a graduate student at MIT, is also attributed with the development of AR in 1968.57

*In and Of the Water* was one of the series commissioned by the Sunshine Coast Council for the Horizon Festival 2019. A diptych of wall-based installations and a freestanding artwork were created using cotton rag. They provided a background for award-winning animator Helena Papageorgiou.

![Figure 147. Two of the three compositions commissioned by the Sunshine Coast Council for the Horizon Festival 2019. They were created using cotton rag, glue and pins](image)

Her sequences were overlaid on mobile devices using the app EyeJack, a technology developed by Dr Stu Campbell (also known as Suti Ai).58 Unlike earlier applications of AR using mobile phones like *Human Pacman*, released in 2003, and *Pokemon Go*, released in


2016, EyeJack is not reliant on the Global Positioning System (GPS). The program is “trigger[ed]” through recognising edges and contrasts in colour and/or density. Subsequently, the papercuts provided mechanical access to AR. An iteration of the freestanding composition was also exhibited in the 5th Ranetas VR Fest in Alcanzi, Spain, 15 November–1 December 2019.

Figures 148–150. The cotton rag objects provided trigger images for the animations of Helena Papageorgiou

Chapter 7: The Post-Digital Translation of Papercuts Using CNC Cutting and Etching

The agency for papercutting to be mechanically translated into post-digital media is most apparent in its application with CNC laser etching and laser cutting. The first CNC machines were developed during the 1930s, as a means of storing information in early computers by way of perforating computer data tape.¹

In 1964, the first carbon dioxide laser was invented by electrical engineer Kumar Patel.² Through embracing SVG and CNC technology, papercut motifs can be fabricated into a diversity of materials.

This enables a post-digital interpretation of the materiality discovered by Henri Matisse in 1943: “drawing with scissors on sheets of paper coloured in advance... allows me to draw in colour.”³ It also creates the capacity for a “conflation of signifier and signified,” which is interpreted in the paradigm of semiotics as fetishism.⁴

In the first of three articles titled “The Problem of the Fetish,” published in Anthropology and Aesthetics in 1985, William Pietz described fetishism as,

irreducible materiality... the institutional construction of consciousness of the social value of things... not a material signifier referring beyond itself, but acts as a material space gathering an otherwise unconnected multiplicity into a unity of its enduring singularity.⁵

This principle was manifested in my *In The Water* series, which was exhibited in the group exhibition *Morphosis* at the Grey Street Gallery at the Queensland College of Art, Brisbane (22 January – 10 February 2019); the group exhibition *Ephemeral Landscape* at the Museo Gustavo de Maeztu, Navarra, Spain (June – July 2019); and as part of a collaboration at the Chalk Hill Residency Center in California on 16 February 2019. A study from this series was also exhibited in *No Waste Form* at the ADGY Cultural Exchange Centre in Beijing, China (8 October – 8 November 2018).

*Figures 151–152. In the Water, 2018. The screenshot (right) is a detail of an installation featuring one of my sculptures by Megan Roberts and Raymond Ghirardo. *Translucent* was produced at the Jentel Artist Residency in Wyoming. Reproduced from Megan Roberts & Raymond Ghirardo, "Translucent4"*
The sculptures were initially created using scrap clear acrylic from QCA. The papercut was hand-traced into a SVG and lasercut into the 3mm thick material. The acrylic cutouts were then placed into a ceramics kiln heated to 150°C. After approximately five minutes, each of the acrylic pieces was bent by hand. The subsequent sculptures illustrated the flowing of water. The artworks used plastic as a signifier of the “estimated 18 billion pounds of plastic waste” that enters the ocean every year.⁶

A similar process was used to create a series *The Wisdom Is in the Water*, which in title reflects a Taoist sentiment. The initial papercuts were traced into a SVG using the automotive trace function in Illustrator and modified by hand. They were then lasercut by Laws Laser into 0.9mm stainless steel. The cutouts were formed cold using wooden mallets and brushed using 80 grit sandpaper. Artworks from the series were exhibited in *Breaking Ground* at Gatakers Artspace in early 2019 and at *Crossing Boundaries* at Art Atrium in Sydney from 6 – 20 July 2019.

![The Wisdom Is in the Water, 2018](image)

### Figure 153. *The Wisdom Is in the Water*, 2018

The series *All That Remains* employed similar principles to explore the plight of the Howard River Toadlet or *Uperoleia Daviesae*. Two of the artworks were exhibited in *Art Meets Science*, staged at the Department of Environment and Science of the Queensland Government, 11 August – 2 September 2017. The ‘fossils’ were created from papercuts cum SVG files laser etched into sandstone by Brisbane-based laser-etching company Grand and Grave.7

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Under the advisement of Dr Andrew Amey at the Queensland Museum, the papercuts were created from the remains of a species similar to the Howard River Toadlet. The institution did not have a specimen of the species, which was listed as vulnerable by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 2012. It has a distribution of less than two hundred square kilometres in the catchments of the Howard and Elizabeth River near Darwin in the Northern Territory. Catalysts for the decline in population include urban development, weed encroachment and recreational misuse. Sand mining is the most pertinent threat to the species. The etching of a foot and a skull, in reference to the Howard River Toadlet, into the sandstone utilised its materiality as a signifier of the sand mining.

10 Lupin, Emma and Dr Greg Leach, Secret World: Carnivorous Plants of the Howard Sand and Sheets (Darwin: Nomad Art Gallery, 2015).
11 Ibid.
Figures 155–158. This series of photographs demonstrates the process used to imitate a focus of a Howard River Toadlet. The original papercuts were created from a specimen of a similar species at the Queensland Museum (top left and right). A scalable vector graphic traced from the papercuts (bottom left) was laser etched into sandstone at Grand & Grave in Brisbane (bottom right).

An example of CNC technology enabling the reproduction of a papercut design into a large-scale public artwork is *Electric Sheep*. It was installed at the Bligh and Barney Reserve, Circular Quay, as part of the City of Sydney Lunar New Year Lantern Festival, 1 – 10 February 2019.12 This was one of three installations commissioned in 2018, each representing an animal in the Chinese zodiac. The practice of allocating an animal to each year is a contemporary manifestation of totemism. This is with reference to the theories of Claude Levi-Strauss, in which the term is used as a means of social organisation.13

12 "Sheep Lantern Pre-Build Meeting Minutes," *Creative City* (Sydney: City of Sydney, 2018).
Figure 159. One of the four sheet lanterns installed at the Bligh and Barney Research at Circular Quay as part of the City of Sydney Lunar New Year Lantern Festival 1-10 February 2019. Photographed by Christine Ko

Figure 160. A drawing created by Partridge Engineering using a render by Eddie Taylor. Taylor’s render, created on Rhinoceros 3D from a papercut, was used in all correspondence prior to the final build.
Figures 161–162. The lanterns were built by Pink Cactus Props. Components were lasercut (top). A crane was required to weld the two halves together. The small red sheep is a maquette from an earlier version of the design (bottom)
The design was developed with the City of Sydney, Partridge Engineering and Pink Cactus Props. The initial concepts were submitted as visualisations created using Solidworks, a process which will be investigated in Chapter 8. The 3D models were built from papercuts and textiles stretched over a wire armature. Several versions were created to address the issue of light transference. This was tested using maquettes illuminated by a 9V battery.

Once a suitable papercut version was created, it was flat-packed and sent to Sydney-based modeller Eddie Taylor. His render, created using Rhinoceros 3D, was used in all communications from the designing of internal frame by engineers to the promotion of the event by the City of Sydney. Pink Cactus Props referred to the render but recreated the SVG files for the lasercutting of the design in mild steel. Each component was cut, labelled, and welded. With a total weight of around 1.65 tons, the work components required a small crane to move and assemble them. The 6 mm thick structure was painted and cast acrylic sheets were inserted. The lanterns were illuminated by LED Lights strategically secured throughout the structure. They were coated with a coloured film.

In addition to *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* by Philip K. Dick, the artwork made reference to the popular children’s book by Mem Fox’s and Judy Horacek, *Where Is the Green Sheep?* Aside from green, the colours it featured are traditionally used in Chinese papercutting. Red symbolises good luck. The blue also made reference to the integration of papercutting into Song Dynasty ceramics. During the Song Dynasty, papercuts were also secured to lanterns. One variety, called the “walking horse,” utilised the heat emanating from the light source to create movement. Subsequently, the shadows of the people moving through the lanterns were intended to simulate the flickering of a candle.

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14 “Sheep Lantern Pre-Build Meeting Minutes,” *Creative City.*
15 “Sheep Lantern Pre-Build Meeting Minutes,” *Creative City.*
18 Ibid., 22.
19 Ibid.
The use of SVG files and CNC lasercutting enabled the translation of a papercut lantern into a public artwork that was both interactive and substantial in scale. It embraced the symbolic capital in both the traditions of papercutting and lantern making. Audiences also responded to the symbolic references of sheep as both a Chinese totem or zodiac sign, a symbol of British colonialism, Dolly the cloned sheep, Philip K. Dick’s electric sheep, and Mem Fox’s and Judy Horacek’s green sheep.

Figure 163–164. Maquettes for *Flower by the Gate* handcut in paper (left) and copper (right)

*The Flower by the Gate*, commissioned by the Brisbane City Council in 2016–2017, similarly utilised a combination of papercutting, SVG files and CNC routing. The subsequent artwork consisted of an illuminated bronze flower with a granite base. In addition to the materiality of the sculpture, the symbolic capital resides in the narratives associated with the *bauhinia x blakeana*. The artwork is part of the *Beneath the Bauhinia* series discussed in Chapter 3. 洋紫 , which translates directly into English as “foreign purple bramble,” became the floral emblem of Hong Kong, and the central motif it the flag of the territory in 1997.²⁰

²⁰ Asher, "How a Weird Hybrid Plant Ended up on the Flag of Hong Kong."
The sculpture is situated on the corner of Albert and Mary Streets, the location of the original Chinatown of Brisbane and a “red light” district during the late nineteenth century.21 Subsequently, a red patina was applied to the bronze and the granite was fitted with a red LED light.22 The title of the artwork partly acknowledges the proximity of the site to the entrance gates of the City Botanic Gardens. It also presents a metaphor of entry, in reference to migrants and visitors coming to Australia via Hong Kong.

The original maquettes for the commission were created using paper and copper affixed to small pieces of marble and sandstone. Although the selection of granite was symbolic of the Granite Belt in Southern Queensland, small portions of unprocessed sandstone and marble were readily available. This was opposed to granite, which stone suppliers imported processed from Southern China. The piece of granite used in the final artwork was sourced and processed in Australia. A corner was honed into a boulder to symbolise the turning of a corner in Sino-European relations in South-East Queensland. It recognises the history of the site being host to one of the “most concentrated attack of xenophobia in Australia’s colonial history.”23 Thus symbolic capital of the material of granite, as affiliated with memorials, was also utilised.

A pattern was required to order to convert an intimately sized papercut into a bronze sculpture approximately one cubic metre in scale. The sand mould was created from a 12 mm polyvinyl chloride (PVC) foam cutout routed from a SVG file that was hand-traced by a technician at the digital processing company Avantix. The PVC foam cutout was heated and hand-shaped, using a large oven heated to 200°C and heat guns. The bronze version of the motif was cast in sections, welded and grinded. The stippled surface, resembling the grain of cold pressed paper, was added mechanically prior to the application of a red patina. The solution was formulated by UAP technician Matteo Fantini using a liver of sulphur, iron oxide and ferric oxide.

*Flowers by the Gate* used a combination of papercutting and the post-digital technologies of SVG files and CNC routing to access the medium of bronze and the symbolic capital associated with its materiality. The processes investigated in this chapter, such as lasercutting and laseretching, are subtractive. The capacity of papercutting to access the symbolic capital of materials using the additive post-digital technology of 3D printing is the focus of Chapter 8.

**Figures 167–171.** The PVC foam pattern was hand-shaped (top left and right) prior to being sand-cast in bronze (bottom). The photographs (middle) were provided by UAP
Figures 172–174. Matteo and I applying a red patina, of his formulation, to the sculpture (top). The installed sculpture during the day (bottom right) photographed by Daniel Templeman. The installed sculpture in the evening (bottom left)
Chapter 8. The Post-digital Translation of Papercuts into Additive Manufacturing

The final chapter of this exegesis examines the capacity of papercutting to mechanically access the medium of Additive Manufacturing (AM) or 3D printing. The term is applied to a method of fabricating objects that deposits or bind materials in layers to form a “solid, three-dimensional object.” Predictability, repetition and “systematic process” are traits that categorise 3D printing as a form of manufacturing.

Its invention is attributed to engineer Chuck Hall. He developed a technique of using an ultra-violet laser to solidify photopolymer resin, called stereolithography (SLA), in 1983. Between 1984 and 1986, a similar process of melting together particles using a laser, Selective Laser Sintering (SLS), was developed by Dr Carl Deckard and Professor Joe Beamen in the Mechanical Engineering Department at the University of Texas, Austin. In 1988, engineer Scott Crump invented fused deposition modelling (FDM), which involves the heating, extrusion and depositing of thermoplastic filament.

Figures 175–176. An SLA machine running (left) in the World 3D Printing Technology Industry Association in Beijing and a UV curing chamber (right) at the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA)

2 Ibid.
What started in his kitchen with a hot glue gun, wax and plastic evolved into a system of 3D printing that has catalysed a movement described as a new industrial revolution. Desktop FDM printers have democratised manufacturing by: (1) reducing lead-time; (2) reducing the need for complex skills; (3) reducing need of specialist equipment; (4) reducing waste, and (5) increasing capacity to customise. The FDM process is also highly adaptable with the printers presently able to process over 120 materials including metal alloys, wood, ceramics, salt and chocolate.

AM may be considered a “direct descendant” of CNC milling, a technology which was developed during the 1940s and came to prominence during the 1950s and 1960s. In 3D Printing for Artists, Designers and Makers, Stephen Hoskins wrote of the technology:

> if you buy almost any part or piece of machinery—whether metal or plastic if it has not itself been milled by a CNC machine then the tool or mould that made that part of piece will have been milled by a CNC machine.

Although invented as a form of rapid prototyping, 3D printing evolved to include rapid tooling during the mid-1990s. The capacity to print heat-resistant polymers and metal alloys enabled the printing of customised tools and moulds. Direct manufacturing of products using 3D printing emerged during the late 2000s. The Dutch 3D printing bureau service Shapeways was founded in 2008.

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9 Hoskins, 3D Printing for Artists, Designers and Makers, 24.

10 Ibid., 25.


12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Hoskins, 3D Printing for Artists, Designers and Makers, 52.
Despite the prevalence of AM in the Maker Movement, the Australian art galleries sector has been slow to uptake 3D printing as a distinct medium. This may reflect the shunning of early computer art during the 1960s, which did not have the “look and feel” associated with “fine art.” The first exhibition of “computer-generated” art occurred two years after the introduction of Interactive Graphics in 1963. Prior to this time, computer users worked “blind” until the images and/or documents were printed. Staged at Howard Wise Gallery in New York in 1965, Computer-Generated Pictures was primarily populated by the works of scientists and mathematicians, including Frieder Nake, George Nees and Michael Noll.

Figure 177. Kenneth Knowlton and Leon Harmon, *Nude*, 1966. Black and white computer-processed photograph

One of the strategies employed by computer artists during the digital era to imbue their images with symbolic capital was chrono-geographically-specific representation. A primary example was the digital reproduction of Piet Mondrian’s *Composition with Lines* (1917) by engineer Michael Noll titled *Computer Composition with Lines* (1965). His contemporaries, scientists Leon Harmon and Kenneth Knowlton, similarly employed the visual trope of the odalisque in *Mural* in 1966. The digital print involved simulating a photographic half-tone by replacing selected pixels with “α” symbols.

17 Ibid., 16–24.
18 Ibid., 13.
21 Ibid., 15.
The propensity to appropriate analogue artworks to imbue digital artwork with symbolic capital remained prevalent up until the 1980s. This may be evidenced by the ‘animated paintings’ of Lillian Schwartz.\(^{22}\) *Mona-Leo* (1986), for example, is a computer-generated image that juxtaposes the portrait and self-portrait of Mona Lisa and Leonardo da Vinci respectively.\(^{23}\)

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\(^{22}\) Popper, *Art of the Electronic Age*, 85.

Despite the technology being available for a decade, the democratisation of personal computers is attributed to the release of the 128k Macintosh by Apple in 1984. In the same year, Masaki Fujihata produced *Owan no Fune ni Hashi no Kai*, which translates to “have a bowl of rice for dinner.” He is considered a pioneer in sound, installation and interactive artwork. The composition, which depicts a traditional lacquered rice bowl, presented a precipice his practice. The object was sliced using computer algorithms. Bereft of its functionality, it becomes exclusively an object of aesthetic value. Fujihata became increasingly focused on the “abstract conception of universal space” created by computers. In 1987, out of a desire to incorporate tactility, he employed a CNC milling machine to create a series titled *Geometric Love*. This was a precursor to *Forbidden Fruits* (1989), possibly the earliest examples of SLA being applied to make artwork.

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27 Ippolito, “From the Avant-Garde,” 149.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid., 148.
Prior to this time, artists used digital media to create representations by inputting attributes of physical objects. Fujihata has created physical objects by outputting their representations that were created using digital media. The resulting artwork not only reflected their ontology but the developing ubiquity of computers and, subsequently, the imbuing of digital aesthetics with symbolic capital.

The phenomena has been described by artist, writer and “technologist” James Bridle as “eruptions of the digital into the physical world.” The experiments by Fujihata can be categorised as a nascent form of Parametricism, a term coined by architect Patrik Schumacher at the 11th Architecture Biennale in Venice in 2008. During the presentation titled “Parametricism as Style—Parametricist Manifesto,” Schumacher stated that the “pervasive” “paradigm” emerged at the beginning of the 1990s. Although typically affiliated with architecture, the term has also been applied to furniture, fashion and sculpture. In addition to entailing the application of parametric principles, which is inextricable to CAD, the style emphasises “fabrication-based form-finding” and the “optimisation [of] processes.”

34 Ibid., 1.
36 Schumacher, "Tectonism in Architecture, Design and Fashion"; Leech, "James Bridle—Waving at the Machines."
Figures 180–182. Three artworks demonstrating the progression of Masaki Fujihata. *Owan no Fune ni Hashi no Kai* (1984) Video Still (top) was presented in 1987 as part of the *Geometric Love* series. *Geometric Love* is noted for the application of CNC routing, as demonstrated by *Torso* (bottom left). This was followed by *Forbidden Fruits* printed using SLS.
There is a sympathetic relationship between papercut motifs and parametric design. The conversion of binary bitmaps into scalable vector graphics was examined in Chapter 6. In parametric design, the vectors operate as a series of ‘parameters’ or boundaries. Parametric may be interpreted as “a linear relationship between a parameter and a geometric manipulation.”

Chapter 3 examined the relationship between the perforations in Chinese papercuts and the linear perspective incorporated into Renaissance paintings, prints and drawings. This included discussing the theory by Panoskfy that the compositions constituted “slices of reality.” The techniques are methods of constructing *perspectiva artificialis* or two-dimensional representations of *perspectiva naturalis*. Of the latter, Alberti wrote in his treatise on painting in 1435,

> Some lines are called straight, others curved... If many lines are joined closely together like threads in cloth, they will create a surface... [it] is like a skin stretched over the whole.

Accordingly, the 3D prints in this doctorate have been constructed by bending and/or joining parametric patches created from papercuts.

One of the most significant developments in CAD occurred in 1959. A mathematician working for Citroen, Paul de Faget de Casteljau, developed a system which allowed vectors to be altered by external “control polygons.” Designers were subsequently enabled to intuitively manipulate the curves without “advanced mathematical training.” This discovery was attributed to Pierre Bezier, a mathematician working for the rival manufacturer Renault, during the 1960s. Although the research of both mathematicians was near identical, Casteljau’s discovery was of propriety and Bezier’s discovery was published. The Bezier curve is the most fundamental of the parametric curves.

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38 Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, 60.
43 Ibid., 5–6.
44 Ibid., 7.
Basic splines or b-splines, the “recursive evaluation” of which is attributed to Carl de Boor from General Motors in 1960, is another variety of parametric curves that has become integral to CAD.\textsuperscript{45} It is considered a generalisation of the de Casteljau algorithm.\textsuperscript{46} Non-Uniform Rational B-Splines or NURBS subsequently evolved during the 1960s as a “system of curves and surfaces in homogenous (or projective) space.”\textsuperscript{47}

\textbf{Figure 183.} In \textit{Perspective as Symbolic Form} Panofsky described Renaissance compositions that utilised \textit{perspectiva artificialis} as “slices” of reality

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 10.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.
Figure 184. This drawing by Gabinetto dei Disegni (left) created in Florence c. 1450 is an example of how ptolomaic cartography combined with *perspectiva naturalis* during the fifteenth century.

Consistent with Alberti’s description of surfaces being like “a very loosely woven veil... divided up by thicker threads into many parallel square sections,” parametric patches, made up of curves, could be manipulated by manoeuvring single polygons or vertices like pulling a thread. ⁴⁸

Figure 185. The cubic parametric curve (aka Beizer curve) was attributed to Pierre Bezier, an engineer for Rénault, over a decade after it was invented by Paul de Faget de Casteljau.

Papercuts cum scalable vector graphics can be imported into 3D modelling software as design web drawings (dwf) and readily converted into parametric patches or NURBS.

The joining of parametric patches to create enclosed forms was achieved using “Boolean operations.” These are a set of program functions named after George Boole, who created “an algebra of logic” consisting of “AND, OR, and NOT” during the nineteenth century. In 3D modelling software, this equates to unions, intersections, difference and exclusion. Subsequently, Boolean operations enabled both the joining and cutting of the papercuts cum surfaces. This allowed for the construction of papercut-esque objects in *perspectiva artificialis*.

In Leon Battisa Alberti’s treatise on sculpture, translated from Latin and published in 1569, it is written:

> Some [sculptors] proceed by adding and taking away, such as those who worked in wax of clay, whom the Greeks call *plasticous* and the Romans *fictores* (modellers); others merely by taking away... The third kind are those who work solely by addition.

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50 Ibid.
51 Ibid.
I used Solidworks, Rhinoceros 3D and 3DS a majority of the 3D modelling applications, they offer a post-digital immersion into fifteenth-century *perspectiva artificialis*, with particular reference to a “Cartesian coordinate system” viewed through a series of Alberti’s “open windows.”

![Figure 187. Giacomo Barozzi de Vignola, *Le Du Regole Della Prospectiva Practica*, 1583](image)

![Figure 188. The ‘Columbus Map’ (right) was thought to have been drawn by Christopher and Bartolomeo in 1490, prior to their discovery of “The New World”](image)

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The parity between papercutting processes and AM extends beyond the CAD as the designs are “sliced” into layers for printing using G-code. G-code is also prevalent in the programming of CNC machines. In the article “3D Printing: State of the Art and Future Perspectives,” published by the Journal of Cultural Heritage in 2017, the authors note:

3D printers are also CNC machines, the only difference is that instead of removing material they add it, which makes them an additive technology, allowing three-dimensional objects to be created by adding material to material layer by layer.

My experimentation in converting papercuts into 3D printing commenced with a sculpture titled Tear. Like, Fujihata’s Forbidden Fruits, it was an SLA resin print. It was used in a direct manufacturing context. The papercut of a ripple of water was scanned on a flatbed at 300dpi. It was then converted into a scalable vector graphic using the image trace function on Adobe Illustrator. The vertices manually realigned prior to the drawing being exported as a dwf file. Two versions of the drawing, one with the interior parameters removed, were imported into Solidworks. The drawings were converted into a 3D object using the extrude and flex functions. It was printed at the World 3D Printing Technology Industry Association (W3PTIA) in Beijing.

Figure 189. Tear, 2018. This detail demonstrates the distinct marks where the photo-sensitive polymers were fused together in layers.

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While parametric design was applied to create *Tear*, it is arguably not an example of parametricism. Although 3D printing was employed to create an object that would be difficult to replicate through other forms of fabrication, it also represents an attempt to transcend the constraints of the medium. This manifested in the artwork undergoing extensive filing and sanding. A polyethylene varnish was applied to the surface. An extension to the *In the Water* series explored in Chapter 7, the artwork explores the contamination of water.

The symbolic capital of this artwork resides in both an affiliation between 3D printing and science and the application of 3D printing as tool. Hoskins observes that

> many craft workers making furniture today—in addition to being completely au fait with powered hand and machine tools—would also possess a CNC router. The crux of this argument is simple that the adoption of new technology requires a new set of skills without throwing out the skills and material knowledge inherent in all of the previous technologies.57

The application of AM in this doctorate also subscribes to the post-digital notion of hybridity raised by Ludovico in 2012.58

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57 Hoskins, *3D Printing for Artists, Designers and Makers*, 62.
Exemplars within the Australian contemporary art industry to have embraced the symbolic capital of 3D printing as connoting scientific/technological development include post-human performance artist Stelarc. In 2006, the construction of *Partial Head* involved the scanning and “digital translating” of his face over a hominid skull. It was subsequently printed in ABSi plastic and seeded with living cells. The sculpture was kept alive in a “custom engineered bioreactor.”

CAT scanning, computer modelling and Rapid Prototyping (RP), as it was termed at the time, were pioneered in a visual arts context by American artist Michael Rees in the mid-1990s. In 2001, his *Ajna Spine Series* was exhibited at the Whitney Biennial and his *BitStreams* exhibition was held at the Whitney Museum. The SLS-printed sculptures combined “eastern spiritual ideas, such as chakras, and western technologies.”

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60 Dormer, “Refining the Human Body as ‘Meat, Metal and Code’,” *Sleek Art and Photography*.

61 “Partial Head,” *Stelarc*.


63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.
Figure 191. Partial Head by Stelarc inside a custom engineered bioreactor/incubator

Figure 192. The Ajna Spine Series produced by Michael Rees between 1995 and 2001 as exhibited at the 2001 Whitney Bitstreams Exhibition
Architect and technologist Associate Professor Roland Snooks is another practitioner pioneering 3D printing within the Australian museum and galleries sector. In 2018, Snooks contributed a monumental sound and architectural installation, titled *Floe*, to the inaugural National Gallery of Victoria International Biennial. The composition comprised over 70 polymer panels, each approximately 180 cm high. FDM printed using a robotic arm in clear plastic filament, the sculpture was intended to refract light and bear resemblance to an ice glacier. The structure also reverberated a soundscape by Philip Samartzis. It was constructed using sound recordings from the Antarctic. The intention of the collaborators was to emphasise the “fragility” of the aforementioned region, and acknowledge “our responsibility to preserve it.”

![Figure 193. Floe by Roland Snooks, installed at the National Gallery of Victoria in 2018, is an example of large format direct manufacturing](image)

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66 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.; Parsons, "Roland Snooks' 3D-Printed Glacier Installation Takes Shape at NGV."
70 Ibid.
71 Parsons, "Roland Snooks' 3D-Printed Glacier Installation Takes Shape at NGV."
Another artist to embrace the ubiquity of AM in the medical and biological sciences as symbolic capital in the Australia visual arts industry is Anne Noble, Professor of Fine Arts from Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand. The exhibition of *Eidolon (II) #3* in the 9th Asia Pacific Triennial at the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art in late 2018–early 2019 is an example.72 Between 2017 and 2019 Nobel exhibited SLA bees alongside the source imagery for their modelling, a series of dead bee portraits taken using an electron microscope.73

Figure 194. *Eidolon (II) #3* by Anne Noble was exhibited at the 9th Asia Pacific Triennial at the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art

Although not derivative of Noble’s artwork, this doctorate does include a series of 3D printed bees. These sculptures built upon the series of papercuts cum vector-based animations documented in Chapter 6. Using an approach similar to Noble’s, environmental sustainability was investigated. However, the PLA bees printed using FDM were also an investigation into materiality and, subsequently, into artifice. Beeswax is a significant

precursor to plastic, the applications of which, such as waterproofing, date back to the seventh millennium BCE.\textsuperscript{74}

The highly visible layers produced by using an affordable desktop FDM printer, in this instance a Flashforge Adventurer 3, also made visual reference to lo-fi rasters. The process has parity to the extrusion of wax by bees to build honeycomb in layers. In title, the composition “telling the bees” makes reference to the ritual of informing bees of news to prevent colonies from absconding their hives.\textsuperscript{75} The practice was purportedly prevalent during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in North America and Western Europe.\textsuperscript{76} It features two bees—a drone and a worker bee—in dialogue.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image1.png}
\caption{Figure 195. \textit{Telling the Bees}, 2019, installed in \textit{My Optic} group exhibition, Arteriet, Norway}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{76} English, ""Telling the Bees,"" \textit{Jstor Daily}. 
A study consisting of a bee and honeycomb was initially printed using an Ultimaker 3 by technical services at QCA. The bee designs were generated from scanned papercuts, imported into Solidworks from Adobe illustrator. The larger bee designs were also modified prior to printing using Z Brush. A larger version of this composition was printed using a Flashforge Adventurer 3 and a 3DP printer. The latter was a machine accessed at ARC Hardware Incubator, Fortitude Valley, Brisbane. The capacity of the larger PLA bee composition to be cast in bronze, using a lost-wax process, is presently being investigated.

Figures 196–198. The study for this artwork was printed in PLS on Ultimaker versions two and three. The bee was printed on an Ultimaker 3 with water soluble support material. The size was 11 x 18 x 25cm
Figures 199–200. A larger version, 21x45x40cm, was printed on a large format 3Dp printer at ARC Hardware Incubator using a 3DP printer and on a Flashforge Adventurer 3.

ARC Hardware Incubator is a private enterprise designed to assist start-ups to prototype products. The organisation was able to provide access to both large format printing and training in post-print finishing. A second artwork was partially produced on the premises using an open-sourced RepRap style 3D printer and completed using a Flashforge Adventurer 3.

*What Was and Will Never Be* embraces direct manufacturing by using PLA wood filament. It explores a disjunction between the doctrines of the twenty-first century Maker Movement and the nineteenth-century Arts and Craft Movements in England and North America. The craft movement lead by William Morris posited “beauty and quality... could be achieved only by the skilled hand labour of artisans, and not by machines.” Conversely, the Maker Movement celebrates the autonomy afforded to designers by “computer-controlled machines” that purportedly negates the requirement for knowledge of manufacturing processes. The Arts and Crafts Movement also emphasised the use of “honest” materials which were locally sourced. By contrast, in the Maker Movement “made locally” is interpreted as the capacity to directly manufacture products using AM with imported filament. *What Was and Will Never Be* comprises a 3D printed wooden mallet that is symbolic of handcrafted furniture. A clear-winged, wood-boring moth is depicted consuming the primary object.

80 Sommer and Rago, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, 12–16.
Figures 201–202. What Was and Never Will Be, 2019
Figures 203–208. Different stages of developing the print *What Was and Never Will Be* from papercut (top left) to paper sculpture (top right) to CAD modelled design (middle). The uncanny texture of wood (bottom) was achieved through post-print finishing. This involved both sanding and soldering components together.
What Was and Will Never Be was initially constructed as a paper effigy. The papercuts were scanned at 300dpi and converted into scalable vector graphics using Adobe Illustrator. They were imported into 3DS Max. In the designs created using Solidworks, the papercut cum dwg files were extruded and joined together. By contrast, the 3DS Max designs used the dwg files to remove components from digitally created solid bodies to create texture.

This hyper-real appearance was enhanced through the alignment of the layers to simulate a wood grain. Aspects of the mallet were also created in sections and joined using a soldering iron to connote the splitting of wood through age. The prints were also extensively filed and sanded.

What Was and Will Never Be demonstrates the distinct capacity of AM to create artworks that explore materiality. It conflates the signifier and signified by using 3D printed wood, a composite of PLA and wood particles, to investigate the debasing of the material through manufacturing methods.82

The preeminent sculptor utilising the medium of 3D printing in the Australian contemporary art scene,83 Louis Pratt is credited by the Museum of Applied Arts and Science as pioneering the Australian “3D printing and Open Source Movement.”84 Pratt scans organic material, “data which is manipulated with algorithmic software” or distorted using “Boolean functions to delete parts” prior to printing.85 In her extensive survey of post-digital art and craft, Digital Handmade, Lucy Johnston describes Pratt’s process as follows:

Each sculpture is printed in multiple pieces, using thermal plastic printers, and assembled and finished with sanding and painting. Even using high-definition 3D printers to accelerate the process, most of Pratt’s larger works take a minimum of 800 hours to print.86

86 Ibid.
The award-winning artist is best known for a series using coal to explore the issue of environmental sustainability.\(^87\)

![Figure 209. Louis Pratt Coal King, 2015](image)

3D prints made by Pratt are also used in the lost-wax casting, a process which was engaged as early as the 1990s by American visual artist and “industrial 3D-printing” visionary Bathsheba Grossman.\(^88\) Grossman was introduced to sculpting as part of the “general education requirements” of a degree in mathematics at Yale University.\(^89\) She also undertook a Master of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania, where studied casting in metal.\(^90\)

Although, Grossman initially used “starch-based 3D printing“ to create patterns for lost-wax casting, it was her adoption of the direct manufacturing technique of ‘binder jetting’ metal that made her sculptures “affordable and accessible to a wider audience.”\(^91\) In the catalogue for *Out of Hand: Materialising the Postdigital*, which was exhibited at the Museum of Art

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\(^88\) Johnston, *Digital Handmade: Craftsmanship and the New Industrial Revolution*, 89.


\(^90\) Ibid.

\(^91\) Johnston, *Digital Handmade: Craftsmanship and the New Industrial Revolution*, 89.
and Design in New York in 2013, Grossman stated: “My work is about life in three
dimensions: working with symmetry and balance, getting from the origin to infinity, and
always finding beauty in geometry.” Each of her complex geometric designs takes
approximately three months to model. Grossman also creates “clay sketch[es]” prior to
engaging CAD.

Figure 210. Examples of sculptures by Bathsheba Grossman

During early 2019, I created a composition that explores a fusion between bronze age and
post-digital technologies in the study for Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow. This is symbolised
through the materiality of bronze and the fabrication technique of rapid tooling using AM.
Experimentations with bronze, c. 2000–150 BCE, gave rise to the Shang Dynasty, a period of
great technological development in China. The region is presently making significant
advances in AM technology, with the production of the world’s largest 3D printed pavilion in
2015 and the development of ceramic printing in microgravity in 2018. According to
Forbes, the collective investment into the development of AM by institutions in China
exceeded 1 billion US dollars in 2017.

92 Robert T. Labaco and Museum of Arts and Design, Out of Hand: Materializing the Postdigital (New York:
94 Ibid.
95 Rayna and Striukova, “From Rapid Prototyping to Home Fabrication: How 3D Printing Is Changing Business
Model Innovation,” 218.
Printing in Microgravity,” China Daily, 19 June 2018, accessed 16 February 2019,
98 Ralph Jennings, “China Lays Groundwork for Asia, World Lead in 3D Printing,” Forbes, 1 February 2018,
The artwork is an extension of the *Beneath the Bauhinia* series investigated in Chapter 2, with an emphasis on the scientific and cross-cultural exchange aspects of the narrative. It consists of two intertwining bauhinia flowers that have been SLA printed and cast in bronze.

In late 2019, a team was assembled to thoroughly examine the processes of rapid tooling using PLA pioneered by Grossman. In addition to utilising Griffith University technical services, the case study engaged both W3PTIA and the Perides Art Foundry. The process of creating investment moulds to create bronze sculptures was established by the Akkadian period in Mesopotamia. Subsequently, a cotton ball and stem were utilised as the motifs, as the crop was propagated during the period.

Figures 214–215. A cotton stem and ball effigy was created in cotton rag prior to being modelled in Rhinoceros 3D.

The designs were SLA and FDM printed using a Formlab 2 and a Flashforge Adventurer 3 in resin, castable wax resin and PLA. The resin version was moulded in ‘Pinkysil’ silicone and cast in wax as a control. The investment moulds were ceramic. The wax and PLA were burnt out at 600°C prior to the ceramic being vitrified at 900°C. A high heat was utilised to preserve the overhangs of the intricate design. A fourth version of the design was also printed in aluminium, which allowed for the highest detail of the materials used in direct metal laser sintering (DMLS).
Figures 216–220. Rapid tooling using PLA, SLA printed wax and wax cast from a silicone mould (top 3 images). In the case of the latter, detail was lost due to the overhangs breaking (bottom 2 images). The casting was undertaken in Perides Art Foundry.
Figure 221. The results of lost wax and PLA casting in bronze and aluminium
Figures 222–224. Direct metal laser sintering was engaged at W3PTIA using aluminium (top) allowed for the highest resolution of 3microns or a layer height of 0.03mm. The ball component was not successfully printed owing to the requirement to remove support from the fragile overhangs.

Although the DMLS of aluminium enabled a later height of 0.04 mm or 40 microns, the printed object was unable to match the level of detail achieved through lost wax casting. This is with particular reference to the design printed in SLA wax and cast in bronze. The pattern was printed in a layer height of 0.05 mm or 50 microns. However, the requirement to remove support from the DMLS version meant that the ball motif was unable to be printed without damaging the fragile overhangs. Presently, there are not services available for the DMLS of bronze.
A fifth version of the design was printed by the Advanced Design Prototyping Technologies Institute (ADaPT) on the Gold Coast for exhibition in the Newcastle iteration of the *Stopping Time: Material Prints from 3000BCE to Now*.

This was undertaken in SLS nylon, which has the capability of printing a layer height of 0.1 mm or 100 microns. To account for the lower resolution, or higher layer height and micron level, the size of the cotton ball was increased in size. Unlike the DMLS or SLA versions, this iteration of the design was de-powdered from its support material. The composition explored the materiality of nylon through depicting cotton. It was a continuation of the knitted compositions in Chapter 5. The series employed acrylic yarn to depict sheep and polyester to depict cotton. This artwork also paid homage to the SLS prints of Michael Rees, who pioneered the exhibition of this medium in the museum and galleries sector of North America during the 1990s.
Figures 226–227. A fifth exhibition version of the design was printed to be used in the Newcastle iteration of *Stopping Time: Material Prints from 3000BCE to Now*. It was printed at the Advanced Design Prototyping Technologies Institute on the Gold Coast.

3D printing is becoming increasingly ubiquitous as an effective method of materialising designs created and/or distorted in *perspectiva artificialis* into *construzione legittima* or a legitimate construction. 101 Although the visual arts sector has been relatively slow to embrace the technology, the symbolic capital of AM as a scientific tool is recognised in this paradigm. Engaging 3D printing to direct manufacture objects also provides access to the materiality and, subsequently, the symbolic capital of a broad range of substances.

Parametric curves and papercutting have a sympathetic relationship. Subsequently, the two-dimensional scanning of papercuts to be converted into surfaces in CAD software is an efficient method of inputting visual data. This demonstrates the capacity of papercutting to provide mechanical access to AM.

Conclusion

This doctoral project was designed to investigate the agency of papercutting beyond paper as an independent medium movement in the contemporary art sectors of Europe and North America that occurred between the mid-1990s and the advent of post-digitalism in the 2010s. The first reference to ‘post-digital’ occurred in the year 2000, with the publishing of *The Postdigital Membrane* by Robert Pepperell and Michael Punt.¹ However, the term was first applied to the medium of paper in 2012 in *The Mutation of Publishing Since 1894* by Alessandro Ludovico.² The exhibition *The First Cut: Paper at the Cutting Edge*, which celebrated paper as independent medium, also occurred in the same year at Manchester Art Gallery.³ In the catalogue, the curators Natasha Howes and Fiona Corridan stated that the myth of the paperless office “never quite materialised.”⁴ The trope of the digital era originated from an article published by *Business Week* in New York in 1975, with 1995 specified as the anticipated date of arrival for the phenomenon.⁵ Thus, the paper as independent medium movement was associated with concerns for the redundancy of paper. Ludovico demonstrated that post-digitalism had, conversely, exponentially increased the usage of the medium.⁶

Chapter 1 explored the capacity of papercutting to be used as a research method within the paradigm of arts-based research, particularly in reference to the theories of Patricia Leavy, Pranee Liamputtong, and Jean Rumbold. The existing arts-based research methods investigated included narrative inquiry, visual anthropology, and participatory research. Agency was examined in respect to a key attribute of the latter: reflexivity. Pierre Bourdieu believed in a cycle whereby the ability to influence reality reflected symbolic power, which was informed by symbolic capital, of which chrono-geographically-specific representations of papercutting presented a vessel.⁷ Papercutting has precedence as an instrument of qualitative research in both the humanities and sciences. This includes ethnography,

² Ludovico, *Post-Digital Print: The Mutation of Publishing since 1894*.
⁴ Ibid. 9.
⁵ “The Office of the Future,” *Business Week*.
psychology, neurobiology and computer science. Agency was also investigated in respect to the capacity of papercutting to provide mechanical access to post-digital technologies. This was predicated on the role of perforated paper, by way of jacquard weaving punch cards, in their development.

The application of papercutting as a form of narrative inquiry was the focus of Chapter 2. Chinese folk artists Cai Lanying, from Heibei province, and Hou Yumei, who hails from Manchurian ancestry, were two exemplars provided. The capacity of papercutting as a repository for maternal traditions and oral histories was investigated. The principles were utilised in the creation of three series of artwork: Graft, which was exhibited at the State Library of Queensland; Beneath the Bauhinia, which was exhibited at The Centre in Beaudesert; and The Windmills of Your Mind at the Queensland State Archives (QSA).

In each of the exhibitions, chrono-geographically-specific representations of papercutting were used to provide a vehicle for instating a Chinese perspective into predominantly Eurocentric historical dialogues. A primary example was the creation of visual accounts depicting the anti-Chinese riot on Saturday, 5 May 1888, described by Graeme Davidson as “possibly Australia’s worse episode of mass violence,” which were exhibited at QSA. This emphasised the symbolic capital of papercutting, and the exhibition subsequently empowered the represented Chinese communities.

The major project for this doctorate was explored in Chapter 3, in the context of visual anthropology. Similar to the artworks examined in Chapter 2, the series Making Chinese Shadows utilised the symbolic capital of chrono-geographically-specific styles of papercutting to reinstate the contributions of Chinese Australians into a cannon of Australian history dominated by the White Australia policy. One of sixty-two distinct regional styles of the craft recognised by the PRC, Foshan Papercutting, was used to depict the floral emblem of the region of birth of each subject and an object that symbolised their contribution to Australian society. The subjects were depicted using a silhouette, a

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10 Evans and Ferrier, *Radical Brisbane: An Unruly History*.
prevalent style of portraiture in Europe and North America from the eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries. This series of artworks, numbering over thirty, has been exhibited and acquired by both the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra and the Chinese Museum in Melbourne.

Other artworks investigating aspects of visual anthropology included a series exploring totemism through AFL mascots exhibited in *Too Close To Call*, a sports exhibition at Pine Rivers Gallery. A third series explored materiality using gilded papercuts of species introduced to Australia at the decline of the gold rush exhibited in *Open Cut Mine* at Gympie Regional Gallery. The exemplar for visual anthropology was Yuken Teruya, who examines consumerism and environmental degradation by cutting trees into bags from multinational corporations.

Chapter 4 investigated participatory art research. One of the five projects qualified as participatory art research by the standards outlined by Conrad and Campbell in their book *Knowing Differently: Arts-Based and Collaborative Research Methods*. Consistent with participatory art research in the health care sector, they specified reflectiveness as a key attribute. In this paradigm, the papercutting provided an avenue for participants to “name,” legitimize their “collective knowledge” and “collectively reason.” This was demonstrated by the exhibition *The View From Here* at Dogwood Crossing in Miles, which featured two participatory artworks, *Across the Prickly Fence* and *Plan Bee*. The participants in *Across the Prickly Fence*, university students from QCA and USQ, used papercutting to investigate the impact of human intervention on the Australian rural landscape. The children who contributed towards *Plan Bee* examined the effects of the global decline in bee populations using a variety of media including papercutting and stop animation. The subsequent artworks identified implications such as a decrease in food production, flora and, subsequently, fauna. The resulting papercut installation generated

15 Ibid.
symbolic power for the young participants and provided a forum for their concerns about the environment.

The other four participatory art projects utilised the “de-alienating” effectives of shared labour and generated symbolic capital. However, they were not reflexive. These projects included Common Wealth for Botanica, The Labour Tree and SLQ and Red is for Remembering as part of the Q100 Century of Anzac Celebrations.

There remains limited documentation of papercutting being used as a method of participatory art. Subsequently, the exemplars for participatory art were situated in a dialogue about knitting in Chapter 5. It explored the capacity of papercutting to provide mechanical access to post-digital knitting, thus providing access to the symbolic capital of this medium. Whereas papercutting is largely absent from the canon of craft in England and North America, knitting was the principal vehicle for craftivism. This movement, bringing together craft and activism, emerged in the wake of 9/11. Needlework, by way of banners, was used as a form of resistance by the suffragettes during their early twentieth-century movement. During the early nineteenth century, stocking knitters played an integral role during the Luddite Rebellion. The contemporary exemplars of craftivism included Marianne Jorgeson who collaborated with the Cast Off Knitters to protest against the Iraq War by covering a tank with a giant tea cosy.

I used a Passap E6000 to knit a number of the artworks in this doctorate. Digitised knitting machines are among the equipment associated with the post-digital Maker Movement. The early twenty-first century ‘revolution’ purportedly industrialised DIY and democratised production through technologies such as 3D printers, 3D scanners, CNC routers, laser cutters, open-source hardware and open-sourced software. The knitted blankets, exhibited at Gympie Regional Gallery and Gatakers Artspace, explored the redundancy created by technological determination. Another knitted composition translated using a

16 Bishop, Artificial Hells, 3.
17 Greer, “Craftivist History,” 177.
19 Bailey, The Luddite Rebellion, 15.
The punch card was knitted using reclaimed synthetic yarn on an Empisal KH-820. The statement on the presence of microfibres in the marine environment was exhibited in No Waste Form at the ADGY Cultural Exchange Center in Beijing.

The application of jacquard weaving software to visually represent enlarged frame buffers and pixels provided a segue between Chapters 5 and 6. The latter demonstrated the capacity of papercutting to provide mechanical access to post-digital animation. For Android was installed on a Variable Message Sign typically used for traffic redirection. In the looped sequence, Dolly—the sheep cloned at the Roslin Institute in the University of Edinburgh—is depicted entering and leaving the screen. In part, the artwork explores aspects of Glendinning’s “Notes Toward a Neo-Luddite Manifesto,” in which she recommends the “dismantling” of “destructive technologies” such as genetic engineering, computers and television. Aesthetically, this series of animations referenced the hack computer games of Cory Archangel. The other exemplars explored in the chapter were Lotte Reiniger and Paul Chen. A series of my vector-based animations were exhibited in Three Contained at Egg Gallery in Beijing.

CNC Cutting and etching from SVG files was explored in Chapter 7. Through the processes of edge detection and/or its contemporary iteration, automated image tracing, papercuts are readily translated into scalable vector graphics. The converted motifs have broad applications when processed using CNC technology. Emerging during the 1930s, CNC cutting was the original computer-based method of fabrication by way of computer data tape for the storage of information.

Two public artworks completed during this doctoral project utilised CNC technology. Flower by the Gate was commissioned by the Brisbane City Council. It comprises a bronze Bauhinia flower motif that is of significance both to Hong Kong and Queensland. The species *bauhinia x blakeana* was named in honour of Sir Henry Blake, who was appointed Governor of

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23 The University of Edinburgh, "The Life of Dolly."
Queensland in 1888.\textsuperscript{27} He was also the governor of Hong Kong between 1897 and 1903.\textsuperscript{28} The artwork also serves as a marker for the aforementioned anti-Chinese riots in 1888. A papercut motif, CNC routed into PVC foam, was used to create the pattern for casting. In the second artwork, for the City of Sydney, a set of illuminated steel sheep were created from a paper maquette. The 1.65 ton structures were CNC lasercut and welded together from a scanned papercut.

Within the museum and galleries sector, CNC cutting represents a contemporary application of the concept of “drawing with scissors,” which enables one to “draw with colour,” as Matisse observed in 1943.\textsuperscript{29} Thus, it also conflates the signifiers and signified into fetish objects.\textsuperscript{30} In the Water is a series that embraced this principle. The water pieces of lasercut acrylic were heat-shaped. They featured in a number of exhibitions, including Ephemeral Landscape at the Museo Gustavo de Maeztu in Spain and Morphosis at QCA South Bank. One of the sculptures was also projected onto by American artists Megan Roberts and Ray Ghirardo at the Chalk Hill Residency Center in California.

CNC technology, by way of the G-code, is also utilised in AM to slice three-dimensional designs in preparation for 3D printing.\textsuperscript{31} The medium was the focus of the final chapter in this exegesis. One of the first artists to embrace the technology is Michael Rees who created a series of SLS prints in 1995.\textsuperscript{32} At the time, the process was referred to as rapid prototyping.\textsuperscript{33} Galleries in Australia have been slow to update 3D printing as a distinct medium.\textsuperscript{34} However, due to its ubiquity within the sciences 3D prints have symbolic capital. Artists who utilise it in this context in Australia include Stelarc, Anne Noble and Louis Pratt. They sympathetic relationship between parametric design and papercutting make scanning the latter an efficient method of importing visual data.

\textsuperscript{27} McMahon, de Nie and Townend, Ireland in an Imperial World, 27.
\textsuperscript{28} “Sir Henry Blake Dead; Served as Governor of Newfoundland, Bahamas, Hong Kong, Ceylon,” New York Times, 25 February 1918.
\textsuperscript{29} Elderfield, The Cut-Outs of Henri Matisse, 22.
\textsuperscript{31} Balletti, Ballarin and Guerra, “3D Printing: State of the Art and Future Perspectives,” 174.
\textsuperscript{32} “Professor Michael Rees Discusses 3D Printing,” YouTube video, 37:22, William Paterson University, 9 October 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1MjzyC06Gw.
\textsuperscript{33} Balletti, Ballarin and Guerra, “3D Printing: State of the Art and Future Perspectives,” 173.
This doctoral project proliferated the perspective of a Chinese Australian female in over twenty exhibitions, including three solo presentations, in galleries across Australia, China, Spain, and the United States of America. This includes the major project being curated into a showcase of Australian women artists at the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra. The series was subsequently acquired for the collection. The government organisations to have commissioned artwork related to this doctorate include the Gympie Regional Council, as part of the Queensland Government Q100 Centenary of Anzac program, the City of Sydney, and Brisbane City Council. The broad support for this body of artwork is testament to the continued agency of papercutting in the post-digital era.
Appendix A

Significant occurrences in the development of papercutting and related technologies from the First Dynasty of Egypt (c. 3150 - c. 2800 BCE) to the advent of Post-digitalism in the early twenty-first century.
Appendix B

Appendix B provides a summary of the research outcomes associated with this doctoral project. They include an array of exhibitions, journal articles and panel discussions undertaken across Australia, Asia and Europe.
### Selected Exhibitions, Presentations and Publications 2016 - 2020

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<td>Casula Powerhouse Art Centre, Casula, NSW</td>
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<td>From a Home to a Home</td>
<td>25 November - 8 December 2016</td>
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<td>The Windmill of Your Mind</td>
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<td>Our Collection: Journey into the Asia Pacific</td>
<td>6 November - 22 December 2017</td>
<td>Queensland State Archives</td>
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Appendix C

Appendix C contains the biographies of a selection of the Chinese Australians profiled in the *Making Chinese Shadows* project. It culminated in two exhibitions, a group show in 2018 at the National Portrait Gallery titled *Contemporary Australian Women Artists Make History* and a solo show in 2019 at the Chinese Museum in Melbourne titled *Shades and Silhouettes*. Both institutions have chosen to acquire the artworks for their collections.
Figure 228. Tim Sang, 2017
Arriving between 1836 and 1840, Tim Sang was the first Chinese person to migrate to South Australia.1

How his transit was facilitated is unclear. His arrival predates both the credit-ticket system and the discovery of Gold in Victoria in 1851.2 During the 1830s and 1840s, Chinese people were recruited as indentured labour to substitute for a decline in the availability of convicts.3

Like the earliest Chinese person to arrive in Australia, Ahuto in 1803, Sang was a carpenter.4 He tendered for a making furniture at Customs House in 1842.5 Sang is thought to have come from the “Sze Yap” in the Pearl River Delta of Guangdong Province.6 The furniture industry, for which the region is renowned, was established in the seventeenth century.7

Chinese furniture makers would come to constitute the “largest group of Chinese workers” in Australia, outnumbering their European counterparts between 1890 and 1920.8

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2 Ibid; Fitzgerald, Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia, 62-63.
3 Fitzgerald, Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia, 63.
4 Tracking the Dragon, A3.
5 SA History Hub, “Chinese.”
6 Ibid.
8 Gibson, "Voices of Sydney's Chinese Furniture Factory Workers, 1890-1920," 99.
Figure 229. Wat a Che, 2017
Name: Wat A Che
Dates: Born in 1837 Arrived in Australia in 1855, Returned to China in 1868
Location of Origin: Guangdong Province
Floral Emblem: Red Silk Cotton-Tree Flower
Object: Pen and ink well

On 26 May 1860, Wat A Che was described in the *South Australian Chronical* as a “Celestial Genius” and an “undeniable dandy.”9 He was born in Guangdong Province in 1837.10 In June 1855, A Che arrived in Melbourne with Chu A Luk and Ho A Low.11 The three had studied together at the London Missionary Society Anglo-Chinese College in Hong Kong.12 Although their initial intention was to engage in “evangelical activity,” A Che departed for the Mount Alexander goldfields.13 A Che remained a prominent member of the Chinese Christian community.14

In October 1857, A Che was appointed the interpreter of the Ararat goldfields.15 Conflict had erupted between the Chinese and European settlers over the discovery of what became known as “The Canton Lead.”16 The Chinese population at the mine exceeded 7000 by 23 May 1857.17 A Che became a British subject two years later.18 In 1860, after having purportedly accrued £6000, A Che visited China where he married Tong Chay Lye.19 They welcomed a son in 1867, who was regarded as “the first Chinese child born in Australia.”20 At the time, most Chinese born Australians were born of mixed marriages.21 From 1863, A Che was the Court Interpreter at the Sandhurst Gold Fields in present day Bendigo.22

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13 Couchman and Bagnall, *Chinese Australians*, 32.
15 Couchman and Bagnall, *Chinese Australians*, 32; Monument Australia, "Wat A. Che."
17 Ibid.
18 Monument Australia, “Wat A. Che."
20 “Ararat Chinese Settler,” *Ararat Advertiser*.
21 Ibid.
A Che is credited for the “diminution of prejudice” towards the Chinese community during the late nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{23} He was commissioned a report on the Chinese community by the government in 1866.\textsuperscript{24} In 1867, he delivered a public address to the visiting Duke of Edinburgh.\textsuperscript{25} A Che is also remembered as a “compassionate” philanthropist who was instrumental in the establishment of the first hospital in Ararat.\textsuperscript{26} In addition to making generous donations, A Che raised funds through organising Chinese theatrical performances and Easter fairs. A Che returned to China in 1868.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{24} "Ibid.; Monument Australia, “Wat A. Che.”
\textsuperscript{25} “Ararat Chinese Settler,” \textit{Ararat Advertiser}.
\textsuperscript{26} Barnard, \textit{The Chinese Discovery of Gold & Settlement in Ararat}, 61; Monument Australia, “Wat A. Che.”
\textsuperscript{27} “Ararat Chinese Settler,” \textit{Ararat Advertiser}.
Figure 231. Lowe Kong Meng, 2017
In 1831, Lowe Kong Meng was born in Penang in Malaysia to a merchant from See Yap District in Guangdong Province Lowe A Quee and his wife Chey Tay. At the age of 16 years, he moved to Mauritius to study English and French. He was already proficient in Cantonese.

Meng arrived in Victoria on his own ship at the age of 23. By this time, he was already trading with merchants in Mauritius, Calcutta and Singapore. A year later, Kong Meng had six ships travelling with frequency to Indian Ocean and South China Sea. Tea, opium and rice were amongst the products he distributed through a business outlet on Little Bourke Street. Meng’s extensive business exploits also included the procurement of beche-de-mer from the Torres Strait, a gold mine at Majorca in Victoria, and the Hap Wah Sugar Company in Queensland. In 1888, the Mount Alexander Mail described Kong Meng as amongst the wealthiest Chinese residents in Melbourne.

Kong Meng is recognised as an esteemed community leader who actively protested against anti-Chinese legislation. He was also amongst the merchants that facilitated the immigration of thousands of Chinese labourers through the operation of credit-ticket systems.

In 1879, he collaborated with Louis Ah Moy and Cheong Cheok Hong to publish a pamphlet titled The Chinese Question. It advocated for Chinese migration by citing the “equality of [all] peoples” described in The Law of Nations by Emmerich de Vattel in


29 Yong, "Lowe Kong Meng (1831-1888)."


31 Yong, "Lowe Kong Meng (1831-1888)."

32 Pung, "Chinese Fortunes Exhibition Charts Untold Tale of Wealth and Prejudice."

33 Ibid.; Culture Victoria, "Lowe Kong Meng, 1866" ; and, Ching Fatt Yong, "Lowe Kong Meng (1831-1888)."

34 Yong, "Lowe Kong Meng (1831-1888)."

35 Ibid.

In 1863, the title of “Mandarin of the Blue Button,” a civil order, was conferred on him by Emperor T’ung Ch’ih for his leadership of the Chinese community in Australia.\textsuperscript{38}

In 1860, Kong Meng married Mary Ann Prussia from Tasmania.\textsuperscript{39} In 1888, he died at his home in Malvern and was survived by his wife and their twelve children.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{37} Fitzgerald, \textit{Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia}, 111; Yong, "Lowe Kong Meng (1831-1888)."

\textsuperscript{38} Yong, "Lowe Kong Meng (1831-1888)."

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.; Pung, "Chinese Fortunes Exhibition Charts Untold Tale of Wealth and Prejudice."

\textsuperscript{40} Yong, "Lowe Kong Meng (1831-1888)."
Figure 231. Ah Young, 2017.
Name: Ah Young
Dates: c. 1838–1921
Location of Origin: Guangdong Province
Floral Emblem: Red Silk Cotton-Tree Flower
Object: Hair

This profile investigates the life of the former resident of Gympie that was honoured in the naming of ‘Young Street’.\textsuperscript{41} Wu Yu Yang was born circa 1838 in Guangdong Province.\textsuperscript{42} He became known as ‘Ah Young’, an anglicised version of ‘Yang’.\textsuperscript{43} The character can be roughly translated into English as ‘nurture’. Living up to his namesake, the father of ten was a second generation market gardener.\textsuperscript{44} Ah Young is best known for his rescue of Mary Amelia Coe, a servant from Norfolk in England.\textsuperscript{45}

Although the circumstances of his migration to Australia are unclear, Ah Young was a gold prospector when he found Mary.\textsuperscript{46} Circa 1871, Ah Young witnessed a ship sink during a storm in The Great Australian Bite.\textsuperscript{47} He waded into the water to rescue a young girl in her dressing gown.\textsuperscript{48} Mary was the sole survivor.\textsuperscript{49} Concerned for their welfare, Ah Young concealed Mary’s gender by cutting her hair and dressing her in the clothes from the body of a boy.\textsuperscript{50}

The pair travelled to the emerging gold rush in Gympie and settled at Chinaman’s Flat on the banks of the Mary River.\textsuperscript{51} Mary revealed her identity whilst living in the Chinese camp.\textsuperscript{52} Ah Young made a large claim on gold.\textsuperscript{53} He was a storekeeper by the time he married Mary in 1877.\textsuperscript{54} Ah Young became a British Subject the following year.\textsuperscript{55} They purchased a property

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{44} Rossow and Beveridge, "The True Story of Ah Young and Mary Amelia Coe"; Rossow, "Chapter 5–The Lost Years (Part 2);" Rossow, "The True Story of Ah Young and Mary Amelia Coe: From Taiping Rebellion to the Australian Gold Rush," accessed 27 February 2018, https://chinadol.wordpress.com/chapter-5-the-lost-years-part-2/.
\textsuperscript{46} Rossow and Beveridge, "The True Story of Ah Young and Mary Amelia Coe"; Rossow, "Chapter 2–A Chinaman in Australia," The True Story of Ah Young and Mary Amelia Coe: From Taiping Rebellion to the Australian Gold Rush."
\textsuperscript{47} Rossow and Beveridge, "The True Story of Ah Young and Mary Amelia Coe."
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{54} Rossow, "Chapter 5–The Lost Years (Part 2)."
\textsuperscript{55} “Intercolonial News in Brief,” The Brisbane Courier, 17 April 1878, 6.
at Long Flat in 1881, where Ah Young established a market garden. Their ten children were born between 1879 and 1902. Ah Young made a brief visit to China in 1916. He died in 1821 and was survived by Mary and eight of their children.

57 Rossow, “Chapter 5–The Lost Years (Part 2).”
59 Rossow, “Chapter 5–The Lost Years (Part 2)”; Rossow, “Chapter 5–The Lost Years (Part 2).”
Name: Andrew Leon  
Dates: c. 1840–1920  
Location of Origin: Guangdong Province  
Floral Emblem: Red Silk Cotton-Tree Flower  
Object: Sugar Bowl

Andrew Leon was a businessman born in Zhongshan, Guangdong Province, circa 1840.60 In 1866, Leon arrived in Queensland and sojourned in the gold fields of Palmer River, Ravenswood and Millchester.61 He became associated with a number of Hong Kong-based firms in the burgeoning Chinese communities of Cooktown and Cairns including Sun Yee Lee & Co., Sun Tung Lee and Sun Chong Lee.62

In 1869, he converted to Catholicism and married an Irish servant named Mary Piggott at St Mary’s in Bowen.63 Mary was likely to have been amongst the 30 000 ‘Irish Orphans’ “dispatched” to Australia between 1848 and 1863.64 The initiative of Earl Grey, Secretary of State for the Colonies, was designed to address the gender inequity in Australia by relocating young healthy women from “pauper institutions.”65 In accordance with The Aliens Act, the marriage enabled Leon to become a British subject.66 He was naturalised in the same year.67 Together, they had four children Elizabeth, William, Mary and Annie.68

Two years after The Port of Cairns opened in 1876, Leon formed a syndicate called the Hap Wah Company.69 He was able to solicit £45 000 in investments from Chinese traders and local businesses.70 Drawing on skills in tropical agriculture that he acquired in the West Indies prior to arriving in Australia, Leon established a plantation on 1250 acres of land near Cairns in 1878-9.71


62 Bolton and Cronin, “Leon, Andrew (1841-1920).”

63 Ibid.


67 Hoy, “Celebrating an Accomplishment by Early Chinese in Cairns.”


70 Ibid.

71 Ibid.
Up to 200 Chinese workers were engaged in land clearing and establishing crops such as maize, cotton and sugar.\textsuperscript{72}

In 1882, the syndicate made two significant regional achievements. Four tons of cotton was shipped to Hong Kong.\textsuperscript{73} It was the first and only known export of the crop from North Queensland.\textsuperscript{74} The Pioneer Mill was also erected and commenced crushing sugar.\textsuperscript{75} The “semi-mechanised, open pan plant with hand-fed steam-driven rollers,” enabled the company to export more than 110 tons of sugar in their first year and up to 600 tons in every subsequent year.\textsuperscript{76} In mid-1884 a global decline in sugar prices caused the venture to become unviable.\textsuperscript{77} In 1886-7 the company and its assets were sold. The mill machinery was relocated to Bundaberg.\textsuperscript{78}

Leon continued to play an integral role to the development of the Chinese community in Cairns.\textsuperscript{79} In 1892, he built four shops at 99 Grafton Street.\textsuperscript{80} He was a trustee of the adjacent Lit Sung Goong Temple.\textsuperscript{81} He was also a court interpreter.\textsuperscript{82} Leon died in Cairns on 27 June 1920.\textsuperscript{83} He was survived by his wife and two of his daughters.\textsuperscript{84}
Figure 233. Yip Hoy, 2017
On 8 May 1884, Yip Hoy was one of the first Chinese migrants in Queensland to become a British subject. He was born in Jiangmen, Guangdong Province, in 1842. Yip Hoy arrived in Australia c1878 and resided in Cooktown, which was burgeoning after the discovery of alluvial gold five years earlier.

In 1884, he also formalised his marriage through an Australian civil ceremony, to Ah How. An application was made to the Magistrate’s Court at Cooktown as Ah How had not reached the minimum 21 years of age. She had arrived in Australia on the ticket-credit system as a general servant. Ah How died in childbirth in 1904, leaving Yip Hoy the sole parent of their surviving six children.

The family relocated to Croydon shortly after the discovery of gold the region in 1885. In October 1888, the Yip Hoy obtained a business license. Significantly, in the ledger of the Court of Petty Sessions, the phonetic interpretation of his family name “Yet Foy” was recorded for the first time. It was later adopted by his children as their surname.

Although Yip Hoy is often referred to as a baker, he also enjoyed success as a gold miner, sold tobacco, and was the proprietor of a butchery. He was also the subject of a series of photographs by Alphonse Chargois. The photographer from Brighton, England, worked in Croydon from 1882-1901 with a horse-drawn dark room.

88 Hoy, *Yip Hoy and His Family*, 2.
89 Ibid.
90 Ibid., 7–8.
91 Ibid., 6.
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid.
95 Hoy, *Yip Hoy and His Family*, 9.
Although Yip Hoy had been naturalised, he was required to apply for a CEDT upon leaving Australian in 1917. The seventy-five year old left Thursday Island on the steamship *Eastern* on 19 January and returned to the same port on the steamship *Ari Maru* on 26 August in the same year. Accompanied by his son, Yip Hoy visited his home village and partook in the organisation of William’s marriage to Florence Kum Too. In 1932, Yip Hoy died in Ingham in at the age of ninety. The cause of death was listed as senility and cardiac failure.

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97 Hoy, *Yip Hoy and His Family*, 5.
98 Coloured Colonials, "Queensland Chinese."
100 *Yip Hoy and His Family*, 12; Damper in a Wok: A Mixed-up Australian Family Tree, “Yip Hoy.”
101 Damper in a Work: A Mixed-up Australian Family Tree, “Yip Hoy.”
Figure 234. Mei Quong Tart, 2017
Name: Mei Quong Tart
Dates: 1850–1903
Location of Origin: See Yup, Guangdong Province
Floral Emblem: Red Silk Cotton Tree Flower
Object: Peacock Feather

Speaking with a Scottish brogue, a keen amateur cricketer and the first person of Chinese descent to be accepted into the Freemason order, entrepreneur and philanthropist Mei Quong Tart was, arguably, the epitome of a “westernised” Chinese migrant. Although the Australian novelist Louis Becke compared him to “royalty” in 1897, in 2007 historian John Fitzgerald posited that Quong Tart’s approximation of “the British-Australian way of life” earned him, at best, acceptance as a “savvy” oriental. In contrast, CF Fong described him as “so well integrated” he was “divorced” from the Chinese community in 1977. Ironically, he dispensed with his family name “Mei” in Australia.

Quong Tart was born in Hsin-ning, renamed Taishan by Dr Sun Yat Sen in 1914, to a well-to-do dealer in Cantonese artefacts in 1850. “Kuang” translates to “bright” and “Da” to “smooth, prosperous, frank and sincere.” He received some education from scholars in China prior to his departure for Australia at the age of nine. This was most likely an invocation of the credit ticket system, migration sponsored by merchants in return for labour. Quong Tart was the translator.

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104 Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia, “Tart, Quong (1850–1930).”
105 Travers, Australian Mandarin, 10; Fitzgerald, Big White Lie, 29.
106 Travers, Australian Mandarin, 22.
107 Ibid.
108 Ibid.; Humanities and Social Sciences, “Mei Quong Tart.”
109 Lea-Scarlett, “Mei Quong Tart (1850-1903).”
110 Fitzgerald, Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia, 68–69.
111 Tart, The Life of Quong Tart.
In Braidwood, Robert Percy Simpson, the brother of the distinguished Supreme Court Judge Sir G.B. Simpson became the guardian of Quong Tart.\footnote{Ibid.} He accompanied Robert to the mines as an interpreter.\footnote{Ibid.} Under the stewardship of the Simpson family, he was educated and converted to Christianity.\footnote{Ibid.} When they offered Quong Tart a generous share in a gold claim, he employed around two hundred labourers, both Chinese and European, to harness it.\footnote{Ibid.} By the time he reached the age of eighteen, he was comparatively wealthy.\footnote{Ibid.}

When Quong Tart was naturalised on 12 July 1871, he was the Government Interpreter of the Districts of Braidwood.\footnote{Ibid.} In addition to being coming a Freemason, Quong Tart was also accepted into the Manchester Lodge, was a Forrester and was the first Chinese person to be elected to and Oddfellows’ Lodge.\footnote{Ibid.}

During 1881, Quong Tart made a trip to China.\footnote{Ibid.} Equipped with letters from the New South Wales premier and principal colony resides he opened a dialogue with “Officers of the State.”\footnote{Ibid.} In addition to visiting his family, Quong Tart travelling to several cities in Southern China.\footnote{Ibid.} With the intention of establishing himself as a silk and tea merchant, his itinerary included both the tea propagation centre of Fuzhou and the silk brocade production centre of Nanjing.\footnote{Ibid.} Dressed in European clothing, complete with a black silk hat, Quong Tart drew crowds of curious onlookers in regional China.\footnote{Ibid.}

Although several women of distinction were presented to Quong Tart by his mother as potential suitors, he purportedly expressed his desire to marry a European woman.\footnote{Ibid.} He became acquainted with Margaret Scarlett, the daughter of a friend George, three years later.\footnote{Ibid.} Quong Tart was twenty-three years senior to the nineteen year old Anglo-Irish school teacher from Braidwood.\footnote{Ibid.} They married in 1886 without the consent of her family.\footnote{Ibid.} Together, Margaret and Quong Tart had four daughters and two sons between 1887 and 1903.\footnote{Ibid.}
Quong Tart is credited for the introduction of casual dining to Sydney. In 1889, he opened the Loong Shan Tea Shop in King Street. It was frequented by governors, premiers and suffragette Louisa Lawson. The latter organised her campaigns whilst sipping tea. In 1898, he opened the Elite Hall in the Queen Victoria Building, a luxurious restaurant and tea room with the capacity of 500 people. The tearooms became famous for their scones. They also made provisions for women including both powder and non-smoking rooms. They offered the nineteenth-century women a unique opportunity to meet outside of the confines of their own homes.

Quong Tart also received broad recognition for his philanthropic work for his Chinese compatriots. He a founding member of the Lin Yik Yong in 1892. This precursor to the New South Wales Chinese Chamber of Commerce had both charity work and the mediation of inter-racial disputes within their charter. In 1888, Quong Tart negotiated between the government and forty-five Chinese passengers on the Afghan. The ship was effectively quarantined by an anti-Chinese protest cum riot. From 1885 to 1888, Quong Tart also staged a series of free feasts in asylums. He was seen conversing with the Chinese inmates. Following the establishment of the Lunacy Act of 1878, Chinese migrants were indiscriminately ‘shovelled’ into the institutions.

Quong Tart was the first member of the Chinese community to raise opposition to the opium trade. He commenced his campaign in 1883. This culminated in his publishing the pamphlet *A Plea for the Abolition of the Importation of Opium in 1887*. In the same year, Quong Tart consulted two visiting commissioners from China, General Wong Yung Ho and Consul-General U Tsing, about the Anti-Chinese League.

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131 Ibid.
132 Ibid.
133 Ibid.
134 Ibid.
135 Ibid.
141 Lea-Scarlett, "Mei Quong Tart (1850-1903)."
142 Tart, *The Life of Quong Tart*.
145 Ibid.; Lea-Scarlett, "Mei Quong Tart (1850-1903)."
146 "The Man Who Brought Cafe Society to Town," *Sydney Morning Herald*; Tart, *The Life of Quong Tart*; Lea-Scarlett, "Mei Quong Tart (1850-1903)."
conferred the title Mandarin of the Crystal Button for his work as an unofficial consul to China. He was also honoured by the “Dragon Throne” with a peacock feather. Three years later, he advanced to become a Mandarin of the Blue Button. He was murderously assaulted with an iron bar at the Queen Victoria Markets on 19 August 1902. Although he survived the initial attack, he would not recover. Quong Tart died of pleurisy 26 July 1903, leaving behind his wife and six young children.

149 Tart, The Life of Quong Tart.
151 Australian Food History Timeline, "1891 Quong Tart Opens His First Sydney Tea Room"; State Library of New South Wales, "Who Was Quong Tart?"; Tart, The Life of Quong Tart.
152 Tart, The Life of Quong Tart.
153 Ibid.
Figure 235. Ah Gim, 2017
Name: Ah Gim
Location of Origin: Guangdong Province
Floral Emblem: Red Silk Cotton Tree
Object: Ship’s compass

Captain Ah Gim was described in *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser* on 12 January 1884 as “... a fine specimen of ‘Heathen Chinese’. “154 Between 1879 and 1885, he operated two Chinese Junks in the waters of Australia and New Guinea.155 His first vessel, the Wong Hing, was the first boat to be built in Cooktown in 1877.156 At this time, the Palmer River gold rush was in decline and fishing was amongst the industries adopted by former prospectors.157

Although the biographical information about Ah Gim is scant, he is understood to have been married to a South Sea Islander woman.158 The majority of Chinese migrants to Queensland were from Guangdong Province.159 Ah Gim was ‘portly’, dressed in European attire and without a traditional Chinese pigtail.160 He held a Master of a Coasting Vessel certificate from the Queensland Maritime Board.161

Ah Gim was highly respected in both Australian and New Guinean waters.162 Courageous and industrious, the captain was undeterred by unfavourable conditions in the weather or political climate.163 In 1880, eleven Chinese crew members of the junk Sin O Ney were killed by tribes indigenous to New Guinea.164 They have purportedly “vowed ‘enmity to all Chinese’.”165 Ah Gim, who had always carried firearms, took the extra precaution of adding a pack of dogs to his crew but he continued navigating the waters.166 They sustained several attacks.167 In 1891, Ah Gim’s murder was reported and in June a crew of ten officers and sixty constables were sent from Australia to “punish” the tribesmen responsible.168 The

158 *The Argus*, 12 January 1884, 8.

162 Gapps, "Made in Australia," 32.
164 Gapps, "Made in Australia," 32.
165 Ibid.
obituaries proved premature as Ah Gim later sailed into Cooktown unscathed with “a hold full of beche-de-mer.”\textsuperscript{169}

\textsuperscript{169} Gapps, “Made in Australia,” 32.
Figure 237. *Chang the Chinese Giant*, 2017
Chang Woo Gow was an entertainer in the court of the Chinese Emperor.\(^{170}\) Chang was born into a family of tea plantation owners in Fuzhou, Fujian Province, circa 1845.\(^{171}\) His father and grandfather were recognised scholars.\(^{172}\) His great-grandfather and brother were decorated members of their respective armies.\(^{173}\) Chang was a Mandarin of The Blue Button, a rank bestowed by the emperor equivalent to “British earldom.”\(^{174}\)

He stood 2.3m or 8 feet and 3 inches tall and could speak several languages including Italian, Portuguese, German, Spanish and French.\(^{175}\) Chang left China on 28 April 1865.\(^{176}\) His departure followed the suppression of the \textit{Taiping Rebellion}, a conflict that was estimated to have killed twenty million people in Southern China.\(^{177}\)

After being discovered by an Englishman, Chang performed with a troupe at the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly in 1865-66.\(^{178}\) He toured Europe, America and New Zealand accompanied by his wife and fellow performer ‘King Foo’.\(^{179}\) The legitimacy of the marriage remains the subject of speculation.\(^{180}\) ‘King Foo’ is an anglicised version of ‘Jin Fu’, which translates into English as ‘Golden Lotus’.\(^{181}\) Her name was a Chinese euphemism for her bound feet, which Jin Fu displayed to “gasp s of amazement.”\(^{182}\)

By the time Chang arrived in Melbourne in January 1871 on the \textit{SS Tararua}, the couple purportedly had a child approximately six months of age.\(^{183}\) Chang received a gold watch


\(^{171}\) Ibid.; “Chang, the Chinese Giant,” \textit{Barrier Miner}, 27 May 1893, 3.


\(^{173}\) Ibid.

\(^{174}\) Ibid.; "The Man Who Brought Cafe Society to Town," \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}.

\(^{175}\) "Chang the Chinese Giant," \textit{The Age}, 11 November 1893, 15; \textit{Culture Victoria}, “Entertainment.”

\(^{176}\) "The Chinese Giant," \textit{The Goulburn Herald and Chronicle}.


\(^{179}\) Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia, “Chang Woo Gow.”


\(^{181}\) Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia, “Chang Woo Gow.”


from the Mayor of Sydney, which he purportedly always wore. They commenced an expansive tour of Australia including regional centres such as Ballarat, Rockhampton and Maryborough.

The popular troupe made an indelible impression into an Australian landscape that was distinctly xenophobic. His levees drew large houses. Chang made appearances at fundraising events for organisations such as the Ballarat East Public Library and the Benevolent Asylum. At an event for the latter in Bendigo, Chang donated half of his box office proceeds. Effigies of Chang and Jin Fu were subsequently created by the Madam Kreitmeyer waxworks in Melbourne and displayed at the Bendigo Easter Fair between 1877 and 1895.

Jin Fu continued to make public appearances as late as September 1871. In October, Chang was engaged in a legal dispute with his agent. Chang married Catherine ‘Kitty’ Santley from Geelong in Sydney on 6 November. The couple, an Jin Fu, departed for Shanghai on the barque Novelty on the 17 November. The first child from the marriage, Edwin, was born in Shanghai in 1877. A second son, Ernest, was born in Paris in 1879. In December 1880, Chang arrived in New York to work in The Greatest Show on Earth by P.T. Barnam.

By 1891, Chang had retired and moved to Bournemouth in England. He was suspected to have been suffering from tuberculous. Chang operated a tea room and ‘Oriental Bazaar’ selling Chinese ‘curios’. Despite his “not very robust constitution” Chang, a Baptist since 1876, continued his philanthropic work with Christian charities. He died 3 November 1893, four months after Kitty.

184 “Chang the Chinese Giant,” The Age, 15.
188 Vickery, “Karen Vickery on Chang the Chinese Giant in Australia.”
192 “Sydney,” Rockhampton Bulletin and Central Advertiser, 9 November 1871, 2; Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia, “Chang Woo Gow.”
193 “Departures,” The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser, 1871, 1237.
194 Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia, “Chang Woo Gow.”
195 Ibid.
196 Ibid.
197 “Chang, the Chinese Giant,” The Australian Star, 6 April 1891, 7.
198 Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia, “Chang Woo Gow.”
199 Ibid.
200 “Chang, the Chinese Giant,” The Australian Star.
Figure 237. Jimmy Ah Foo, 2017
Name: Jimmy Ah Foo  
Dates: c. 1843–1916  
Location of Origin: The Pearl River Delta in Guangdong Province  
Floral Emblem: Red Silk Cotton-Tree Flower  
Object: Beer Tankard

There is little known about the life of this subject in China and how he came to reside in Australia. By 1866, he had established a boarding house in Springsure in Central Queensland and was being referred to as “Jimmy Ah Foo.” His Chinese name has not been documented. “Jimmy” was a name adopted by many Chinese migrants to Australia during the nineteenth century. “Ah” is a prefix attributed to many Chinese surnames as a sign of familiarity.

Jimmy is thought to have been born c. 1843 in the Pearl River Delta Region of Guangdong Province. It is speculated that he travelled to Australia on the credit-ticket system. Indicative of having received a higher than average level of education, he could both write in Chinese and converse in English without an interpreter. He married Evelina Vessey in 1866. She was a sixteen year old from Lincolnshire County who had travelled to North Queensland after being orphaned at age eleven. Together they had thirteen children, born between the years of 1869 and 1892.

Jimmy exemplified the assimilation of a Chinese migrant in pre-federation Australia. He was held in high esteem both in the European and Chinese communities. He was a benefactor for the Chinese community. He also occupied the role of court translator.

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203 Ibid., 6.
204 Ibid., 7.
205 Ibid., 6.
206 Ibid.
207 Ibid., 7.
208 Ibid., 11.
209 Ibid., 8–9.
210 Ibid., 37; Rains, "Webs of Association," 36.
211 Rains, Cedars of the West, 37.
He undertook a broad range of enterprises from running a slaughterhouse to selling herbal remedies.  

212 However, Jimmy was best known as a publican.  213 He received his first license at Charters Towers in 1873. 214 He became a naturalised British subject shortly after purchasing The Canton Hotel in Cooktown in 1875. 215 In 1887, he took ownership of the Terminus Hotel in Barcaldine, renaming it the Springsure Hotel. 216 In 1892, after The Great Shearer’s Strike of 1891, the Ah Foos moved to Longreach and erected The Federation Hotel. 217 With two bars, a billiard table and an adjoining dance hall, it was “the largest and best appointed public house” in the region. 218

Offering both accommodation and entertainment, the hotels run by the Ah Foo family became institutions within their respective communities. However, it was the musicality of the children that elevated the family into “celebrated identities.” 219 The Ah Foo Family Band, featuring the thirteen children, toured Central Queensland. 220

In 1898-99, many businesses in Longreach were affected by a state wide economic depression, a destructive fire and a cyclone. 221 The Ah Foos subsequently relocated to Rockhampton to run the Three Crowns. 222 Unable to replicate their success in Longreach and after having spent the savings accrued over the past thirty years, they returned to Barcaldine at the turn of the twentieth century. 223 Jimmy died in 1916 and was survived by his wife and his children. 224

212 Ibid., 26–46.
214 Rains, Cedars of the West, 14.
215 Ibid., 17.
217 Ibid., 33–34.
218 Ibid., 33–35.
221 Rains, Cedars of the West, 41.
222 Ibid.
223 Ibid., 42.
224 Rains, “Transient Chinese in Colonial Queensland.”
Figure 238. George Chow Bow, 2017
Name: George Chow Bow
Dates: Born c. 1850
Location of Origin: Guangdong Province
Floral Emblem: Red Silk Cotton Tree
Object: Jeweller’s Callipers

George Chow Bow was a jeweller who worked in Queensland during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He was born in Guangdong Province c. 1850 and moved to Thursday Island in 1881. The marriage enabled Bow to become a British subject. It also produced two sons born in 1889 and 1891. Chow Bow leased a garden in North-East Thursday Island during the year his eldest was born. The married broke down, purportedly due to Rosie drinking heavily in 1890. After bringing an action against his wife in for common assault, Bow left Rosie in 1893. The sons migrated to China. Over the next decade, Bow’s exploits included managing Tong Song Won & Co., owning a small ship called The Crab, and running Chow Bow & Co. The latter was listed amongst the leading businesses on Thursday Island in The Worker on 29 August 1895. By the time he returned to China in 1902 to collect his sons, Bow had acquired two houses. His store burned down 4 May 1905. Bow returned to Thursday Island on 27 August 1905. He died in 1931.

228 Certificate of Domicile.
230 Ibid.
231 Ibid.
232 Certificate of Domicile.
234 Certificate of Domicile.
236 Certificate of Domicile.
Figure 239. Huang Pak Cheong, 2017
Name: Hung Pak Cheong
Dates: Born 1854
Location of Origin: Taishan
Floral Emblem: Red Silk Cotton Tree
Object: Bowl of pudding

Cheon in *We of the Never Never* was a ground breaking representation of a Chinese person in Australian literature. Written by Aegenus “Jeannie” Gunn, the autobiographical account of a year on a remoted cattle station in the Northern Territory was first published in 1908. The novel was translated into German in 1927. Sales of the book had exceeded one million by 1990. He is regarded as “Australia’s first Chinese celebrity cook.”

The character was inspired by Xiong Bai Chang. In acknowledgment of his Cantonese heritage, he is generally referred to as Hung Pak Cheong. Cheong was born on 27 February 1854 in Taishan, south-west Guangdong Province. Typical of the Chinese prior to the 1920s, Cheong emigrated unaccompanied by his family. Cheong left for the “big gold mountain” in California where he honed his culinary skills on the goldfields. He may have been as young as twelve or thirteen years of age.

Cheong was already in his forties when he appeared in the novel as the enigmatic gardener and cook of Elsey Station. He was described as portly and “jovial.” During the mid-1870s, the Northern Territory government “agreed to the immigration of more Chinese” to meet a shortage of labour. At the time, five Chinese companies were recruiting Southern Chinese workers from the gold fields of California, Oregon and Nevada.

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240 Ibid.
241 Ibid.
242 Hoy, *Cheon of the Never Never*, cover.
243 Hoy, *Cheon of the Never Never*, 86.
244 Ibid.
245 Hoy, *Cheon of the Never Never*, 16.
246 Ibid.
248 Ibid.
249 Mrs Aeneas Gunn, *We of the Never-Never* (Melbourne: Robertson & Mullens, 1944).
From the eighteenth to early twentieth centuries, many Chinese immigrants sojourned in
Australia to support their families back in China.251 After his first wife died during childbirth,
Cheong remarried on a visit to China during the turn of the twentieth century.252 In 1902,
Cheong sent a remittance to his second wife upon the birth of twin daughters.253 He
returned to China for another visit in 1913, but was initially detained by customs upon re-
entry for not having a CEDT.254 Cheong departed Australia for the last time in 1919.255
Cheong’s eminence extended beyond the success of *We of the Never Never*. He was
mentioned for his agrarian skills at Bradshaw Station in an interview with South Australian
Senator William Harrison Story.256 The article was published by the *Brisbane Courier* in
1907.257

251 Helen Vivian, “Tasmania’s Chinese Heritage: A Historical Record of Chinese Sites in North East
Tasmania”(Master’s Thesis, University of Tasmania, 1985), 8.
253 Ibid., 88.
254 Ibid., 53.
255 Ibid., 48.
256 Ibid., 38; Judy Poulos, "Story, William Harrison (1857-1924)," *The Biographical Dictionary of Australian
Senate* (Canberra: Parliament of Australia), accessed 28 November 2017,
257 Hoy, *Cheon of the Never Never*, 38.
Figure 240. *Emma Tear Tack*, 2017
Emma Tear Tack was one of six children born of a union between the district interpreter of Ararat, Lee Young, and his “English” wife Elizabeth Wright. Born in Guangdong Province in 1827, her father arrived in Melbourne as a twenty-five year old. He was naturalised in 1860.

The family endured prejudice from both European and Chinese communities. In 1865, the year Emma was born, Lee was charged with accepting bribery from the Chinese community. The following year, he was attacked by a group of seventy in a Chinese camp.

They regularly attended church. Both Emma and a sister married to Christian ministers. At the age of twenty, Emma married Joseph Tear Tack in 1885. Born in Guangdong Province c. 1848, he was approximately 17 years her senior. Tear Tack converted to Christianity whilst working on the goldfields in Bendigo in 1971. He was naturalised in 1883 and ordained into the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1886.

They had five children whilst living in Northern New South Wales between 1887 and 1896, where Tear Tack served as superintendent of the Chinese Mission. Tear Tack was transferred to Darwin in 1896 to open a new church for the burgeoning Chinese community. Shortly after their arrival the family survived a tropical cyclone that
destroyed their house and the chapel.\textsuperscript{270} It was estimated to have killed sixty people.\textsuperscript{271} The new church was not well received. Tear Tack baptised five out of a population of approximately three thousand Chinese residents.\textsuperscript{272}

In 1899, Tear Tack was relocated to Cairns to address an “invasion” of “heathens.”\textsuperscript{273} At Palmer River, shortly after the discovery of alluvial gold in 1873, the Chinese population of 9000 rendered their European counterparts a minority of 5000.\textsuperscript{274} When the gold was exhausted, many Chinese moved to urban centres in search of employment.\textsuperscript{275} According to an article in the Lithgow Mercury on 5 June 1900, services staged by Tear Tack were well attended.\textsuperscript{276} Emma and the children remained in Cooktown until November.\textsuperscript{277} On 23 August 1901, Tear Tack died of heart failure.\textsuperscript{278} Widowed with five children at the age of 36, Emma relocated to Ballarat in 1903.\textsuperscript{279} With the support of her extended family, she raised her children including two adopted daughters.\textsuperscript{280} She moved to Sydney c. 1930.\textsuperscript{281} She died on 28 October 1948, and was survived by her five children Elizabeth, Joseph, Laura, Josiah and Lucy.\textsuperscript{282}

\textsuperscript{270} Ibid.; Oxley, “Emma Tear Tack Nee Lee Young.”
\textsuperscript{272} Welch, “The Methodist Chinese Mission.”
\textsuperscript{273} Ibid; “People,” \textit{Heritage Futures Database}.
\textsuperscript{274} Rains, “Webs of Association,” 28.
\textsuperscript{276} “A Visit of a Chinese Missionary to Lithgow,” \textit{Lithgow Mercury}, 5 June 1900, 2.
\textsuperscript{277} “Clearances,” \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald}, 28 November 1900, 6.
\textsuperscript{278} “Death of Mr Tear Tack,” \textit{Australian Christian Commonwealth}, 30 August 1901, 6.
\textsuperscript{279} Oxley, “Emma Tear Tack Nee Lee Young.”
\textsuperscript{280} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{281} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{282} Ibid.
Figure 241. Charles Yee Wing, 2017
Yee Wing was described in The Sydney Morning Herald in 1911 as “...held in high esteem by Europeans and Chinese alike.” Born in Jincun in 1866, he sojourned in Sydney between 1883 and 1896. He returned in 1903, with “the express purpose” of “generating support for Dr Sun Yat Sen.”

Although consistently listing his occupation as a tea merchant, his entrepreneurialism extended across a number of significant industries during the early twentieth century. Wing was a founding director of Tiy Sang, travelling with regularity between Fiji and Australia from the late 1900s to late 1910s. It was a company that supplied Fijian bananas to Sydney.

Wing also became the treasurer of the New South Wales Kuomintang (KMT) between 1916 and 1919. The KMT was the “political arm” of the Southern Chinese Republican Party. It was also known as the Chinese Nationalist Party. In addition to publishing periodicals and operating Chinese language schools, the KMT fostered unity in the Chinese community through dances, theatrical performances and picnics.

Through the KMT, Wing was affiliated with the China-Australia Mail Steam-Line. The failed business venture involved the purchase of two ships in 1917–18. It was the culmination of
the efforts of prominent Chinese-Australian civic associations such as the NSW Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the Australasian KMT and the Chinese Masonic Society. It was intended to provide an alternative to the Japanese monopolised “shipping lines” between China and Australia. The company collapsed in 1924.

Wing became president of the KMT in 1925 and was tasked with reorganising the NSW branch after the death of Dr Sun Yat Sen. In the same year, the KMT established an “Australasian residential clubhouse” in Guangdong Province. The Canton Australasian Club was perceived as a Chinese organisation by Australians and an Australian one by the Chinese; it was designed to support Australians in the region.

Yee Wing married for the second time in 1906. He and his wife Susan had at least twelve children. When he was widowed for the second time in 1938, Yee Wing returned to China. A son and a daughter resulted from a third marriage. He died in his home village of Jincun in 1942.

294 Ibid., 186. 295 Ibid., 187. 296 Ibid. 297 Ibid., 159; Fitzgerald, Red Tape Gold Scissors, 115. 298 Fitzgerald, Big White Lie, 141. 299 Ibid. 300 Wing, “Yee Wing, Charles.” 301 Ibid. 302 Ibid. 303 Ibid. 304 Ibid.
Figure 242. Mary Ann McInerney, 2017
This is Mary Ann McInereney (nee Ah Foo) was born in Springsure in 1867.305 She was the eldest of the thirteen children born from a union between Jimmy Ah Foo from Guangzhou and Eveline Vessey from Lincolnshire.306 Her father was publican, a naturalized British subject and a “celebrated identity” in Central Queensland.307 The children were “highly musical” and toured the region as The Ah Foo Family Bands.308 Mary was a successful hotel proprietor like her father. She married at age 28.309 Together with her husband Peter, she pioneered the motion picture industry in Central Queensland by establishing an open air cinema, The Royal Picture Theatre, in Longreach in the 1910s.310 During the 1920s, they ran a guest house and kiosk at Manly in Brisbane.311 Mary died of pneumonia in 1935.312 She was survived by her two daughters Vera May and Elsie Isabelle.313

305 Rains, Cedars of the West, 56.
306 Rains, Cedars of the West, 6–11.
308 Ibid.
309 Rains, Cedars of the West, 57.
310 Ibid., 58.
311 Ibid.
312 Ibid.
313 Ibid., 57.
Figure 243. Ho Lup Mun, 2017
Name: Mrs Ho Lup Mun
Dates: Born c. 1869
Location of Origin: See Yup
Floral Emblem: Red Silk Cotton Tree

Ho Lup Mun became the proprietor of Suey Gee Chong in Celestial Avenue off Little Bourke Street when her husband, a Chinese Herbalist, died at the turn of the twentieth century. In addition to providing medical consultations and retailing herbs, the company was a wholesale supplier to herbalists around Victoria. Mrs Lup Mun was noted for both her business acumen and charitability. She was an esteemed confidante. She also adopted a number of orphans, fulfilling a role that would have been undertaken by family networks in China. Reflective of her matriarchal position in the community, she affectionately referred to as “Cepore.” Mrs Lup Mun was born c. 1869 in See Yup, Guangdong Province. She practiced as a Buddhist nun prior to marrying and migrating to Australia c. 1891. Suey Gee Chong was inherited by her grandson Ho Yik Pang.

316 Ibid.
317 Ibid.
318 Ibid.
319 Ibid.
320 Ibid.
321 Ibid.
William Ah Moy was born in Branxholm in 1893. His parents were Loong Kee Ng Moy and Hong Lee Chee. A migrant from Kwangtung, Guangdong Province, his father moved to Tasmania via Melbourne during the 1870s-1880s. This coincided with the discovery of gold in Waterhouse and Beaconsfield. Tasmania was also offering “open entry” to the Chinese and subsequently “the opportunity to become naturalised.” Hong ran a small store with goods imported from China. William owned and operated The Arbar [tin] Mine. During the late nineteenth century, Chinese tin miners outnumbered their European counterparts in North East Tasmania by as much as 10:1. He married Ethel Tong in 1927. Together they had six children: Norman, Wilma, Tasman, Noela, Alan and Janice.
Figure 245. Gugug Go Tack, 2017
This profile explores the life of a former North Queensland resident that Herberton Shire Council honoured in naming “Go Tack Road.” He was remembered affectionately by the community for his skills in basketry, Chinese medicine and water divination.

Gugug Go Tack was born in Guangdong Province on 11 July 1878. He departed China during the lead-up to the Boxer Rebellion on the SS Chingtu, entering Australia on 10 September 1898. He registered as an alien, as per The War Precautions Regulations of 1916, at Tolga. He was, at the time, growing corn for the Atkinson Family.

The Chinese dispersed to urban centres throughout Queensland at the decline of the Palmer River Gold Rush during the late 1870s. By the turn of the century, Cairns had become reliant on the community for their fresh produce. Nearly all of the market gardeners originated from Guangdong Province. It was commonplace for European farmers to lease small allotments to their Chinese counterparts.

Go Tack consistently listed his occupation as “labourer or farmer.” He visited China three times, receiving CEDT in 1909, 1913 and 1917. After returning from the last trip, Go Tack purportedly altered his appearance growing his hair into a traditional Chinese pigtail with an accompanying beard. By the 25 September 1920, Go Tack had moved to Wondecla where he established a large market garden.

336 Ibid., 3.
339 Ibid.
340 Ibid., 124.
342 Ibid.
343 Ibid., 9.
344 Ibid., 3; Toohey, Tumbling Waters, 52.
He was arrested and jailed for two months for unlawful assault of a sixteen year old girl in 1924. He moved to Coolabbi Creek at Evelyn on his release. He established a vegetable garden and an orchard with plum trees imported from China. In addition to selling produce door to door at Kaban and Tumoulin, Go Tack sold baskets that he wove from rainforest cane.

Go Tack built a double storeyed wooden-house with few notably few windows. He ran an herbalist business through this distinctive building, treating both people and their animals. Although he imported some products from China, such as Tiger Balm, Go Tack made many of the remedies using local produce. For example, his ointment for burns consisted of render fowl fat and fermented water melon.

Go Tack was found deceased in his home on 30 January 1956. He was buried by the state.

347 Ibid.
348 Toohey, Tumbling Waters, 52–53.
350 Ibid., 6.
351 Toohey, Tumbling Waters, 53.
352 Ibid.
353 Ibid., 9.
354 Ibid., 10.
Figure 246. Ah Him, 2017
Name: Ah Him
Dates: Not specified, but he was photographed at the turn of twentieth century
Location of Origin: Not specified, most likely the Pearl River Delta in Guangdong Province
Floral Emblem: Red Silk Cotton-Tree Flower
Object: Chisel

There is little biographical information available about Ah Him. He was identified as a Chinese cabinetmaker living and working in Melbourne around the turn of the twentieth century.355 The earliest known Chinese settler to Australia, Ahuto in 1803, was a carpenter.356 He was shortly followed by fellow carpenter Mak Sai Ying in 1818.357 Between 1890 and 1920, Chinese workers outnumbered their ‘White’ counterparts in the furniture industry.358 They constituted “the largest group of Chinese workers” and the first within the community to undertake industrial action to “agitate” for better wages and working conditions.359

Ah Him most likely originated from Guangdong Province.360 The furniture industry in the Pearl River Delta, for which the region remains renowned, was established in the seventeenth century.361 Contrary to the beliefs of European colonists, the Chinese trained artisans did not produce furniture of inferior quality.362

There was a disparity in the wages and hours amongst the Chinese furniture workers.363 In instances where they were payed less than their European counterparts, the remuneration still eclipsed their compatriots in China.364 Subsequently, the industry in Australia afforded Ah Him social mobility.365

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356 Tracking the Dragon, A3.
359 Ibid.; Fitzgerald, Big White Lie, 8.
Although living in furniture factories became illegal in Melbourne in 1896, Ah Him may have been provided accommodation offsite.\textsuperscript{366} His employers may have also provided cooks in the lodgings to prepare Cantonese stables such as Chinese sausage, salted fish and rice.\textsuperscript{367}

\textsuperscript{366} Gibson, “Voices of Sydney's Chinese Furniture Factory Workers,” 110.
\textsuperscript{367} Ibid.
Figure 247. William Edward Sing, 2017
William Edward Sing was one of three children resulting from a union between John Sing from Shanghai and Mary Ann Pugh from Staffordshire. He was born in 1886, one year prior to the forming of the Anti-Chinese League in his hometown of Clermont in Central Queensland.

“A notable sniper” during the First World War, his distinction in marksmanship was recognised in Central Queensland from a young age. As a boy, ‘Billy’ was able to “…shoot the tail off a piglet at 25 paces with a .22 rifle.” Sing enlisted in the 5th Australian Light Horse Regiment in 1914. Sing was credited with “201 confirmed kills” at Gallipoli, earning him the nicknames “the Assassin” and “the Murderer.” Amongst the carnage was the celebrated Turkish Sniper “Abdul the Terrible.” He had been assigned to eliminate Sing who had obtained notoriety through the Australian, British and American press. Sing shot his rival between the eyes in a duel in 1915. In 2016, Sing was awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal for his efforts.

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368 Jo Clyne, Richard Smith and Ian Hodges, *Chinese Anzacs* (Canberra: Department of Veterans’ Affairs, 2015), 34.
371 Hamilton, “Billy Sing.”
372 Clyne, Smith and Hodges, *Chinese Anzacs*, 34.
373 Ibid., 34; Hamilton, “Billy Sing.”
375 The Australian War Memorial, “William ‘Billy’ Sing.”
Sing also received the prestigious Belgian Croix de Guerre in 1918. The medal was awarded to soldiers who “served with distinction” by the Belgian Government.

Between October 1914 and July 1918, Sing was “severely gassed” and wounded more than three times. He met and married a 21 year old waitress, Elizabeth Steward, whilst recuperating in Scotland during 1917. She accompanied Sing back to Central Queensland. They were received in a large procession led by a band and greeted by local dignitaries. Mrs Sing nee Steward disappeared from public records within a few years of their marriage.

In 1919, Sing was granted a “Solider Settlement Block” near Clermont where he farmed sheep. When the exploit proved unsuccessful Sing mined for gold at Miclere resulting in a “modest gold strike” in 1931. Suffering from post-traumatic stress, Sing habitually shot at the moon from his “miner’s shack.”

Sing died of a ruptured aorta on 19 May 1943. He was discovered alone in his pyjamas in the room he boarded at 304 Montague Road West End. The fifty-seven year old had only five shillings in his possession. Memorials were erected in his honour at Clermont in 1995 and Brisbane in 2015.

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378 Ibid.
379 Clyne, Smith and Hodges, *Chinese Anzacs*, 36.
380 Hamilton, “Billy Sing.”
381 Clyne, Smith and Hodges, *Chinese Anzacs*, 37; Australian Light Horseman Association, “Trooper William Eddie Sing.”
382 The Australian Light Horseman Association, “Trooper William Eddie Sing.”
383 Ibid.
384 Ibid.
385 Clyne, Smith and Hodges, *Chinese Anzacs*, 37.
386 Ibid.
387 Hamilton, “Billy Sing.”
388 The Australian Light Horseman Association, “Trooper William Eddie Sing.”
389 Ibid; Hamilton, “Billy Sing.”
Figure 248. Mee How Ah Mouy, 2017
Born in Middle Park in Victoria on 26 April 1887, Mee How Ah Mouy was the eleventh child born from Chinese parents Louis Ah Mouy and Ung Chuck.\(^{392}\)

Despite arriving as an indentured carpenter, Louis became an “undisputed leader” of the Chinese community.\(^{393}\) He founded the See Yap Society of Melbourne.\(^{394}\) He is also credited with instigating a mass migration from Guangdong Province to the Victorian goldfields during the 1950s.\(^{395}\) Louis also co-authored *The Chinese Question*, a pamphlet published in in 1879 which advocated for Chinese migration.\(^{396}\)

Mee How was equally esteemed in the Chinese community.\(^{397}\) In 1906, he co-founded the Sino-Australian Association with William Ah Ket.\(^{398}\) Ah Ket was the first Chinese barrister in Victoria.\(^{399}\) At the time, Mee How was a second year architectural student at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT).\(^{400}\) In 1907, his graduating year, Mee How received an award from the Victorian Institute of Architects.\(^{401}\) He was the first Chinese Australian architect, listed as working in Arlington Chambers on Collins Street in Melbourne in 1924.\(^{402}\)

Mee How was the first president of the Young Chinese League.\(^{403}\) The organisation resulted from a merger between The Chinese Progressive Association and the Chinese Athletics Association in 1932.\(^{404}\) Membership was open to all persons with parents or grandparents born in China.\(^{405}\) Young Chinese League provided opportunities to socialise that were


\(^{394}\) Yong, “Ah Mouy, Louis (1826-1948).”

\(^{395}\) Ibid.


\(^{397}\) Macgregor, “Ah Mouy”; Ching Fatt Yong, “Ah Mouy, Louis (1826-1948).”

\(^{398}\) Macgregor, “Ah Mouy.”

\(^{399}\) Ibid.


\(^{401}\) Ratcliffe, "Looking Back on 130 Years of RMIT Life."

\(^{402}\) Macgregor, “Ah Mouy.”


\(^{404}\) Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia, "Young Chinese League."

\(^{405}\) Ibid.
politically-neutral and “moral.”

Offering an alternative to the “gambling and drinking houses,” YCL hosted an array of activities from Australian Rules Football to Debutant Balls. Mee How was the YCL Treasurer from 1939 to 1957.

Mee How met his future wife, the daughter of a doctor, Monica Kung whilst sojourning in China between 1912 and 1915. Monica travelled to Australia in 1915 and they were married two years later. They had one child named Stanley. Mee How passed away on 5 August 1977.
Figure 249. William Joseph Liu, 2017
William Joseph Liu was described by Australian historian Wang Gungwu as "the epitome of an assimilated Chinese." Born in Sydney in 1893, he was the eldest of three children resulting from a marriage between William Ah Lum from Guangdong Province and Florence Thomas from England. After his mother took ill in 1900, William was sent to his paternal home village of Taishan. He returned to Sydney eight years later to resume his schooling at Christ Church St Laurence’s School, Wahroonga Men’s College and Stott & Hoare’s Business College.

In 1912, he moved to Melbourne and worked as a translator and clerk for the Chinese consulate. There he met the first Chinese Australian barrister William Ah Ket, who was the acting consul-general in 1913–14.

Liu is best known for his role as the founding General Manager of the Australia China Mail Steamship Line (ACMSL). The company was a joint initiative of the New South Wales Chamber of Commerce, the Australasian Kuomintang (KMT) and the Chinese Masonic Society. The intention was to break a Japanese monopoly on shipping lines between the China Sea and Australia. Two ships were purchased and registered to the 24-year-old Australian in 1917. Unfortunately, the SS Gabo and the SS Victoria were requisitioned for World War One at a substantial cost. When the vessels were returned in 1919, the company came into competition with the British operating the same route. Liu was replaced in 1921 by Peter Yee Wing, the leader of the KMT, causing further division within the company. The enterprise collapsed in 1924.

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412 Fitzgerald, Red Tape Gold Scissors, 169.
414 Ibid.
415 Ibid.
417 Ibid.
418 Fitzgerald, Big White Lie, 186–190.
419 Ibid.
421 Ibid.
422 Ibid.
423 Fitzgerald, Big White Lie, 188.
Liu had married Mabel Ting Quoy in 1916. In an article published in the *Chinese Republic News*, Li Xiangbo accused Liu of colluding with his father-in-law Sydney business man Gilbert Yip Ting Quoy on some of the most unsustainable initiatives of the company. This included the leasing of a third vessel from the Chinese government, SS Hwah Ping, in 1920. Despite the scandalous failings of his tenure at the ACMSL, Liu maintained a position or prominence in the Australian Chinese community.

He was, for example, the English secretary of Kuomintang in Sydney during the interwar period. He was invited to meet the Chinese leader Dr Sun Yat-san in Guangdong in 1921. He was also the vice president of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in New South Wales from 1927 to 1933. Liu was the English secretary for the Sun Company during the 1930s, which ran one of the four large department stores in Shanghai. When the Japanese invaded China, Liu worked as a propagandist for China’s 19th Route Army.

Liu also successfully lobbied the Australian government to reduce the qualifying period for Chinese people to become naturalised from fifteen to five years in 1966. He became the founding governor of the Australia-China Chamber of Commerce and Industry of New South Wales in 1976. In 1981, Liu was awarded an Order of the British Empire. He died at Randwick in 1983 and was survived by his wife and two children.
Figure 250. Wilfred Hem Jen Young, 2017
On 14 April 1896, Wilfred Hem Jen Young was born in Gympie to Ah Young from Guangdong Province and Mary Amelia Coe from Norfolk in England. He was known by an anglicised version of his Chinese name “Harry.” On 26 June 1916, Harry enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force at the age of twenty. Like many young men, at the time, he lied about his age. Serving in the 49th Battalion in France, Wilfred was wounded in action twice. He met his future wife whilst recuperating in hospital, a nurse from Kent named Alice Norah Harris. He received both a Victory Medal in 1918 and a British War Medal in 1920. He was discharged in 1919.

Upon returning to Queensland, Harry and his brothers Ben planted two hectares of peanuts in Memerambi in the South Burnett Region. Commercial farming of peanuts in Queensland was initiated in Kingaroy by fellow Chinese immigrant Samuel Long in 1901.

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437 The True Story of Ah Young and Mary Amelia Coe, “Chapter 6.”
438 Rossow, “Chapter 6, Part 4–Children–Wilfred Hem Jen.”
439 Ibid.
440 Ibid.
441 Ibid.
443 Ibid.
Although the cultivation of peanuts outside of their region of origin, South America, was facilitated by the Spanish in the sixteenth century it was introduced to Australia by Chinese immigrants.\textsuperscript{444} The “Chinese Ground Nut” was farmed in the Condamine Region during the 1860s.\textsuperscript{445} It was also cultivated by Chinese immigrants in North Queensland.\textsuperscript{446} Two of the principle Chinese Australian companies operating in Sydney during the early twentieth century, Wing Sang and On Lee, also credit their success to the importation of peanuts.\textsuperscript{447} The primary consumers of peanuts, at the time were from the Chinese community who used to make oil, as 小吃 and/or an ingredient in ‘cakes’.\textsuperscript{448}

Queensland farmers arguably benefited from an embargo place on the importation of peanuts from Asia in 1927.\textsuperscript{449} The protectionism was justified by prejudicial and unsubstantiated claims the Chinese harboured carried disease.\textsuperscript{450}

In 1929, Harry revolutionised the peanut growing industry in the South Burnett region by inventing a threshing machine.\textsuperscript{451} Up until that time, peanuts were shelled by hand.\textsuperscript{452} The machine remained in use up until the 1950s.\textsuperscript{453}

Harry married Norah in St Leonard’s Church in Kent in 1924.\textsuperscript{454} He died in 1980. He was survived by Norah and their three children Una, Daphne and Wilfred.\textsuperscript{455}


\textsuperscript{446} The Peanut Company of Australia, “History of the Australian Peanut Industry”; Australian Food History Timeline, “1901 Peanut Industry Begins in Australia.”

\textsuperscript{447} Sophie Loy-Wilson, “Peanuts and Publicists: ‘Letting Australian Friends Know the Chinese Side of the Story in Interwar Sydney,’” \textit{History Australia} 6, no. 1 (2009): 06.3.


\textsuperscript{449} Australian Food History Timeline, “1901 Peanut Industry Begins in Australia.”

\textsuperscript{450} Loy-Wilson, “Peanuts and Publicists,” 06.3.

\textsuperscript{451} Rossow, “Chapter 6, Part 4–Children–Wilfred Hem Jen.”

\textsuperscript{452} The Peanut Van, “A Quick History of Peanuts,” accessed 10 December 2017, 

\textsuperscript{453} Rossow, “Chapter 6, Part 4–Children–Wilfred Hem Jen.”

\textsuperscript{454} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{455} Ibid.
Figure 251. Frank Chinn, 2017
Frank (Tung Foo) Chinn was a founding member of the Young Chinese League and its president between 1937 and 1966. In 1897, he was born in Weldborough to Maa Mon Chinn and Lula Kow Yonn. His father, Maa Mon, had emigrated to Tasmania from Guangdong Province in 1875 to contribute towards the burgeoning tin mining industry. At its decline during the 1910s, the family of seven sons and four daughters moved to Melbourne. The middle and younger sons started a produce wholesale business on Little Bourke Street. Chinese migrants pioneered cultivation of many crops in colonial Australia including bananas, corn and sugar cane. During the first part of the twentieth century, nearly half of the fruit merchants in Melbourne were Chinese. The Young Chinese League operated from the Chinn family home from its inception in 1932 until 1963. It offered the Chinese community opportunity to socialise through sport and cards, a “moral alternative to the gambling and drinking houses.” Affectionately referred to as “Uncle Frank,” he served as president for 34 years. In 1971, the Ambassador of the PRC presented Frank with a Hua Kuang Award of Merit in recognition of his service to the Chinese community. Frank died in 1986.

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459 Ibid.
461 Annette Shun Wah and Wah and Greg Aitkin, Banquet: 10 Courses to Harmony (Doubleday, 1999): 23.
462 Tracking the Dragon, A13.
463 Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia, “Young Chinese League.”
464 Ibid.
465 Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia, “Chinn, Frank (Tung Foo).”
466 Ibid.
467 Ibid.
Figure 252. Alice Lim, 2017
Name: Alice Lim
Dates: Born c. 1900
Location of Origin: Rutherglen, Victoria
Floral Emblem: Common Heath
Object: Reel of film

Alice Lim was born in Rutherglen in Victoria in 1900.\textsuperscript{468} She and her younger sister Queenie resulted from a union between Charles Lim Kee and Ng Hock Lim.\textsuperscript{469} During the 1920s she lived in Melbourne and was unofficially engaged to the fruit merchant Frank Chinn.\textsuperscript{470} She later moved to Shanghai to contribute towards the burgeoning motion picture industry as a film star.\textsuperscript{471}

\textsuperscript{470} Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia, “Lim Kee, Alice.”
Figure 253. Anne Chen Ki Chong, 2017
Name: Anne Chen Ki Chong  
Dates: Born c. 1900  
Location of Origin: Cooktown, Queensland  
Floral Emblem: Cooktown Orchid  
Object: Fan

The photographs of a young girl, identified as Anne Chen Ki Chong, is amongst the limited documentation evidencing the existence of a Chinese Consulate in Cooktown during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Records to the contrary indicate that the first Chinese consulate in Australia was established in Melbourne in 1909. The recommendation to open Chinese consulates were made to the Emperor following an investigation by General Wong Yung Ho and Consul Yu Ch’iuang in 1886–87. Cooktown was amongst the colonies visited in Southeast Asia.

It was not commonplace for men to emigrate from China with their families or spouses prior to the 1920s. According to the 1911 Commonwealth census, the males in Australia born in China numbered 20,453 as opposed to 322 of their female counterparts. In 1905, the Immigration Restriction Act was also modified to exclude the entry of dependants.

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474 Ibid.


Figure 254. Kwong Sing Wah, 2017
Kwong Sing Wah was an “internationally renowned” vaudeville performer. The six foot “giant” from Northern China was described as a Chinese Rudolph Valentino by *The Advertiser* in 1927. He was born into a family of performers who were, at the time, a distinct “caste” in Chinese society. The intergenerational transference of theatrical skills occurred between fathers and sons.

During the 1920s, Wah’s the “royal troupe” took their skills from the “courts” of China to the United States of America for a two year period. Upon returning to China, the group was “scattered in the tumult of uprisings and military expeditions that constituted the Chinese Revolution of 1925–27. This included two performers being “Shanghaied” into the National Army. Wah spared no expense in repatriating his troupe from all over China and relocating them to Australia in 1926. The two youngest members, contortionists Sun Shun and Ah Loong, were smuggled out of the country in a kitbag and a rug.

The Kwong Sing Wah Troupe performed extensively throughout Australia during the late 1920s, in venues such as the Wintergarden Theatre in Brisbane, The Tivoli Theatre in Sydney, The Catholic Hall in Maitland, West’s Olympia Theatre in Adelaide, and The Prince of Wales Theatre in Perth.

The “Wonder Show” offered spectators a uniquely oriental experience. The sets and costumes, including gold tapestries and ornate glowing screens, had an estimated value of

485 “Chinese Performers,” *The Advertiser*.
487 “Chinese Performers,” *The Advertiser*.
£10 000. The variety of acts incorporated acrobatics, singing, juggling, hypnosis, illusion and live animals.

Figure 255. Gladys Sym Choon, 2017
Name: Gladys Sym Choon
Dates: 1905–1991
Location of Origin: Adelaide
Floral Emblem: Sturt Dessert Pea
Object: Tiger pillow toy

The iconoclastic Gladys Sym Choon is credited as the first female importer in Adelaide.\(^{491}\) She was also the first woman to incorporate a business in South Australia.\(^{492}\) She was born in Unley on the 14 December 1905, the fourth child to Christian peasants ‘John’ Sym Choon and So Yung Moon.\(^{493}\)

John migrated unaccompanied to Adelaide in 1890 shortly after the death of his first child.\(^{494}\) His wife remained in Dong Guan, Guangdong Province, for several years with an adopted son. He hawked produce door to door wheeled in a handcart. So Yung joined him in Unley at the turn of the twentieth century. Due to illness, John returned to China shortly after the birth of his youngest son, Gordon, in 1910.\(^{495}\) He died of diabetes.\(^{496}\)

In a departure from Chinese convention, the widowed So Yung sent her daughters to secondary school.\(^{497}\) Bookkeeping was amongst the commercial practices Gladys studied at Adelaide High School.\(^{498}\)

Shy of 20 years of age, Gladys opened the China Gift Store at 235A Rundle Street in 1923.\(^{499}\) Unhindered by the Immigration Restriction Act, which applied to Chinese persons born overseas, Gladys travelled to China with frequency.\(^{500}\) The importer was able to offer “an exclusive clientele” an array of “luxury oriental goods” including napery, embroidery, lingerie, ornamental China and cloisonné.\(^{501}\) In 1990, Gladys stated that she sourced “Very


\(^{493}\) Miss Gladys Sim Choon, “History.”

\(^{494}\) Ibid.; Sumerling, “The Sym Choons of Rundle Street,” 81.

\(^{495}\) Sumerling, “The Sym Choons of Rundle Street,” 81.

\(^{496}\) Miss Gladys Sim Choon, “History.”

\(^{497}\) Ibid.

\(^{498}\) Ibid.


\(^{500}\) Manning, "Gladys Sym Choon."

exclusive things... If anyone wanted that type of thing they would come and see me. I tried to find what they wanted.”

Gladys married an importer from the north-east Tasmanian tin-mining community, Edward “Teddy” Chung Gon, at St Pauls Church, Adelaide, on 12 August 1939. She continued to stock and supervise her store from Launceston. Gladys and Teddy had three children, Mei-Ling, Kuo Weng and Kuo Kwan. The title for 235A Rundle Street was passed onto Mei-Ling in 1976. Gladys died at her daughter’s home in Melbourne on 16 October 1991.

The China Gift Store operated until 1985. The property was resurrected into a fashion emporium Joff Chappel and Razak Mohammed in 1985. In homage to the “fashion stalwart,” it was named Miss Gladys Syn Choon.

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502 Sumerling, “The Sym Choons of Rundle Street,” 86; Catherine Manning, "Gladys Sym Choon.”

504 Culture Victoria, “The Wedding of Gladys Sym Choon.”


508 Manning, "Gladys Sym Choon."

Figure 256. Daisy Kwok, 2018
Daisy Kwok was a Chinese Australian born in Sydney in 1907. She was one of eight children that resulted from a union between merchant George Kwok Bew from Guangdong Province and Darling Young a Chinese Australian from Bourke. She spent her early years living in a mansion in Petersham, being waited upon by European servants. The children were banned from speaking Chinese, for fear of tarnishing their English accents.

George relocated his family to Shanghai in 1918. This decision was influenced both by the impact of anti-Chinese “boycotts” on his business in Sydney and the growing nationalism amongst Chinese diaspora. Eager to contributing towards the building of a new China, George co-founded what would become one of the largest department stores in the city. Wing On was modelled on Sydney’s Anthony Horderns. The multi-levelled department store offered a “style of retail” that was unique in Asia, with fixed prices, courteous staff and glass cabinets. In addition to being the managing director of Wing On Co. Ltd, George was also the director of the Chinese Government Mint at the time of his death in 1932.

Daisy grew to epitomise the modernity the swept through Europe’s “preeminent” treaty port in Asia during the 1920s–30s. She navigated the decadent grandeur of the British and

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Name: Daisy Kwok  
Dates: 1907–1998  
Location of Origin: Sydney  
Floral Emblem: Waratah  
Object: Floral broach
French concessions as a desirable socialite. Against the backdrop of the art deco and jazz era, Daisy opened a fashion boutique and took lessons from pastry chefs. She also attained a degree in psychology from Yenching University in 1934. Daisy married Woo Yu-Hsing, a playboy and major league baseball enthusiast, who had graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in engineering. Together they had two children.

Although many of the affluent residents of Shanghai greeted the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949 with enthusiasm, the Communist Party dismantled the “lavish” upper class. Private companies were closed down. Notably, the legacy of Wing On in Shanghai continues as the state-run Hua Lian Department Store. However, most of Daisy’s extended family moved to Hong Kong and the United States of America. She and her immediate family remained in Shanghai for their scientific instruments company.

Woo, who was outspoken in his opposition to the Communist Party reforms, was arrested during the anti-Rightest campaign in 1958 for his dealings in foreign currency. He died in prison three years later.

Daisy and her children were progressively relieved of their privileges. Their accommodation, for example, was initially reduced to two rooms in the servant quarters of their mansion. Items considered by the government to be extraneous, including winter clothing, were confiscated. Daisy was also relocated to the countryside on several occasions to be re-educated. Digging latrines, lugging bricks and peeling cabbages were amongst her assigned activities. Although many of Daisy’s bourgeois contemporaries opted for suicide, Daisy was “calmly” accepting of her new circumstances.

When the Communist Party policy realigned to encourage international engagement during the late 1970s, bilingual skills became a reified commodity. Daisy assisted Australian consulate staff when it reopened in Shanghai in 1987. In addition to translating

522 Reuters, “‘Daisy’ Refuses to Wilt.”
523 Ibid.
524 Ibid.; Pietsch and Loy-Wilson, “Shanghai Princess.”
525 Reuters, “‘Daisy’ Refuses to Wilt.”
526 Ibid.
527 Ibid.; and Tantala, “A Right Royal Yarn About a Princess.”
528 Ibid.
529 Ibid.
530 Ibid.
531 Ibid.; Pietsch and Loy-Wilson, “Shanghai Princess.”
532 Ibid.; Tantala, “A Right Royal Yarn About a Princess”; Reuters, “‘Daisy’ Refuses to Wilt.”
533 Pietsch and Loy-Wilson, “Shanghai Princess.”
534 Ibid.
535 Ibid.; and Tantala, “A Right Royal Yarn About a Princess.”
536 Ibid.
537 Ibid.
538 Pietsch and Loy-Wilson, “Shanghai Princess.”
documents and teaching Chinese, Daisy proved a “repository” of the history of “Chinese-Australian connections” during the interwar period. In 1990, the Australian government rewarded Daisy with a coveted citizenship. She visited Australia however chose to continue living in China. During an interview, she stated the belief that the overseas Chinese did not necessarily fair better than their mainland counterparts. Daisy died in 1998, was survived by her son and daughter.

540 Ibid.
541 Ibid.
542 Pietsch and Loy-Wilson, “Shanghai Princess.”
543 Ibid.
544 Ibid.
Figure 257. Charles Lee, 2017
Charles Que Fong Lee was a pioneer in the Australian diplomatic service. The first Chinese-Australian diplomat was part of Australia’s third overseas diplomatic post in Chongqing. Twenty-two Australians were rotated between 1941 and 1946 in what became known as “The Legation.” This “advance party” established diplomatic relations between Australia and China.

Lee became the “emerging face of multicultural Australia.” He was born in the Northern Territory in 1913 to Cantonese parents. He was “immensely popular” despite his inability to speak mandarin or the local dialect. Lee was a regular guest of prime minister Sun Fo. He also served in the Australian Embassy in Jakarta and the United Nations in New York.

Lee was part of a delegation that negotiated the opening of relations between Communist China and Australia in 1973. His retiring that year coincided with the ending of the White Australia Policy.

Lee purportedly did not identify as a Chinese Australian during his early years in the Northern Territory and Queensland. In his preschool years, Lee found friendship in the indigenous community that was equally marginalised. Lee relocated to Queensland in 1927 for a scholarship at Southport School. He later completed a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Queensland. His ethnicity was emphasised in media coverage he received for

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547 Ibid.
549 The Australian Consulate General, “An Australian Legacy in Chongqing.”
551 Pemberton, 2011.
552 Ibid.
553 Lee, “Papers of Charles Lee.”
554 Pemberton, “Charles Que Fong Lee.”
555 Ibid.
556 Ibid.
557 Ibid.
558 Ibid.
his achievements in rugby.\textsuperscript{559} He played as half-back for Queensland in 1933.\textsuperscript{560} Lee died in Canberra in 1996 and was survived by his wife Nancy.\textsuperscript{561}

\textsuperscript{559} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{560} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{561} Lee, “Papers of Charles Lee.”
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Installation Images of the PhD Exhibitions

Papercut installations at Andrew Baker Art Dealer in Brisbane, Australia
Papercut installations at Andrew Baker Art Dealer in Brisbane, Australia
Detail of the papercut installation *Along The Silk Road* at Andrew Baker Art Dealer in Brisbane, Australia
Papercut installations, artist books and wood veneer prints at Grey Street Gallery in Brisbane, Australia
Gilded papercuts, trigger images for augmented reality and paper sculptures at Grey Street Gallery in Brisbane, Australia

Papercut installations, digital animation and stainless steel sculpture at Grey Street Gallery in Brisbane, Australia. Photograph by Abraham Ambo Garcia Jr
Digital animation, papercut installation and PLA FDM print at Grey Street Gallery in Brisbane, Australia

PLA FDM print, aluminium DMLS print and bronze cast from an SLA print at Grey Street Gallery in Brisbane, Australia