

2003

I Moved House : an inscape

Rose Williams
Edith Cowan University

Follow this and additional works at: https://ro.ecu.edu.au/carn_artcap2003



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Australian Research and Training Centre for the Arts in Psychotherapy @ Edith Cowan University School of Contemporary Art. Edited by: Dr Rose Williams Papers Refereed By: David Maclagan, Annie Henzell, Babette Sabella November 13-16, 2003 Wollaston Conference Centre, Perth.
This Conference Proceeding is posted at Research Online.
https://ro.ecu.edu.au/carn_artcap2003/10

I Moved House¹: an inscape

I moved house²
And tore up the boxes
That held all the bits
Carried away
From my parents place³
From my old house
Where I used to live

I painted them in black
In a dark room
Thinking about

Grief
And loss
And memory

And then

¹ Keller, H (1902) *The Story of My Life*, Signet Classic New York

That living word awakened my soul, gave it light....I left the well-house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought. As we returned to the house every object which I touched seemed to quiver with life. That was because I saw everything with the strange new sight that had come to me.

² Martin, E 1987 *The Woman in The Body: a cultural analysis of reproduction*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes

Pg 201 If there is anything at all to the relationships between *housekeeping of the "body" of the family* - of its effluvia, dirt, waste - and a different and more practical, grounded consciousness prone to question the shape of society as a whole, then there should be a more acute consciousness of the working class. For they, especially women, and most especially black women, in large part do the housekeeping for the whole social body in addition to the housekeeping for their own bodies and their families. It is they who clean rich peoples homes, clean offices and factories, take away waste and garbage of cities and towns, serve people at restaurants and clean up after them, care for the daily needs of patients and clean up after them in hospitals.

³ Kierr, S (1995) *Treating Anxiety: four case examples* in Levy, F (eds) *Dance and Other Expressive Arts Therapies: when words are not enough*, Routledge:London

pg121.....a child sometimes becomes attached to an object associated with the safety and comfort of the parents, perhaps a blanket or a teddy bear.....these objects help to maintain the feeling of safety even when the child is away from the parent.....

On the third day⁴

I opened the curtains
To the window of my new home⁵
And light came in
And I liked what I saw

I made all the
Bits n' pieces
Into a 3 metre
Totem
And hung
Her/him
On the wall
Above my spiral stairs⁶
And noticed as I walked

Up
And
Down

That he/she
Acted as the skeleton
To my psychic world
Based around the body of me

⁴ Whitford, M (1995) *Luce Irigaray - Philosophy in the Feminine* London:Routledge

pg 48 Bringing the god to life through us, between us, as a resurrection and transfiguration of blood and flesh through their language and their ethic

⁵ Whitford, M (1995) *Luce Irigaray - Philosophy in the Feminine* London:Routledge

Pg 47 What links God, language and woman here is the idea of becoming; God or language is defined in terms of becoming; woman or being in the feminine is also defined in terms of becoming. And God and language are both defined in terms of a house or habitation. What is needed for women then is a habitation that does not contain or imprison them; instead of an invisible prison which keeps them captive, a habitation in which they can grow is the condition of becoming, and of becoming divine.

⁶ Hobson, R (1985) *Forms of Feeling: the heart of psychotherapy*, Routledge London

Pg 57 A psychotherapist is not a third-rate metaphysical poet. His job is not to think up fanciful analogies with which to ice the cake but, together with his client, to seek for 'moving metaphors'. In a language of feeling are brought together and they disclose a new meaning which resonates with deep levels of pre-conceptual experiencing. Then as a new, and larger synthesis emerges from our middle, there is a carrying forward with a step on to new ground.

A clunky shoulder
A funny neck
A head with bits wiggling out
On stalks

Anyway I hung it in my final show
At the prison⁷

And when it was finished
I asked my dad
And my mum
To help me get
Her/him down
And so we swung it
And held it and
Paced about
And down he/she came

I walked along
With him/her
Held awkwardly
In my arms
So that
The big long bits
Wouldn't waggle
Too much
In the wind
Coming through The windows
And come unstuck⁸

⁷ Rich, A (1976) *Of Woman Born*, WW Norton New York

Pg 164 These thinkers tend to assume that awareness of my body in its weight, massiveness, and balance is always an alienated objectification of my body, in which I am of my body and my body imprisons me. They also tend to assume that such awareness of my body must cut me off from the enactment of my projects. I cannot be attending to the physicality of my body and using it as a means to the accomplishment of my aims.

⁸ Con Davis, R (1997) *Aristotle, Gynecology, and the Body Sick with Desire* in Lefkowitz, L (eds) *Textual Bodies: changing boundaries of literary representation*, UNY Press:New York

pp 50-51 The world, in other words, can come unstuck precisely in the way that womans uterus comes unstuck in the female body. This similarity exists because the Kosmos itself...was conceived by the Greeks as a female otherness..in relation to Zeus's position as the super-male agency. Zeus and the gynecologist, in other words, have the same approximate relation to the Hupokeimenon (subject in process) and the discourse that makes the world knowable. The fixed position of the father/doctor, as doctor, orients the female body, and Zeus as super father/doctor orients the female world....Gynecology as cultural reference and technology of power and the fixity of "Mount Olympus", in effect, are the references of Greek critical authority, and in relation to the "womb" and "world" wander without purpose until a male can reposition them. Male technology cures "female problems", that is, female constitutional inadequacy and disorder.

Dad followed behind
To hold the string
And check the bits
As we went through the door

We were talking about
Something or other
I can't remember now
And just as we got
To the threshold⁹
With the metal plinth
Running under the door
That you have to
Remember
To step over
Or trip
And fall

And just as we stood
Near the door
To the death chamber
Where the threshold is
that we had to cross
A gust blew up
And the body
Wibble-Wobbled
Its last
Wibble wobble¹⁰

⁹ Grosz E (1994) *Volatile Bodies: toward a corporeal feminism*, Allen & Unwin St Leonards

Pg 52 (Freud) claims that, ininterceding between the mnemonic systems and consciousness, are the two psychical systems of the unconscious and the preconscious, divided by the barrier of censorship. The transformation of quantitative to qualitative excitations (of neurones) thus occurs well before the conscious registration of the perception. The movement occurs in the translation of terms between the mnemonic (memory) systems, which involve quantitative transformations of the neurone, and the unconscious, which is composed of nothing but perceptions which strive for conscious expression, i.e., wishes. This is thus the threshold point between neurological and psychological processes, the point at which the outer material impingements deflect into an internal, psychical order.

¹⁰ Riley, D (1999) *Foucault Nietzsche, Genealogy and History* in Price, J and Shildrick, M (eds) *Feminist Theory and the Body: a reader*, Edinburgh University Press:Edinburgh

Pg 224 If the body is an unsteady mark, scarred in its long decay, then the sexed body too undergoes a similar radical temporality, and more transitory states. Then what is the attraction of the category of the body at all?.....for the concept 'womens bodies' is opaque, and like 'women' it is always in some juxtaposition to 'human' and to 'men'. If this is envisaged as a triangle of identifications, then it is rarely an equilateral triangle in which both sexes are perched at matching distances from the apex of the human.

And came unstuck
Falling into pieces
On the ground
At my feet
Lying half
Across the lintel
Half in
And half
out

he/she
Literally
Came unstuck

My dad and I
Looked down and laughed
And said
Well that was a freudian slip
And I wondered
Does this mean its over?

I picked up the bits
And put them in my car
And drove to my aunts house

Her name is Eve¹¹
She has an old train carriage
In her garden
Lifted in there on a crane
By a friend of hers

And I put the pieces in there
With some stands and a light box
And I leave them there
In the mostly dark
Across from the door
Where the dog and cats come in
And out

¹¹ Scott Peck, M (1987) *The Different Drum: the creation of true community*
the first step to world peace, Arrow Books London

Pg 172 Take the wonderful story of Adam and Eve, the garden, the apple, and the snake..Is it a story of our fall from grace and alienation from our environment? Or is it a story of our evolution into self-consciousness (and hence the shyness that is so essentially human)? Or both? It is also a story of human greed and fear and arrogance and laziness and disobedience in response to the call to be the best we can be. And it tells us that we can no longer go back to that unself-conscious state of oneness with the world (the way is blocked by a flaming sword) but can find our salvation only by going forward through the rigors of the desert into ever deeper levels of consciousness.

Sometimes

Then
Just recently
My aunt emailed me
Asking me to
Take my stuff when
I am ready

She has left
My uncle
And was wanting
To clean things out
A bit

So I went on a Saturday
And opened the gate
And the blind dog
Came out to meet me
And snuffled her
Way down to the
Green door
At the side of the carriage

And I slid it open
And it clunked
And made my hand
Smell of iron
Because it
Was rusty

And inside
I had forgotten
It was there
And had just expected
To see
My stands
And other things

But there it was
All the
Bits n' pieces¹²
And I smiled and thought
I'm glad I kept that
Something about
The images
And crayon
And black paint
And delicious edged
Ripped up
Cardboard
Makes me feel
Good

So I pulled it out
And decided
I would put it
In the gallery show
Because really
It has travelled
All this way
Across the Inner geographies
of my life

¹² Minh-Ha, T (1991) *When the Moon Waxes Red: representation, gender and cultural politics*,
Routledge:New York

Pg 143 ... a form provides an armature for the amorphous substance - the vision of a piece of meat that would have no end is a mad vision but if I cut that meat in pieces and distribute it according to the progress of time and appetite, then it will no longer be perdition and madness; it will be humanised again...since I will inevitably have to divide that monstrous meat...let me at least have the courage to allow that form to shape itself by itself just as a crust grows hard by itself...allowing a meaning, whatever it may be, to come to the surface (pg 23 *The Passion* According to GH Paris, *Des Femmes Cixous*)