Peel, Fondle, Ogle: An exhibition and Unfixed parameters: A creative arts praxis investigation of the in-between conditions of the corporeal body: An exegesis

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Peel, Fondle, Ogle

An exhibition

– and –

Unfixed parameters: A creative arts praxis investigation of the in-between conditions of the corporeal body.

An exegesis

This thesis is presented in partial fulfilment of the degree of

Master of Arts

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Edith Cowan University
Faculty of Education and Arts
School of Communications and Arts
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Abstract

This research emerged from a rejection of the corporeal body as a clean, sterile entity that can be neatly contained by the boundaries of skin. Informed by Lacan’s (1977, 1979) notions of the body and desire and Kristeva’s (1982) perspectives on the abject, I have developed a concept of the unfixed status of the body as an in-between condition. This investigation of the in-between condition of the body critically explores notions of the corporeal body as constructed physically, psychically and symbolically through my creative arts praxis concerning the body, garment, object and performance. This exegesis unveils the potential for a reflexive and critical investigation of the in-between condition through a blurring of garment and the body. This blurring reveals the undefined margins of the body that simultaneously manifest desire and repulsion for the viewer and wearer (viewed).

This critical inquiry, carried out through the merging of theory and practice in my creative arts praxis, forms the reflexive methodology that demonstrates the body is in a constant state of change and is an unstable concept. The in-between condition demonstrates the body as penetrable, fluid and ambiguous. The unfixed parameters of the body are both disturbing and enticing and have been explored through the accumulative exhibitions undertaken throughout my candidature: *Fashion[ing] forms* (2014), *Becomings* (2014), *Progress* (2013), *The in-between: An inquiry of the body*. The final exhibition of my candidature, *Peel, Fondle, Ogle* in February 2015 explored the potential for the gaze of both the viewer and the viewed (Lacan, 1979) to physically and emotionally generate a response to the in-between condition of the body. Experimentation of gaze within this research extends the notion of the body’s uncontainable status due its in-between condition. It further reveals how relationships to and of the body are formed individually and collectively through viewer encounters.
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Introduction

My research involves a constant questioning of the materiality of body as I ask whether the margins of body are defined by the physical qualifies of the body or whether these are also imagined parameters. The human body is not static. It is continuously growing, changing, expelling and in-taking (Lupton, 2002). It is excessive, permeable and penetrable. Openings, gaps, folds, and rims interrupt the surface of the body and it is this unfixed nature of the body that generates an in-between condition. This research critically investigates the in-between abject (Kristeva, 1982) condition of the corporeal body (physically, psychically and symbolically) (Lacan, 1977, 1979, 1981) through a dialogue between the body, garment, object and performance in a creative arts praxis (Barrett, 2007b).

Crouch and Pearce (2012) explain praxis as “…the term we use to talk about the interrelationship between thinking and acting, and reflecting on the results of our actions” (p. 14). It is my aim, through my creative arts praxis, to reveal the corporeal body as physically, psychically and symbolically in-between, fragmented, and fluid using the critical theory of psychoanalysts Jacques Lacan and Julia Kristeva alongside an investigative studio component. Merging the theoretical perspectives of these key theorists with my studio-led inquiries endeavoured to demonstrate the in-between condition of the corporeal body through the capability of garment to act as an extension, rim or margin for the body. This research sought to establish the in-between condition of the corporeal body and to reveal the potential for the ambiguous bodily margins to simultaneously manifest desire and repulsion for the viewer and wearer (viewed).

The ensuing investigative process uncovered the capacity for the unfixed nature of bodily margins to be simultaneously internal and external, subject and object, desirable and repulsive. The critical, theoretical discussion accompanying this creative work is focused on the in-between condition of the body and denies the body as a complete and sterile container. The key theoretical terms relevant to this investigation of the in-between condition of corporeality are expatiated on in the literature review but are briefly introduced here. The main terms concerning this research are: corporeal body, physical, psychical, the symbolic, the abject, desire, fetish and gaze.
The central focus of this research is on the corporeal body, which is defined by the materiality of the human body and in this analysis is concerned with the physical, psychical and symbolic aspects that contribute to corporeality. The physical is defined as the biological or material component of the body. The psychical refers to the non-physical consciousness of mind and can be linked to Lacanian (1977, 1981) concepts of the self, ego and body image. The symbolic is analysed as the lens through which the individual and collective determine the meaning, values and perceptions for the physical and psychical body. The symbolic is a core perspective of Lacan (1977, 1981), who questions what we understand as biological and material boundaries of the body, establishing the symbolic as a structuring order for how the body is perceived physically and psychically. The capacity of the symbolic to manifest in-between abject conditions will be uncovered by disputing the clear delineation of bodily boundaries.

The notion of the in-between body is derived from Julia Kristeva’s (1982) abject, which facilitates the denial of boundaries. The abject is primarily concerned with the material body and refuses established, physical, psychical or symbolic corporeal boundaries; it is “the in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). Kristeva draws heavily from Lacanian theory to establish her notion of the abject that is primarily concerned with the materiality of body and the denial of all boundaries. The abject facilitates the in-between conditions of the corporeal body that drive my creative arts praxis.

Finally, desire is an ambiguous term as it is intangible and mediated through the symbolic. The perspective of desire employed in my creative arts praxis is primarily drawn from Lacan’s perspective. Lacan’s (1975, 1977) notion of desire is significant as it contributes to the relationships of the in-between corporeal body; it is defined as unsatisfiable, located in the lacking and the fragmented.

There are two terms that are not mentioned in the research questions that are interwoven into this project, which are extrapolated upon in the literature review. Firstly, fetish is discussed alongside desire, as it offers a suggestion of recovery of the loss facilitated by desire through the transference or displacement of desire onto another object. Secondly, gaze is integral to the discussion of the position and participation of the viewer and wearer (viewed) to the in-between conditions of the
body. Gaze acts as an extension of desire by contributing to the fragmentation of the in-between body. These terms regarding the fluidity of the in-between body are many and varied. They are critically examined within this research and are demonstrated as interwoven components.

My early experiences of being exposed to images of the internal body in medical journals altered my understanding of the body as contained by the surface of skin. These early experiences informed my research into body, which later became significant within my creative arts praxis. Therefore the current position of my research is the result of a continued investigation of the body originating from my early habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) and manifested through studio practices in my undergraduate studies.

A creative arts praxis is defined as a qualitative research methodology that generates research through the material languages of a studio-led artist investigation alongside a critical theoretical inquiry (Barrett, 2007b). I critically engage with my creative arts praxis using Bourdieu’s (1990) reflexivity as a methodology and analysing previous ways of working is part of this process. However, my creative arts praxis was previously divided between the fashion and visual arts disciplines, which privileged certain aspects of the studio practices of each during my undergraduate degree. Recognising that working in this divided manner had limitations for exploring the physicality of the body led to a synthesis of these practices. The fluidity of the body investigated in my research cannot be bound to a particular studio practice. Therefore the merging of practices and disciplines drove the critical, aesthetic and creative decisions, which became central to this investigation and now form a multidisciplinary approach.

The culmination of this multidisciplinary approach into the in-between condition of the body was my final Masters of Arts solo exhibition Peel, Fondle, Ogle (2015). However, as the research was accumulative, the positioning of my creative arts praxis was uncovered through analysing previous exhibitions that contributed to these perspectives on the body. These exhibitions were: Fashion[ing] forms (2014), Becomings (2014), Progress (2013), The in-between: An inquiry of the body (2013), The in-between (2012), Visual Arts graduate exhibition (2011) and the Contemporary Fashion graduate exhibition and performance (2010). The hybrid nature of my
creative arts praxis identified the need for a multidisciplinary practice inclusive of studio investigations of garment, sculpture, image, film, and performance in order to explore the in-between condition of the body that became central to my Masters research.

The current position of my Masters research questions the clean delineation of bodily margins physically, psychically and symbolically and the desired result from my creative arts praxis is to demonstrate the body as in-between condition. The intention for this is to question how the body is understood and to reveal the body as penetrable, fluid, ambiguous and in-between. The in-between condition of the body demonstrates unclear boundaries between the internal and external body and my creative arts praxis asks how do these unclear boundaries simultaneously disturb and entice us? My research aims to demonstrate that these sites have the potential to be simultaneously desirable and repulsive through the abject in-between conditions of the body. Furthermore, I aim to draw on this response by creating a conversation through the exhibition of garment, object and performance with the viewer and wearer (viewed).

The studio aspect of my creative arts praxis is focused on the ability garment has to create a dialogue with the body. Garment is significant to the investigation of the in-between body as garment and wearable object renegotiate the body’s margins, orifices and folds through its capacity to act as a rim, frame and boundary (Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998). In this view garment contributes to and extends upon the in-between condition of the body as it continuously shifts and re-establishes the boundaries of the body demonstrating its unfinished parameters. Whilst garment blurs, replicates, fragments and accentuates the physical margins of the body, my creative arts praxis investigation extended beyond garment. The position of the viewer and wearer were considered to establish an inquiry of the in-between body.

I aimed to establish a dialogue with the viewer and wearer (viewed) through installation, film and performance, which is reflexive of extending my studio practice beyond the static display of garments. Throughout this research I endeavoured to consider how the gaze from the viewer, and also the wearer, was able to contribute to the in-between condition of corporeality. This was accomplished through establishing a discourse between the installation of garment, sculpture, film, sound, performance (wearer) and viewer. My intention was for the viewer (and wearer) to consider the in-
between condition of the body present in the material manifestations of my studio practice and to then reflect on the context of their body through proximity and experience.

The research questions central to this investigation were:

1. In what ways can a creative arts praxis reflexively examine the in-between conditions (physical, psychical and symbolic) of the corporeal body through garment, object and performance?

2. How can the blurring of the corporeal body and garment, in a creative arts praxis, investigate the abject conditions that simultaneously manifest both desire and repulsion in the viewer and wearer (viewed)?

The research questions are a result of an ongoing inquiry of the body and corporeality through my creative arts praxis. Praxis, which was defined earlier as a critical relationship between theory and a conceptual studio practice, contributes to the methodology that is used within my research (O'Leary, 2007). As discussed, I used Bourdieu's (1990) reflexivity to engage with my praxis by acknowledging the individual and collective values that contribute to meaning and value. In regards to my specific praxis, it involved a merging and reflexive inquiry of the psychoanalytical and theoretical research alongside a creative studio practice of garment, installation, sculpture and performance. Previous and ongoing exhibitions and studio work were reflexively analysed in order to continue to drive the research of the in-between conditions of corporeality.

The exegesis structure begins with Chapter 1, the Literature review, which broadly uncovers different understandings of the body physically, psychically and symbolically whilst also identifying the social, cultural and historical influences on the body. The analysis of the body takes place through an inquiry of the symbolic lens that defines the body and uncovers how garment acts as an extension, frame and rim of the body. Furthermore, the abject, desire and gaze are analysed and revealed as significant within my research.

In chapter 2, the key theoretical perspectives that formulate my position of the corporeal body as a fluid and in-between condition are defined alongside a discussion
of the relevance of these ideas to my creative arts praxis. The undefinable margins of body are linked to the notions of the body as in-between through the theory of Lacan (1977), Kristeva (1982) and Grosz (1994). The body is revealed as fragmented, partial and privileged through convergence of desire (Lacan, 1975, 1977), repulsion and fetish (Krips, 1999). Links between the ambiguous parameters of the body and my creative arts praxis are revealed through the potential for garment and object to extend the unfixed nature of the body. Furthermore, the role of the viewer and wearer (viewed) specific to my research are revealed through uncovering how gaze contributes to these in-between conditions.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology significant to my research, establishing links between Bourdieu’s (1990) reflexivity and the symbolic. A reflexive inquiry is demonstrated as enabling critical reflection on the thinking and making, whilst considering the wider perspective of the field and institution. This section mediates the conflicts of self-focused research by acknowledging the influences of the wider collective.

Chapter 4 extends on the reflexive methodology of my creative arts praxis by reviewing artist’s practices and my exhibitions prior to my candidature that resonate with the research on the in-between condition of the body. In particular, I aim to link the ideas and outcomes of artists from various disciplines to my creative arts praxis such as the 16th century wax anatomical models in the La Specola in Florence, Italy, Elsa Schiaparelli, Hans Bellmer, and Leigh Bowery. An inquiry into the various practices of these artists and works alongside my creative arts praxis enables an understanding of my position in the field that contextualises my research.

Chapter 5 is a reflexive analysis of the tangible creative outcomes, which occurred throughout the duration of my candidature and reveals the critical investigation of the in-between conditions of the body. The accumulative process of my creative arts praxis is examined through the in-depth inquiry of my creative work in exhibitions: *The In-between: An inquiry of the body* (2013), *Progress* (2013), *Becomings* (2014), *Fashion[ing] Forms* (2014) and *Peel, Fondle, Ogle* (2015). The reflexive process of making, reviewing and responding is demonstrated by repeated adjustments of materials, thinking and exhibitions. The in-between condition is constantly examined and re-examined through the dialogue occurring between the garment, body, object
and performance with the increasing awareness of the potential of the viewers’ and viewed gaze to direct the research.

I am aiming to use the tangible outcomes of my creative arts praxis to reveal the body as an unfixed entity which cannot be defined as complete, whole or static. The relationship possible between garment and the body reworks these perspectives and makes evident the in-between condition of the body which denies any assumed boundaries between the internal/external, public/private, desirable/repulsive and viewer and viewed.

The significance of this research is that it reveals the body is a construction of boundaries that delineates the clean, proper and erotic from the unclean, obscene and abhorrent. The invisible boundaries are result of social, cultural and symbolic constructed meaning and value that are taken for granted as real and true. It is important to uncover the unstable status of the body through the in-between condition, as the corporeal body cannot simply be defined by our intrinsic knowledge. Becoming aware of the constructed body image uninges assumed and learned understandings of the body that are facilitated through the desire for a complete and whole body. Peeling back this façade opens the potential for the body to be critically examined and comprehended as a construction of the symbolic.
Chapter 1. Literature review

1.0 An introduction: The in-between condition of the corporeal body

This literature review uncovers the ambiguity of body through literature that inquires into the physical, psychical, symbolic, social, cultural and historical implications of the body. Furthermore, this investigation of the body reveals how the in-between condition of the corporeal body is intrinsically linked to the symbolic, garment, the abject, desire, and gaze, all refuting the body as a stable concept.

This literature review initiates the investigation of the in-between body by analysing the position of the symbolic as a lens for the physical (the body) and psychical (the mind) to shape and form the values and perceptions of corporeality for the individual and collective. The body is revealed as an in-between condition through an analysis of the historical, philosophical and psychoanalytical literature that focuses on the ambiguity of the body biologically, socially, culturally, historically and symbolically. Furthermore, the in-between condition of the body is explored though the ongoing dialogue between garment and body. The relationship between the body and garment demonstrates the potential for garment to act as an extension, frame and rim due to the undefined parameters of the body margins. Subsequently, a critical investigation of the abject, as theorised by seminal theorist Julia Kristeva (1982), is significant as the abject reveals a denial of boundaries which facilitates the in-between, ambiguous corporeal body.

Additionally, the ambiguous nature of the corporeal body is further analysed in Lacan’s (1975, 1977, 1981) perspective on desire. In this section desire is linked to the in-between condition of the body, as Lacan’s desire is established in the lacking body, the unsatisfiable drive of desire and fragmentation of the body through the symbolically privileged erogenous zones. Finally, gaze is analysed as an extension of desire and a facilitator of the in-between condition of corporeality through its contribution to the symbolic signification and fragmentation of the body. A discussion on gaze is significant in order to consider the performative role of the viewer of my work and the wearer of my garments (the viewed), demonstrating the in-between condition of the corporeal body though a dialogue between, body, garment and performance in my creative arts praxis.
This literature review aims to address the condition of the in-between of corporeality by taking into account the varying theoretical perspectives that inform an understanding of the body, the symbolic, the abject, desire and gaze in order to develop a critical perspective for my creative arts praxis. Additionally as this research concerns various different but intrinsically linked theoretical positions and concepts it is important to note the reliance on the seminal theorists of these fields to establish my own theoretical perspective. Lacan’s perspective contributes to the understanding of the body, the symbolic, the in-between, and desire, however, it should be noted that there are gaps and issues in the literature that are identified through the various sections noting the limitations of aspects of these theoretical perspectives.

1.1 The symbolic: A lens for the physical and psychical body

This section investigates the position of the symbolic and the power it has to organise and shape the values and perceptions of the individual and collective both physically (Adams, 2006; Grosz, 1994; Kristeva, 1982; Lacan, 1977) (material body) and psychically (Grosz, 1994; Lacan, 1977, 1981) (unconscious mind). The discussion of the symbolic is imperative at this point in the literature review as the symbolic (Bourdieu, 1990; Butler, 2011; Lacan, 1975, 1977, 1981) is the lens that determines meaning for the social, cultural and historical. By identifying the power of the symbolic to structure meaning, values and perceptions demonstrates how the individual and collective form meaning for the self, corporeal body, garment, the abject and desire. Locating the relationship of the symbolic to these main focuses of my research reveals how the lens of the symbolic contributes to, fragments and structures the in-between body.

In Bourdieu’s (1990) discussion on the symbolic in his book, *In other words: Essays towards a reflexive sociology*, the symbolic is analysed as a system and discussed as power, status and capital. The positioning of the symbolic through power, status and capital collectively reveal the symbolic as a perception and value determining system contributing to the meaning of the social, cultural and historical (Bourdieu, 1990; Jenkins, 1992). As Bourdieu’s (1990) symbolic contributes to meaning of the social and cultural, the practices and positions of the individual and collective are unable to be considered as autonomous functions. Butler (2011) extends this notion of the symbolic system by identifying the individual is a result of the normalising facility of
social and cultural practices. The individual then, is reducible by the symbolic and habits, learned values and actions are a production of this network (Bourdieu, 1990).

Bourdieu’s literature demonstrates the symbolic structuring of the individual, however it lacks acknowledgement of the body. While Bourdieu is focused on the non-material outcomes for the individual (and collective), the body can be linked to his notion of habitus. Habitus for Bourdieu is the self-identity (Giddens, 1991) or contributing factors that form the individual as determined by the symbolic influence through the structuring of systems, practices and habits (Adams, 2006; Bourdieu, 1990; Jenkins, 1992). These systems (of the social and cultural) are discussed as a psychical manifestation that unconsciously structures the individual’s identity, behaviours, gestures, values, beliefs and practices (Bourdieu, 1990). Devisch (1985) contends that the individual portrays physical symptoms of symbolic signifiers when the non-physical learned values of the symbolic manifest through the body’s functions, actions, gestures, discourse and behaviours.

The unconscious manifestation of these symptoms are potentially homogenising for the individual as these practices and habits are facilitated by the symbolic power of the collective, institutions, groups and the historical (Bourdieu, 1990). Butler (2011) also acknowledges that the formation of the self, as constructed by the normalising power of the collective, does not mean there is no ‘real’ self or physicality of the body but identifies that the individual operates within these systems. Bourdieu counters this homogenising process with his notion of reflexivity in which an individual can become aware of and acknowledge the symbolic impact of the social, cultural and historical (Adams, 2006). Awareness of the unconscious conditioning of the symbolic process means the individual is able to deliberate the social system (Thiem, 2008). Therefore, Bourdieu’s (1990) reflexive habitus becomes a fluid space, because the symbolic, as a structuring system, has potential to shift the value and meaning for the individual and collective, potentially reconfiguring meaning for the individual physically and psychically. This fluidity of the symbolic through Bourdieu’s reflexivity is an approach utilised in my creative arts praxis, which is the reflexive investigation of both studio practice and theoretical perspectives, enabling the disentanglement of the physical and psychical body as a static system.
Bourdieu’s approach privileges the psychical implications of the symbolic system whereas seminal theorist Lacan’s symbolic acknowledges both the physical and psychical body. The symbolic is integral to Lacan’s theories and is revisited throughout his writings (1975, 1977, 1981). For Lacan, the symbolic is an order, structure, exchange, reality and a network of codes manifested in the physical (body) and psychical (unconscious mind) (Lacan, 1975, 1977, 1981). Lacan’s (1977) symbolic mediates between what is real, imaginary and symbolic through the symbolic exchange of the unconscious, the body and language. Lacan’s notion of the symbolic is essential to reveal and analyse how the structuring system informs his theoretical perspectives on the body and desire that are investigated in my praxis of the in-between body.

For Lacan (1977), similar to Bourdieu (1990), meaning and value is based on a network of signs, systems and language as impacted by the symbolics’ influence on the symbols and symptoms of the body, otherwise the signifier or signified (Devisch, 1985; MacCannell, 2014). The use of a symbolic as signs and signifiers to stand in for and communicate the social and cultural values is not confined to Lacan as his notion of the symbolic order was derived from the Saussurean model of structural linguistics (Flisfeder, 2012).

In the selection of essays in *Ecrits: A selection* and *speech and language in psychoanalysis*, Lacan submits that the symbolic drives the idea of the self, identity and ego as the meaning and definition of the body are dependent on the symbolic interpretation of images and language (Lacan, 1977, 1981). In this manner the symbolic network becomes a lens as the body produces a symbolic language and value stands in for meaning when the signifier takes place over the signified (Lacan, 1975; MacCannell, 2014). The symbolic signifiers then signify the physical body for Lacan. Butler (2011) differs on this perspective in her structuring of the material body arguing that while the materiality of the body is signified as a result of signifiers, the denial of the materiality of the body negates the potential for the material body to contribute as a signifier.

Lacan (1977, 1981) establishes that the symbolic network is imposed on the individual by the collective and established before birth and language for the infant. For Lacan, using Freud’s castration theory as a basis, the child enters the symbolic
order first as an object, structured by the collective values of the mother and family structures (Lacan, 1977, 1981). The child then enters Lacan’s mirror stage where the symbolic network of images begin to take value and the child comes to learn symbolic codes and values before language is established (Lacan 1977, 1981). For Lacan (1977) the mirror stage is where the subject becomes informed by the symbolic as the idea of self or ego is generated through a projection of symbolic influences. While Lacan (1977) refers to three orders, the symbolic, the imaginary and the real, the symbolic order is privileged as he defines the other orders through the lens of the symbolic. This is extended to his idea of the physicality of the body, which he views as a projection of the symbolic and is referred to as the ‘imaginary anatomy’. For Lacan even the physical state is questionable because the real is contained by the symbolic and segmented by relationships of the body/the mind or physical/psychical.

Much of the research discussed within this segment has addressed the symbolic as a lens for structuring perception, value and meaning, however few have investigated the direct link to the corporeal body. While Lacan does discuss the symbolic nature of the physical body he privileges the psychical, which limits the discussion of the physical body as being acted upon by the symbolic rather than generating symbolic signifiers. In this manner the corporeal body is viewed as manifested through the psychical. This identifies a space that my creative arts praxis can contribute to, by encountering how the corporeal body is not divided by the physical / psychical symbolic but blurred through the in-between body.

1.2 The corporeal body: the in-between space.

The corporeal body has been a contested site across literature, culture and history. Through an analysis of historical, philosophical and psychoanalytical literature this segment aims to examine the potential for the body to be an in-between space through the inability of the body to assume a static position biologically, socially, culturally, historically or symbolically (Bourdieu, 1990; Butler, 2011; Grosz, 1994; Lacan, 1977). The corporeal body refers to the body’s physicality and is initially discussed from a historical perspective, identifying the symbolic fragmentation between the body (the physical) and the mind (the psychical). Additionally, through examining constructed notions of body image and its margins reveals the fragmentation, fluidity, and penetrability of the body. The fragmentation of the body is linked to Lacan’s (1977)
theories on the body of the real, imaginary and symbolic and examine the contribution of the ego to the fluidity of the inside/outside, physical/psychical and internal/external body. In addition to Lacan’s symbolic body, literature on the physical and material body reveals the body as privileged through the symbolic. Furthermore literature on the problematic notions of binaries of the body is discussed following these perspectives in order to examine the fluid capabilities of the physicality of the body and its margins. By considering the shifting nature of the corporeal body as fluid, penetrable and excessive demonstrates the body as an in-between space.

As established in the symbolic, the corporeal body in contemporary Western culture is fragmented. However, historically the body and the mind remained unsegmented in corporeality until the Greek religions in the 2nd century separated God from humanity (Vernant, 1989). This separation facilitated the initial division of the body and soul and Descartian theory extended the fragmentation of the previously intrinsically linked body and mind through the dualism theory (Grosz, 1994). The Cartesian dualism theory proposed that the physical mechanics of the body operated separately from the non-physical consciousness of the mind (Grosz, 1994; Sawday, 1995; Zizek, 2004). This system is problematic as the non-physical nature of the mind presents itself through physical manifestations and inflictions in the body and body image. The manifestation of the psychical functions of the mind as physical outcomes in the body contests the divisions established in the dualism theory, indicating that the mechanics of the body are not entirely independent from the unconscious (Grosz, 1994). The theorisation of the body as a liminal space (Turner, 1974), as divided between two thresholds, is investigated further through the materiality of bodily margins.

Jonathan Sawday (1995) observes a major shift in the historical understanding of these liminal thresholds of the external (the body) and internal (the mind) through public exposure to the internal human anatomy beginning in the 16th century. Public dissections of the corporeal body revealed the previously defined impenetrable totalised physical body to have new marginal qualities of the internal. The ability to view the internal body fragmented the physicality of the corporeally and symbolically perceived bodily boundaries (Hillman & Mazzio, 1997). Body image became unfixed as the boundaries that divided the internal and external dissipated. The breakdown of the constructed notions of the body as a totalised structure reveals body image as a site of cultural perspective or as a symbolic symptom (Butler, 2011; Miglietti, 2003;
O'Reily, 2009; Sawday, 1995). It is these symbolically informed margins of external and internal corporeal body that are delineated, fragmented and rendered ambiguous, revealing the in-between condition of body that is central to my creative arts praxis.

Lacan’s (1977) theories on the imaginary anatomy and body image contribute to the fragmentation of the body as an in-between condition. For Lacan, the body is a projection of symbolic influences and through the unfixed nature of the symbolic the physicality of the body becomes a fluid notion (1977). As Lacan privileges the symbolic, the construction of body image is a manifestation of learned values and images. Lacan’s imaginary anatomy is the ego’s (Lacan’s self) constructed projection of the physical and non-physical margins of the body that contribute to body image. This means the physicality of the body and margins are no longer defined by physical materiality but are symbolically constructed or an imaginary projection of surface (Grosz, 1994; Lacan, 1977). A result of the relationship between the psychical and the physical, the body becomes fragmented by the various projected values and constructs of the imaginary anatomy and symbolic. This perspective indicates Lacan’s primary focus on the psychical to explain and interpret the physical.

Elizabeth Grosz (1994) extends this notion of a fluid, physically defined body and questions the physical body and non-material psyche relationships that form body image. As Grosz draws from Lacanian theory, her view of the body image is also a projection of the symbolic, cultural and historical influences. However, finding instability in these influences, she questions the boundaries and margins of the physical body image as it is mediated by the individual subject’s relationships to themselves and the external collective (Grosz, 1994). The physical exterior of the body for Grosz is not static or defined by the material boundaries of the skin but mediated by the cultural and social (or Lacan’s symbolic). Therefore the delineation between external and internal body is questionable and reveals the body margins as ambiguous (1994). Lupton (2002) concurs that bodily boundaries are ambiguous by questioning the physicality of the body margins to act as a container for the body. For Lupton, skin’s permeable nature lacks delineating powers as skin transitions fluidly between internal and external negating any detaining and regulating capabilities. Grosz’s (1994) perspective alongside Lupton’s (2002) discussion on the unfixed nature of the body demonstrates a reluctance to privilege the physical or the psychical instead suggesting the contribution of both fluidly constructs body image.
Lacan’s (1977) perspective privileges the psychical body, whereas Grosz (1994) acknowledges both the physical and psychical to contribute to body image. However it is Kristeva (1982) who argues for the materiality of the body. For Kristeva (1982) the materiality of the body has the capacity to be a signifier though the traumatic, horrible and abject as an interruption of the symbolic body. However, the generative power of the ‘real’ body as a signifier present in trauma is ambiguous as even the raw, physical trauma of the body is already symbolically invested (Butler, 2011; Kristeva, 1982; Zizek, 1991). While Kristeva’s (1982) notion of the abject informs the body’s physicality as an in-between space and is discussed later in greater detail, the physicality of the body as a biological element is integral to a discussion on the corporeal body’s negotiation of the symbolic network. The symbolic network’s overarching lens is not a complete denial of the physicality of the body. Butler (2011) finds, while the physical conditions of the body are constituted by imaginary symbolic demarcations as a result of the psyches projected body form, it does not diminish the physical body as a result of the psychical. Despite emphasis on the symbolic and psychical body in these texts, the physical body is able to contribute as a signifier. It must be acknowledged, however, that the psychic body is prominent and any position the physical takes to generate and signify meaning is through the symbolic.

At this point the body has been discussed through literature without the restrictions or implications of gender or sexuality. However, it must be considered that while Lacanian theory contributes to the foundation of my research on the body and desire it is problematic as it is structured by a symbolically masculine heterosexual viewpoint and lacks discussion on the feminine body (Grosz, 1994; Lacan, 1977). This is evident in Lacan’s (1975, 1977) discussions on the phallus complex as these theories are developed from a male perspective and he acknowledges application of this theory is difficult to apply to both genders. The phallus complex for Lacan (1977) occurs during psychosexual development and is developed during the process of sexual differentiation and identity formation. While stemming from the period of sexual differentiation the phallus, for Lacan, is not literally the penis but a symbolic signifier and imaginary object. The problematic nature of the phallus complex lies in its translation to a literal element, for Lacanian theory fragments women through symbolic castration and positions men as totalised through the phallus (Butler, 2011; Grosz, 1994; Lacan, 1977). By countering Lacanian theory with feminist theorists,
such as Grosz (1994) and Butler (2011), the static contribution of the Lacanian phallus to heterosexual normative values, the symbolic body and notions of desire can be negotiated. Butler (2011) contributes that the phallus is not literally a body but signification of the body as a symbolic whole, a theory that can be applied to any body, gender or sexuality. Furthermore, Irigaray (1985) rejects the traditional notions of defining women as lacking within the phallocentric theory of Lacan and Freud, stating that a denial of this discourse enables the possibility for women to exist beyond this limiting spectrum and also exist as “a disruptive excess” (p. 78).

The primary perspective in my creative arts praxis is that corporeal body is an in-between condition and that the margins of the body are fluid and ambiguous physically, psychically and symbolically regardless of gender or sexuality. However, the symbolic positions of gender and sexuality must be investigated in order to reveal the body as invariably fluid. According to feminist theorists Betterton (1996), Butler (2011) and Grosz (1994), gender and sexuality divisions are culturally and socially prescribed. Grosz, who draws on a large body of scholarship to form a contemporary perspective, emphasises that the masculine and feminine are not biological conditions. She states that these identities are formed socially, occurring in the imaginary and symbolic as the “body is in no sense naturally or innately psychical, sexual or sexed. It is indeterminate and indeterminable outside its social constitution as a body as a particular type” (Grosz, 1994, p. 60). For Grosz, the confines of sexuality and gender are problematic to the identity of the body and Waldby (1995) emphasises this problematic nature in dominant normative heterosexual ideology. According to Waldby (1995), normative heterosexual structuring of the body symbolically defines the female body as fragmented and penetrable and the male body as totalised and impenetrable. However, despite its heterosexual prominent viewpoint, Lacanian theory allows some negotiation of the fragmentation of the body by gender and sexuality through his theories on the body.

Lacan (1977) identifies that the fragmentation of the body occurs at the margin, cut or orifice, a physical trait evident on all bodies, and these sites that determine the body’s drives are symbolically erotically privileged and diverged through the symbolic network (Butler, 2011; Grosz, 1994; Lacan, 1977; Zizek, 1991). Furthermore, Lacan’s (1977) erogenous zones demonstrate fluidity regardless of gender and sexuality as every corporeal body has penetrable and ambiguously determined margins of internal
and external body such as the anus, mouth, penis, vagina, ears and eyelids. At this point my research is able to address and identify that all bodies are capable of being fluid and penetrative. The in-between nature of the body is not a denial of these symbolic identities or the biological but acknowledgment of the unfixed nature of corporeality. Furthermore, through considering the contribution of the physical, the psychical and the symbolic, the body can transgress static formations of identity and become reformulated and reconfigured in my creative arts praxis.

The corporeal body’s unfixed status identifies that the body is not a neat contained package. Shabot (2007) and Levin (1988) address the transformative and excessive qualities of the body boundaries in an analysis of the grotesque material body. Shabot’s (2007) perspective is that the material body is not closed off and sterilised from the world. The orifices and permeable nature of the body with its excessive growths, bumps, cuts and protrusions interrupt and reformulate the external body. Grosz (1994) has a comparative view of body image noting that the body’s ability to incorporate and expel contribute to a fluid body image. For Grosz (1994) body image is accommodating and the ambiguity of its surfaces and margins means that any external object placed on the surface of the body, such as garment, jewellery or accessories, can be potentially assumed into the body image. This demonstrates the transformative and ambiguous nature of the body margins. The potential for the body to be fluid and allow for objects and garments to contribute to body image is a central concern in my creative arts praxis.

1.3 Garment: An extension, frame and rim for the body.

As previously discussed in section 1.2, the ongoing exchange between the body, object and garment, identifies the ability of garment to become an extension, frame and rim of the body. This section endeavours to reveal the relationship of garment to the body and the communicative function of garment to project symbolic values. Furthermore, literature on the dialogue of garment and the body explains the capability of garment to fluidly transform and assume bodily boundaries. Finally by considering the fragmentary nature of garment to define, shift, transform and assume body image and margins unveils the contribution of garment to the in-between condition of the body. The dialogue of garment to the in-between condition of the body is significant to my creative arts praxis as the transformative ability of garment
through manipulation of form and techniques enables the extension of the symbolic body of concern through construction of these ambiguous spaces.

Several theorists (Bancroft, 2012; Barthes, 2004; Calefato, 2006; Entwistle, 2000; Evans, 2003; Lauwaert, 2006) have contributed to literature on the communicative value of garment. Many of these theorists are reliant on Barthes (2004) writing in *The fashion system* and his use of semiotics as a methodology for a fashion discourse to communicate values, meaning, status and power. For Barthes (2004) fashion is only able to contribute to this discourse as a signifier through other communicative systems such as media. Evans (2003) challenges Barthes’ assertions by countering that garment alone is a communicative discourse and, through construction and manipulation of form, can convey a concept or narrative. Furthermore, Evans (2003) asserts garment is able to signify identity, culture, status, sexuality, history and the symbolic.

In Bancroft’s (2012) text *Fashion and psychoanalysis* the context of the body is required to communicate meaning for garment. Comparatively, Bancroft (2012), Cavallaro and Warwick (1998) find that the relationship of the body and garment are encoded with cultural, social and historical values that inform the boundaries of the physical and symbolic body. Garment has a history of directly manipulating the physicality of the body and garment’s regulative and transformative ability denies the physicality of corporeal form (Levin, 1988). Garment denies true corporeal form and abstracts the body through covering, wrapping, binding, manipulating and shifting the direct physicality of the body. The manipulation of the body form reveals garment’s potential to negotiate bodily boundaries through material qualities, shape, and form as it creates new margins while denying others (Grosz, 1994; Levin, 1988). Cavallaro and Warwick (1998) expand on the transformative ability of garment as it is assumed into body image. Garment assumes body image as it becomes an extension, a frame and rim for the physicality of the body. The potential of garment to stand in for the physicality of the body creates new body margins and proximities. The reformation, reconfiguration and changeability of garment to the body and its margins reveals the potential for garment to act as a communicative discourse of the in-between body in my creative arts praxis.
Furthermore, garment’s potential to blur the boundaries of the internal and external body creates ambiguous margins, and fragments the symbolic totalised body. Bancroft (2012), Cavallaro and Warwick (1998) support garment’s contribution to the in-between condition of body image through Lacanian notions of the symbolic body and the imaginary anatomy. Finding relationships between the Lacanian imaginary anatomy and notions of the symbolic body can explain garments ability to act as a rim, as garment has potential to fragment, reveal, deny, project and extend the in-between conditions of the body. Lacan (1977) finds that orifices and folds in the corporeal body disrupt the totalised form of the body and identify a penetrable rim or margin of internal meeting external body. While Lacan’s discussion is focused on the body itself, he does provide some indication of the potential for garment cuts, folds and seams to fragment and symbolically stand in for the rim of the body (Bancroft, 2012; Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998). Lacan notes the surfaces of the body are interrupted by points of discontinuity and that these are the sites of the symbolically privileged erogenous zones as “the very delimitation of the ‘erogenous zone’ that drive isolates from the metabolism of the function … is the result of a cut (coupure) expressed by the anatomical mark (trait) of a margin or border” (1977, p. 348). Therefore, garment has potential to symbolically extend this relationship, standing in for and becoming part of body image and the imaginary anatomy, fragmenting and acting as a cut, gap or margin through points of discontinuity, fragmentation and extension.

Doy (2002) extends the notion of garment’s ability to contribute to the symbolic space of bodily margins through the capacity of drapery to contain or reveal the body. For Doy (2002), the veiling and containment of the body symbolically sterilises the body, denying any penetrable fragmentation or abjection of the body. While Doy proposes that garment denies corporeal body margins, Bancroft (2012) elaborates on the potential for garment to contain or reveal the body. She proposes that a cut and gap in garment fragments and reveals the body, privileging the symbolically desirable. Linking these ideas to Lacan’s (1977) erotically privileged symbolic body, Bancroft finds that the body’s erogenous zones are sites where the surface of the body is interrupted and the perimeter of the body gives way to the internal. Interruptions in the garment act as a cut or gap to symbolically fragment the body. Turning the body into a cut and gap and re-establishes the symbolic sites of the erogenous zones through garment (Bancroft, 2012; Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998; Doy, 2002).
In summary, the ability of garment to act as an extension, rim and margin for the body demonstrates an ongoing exchange of bodily boundaries and the in-between conditions of garment that are capable of manifesting the symbolically desirable and abject conditions of concern in my creative arts praxis. Additionally, the dialogue of garment to the body is extended in my creative arts practice by challenging prescribed notions of garment through the relationship to the body, non-prescribed garment forms and manipulation of materials.

1.4 The abject: The in-between condition

The capacity of garment to assume, stand in for and extend corporeality through the ambiguity of body margins demonstrates the in-between conditions of Julia Kristeva’s abject. Kristeva’s (1982) notion of the abject is significant to my research as it is primarily concerned with the materiality of the body and acts as a disturbing mechanism of the symbolic body by revealing the in-between conditions of corporeality. Several other theories can be linked to ambiguity of the body such as; the liminal (Turner, 1974), the obscene (Foster, 1996), the traumatic (Foster, 1996), the uncanny (Freud, 1919) and the disgusting (Menninghaus, 2003), however, they inadequately relate to the corporeal body condition of concern in my praxis. As the abject (Kristeva, 1982) is primarily concerned with the ambiguity of the corporeal body, the link to the in-between body is significant.

Initially, literature on the abject is reviewed to establish the body margins as a site of contestation and the function of the abject as an in-between condition for the physical, psychical and symbolic body. Furthermore, literature on the abject analyses the disruptive and blurring capacity of the abject to fragment the symbolic and imaginary body through the material body qualities of the real, traumatic and repulsive. Finally uncovering the relationship of the abject and the body’s erogenous zones, questions the position of the abject to desire, and reveals the in-between body which is of concern in my creative arts praxis.

as for her, the disentanglement from the mother and development of the individual ego originates through the symbolic framing of a clean and pure body through action and ritual before image or language. Barrett (2010) explains that for Kristeva, the mother’s body is the first instance of abjection and challenges Lacan’s theoretical perspective, by theorising that the castration complex is not the initial point of separation for the infant but the end of the symbolic process. Furthermore, the abject is also present at the point where the boundary between subject (infant) and object (mother) are divided and the infant finds its identity symbolically split by unclear boundaries (Barrett, 2010; Kristeva, 1986; Reader, 2006).

The abject as a condition of ambiguous thresholds is identified by Foster (1996), who explains the unclear boundaries of the body are the primary concern of the abject as for Kristeva the body is undefined symbolically as a subject or object. Foster (1996) discusses the abject as a spatial condition because the unclear distinction between boundaries and close proximity to the physical manifestations of internal and external induces trauma for the symbolic body image and subject. Although Kristeva’s notion of the abject also addresses religion and taboo, the primary concern of my creative arts praxis is the abject to explain the in-between condition of the corporeal body (Barrett, 2010).

Kristeva (1982) theorises the abject in her writings, *Powers of horror: An essay on abjection*, stating the abject is experienced physically as tangible bodily manifestations, psychically as an unconscious reaction, and symbolically to disturb imaginary body boundaries. According to Kristeva, the abject is not definable, it is a rejection of all boundaries, it is “… what disturbs identity, systems and order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (1982, p. 4).

The abject is concerned with the physicality of corporeal body and Kristeva (1982) views the body as an ambiguous in-between condition, not defined by margins (of the physical or symbolic). In Kristeva’s (1982) writing the abject refuses to be defined, it freely exchanges between alternate states such as the internal and external, subject and object, self and other, proper and improper, and public and private. The core perspective of the abject is a denial of delineation or segregation, meaning the abject only has the potential to merge and blur (Kutzbach & Muller, 2007). For Kristeva
(1982), the materiality of the body has potential to incite the abject and disturb and transform the symbolic ideas of the corporeal body.

Although the abject is readily associated with material qualities, such as the unclean and repulsive, the abject is not defined by these conditions. These qualities, however, contribute to the fragmentation of the symbolic body and the in-between condition of corporeality. Kristeva’s (1982) theoretical perspective of the abject is concerned with the confrontation of the lived physicality of the body, which according to Grosz (1994) is part of the abject’s potential to shift the cultural and social body [Lacan’s symbolic body (Lacan, 1977)]. For Kristeva (1982), the abject acts as a buffer for the real, traumatic and repulsive as determined by culture and is thrust aside by the symbolic body image. The symbolic body cannot deny the presence of the abject, as the boundaries (physical and psychical) of body are ambiguous.

Kutzbach and Muller (2007) investigate the abject as a physical and psychical condition because it is often related to the experience of Lacan’s (1977) real, raw and flayed body disrupting the symbolic and imaginary body. The real, raw and flayed body refers to the physicality of body that interrupts the symbolic containment of the body through any compromise in its’ surface. Kristeva’s (1982) abject is not restricted to the material condition of the body but also manifests as immaterial conditions in the psychical body through symbolic notions of the unclean and improper (Kristeva, 1982). The presence of the abject in the physicality of body is demonstrated by the internal merging and blurring externally disrupting the proximity of the clean and sterile body which Kristeva (1982) views as a rejection and reconditioning of the cultural system (Kutzbach & Muller, 2007). While Kristeva (1982) privileges the physical nature of the raw material body as capable of disrupting the symbolic body, she acknowledges the power of the social and cultural to determine the body as coded, because the abject is a result of the psychical and symbolic.

Grosz (1994) further investigates the abject’s potential to disrupt and create in-between conditions of the corporeal body through Kristeva’s heavy reliance on Mary Douglas’ (1966) text *Purity and danger.* The extent of influence on the abject is seen as Douglas (1966) theorises that filth and defilement are segregating and delineating to social and cultural boundaries through rituals and taboo. The codes and taboos associated with the unclean and improper from Douglas’ (1966) writing can be seen
as foundations for Kristeva’s (1982) theories on the body marginality. Kristeva identifies that the abject condition of the body extends to the bodily wastes as excrement, urine, semen and other bodily fluids signify fragmentation of the body and are symbolically coded as unclean once exiting the sterile shell of the body. The connection to bodily margins, fluids and the in-between condition of the body is evident as for Kristeva (1982) as:

The body’s inside, in that case, shows up in order to compensate for the collapse of the border between inside and outside. It is as if the skin, a fragile container, no longer guaranteed the integrity of one’s ‘own and clean self’ but scraped and transparent, invisible or gaunt, gave way between the dejection of its contents. (p. 53)

Grosz (1994) recognises that Kristeva’s perspective diverges from Douglas’ (1966) analysis. Douglas proposes the unclean and improper are a dividing threshold and emphasises a defined boundary, whereas Kristeva (1982) finds no clear delineation between margins as the abject is ambiguous and in-between.

The ambiguity of the abject is further defined by questioning the relationship of the traumatic and repulsive to the desirable and erotic. Corresponding relationships can be established when comparing Kristeva’s (1982) and Lacan’s (1977) discussions on the fragmented, symbolically privileged corporeal body. Both Kristeva and Lacan determine the discontinuity of the body’s surface, the orifices, the cuts and openings, where internal and external blur (Lacan’s erogenous zones), to be ambiguous physically and symbolically. These ambiguous sites of the body demonstrate Kristeva’s (1982) uneasy negotiation with desire, as for her the abject is a cultural buffer which she claims is cast aside by desire to keep the abject at bay. Furthermore, she alternates her position between desire as a normalising facility in opposition of the abject, and later discussing desire as a quality of the abject (Kristeva, 1982).

Kristeva’s precarious relationship between the abject and desire demonstrates the ambiguity of the margins of the physical, psychical and symbolic body and identifies the in-between condition of corporeality central to my reflexive creative arts praxis. Furthermore, the abject continues its in-between status of concern in my praxis as several theorists, (Bancroft, 2012; Calefato, 2006; Grosz, 1994) connect the abject and desire through the previously discussed capacity of garment to act as a cut, extension, rim and frame, to signify the erogenous sites of the body. As the abject and
desire deny the body as an impenetrable or sterile form, the position of the corporeal body image is demonstrated as fluid and uncontainable (Bancroft, 2012; Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998; Kristeva, 1982; Lacan, 1977).

This discussion demonstrates how the abject facilitates the in-between condition of corporeality by blurring boundaries of the physical and the psychical body manifesting symbolically ambiguous conditions of desire and repulsion.

1.5 Desire: the lacking body, the unsatisfiable drive and the fragmented erogenous.

The literature discussed so far provides evidence that the unstable boundaries of corporeality are capable of manifesting simultaneous conditions of desire and repulsion. Further analysis of desire is required to identify the significance of Lacan’s theoretical perspective to my research. This section aims to identify the contribution of Lacan’s theoretical perspective of desire to the in-between condition of the body through the unsatisfiable drive of desire, the incomplete and lacking body and the fragmentary nature of the erogenous zones.

Firstly, literature on various theoretical perspectives on desire is analysed to acknowledge the significance of Lacan’s desire to the in-between condition of corporeality. Secondly, Lacan’s notion of desire is reviewed through his essays in *Ecrits: a selection* (1977) and *Encore* (1975) to uncover desire as a lack or loss, and the unsatisfiable nature of the drive of desire. Thirdly, the fragmentary nature of the erogenous zones is analysed to reveal Lacan’s desire forms a symbolically privileged body. The symbolically privileged body of Lacan’s (1977) desire is contrasted with feminist theorists such as Grosz (1994) and Butler (2011) to address some problematic notions of the gendered body. Finally, literature is reviewed to uncover the position of fetish in desire and the capacity of the fetish object to relocate and generate projected desires. The analysis of literature on desire reveals Lacan’s notion of desire for the corporeal body and its symbolic contribution to the in-between body investigated in my creative arts praxis.

Prior to analysing Lacan’s theoretical perspective on desire, the broad field of philosophical debate on theorising desire must be acknowledged. Defining desire becomes problematic, as desire is intangible; it is difficult to ascertain a position
philosophically due to its unstable and mediated conditions individually and collectively (Butler, 1987). As desire is mediated through the physical, psychical and symbolic, Grosz (1994) and Miglietti (2003) theorise that the corporeal body is an agent for psychological processes such as wants, perspectives and desires that extend beyond the containable physicality of the body. Butler (1997) confers that the social inscription of desire on the body is produced as a social condition, and is manifested and subjected by the normalising framework of the psychical and symbolic.

In her book *Subjects of desire*, Butler (1987) recognises the problematic nature of discussions on desire through her analysis of the major psychoanalytical and philosophical positions on desire. Butler (1987) structures her discussions on Hegelian notions of desire, which she states is the lacking subject’s desire for unity. In Hegel’s notion of desire, the subject desires what is desired by others in order to prevail over any individual divergences from the collective (Butler, 1987; Grosz, 1990; Lacan, 1977). Butler (1987), however, notes that Hegel, alongside Aristotle, Spinoza, Leibniz and others’, theoretical perspective on desire, was disputed by later theories, such as Lacan’s, as desire is not signified by an idea of a unified subject but found in the lacking subject. Despite Lacan’s objections to Hegel’s theory of the unified subject, Lacan derives his foundation of desire, as a lack, from Hegelian perspectives (Grosz, 1990). This concept of desire in the incomplete, the lack and the loss alongside Lacan’s perspective on the corporeal body identifies the significance of Lacanian theory to the in-between conditions of the body that position my research.

Lacan’s perspective on desire is conceptualised in his writings, *Ecrits: a selection* (1977) and *Encore* (1975), finding that it is situated in the human subject, is located in the corporeal body and is present in the lack or loss. The lack for Lacan stems from a symbolic disruption of unity that, unlike Hegel’s perspective, is unsatisfiable (Grosz, 1990). The symbolic disruption of unity begins with the child’s symbolic entry to the castration process and development of ego where the infant learns it is a separate entity from the mother (Lacan, 1977). This separation extrapolates on the separation that occurs in the psychosexual development process, a process that is heavily dependent on Freud’s developmental sexuality theories (Lacan, 1977). However, Lacan diverges from Freud’s biologically literal interpretation of the lacking Phallus in the mother to generate lack and desire, and instead theorises the position of lack is formed symbolically through the symbolic castration process and ego development in
the mirror stage (Grosz, 1990; Kirshner, 2005; Zizek, 1991). The symbolic separation for Lacan begins in the early stages of ego development and the unsatisfiable nature of desire is initiated when the child realises it will never be whole with the maternal figure again and this lack can never be recovered (Butler, 1987).

Desire for Lacan is an unsatisfiable drive, which he differentiates from a need or demand (Grosz, 1990; Lacan, 1977). A need for Lacan (1977) originates within the real body, the raw physical flayed form of corporeality. Grosz (1990) explains need diverges from demand and is linked to the imaginary body. A demand originates in the imaginary as an initial lack or defect (the symbolic loss of the maternal figure) and becomes a drive as desire quickly situates the demand within the symbolic network (Butler, 2011; Lacan, 1977; Zizek, 1997). As a symbolic drive desire can never be satisfied, it is unconsciously structured by the subject, and symbolically privileged by the individual and collective (Lacan, 1977; Malt, 2004; Zizek, 1997). Furthermore, Grosz (1990) provides an example of the cyclical nature of desire through the transference to an object, such as food for hunger, which can never satisfy desire as an object fulfils the part of the real (the need) and desire is situated in the symbolic. The object is a signifier for the desire; therefore the object does not facilitate the satisfaction of desire but stands in symbolically for the drive of desire. Lacan (1977) views this as the return to desire and this unsatisfiable and cyclical nature of desire contributes to the in-between condition of corporeality, as desire is never stable.

Lacan’s (1977) theories on desire contribute significantly to the in-between condition of the body of concern in my research, through the symbolically privileged erogenous zones of desire. For Lacan (1977) the sites of desire are located on the surface of the body, at the sites of discontinuity, where orifices and openings blur the boundaries between internal and external. These orifices and openings in the body are not biologically determined but are learned locations that fragment the body through the symbolic constructs of desire. Grosz (1994) and Butler (2011) identify that the biological does not determine the erogenous sites as the body is a site of cultural and social inscription. Therefore, the body is embedded individually and collectively with symbolic desires, wishes, values and perspectives that contribute to the fragmentation of the body through significance placed on the erogenous zones (Butler, 2011; Grosz, 1994). Grosz (1994) offers further analysis of the symbolic privileging of the erogenous zones of the body by examining the significance of these sites as
fragmented and privileged; extending beyond the symbolic structuring of desire and sexuality. For Grosz (1994), the erogenous zones are not purely informed by the divide between internal and external body, or sexualised processes of penetrability, but are already symbolically invested by the mother’s handling of the body as an infant.

At this point a gap in the literature must be addressed, one that has already been called to attention in section 1.2, which is the privileging of the heterosexual masculine position on the body, desire and sexuality in Lacanian theory. This position is particularly evident in Lacan’s text (1975), on feminine sexuality and desire. In this text Lacan (1975) states that a woman (and her desires) are only signified through a man, and that a woman is fragmented though the symbolic process of desire. However, through the comparative inquiry of feminist theorists who analyse Lacan’s theories on desire such as Grosz (1994), Irigaray (1985), Butler (Butler, 1987, 2011) and Waldby (1995), problematic gender and sexuality-imposed norms can be negotiated. This is significant, as Lacan’s (1977) theories can potentially reduce all bodies equally as a lack, cut and gap to create desire through his denial of a totalised body. Lacan’s (1977) erogenous zones place equal importance on the biological sites of male and female body to act as lacking, delineated and penetrable which offers some compromise within his theoretical perspective of desire that all bodies have potential to be in-between.

As the erogenous zones of the body symbolically represent a symbol of the lacking whole body, a desire that can never be fulfilled according to Lacan’s (1977) perspectives on the drives of desire. The transference of desire to an object or body part in accordance with theory on fetish should be addressed. While Lacanian theory provides some discussion of fetish, it is situated within desire as a displacement, a symbolic substitution, of one signifier to stand in for another (Lacan, 1981; Zizek, 1997). The significance of fetish for the in-between body in Lacanian theory is in the lack, however as fetish is attached to various discourses, the alternative definitions of fetish must be acknowledged. The appropriate definition of fetish is of importance to unveil the potential of garment and object to stand in for fragmented body, repositioning the sites of desire and the abject as investigated in my creative arts praxis.
A notable critical theorisation of fetish is Marx’s notion of the commodity fetish, in which fetish is attached to material objects that contain value that satisfy a particular want through attainment (Zizek, 1997). Another theoretical perspective of fetish is by Steele (1996), in her book *Fetish: Fashion, sex and power*, where she discusses the relationships of fetish in popular culture, noting the objectification of women’s bodies through fetish, symbolically sexualised objects, and clothing. The perspective on fetish for my research is situated within Lacan’s desire and his heavy dependence on Freud’s definition of fetish (Krips, 1999; Lacan, 1977). Lacan, however, avoids Freud’s over emphasis on the literal translation of erotic desires to objects to signify the lack as an attempt of recovery for Freud’s biologically and symbolically castrated woman. Instead Lacan views castration and the phallus complex as a symbolic displacement that drives desire and the fetish as psychical and symbolic conditions (Doy, 2002).

Fetish offers desire the fantasy of recovery, which Krips (1999) relates to Lacan’s *object petit a* which is the object that stands in as a signifier of desires but not the actual cause of desire. Kirshner (2005) explains, for Lacan the *object petit a* represents the unsatisfiable nature of desire as it can never adequately be represented by an object or symbol. The transference of desire onto an object represents the deferment of satisfaction as the displacement of desire onto a object is an attempt at merging fantasy with the tangible, the psyche’s attempt at attainment for the intangible desire which can never be fulfilled (Kirshner, 2005; Lacan, 1977). This relationship has been explained by Malt (2004) as the fetish object being “the appropriation of an object to serve as a vessel for the subject’s projected desires and delusions” (p. 5). This quote demonstrates Lacan’s *object petit a* and the theorisation of fetish to channel symbolic projected desires to another object or body (Krips, 1999; Bancroft, 2012). Malt (2004) and Krips (1999) extend that fetish in desire is an attempt to recapture the lacking wholeness (the incomplete body) that drives Lacan’s desire. The object is not the real, it will never fill the lack, and the drive of desire will cause the subject to forever attempt to fulfil the unsatisfiable though repetition.

The link of fetish and the discourse of desire to the in-between body is relevant in terms of garment, as Doy (2002) explains the capacity of draped garment to represent the castrated body through the revealing or concealing of the body. Drapery can signify the lack or loss of the body located in desire and fetish through revealing and
opening of the body, or it can suggest recovery of the lack through the denial of form through veiling (Doy, 2002). This demonstrates the intrinsically linked relationship between desire, the corporeal body, garment, the wearer and viewer that is of concern in my creative arts praxis.

1.6 Gaze: The facilitator of the in-between body for the viewer and wearer

This section aims to establish the relationship between gaze, desire, fetish, the in-between condition of corporeality, the viewer and wearer. Gaze contributes to the in-between condition of the body in Lacanian theory as it is an extension of the erogenous zones, it facilitates the drive of desire, and contributes to the fragmentation of the body through fetish (Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998; Krips, 1999; Lacan, 1979). These relationships of the body and desire indicate the contribution of gaze to the symbolic signification of the body and identify the significance for the position of the wearer and viewer.

Firstly, the relationship between gaze and the corporeal body is acknowledged, identifying the contribution of gaze to the symbolic structuring of the corporeal body and desire through gaze. Additionally, gaze is analysed as a drive of Lacan’s desire, as an extension of the erogenous zones and its potential to fragment and fetishise the body as an object. Finally, the position of the subject (viewer) and object (viewed – or wearer in terms of my research) is considered in relation to the voyeurs’ gaze and the corporeal body identifying the reductive fragmentary nature of gaze as an extension of the in-between condition.

According to Lacan (1979) and Berger, Blomberg, Fox, Dibb, and Hollis (1972), gaze shapes our relation to things and what is seen is privileged by perspectives and values of the symbolic order of the individual and collective. The symbolic is privileged by Lacan’s (1979) gaze, as gaze concerns not only looking but being looked at, fragmenting and reducing the body for subject (viewer) and object (viewed) through the frame of desire. In this manner gaze contributes to the symbolic, imaginary, cultural and social formation of the body rendering the subject as performatively through fragmenting, privileging, reducing and shaping the understanding of the body through how it is seen (Butler, 2011; Lacan, 1979; Schroeder, 2009).
The reductive nature of gaze within the symbolic (Lacan, 1979) and the position of the subject (viewer) and the object (viewed) is acknowledged by Schneider (1997), Blocker (2004), and Berger et al. (1972) who state that historically women have structured themselves though the male gaze. As previously discussed in Lacan’s (1977) desire, the female body has been structured through masculine desire and gaze is an extension of this relationship. Women have historically been framed passively by gaze as the object (viewed) and not the subject (viewers) (Blocker, 2004; Lacan, 1979; Mulvey, 1989; Schneider, 1997). Sawday’s (1995) text offers a divergence from the male prominent gaze relationships through the historical public viewing of the sixteenth century European anatomy theatres where mostly male corpses became the focus of the erotic gaze through exposure to previously unseen internal body spaces. Another example of the shift of gaze from private to public during this period occurred in Dr. Jean-Martin Charcot’s performative medical lectures, accessed by mixed audiences of students, physicians, artists, actors, journalists and socialites (Marshall, 2008). The exhibition of bodies publically for audiences beyond the medical field reduced both male and female bodies to parts through the narrow focused lighting in the amphitheatres. These theatres demonstrate the penetrability of the body regardless of gender to facilitate desire through fragmentary erotic gaze. As previously discussed in the body and desire sections, by Butler (1987) and Grosz (1994), desire and therefore gaze, is not purely reductive to a gender or sexuality but are ambiguous, as all bodies have the capacity to be penetrable and in-between. This point of fluidity between gaze and the body regardless of the traditional concepts of the body is significant as my creative arts praxis investigation positions the body as in-between, penetrable and fluid regardless of gender or sexuality.

The ambiguity of gaze is significant in Lacan’s (Grosz, 1990; Lacan, 1977, 1979) desire as it is an extension of the erogenous zones. For Lacan (1979), the gaze is part of the subject (the eyes) but not confined to the subject. The detachable nature of gaze renders it ambiguous, which contributes to the lack that drives desire (Lacan, 1979). According to Lacan (1979) gaze is the initial drive that manifests desire, in the scopic field, and, Schneider (1997) extends on this, noting vision is separate from gaze, as gaze does not see the real. Filtered through the symbolic, gaze shifts what we see; it structures fantasies, desires and fetishes through denial of penetrability through the
proximity of gaze (Lacan, 1979). Schneider (1997) expands on the potential of gaze to fragment and fetishise the body as an object, as the distance of gaze:

…beckons and simultaneously denies, invoking possession at the same time that it expands into an infinite, inaccessible dreamscape… a distance across which desire can be constructed as unsatisfiable, and so constructed, can work its magic as the unending drive to accumulate, appropriate, possess, acquire. (p. 68)

Schneider’s identifies the position of the subject (viewer) to desire the object through gaze, however, the subjects (viewers) relationship to the voyeur must be considered. According to Denzin (1995), the voyeur’s desire is to look, to know, to invade the private sphere of the object of the gaze (viewed) through seeing. The inappropriate ambiguity of gaze is suited in the in-between nature of Lacan’s (1977) desire as gaze is unattainable it is constantly shifting and attempts to penetrate the gap of the body through looking (Denzin, 1995; Lacan, 1979; Schneider, 1997; Schroeder, 2009).

In terms of my creative arts praxis, the shifting nature of gaze is identified through questioning the position of the audience as the subject (viewer) and the wearer as the object (viewed). It is significant to note the potential for transference between these positions as the wearer can also be considered both a viewer and the viewed within the symbolic order of gaze and desire through the potential to return the gaze, or be positioned as an object within it. The potential for the object (wearer / viewed) to return the gaze is an ambiguous position, and marks an awkward and potentially abject space as the transference of desire through gaze becomes unfixed, making the viewer and wearer (viewed) relationship an in-between condition. Schneider (1997) unveils the ambiguity of the return of the gaze or counter-gaze for the viewer and viewed by considering and questioning who is the subject and who is the object? Furthermore, Mulvey (1989) extends on the ambiguous position of the viewer in her discussion of the voyeur, stating that the viewer relationship operates beyond the passive projection of desires onto the viewed’s (object) through the potential of gaze to reveal the private. She contributes that the viewer/s additionally interject themselves into the fantasy of the gaze through the relationship to the human form, aligning Lacan’s (1979) theories on the ego and the mirror stage with the desire to look to the intrigue of recognition of the body. The interjection of the viewer ‘s (subject) ego as the viewed (object) through identifying with the human form.
contributes to the in-between condition as the viewed (object) ability to return the
gaze also allows them to position themselves through the viewer.

Gaze contributes to the in-between body as it is always shifting, it does not remain
confined to physical boundaries, and as Lacan (1977, 1979) states it is an extension of
the subjects’ symbolic desires, which are never stable. The ambiguity of gaze is
further demonstrated as gaze drives desires and shapes how we see things. This
establishes the link to garment in my research, to act as a rim, margin and extension of
the in-between body by signifying the erogenous zones or gap in the body that
through gaze manifest states of the abject and desire for the viewer and wearer

1.7 Summary
In summary the literature reviewed demonstrates the intrinsically linked condition of
the in-between body (physical, psychical and symbolic) present in the symbolic, the
body, garment, the abject, desire, and gaze. The contribution of the physical,
psychical and symbolic body is acknowledged as integral to the fragmentation,
reformulation and reconfiguration occurring in corporeality. The limitations of
Lacanian theory adhering to divisions by gender and sexuality were addressed by
contrasting these notions with feminist theorists such as a Grosz (1994) and Butler
(2011). This comparative analysis addressed these limitations, opening the discussion
for my creative arts praxis to investigate the potential for the body to be fluid,
penetrable and excessive, as the in-between condition of corporeality is not defined by
the biological and symbolic multivalent divisions of the body. The constant shifting,
blurring and transformative nature of the corporeal body identifies the capacity of
garment to act as an extension, rim and frame for body, while manifesting conditions
of desire and the abject for the viewer and wearer that is significant in my creative arts
praxis.
Chapter 2. Theoretical perspectives: Examining the corporeal body as situated by the in-between.

2.0 Introduction

The previous Chapter 1 outlined the key texts relevant to the inquiry of this research; the in-between condition of the corporeal body. In this chapter I attempt to explicate my formation of the in-between as a method for navigating and understanding the corporal body as a fluid entity. The key theoretical concepts underpinning my creative arts praxis are defined.

I uncover the notion of the in-between condition through analysing the physical, psychical and symbolic body, finding that these each stipulate differing values and perspectives for the body, negating it as a fixed ideal. My negotiation of the in-between condition of the body is discussed in relationship to my creative arts praxis, as this locates the perspective of the in-between to the body through material qualities. Creating a conversation between theory and practice demonstrates the potential for emotional and physical responses of desire and repulsion that are simultaneously manifested by the ambiguity of the body. A dialogue between research and making can reflect the fluidity of the in-between by questioning engagement with the body as a viewer (or the viewed) through revealing the position of the audience. The consideration of the viewer and wearer (viewed) indicates the choices made for this research approach by situating the in-between through a material studio inquiry with a conceptual framework considering the social, cultural and historical conditions as located by the symbolic.

2.1 The in-between condition: Undefined margins, the rejection of boundaries and the shifting symbolic.

Through the research of the in-between condition of body I am objecting to the body as a static object, in both the material and non-material sense. The in-between condition contests the corporeal body as defined as a static or liminal entity. I developed this perspective to demonstrate that the assumed margins of the body are unfixed, and that the fluid lens of the in-between can be applied to notions of desire, repulsion, and linked to reflexivity and creative practice.
The literature review has established that the body exists within cultural, social and historic frameworks. These frameworks assign symbolic value to the body through the learned values of the collective (Butler, 2011). Furthermore, even the biological or physical qualities of the body, taken for granted as real or true, are defined by values of the symbolic network and are subject to examination. However, the body is not an easy object to define, it does not stand still in time; it shifts and changes. It is a living thing. Grosz extends on this as “(b)odies are not inert: they function interactively and productively. They act and react” (1994, p. xi). Yet, we attempt to organise the body by containing it within frameworks and the inscription of meaning and value on the body affects how we can understand and encounter the body.

I suggest that the body cannot be contained within these frameworks and my research uncovers points where these frameworks intersect, blur and become unstable. The in-between condition is an inquiry of established body margins and questions the assumed limits, boundaries and definitions of the physical, psychical and symbolic body (Lacan, 1977). Using Lacan’s (1977) notions of the body I posit that even the raw, physicality of the body must be questioned as the margins are not defined by the physical qualities of the body but are part of the symbolic dialogue and are instead imagined parameters. This inquiry into the unfixed status of body is negotiated through a creative arts praxis investigation of the tangible material aspects of the body and the non-tangible frameworks imposed on the body. Forging links between Kristeva’s (1982) notion of the abject and Lacan’s (1977, 1979) perspectives on the body, the symbolic and desire, generates the perspective of the in-between which has framed this research.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Kristeva’s (1982) notion of the abject is “…what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions and rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (p. 4). This encapsulates the perspective initially distilled to formulate the in-between upon noticing the margins of the corporeal body were subject to negotiation through the making in my creative arts praxis.

The abject is a disturbing mechanism as it symbolically disrupts and denies the body as a clean closed container through experiencing qualities of the real, traumatic and repulsive found within the body (Kristeva, 1982). The point where the in-between
condition differs from the abject is that it does not seek to disturb or shock the viewer by revealing that which is unclean and traumatic (Kutzbach & Muller, 2007). The in-between and the abject share the unease experienced through challenging the symbolically formed systems and playing on the exposure of unclear margins of the body. However, the in-between is not limited to repulsion or the traumatic exposure to the unseen internal body but seduces the viewer through playing on the symbolic relationship to the complex tensions of the repellent. Rather than exposing the viewer to contents of bodily dejection, the in-between subtly suggests the fluid status of body at the sites of the body that are already undecidable. These unfixed sites are not shocking or unique but part of regular body functionality and are found at the margins of the body, at the points where the internal and external body meet, blur and slippages of meaning occur. They are already linked to desire through the symbolic and can be located by Lacan’s (1977) erogenous zones. These sites are found at any point where the body creates a rim or a fold, for example, the mouth, the ears, the eyes, the anus, the vagina, and the penis. These orifices of the body are not inherently repulsive or desirable until they are filtered through the symbolic. My creative arts praxis investigates the tension of these spaces and the potential for them to be renegotiated and reimagined through the symbolic via a dialogue between the body, garment, object and performance. The in-between body is revealed by creating a transparency of meaning already associated to the body through subverting assumed boundaries and margins rather than an exposure to its’ repellent manifestations.

The in-between condition differs from the abject as it is not primarily focused on the material body and is investigated through the multiple layers that the body exists within, physically, psychically and symbolically (Lacan, 1977). Using Lacan’s (1977, 1979) notion of the physical and non-physical entities of the body assists in establishing a broader inquiry as the privileging of the material body could have been potentially inhibiting to my creative arts praxis. While the material qualities are core to my creative arts praxis and are central to evoke reactions, the body is not solely defined by these elements. The material qualities set up relationships, transforming and shifting materiality and perception, but also evoke symbolic responses. This process shifts how we psychically engage with body and renegotiates the imaginary parameters established by the symbolic.
The evocation of the in-between through my creative arts praxis asks the viewer (and viewed/wearer) to question their established ideals. It questions the normalised perception of the body and identifies the construction of that relationship by contrasting the assumed fixed nature of the viewer’s (or viewed) individual body in proximity to other bodies. It is significant to note that the symbolic meanings defined for the body are negotiated through a studio practice, as there is a link between the handling of materials and the handling of the body symbolically and physically.

While the in-between is manifested through the handling of physical materials through my creative arts praxis, the installation of these elements in a gallery space accommodates the shifting parameters physically, psychically, symbolically, and emotionally through the convergence of internal and external conditions in material forms.

2.2 Fragmented, partial, privileged: Convergence of the intangible qualities of desire, repulsion and fetish through the body.

This section reveals how the in-between condition of the corporeal body denies the body as a totalised entity which is fragmented and privileged through the physical, psychical and symbolic structuring of desire, the abject and fetish. Desire, the abject and fetish are specific to my investigation of the in-between body as they are part of the emotional and psychological responses of the viewer (and viewed). Specifically, there is potential for the in-between condition of the body to simultaneously manifest desire and repulsion at the sites of the body that are already ambiguously defined.

My research on the in-between questions the symbolic position of these qualities and asks if they can be divided cleanly. Can we really say where something stops being erotic and enticing and is simply repulsive and repellent? Is there some attraction to that which is unappealing and repellant? The in-between condition of the body investigates sites of the body which merge back and forth; that fold and fall open and are the rim to the internal body. These are the sites of the body that are encountered regularly through every day handling and are already symbolically invested as desirable and repulsive. The in-between condition questions the convergence of these qualities finding that they are simultaneously imbedded in the same sites of the body.

As covered in Chapter 1, the perspective of desire used in my research is specific to Lacan’s (1977, 1975) notions of desire. Lacan’s notion of desire directly correlates
with the in-between conditions of the corporeal body as desire is viewed as lack and loss that is discussed through the physical, psychical and symbolic body. Lacan suggests the loss of the ideal of the totalised or whole body can never be recovered as desire stems from the symbolic separation from the maternal figure. This initiates the fragmentation of the body of Lacan’s (1977, 1979) desire that is specific to the in-between condition. This is because it is unsatisfiable, it can never be complete, it exists in a fluid state as it is the lack of, want for and drive towards an unattainable totalised body.

Lacan’s (1977) desire symbolically privileges and fractures the corporeal body though the erogenous zones, occurring at sites of discontinuity of the body, where the orifices of body merge the internal with the external. These sites where the body becomes penetrable, permeable and vulnerable align with my investigation of the in-between as they are not naturally defined by the biological but are instead symbolically invested through the social and cultural inscription of the collective on the body (Butler, 1997, 2011; Grosz, 1994). The body is delineated by these spaces, it cannot be seen as a complete object as it is penetrated through handling and gaze. My creative arts praxis attempts to navigate these sites acknowledging that the erogenous zones of desire are the same ambiguous sites of the abject.

Desire and the abject contribute to in-between condition of the body in my research theoretically, conceptually and emotionally. The intangible emotional and psychological responses of the viewer (and viewed) are considered through the material manifestations of my creative arts praxis. This is negotiated through subverting the symbolically invested, assumed erogenous zones and shifting the comfortable proximity that we establish to keep responses of desire and repulsion at bay. Shifting these sites through the material form of my praxis allows negotiation of the emotional and psychological responses of the viewer as I ask how we symbolically understand these sites of body and the potential for the body to be simultaneously desirable, the erotic and alluring and repulsive, uncomfortable and repellent.

Desire existing in the incomplete and lack means the in-between condition of the body will always be imbedded with desire. However, the location of fetish in desire offers a suggestion of recovery (Krips, 1999). Fetish is used in my creative arts praxis
as through the making as I seek to reposition and question the assumed body margins using garment and object as a fetish object. The fetish object offers a chance of recovery as it can stand in for the fantasy of the complete or recovery of the lack (Malt, 2004). As Kirshner (2005) and Lacan (1975, 1977, 1979) are discussed in the literature review, fetish merges the intangible, the emotional and psychological state manifested by the in-between, with the tangible, the material makings of practice. I draw on the emotional state of the viewer by creating a compulsion to want to touch, fondle, and encounter. The fetish object will never fulfil desire but is able to physically and psychically engage the viewer through the relocation, exposure and denial of the body through the material investigations in my creative arts praxis.

2.3 Pulsating, permeable, excessive: The tangible and imaginary corporeal body and the negotiation of its parameters through garment and object.

The core inquiry of this research has been established through the dialogue between the body, garment and object. Garment, as defined in the literature review, has the potential to act as an extension, frame, and rim of the body, transforming and assuming the boundaries of the corporeal body (Bancroft, 2012; Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998). This dialogue between the body, garment and object is specific to my research questions as my theoretical inquiries and physical studio manifestations are directly linked and intertwined through the location and investigation of the body. While the body is recognised in this research as a marginal site that is always changing, expelling and in-taking, garment is able to both theoretically and physically extend this inquiry. This process occurs through directly questioning the body by manipulating the boundaries of body through garment and playing on the ability of garment to fragment, reveal and act as a rim or margin (Cavallaro & Warwick). The blurring of garment and the body can reveal the abject conditions that simultaneously manifest both desire and repulsion in the viewer and wearer. How can garment contribute to the condition of the body and shape the reaction of the audience?

It has been established that the body is a living entity, pulsating, excessive, permeable and penetrable. The surface of body with its ambiguity through the folds, margins, rims, and orifices is suggested to have potential to produce both repulsion and desire through the symbolic. Garment offers a chance to extend this unfixed nature of body
as it can play on the convergence of the internal and external, exaggerating the in-between condition already present through the blurring the parameters of garment and body and dissipating any dichotomies that are assumed.

In terms of making, which is a pivotal part of generating the research, garment has the ability to use the physical to determine (or shift) the symbolic and use the symbolic to manifest and reshape new qualities of the physical. Garment and object act as a continuation of the projection of symbolic values assumed to body (Bancroft, 2012). It can continue the subversion of the imaginary body that the symbolic and psychical assign to the states of physicality. This allows negotiation and subversion of assumed body image and margins through manipulating the placement, continuation and suggestion of body margins and orifices to create new surfaces and openings through garment and object. Through the body’s ability to assume objects worn into the perceived body form (Grosz, 1994), garment and object can act as a fetish object in my creative arts praxis. In this manner garment continues the incomplete body image, suggestive of recovery of the incomplete fragmented body, through veiling and denial, or act as a continuation of the in-between condition through it’s potential to create new rims and margins where the fabric falls open and reveals the body (Doy, 2002). This can play on the fluid condition of the body as the material forms of practice can physically determine the symbolic body and the symbolic can also determine the physical.

Lacans’ (1977) object petit a demonstrates the link between the physicality of the material practice of garment and object on body to desire, repulsion and the fetish. The object petit a is filtered through Lacan’s (1977) symbolic order, it is the material manifestation of desire, an attempt to recapture the stability of the body and manage the in-between condition. This displacement of desire onto another object or body attempts to fill the lack in the in-between, the incomplete fragmented body. The repetition compulsion of fetish object to generate the lacking in material form makes the intangible wants of desire tangible. Fetish manifests desire and repulsion through my creative arts praxis in the physical and emotional sense as it identifies the sites of body, the erogenous zones that cause this discomfort. (Krips, 1999) Through locating this inquiry of the in-between through garment, object, performance and sound I have potential to replicate and subvert these sites as an attempt to recapture and relocate these spaces as a fetish object. The fetish object is able to generate emotional
responses through its capacity to disturb and entice through the seductive allure of what is desired and veiled, yet revealed and repellent.

The concept of the in-between used in this research applies the same framing lens of the symbolic to all bodies, finding they share the physical and symbolic fluid characteristics of the in-between condition. Therefore, I do not seek to deny the boundaries of gender or sexuality but find that body transgresses both through the in-between condition. All bodies can be viewed in the same perspective through the reduction of the body through viewing, the breakdown of ideals of the totalised body through Lacan’s (1977) erogenous zones and the material manifestations of my creative arts praxis. All bodies are penetrable and have sites that exist as rims to the internal body. I can play on these established symbolic relationships by manipulating how the body is framed and seen by the viewer.

2.4 Looking, watching, ogling: The penetrative nature of gaze.

Gaze contributes to the framing of the in-between body due to its detachable and uncontainable status. It acts as a fragmenting device for the body as it privileges, divides and reduces the body as an object (Lacan, 1979). Gaze plays a part in rendering the body as an in-between condition because it navigates and forms the anticipated emotional and psychological responses of the viewer. As previously discussed, in Chapter 1, gaze is an extension of the erogenous zones and contributes to the negotiation and perspectives of the physical, psychical and symbolic body. It is specific to this research as it negotiates how we encounter both the body and the material outcomes of my creative arts praxis. Due to the viewer’s (and wearer’s) significance to the investigation, the framing of gaze is considered through the dialogue between of garment, the body and object, performance and sound.

The term viewer is specific to my creative praxis as an audience alludes to a collective group. While learned perspectives and values of body are formed and filtered symbolically by the collective, gaze is experienced initially as an individual (Berger et al., 1972). I consider the viewer in relation to the voyeur, mediating the proximity of the body and uncomfortable of exposure to the in-between through an attempt to create intimate spaces and by denying the normalising comfort of a collective group. The penetrability of gaze contributes to this condition as it engages and permeates the private spaces of the body (Lacan, 1979). The erotic lens of gaze creates conditions of
the in-between as it leers into the gaps and openings where the body is revealed and which contribute to the fragmentation and privileging of the body.

Gaze allows the viewer to experience the in-between through the potential to identify with the projected body image through the fantasy of gaze (Lacan, 1979). This is facilitated in my creative arts praxis by creating intimate spaces, further reducing gaze through proximity to object and body. There is another relationship to be considered and that is the return of the gaze possible from the viewed or in my case the wearer/performer. Gaze not only reduces and fragments the body for the viewer but the potential of the viewed to return the gaze shapes the way body image is perceived (Mulvey, 1989; Schroeder, 2009). Through allowing a performer to engage and counter gaze, or deny this relationship altogether, further fragments the body or changes the emotional response to the in-between body for the viewer (and wearer). Using performers and sound extends the parameters of the body through gaze. It is a projection of unease. Sound contributes and can be seen as similar a way of engaging the viewer’s body through the physical experience of the material outcomes of my creative arts praxis. While gaze is selective, you can choose not to look and see, sound has no respect for boundaries. It flows; rending the body in-between and casting this experience on without regard for static boundaries.

2.5 Summary

In summary the in-between condition has been discussed through the physical, psychical and symbolic body and reveals the potential for all bodies to be penetrable fragmented and fluid. The location of the investigation of the corporeal body through the body, garment and object are directly positioned with consideration to the ambiguity of desire and repulsion due to fluid nature of the body for the viewer and viewed (wearer). The links to creative arts praxis are perceivable when considering how the handling and viewing of material qualities manifests emotional and physical responses for the audience. This process of inquiry in my research of the in-between conditions of the body occurs through analysis beyond the theoretical inquiry as the reflection on the studio investigations and outcomes that generate research must be considered.
Chapter 3. Methodology: Praxis, reflexivity, the field and the process of making.

The critical analysis of the in-between conditions of the corporeal body central to my research has been facilitated through a reflexive examination of my creative arts praxis. Creative arts research involves the merging of an investigative studio practice and a critical theoretical analysis alongside a negotiation of the field (Barrett, 2007b). O’Leary (2007) defines praxis as “the process by which theory becomes part of lived experience and empowers individuals to become critically conscious beings” (p. 209). Crouch and Pearce (2012) extend on this notion of praxis merging practical skills with critical reflection and thinking. They advocate that, through praxis, the practitioner negotiates individual and collective theoretical positions of the social and cultural constructed world and the field in which they operate.

A creative arts praxis, however, can be problematic and according to Crouch (2007) has potential to facilitate narcissistic outcomes due to the practitioner’s position within the research. The impact of the individual habitus and field in a creative arts praxis is particularly prominent and must be acknowledged, analysed and negotiated. Employing reflexivity as a creative research methodology enables the researcher to mediate the conflicts of self-focused research by addressing the construction of meaning and value by the social and cultural collective (Bourdieu, 1990; Crouch & Pearce, 2012). Bourdieu’s (Adams, 2006) reflexivity can be extended beyond the positioning of the self within the wider perspective of the collective as it encourages a critical dialogue between the practice and research.

Links can be made between Bourdieu’s (1990) reflexivity and the in-between conditions of the corporeal body through reflexivity’s potential to disentangle individual thinking from the collective though analysing the symbolic and habitus. Reflexivity encourages a fluid in-between position by enabling the researcher to engage with static notions of the self and body image symbolically manifested though the individual habitus (self). Analysing the construction of body image formed by both the individual habitus and the collective reveals the impact of the symbolic to construct meaning and value for the social and cultural practices, habits, actions, and values (Bourdieu, 1990: Giddens, 1991). This means a reflexive methodology can encourage a response to the potentially homogenising autonomy of the symbolic, the
Bourdieu’s habitus (1990), however, lacks adequate discussion on the physicality of the body. As a reflexive methodology in creative arts praxis can generate a dialogue between theory and physicality, or objects/things and the systems in which we understand them (Crouch & Pearce, 2012), it can be used to question the actuality of the corporeal body. Reflexive engagement of the relationships between physicality and theory has contributed to my perspective on the in-between conditions of the body. Links between the real material body and the symbolically imagined parameters of the body have been constructed through both the material studio processes and the theoretical perspectives of the body drawn from Lacan (1975, 197, 1981) and Kristeva (1982). Employing reflexive investigation of these theoretical perspectives on the body identifies how the symbolic contributes to the unfixed condition of the corporeal body as it constructs and filters perspectives and reality (Bourdieu, 1990). While the symbolic acts as lens for the body, it is crucial to also question the potential for the material body and physicality of objects to inform the symbolic (Kristeva, 1982).

Reflexive engagement in a creative arts praxis exists beyond the sphere of individual research and the researcher must consider how the symbolic shapes and forms values and perspectives that contribute to the academic boundaries within an institution. According to Perry (2011) the institutional habitus of a university segments disciplines, forming academic identities based on production of knowledge. The production of knowledge is mediated by the value of the social, cultural and economic (Bourdieu, 1990). The commodification of knowledge within the institutional habitus results from the prioritisation of certain research outcomes. Placing value on research outcomes has repercussions for certain disciplinary fields because the conditions and processes that research is conducted within are modified to favour institutionally valued results (Perry, 2011).

Creative arts praxis research differs from other academic models of knowledge production due to influence of the researcher’s subjective perspectives drawn from emotional and individual experiences (Barrett, 2007a). This subjective approach extends to the studio processes that manifest knowledge production in creative arts research as thinking and ideas are generated through responding to material
investigations. Bolt (2007) explains that while material investigative processes differ from the more traditional research methods the “handling of materials and processes” is not a new concept as we interpret the world through physical engagement and experiencing rather then theoretical navigations (p. 30).

The negotiation of the production of knowledge in a Masters of Arts by Research program through a creative arts praxis is navigated through the research outcome expectations. Knowledge production in higher degrees in creative arts is frequently assessed via a final display of the material studio investigations through an exhibition and accompanying written thesis component (Barrett, 2007). This format can be potentially difficult in a reflexive praxis as it may place emphasis on the end result, or final exhibition, rather then encourage the researcher to engage in various experimental results. Additionally, as the written component is the supportive documentation for the practical work it must be considered that it is not always possible to translate studio decision-making processes to the written document (Goodard, 2007). Some reflexive processes in the making cannot be effectively revealed or explained due to the intuitive nature of handling materials in a studio context. These are some of the issues of navigating the framework of knowledge production in creative arts disciplines within an institutional habitus.

To engage in a reflexive creative arts praxis, demonstrating the accumulative nature of my research, the investigation of the in-between conditions of the body has been developed and analysed through a series of exhibitions. Rather than placing emphasis on one final conclusion I establish a process of reviewing and development through both material and written processes. Establishing an ongoing investigation through my creative arts praxis allows negotiation of institutional research processes and illustrates a critical inquiry relevant to a reflexive methodology.

Creative arts disciplines are divided within the institutional habitus by types of practice and this division initially inhibited my creative arts praxis. The institutional attitudes and guidelines for research tended to favour the continued segmentation of my fashion and arts practices by disciplinary area. However, during the development of my methodology and methods for research I resisted this separation by merging practices through making. The pressure to separate fashion and arts practices exists outside the systems of the academic institution as the fashion field is already encoded
with industry paradigms and segmented by commercialism, consumerism and mass production not readily associated with (high) art production (Lipovetsky, 2006). However, as explained in Chapter 1, fashion can transcend these established boundaries due to its capacity to convey a concept or narrative in the same manner as an art object (Evans, 2003). The nature of reflexive creative arts praxis encourages a dissipation of these established boundaries through the merging of disciplines. The facilitation of a transformative approach to material outcomes to drive the research becomes desirable in terms of knowledge production as a fluid approach within research and disciplines can support varied results (Perry, 2011). The merging of art and fashion disciplines is particularly significant to my methodology as I am interested in the ability of garment to extend, transform and stand in for bodily margins while also creating a immersive experience for the viewer through installation of garment, body, sound and performance.

Creating a reflexive dialogue between theory, practice and the work of other artists establishes the importance of a multidiscipline praxis when researching the corporeal body. Analysing the process of other artists in the field reveals how layering different practices of garments, object, sculpture and performance can communicate notions of the corporeal body as a fluid space, a living, tangible, non-static entity. For example artist Leigh Bowery’s practice of highly sculptural garments challenged the limits and symbolic boundaries of the body through garment and is demonstrative of the integral nature of a layered arts practice. Bowery’s works cannot exist as static objects as the performative situates the garment on the body, creating narrative, characters and action that communicate intent not inherent without the active body (Bancroft, 2012). The merging of practices demonstrated in Bowery’s work illustrates the layered method of material making, and an embodied process of meaning making. This approach to practice demonstrates an alternative to a restriction of creative arts praxis due to the segmentation of arts disciplines. These relationships between the field, artist practices and my creative arts praxis will be extrapolated upon in Chapter 4.

Methodology can be defined simply as the processes and systems implemented to guide the production of research. These processes include the methods of making to manifest the material inquiry. My creative arts praxis is generated through a multidisciplinary studio approach, facilitating a dialogue of the in-between conditions of the body through garment, object, body, performance and sound. Reflexive
examination and the merging of theoretical perspectives of the in-between occurs through the experimental material studio work, repeated adjustment of material practice and exhibited outcomes.

Barrett (2013) discusses the conversation possible from material studio outcomes by drawing on Kristeva’s psychoanalytical perspective that physical qualities are able to generate discourse. This means material objects are capable of producing new languages, subverting the symbolic discourse associated with materials, and can produce new emotional responses and experiences. This way of thinking and feeling through the making of objects in praxis is one method of reflexively engaging with materials and outcomes through the emotional and physical response to work significant to my creative arts praxis. It identifies the fluidity required between disciplines, studio practices and exhibition intrinsically interwoven through my research of the in-between.

The construction of knowledge in my creative arts praxis is accumulative as at each point the work is exhibited, it generates knowledge, acting as a marker or experimental outcome. Each time I exhibited I was able to consider the audience and viewers’ proximity in the work and to overcome static issues that arose when the material research did not mesh with the theoretical investigation. This process allowed a critical negotiation of the work through physically assembling my contextual material investigations in various gallery spaces. Each installation built on the relationships between the works and demonstrated the layers of meaning, which were contributed by each part of my multidiscipline praxis. Constant questioning and responding within the studio challenged notions of the represented body by asking new questions of the symbolic, the role of the viewer and viewed within the arts praxis and ways of seeing. This dialogue between theory and material outcomes was negotiated through the integration of the performative, which challenged the assumed relationships of garment in praxis, the static nature of the body and the segmentation of disciplines. This facilitated the continued exploration of the in-between conditions of body through construction of intimate spaces and accommodation of different representations of the body, pose, movement, gesture, and gaze. Rather then reaching a conclusive answer, reflexive engagement with my creative arts praxis through the material investigations manifested inquiries of the fluid, ambiguous and in-between.
Due to the body’s capacity to continuously transform and be redefined through the symbolic, relationships formed through various contextual spaces, the viewer, the viewed, and the collective it is uncertain if a final point to the research can be determined. Additionally, the theoretical perspectives that shape my research from Lacan (1975, 1977, 1979) and Kristeva (1982) do not necessitate a fixed or final position, as the meaning of the body through my research is unfixed through the in-between. The desire to conclude the research can be mediated by turning to Lacan’s (1975) perspective that desires are always unsatisfied and cyclical, allowing deliberation of open-ended research. Goddard, (2007) extends on the potential for a creative arts praxis to be unresolved as the writing accompanying the praxis makes efforts to “present a sense of the creative decision-making process(es) within the context of the research practice” rather than critically defining the work to an end point (p. 199). Negating the need for a final conclusive answer to my research allows a collection of ideas to be presented and enables the conclusion to pose new questions generated from an accumulation of research.
Chapter 4. The ambiguous margins of the body in creative arts praxis and the field.

This chapter identifies the foundations of my creative arts praxis through the amalgamation of my creative practices prior to my candidature. Furthermore, it situates my research within the field through analysis of the creative works and practices of artists relevant to this inquiry of the in-between body. The formation of my current creative arts praxis and investigations of the body are a result of the merging of my previously disparate undergraduate visual art and fashion creative practices. The coalescence of these studio practices and theoretical ideas of the body contributed to my current reflexive methodology and is identified through discussion of my 2012 exhibition, *The in-between*. Acknowledgement of the creative works and practices of artists that explore perspectives and methodologies relevant to my research and field demonstrates the reflexive positioning and questioning significant to the inquiry of the in-between body.

4.1 Beginnings: Forming ideas on the body and the merging of visual arts and fashion disciplines

In my undergraduate Contemporary Fashion practice and final exhibition my ideas of the body were symbolically formed as liminal (Turner, 1974) as I explored the body as divided and separated between internal and external (or inside and outside). The notion of the body as a liminal entity was established in my early habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) though exposure to medical journals as a child which facilitated a perceived division between the internal and the external body.

Defining my habitus is necessary to provide context for my perspectives formed on the body, body image and values that direct my creative arts praxis. Habitus is the coalescence of the lived experiences; it is the learned social and cultural experiences that shape individual and collective practices and values (Jenkins, 1992). A significant event that fractured my learned perspective of the body occurred in my early habitus upon receiving a medical journal containing photographic images of surgeries and exposed human anatomy. This event shifted my perspective of the body as a clean contained whole defined by the boundary of skin to a liminal space divided between the internal and external. This established an interest in the human body, which developed into an investigative studio practice in my undergraduate degree.
My undergraduate fashion studio practice and final graduate exhibition (2010) (Figure 1.) is demonstrative of the symbolic formation of my individual understanding of the body at that point. The navigation of the body through garment in my undergraduate fashion practice identifies the beginnings of the reflexive dialogue between the material studio investigations and critical theoretical concepts of my current creative arts praxis (Barrett, 2013). At this point my investigation of the body was symbolically formed as a static condition neatly defined by the boundaries of the skin. The studio practices and material work manifested during this period enabled exploration of the corporeal body’s capacity to be situated and divided physically between the internal and the external directly through the construction of garment. Lauwaert’s (2006) associations between the body and garment make this relationship clear through the capacity of garment to act as a projection of the body as:

A person is a unity of textiles and body. Clothing is not some extraneous addition way out on the periphery, but an essential redefinition. Clothing does not hide the conjunctions; it enriches it. Anatomy is replaced by attractive drapery, or by a precise construction
Figure 2: Pace, K. (2010). Exhibition installation of open and flayed garments from my undergraduate fashion exhibition.

Garment in my undergraduate work mimicked the anatomy and projection of a static body image through acting as a clean shell of the external body (Figure 2). Garment was used to attempt to contain and organise the body, establishing the divide between the internal and external. The organic nature of fabric was manipulated to replicate the qualities of body. The static division of the body explored took form through interruptions of the smooth and clean external construction of garment with the manipulated garment lining that replicated the organic fluid internal body. Manifesting qualities of the physicality of the body through garment substantiates a reflexive a starting point for my current research.

My Visual Arts studio practice and graduate exhibition (2011) shifted from the static exploration of boundaries of the body in my fashion undergraduate practice and began to investigate the representations of the pornographic imagery in the domestic and everyday. This work blurred the symbolic divisions between the internal, improper,
and obscene to the external, proper and private. The Visual Arts graduate work (2011) arising from these divisions between public and private consisted of sculptures, objects, and installations (Figure 3) and applied qualities of the pornographic to everyday objects and spaces. The division between the public and the private was found to be ambiguous through my creative research and the pornographic qualities explored demonstrated the potential for the body to be simultaneously seductive and repulsive. These developments in my studio work were discoveries of a fluidity between boundaries of the body, the public and private, the obscene and the proper, which revealed and initiated theoretical shifts in my creative arts praxis and introduced notions of the abject (Kristeva, 1982). The theoretical perspective of the abject enabled new reflexive inquiries of the body. The previous ideals formed about the static liminality (Turner, 1974) of the body were questioned. How could the body simultaneously be represented as alluring, beautiful and grotesque? This work altered how I viewed the body as a fixed entity through my habitus (Bourdieu, 1990), and the symbolic through shifting assumed representations of the body.

Figure 3: Pace, K. (2011). Detail image of the installation of my visual arts undergraduate graduate exhibition merging the seductive and repulsive.
4.2 The merging of ideas and disciplines in my creative arts praxis through exhibition: The In-between. Free Range gallery, Perth, WA, November 2012

Reflexive consideration through the merging of my undergraduate creative arts practices and conceptual ideas initiated the investigation of the in-between conditions of the body of concern in this research. The In-between (2012) used garment and object as a device to directly investigate the newly formed notions of the fluidity of the corporeal body using the theoretical lens of Kristeva’s (1982) abject to discard previous static notions of the body as fixed and explore the ambiguity of the physical body.

The focus of this exhibition examined the relationship between the body and the external, reflexively considering the previous exhibitions, challenging that which is perceived as stable and normal. The notion of Kristeva’s (1982) abject enabled consideration of the space where subject and object meet, merge and separate and the potential for creative disciplines to converge. My creative arts praxis further transformed, integrating creative disciplines and boundaries directed by the representation, merging and blurring of internal and external bodily qualities through installation of garment, sculptural object and image. The garments produced interacted fluidly with the body and the space. Garments constructed renegotiated the body form, spilling internal elements externally, manifesting qualities of the repellent but also at the same time retaining the appealing and classic qualities of draped garment (Figure 4a). Intuitively, without being consciously aware through the making, I was isolating and fragmenting the body through casting body parts and merging them with garments (Figure 4b). The merging of sculptural object and garment challenged the notion of the traditional silhouette of the body. This was the point at which I began to investigate the body as both an object and a subject. While the symbolic and imaginary body (Lacan, 1977) were not at this point part of my creative arts praxis, this was the first discovery through the studio manifestations that directed the theoretical ideas that currently frame my research.

The In-between (2012) exhibition allowed me to refocus my creative arts praxis through merging ideas and disciplines. Understanding that garment, sculpture and installation enabled fluidity in making replicated the dialogue of the in-between
conditions of the body. This shift in my approach to studio practice indicates the reflexive exchange between making and thinking that shifts and directs research within a creative arts praxis (Carter, 2004). Here the studio investigations and installation directed the research that became the primary focus of my research on the corporeal body.

Figure 4a & 4b: Pace, K. (2012). Detail of works from The In-between demonstrating the draped spilling body and garment and the merging of sculptural cast works and garment.

4.3. Reflexive review of artists and the La Specola wax museum linked to my inquiry of the in-between body and their relationship to my creative arts praxis.

The review of artist practices, works and methodologies that align with my research inquiries of the in-between body are significant to reveal how the methodologies and methods used in this research can reflexively communicate and explore the ambiguous parameters of the corporeal body. In addition to the creative arts praxis of artists, museums and other creative works that contribute to the perspectives of my
research are considered. The importance of a reflexive dialogue between materials (and practices) is revealed by examining the multidisciplinary nature of creative arts praxis through a discussion of relevant artists and works noting the specific relationships to my reflexive methodology.

4.3.1 The seductive and repulsive anatomical wax models of *La Specola* in Florence, Italy.

In the initial stages of my research of the in-between conditions of the body I had difficulties identifying the relevant theoretical position that best suited the alluring qualities of the body evident within the studio practice manifestations. The discoveries from work produced for my exhibition at *Free Range Gallery* in 2012 had already demonstrated that the in-between condition of the body was not restricted to qualities of the repulsive as the body could be simultaneously appealing. A pivotal development of these ideas of the body occurred in my creative arts praxis after visiting the *La Specola* wax museum in Florence, Italy. There I encountered what are defined historically as scientific anatomical models from the 16th to the 18th century (Figure 5). In this review they will be analysed as creative works.

![Figure 5: Detail of the wax models at the *La Specola*. Photographed by Kimberley Pace.](image-url)
These wax models (Figure 5) are flayed and cut open, fragmented with organs exposed, replacing the use of a cadaver or anatomy theatres (Sawday, 1995) for the educational purpose of training medical professionals. These anatomical wax models, however, while highly detailed, are not displayed in the same manner as modern educational and scientific anatomically correct models. Rather than presentation of a sterile display, these wax models were reclined in enticing gestures and poses, placed delicately on silks and the seductive glossy bodies feature lifelike expressions beckoning the viewer to engage and look (Figure 5). It was through this experience of viewing these wax models that I first considered that the abject and borderless body (Kristeva, 1982) also had potential to be simultaneously repulsive and desirable. The internal body space was exposed, new cuts and openings directly allowing the division between internal and external be exchangeable, forming new orifices and erogenous zones of desire (Bancroft, 2012; Lacan, 1977)

Figure 6: Detail of a male wax model at the La Specola demonstrating the in-between condition regardless of gender.
Additionally, viewing these works provided evidence of the in-between condition of body regardless of gender. While the symbolic readings of gender and sexuality cannot be ignored when observing any body, both male and female wax bodies in the museum were presented in the same alluring and repulsive manner (Figure 6). These bodies, flayed, open and fragmented in the same ways, were informative for the condition of the in-between body to transgress and negotiate the restrictive symbolically sexed body. Grosz (1994) extends on the stifling nature of the sexed body theoretically by noting that the biologically sexed and gendered body is not naturally encoded. This stance acknowledges the symbolic manifestation of gender and sexuality which position the male and female body as separate and defined by the penetrable and non-penetrable. The works at the La Specola were material reflections of the potential for the body to subvert the dominant ideology of the phallus complex (Lacan, 1977) which, as discussed in the literature review, structures the female body as fragmented and penetrable and the male body as totalised and impenetrable (Walby, 1995). These wax models provide evidence that the in-between condition can apply to all bodies and the body of both genders can exist as penetrable, open, and fluid. This identifies the potential for negotiation of the problematic normative heterosexual values contributed by Lacan’s (1977) phallus complex within creative works by using Lacan’s (1979) theory on erogenous zones to mediate these static values. This is demonstrated as these wax bodies are undeviatingly symbolically and erotically privileged regardless of gender through the cut or gap in body (Grosz, 1994; Lacan, 1977). It is the fluid delineation of internal and external body in both the male and female form that substantiate the in-between condition in this research and which is capable of producing desire and repulsion for the viewer.

It is significant to note the method of presentation for the wax bodies in the La Specola, as they were open, and flayed but also fragmented and separated. Further segmentation occurred through the display of the works separated behind glass cabinets and boxes, which allowed an intimate viewing but also kept the viewer at bay. The viewer can only encounter the body through the penetrative nature of gaze (Lacan, 1979), which can be linked to the voyeuristic and erotic nature of the gaze present in the previously discussed European anatomy theatres of the 16th century. These anatomy theatres were the first instance where the internal body was on display to members of the public (Sawday, 1995). No longer was the body confined to the
external structure as the internal of body was opened up and penetrated through the viewer’s gaze by gaining access to a previously considered intangible space. In both the La Specola and the anatomy theatres the viewer gaze encounters the body in an open and exposed manner, which enables the continuation of desire (Lacan, 1975, 1977) as the drive to touch, to fondle and physically encounter can never be achieved.

Reflexive analysis of my documentation of the La Specola reveals a continuation of my creative arts praxis investigations of the body as the framing and perspectives of these images fragment the body in the particular way. The framing of these images isolate and reduce the body, extending on the ideas of the intimate and revealed body that were operating within my research. Continuation of the fragmentation of body through the framing of these images further directs the viewer’s gaze and how they might interact with the body. This process of reducing the body through gaze was identified at this point and instigated into my creative arts praxis later to direct the framing of the viewers’ gaze to further fragment the body.

4.3.2 Elsa Schiaparelli: Extension of the body through garment.

Elsa Schiaparelli’s creative works in the mid to late 1930s demonstrate the appropriation of garment to act as a surface of the body by using garment as direct space to investigate the displacement of the body (Evans, 1999). Schiaparelli’s work has influenced my creative arts praxis because it demonstrates an initial shift in understanding the contemporary body through garment. Furthermore, her work is significant as it was made during a period when artists, psychoanalysts (Lacan) and academics were attempting to challenge assumed body image. Her work during this period directed by the surrealist artists and her use of the Trompe l’œil align with my investigations of the corporeal body in both a direct and indirect manner.

Direct examples of Schiaparelli’s work that can be linked to my creative arts praxis investigations are those that specifically question the real, imaginary and symbolic body (Lacan, 1979). These examples are those that redefine the parameters of the body margins, manifesting the internal bodily qualities on the surface and subverting the assumed body image (Figure 7) (Evans, 1999). This work alerts the viewer to the internal and external division of the body through the emergence of normally hidden qualities of the body merged with garment form. The skeleton dress seeks to displace traditional notions of femininity and is perhaps an attempt to shift the containing of
the female form and denial of the abject through garment’s ability to act as a second skin (Evans, 1999). Doy (2002) discusses the use of drapery as a method of concealing the body and establishing desire through the phallic complex (or hidden lack of) through the veiling of the body, smoothing over all orifices, bumps and folds.

Figure 7: Schiaparelli, E. (1938) Skeleton dress. This garment manifested internal qualities of the body externally through garment. (Exception to copyright, Section ss 40, 103C, Research or Study)

Indirect examples of Schiaparelli’s works that are relevant to my creative arts praxis which are more relevant to notions of desire are the tear dress and the black suit with lip pockets (Figure 8). In these works there is a shift in the language of smoothing over the orifices and wrapping the body into a clean package that keeps the abject at bay (Wood, 2007). Instead of projecting the internal body externally, these two garments challenge the division between inside and outside. The illusion of the veiled body is disrupted, linking to the abject qualities of the in-between erotic and repellent explored in my creative arts praxis. I am particularly interested in Schiaparelli’s works where the boundaries between inside and outside of body are shifted and the division between the proper, private and intimate become blurred through garment. (Evans, 1999). When wearing a jacket with a mouth pocket where does the division
between the article of clothing end and the signification of placing your hand into someone else’s mouth begin (Figure 8)? How can these interactions through garment play on our divisions between the body and manifest emotional and psychological responses of the erotic and the repulsive?

Figure 8: Schiaparelli, E. (1938). Lips jacket. (Exception to copyright, Section ss 40, 103C, Research or Study)
4.3.3 Hans Bellmer: The desirable, fragmented, and symbolic body and the viewer

Han’s Bellmer is another artist involved in the surrealist movement in the 1930s. Bellmer’s relevance to my creative arts praxis is in his use of the symbolic, imaginary and projected body image. Links from Bellmer’s work to my creative arts praxis are in his use of the body as an object to project symbolic desires and his ability to fragment and shift the human form in ways that are simultaneously repellent and alluring. Additionally of interest are his methods of establishing a relationship between the viewer, the viewed and the voyeur through the constructed fantasy that takes place through the framing, documenting and transferring of his work into imagery. I will discuss Bellmer’s work in two parts, firstly his construction of body through fragmented dolls and drawings, to shift the idealised notion of a unified complete body, and secondly through his use of gaze to direct the viewer.

Despite Bellmer’s work being produced from the 1930s onwards, it is still tied to contemporary ideology and relevant to how body is currently perceived. His work reflects the influence of Lacanian theory on surrealists during this period through its’ negotiation of the body as a symbolic object and as a site of desire (Webb & Short, 2006). Bellmer’s work could be considered as a reflexive product of his habitus, as his work is evidence of the rejection of the symbolically idealised body that was heavily imposed in Germany in the 1930s (Lichtenstein, 2001).

Bellmer used sculpture, drawings and photography to produce new dialogues of the body for the audience by building a layered perspective through the various symbolic discourses associated with materials (Barrett, 2013). This layering of practices is considered within my creative arts praxis in order to build a narrative for the viewer. The layering of ideas developed in Bellmer’s drawings is constructed in the same manner as his sculptures as they fragment, repeat and relocate the body (Figure 9). His drawings evoke a sense of movement through repetition of body parts that form new ambiguous parameters of the body. These new formations of the body demonstrate the in-between condition of body investigated in my research through the unfinished nature of the ever-growing body through their displaced and uncontainable silhouettes (Brink, 2007; Shabot, 2007). These drawings both repulse the viewer through the ambiguous merged forms and seducing them through the erotic
displacement of fluid body margins and suggestion of movement. These drawings helped inform the development of my creative arts praxis studio investigations by demonstrating a way to encounter the body in a fluid and transformative manner.

Desire is evident in Bellmer’s investigations through the doll sculptural works as they establish new formations of the body in the same manner as the drawings. The symbolic, idealised and projected body is played upon as the construction of body in these works (Figure 10) privileges certain body parts through repetition rather than presenting the body a unified whole (Taylor, 2000). The symbolic lack that drives desire is present through these new formations of the body as the ideal of the unified whole is unachievable through both the replication of specific body parts and the exclusion of others (Brink, 2007). These dolls extend on Lacanian theories on the body as they stand in the real body, and demonstrate the division between the real,

![Figure 9: Bellmer, H. (1968). Drawing. (Exception to copyright, Section ss 40, 103C, Research or Study)](image)
imaginary and symbolic body as ambiguous (Lacan, 1977). The fetish of desire is referenced in these works as the body replicates itself, suggesting a recovery through stimulating the viewer through the perversions of the body while simultaneously repelling the viewer through its displacement of form.

Figure 10: Bellmer, H (1935). The second doll. The replication of the partial body in the mirror and sculpture. (Exception to copyright, Section ss 40, 103C, Research or Study)

Bellmer continues to negotiate the division between reality and the imaginary through his construction of the viewer’s gaze. The continued fragmentation of the body is perceivable in his work where he used the mirror (Figure 10) to further isolate the body. In this work the gaze is fragmented in the body through its direction to the reflection, which reduces the body. Further direction of the viewer’s gaze is evident in works where he focused the viewer’s awareness on their own position through interaction with the images of the dolls (Figure 11). Gaze, as discussed by Lacan
(1975, 1979), is specific to the relationship of desire established in these works as it continues the rendering of the symbolic, imaginary and social formation of the body. The subject is depicted as performative through this relationship because the body is fragmented, reduced and privileged through the viewers gaze. The relationship between the viewer and the viewed is considered in Bellmer’s work as he achieves interaction through allowing the viewer to become aware of their position. This interaction is accomplished for the viewer (and the viewed) through the voyeuristic relationship established by allowing either the dolls to return the gaze (or only be gazed upon) or inclusion of the gaze of other figures. The suggestion of another viewer, or voyeur, within the same frame of the doll enables the viewer to consider their position of his or her own gaze. Walsh (2013) expands on Bellmer’s manipulation of the viewer through suggestion of another viewer as this engagement works towards “destabilising the mastery of the gaze, unseating the subject from its secure position as a surveyor of all that it sees” (p. 57). Through reflexive consideration of this use of gaze the viewer then becomes part of the work and demonstrates the potential for creative works to potentially manifest emotional or psychological responses from the viewers (audience).

Figure 11: Bellmer, H. (1935) The second doll. The presence of the viewer / voyeur. (Exception to copyright, Section ss 40, 103C, Research or Study)
4.3.4 Leigh Bowery: Transforming the body through garment and performance.

Leigh Bowery is an artist who used garment and performance to subvert assumed body margins and reframe normative notions of the self that transgressed the boundaries of the body for both performer and the audience (Figure 12). Bowery’s creative works are significant to my research on the in-between body as his creative practice relied on the merging of the body, garment and performance to explore notions of the corporeal body as a fluid space. His layered arts practice substantiates the position of my research of the in-between that finds the merging of the body garment and performance integral for demonstrating the fluidity of the body and instigating relationships with the audience (viewer).

Figure 12: Bowery, L. (1990). Leigh Bowery reshaping his body through a pubic wig and reframing his body though garment. Photographed by Fergus Greer (Exception to copyright, Section ss 40, 103C, Research or Study)
Leigh Bowery’s garments, as discussed in the methodology, do not exist without the presence of the body or the performance. For Bowery the garments (or costumes) were dependant on the performances to situate the garment on the body and existed as empty vessels without this presence (Violette, 1998). The physical altering of Bowery’s body extended past the radical distortions achieved through the garment form and the modifications to his physical body challenged fixed notions of the body, physically, psychically and symbolically. Bowery often physically manipulated his own body to distort and reshape the body, fashioning his chest into breasts and tucking back his genitals with a pubic wig (Figure 12) (Bancroft, 2012). These manipulations of the body and garment transgressed the boundaries of gender and reframed ideas of the constructed self-negotiating body as a fluid space through manifesting characteristics in his garments that were undecidedly male or female (Figure 13). This direct, tangible dialogue occurring between the real body and the projected body is something that is implemented in my research of the in-between conditions of the body.

Figure 13: Bowery, L. (1992). Leigh Bowery in a garment negotiating projected body image of gender through garment Photographed by Fergus Greer. (Exception to copyright, Section ss 40, 103C, Research or Study)
Bowery was able to use the body as a site of contestation of gender, boundaries and limitation, exploring the corporeal realness through his grotesque or obscene performances (Bancroft, 2012). The performances that took place in these garments are to be considered as a projection of imaginary body and anatomy, as the body was redefined through the garment. The necessity for the presence of the physical body in his garments can be understood in his performance *The birth* (Figure 14). In this performance his body is necessary to complete the context as his wife Nicola Bowery strapped to his chest upside down in a sling within a garment would emerge naked and blood covered (Violette, 1998). Furthermore, the blurry division between desire and repulsion is evident through his performances in which he performed enemas on

Figure 14: Bowery, L & Bowery, N. (1993). Leigh Bowery with wife Nicola Bowery in a sling upside down before *The birth* performance. Photography by Annie Leibovitz (Exception to copyright, Section ss 40, 103C, Research or Study)
stage, spraying his audience with water from his colon (Bancroft, 2012). In these performances the illusion of a clean, contained body is disputed as he breaches the rim of his body. The erotic, symbolic value attached to the body through Lacan’s (1977) erogenous zones is challenged within this performance, as a site of the body symbolically invested as desirable is shifted through the abject act of spraying the audience with faeces laced water.

It is significant to note that Bowery’s garments were not limited to these spectacle performances and his work with photographer Fergus Greer (Figures 12 & 13) continue to reshape and convey the body as a fluid space through still imagery, gesture and pose. In these the new silhouettes of his garments are made performative through his positioning of the body. New erogenous zones (Lacan, 1977) are formed through the cut, gap or opening in the garments through often shifting and redesigning what parts are revealed, (the genitals), or concealed (the face). Bowery’s work provides a space for the contemporary body to be questioned and reformed as fluid demonstrating the integral relationship through tangible elements of the body, garment and performance within his practice.

4.4 Summary

This chapter has established the development of my previous exhibitions alongside the relevant creative works and practices that have contributed to my current reflexive methodology. The analysis of these exhibitions, works and practices are essential to reflexively establish and question the approach that informed my creative arts praxis. Reflexive engagement across the La Specola, Elsa Schiaparelli, Hans Bellmer and Leigh Bowery are pivotal to positioning the creative tangible outcomes of my research within the field and contemporary inquiries of the body for the viewer and the viewed.
Chapter 5. Reflexive analysis of creative works: Material manifestations of the in-between body

This section will analyse the creative outcomes significant to my research on the in-between condition of the corporeal body through an in-depth, reflexive examination of the exhibitions and studio manifestations that I produced throughout my candidature. The critical analysis of these exhibitions reveals the reflexive questioning and positioning of both the creative work and the viewer. This reflexive process occurs through consideration of the discourse between the body, garment, object, performance and sound to produce qualities of the in-between conditions of the body.

Throughout my candidature I have attempted to consider the position of the viewer, and the wearer (viewed), in terms of generating and investigating the in-between conditions of the body. The accumulated production of my research is examined through the critical exploration of work exhibited in The In-between: An inquiry of the body (2013), Progress (2013), Becomings (2014), and Fashion[ing] forms (2014). Each exhibition aimed to explore the fluidness of the body beyond the static limits of garment and object and considered the tangible and intangible manifestations of both desire and the repellent, for the viewer and viewed. The final solo exhibition Peel, Fondle, Ogle (2015) demonstrated the reflexive, investigative process and critical negotiation of the viewer (and viewed/wearer) through the inclusion of live performance as part of the installation. The presence of live bodies through performance enabled re-examination of the dialogue between garment, object and the body whilst examining the potential of a living physical body to mediate experiences of the in-between conditions for the viewer.

Over the course of my candidature I have employed reflexive and critical inquiry through analysis of the tangible manifestations of my creative arts praxis through a process of making, reviewing, reorganising, remaking and responding. At each point I attempted different approaches through materials used, installation layouts and responded to the requirement for a stronger representation of the body through the implementation of performance and sound. The inquiry of these processes aimed to engage the audience in work that projected an idea: an in-between body that was simultaneously repulsive and desirable.
5.1  *The In-between: An inquiry of the body.* Mundaring Arts Centre, WA, October, 2013.

The first exhibition of my candidature was a solo exhibition, *The In-between: An inquiry of the body* (2013). The work extended and developed the ideas of the previous exhibition of a similar name, *The In-between* (Chapter 4.2) with specific focus on my research questions. *The In-between: An inquiry of the body* was a ‘work in process’ exhibition displaying the earlier stages of my research development. This work consisted of fragmented and incomplete garments displayed on dress forms and partial mannequins, drawings, images and sculptural objects (Figure 15). Exhibiting at this early stage in the research helped to direct my creative arts praxis, refine my research questions and discover what was lacking from my inquiry.

![Image of the exhibition](image)

*Figure 15:* Pace, K. (2013). Detail of the installation from *The in-between: An inquiry of the body.*

*The in-between: An inquiry of the body* was significant in reflexively identifying the requirement for a considered relationship between the creative works, the body and the viewer and viewed (wearer). This exhibition’s inquiry was focused on exploring the in-between condition of the body, using garment as a surface to explore the
unfixed qualities of the body. The requirement for a merged relationship between the creative works and the viewer was recognised through lack of an appropriate suggested or physical presence of the corporeal body. In the studio context, the work as objects communicated the fluidity of the body margins. The manifested creative work was able to stand in for, and act as, reconfigured parts of the anatomy (Figure 16). The garments and objects created new sites for the body to be encountered, by constructing alternate orifices and reconfiguring the erogenous zones (Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998; Lacan, 1977). These studio investigations indicated the capacity of garment to stand in for the body by directly manifesting internal or hidden bodily elements and sites externally on the body. These works rejected assumed boundaries of the body as a clean and closed off vessel, manifesting qualities of the abject, that were simultaneously repulsive and desirable. Once these works were arranged in a gallery context I was able to see that the static nature of the work displayed on the chosen dress forms, black and white mannequins and vertical plinths, did not communicate the fluidity of the in-between condition central to my research.

Figure 16: Pace, K. (2013). Studio work experimenting and establishing new erogenous zones through garment.
Each piece was set up separately with no established relationship between the works. Carter (2004) elaborates on the process of material thinking to direct the reading of the work as:

[t]he act of artistic creation that aims, through ‘setting up a resonance between two objects’, to release ‘the precious image from the natural conditions that determine it’ depends on the information for combination afforded by the material of which those objects are composed (p. 183).

The work was not set up to resonate a particular idea through its installation but instead existed as a selection of work that could have been found in a studio environment. The in-between condition of the body that I was attempting to create was not evident as the margins between body and garment could not be blurred without a physical body or representation of the body through image, video or performance. There was very limited consideration of the potential viewers’ immersive experience and the work existed as separate static objects to be engaged individually rather than establishing a fluid and collective installation of creative work. The lack of the physical body may have made it difficult for a viewer to be affected by the work and to consider the materiality of their own body. I recognised that the margins between the body and the garment needed to be blurred further and the addition of investigations through performance in the form images or video could be used to extend and question the visual representation of corporeality that is manifested through a relationship with garment (Negrin, 2013).

Figures 17a and 17b are examples that show the limited capacity for the selected works and dress forms to communicate the physicality of the body. Negotiated in this manner these pieces read more like shop fittings than as a signifier for the body. At this point in my research, I was attempting to fragment the corporeal body through selective veiling and revealing of the body. However, this intended outcome was unsuccessful without the presence of the physical body. Due to the limited capacity of this exhibition to communicate the key concepts of the ambiguity of the materiality of the body, I was able to reflexively consider how the positioning and placement of the garments, objects and bodies may contribute to the material language of the in-between conditions of the body. Additionally, the integration of an actual or suggested body, together with the use of lighting, was acknowledged as having potential to communicate an experience of the in-between condition for the viewer. At this point
it was clear that in order to negotiate the fluidity of body I needed to consider how to best represent the qualities of the material, lived body and engage the viewer in the context of a gallery space.

Figure 17a & 17b: Pace, K. (2013). Detail images of *The in-between: An inquiry of the body*. The use of dress forms and mannequins were unable to communicate the corporeal body effectively.

5.2 *Progress*. Building 5, Edith Cowan University, WA, November, 2013.

Work exhibited as part of a group postgraduate exhibition called *Progress* (2013), implemented the concerns generated during the previous exhibition. The work in this exhibition was separated into two spaces, one an intimate, smaller video installation exhibited with the *Progress* group and the other in a separate room and consisting of an installation of garment, object, drawing and large scale projected video performance. In the *Progress* group exhibition space I decided not to exhibit any physical garments but to investigate how the work could exist without the garment presence and instead focused on performance to demonstrate the central ideas. This
work consisted of a looped video clip embedded in a fabric orifice that the viewer had to peer inside to view (Figure 18). Embedding the video within an internal space, allowed the viewer to negotiate their gaze by penetrating a private space, a fabric orifice, voyeuristically leer into a gap to watch an intimate moment. This video work is the first point, in my candidature, at which I started to take control of how the body is seen. I aimed to control and restrict the viewer’s experience through gaze by the selective decisions made for the reduced framing of the filming. The second work exhibited was in a separate room with a similar installation of work to the previous exhibition (The in-between: An inquiry of the body, 2013) with the exception of a large wall sized projection of the new video performance clips.

**Figure 18:** Pace, K. (2013). Detail image from Progress. Fabric orifice frame with embedded video work.
These video clips were a direct reflexive response to the static nature and denial of the live material body that had occurred in the previous work (The in-between: An inquiry of the body, 2013). This was the first instance I used video pieces in my creative arts praxis. Previously I had used still image to contextualise my ideas of garment on the body, however, the body in this research was investigated as a fluid, uncontainable entity physically (the body in the space), psychically (the emotional and psychological response) and symbolically (our relation to the value implemented in things) (Grosz, 1994; Lacan, 1977). I recognised that to communicate the constantly changing, shifting and transforming nature of the body of concern within this research, the static documentation of the body through still images was not suitable.

The video work in Progress consisted of a restricted view of a performer wearing and interacting with a toe covered and veiled garment through a repeated single action (see video 1, in accompanying PDF). The restricted view I facilitated in this work can be derived from earlier investigations, as discussed in Chapter 4, through my documentation of the La Specola wax museum. During the documentation of the wax models I was able to isolate the reading of the body through the framing of the images taken. These images portrayed the body in a restricted and partial manner, privileging and reducing the body as a fragmented entity. The structuring of gaze for the viewer in this instance is derived from theoretical inquiries concerning the relationship between the viewer as the subject and the viewed as the object (Schneider, 1997). The viewed (wearer/performer) in this clip cannot return the view, they are effectively veiled and can only be looked upon by the viewer. In this manner the voyeuristic gaze of the viewer invades the private sphere (Denzin, 1995). The body is reduced to a partial section putting into practice the fragmented body identified in Lacan’s (1975, 1977) notion of desire and the erogenous zones of the body.

The viewed performer caresses and fondles the toes on the garment, questioning the division between the real, imaginary and symbolic body (Lacan, 1977). The action of the performer encounters the rims, gaps and margins of the garment (Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998; Lacan, 1977) suggesting new orifices and questioning the stability of the parameters of the body. The performer never reaches a climax, there is no resolve in these clips, and the same action is repeated, looped in a never-ending cycle. By denying an end point no true state of desire or repulsion can ever be reached and the body exists in a constant in-between condition where it is never stable or defined but
constantly shifting. Withholding a final resolve from the viewer extends Lacan’s (1975) theories on desire as, for Lacan, desire can never be satisfied and will never reach a resolution. The veiling of the viewed further denied access to a complete body. The partial and fragmented body is privileged as the garment reduced the viewed to a single opening, revealing only the mouth and jaw through the veil (Figure 19).

![Figure 19: Pace, K. (2013). Still from video work in Progress revealing the body as fragmented through the framing.](image)

Another space was arranged in a similar layout to the previous exhibition (The in-between: An inquiry of the body, 2013) with the exception of a large wall sized projection of the fondling video clips. I discovered these larger scale projections were unable to translate the intended uneasy viewing experience, as enabling larger groups of viewers to access to performance denied the intimate quality of these clips. It was no longer a private experience where the viewer may feel as if they are encountering a intimate moment and, instead, this experience prompted the normalised mass viewing associated with cinema (Mulvey, 1989). Situating these video works onto smaller screens embedded in fabric orifices was more successful as they enabled access for only one or two individuals at any time. Reducing the number of viewers who could access these clips created a specific experience that encouraged a more intimate relationship between the work and the viewer, intensifying the uncomfortable associations formed with voyeuristic viewing (Denzin, 1995).
5.3  *Becomings*. Spectrum Project Space, Edith Cowan University, WA, August, 2014.

The work exhibited in *Becomings* (2014) was part of a group exhibition and was installed in two spaces, a wall space with a small tablet video work situated in a fabric orifice (Figure 20 & 21) and a long hallway installation of garment, object and sound. I aimed to demonstrate and explore the abject (Kristeva, 1982), uncomfortable and perverse experiences of the in-between conditions of the body through this exhibition. *Becomings* is a marker for the use of installation to demonstrate the body and garment as merged and for the continued investigation to restrict and facilitate a framed gaze for the viewer. The fragmentary views offered occurred through the video work and through placement of small mirrors to reflect parts of the body in the installation. These mirrors extended the framing of body accomplished through the previous video work present in both this exhibition and *Progress* (2013).

*Figure 20:* Pace, K. (2014). Detail of the installation from *Becomings* showing the installation of the video work and resin cast toe sculptures.
The first space with the looped video situated in a fabric orifice (Figure 20 & 21) incorporated ideas from the *Progress* (2013) exhibition. The same toe-fondling video clip from *Progress* was used to locate the central ideas of my research to the body through garment without the presence of a live performance. Additionally, the presence of the performance through the small screen enabled further inquiry of the theoretical concerns of the ‘real’, imaginary and symbolic body (Kristeva, 1982; Lacan, 1977). This was physically extended through the material manifestation of the body through placement of realistic resin cast toes on the wall space. Approximately 30 resin toes were clustered together in bunches and arranged in an almost overwhelming array. These toes extended the link between the physical, psychical and symbolic body for the viewer through the projected fantasy occurring in the video work and the material elements of my creative arts praxis.

The second installation was situated at the end of a long hallway (Figures 22a and 22b) and the enclosed qualities of this space enabled the viewer to have an immersive, bordering on uncomfortable, experience. The viewer had to navigate the close proximity of both the installation of garment and object and the bodies of other
viewers within this space. The use of selective spot lighting illuminated partial elements of the work; directing, fragmenting and privileging the body while an ambiguous bodily sound (see sound clip 1, in accompanying PDF) stimulated the viewer’s interest to venture into this space.

Figure 22a & 22b: Pace, K. (2014). Detail views of the installation at the end of the hallway in the Becomings exhibition.

The uncomfortable experience heightened for the viewer as they ventured down the hallway towards the sound and main components of the installation. Along the hallway walls the body was fragmented through spot lit groupings of finger and toe sculptures. This lead the viewer to the end of the hallway where a garment was draped over a low lying plinth with two mannequin legs lit from behind with a spot light (Figures 22a and 22b). The selective lighting privileged certain parts of the work and encouraged a fragmentary encounter with the body.

The viewer had limited space in which to move and further fragmentation and privileging of the body was facilitated through placement of round small mirrors that reflected isolated segments of the body and garment (Figure 23). Additionally, this
work was located next to large windows that allowed access to the work through an outside viewing down an exterior side alley. The potential to view the work from the outside of the gallery contributed to the voyeuristic experience for the viewer and demonstrated the blurry division between the public and private or proper and improper. The use of mannequin legs implied a presence of the body and the use of realistic cast body parts on the garment, and replicated bodily qualities of skin in the garment blurred the line between the real and represented body. At this point in my research I understood that these garments required a representation of the body to provide an example of the fluid merging between the body, garment and object that was of concern. Through this exhibition I was seeking to explore the potential of garment to stand in for the body (Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998) and to investigate if the represented body was required though object, mannequins or body parts to demonstrate the merged relationship between the body and garment. The selective use of two mannequin’s legs enabled the body to be communicated whilst denying it as a complete form.

**Figure 23:** Pace, K. (2014). Detail from *Becomings*. This image demonstrates the fragmented body through the use of the mirrors.
The *Becomings* exhibition was the first instance sound was used within my creative arts praxis. The sound was played through speakers located behind the body and garment installation and the intensity of the volume was most potent at this point. It seeped and spilled into the space with no regard for the viewer’s boundaries. The viewer could choose to avert their gaze from an uncomfortable viewing, however sound is immersive. The sound seduced the viewer into the space while simultaneously repelling them through its reference to an embarrassing slippage of bodily function. The sound demonstrated the instability of the in-between condition of body and fluidly merged the internal / external and public / private. I determined that whilst the sound conveyed the fluid boundaries of the abject corporeal body it needed further development. Subduing the sound through gaps of silence or dissipating it over the space could avoid the privileging of the repulsive qualities in the sound.

5.4 *Fashion[ing] forms: The craft of making, Gallery Central, WA, September, 2014.*

The subsequent exhibition, *Fashion[ing] forms: The craft of making* (2014), was part of a group show in the *Perth Fashion Festival*. The set up of the work in this exhibition was arranged to allude to the seductive and desirable. The projection of the desirable was directed as a response and contrast to the dominant abject and uncomfortable qualities present in *Becomings* (2014). The installation of work merged the body, garment, sculpture, object and performance. The integration between body forms and garment in *Fashion[ing] forms* aimed to relocate, reform and reveal the body through the garment as a second skin.

It is significant to note that as part of a group exhibition I had limited control over the space allocated to install my work and the lighting in this space. This resulted in the display of the work within a large open room that was well lit. The open space allowed the work to be viewed comfortably from a distance and enabled a ‘safer’ view that did not control or restrict how the viewer was able to interact with the work.

The garment present in *Fashion[ing] Forms* merged a suggested ‘real’ body (life cast resin breasts) with garment (Figure 24). This merging of the corporeal body and garment demonstrated the ambiguity and fluidity of the body. The exposure and repositioning of the breasts in a new placement further down the body from the known anatomy denies any assumed definitions of the body.
The redefinition of the body through a cut, fold, and orifice references desire and the fetish through Lacan’s (1977) *object petit a*. Whilst the complete body is denied by the in-between conditions of the body, fetish offers the suggestion of recovery. Fetish through Lacan’s (1977) *object petit a* links to the studio outcomes of my creative arts praxis as a process of making these intangible desires tangible through the attempt to fill in the gap of the incomplete and shifting body. The displacement of this desire onto another object, or body, or through garment is an endeavour to fill the lack, to recover the unattainable whole and complete body. The ideal of a whole body image can never be recovered and the *object petit a* is demonstrated through the garment’s folds, repetitions and openings. The body margins were extended and the rims, gaps, and cuts dissolved the divisions between body and garment prompting new erogenous zones for the viewer and wearer (Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998).

The *object petit a* in my work occurs through the displacement of desire into the material manifestation of another object and attempts to manage the in-between condition of the body. The normally private is exhibited publically and the delineation between inside and outside of the body is blurred. This replication of the normally
concealed body parts was continued on the surrounding wall through the placement of resin cast toe objects. I attempted to pull back from the repulsive and overwhelming that was present in the *Progress* (2014) exhibition through smaller numbers of resin cast toes on the wall.

A mannequin torso and hand were used to investigate the link between a projected body image of the real, imaginary and symbolic body (Figure 25). The ‘real’ body is represented through the lifelike casts alongside the idealised representations of the body through the mannequin parts. Additionally the mannequin parts were painted to replicate the same colour of the cast resin parts, a beige skin tone, which further blurred the link between the ‘real’ and represented. The mannequin and garment were installed on a low plinth to encourage an awkward viewing. Installed at approximately knee height, the viewer has to bend their body to engage with the detail of this work.

![Image](image_url)

**Figure 25**: Pace, K. (2014). Detail of installation in *Fashion[ing] forms*. Life like resin body castings merge the real, imaginary and symbolic body.

A nearby taller plinth was installed with a fabric orifice video installation that mimicked the fluid and undulating qualities of the garment. The video clip showcased a performer (the viewed) in the garment slowly rubbing, fondling and touching the
‘rim’ of the garment (see video 2, in accompanying PDF). The repetitious action and slow pace of these clips emphasised the seductive actions of the performer. The small screen and fragmented view of the performer (Figure 26) enabled an intimate viewing and questioned the division between the public and the private. Placing the video onto a plinth that required the viewer to peer down into the work opened up the possibilities for future exhibitions regarding positioning of the video works.

Figure 26: Pace, K. (2014). Detail of video work in Fashion[ing] forms. The small screens of the tablets enabled an intimate viewing.

The absence of elements such as controlled lighting, sound and mirrors that had been used successfully in Progress (2014) were demonstrated as significant to the reading of the in-between condition of the body through their lack in Fashion[ing] forms. It was these elements that contributed to the fragmentary reading of the body to immerse the viewer in the work. Furthermore, through reviewing the documentation of this exhibition through the still, cropped images (Figure 25) I formed links to the framing of the body employed by Hans Bellmer and opened up ideas of the object vs subject for my research. New questions were generated as I considered the possibility of how much of the body is needed to communicate the in-between conditions and
developed a concept of having objects that were not purely garment or the body but stand alone fragments of the body.

5.5 Peel Fondle Ogle, Spectrum Project Space, Edith Cowan University, WA, February, 2015.

Reflexive consideration of the viewers’ proximity to the work through both Becomings (2014) and Fashion[ing] forms (2014) informed the potential of the creative work to manifest qualities of the in-between body through garment, object and the use of installation and video to direct the viewers’ engagement and gaze within Peel, Fondle, Ogle (2015). In these two previous exhibitions one garment/body installation was used to create a dialogue with the surfaces of the body, transforming, fragmenting, shifting, revealing, denying and renegotiating the body’s boundaries and form. Peel, Fondle, Ogle aimed to develop the body as renegotiated through gaps, cuts, folds and rims across a collection of work in a gallery space. Various works within the space evoked the in-between conditions of the corporeal body by creating new, and questioning existing, erogenous zones with a specific focus on how the viewer and viewed (wearer) encounter the body.

The integral relationship of the viewer to my creative arts praxis is explained by Duxbury: “if arts practice is to be considered as research it needs to reveal its processes and illuminate the thinking that underpins the material manifestation and it needs to be experienced. Art as research requires a viewer” (2009, p. 57). The viewer within Peel, Fondle, Ogle is not considered as passive and acted upon by the work but instead is included in the exchange that can be manifested through the way in which the work is encountered and the potential for the viewed (wearer or performer) to return the gaze. Gaze has been most specifically explored within Peel, Fondle, Ogle through its potential to contribute to the in-between conditions for both the viewer and viewed (wearer) and is the only exhibition that addressed the returned gaze.

The difference between the previous two exhibitions and Peel, Fondle, Ogle was through the fragmentation of the body that revealed the in-between condition of the body regardless of gender or sexuality. Previously, the in-between condition had only been explored through exhibition of female garments and body forms. However, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, all bodies are penetrable and permeable and the in-between condition of the body can be applied to any body regardless of gender or
sexuality. In this manner considerations were applied in *Peel, Fondle, Ogle* and the same visual reductive and fragmentary language was applied to both male and female body forms.

### 5.5.1 The use of installation to direct the viewer’s gaze in *Peel, Fondle, Ogle.*

Reflexive consideration of the potential of the creative works to direct viewer’s gaze occurred during the installation of *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*, generated through specific placement and layout of the work which aimed to create intimate spaces for the viewer. The in-between condition of the body was explored though the location of garments, objects, video works, sound and live performance. I aimed to construct intimate spaces that enabled the viewer to encounter various separate installations that presented the body as ambiguous, fragmented and reduced. Together, the collection of work undulated and flowed from one space to the next, forming an installation of the body in various in-between states.

The exhibition was entered from an open space, luring the viewer in through open comfortable spaces (Figure 27). The viewer then navigated through more condensed and enclosed spaces that alternated between levels of comfort, voyeurism, and the perverse. Revealing and displaying the body in its in-between condition encouraged the viewer to want to look and touch, yet at the same time the exposure to these spaces provoked responses of discomfort and repulsion. The lighting and two moveable walls of the gallery were arranged to encourage private viewing. As the viewer progressed through the space the works became more seductive, repulsive and intense. Physically enclosing the viewer’s body into fragmented spaces and hallways enabled an immersive, intimate and potentially confronting experience for them. The aim was to direct the viewer through the space, with consideration to elements becoming more desirable, and repellent the further they ventured in. I wanted the viewer to become aware of the voyeuristic and perverted nature of seeing the body in these spaces. The aim was to represent the in-between condition of the body as simultaneously desirable and repulsive manifested through exposure to the normally unseen body and actions.
Considerations of the interpretive and reductive powers of the viewer’s gaze were used to facilitate a dialogue across a body of work that could together blur and merge the physical, psychical and symbolic body (Lacan, 1977). The framing, privileging and reductive capability of gaze was used to shape the anticipated physical, emotional and psychological responses of the viewer through the dialogue between the body, garment, object, performance and sound.

*Peel, Fondle, Ogle* enabled viewer engagement through both static exhibition and live performance. Live performance, further explained in section 5.5.4, took place during the opening event. During this event, the mannequin parts, that had stood in for the body were exchanged for live performers at three sites within the installation. The exchange between the static exhibition and the live performance enabled two separate inquiries into the ways the viewer encountered the body and creative arts praxis manifestations within the exhibition. The use of live performers within the space revealed new inquiries into how viewers may manage their bodies in the space. The integration of live performers as part of the installation might promote the viewer to maintain a comfortable ‘safer’ distance instead of the close proximity afforded by the static objects and garments.
5.5.2 A critical analysis of the use of the body, garment and object as materials to convey the in-between conditions of the body and to denote the presence of a ‘real’, imaginary and symbolic body in *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*.

The capacity of garment and object to directly generate a dialogue with the body is explained by Grosz (1994) as

> The limits or borders of the body image are not fixed by nature or confined to the anatomical “container,” the skin. The body image is extremely fluid and dynamic; its borders, edges, and contours are “osmotic” – they have the remarkable power of incorporating and expelling outside and inside in an ongoing interchange. (p 79)

In *Peel, Fondle, Ogle* the unfixed status of the body was communicated though reworked sites of the body using garment and object as devices to stand in for, extend, manipulate and subvert assumed body image. This extended on the developments of the body, garments and objects in *Becomings* (2014) and *Fashion[ing] forms* (2014).

The body in *Peel, Fondle, Ogle* was reworked through replication, reformation and relocation of orifices over a collection of work which allowed various interpretations of the body, in various stages of ambiguity, to be explored. Through this exploration of various bodies at once, no one state of body could be privileged, and new sites of engagement were formed where the internal and external body met and merged. The symbolic investment of the body was explored through the subversion and denial of the body as a static entity. By transforming, reconstructing and reimagining the body through garment and object in my creative arts praxis, these creative inquiries asked how the body is defined physically, psychically and symbolically.

Through merging garment construction with cast body parts and through suggestions of new openings, cuts, gaps or orifices (Figures 28 & 29) I attempted to blur the physical (real), psychical (imaginary) and symbolic body image. These new sites asked where body ends and where garment begins. They demonstrated the uncontainable nature of the body and link to Lacan’s (1977) theories on the body as fragmented through the erogenous zones. The body cannot be viewed as a totalised structure as these naturally occurring orifices segment and disrupt the body. These sites were investigated within my research as simultaneously desirable and repulsive through their capacity to expose the vulnerable and penetrable parameters of the body.

There is desire to attempt to view the unseen, to recapture the stability of the body
image and manage the in-between condition. Yet, these same sites are also repellent and are symbolically invested as abject (Kristeva, 1982). These newly revealed sites of the body explored the boundaries to the internal that are associated as sites of taboo and unease.

**Figure 28:** Pace, K. (2015) Detail from *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*. Demonstrating the blurred division between garment, object and body. Photographed by Danielle Fusco.

**Figure 29:** Pace, K. (2015). Detail from *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*. New cuts or gaps in garment reveal the suggested and imaginary body.
The garments stood in for, acted as and became part of the body (Cavallaro & Warwick, 1998). The folds and gaps demonstrated the body’s permeable, penetrable and vulnerable status (Figure 30). These new openings and folds segmented the body in new ways whilst revealing its uncontainable, fluid status. In Figure 31, fluid draped fabric undulates and flows off the body. The gaps, rims and openings reveal parts of the body normally concealed and the selective padding created seductive new body forms. Doy (2002) extends on this act of concealing or revealing the body through garment as the draped body can represent the lack or loss of a complete body image though the act of veiling or unveiling the body. The body was reimagined in new positions and gestures as cast-life like hands emerge from the garment folds. The placement of these body parts is awkward. To whom did these hands belong? The position of these hands could not physically be the wearer’s (performer’s) hands yet they emerge from their body. These casts were replicated to match the painted mannequin form suggesting a blurred division between the real or imaginary body.

Figure 30: Pace, K. (2015). Detail from Peel, Fondle, Ogle. The forms of body are determined by the folds, rims and padded forms of the garments.
Lacan’s (1977) theories on object petit a, as used in the fashion[ing] Forms (2014) exhibition in Chapter 5.4, was also evident in Peel, Fondle, Ogle through the replication of body parts in order to recapture the lacking wholeness of the in-between condition of the body. Latex covered pearls, fingers, toes, breasts, beads and manipulated silks seep from openings, drip from crevices and cover surfaces demonstrating the uncontainable in-between condition of the body. Openings, folds and orifices fragmented the body and revealed that which is normally veiled or private; further dissipating and transferring these desires. Parts were replicated; bodily elements oozed from the internal, suggesting unstable parameters that were simultaneously enticing and repulsive in their exposure to the normally private and intimate (Figures 32 and 33).
Figure 32: Pace, K. (2015). Detail image from *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*. The replication of bodily elements as an attempt to recapture the ideal of the whole body.
The use of partial mannequin body parts to stand in for the body and display the body as isolated and reduced that was developed through *Becomings* (2014) and *Fashion[ing] forms* (2014) was again implemented in *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*. Through the use of selected limbs and parts I denied the totalised body. These selective parts alongside their actions and gestures became more significant in how they interacted with garment and suggested gesture or movement. These parts were integrated through the installation to become part of the garment and continued to blur the division between real and idealised body (Figure 34). Both male and female mannequin parts referenced fondling and caressing gestures that merged and blurred with the garments. The same language was applied to both male and female bodies and demonstrated that the in-between condition is not specific to one gender or sexuality (Figure 35). The mannequin body parts were painted the same colours as the resin life cast sculptural objects that were merged with the garments, creating a dialogue between the real, imaginary and symbolic notion of the body.
Figure 34: Pace, K. (2015). Detail from Peel, Fondle, Ogle. The selective use of mannequin parts denied a totalised body image.

Figure 35: Pace, K. (2015). Detail image of Peel, Fondle, Ogle. Use of male mannequins within the exhibition.
The reductive framing lens of the mirrors was successful in *Becomings* (2014) and used in *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*, to continue to develop the isolated and fragmented gaze for the viewer. The small circular mirrors are already associated with a fragmented gaze, allowing the viewer only a piece, or segmented view of the body (Figures 36, 37 and 38). Through the mirrors I facilitated a new view for the viewer, showing them how to see the body, how to look. The mirrors also offered a compromise of gaze because once performers became part of the installation; the viewer may have felt uncomfortable gazing directly at the viewed in such a close proximity. The mirrors offered a deference of gaze through a mirror, the ability to safely watch and fragment the body without fear of a returned gaze. In this way the viewer could catch a glimpse, or view the body in parts and leer as long as they desired without direct confrontation with the body.

**Figure 36:** Pace, K. (2015). Detail image of *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*. The fragmented gaze through the placement of mirrors within the exhibition.
Figure 37: Pace, K. (2015). Detail image from *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*. Depending on where the viewer is positioned the body was fragmented through the mirrors.

Figure 38: Pace, K. (2015). Detail image from *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*. Mirrors encouraged the viewer to bend and leer in awkward positions.
The continued fragmented body was represented in segments through the soft sculptural works (Figure 39) that were part of this exhibition. These works privileged partial elements of the body. The body was again reduced for the viewer. These works undulated and folded, the body parts appeared to simultaneously expel from, and recede into, the folds of fabric in a seemingly never ending motion of changing and shifting.

![Image](image_url)

**Figure 39:** Pace, K. (2015). Detail image from *Peel, Fondle, Ogle.* The body was separated through smaller sculptural works into experiences not located to a suggestion of body or garment.

**5.5.3** The use of video, sound and lighting to navigate the viewer’s encounter to the body with considerations of the reductive and fragmentary nature of gaze in *Peel, Fondle, Ogle.*

Gaze is identified within my creative arts praxis as an extension of the erogenous zones and as a contributing element to shape anticipated emotional and psychological responses from the viewers. Reflexive consideration of the previous use of video, lighting and sound to frame the body within *Becomings* (2014) informed the use of
these methods to direct the viewer’s gaze as fragmented, privileged and reduced in *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*

The viewer within *Peel, Fondle, Ogle* is distinguished from the group spectator. The notion of gaze implemented within this exhibition is derived from Lacan (1977, 1979) as the viewer is considered as an individual and their presence is acknowledged physically, psychically and symbolically. It is necessary to differentiate these perspectives from those of Mulvey (1989) as she discusses the spectator as part of a mass audience. Through my creative arts praxis I made decisions within this exhibition that encouraged an intimate viewing of the work. Choices were made choices to exhibit the video works and arrange lighting that generated focused, private and fragmented experiences for the viewer (Figure 40).

*Figure 40:* Pace, K. (2015). Detail image from *Peel, Fondle, Ogle.* Video work.
Distinguishing gaze for the individual was significant in making reflexive choices to keep the video work on small and intimate screens. Approaching the viewer as an individual enabled the denial of the normalising comfort of group viewing and considered the viewer firstly as a voyeur. These videos were imbedded in fabric orifices that replicated the same qualities of the soft sculpture bodily forms present throughout the exhibition (Figure 40). The viewer made a choice to leer into this gap, to peer into these orifices. Small beaded clusters and fingers were integrated into these works extending the space of the body beyond the containment of the screen (Figure 41).

![Figure 41](image-url)

**Figure 41:** Pace, K. (2015). Detail image from *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*. The segmentation of the body was continued in the video works through the link to the resin cast bodily elements.

Five of these small tablets were located next to body and garment installations. Each tablet had a different video work of a performer (viewed / wearer) wearing the nearby garment in a looped and repetitious action of fondling of and caressing the folds, rims and openings of the garment (see videos 3, 4, 5 & 6, in accompanying PDF). The viewer was only afforded a partial view, the viewed (wearer) could not return the gaze and was effectively veiled through the isolated part of body filmed. The viewer was
exposed to what would normally be considered a private moment. Only one or two viewers could comfortably see these pieces at one time due to the small screens activating an intimate space. The viewer’s gaze was mediated; the viewer encountered the body in new ways, exposing them to uncomfortable and awkward situations. The viewer was able to indulge their desire to leer and ogle as there was no fear of the returned gaze from viewer protected by both the tablet screen and veiling and partial view of the wearer through the framing of the video (Figure 42).

Figure 42: Pace, K. (2015). Detail of viewer engaging with a video work from *Peel, Fondle, Ogle.* Photography by Emily Hornum.

The video clips evoked a presence of both the real and imaginary body. The wearer interacted with garments in such a way they could be part of the body continuing to blur the real, imaginary and symbolic body. The viewer penetrated the body with their
gaze as the wearer performed actions that engaged with the new internal opening of the body prompted by these garments. The actions of the wearer were continuously looped; both male and female bodies were framed in the same manner (see Videos 4 & 6, in accompanying PDF). The wearer revealed the bodily openings, traces around the rims and repeated seductive and alluring actions, which enticed the viewer. No resolution was ever accomplished. There was no climax, the wearer continued to repeat these actions in a cycle, denying the viewer of any escape from desire and reinforcing the cyclical nature of desire for the body. This is an example of the unattainable repetition of the fetish (Krips, 2002), where the viewer is captured between desire to look and repulsion through exposure to the internal and uncomfortable viewing.

The lighting was used to create focus and situate the viewer as the voyeur. The lights were used to privilege parts of the body, directing the viewer’s gaze by creating focus on specific sites of the body (Figure 43). They isolated how the viewer was able to see the body, creating intimate spaces through focused sites. During the installation of these lights reflexive decisions were made to make the lighting a visible part of the installation. Unable to hide these lights I choose lamps as spotlights that became part

Figure 43: Pace, K. (2015). Detail image from Peel, Fondle, Ogle. The viewers gaze was directed through the use of lighting.
of the work, which made the viewer aware that these bodies are to be looked at. These were arranged to create direction and focus. The prominent placement of the lighting adds to questions about how we view the work, it reveals the processes of gaze and contributes to the voyeuristic and perverse viewing encouraged (Figure 44).

Figure 44: Pace, K. (2015). Detail image of Peel, Fondle, Ogle. The exposed lighting alerts the viewer to engage closely.

Following the success of sound in Becomings (2014), it was again used within Peel, Fondle, Ogle to incite a direct physical and emotional reaction from the viewers. However, sound was used within Peel, Fondle, Ogle in a different manner from previous exhibitions. Instead of locating the sound to an isolated space it was played over a space, it washed over the whole exhibition instead of being pinpointed to a
singular work. This added to the comfortable/uncomfortable experiences of the viewer as the sound was quiet and not noticeable upon first entering the gallery. As a viewer moved towards the back of the gallery, the sound washed over the space.

The sound used (see sound clip 1, in accompanying PDF) is demonstrative of the ambiguity of the body. The sound was wet, continuous squelching, squishy and pulsating. It referenced the accidental slippages of the body. It directly questioned boundaries that divide the public and the private. It spilled and undulated in the space. It denied the private boundaries of the viewer. The viewer can always look away from uncomfortable and confronting images but the sound spilled into the space without any regard for a clean, containable status of the body.

5.5.4 Examining the presence of live ('real') bodies through performance in *Peel, Fondle, Ogle*.

Live performance became a significant part of *Peel, Fondle, Ogle* to investigate the contributing role of the viewer, the viewed and gaze for the in-between conditions of the corporeal body. Additionally, the presence of live bodies through performance enabled the re-examination of the dialogue between garment, object and the body to explore the in-between conditions of the body. The absence of a physical, live body within the previous exhibitions enabled the viewer to maintain the traditional role that occurs in an exhibition context where the viewer is active as a subject looking at objects. This role allowed the viewer to act as a voyeur, as they were able to leer in the gap and comfortably view the private without the fear of a returned gaze (Denzin, 1995). The presence of live bodies within *Peel, Fondle, Ogle* was able to shift and challenge this notion. I aimed to create a dialogue between the body, object, garment and gaze, which allowed the audience to question their position as the viewer, through the presence of the viewed. The ambiguity of gaze was revealed when the viewed was able to return the gaze because transference of roles took place through the potential of the counter gaze (Schneider, 1997; Walsh, 2013). The viewed body of the wearer within this section is referred to hereafter as the *performer*.

During the opening event three static garment / mannequin installations were exchanged for performers. Three performers, two female and one male, wore the works. Each performer was situated on a low-lying plinth and replicated the movements and gestures displayed in the nearby video works of performers in the
same garments. These movements were isolated to the confined space of the plinths and each performer was situated within the focus of the spotlights. The movements and gestures of the performers were slowed down, creating an eerie focus on the moments. The repeated and slowed movements were designed to make the viewer aware of the seductive actions. The implementation of deliberate and steady movements rather than the typical speed of every day human movements created focus on the interaction with the body.

The choice to exchange only three sites of the installation with performers was to avoid overwhelming the viewer. The use of performers within the exhibition enabled an encounter for the viewer, which was different from that with static objects, installations and video works. The presence of a live physical body enabled an exchange between the real and represented body and revealed the possibility of the returned gaze, which marked an unfixed position, as the viewer could also be the viewed. The potential for the viewer and the viewed to be both the subject and object repositions Mulvey’s (1989) notions of the passive viewed subject. Circumstances were altered when the viewer was able to view a real, living body rather than seeing the body parts as a static object. At this point, the act of looking and watching became perverted. How did viewers react differently to the presence of the live, physical body of a performer? The viewer had choices to make. Was the viewer able to analyse the body as an object in the same manner as the video or sculptural works? Were they still afforded the ability to linger and stare for longer periods of time than are proper or comfortable?

The use of performers also changed the proximity of the viewers to the work; there was a direct physical reaction (Figures 45 and 46). The potential to provoke an emotional or psychological reaction arose when confronted with a performer undertaking fondling, caressing actions on new ambiguous openings to the body. The boundaries between private and public became blurred. Viewers no longer encountered the performers in the same manner as the static sculptural pieces or video works. Viewing of the performers took place from a further distance, to avert the possibility of the counter gaze. The penetrative gaze afforded for the sculptural works or video pieces became awkward and uncomfortable when applied to the ‘real’ bodies through the potential of the returned gaze.
The performers were in various states of being veiled. One performer was unable to return the gaze, as she was completely veiled except for the lower half of her face, the hands, feet and the parts of body exposed through the openings in the garment (Figure 47). The body in this piece was completely fractured. It was repositioned, repeated and reformed. The viewer had the capacity to gaze upon this performer without fear of the counter gaze. The mirrors further fragmented the body and the performer’s actions. They reduced the body from a complete view to privilege the actions, and parts of body further (see video clip 7, in accompanying PDF). The other performers were in various stages of being able to return the gaze depending on where the viewer

Figure 45: Pace, K. (2015). Detail image of a viewer watching a live performer from a distance in Peel, Fondle, Ogle. Photography by Emily Hornum.
was situated or whether they were facing the viewer (Figures 48 and 49). Transference of roles took place through the potential of the counter gaze. The division between viewer and viewed became blurry. No longer could the viewer leer and ogle without awareness of their gaze. Mirrors also fragmented these two performers, which allowed viewers a deferred gaze, enabling watching, looking and ogling without directly having to make eye contact.

![Figure 46: Pace, K. (2015). Viewers encountering works without a live body closely. Photography by Danielle Fusco.](image)

The presence of ‘real’ bodies within the exhibition generated new conversations not previously possible through the display of static sculptural and video work. The viewer was compelled to question their presence within the exhibition and manage their contribution to the in-between condition.
Figure 47: Pace, K. (2015). A live performer that was veiled and unable to return the gaze. Photography Danielle Fusco.

Figure 48: Pace, K. (2015). Performer able to return the gaze in Peel, Fondle, Ogle. Photography by Emily Hornum.
Figure 49: Pace, K. (2015). A male performer in a state of semi veiling able to return the gaze depending on where the viewer positioned themselves. Photography by Emily Hornum.

5.6 Summary

The process of analysing the ambiguity of the body through exhibitions; The In-between: An inquiry of the body (2013), Progress (2013), Becomings (2014), and Fashion[ing] forms (2014) enabled the reflexive questioning of the role of the gaze to contribute to the in-between conditions of the corporeal body within this research project. The relationship between the viewer, the viewed, gaze and the creative work, was found to be significant and impact how the body is understood is physically, psychically and symbolically and further explored through investigations in Peel, Fondle, Ogle (2015). Taking into consideration the viewer’s potential to be the viewer,
voyeur, and viewed identified the integral relationship the viewer has within my creative arts praxis. If the viewer’s position can be unfixed it is also affected by the in-between condition of the body. This ambiguous position of the viewer and their inability to remain static in the position as the subject also acknowledges their symbolic contribution to the body and tangible manifestations of this research. The division between the internal and external, public and private, proper and improper, desirable and repulsive and viewer and viewed was demonstrated to be indistinguishable.
Conclusion

The in-between conditions of the body were uncovered through the reflexive processes of my creative arts praxis and these investigations were unveiled through the embedding and reflection of ideas within each exhibition throughout my candidature. Each exhibition enabled the examination and re-examination of the in-between conditions of the body. New tangible formations of the body were generated through the material thinking that contributed to the accumulative processes of my research. At this final point is it relevant to consider if a true conclusion has been reached or if the nature of my research as in-between, unfixed and ambiguous has been extended to the outcomes and applications of my research. According to Carter (2004)

The outcomes of creative research are, in this sense offcuts of infinity. Bunching perceptions or grouping phenomena in new ways that are memorable, they provide the ‘prenotion’ that enables mediation between the immediately to hand (or local) and otherwise ungraspable (the global) – the activity of material thinking (p. 184).

This quote extends on the notion that, while there are outcomes from creative arts praxis inquiries, this process has the potential to reveal discoveries rather than definitive answers. Whilst my research has made the shifting and transformative nature of the body tangible through the theoretical perspectives that supported my approach from Lacan (1975, 1977, 1979, 1981) and Kristeva (1982), it also revealed the potential for this process to be ongoing.

It is significant to realise that through revealing the in-between condition of the body I have not attempted to close the loop. Drawing on Lacan’s (1979) notions of desire I believe my research remains open ended, as desire is perpetuated in the lack, it is unresolvable, and the body will always be fragmented, incomplete and ambiguous. The material manifestations of my creative arts praxis have not alluded to closure but denied a climax or resolution for the viewer. The creative works generated throughout my candidature were fluid in their appearance and suggested the continuity of growth, change and the ongoing mechanics of the body. I have alluded to ideas and discoveries rather than providing closure or a final statement.

What my creative arts praxis inquiry has indicated is that the physical, psychical and symbolic body generates varied perspectives that establish its in-between status. The manifestation of the in-between condition through a dialogue between the body,
garment, object, performance, video and sound has established links between the real, imaginary and symbolic understanding of the body. Producing these various incarnations of the body in the material sense through my studio developments and installation of work identified the fragmented, lacking and fluid nature of the body. A chance at recovery was offered for this lack and fragmentation through the substitution produced via the replication of the tangible objects (implementation of fetish) through my creative arts praxis. The replication through substitution denied any resolution of the in-between and extended this uncomfortable condition. The cycle of desire is continued through replication.

The body will always be lacking, it is constantly transforming socially, culturally, physically, psychically, and symbolically through time. Reflexively analysing the works of the La Specola, Elsa Schiaparelli, Hans Bellmer and Leigh Bowery revealed that the in-between condition of the body has not been restricted to the contemporary; these are not new concerns and will remain ongoing.

It is significant to realise that these in-between conditions were explored and manifested within my research regardless of the inhibiting divides of gender or sexuality. Within my research the in-between condition bypassed these boundaries. Whilst Lacan’s (1975, 1977, 1979) heterosexual and masculine prominent theoretical positions could have been inhibiting to my research, they were negotiated through aligning his theoretical perspective on the symbolically defined erogenous zones with the feminist perspectives of Grosz (1994), Irigaray (1985) and Butler (1997, 2011). Merging these theoretical perspectives with my creative outcomes demonstrated that the in-between condition of the body is not contained to these boundaries. The body remains in-between, fluid and unfixed regardless of gender or sexuality.

Identifying the lacking body that drives Lacan’s (1975, 1979) desire as by situated the orifices and unfinished nature of the body, I distinguished the capacity for both desire and repulsion to exist in the same sites of the body. The erogenous zones of the body are not fixed or biologically determined (Grosz, 1994) and this extends the unfixed nature of the body. The works I exhibited in Peel, Fondle, Ogle (2015) conveyed this undefinable status and existed as transitional objects or experiences that enabled the viewer to indulge their fantasies for a complete or incomplete body.
Throughout my candidature the participation and presence of the viewer and the wearer (viewed) became increasingly significant to generate these in-between conditions of the body. It is relevant to acknowledge this not just because arts research does not exist without an audience (Crouch, 2007) but also that the viewers’ gaze is integral to developing these in-between conditions. My research considered both how we see things and the viewers’ potential to inject themselves into the fantasy of the situation through identification of the fragmented body (Berger et al., 1972; Schneider, 1997). The articulation of the fluid, uncomfortable and unfixed margins of the body within my creative work could not hold power without identifying and subverting the signifiers of the desired and fantasised complete whole body. Lacan’s (1979) use of the symbolic to generate meaning alludes to the importance of the viewer’s presence to determine value emotionally and psychologically within the work. The way the viewer encountered and interpreted the work was through the relationships formed by the way we see things.

The role of the viewer within the research enabled the extension of the in-between through the fragmentary ways of seeing. It is important to realise the viewer’s role within this exhibition has not been static and passive, as within more traditional arts research, but was active through the possibility for the viewer to be the viewer, voyeur and viewed (through the opportunity of the counter gaze). This was realised throughout the exhibiting process through the integration of the ‘real’ body (live performers) alongside the imaginary and suggested body (the sculptural objects, garments and video works). The observations made within the final exhibition Peel, Fondle, Ogle (2015) recognised the performatif nature of the viewer by the exchange of roles through gaze within this exhibition. This was realised through generating emotional and physical responses from the work and enabling the viewer to be both passive and active within the research through how they looked at and encountered the creative outcomes.

Overall, the in-between condition has not just been facilitated within the creative work but also in the viewer’s response. No clear boundaries can be assumed between the internal and external body, subject and object, desire and repulsion or the viewer and the viewed.
References


