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Introduction

"Bring out the nature of materials, let their nature intimately into your scheme. . . . Reveal the nature of the wood, plaster, brick or stone in your designs; they are all by nature friendly and beautiful." [1]

Do former applications of a material dictate its use in art today?

In presenting this body of work to you I want to make it explicit that this is a personal study. The way in which this writing represents my work is symbolic of my approach in researching this topic.

Within my personal practise my work with 'materials' is my motivation. How I use them and how I can push them to their limits. How I can change our perception, relationship and experience to a given material. But how do they play a role in representing the situation they are intended for? This got me thinking. Where do the feelings that I experience when working with them come from? More importantly what are these feelings and do they play a role when choosing materials? Why

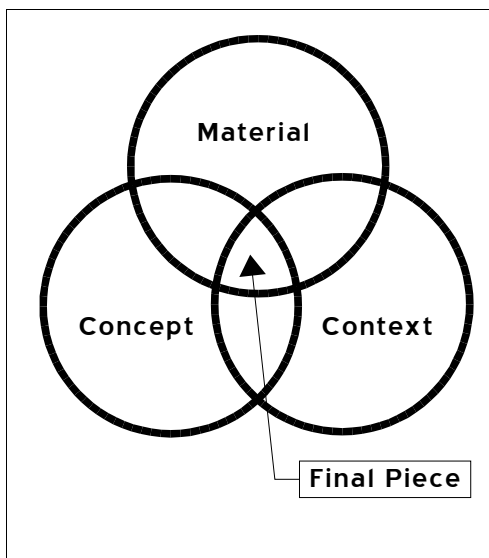


Fig. 1

do I choose one instead of another? Is it a conscious decision (i.e. Does it 'look' right or 'feel' right) or is there a fundamental knowledge gained from our preconceptions or experiences with a given material and our associations with its use in the past? Maybe we should be asking where it has come from and whether this has an effect on or affinity with our work. It is with all this in mind that I will be looking at concept and context in terms of the material as shown in Fig. 1.

I have created this from the main themes in my readings. It helps me to illustrate the overlapping nature of the question I am asking and the position I am entering from. This is important in the

greater scheme where it brings to light an often overlooked aspect of Public art – the role of material as a driving force in the process of creative endeavours. I know this is not the only point of view, but in art these areas overlap with such complexities that I have to be brutal in the approach that I take.

With these questions in mind I began to look at theory. I found that ideas grounded in representation, bricolage, materiality and phenomenology each play a significant role in the understanding of this topic.

However this will not and cannot remain a purely theoretical exercise. I will be exploring the very nature of material and in turn our relationship to it specifically using my own work with cardboard as a major case study.

Through much of my own work, that of my contemporaries and the artist James Carl (all of whom have worked with cardboard as well as other materials) I will be gaining knowledge through case studies, interviews and questionnaires. This includes an experiment with word association (materials based of course), that will allow for a greater insight which I could not gain from text alone.

These questions not only have applicability for public artists but also for the public. Those who are engaging with the piece. These kinds of material encounters take place at an everyday level with a multitude of results. I am also interested in the opinions of those who are not practising artists to see if there is a different relationship and understanding formed. After all it is this public that we are trying to engage with. In the *'The Practise of everyday life'* Girad describes the idea that there is a *'practise of cooking'* but that the tools, resources and materials that people use and the way that they use them are all nuanced and different. For example, the way that I hold a potato peeler or a tin opener is different from the way that you do, but we are both *'peeling potatoes or opening tins'*. [2] This point being, it is important to listen to the individual and to be aware of these nuances but not

to undermine the fact that a practise exists – that there is something we all do – but we all do it differently.

It is my belief that the relationship between artist and material is formed through ones own personal engagement with it in precisely the same way as the example above shows with cooking practices. My own bodily experience will not be the same as yours, my reactions are nuanced to me as yours are to you so while experience can be shared it will never be the same for any two people. Due to the nature of my research I have been led to explore this project in terms of representation because to a certain extent, representation allows a platform for shared understanding despite every personal experience being different.

It has been said that,

“the challenge of creating public art is combining appropriate materials and an artistic vision” [3]

But what makes an appropriate material? Questions arise from these issues such as maintenance in public art,

“Art is not thought of as having a life expectancy, but maintenance issues raise the question of just how permanent is permanent public art” [4]

But is that where it begins and ends? The above are important factors in debates surrounding material but I want to move on from these issues in my argument. I will however be taking into consideration issues of permanence, ephemerality, site and place using ideas highlighted in the work of Krzysztof Wodiczko, Andy Goldsworthy and Johanna Rosenqvist's essay 'Materials in time and space' as a context for this part of my debate.

A Cardboard Case Study

The History of cardboard.

The story of the use and development of cardboard through history is very straightforward compared to that of many other materials. The making of paper had been developing for many centuries. In 1856 the first corrugated paper was patented by two Englishmen known as Allen and Healey. Interestingly it was initially used to line gentlemen's tall hats. Throughout the 1870's further development of corrugation in paper to strengthen this flimsy material took place. By 1874 the cardboard that was being produced bore similarities that we share with it today. It began life as sheets used as a shipping material and in 1891 the first pre-cut cardboard boxes went into production in America. I imagine that due to the nature of its life as a shipping material this aided in speedily spreading this new phenomenon globally. Nowadays it is still predominantly used for boxes as packaging and storage for a wide variety of products, but it is also less commonly used to shelter the homeless, to break falls in stunt scenes and as a medium for growing number of artists.

'Individuals differ strikingly in their responses to the notion of media transformation. They range from those who insist that they are in total control of the media which they 'use' to those who experience a profound sense of being shaped by the media which 'use' them'. [5]

Cardboard at College

In October 2001 my class and I, the second year Design and Public Art students, were given the site of Shepherds Bush Green (from now on SBG) to work with. As a starting point we were asked to explore and research the public, the private, scale and the environment which would result in each of us producing something for this site using cardboard (A stockpile had kindly been donated by a

former student.) Although the site and issues we were asked to research did not present problems for many of my class mates the idea of working with cardboard did. Many found that the pressure of working with this medium somehow affected the ability for inspiration and development of ideas within this project, thus limiting the 'greater picture' or final outcome. It was discussed that the cardboard should or could be used as a 'first draft ' to create models of proposals and allow experimentation in a cheap and safe way for what we would eventually propose to do at the site. For many there were still difficulties in getting past this idea of working with cardboard, *'I found it hard to start on my project with a view to using cardboard and even the thought of using it as a mock up was not something I was entirely comfortable with.'* [6]

Was it the limiting factor of choice, i.e. if we had all been asked to work with stone for example would reactions have been any different? What is our reaction to the nature of the material?

'Iron man' and 'Forward' – A case study of material/place association.

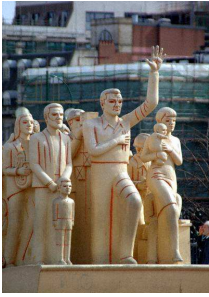
There is a case study which highlights the importance of this situation involving Public Arts in Birmingham's Centenary Square.

From the late 18th Century the region's economy was dominated by the manufacturing industries. Birmingham had an identification as *'the City of a thousand trades.'* [7] The city's council made it explicitly clear that these trades from the past and present would play an important role in their consideration for the commissioning of civic 'public art' sculptures that they had chosen for the city. Among the many chosen was Anthony Gormley's



Fig. 2

Iron Man. A highly successful and un-controversial choice which reflected a trade that was abundant in the West Midlands (the iron trade.) I would argue that the use of this traditional



material made it so there was almost no distinction or rather the association was so strong that the two ideas become intertwined – local trade with material. This is made even more apparent when we look at how Raymond Masons work was received by the public. Another 'civic' sculpture, titled *'Forward'* (the city motto).

Fig. 3 This image of the all-red brick city necessarily implies polychrome. Thus the material utilised would be synthetic resin – polyester and fibre glass, the ideal support for polyurethane paint.' [8]

There was a lot more controversy after the unveiling of this sculpture. This was not concerned with the content or context but the fact that it was made from these less 'associative' materials seemed to undermine its value as a civic sculpture. The sculpture was described as *'resembling 'a slab of rancid butter'..'cheap and nasty'. The materials were particularly criticized. 'Why it couldn't have been done in bronze or stone I'll never know.'* [9]

whilst at the same time people spent more of their time trying to evaluate and understand what this sculpture was about.

'You have to stop and look at Forward time and again to see it ever more unfolding; it is grand, startling, humble in turn.' [10]

At the time I was still unaware of my own motivations for this project (my reasoning and choice of materials did not seem high on my agenda) but unlike others I knew that I wanted to use the cardboard to create 'something' for SBG that was always going to be cardboard – not just a prototype for another material. From the first mention of this material within the realms of this project I was excited. For some reason I loved the idea of working with cardboard and it became my inspiration for looking into issues at the situations I was concerned with at the site.

By the end of the project I had produced a helmet and go cart made entirely from cardboard and glue, then coated with varnish and dye.



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

'Art has a duty to transform. It takes materials, often unlikely ones, and magically turns them into something else'. [11]

My project: Cardboard City / Racing Green

My initial thoughts about the cardboard had led me to automatically associate it with packaging, recycling and 'boxes'. Further investigations concerning this medium alongside my research at SBG led me to start associating it with plights such as homelessness (this plays a major role in the community around SBG), so again perhaps a very obvious link, but herein was the fact - these former applications and representations were playing a role in the development of my project if not predicting the next move I would take. It had already travelled this journey through its own development and in the way it had been used prior to me working with it.

As well as the associations I had already made with the cultural climate of SBG the cardboard also came to represent environmental aspects that affected the area. It gave me a sense of the natural environment making me question the hostilities SBG faced – a primary factor being the pollution from fumes of the cars that circled the green, but these new associations were not born from an affiliation with a subject or an issue that I had previously associated with cardboard. So at this point was the material still influencing the decisions I was making? Perhaps we need to look at a different avenue of thought here and take a step further back into the life of this material to understand this idea fully.

Cardboard is made from wood pulp so it is obvious that it began life as a tree – which type is not relevant and whilst I do not necessarily associate cardboard with trees I can understand that the connection I made with the environment plays an important role here.

I also believe that these ideas could be linked to the feelings I got from physically working with it -

a 'bodily reaction'. These connotations were inherently linked to how I interacted with the material.

My personal material and tactile engagement with the cardboard (touch, smell, and sound etc.) were revealing a whole host of possibilities of use. I could see new ways of working with it but I still referred to the representations, the symbolic currency that it evoked. Ultimately these representations were very important and mediated use greatly but representations change in order to uphold the norm. There is a core of stability because the material (to all intent and purposes) stays the same – but there is also flux (it is more fluid) because there is a personal engagement with the medium. So whilst practises may be repeated, the results will always be different (they wont be precisely the same).

To summarise so far we have four main levels of interaction with a material. Firstly, we have the associations to the artwork itself with reference to a wide variety of external factors i.e. nature / culture / site specificity etc.- (whatever the artists concerns might be). Secondly, our reactions to the material of the artwork in question – how sight, touch, sound etc. might influence a response. Thirdly, there is the relationship concerning the former applications of it, keeping in mind that these can change due to the nature of representation. Finally, we have our response to its actual physiology, what it was in its most basic form (i.e. trees to cardboard). The nature (texture, form) of the material changes but it is still fundamentally the same material¹. At this point I want to make it clear that I am looking at this in terms of creator, but naturally each of these points raised apply equally to that of the audiences experiences. This something I will be exploring through my own role as 'audience' in the final case study.

Not only was I happy working with the cardboard because of its 'associative' qualities (realised or not at the time), but because I wanted to see if I could change our existing relationship to it by

¹ Obviously looking at this at a chemical level there would be a very different response. What I am trying to get across is that there is still tree in cardboard. Again with man made materials the intial reaction for me was to think of the form that I had first experienced them in e.g. PVC to cling film.

bringing in the question, 'is this in fact cardboard?'. The use of dye and varnish on my project created the illusion that the cardboard was in fact wood. I had changed the associations in a cyclical fashion from wood to cardboard to wood again.



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

All of these associations with a material play a role here but through my own work a question still remained unanswered. Does the use of cardboard make for a 'cardboard like' piece of art? Or, for example, does the fact a sculpture that is made from stone make it a stone-like piece? With the findings from my word association exploration it might appear that artwork made from cardboard would have the qualities ascribed to it as shown in the table below.

From my own work I found that different associations took precedence when I manipulated the material. (For example the go cart now looked and felt like wood.)

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|--------|--------------|
| <i>Cardboard</i> | city | Fexible | Your car | Free | Box |
| | cornflakes | Your car | Boxes | | |
| <i>Wood</i> | Floorboards | Furniture | Door | Warmth | Construction |
| | Carpentry | Table | Floor | | |

From my personal stance I have explored these four associative factors but are these purely my own point of view?

- Artwork association (site, etc.)

- Bodily association (feelings)
- Former material association (e.g. cardboard to box)
- Basic form association

leading to my overall question: What part do these associations play in the creation of Art?

With these in mind I began to look at theory.

Theory

I have chosen to look at the following topics in this section: Bricolage, materiality, phenomenology and their representational qualities. I feel that these best offer the necessary explanations to understand what it is I am questioning and gives the five factors that I consider to be the tenet of my investigation and argument the validity they deserve and require.

I do not want to use this section as a platform to argue the rights, wrongs or differing opinions that surround such theories and ideas this is not what my study is about. I will instead be using suitable information as a tool to bring clarity to my own findings and as a grounding for my case study with James Carl.

Bricolage and the Bricoleur.

'Everything we design and make...is an improvisation, a lash up, something inept and provisional.

We live like castaways...' [12]

In its original context the Bricoleur was someone who delighted in making novel contraptions out of the bits and pieces of old ones. Bricolage was the result.

Levi Strauss set a precedence for these terms when he used them to characterise the process of myth making in pre-industrial societies, stating,

'the process of creating something is not a matter of the calculated choice and use of whatever materials are technically best-adapted to a clearly predetermined purpose, but rather it involves a dialogue with the materials and means of execution'. [13]

More recently, studies concerning Bricolage and the Bricoleur have been applied to the Arts, philosophies and a wide range of theories with all manners of application.

Upon discovering the notion of bricolage (it was not a term I was familiar with prior to my research

for this topic) I felt it had a strong resonance with my project work and this task at hand. On the most basic of levels we were being asked to behave as the 'Bricoleur' when our project was set, to use the 'left over' cardboard as a 'tool' to further our work.

'The inventory of tools and materials he has to work with,'

Levi Strauss explains,

'bears no relation to the current project, or indeed to any particular project, but is the contingent result of all the occasions there have been to renew or enrich the stock or to maintain it with the remains of previous constructions or destructions'. [14]

On a more significant note this idea is an important factor when looking the relationship concerning former applications of a given material. It highlights the importance of past use whilst at the same time assigning equal portent to the new. To me it also suggests the substantial role that a material plays, regardless of its surroundings (time, space) of form – the ephemeral quality of bodily reaction – being a constant presence.

Phenomenology.

This is a notoriously difficult subject to define it is for this reason that I will be using Merleau-Ponty's 'style' of phenomenology to understand our reactions to the material of the artwork in question and how our senses might influence our responses.

We are living in a visual culture, not only media driven (e.g. adverts, films etc.) but also in scientific and philosophical thinkings. 'Seeing is believing' is to many extents the way in which we approach the world. It is this 'ocularcentrism' that phenomenology challenges. It attempts to shift our focus from not only that which we see but to that which we feel. Merleau-Ponty does this through highlighting the 'strangeness' of the world. He argues that

'the human body provides the fundamental mediation point between thought and the world. The world and the subject reflect and flow into each other through the body that provides the living bond with the world.' [15]

This has been furthered by other theorists, most noticeable recently in the deconstruction of binary thinking, for example from public and private space as separate domains to contemplation of areas that constitute a mix of both; the in between spaces. e.g. office atrium's.

In some respects it is a call to recognise the influence that these sensations have on the way we perceive the world. This is of vital importance to my work on materials. It moves away from the look of a piece and places it within a multi-sensorial realm from within which a myriad of new associations can arise.

Materiality

'Material things I know, or feel, or see; All else is immaterial to me.' [16]

*'Material /Ma*te"ri*al/, n. The substance or matter of which anything is made up or may be made.'* [17]

This idea allows a new consideration for a material. This was initially raised through one of the responses to my questionnaire when I asked what determined the choice of material for any given project. The answer stated,

'I would prefer to use the word medium or media which is determined by the situation, by its appropriateness for the situation. e.g. Latest project used photography, video, audio as a method to represent place.' [18]

This made me consider material through an avenue of thought that I had not yet explored in my

study. The distinction between material as a material and material as the medium or media. The issues of the ephemeral and changing nature of many materials or 'mediums' used for artistic purposes.

But how are these ideas related to public art?

Firstly, this idea can be illustrated in the work that Krzysztof Wodiczko presents in his projections of the homeless on to various monuments.

Secondly, through work on ephemeral or transitory materials mentioned by Rosenqvist.

'Water does not have a shape of its own but is formed by its surroundings.' [19a]

Lacking a solid or structured form makes it more difficult to define but as soon as it changed into ice we suddenly identify with it as a 'thing.' Like with Wodiczko's projections – the nature of the material has not changed but the emphasis and meaning of the construction has, yet this has only happened through projection of light, an intangible material on its own.

Thirdly if we consider nature and the natural, there are artists such as Andy Goldsworthy who use material at its most basic form. Leaves, rocks, snow etc. - elements that exist prior to a use or application of them. Distinctions are beginning to appear. There is no actual former application therefore the idea of a former application can not be applied to a case like this in the way it could with cardboard but there are still associations formed. These associations that we now apply to, or 'put on to' what has been created must be formed in our memory and experience of place – where we had seen or touched or smelt it before. It is created in our minds through our associations with unrelated themes (of the material) What the natural materials new form means is that the associations to the piece are now with the created artwork and not the prior application (there was not one) of the material.

Throughout this practise construction becomes an issue. Rosenqvist asks the question *'could textile be load-bearing?'* [19b] She goes onto to describe how the German art historian Gottfried Semper

caused a debate when in 1860 he named textile as the first and most original construction material.

'He describes it as a technique that joins, rather than as an integrated material in itself.' [19c]

So the make-up of the material, as well as the 'finished material' the technique that was used in the process of construction could also be said to play a role in the associations in terms of the material.

i.e. The process of weaving the twine to make the string that will then be used to tie up the parcel. .

Through these examples it becomes clear that in the absence of one type of association others take precedence highlighting the interactive nature of all of the forms of association.

I have tried to avoid specific theories of representation. Instead what I have looked at here are ,in a way theories of representation., yet they move away from a purely visual and representative view of the world. I am trying to apply this to my art and case studies through varying levels of of associations, to move away from the 'visual culture' that Merleau Ponty describes, whilst acknowledging its importance.

Word Association

I have put this short chapter into my study to highlight the importance of the position it held during the research stages in my project. It clarifies results that were not altogether unexpected but that are nevertheless vital to this topic in the issues that it raises.

I decided to conduct this experiment in an attempt to gain a wider perspective of how Public artists relate to materials that they might use and in turn what materials they associate with a variety of words i.e. cultural, historical, sensory etc. I wanted to gain a broader understanding of the variety of associations that we make with materials, objects or even words, where they might come from and the range of influences that can affect this.

Below is a table showing a cross section of my findings from my participants. The full results can be found in the appendix.

| | | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------|-----------|
| <i>Sandstone</i> | Crumbly | Bath (city) | Isle of Wight | Floors | Liverpool |
| <i>MDF</i> | 'Changing Rooms' | Lawrence Lewlyn Bowen | Dust | Shelves | Cheap |
| <i>Glass</i> | Drink | Cleaner | Wine | Vases | Window |
| <i>Wool</i> | Sheep | Small booties | Sweater | My mum | Sheep |
| <i>Sand</i> | Blast | The beach | Storm | Sun | Texture |

It is interesting to see the extent of reactions that are expressed just from associations with cardboard – a material which has a relatively unchanged application in the everyday.

So it is not surprising to see a wider range of responses to a material that has had a more complex development with many more applications. Whilst these issues do not primarily concern cardboard they are very important in the understanding of the topic as a whole.

I found that people's reactions were cross cut by both similarities and striking differences. This range of answers whilst not a complete surprise raises some important points about our associations. These are:

- The USE of material association e.g. Plastic with chairs.
- The PLACE of material association e.g. Sand and beaches or sandstone and Bath.

- The BASIC FORM of material association e.g. Fur with animals.
- The PERSONAL of material association e.g. PVC as kinky
- The QUALITY of material associations e.g. Velvet to soft.
- The MEDIA influence of material associations e.g. MDF and 'Changing Rooms' – a television programme.
- The TRANSFORMATIVE nature of material associations e.g. Sand to glass.

Each of these points can be seen to different extents in my own understandings and in the theory.

These ideas, based on my personal analysis provide a strong illustration of the multi-faceted nature of association as well as providing a useful structure for reading case studies and my conclusion.

James Carl

Within this case study, through my role as 'audience', I will be using the opportunity to take a more objective stance to issues that are raised by James Carl and the way in which he works. This study allows for further investigation into the now seven forms of material association that I had concluded to be of importance at the end of my word association chapter. It lets me continue to explore the issues highlighted through the theory and word association using the context of cardboard to validate my findings.

In the initial stages of my research program part of my criteria was to find another artist who had worked in cardboard so as to give a foundation for my own work. Initially I was somewhat daunted by this task but I knew that it had been done before and I was pleasantly surprised by the sheer volume of artists who at some point in their careers had turned their hand to cardboard.

Having paged through the likes of Japanese architect Shigeru Ban's cardboard and paper buildings and considered 'Unboxed: Sculptures in cardboard'² I finally chose to concentrate on the work of Canadian Artist James Carl whose career has not only involved sculptures made from cardboard but whose work and 'performance' is often placed in the realm of the public arena (i.e. on the streets) and showcased in a similar way to how many of us approach our explorations and work as public art students holding a particular relevancy to my own work.



In the 1990's James Carl spent much of his career making '*disposable mass produced items*'.^[21] In 1993 for a show at Galerie Clark he presented various consumer appliances; refrigerators, stoves, toasters and a television to name but a few. These were all made from cardboard in a 'real-life' scale, questioning the position that art holds in the chain of

production/consumption and presenting

Fig. 9

'a mask of consumerism – the "art-like" design of the assembly line.'^[22]

2 An exhibition at the Dean Leshner centre for the Arts Bedford Gallery in Walnut Creek, California in which artists Anne Veraldi, Ann Wagner and Michael Stutz worked with '*This apparently prosaic material to create strong and ambitious work.*'^[20]

In the sense that what was once 'formless' it now appears to be an object showing how the association of use of the material is playing a role.

Not just any type of cardboard was used in these constructions - Carl made them from the discarded containers (the packaging) of exactly the products they represented,

'a kind of creative employment without consumer value – was a comment on the value placed on dehumanized work in an age of mass production.' [23]

Each week during this installation he would place some of these 'appliances' on the streets, as rubbish. Some were picked up by passers by and others were cleared away along with the 'normal' rubbish. By incorporating this element of work into his equation he

'broached questions no longer standard to current artistic practise. Carl's crafted objects are made to appear like consumer items – but they are every bit a ephemeral, changing and short lived as elements in nature and the art world.' [24]

In a similar way to my word association experiment these reactions to Carl's work represent the dichotomy that surrounds cardboard as a material – as something useful (and in this case as an aesthetic piece), but also as something to be discarded – not the product held within the cardboard.

This project was developed in his 'Public works: Cardboard only' show held at the Grunt Gallery in Vancouver, April 1993. Attempting to,

'focus on issues and materials that form a sort of common currency within these fractured, poly centric social environments.' [25]

he (re)constructed a full scale 'garbage dumpster', every detail made from cardboard. After the show he again took to the streets placing this work in an alleyway next to a 'real' dumpster,

challenging,

'the waste disposal function of the original container by building the same purpose into a material that itself was judged as mere waste.' [26]

Needless to say the work was taken away by a real 'garbage truck.'

A link with personal material association is formed here in the public's reception of this work. It was viewed both as a piece of art but it was equally treated as rubbish. In terms of place association we can see here that this performative aspect of Carl's work, the surroundings and environment, have become the fate of his work. Perhaps the most important issue that arises from this is the media association. At the same time as relying on these associations it refutes them i.e. making the useless useful.

Through this case study it becomes apparent that not all associations are applicable in every case of work. Issues such as basic form as discussed in Andy Goldsworthy's work held no relevancy for me here. Quality was also irrelevant here. Carl's work was not based around the way the material felt as work but was instead a statement concerning consumerism. Out of all of the types of material associations the idea of the transformative was the most difficult to apply in this situation because it is so ambiguous. In so much as the cardboard now 'becomes' something the associations shift introducing a whole host of philosophical ideas and theories that I am not exploring in this essay. This study was useful in the way that it illustrates how art can play with and disrupt the associations that are formed through the work. Whilst this is not a 'ground breaking' fact in its own right, the fact that it can affect a material to this extent and not just be for the use of political comment shows me how important the role of the audience, who generate a new set of associations of their own, is.



Fig. 10



Fig. 11

Conclusion

When I started this project I had many unanswered questions about how materials and their former applications might dictate use in art today. Through a continuous approach of questioning, many themes that I had not initially envisaged arose.

At the fore-front of my findings was a continual link to the varying associative responses. Whilst my question did not become invalid the focus shifted to exploring the associations of the applications.

Through my personal study these issues became of greater importance, expanding from a few questions and feelings to four major platforms of thought. In the word association this grew further. Another three key associations emerged. These were unexpected findings which show, like the 'observer' how some ideas are accounted for whilst others are not.

'Nor could the observer of art be delimited only in Phenomenological terms; he or she was also a social subject defined in language and marked by difference (economic, ethnic, sexual, and so on).'
[27]

I was finally led to James Carl whose case study allowed for an evaluation of these ideas.

Through my work with this study I have discovered that material associations play a key role in the production of art. This can act as a creative force but it can also become a factor causing limitations.

These associations vary greatly not only at a personal level but also in terms of audience – the public level and how controversy can arise as highlighted in Centenary Square, Birmingham.

Peoples practise of association forms an incredibly personal relationship. We pay greater heed to some associations than others. In James Carl's work media association with material was far greater than others.

Overall, I have been led to believe that association is a skill to some extent, whilst in the immediate we can recognise certain aspects the portent and notice we give to them is honed (to a degree) through our own desire to realise these unbidden connctions. In this way material associations of

course influence the final form of our artwork but the extent to which we allow these associations to control it is our own.

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Appendix