An Investigation into imagery of the pregnant female figure and the reason for the disregard thereof in western contemporary fine art.

By

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I, the author, hereby certify that all the material in this research study, unless otherwise stated, is my own work and has not been submitted for qualification purposes at any other institution.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1. The statement of the problem

Through the analyses of both visual material and the related literature, this research proposes to investigate the image of the pregnant female as portrayed in the contemporary Fine Arts of Western society. Allara, (1978: 7) while discussing Alice Neel's series of pregnant figures, stated that, *"Pregnant nudes, are a subject all but unprecedented in Western art history"*. The research will investigate the reason for this apparent neglect, by studying society's attitudes toward the pregnant female body. The extent to which artists are directly influenced by public opinion will then be studied. The, researcher will then be able to ascertain if society's attitudes toward the pregnant female body are a factor in the neglect of the image in Fine Art.

Identified art works by prominent artists, containing the image, will be analysed. In addition, the context in which the image was utilised and the apparent reason for the use thereof, will be studied. The pictorial research will then focus on how the pregnant female imagery could be interpreted in pictorial terms.

The results of this study will, hopefully, create an awareness of society's prejudices toward the pregnant woman and how the pregnant female is portrayed in Fine Art. The study will, additionally, present the image as a versatile, exciting one, with vast potential for exploration by many more artists.

1.2. The subproblems

The first subproblem will be to ascertain the reason for the apparent disregard of the image of the pregnant female in contemporary Fine Art in the Western world.

The second subproblem will be to analyse identified artworks, investigating the context in which the image was used and the reason for its use.

The third subproblem will investigate how pregnant female imagery could be interpreted in pictorial terms.

1.3. Hypotheses

1.3.1. Hypothesis to subproblem 1

Western society is predominately inclined to view the body of the pregnant female with disfavour. It is hypothesised that these views held by society have had a direct influence on the artist and his choice of subject matter and that this has resulted in the neglect of the image of the pregnant woman, as subject matter, in fine art.

1.3.2. Hypothesis to subproblem 2.

The analysis of the art works in which the pregnant form has been utilised, will reveal that they are effective in bringing across content and are aesthetically creative within the framework of Fine Art. In reference to the context in which the imagery is used, it is hypothesised that the research will show the extreme diversity of the image being used to show social issues, opinions of women in general and feminist thoughts on oppression, to name but three.

1.3.3. Hypothesis to subproblem 3.

It is hypothesised that the researcher's use of the pregnant female image will reveal the potential of the image to create awareness of a number of issues such as oppression of women and the present day obsession of women, with their physical appearance. The

pictorial research should also highlight the image, emphasising its potential to be more extensively explored and exploited.

1.4. Definition of terms

- *Contemporary*: Limited time period; within the last century
- *Western*: Grouping of people; cultures influenced by ideas of first world countries.
- *Fine Art*: term for a group of arts that include painting, sculpture, drawing, and photography. These are distinct from applied, industrial and commercial art, as fine art is not primarily utilitarian.
- *Pregnant female form \ image*: visual image of the human female expecting a child.
- *Pictorial investigations*: visual experimentation; paintings, varying in size and theme, containing the image of the pregnant female.
- *Pregnant imagery*: representations of pregnant women

1.5. Assumptions

Pregnant female imagery has been used in the realm of Fine Art in the past, but its use was very limited.

1.6. Method of investigation

The study will be researched in a historical, philosophical method. The researcher will analyze the visual material, i.e. identified artworks. The text will be drawn from theoretical interpretations of books, magazines and articles obtained from libraries.

1.7. Delimitations

- The research while taking into account the influences and role feminism plays in the

theme, will not be viewed from a feminist perspective.

- The study will not investigate aspects before the time of conception or after the time of birth of the child.
- The research will not be dealing with the politics of reproduction.
- Only human female imagery will be investigated.

1.8. Importance of study

The acceptance of the visual portrayal of the image is vital, as it holds a vast potential to create awareness of important issues in contemporary life. The pregnant female is a strong image and could be very effective in works which deal with themes such as the miracle of birth or the oppression of women, to name but two.

1.9. Reference system

The Harvard method is used as the reference system for this research study and it entails the following information:

1. The author of the book, the date of publication e.g. (Allara, 1994....)
2. The page number of the book, e.g. (..,36)

According to this method, the information is furnished in brackets throughout the text and is mentioned in detail in the literature list. The literature list is arranged alphabetically according to the author's surname and is placed at the end of the research study.

1.10. Visual material

All photographs are placed separate from the text in an annexure at the end of Chapter 4. The researcher made use of visual material obtained in Library books and magazines

pertaining to the field of study. Illustration of the works of artists and visual material featuring the researcher's practical work will be available for the analysis and discussion.

CHAPTER 2

ATTITUDES OF SOCIETY TOWARD THE PREGNANT FEMALE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will endeavour to ascertain the reasons for the apparent disregard of the pregnant female form in contemporary Fine Art. This will be achieved with a study of society's attitudes toward pregnant women. These attitudes will be divided into applicable sections; (A) feminine opinions, (B) feminist attitudes and (C) pregnancy as a social stigma, including case studies and the emotional aspects of pregnancy. The influence of society's attitudes on artists and their choice of subject matter will then be scrutinized.

Feminine attitudes will be discussed within the context of women's conceptions and preconceptions with regard to pregnancy, their perception of themselves as well as their perception of how they are viewed by others, while pregnant. Women's resistance towards male-dominated views, with regard to pregnancy, will be discussed against the background of an alternative "women-defined" world-view. These feminist views will be probed, not only to determine the nature of this movement's often radical views, but also to establish to what degree these views differ or are representative of the views of contemporary women in general. Pregnancy, as a "social stigma" will be examined by researching case studies of pregnancy, in order to investigate the apparent negative attitudes of society toward the pregnant woman. Women's opinions of themselves during the gestation period will then be examined.

By looking at sociologists and art historians' opinions on the amount of influence society's attitudes have on artists and their choice of subject matter, the study will ascertain the extent to which contemporary society's attitudes toward pregnancy have influenced artists in their portrayal of pregnancy.

2.2. Contemporary feminine opinions of pregnancy

In the past it was not unusual for women to resent their pregnancy. The famous American fictional character from early in this century, Scarlett O'Hara, who appeared in the motion picture, *"Gone with the wind"*, showed great distress over motherhood, as it would rob her of her of her seventeen-inch waistline. This example, although a fictional one, was representative of the attitudes of many women, earlier in this century. Prospective mothers were also known to miscarry, as a result of their tightly laced middles. These constricting corsets were worn so as to disguise the oncoming birth (Baker, 1984: 142).

Unfortunately, attitudes towards the visual display of pregnancy have changed very little. To illustrate this, one only has to observe the reaction of the public to the August 1991 issue of the magazine, Vanity Fair, in which the American actress Demi Moore posed, naked and pregnant, on the front page. Many news-stands refused to carry the issue, whilst others were reported (Internet 1) to have wrapped the magazine in black plastic to hide the "offensive" photograph. The picture was by no means pornographic; its only crime being that it portrayed an attractive woman late in the gestation period. Another example of negative Western attitudes towards the pregnant woman, was very well illustrated with the stories surrounding Gustav Klimt's (1862-1918) *" Hope 1"* (fig 4). This painting belonged to a private art collector, Fritz Waernodorfer, who was reported to have screened it off and hidden it from public view. The work was also turned down for an exhibition, because of its subject matter (Nebehay, 1994: 141).

According to the psychiatrist, Dr Helene Deutsch (1945: 158-159) there are two aspects of development during pregnancy. First, physical enlargement and psychic expansion. (Physically, by the growth of the life within her and psychically by the consciousness of a new being within). Secondly and conversely, her existence shrinks both physically and psychically; physically in that the woman's body is now in service to something that is not

herself and psychically because she does not receive anything, but only gives. This duality of attitude can play a significant role in the life of the pregnant woman. The self-perception of the woman can move from thinking she is of the utmost importance, to a belief that she is without worth. The first attitude according to Deutsch (Ibid.: 159) gives rise to life, love, motherly pride and feelings of happiness, while the second can lead to depression shame, hatred, destruction and death.

The attitude of a woman toward her pregnancy is fundamentally consistent with the circumstance in which she finds herself and her experiences in life up until that point. For the unloved woman, the "asocial" unmarried mother and the ambitious woman, the approaching reality of the child can result in the ultimate rejection of the foetus (Ibid.: 154). However, a woman who has perhaps planned her pregnancy and has the support of the people around her, be it her husband, family or friends will be more inclined to revel in the idea of her pregnancy. The latter group will, presumably, experience the positive emotions mentioned in the previous paragraph, those of love, motherly pride and feelings of happiness (Ibid.: 132).

All women, whether they enjoy their pregnancies or not, undergo a series of physical changes. Most of these changes are not consistent with the contemporary definition of beauty. The media has conditioned the majority of society, to view beauty as a tall, thin woman, often, just past adolescence (Sumner, Waller, Killick & Elstein, 1993: 20-207). These women are fit, healthy and their bodies are firm and free of stretch marks. The majority of pregnant women do not and would never reach these outrageous standards. Viewed in this light, it becomes almost understandable that some women resent their pregnancies. Most would not avoid having children, like (Scarlett O'Hara) just to retain their youthful figures. As was stated by Baker (1984: 144) the joy of having children is far too great to forfeit the experience, however the joy may be significantly lessened if the woman, perceives her pregnant body in a negative light.

Modern technology has increased the number of healthy children being born and this is a very positive development in making women more amenable to the idea of child bearing and rearing. However, according to Rosemarie Tong (1989: 80) the medical profession places pregnant women into the *patient category*. Pregnant women have been told, often by male practitioners, how to think, feel and act during their pregnancies. The woman had to sublimate her embarrassment or shyness and undergo a series of degrading, probing rubber-gloved fingers and gleaming equipment, in places she once held sacred. Women have almost become an inconvenient obstacle in the inspection of the foetus (Raphael-Leff, 1991: 48). One wonders if pregnancy might feel a lot more exhilarating and far less dehumanising, if the pregnant woman was treated with as much respect as the foetus, by the medical profession.

According to Sheila Kitzinger (1992: 78-85) this technological take-over in the area of pregnancy and childbirth has been responsible for pregnancy becoming a period of painful loneliness for many women, during which they view themselves as no more than a container for a foetus. Pregnancy is, above all, a drama acted out within a woman's body. She will feel both enrichment and injury, for while the foetus is part of her, it is also a parasite that feeds upon her. She both possesses it and is possessed by it. It is thus understandable that many women come to the conclusion that they are no more than a passive instrument for (both nature and society) ensuring the continuation of the human race. Deutsch, (1945: 128-132), who holds similar beliefs regarding the way women react toward their reproductive ability, substantiated this statement.

The philosopher Tiemersma (1989: 67), believes the identification of the mother with the child inside her, decreases from the sixth month of pregnancy onwards, especially when the child grows toward the front. The child becomes more and more independent of the body image of the mother. The mother sees herself more as standing behind the child, than the child being part of her.

This belief links with the theory that the body is separate from the self (Davis-Floyd, 1994: 203-208). The article containing the theory of body separate from self by Davis-Floyd, a professor in psychology, is based on interviews done with 31 middle class, pregnant, professional women. In this study he examined these pregnant women's self and body image during their pregnancies. He discovered through his research that the majority of women viewed their bodies as a vehicle, for the mind and soul, and that these women tended to see the pregnant body, as a vessel, a container for the foetus (who was considered as being separate from the mother). The feminist writer Emily Martin (1987: 63) supports the theory of separation from self during pregnancy. She, however, believes it is a result of a technological take over, and that it is consistent with the sense of alienation and fragmentation which many women feel at the time of pregnancy.

The views above are negative ones and it must be stated that all pregnant women do not have these feelings during their pregnancies. Each woman brings into her pregnancy a certain number of emotional factors and conflict situations, acquired during their lives and this influences how she reacts toward the foetus and her pregnancy. According to Deutsch (1945: 130) the most important thing to remember is the fact that there is, in almost every pregnant woman a constantly active tendency to interrupt the harmony of the pregnancy state.

Many women become pregnant and muse endlessly over their new-found importance, encouraged by society's ideas that women's most essential function is to procreate. In other circumstances the woman may have become preoccupied with the need to present her spouse with the ever-important heir. Women whose primary function is in pleasing men, see themselves as erotic objects, in love with their bodies (Delamont, 1980: 97). These women will be distressed and consider themselves deformed, disfigured and incapable of arousing desire with their bodies, while pregnant. Once again we see the potential for negative emotions linked with pregnancy creeping in, and the women may again come to resent the foetus within her.

A number of diverse feminine attitudes towards pregnancy have been discussed in this section, they range from positive, where women feel a sense of new-found importance, to negative ones, where women see themselves as ugly, fat and disconnected from their bodies. It is however, evident from research that the majority of women view themselves and other pregnant women as unattractive, when pregnant. These attitudes are predominantly a result of the circumstances and experiences of the women, technology and contemporary society's obsession with pre-conceived ideas of beauty.

2.3. Feminist Attitudes on pregnancy and its role in society

In the 1960s, a woman's liberation movement emerged, the new self-described radical feminists. These feminists believed the oppression of women was their central political and theoretical problem. They began to clarify the ways in which norms of gender, often invisible because so familiar, structure every aspect of contemporary society and subordinate women and men (Jaggar, 1992: 81). Other feminists saw the role of pregnancy and childbirth differently within the context of their cause. Most feminists however, seem to have linked pregnancy with a number of negative connotations.

2.3.1. Emily Martin

Martin's (1987: 32-35) analysis could best be described as an ethnography of women's body images, in which the central cultural system of meaning is the issue of science and technology. Through interviews with a range of different women varying in age, race and class, in a large American city, Martin documented accounts of women's reproductive experiences, in order to investigate the power of dominant scientific representations of reproduction, in the formation of ordinary women's, common-sense assumptions, about their bodies and themselves.

Martin (Ibid.: 40) identified the emergence of new metaphors for bodily processes, based on the imagery of the industrial era. With these developments women's bodies, and in particular, their reproductive capacity, were radically differentiated from those of men and viewed negatively. This became further evident in the metaphors of industrial production, through which these processes eventually came to be represented in the medical literature. Martin (Ibid.: 40-46) extended the analysis of metaphors for factory production in relation to the medical representations of birth. The labour process was also defined in terms of industrial language, the doctor being described as the mechanic, who guided the workings of the 'woman-labourer', whose uterus-machine produced the baby (Ibid.: 53-60). Martin described the implications of this construction of birth for the management of the 'foetal outcome' during delivery, as the alienation of women's reproductive labour.

Martin then turned her attention to the ways in which women had responded to the dominant medical constructions of the reproductive processes. The separation of the self from the body was a central finding throughout these discussions. She proposed the idea that women's reproductive bodies and women's productive and reproductive work, were seen as the basis for women's oppression and resistance. The basis both of women's consciousness and an alternative, woman-defined, world-view. In conclusion, Martin considered it important for women not to romanticize their relationship to their bodies.

2.3.2. Adrienne Rich

Adrienne Rich (1979: 34) believes that throughout patriarchal mythology, dream-symbolism, theology and language, two ideas flowed side by side: one, that the female body is impure, corrupt, the site of discharges, bleeding, dangerous to masculinity and a source of moral and physical contamination. On the other hand, as mothers, women were seen as beneficent, sacred, pure, nourishing. Thus, the same body, with it's bleedings and mysteries, became the instrument which defined women's single destiny and justification in

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life. Rich believed that these two ideas have become deeply internalised in all women, even the most independent thinkers.

Rich (Ibid.: 111) believes that men are jealous and fearful of women's reproductive powers. The jealousy stemmed, she believes, largely from men's realisation that *'all human life on the planet is born of woman'*, that a woman has a unique power to create life. The fear, Rich (Ibid.: 111) believes, came primarily from men's sense that women's reproductive powers are somehow mysterious and uncontrollable. Given their jealousy and fear of the women's reproductive powers, men quickly realised, according to Rich, that if patriarchy wished to survive, let alone thrive, it must restrict the power of the mother. Thus, as soon as they were able to devise the means, men took control of the labour process. Male obstetricians replaced female midwifes and proceeded to tell women how to feel, act and deal with both pregnancy and childbirth. The rules made by these men, according to Rich, frequently clashed with the real life experiences of women. She stated that this kind of experience can transform a pregnancy into a profoundly alienating episode (Ibid.: 111-113). Rich (Ibid.: 113) suggested that were women put in charge of pregnancy and childbirth, then these experiences could take on active, rather than passive, meanings. Women would no longer sit passively waiting for childbirth to occur, rather they would actively direct childbirth, regaining control of the pleasures as well as the pains of the experience.

2.3.3. Shulamith Firestone

Firestone believes that the roots of woman's oppression are biological ones. Because of this, she concluded that women's liberation required a biological revolution (Crowly & Himmelweit, 1992: 81). Keeping in mind that the root of female oppression is a biological one, Firestone (Tong, 1989: 74 -75) concluded that the only way to overcome this oppression would be to take away the role of the female as the carrier of the child. In this way, with the help of technology the woman's role in reproduction will be no more than the male's.

As Firestone saw it, biological reproduction is neither in women's best interests nor in those of the children reproduced. The joy of giving birth, evoked so frequently, in Western society, is, according to Firestone, a patriarchal myth. In fact she believes pregnancy to be "barbaric" and that "natural childbirth is, at best, necessary and tolerable" and at worst " like shitting a pumpkin". Moreover, Firestone believed biological motherhood is the root of further evils, especially the vice of possessiveness generating feelings of hostility and jealousy amongst human beings (Tong, 1989: 74-75).

2.3.4. Andrea Dworkin

Andrea Dworkin (Tong, 1989: 80-81) developed some of Rich's ideas. Dworkin argued that men value women, not as unique individuals, but as members of a class who serve them sexually and reproductively. There are, she believes, two models that best explain how women are seen: the brothel model (who serve to satisfy the male sexual urges), and the farming model (whose function it is to grow crops, where crops, of course, are children).

The Feminist movement, it seems, only ever mention the gestation period to show negative aspects, suggesting that the female's ability to procreate is the source of all oppression and subordination of women. Even when Feminist writers look at what they define as the problematic misuse of technology, it is primarily to show that men have taken over the only area in life, in which the female was undeniably superior. It appears that the majority of Feminists, view pregnancy as little more than another topic to illustrate their view point, pertaining to the inequalities of women.

In reaction to these opinions, it must be stated that there are very few women who would be prepared to sacrifice their reproductive capabilities. Feminist beliefs, such as these, have resulted in the feminist's movement not having a greater following.

2.4. Pregnancy as a social stigma

According to the sociologist Sara Delamont (1980: 197-200), pregnancy in Western society is surrounded by a number of myths. The generally held belief that a woman's biological structure and her drives towards motherhood are her main purpose in life, leads to a whole range of other beliefs and practices. An example illustrating this, was that in the past, there was strong opposition to women vicars in the Anglican Church. Typically, the awful possibility of a pregnant vicar was pointed out or there was mention of how menstruation renders women unclean (Ibid.: 198). Delamont (Ibid.: 197-200) declared that a popularly held belief in Britain was that all women were destined to be mothers, have uncontrolled, uncontrollable, though socially desired drives towards maternity, and because of this could not be given responsible jobs, training, advanced education, or any other material advances in society. In fact, not only was the concept of a maternal instinct in humans, very poor, but the popular beliefs about the maternal instinct were, in reality, structured in accordance with social conventions that are rarely examined by either the general public or social society.

Another belief held by society was that only married women want to have children and that single women because they are single, do not want children. This is demonstrated delightfully in the famous "doctor" joke:

Doctor : Well, Mrs. Brown I've some splendid news for you.....
Patient : It's Miss Brown
Doctor : Miss Brown, I have some terrible news for you
(Delamont, 1980: 198).

Lips (1988: 187-189) suggested that many people see pregnancy as a disability. Medical research on pregnancy often seems based on the notion that the pregnant woman is, to some extent, disabled, it tends to focus on the negative symptoms. So pervasive is this negative

focus that it was difficult to find a pregnant woman described as healthy or normal in the medical literature. As Rothman (1982: 89) noted, healthy, pregnant women were classified simply as 'low risk' patients. Social scientists too have been influenced by the notion of pregnancy as a time of special difficulty and vulnerability for women. Psychological research on pregnancy has, until recently, been dominated by the psychoanalytic idea that pregnancy brings up a host of unconscious conflicts about femininity, sexuality and the woman's relationship to her own mother (Deutsch, 1945: 128-135). There has evidently been a tendency, in both medical and psychological research, to focus on the problems of pregnancy. Only recently, have researchers begun to examine the positive aspects of the experience (Lips, 1988: 187).

2.4.1. Emotional attitudes of pregnancy

Society's attitude toward motherhood and pregnancy, according to Matlin (1987: 360), are very complex. Mothers are not ignored, motherhood, receives public praise, yet they have little true prestige. According to Matlin, most women sense approval from others whilst pregnant, many women also describe a sense of purpose and accomplishment about being pregnant.

Leifer (1980: 57) recorded one woman saying *" I feel like a ripe peach, fully in bloom now. I used to laugh at pregnant women, but now I feel that there really is a kind of glow coming from me".* Different women respond differently to the same life event. In pregnancy, the situation becomes even less predictable, because each individual woman may experience a wide range of responses in their gestation period.

Unfortunately, many women have negative emotions during pregnancy; an important part of women's negative reactions to pregnancy, is a result of the fact that other people begin to respond differently toward them. The world categorises them as *"pregnant women,"* females who have no identity aside from being receptacles for a growing baby. Many

identify with the Feminist, Adrienne Rich's description of how she felt while she was pregnant:

"My second book of poems was in the press, but I had stopped writing poetry, and read little except household magazines and books on child-care. I felt myself perceived by the world simply as a pregnant woman, and it seemed easier, less disturbing, to perceive myself so (Rich, 1979: 26)."

According to Lips (1988: 188), Western society has a cultural script for pregnancy which includes a range of various emotions. She believes society allow pregnant women to act a little unreasonably and that society is inclined to tolerate emotional outbursts and strange requests, simply because the woman is pregnant. On the other hand women are expected to *'glow'* while pregnant. Lips stated that in self-reports by pregnant women, little support for these generalisations were provided. Pregnant women do not, according to Lips (Ibid.: 188), differ from other women in the tendency not to describe themselves as beautiful, attractive and radiant. In fact negative adjectives like tension, depression, anxiety and irritability were often used instead. Furthermore in a culture where pregnancy and childbearing is seen as the route to women's fulfilment, and women are expected to glow when pregnant, many pregnant women have been recorded as feeling guilty or inadequate, because they are not experiencing the positive emotions, but the more negative ones (Ibid.: 188).

2.4.2. Case studies: examination of society's attitudes toward pregnant women.

There is great emphasis placed on women's attractiveness, especially since our culture values slim women, a woman's self image may deteriorate as she watches her body grow fatter. In a study in which pregnant women were interviewed about their self-images, they frequently said that they felt fat and ugly during the gestation period (Matlin, 1987: 363).

There are three major gynaecological events in a woman's life, namely menarche, pregnancy and menopause. Both menopause and menarche are highly private events, in contrast pregnancy is public, particularly in the last trimester. Because woman's pregnant state is so obvious, it seems likely that people would treat a pregnant woman differently to a non-pregnant woman (Taylor and Langer, 1977: 27).

According to a case study done by Taylor and Langer (Ibid.: 27-35) pregnancy is somewhat similar to a physical stigma. These researchers reported that people's reaction toward a pregnant woman and toward a crippled person was virtually identical. They wanted to test whether people would physically avoid a pregnant woman. The authors arranged for two women to ride in an elevator. One woman was padded to simulate pregnancy, the other held a box in front of her, so they both would occupy the same amount of space in the elevator. The research documented where other passengers in the elevator, stood, in relation to the pregnant woman (Ibid.: 27-35).

The results showed that male elevator passengers made great efforts to avoid standing near the pregnant woman, and female passengers were also somewhat likely to avoid her. Furthermore, the 'pregnant' confederate reported feeling uncomfortable because passengers frequently stared (Ibid.: 35).

People's attitudes toward pregnant women seem also to be intertwined with a woman's emotional responses to pregnancy. A study done by Horgan (1983: 333- 339) found that attitudes toward pregnant women and women's attitudes toward themselves differed, depending on social class. In 1983 Horgan went to a number of department stores, both high status and low status stores, in a large city. She discovered that high-status department stores (for example, Lord & Taylor or Saks) placed their maternity clothes near the lingerie and lounge wear, this according to Horgan, suggests an image of femininity, delicacy and luxury. In contrast the low-status stores (like Sears or J. C. Penney) placed their maternity clothes near the half-size clothes and uniforms, suggesting a pregnant woman is fat, with a

job to do. Horgan suggested (Ibid.: 333-339) that women may internalise society's attitudes toward them. She believes the challenge is to encourage society to view pregnant women as competent adults, so pregnant women will begin to see themselves that way.

Other research (Lips, 1988: 189) indicated that people think of pregnant women as emotional, irritable and suffering from various physical symptoms. In a study, university students were given a description of a day in the life of a young woman and were asked to rate her mood as well as to rate the importance of various factors in determining the woman's mood. In half of the descriptions, the woman was described as 5 months pregnant, while in the others, no mention of pregnancy was made. The students generally rated the woman's mood as more positive, when she was described as pregnant. However, when trying to give reasons for the woman's moods, they used pregnancy, more often, as an explanation for negative, rather than for positive moods. Moreover, students who mentioned it spontaneously, almost without exception, described pregnancy as a source of stress. Clearly, these students, most of whom had never been pregnant, had learned the social stereotypes about pregnancy (Horgan, 1983: 333-339).

In a pilot study done by Stenberg and Blinn (1993: 282-284) to determine the stability of feelings about self and body during adolescent pregnancy, they discovered that adolescents were inclined to judge their changing bodies, according to established cultural standards of thinness and beauty. In interviews done with 30 adolescent females they found that the girls placed great importance on physical appearance, frequently, unfavourably comparing themselves with television and magazine models (Rosenbaum, 1979: 234-240). Unfortunately according to Garner, Garfinkel, Schwartz & Thompson, (1980: 483-487) although female models have become thinner over the past 20 years, population weight norms for women have increased. These conflicting cultural trends are reflected in adolescent females' attitudes toward their bodies. It is, therefore, understandable that the pregnant adolescents consistently described themselves as being fat and ugly. Appearance, the size of their stomachs, and weight gain were common complaints (Stenberg & Blinn,

Ibid.: 288). Consequentially, these pregnant women had as much difficulty in adjusting to their new body image, as adult pregnant women are inclined to (Slade, 1977: 245-252).

2.5. Society's influence on artists and their choice of theme.

2.5.1. A brief historical overview of society's influence on artists

In the Fifteenth century and before, patrons exercised what modern society would consider an outrageous degree of influence on the artist's work. The market dictated even what colours should be used (gold and ultramarine) by the painter, and how the figures on the canvas should be depicted. Arnold Hauser (1968: 48) showed that the social organisation of artistic production, before the late fifteenth century, was very much along communal lines, based primarily on guild workshops. In the early Renaissance, works of art were not yet the expression of an independent personality, individuality was not emphasised in the art field. According to Hauser (Ibid.: 48), Michelangelo was the first modern artist to shape his whole work independently, from the first stroke, to the last. From that date, the artistic profession and art became differentiated from craftsmanship and the artists became increasingly emancipated from the guilds (Ibid.: 48).

A fundamentally new element in the Renaissance conception of art was the discovery of the concept of *'Artist as Genius'* and the idea that a work of art was the creation of an autocratic personality, and that this personality transcended all tradition, theory and rules (Ibid.: 61). It is certainly true that the conception of the artist as a unique and gifted individual was an historically specific one, and that it dates from the merchant classes in Italy and France, and from the rise of the humanist ideas in philosophical and religious thought. Over the next few centuries this concept narrowed and sharpened, and the artist was increasingly regarded as a person with no institutional ties whatsoever.

According to Janet Wolff (1981: 44) in the mid-eighteenth century, painters faced a new situation, offering more freedom as a result of the decline of the system of direct patronage, but at the same time rendering the artist's life more precarious and subject to market dictates and economic uncertainties. Increasingly, patrons of art and the central role of the Academy, were displaced by the dealer-critic system. Here again, public opinion of the time was of paramount importance in the survival of the artist. People and institutions that formerly were merely mediators, occupied a more crucial position in the very immediate problem of economic survival of artists.

The art dealer- critic system has had an impact on the success of an artist and on the acceptance of the artist's ideas, for a number of years. An example of this would be the works of the Impressionists, who, according to Wolff (Ibid.: 46) would never have found acceptance were it not for the emergence of the new dealer-critic system during the nineteenth century. It took the officially rejected new work, and brought it to the attention of a potential and eager market of newly rich, middle-class buyers. The dealers and critics made their success by bridging the gap.

In the production of art, social institutions dictated amongst other things, who became an artist, how they became artists and how they were able to practise their art. Furthermore, the judgements and evaluations made of the works and art schools, determined their subsequent acceptance in art history. These judgements were not based solely on individual talent or aesthetic appeal, but were determined by the extent to which the artist's work reflected and supported the values of society at the time. A good example of this was the rise of the role of the critics in the nineteenth century, and their peculiar and novel power over the art world. For example, the critic John Ruskin had the power to make or break the career and reputation of an artist. The Pre-Raphaelites and the English Romantic artist Turner, were amongst those who owed a great deal to his support in the art journals of the period (Ibid.: 40-41).

As Wolff (Ibid.: 45) stated, all artists do not live within a vacuum, they do not all maintain a precarious existence, and certain forms of modern patronage, have, in many respects, taken over from the traditional patronage relationships. Painters are often commissioned by industrial corporations to execute works, or are employed as community artists, or as artists in residence at universities. Artists have also been very much influenced by one of the most important developments in the twentieth century, that being the growth of government patronage of art. In Britain, this operates through the Arts Council and Regional Arts Association, working in conjunction with local authorities, through grants to artists and writers and funding for projects (Ibid.: 45). Although there may be no specific stipulations by the patron as to what the artist actually produces, it is clear that funding bodies are no more neutral than any other social organisation, and that the success or failure of some artists in gaining sponsorship is likely to be related to their type of work. That is to say, it is still true in our own society today, that art which is successful in reaching the public by being bought, achieves this through various social structures and processes, and not simply because it is, in some sense, just good art (Ibid.: 45).

Contemporary art society, although believed by many to be unaffected by society's opinions, functions within this environment and thus, is unavoidably influenced by it.

2.6. Contemporary theories with regard to the social production of art

2.6.1. Trewin Copplestone

Art is a social product. The American art historian Trewin Copplestone (1983: 30) believes that an artist's approach to his subject is affected by what has been called *"period vision"*. The artist alone, does not select what he wants or needs to see, but in a sense, most artists and in fact society, perceive only what our society and age encourage them to see, or perhaps, more accurately, what values and standards society holds and are embraced. When

an artist selects certain subject matter, intellectually or visually, he is always to some extent searching for what his society expects of him. The artist is conditioned to share his society's interests and values, and what he chooses to see and use will be affected by the social values of his time. This is evident in the work of architects, sculptors, painters and craftsmen in contemporary society.

Copplestone (Ibid.: 9) believes that the arts of all periods are more easily comprehended, related to and enjoyed, within the framework of the events, movements and structure of history. The social conditions, the intellectual climate and the attitudes of mind that prevail, make each work of art, as a product of its own history and as a patent expression of its own cultural context, best known and loved in its specific historical setting.

A major point in the creative triangle is the observer. The observer's reading of the work is the last act of the creative process and links him with the artist. In the last analysis the artist is not concerned with the observer. The artist may anticipate the way in which the observer may participate in the experience, but the artist cannot know the exact reaction to an art work, as the viewers are all individuals with unique ideas and life experiences, influencing their reaction to the work. The viewer can therefore only appreciate or absorb what he can relate to, he can contribute in understanding, only what he knows (Ibid.: 17). Each person is as sensitive and intelligent as they are able to be. Their responses are what they are - now! They might wish them to be otherwise, but wishing will not make it so.

The quality of human response, of both creator and observer, will be the result of innumerable influences. The background and the environment in which they find themselves are the obvious factors, but there are others not so obvious, but no less formative. Social attitude, according to Copplestone (Ibid.: 17) prevails over conventions of thought, accidental associations and minor events of great personal significance. The influence of other people, through reading or contact unconscious responses and development during growth are what develop into the vital and unique elements found within each person's

makeup. Therefore, the reaction of two observers will never be identical. The communion between the work of art and the observer is as private and unique as that between the artist and his work (Ibid.: 18).

2.6.2. Janet Wolff

The English sociologist Janet Wolff (1981: 1-20) argued against the romantic and mystical notion of art as the creation of genius, transcending existence, society and time. She argued that it is rather the complex construction of a number of real, historical and social structures which accumulate and influence the artist's choice of subject matter. Wolff (Ibid.: 9) believed that everything we do is located in and therefore affected by social structures. It does not follow from this, that in order to be free agents, we somehow have to liberate ourselves from social structures and act outside them. She argued that all action, including creative or innovative action, arises in the complex conjunction of numerous structural determinants and conditions. The corollary of this line of argument is that while we are not programmed robots, creativity and social structures are interdependent.

In looking at the true nature of artists' isolation, Wolff (Ibid.: 11-12) stated that there are conditions in contemporary capitalist society, hostile toward artistic production. The first is the rise of individualism, concomitant with the development of industrial capitalism. The second is the actual separation of the artist from a clear social group or class and from any secure form of patronage.

Another important view according to Wolff (Ibid.: 12) held by society is that it is in the nature of art that its practitioners are not ordinary mortals, that they necessarily work alone, detached from social life and interaction, often in opposition to social values and practices. The artist is believed to be a social outcast, when in fact a historical figure has been transformed into a universal definition. These types of artists do appear, but they are not

the rule. By believing this stereotypical view, we are ignoring the many successful graphic artists, industrial designers, artists in advertising and the community artists (Ibid.: 12).

According to Wolff (Ibid.: 12) the concept of the artist as some kind of asocial being, blessed with genius, waiting for divine inspiration and exempt from all normal rules of social intercourse, was therefore, very much an historical and limited one. It's kernel of truth lies in the fact that the development of our society has marginalized artists.

2.6.3. Stephen Willats

Stephen Willats' (1976: 1) opinion on the social influence of art was similar to that of both Wolff and Copplestone. Willats concluded that art practise operates within an environment of institutions and groups of people which effectively maintain it as an identifiable activity within society. This, he believed, defined what can be called the territory of art in society, and he referred to it as *art's social environment*. The artist operating within the delineated territory of art's social environment, had a largely restricted area of function in art practise, within these internal fabrics of norms and conventions. According to Willats (Ibid.: 1) within such contained conditions, the artist had been able to develop methods of communication using intentional concepts to a largely predictable audience. The audience who viewed art works of artists within the same group (namely Art Social Environment) enabled this to be achieved.

The diagram (fig 16) (Ibid.: 27) represents the position an artwork traditionally occupies between the artist and his audience. Two loops are shown: one showing the connection of the art work to the artist and the other showing the connection of the art work to the audience. Both loops are separated from one another by the art work.

2.6.4. Arnold Hauser

Hauser (1968: 157) in his analysis of art styles and the rise of capitalism, believed the same mechanisms that gave way to specific economic factors, were responsible for changes in art styles and aesthetic institutions. Hauser's opinions are believed by Thalasinos (1988: 37) to be radical relativism, as Hauser believes he stated that art styles wholly reflect, and are a product of, historical contingencies at the time of their creation. Hauser (1968: 207) however stated that men not only act, they also motivate and justify their actions in accordance with their particular, sociologically or psychologically determined approach.

Hauser (Ibid.: 246) believed that the way to extend the general appreciation of art was to extend the horizons of the masses as much as possible, through education. Not, he believed, by simplifying art, but by the training of the capacity for aesthetic judgement, thus preventing the constant monopolising of art by a small minority. He also stated that the preconditions of a slackening of the cultural monopoly, were, above all, economic and social.

According to Thalasinos (1988: 33), the art historian E. H. Gombrich, criticised Hauser's attempt to offer dialectical materialism as the key to understanding art. Gombrich apparently acknowledged that changes in style could be a clear indication of social and intellectual changes. Despite this acknowledgement, Gombrich felt Hauser's analysis was reductionist and simplistic. Gombrich argued that while changes in art forms directly correspond with changes in social functions, they were not reducible to them (Ibid.: 34).

2.6.5. Peter Fuller

Fuller (1980: 19) proposed a new synthesis incorporating psychological and discourse theories. He began his analysis by acknowledging the historical specificity of art and aesthetic experience, while insisting that art had never been a mere derivative of economic

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or ideological contingencies. He noted that in the case of the arts, it is well known that certain periods of their flowering were out of all proportion to the general development of society. Fuller believed that there was a resilient underlying human condition that was the fundamental basis of aesthetic need and expression. Human biology, rather than the artist's place in history, he stated, determined this condition.

Fuller (Ibid.: 19-20) referred to cultural continuities or certain life experiences that remain constant and enduring from generation to generation. So, he believed, regardless of time, place or political persuasion, audiences can identify with universal themes like love, war and peace.

Fuller insisted that aesthetic expression was an interaction between the imagination and physical activities of the artist. He stated that artistic production transformed the world, through material processes like painting and sculpture. He believed it was through this material process, that an artist's way of seeing and conceptualising the world was made apparent. Fuller maintained that both history and ideology affect artistic vision to a certain extent, but he believed, they did not determine it.

2.6.6. The traditional aesthetic belief

According to Stern and Robinson (1983: 108) traditional aestheticians believe that art is not class, time or place bound, but instead is both transcendental and universal. The "beautiful" is that which is represented as an object for universal satisfaction. While admitting to the possibility of trends emerging in art, they believe that the universal appeal of the beautiful will remain constant (Ibid.: 120). They also believed art did not rely on any inclination or predetermined interest to present a subject but that art had an autonomy and value freedom of it's own. Art, they believed, had an eternal validity that is not dependent on class, culture or place, but is universally acknowledged by all.

According to the researcher these opinions have been disproved throughout the study of the sociology of art. Although sociologists and art historians have not agreed on the extent to which history, social circumstances and society's attitudes have influenced artists, the majority of them acknowledge these elements to have had a definite affect on artist's choice of theme or subject matter.

2.7. Conclusion

From the study of numerous attitudes held by women in regard to the pregnant female form, it became evident that the trend is for majority of women to view themselves when pregnant, and other pregnant women, as unattractive. According to the psychiatrist Dr Helene Deutsch, a woman's attitudes toward pregnancy are fundamentally consistent with the circumstances in which she finds herself and her life experiences up until that point. Other factors influencing feminine views on pregnancy, are a result of the physical changes that occur during pregnancy not being consistent with contemporary standards of beauty. The majority of women, it appears, view pregnancy as an unpleasant experience with their bodies becoming ugly, fat and unattractive.

The Feminist movement, it seems, only mention the gestation period in negative terms, suggesting that the female's ability to procreate results in the oppression and subordination of all women. Even when Feminist writers such as Emily Martin, look at the problematic misuse of technology, it was primarily to show male dominance in the areas of pregnancy and childbirth. It appears that the majority of Feminists, view pregnancy as little more than another topic to support their theories about the inequalities of women.

Firestone's theory that women's ability to procreate should be taken away and replaced by technology is radical and few women would agree with it. It is feminist attitudes such as these that have resulted in the movement not having a greater following.

The results of the case study done by Taylor and Langer regarding the reactions of fellow passengers toward a pregnant woman substantiate the belief that pregnant women are treated similarly to "cripples", they are avoided and viewed by society, as strange. Matlin stated that in a further study done by interviewing pregnant women on their self-image, they frequently said they felt fat and ugly. Horgan found that women reacted differently within different social economic classes.

In summation the attitudes of contemporary Western society toward pregnant women were found to be primarily negative. These social attitudes are a result of a number of social circumstances, including economic factors and long-held preconceived ideas of pregnancy and childbirth.

In regard to the influence of society's attitudes on the choice of the artist's subject matter, it was apparent that historically patrons exercised, what modern society would consider an outrageous degree of influence on the artist's work. Later in, the history of art social institutions affected amongst other things, who became an artist, how they became artists and how they were able to practise their art. Furthermore, the judgements and evaluations made of the works and art schools determined their subsequent acceptance in art history. Artists have always been and always will be, influenced by society's opinions, be it in their choice of subject matter or in the influence of ingrained attitudes accumulated throughout their lives.

As Wolff stated, all artists do not live within a vacuum, they do not all maintain a precarious existence, and certain forms of modern patronage have in many respects taken over from the traditional patronage relationships. Painters are often commissioned by industrial corporations to execute works, or are employed as community artists or as artists in residence at universities.

The researcher agrees with Wolff's view that everything artists do, is located in and therefore affected by, social structures and that artists were not free agents, liberated from social structures and outside influences. Hauser's analysis of the development of art styles only being influenced by historical changes was too simplistic. It is evident that the influence goes beyond that of historical changes to include social attitudes, economic factors and social acceptability. Copplestone and Wolff's belief's which mention and include these influences appear to be more comprehensive.

The beliefs of the traditional aestheticians were that art was not class, time or place bound but instead was both transcendental and universal. These views suggest that artists live apart from the rest of society outside the influence of the world and environment in which they exist.

The majority of artists live within the same social environment as the rest of society, thus it is reasonable to conclude that if society views pregnant women in negative terms, many artists will also hold these negative attitudes. The deduction can be made that the predominately negative attitudes of society (including artists themselves) toward the pregnant female form has influenced most artists to exclude the image as subject matter, in their art works. The negative view of the pregnant body will induce negative opinions of the representation of the image. Very few artists want to portray what society deems unacceptable.

It is thus apparent that the first hypothesis was correct. We can resolve that the apparent disregard of the pregnant female form in Fine Art is a result of the negative opinions of contemporary Western society toward the pregnant female form. These predominantly negative attitudes have influenced artists to avoid the use of the image in their art works.

CHAPTER 3

PREGNANCY AS A THEME IN CONTEMPORARY FINE ART

3.1. Introduction

The image of the pregnant female is not a new one in art history; one of the oldest recorded sculptures, the *Venus of Willendorf (fig 19)* is a representation of a pregnant woman. This and many other sculptures like it, were believed to have played a role in fertility in early civilisation. Researchers in recent studies believe these sculptures to be the earliest known religious art, depicting the patheolithic image of the Creator, or mother of all life (Preble, S & Preble, D, 1973: 256). The image was undoubtedly seen in a positive light indicating that early civilisation had a great respect for the pregnant woman.

In the Middle Ages, early and late Renaissances, the image of the pregnant woman seldom appeared. When it did, it was in the form of a religious art work, for example in the case of the 15th century artist Dirk Bouts' panel *"Visitation"* (fig 18). Artists outside of Italy during this period, also painted portraits with women dressed to appear pregnant. Jan van Eyck did this in his work *"Arnolfini Wedding"*(fig 1) to symbolise fertility in marriage. Throughout the Baroque, Romanticism and other early modern European art movements, the image was all but absent.

The image of the pregnant female, within the context of modern art, is as scarce as in other periods throughout art history. It has been, however, utilised sparingly by a few artists who tended to depict pregnancy when they came into contact with it in their lives. Each artist who has utilised the image has done so, differently, in terms of the content and technical approach in his or her art works.

The researcher has attempted to give examples of artists from each of the societal groups mentioned, in Chapter 2 e.g. the Feminist who used the image primarily to illustrate the oppression of women like Sherman or Neel), or feminine opinions (artists who dealt with the attitudes of pregnant women themselves and female opinions of pregnant women in their art works e.g. Neel). The art works discussed in this chapter range from Klimt's work *"Hope 1"*, done in 1903, to an art work by Cindy Sherman completed in 1989.

Emphasis has been placed upon the female American portrait artist, Alice Neel. In a series of nine works in which Neel dealt with varying issues of contemporary life, she illustrated the aesthetic potential of the image. She depicted contemporary opinions in *"Pregnant Julia and Algis"* (fig 14) (hinting at male dominance in the area of pregnancy) and women's emotions toward pregnancy and and their self perception, in *"Margaret Evans pregnant"* (fig 3) (in which the phallic mother is depicted who feels disconnected from the foetus inside her).

Fine art photography have been included in this discussion because it was evident that this art form has utilised the image more extensively than fine artists of other disciplines. Photographers, the researcher believes, are also more inclined to portray the world around them, which is possibly why the image was more extensively used in this art discipline. Photographs are used a great deal in media publications, this has resulted in the researcher's belief that on account of a greater section of society coming into contact with photography, it was imperative to look at how these artists have utilized the image of the pregnant female in their art works.

3.2. Pregnancy as a theme in contemporary fine art.

3.2.1. Marc Chagall (1887-1985)

Compton (1985: 14) stated that the Russian born artist Marc Chagall, used a number of themes in his art works. One of these themes was that of Russian rural life in which Chagall portrayed human weakness, without passing judgement. Chagall was also known for his admiration of the traditions of icon-painting in Russia. His attitude toward women in general was positive. This was on account of his deep love and respect for the women in his life, namely his mother, daughter and both his first and second wives. Chagall approached his works from his own life experiences, which was why he painted women as maternal, loving peasants, often busy with domestic chores. He occasionally portrayed women's sexual power, from which he believed it was impossible for men to escape.

Chagall did a number of paintings in which he portrayed the theme of pregnancy, for example *"Birth"* (1910) and maternal instinct in *"Brides over the seine"* (1954). He was also well known for his portrayal of animals, representing human emotions and events, as is evident in the work *"The cattle dealer" (1912),* in which he portrayed a gravid horse. The foetus was visible within the stomach of the cow. This approach was repeated in his painting *"Pregnant Woman"(fig 2)*. This work illustrates the influences of icon painting and of the theme of Russian rural life, in Chagall's work.

The artist's motivation for using the image, according to Walther (1987: 58), was to demonstrate the timelessness of love and security of affection, found within love. This theme was portrayed in different ways throughout Chagall's life in a number of his works for example in *"The birthday"* (1915), *"Le Champ de Mars"* (1954) and *"The walk"* (1973). The happiness portrayed in his paintings often matched his own emotional situation in life, for example it was not long after the completion of *"Pregnant Woman"* that Chagall was to marry for the first time. The context in which the image was utilised was believed,

by Compton (1985: 24), to be the portrayal of mother Russia. Despite the work's origin in icon painting, it does not represent the Madonna but a Russian peasant. Chagall though influenced by these Christian paintings was, in fact, Jewish, which would explain his reluctance to portray the Madonna of Christianity.

Chagall's pregnant woman carries a visible child in her oval-shaped womb. He portrayed the unborn foetus as a fully developed child. This was again, possibly influenced by icon paintings, in which the Christ child was portrayed as a small adult. Chagall's figure emphasises her essential elements of motherhood (breasts and womb) by pointing at them. West (1990: 65) stated that Chagall further subverted the Christian message of the Madonna image, by including a male face sprouting out of the side of the woman's head. With this he believed the concept of desired unity between man and woman was emphasised. This unity was ultimately achieved through the child that the woman is carrying.

However, West (Ibid.: 65) believed that, in this work, the woman was the dominant force, this dominance was suggested by the symbol of the crescent moon in the background. Chagall had in many of his previous works used the image of the crescent moon as a female symbol (the image was used because of the similarities between the menstrual cycle of women and the cycles of the moon).

The figure was presented as a Jewish peasant girl. She is very large in comparison to the landscape and people around her. This was done to place emphasis upon her importance and power as a creator of life. The woman was ultimately portrayed in this work, as the mother of all life and the protector of Russia.

West (Ibid.: 64) states that the image of the pregnant woman was also used in a gouache done by Chagall which was another representation of mother Russia using the depiction of a

pregnant woman carrying a visible baby. Compton (1985: 24) believes the work *"Pregnant woman"* was inspired by the pregnancy of Chagall's wife Bella.

3.2.2. Henri Matisse (1867-1954)

According to Board (Broude & Garrard, 1992: 372) Matisse's interest in female models was limited to the fact that they signified only the polarity of the unknown. The faces of Matisse's models were empty or impassive, their bodies were motionless and they had neither personalities nor histories of their own. They were, of course, not real women, but mythic products of the artist's fantasy and the collective fantasies of his patriarchal culture.

Durozoi (1989: 22) stated that Matisse needed an extended period of familiarisation with his models. Matisse was quoted as saying about his models: *"for me, the model is a spring board, a door I must leap through to gain access to the garden in which I am so happy, so alone - even the model only exists for me to make use of it"*. Durozoi (Ibid.: 22) believed that Matisse was often so absorbed with his models that he was free to work almost unconsciously, thus ensuring his works remained spontaneous.

Board (Broude & Garrard, 1992.: 361) stated that Matisse's works of women illustrate the assumptions of male possessive dominance over the passive female. In addition to Matisse's more obviously prejudicial iconography, Board (Ibid.: 361) believed his stylistic syntax could have been demonstrated to constitute an ideological statement that embodied the establishments' attitudes toward women and their empire.

Between the years of 1919-1929 Matisse completed the Odalisque series. This period, to many art historians, (Durozoi, 1989: 22) was considered Matisse's *easy period*. The series expressed a profound serenity and a sense of happiness, with few of them concerned with misery. These works were representations of languid young women surrounded by decorative accessories, bouquets, wall hangings and carpets. These intricately patterned

objects were believed to have been inspired by Matisse's trip to Morocco. According to Durozoi (Ibid.: 23) the works were an extremely tight construction of the representation of space where the female body often became, not the central motif, but just one form amongst all the others; less an exaltation of the female form, more an affirmation of the opposition of her curves to the horizontals and verticals.

The odalisque series according to Board (Broude & Garrard, 1992: 372) were not about the models but about the artist's ability to create and about his extraordinary capacity to condense and reformulate his sensations in response to nature. He also believes that regardless of the works' ostensible themes, the odalisques were all painted as disguised self portraits (Ibid.: 372). Some art historians, Board stated, detected an unresolved tension within these pictures, they noted feelings of boredom, claustrophobia, alienation and sexual yearning beneath the surface of these odalisques.

The repetition of theme, Durozoi believed, (1989: 23) did not indicate a lack of inspiration on the part of the artist, rather his dedication to the exhaustion of all possible variations or combinations.

Matisse used the image of the pregnant woman in one of his Odalisque works, *"Odalisque with Green Sash"* (fig 15). The pregnant figure in this work touches her breast in a sign of her primitive nurturing function and the green sash around the figure's belly calls the viewer's attention to her pregnant state. The figure was surrounded by decorative receptive vessels, implying that she was also one of these vessels. The female symbol of the crescent moon dominates the upper left hand corner of the painting, portraying the link between woman's fertility and the lunar cycle.

According to Board, (Broude & Garrard, 1992: 372) *"Odalisque with green sash"* was a representation of both the female body and the Orient, as passive incubators whose nature was to await acceptance from the male viewer or artist.

The work, with its pregnant female imagery, was predominantly painted as a variation of the odalisque theme. Like the other works in this series, it was positive in nature with the figure being of equal importance to the surrounding objects.

3.2.3. Gustav Klimt (1862-1918)

Gustav Klimt was notorious for his attitudes toward women. One of his many themes was to portray women as sexual objects. Whitford (1990: 161) believes Klimt's women to be exclusively sexual beings, this, he states, was proven in the sketchy portrayal of their faces and generalised features. They existed for Klimt, he believed, only to whet the appetite of the male spectator who was not only a potential lover but also a voyeur. Whitford stated that Klimt had three models at his beck and call at all times. Klimt was also believed to have exploited them, seeing them as bodies and little more, an attitude revealed in his description of the model from the work *"Hope 1"*. Klimt was recorded as saying that the model's backside was more beautiful and intelligent than many faces (Ibid.: 166).

Klimt was also believed to have slept with a number of his models, one who bore him two sons. This woman was believed, by Partsch (1994:58), to have been the real inspiration for Klimt's portrayal of pregnant women. Partsch (Ibid.: 58) suggests that it was when Klimt's model Mizzi was pregnant that he painted the pregnant female imagery (using Mizzi as a model but changing the faces of the figures). Partsch substantiates this by comparing the dates of the works containing the image, with the dates of Mizzi's pregnancies.

In Klimt's works, according to Whitford (1990: 168), women are unmistakably agents of merciless retribution or embodiments of evil, while men are almost always their defenceless idols on the one hand and deadly predators on the other. According to Whitford (Ibid.: 169) the purpose of Klimt's use of allegorical and mythological figures and the representation of women as witches, gorgons and sphinxes embodied his fears of and

desires for women. He also had a passion for erotic themes that resulted in the creation of innumerable drawings and paintings of sensual and explicit female figures, including pregnant women (Partsch, 1994: 24). Gustav Klimt used the image of the pregnant woman in the art works *"Hope 1"*(fig 4) *"Hope 2"* (fig 5) and *"Medicine"* (1907).

The work *"Hope 1"*,was the image of a naked, pregnant woman. The figure stands in front of a length of blue material interwoven with gold which, according to Partsch (1994: 65), was used as a symbol of hope. However, behind her at the upper left edge, are three grotesque faces and an eyeless skull. These Partsch believed, were Klimt's grim reminders of sickness, death, misery and crime. Klimt had previously included personifications like these in his work *"Beethoven Frieze"*, describing them as malevolent powers against whom the gods themselves struggled in vain.

Whitford (1990: 110) believes the subject matter in this work was a comment or warning about the consequence of sexual desire and the physical attractions of women. He also believes it could be Klimt's way of portraying a more conventional allegory about the presence of death, even at the time of birth.

According to Whitford (Ibid.: 111) *"Hope 1"* with its unusual subject matter was only exhibited three years after its completion because Klimt was already the brunt of a great deal of criticism, which, he believed, would have intensified had the public seen the art work.

In the second version, *"Hope 2"* (fig 5) the subject was deprived of its focus namely the huge naked mound of flesh. In this work the woman's body was veiled by a gown, which was covered in ornamental spirals leaving only her breasts exposed. Three women at the lower edge of the painting lift their hands, in the same way the main figure does, resulting in their physiognomy making them appear to be triplets. Partsch (1994: 700) believes that even the death's-head, intruding into the picture at the edge of the woman's distended

stomach, was not so much a threat, as an accessory. This version was a far tamer one, than the first and appears to be a more publicly acceptable one.

The ambiguity of the title *Hope* was absent in the German translation "Hoffunung" (meaning "expecting"). Partsch (Ibid.: 660) believes these works were produced while Klimt was awaiting the birth of his child. Partsch suggested that Klimt took the decision to redesign the background of *"Hope 1"* after the loss of his son. Only then did he give the work the negative connotation it holds today. Partsch also stated (Ibid.: 660) that Klimt's use of the image of the pregnant woman was related to his personal experience with pregnancy and death.

3.2.4. Lucian Freud (1922-)

Lucian Freud was the grandson of the famous psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud. Freud approached his figures in a realistic way and, as stated by Hughes (1988: 13), refused to let his personal interests dominate any painting or drawing. Hughes (Ibid.: 20) also stated that all Freud's models were people in his life. Hughes believed that Freud did not paint *from* his nudes (which implied distance and detachment from the work) but carefully painted *with* his nudes (which implied collaboration and a conspiracy with the image). Hughes also stated that Freud's models were not instruments of the artist's fantasies but head on depictions of real people (Ibid.: 13).

Gowing (1982: 192) believed that Freud, through the years, developed a style that worked to convey the physical reality of humans in a concrete world. Freud clinically eyed his subjects with a chilling objectivity. His works go beyond the skin and he exposes his sitter's souls and hidden personalities. Freud's use of body language was of paramount importance in all his works. He was quoted by Gowing (Ibid.: 190) as saying about his portraits that *"my idea of portraiture came from dissatisfaction with portraits that resemble people. I would wish my portraits to be of the people, not like them. Not having a look of the sitter,*

being them. I didn't want to get just a likeness like a mimic, but to portray them like an actor. As far as I am concerned the paint is the person. I want it to work for me just as flesh does".

The content in which pregnant female imagery was used in Freud's works was similar to his other portraits showing the women in their entirety. *"Naked portrait 2"* (fig 6) was an excellent example of how Freud used pregnant female figures in his art works. The composition was made up almost entirely of a pregnant woman lying naked and relaxed on a couch. The stretched skin and extensive discoloration caused by pregnancy was evident, even blatant. The figure's extended belly and breasts seem to tell of the hardship experienced during pregnancy. This work has a shallow stage-like space, forcing the viewer's attention to the naked figure. It was an excellent example of how brutally honest Freud could be, in his portrayal of his sitters. According to Gowing (Ibid.: 192) Freud seldom considered the model's feelings about being "exposed", in every sense of the word.

Another art work done by Freud which deals with the image of the pregnant woman was *"Annie and Alice"* (fig 7). The entire composition of this work consists of two women with the front figure undeniably pregnant. The back figure has her arm draped around the front figure in a supportive gesture. The idea that the front figure is in need of support is enhanced by the strained look on her face. The theme of this work is the support which women give one another during the often alienating time of pregnancy. Hughes (1988: 210) stated that the strangeness of Freud's paintings came primarily from the circumstances of their making, they bypassed decorum while fiercely preserving respect.

3.2.5. Feminist artists Susan Hiller (1940-) and Monica Sjoo

According to Chadwick (1990: 29) both those who believe that there is an essential feminine sensibility and those who insist that femininity is socially and historically constructed, support the tactical importance of revealing and analysing aspects of women's

lives, that have been veiled in shame and silence. These include childbirth and menstruation, for example. Acknowledging the importance of these "events" feminist artists, such as Susan Hiller, have used them as ideas for themes in art works.

Hiller used a wide variety of materials in her works, using them to find and generate meaning. She has made art from postcards, photo booth portraits, wallpaper and photographs that she takes of herself. These photos are often of overlooked details in our everyday environment. Each work engages the viewer, offering a system of structured views whereby a first, distant or general impression is enriched into a wealth of detail as a closer approach is made. According to Bradley (1996: 9) Hiller said, about her work, that she was retrieving and reassembling a collection of fragments. As an artist she stated that she makes something potentially new, out of discarded items; what the works mean as a whole, is left up to the viewer to decide. Bradley (Ibid.: 10) believes Hiller acts as a mediator, selecting and presenting items for the consideration of the viewer. When asked about her concern with gender, Hiller stated that it was important to be concerned with gender in that *"by understanding the implications for perception and behaviour of language as a sexed subject, and by understanding how this is definitely not the same thing as being limited to activities that are conventionally defined as feminine"* (Ibid.: 34). It was this belief that gave Hiller the impetus to explore areas that used to be considered off limits in art.

Hiller did exactly this when she analysed a woman's consciousness during pregnancy. She did this with an analysis of herself while pregnant. She recorded her thoughts, by keeping a dairy, and the physical changes, by the taking of a series of photographs of the development of her pregnancy. Hiller used the research, into her consciousness, in the artwork *"10 Months"* (fig 10). These photographs were arranged in sequences of twenty-eight, one sequence for each of the ten lunar months of pregnancy, and were juxtaposed to a written discourse, drawn from a diary covering the same span of time. The columnist Lisa Ticker from the American magazine *"Block"* observed, about this work, that the sentimentality

associated with the images of pregnancy, was set tartly on edge by the scrutiny of the woman who was acted upon. Ticker believed the belly to swell and rise like a harvest moon with the echoes of a landscape, an illusion of ripeness and fulfilment (Chadwick, 1990: 30).

According to Orenstein (Broude & Garrard, 1994: 174) the Swedish feminist artist Monica Sjoo belonged to a seventies art movement called *Goddess Art*. This movement was a contemporary feminist movement which tried to revitalise and use the long-standing ideas, figurative traditions and imagery drawn from goddess cults and mythology throughout history. These feminists portrayed women as they believed them to have been portrayed in earlier times, as divine females with vast creative abilities. According to Orenstein (Ibid.: 177) Sophia (the female side of God, representing wisdom) was often represented in images of churches or as a mother. Many ancient symbols of women and creation (eggs, mounds of earth, circles, horns, crescent moons etc.) were found through research and were utilised by this feminist Goddess movement.

One of Sjoo's Goddess representations, which contained an image of a pregnant woman, caused a great deal of controversy when it was exhibited. The work was named "*God giving Birth*" (fig 9). This work was an image of a woman (Goddess) giving birth and it was, according to Chadwick (1990: 326) inspired by a goddess-worshipping religion. The work was exhibited in the "*womanpower*" exhibition, one of the exhibitions organised by the "Women's Liberation Art Group", in 1971, at the Woodstock Gallery in London. Chadwick (Ibid.: 326) stated that in this exhibition the work aroused intense controversy and the artist was threatened with legal action on charges of blasphemy and obscenity.

The composition consisted primarily of the pregnant woman standing with her legs out-stretched. The figure's face was divided down the middle, with a dark side and a light side, showing the unity of all women in the ability to procreate. The figure squats over a semi-circular form that appears to represent the earth, images of other planets are visible around

the figure's head. The name of the work was visible in stencil lettering around the earth image, leaving no ambiguity as to the meaning of the work.

3.2.6. Fine art photographers

Fine art photographers appear to have used the image of the pregnant woman more extensively then other disciplines in fine art. Artists who used the image include Cindy Sherman (1954-) and Joyce Tenneson (1945-).

3.2.6.1. Cindy Sherman (1954-)

Sherman's career in art has had a major impact on post-modern thinking in the art world. She also furthered the rise of photography and it's mass-media techniques, as a powerful means of expression for fine artists. Her works have had a major influence on feminist thinking and on contemporary dialogues about the strategies of art in general.

Sherman's portrayal of women was in accordance with the content of the series she was undertaking. In the 'centre fold' series, woman were photographed to appear shallow and in a dream like reality. In the later series 'sex pictures', women's bodies, although represented by plastic mannequins, were then made to appear as spectacles at which to gaze, to be visually and sexually abused. According to Krauss (1993: 207) the feminist's society differed in their views of Sherman's works. Some of them believed she deconstructed the eroticized fetish while others criticised her, stating that her images were successful partly because they did not threaten phallocracy but reiterated and confirmed it. These feminists believed that by leaving her works untitled, Sherman had taken refuge in silence, refusing, they believed, to "speak out" on the issues of domination and submission, issues that were central to feminism.

In 1987 Sherman introduced a different type of photography concentrating on art history for inspiration. The result was a series of photographic portraits of herself, transformed by false noses, bosoms and so forth, into both male and female historical images. Figures were photographed as paintings of old masters of Western art history. In this, Krauss (Ibid.: 173) believed Sherman turned her art firmly toward the most overt and pronounced version of the scene of sublimation. Sherman's history portraits revel in forming again and again the signifiers of the form that high art celebrate and signified. The fake body parts that were strapped onto the torso and applied to the head were made to appear as surface masks, ones you could supposedly move or see behind. This, Krauss believed revealed that the figures had another dimension, one in which they possessed inner truth and meaning.

In her art work *"Untitled 1989"* (fig 8) Sherman transformed herself into a pregnant noblewoman of the Renaissance era. This depiction of the pregnant female appears to have been a one off occurrence. The use of the image appears at first glance to have held little more meaning, other than that it was a re-depiction of a historical art work. The representation portrays the woman as almost naked with only a thin translucent cloth to cover her pregnant mound. Sherman appears to have been making a comment on how women incessantly tried to cover their pregnant states. It was also possible that Sherman intended the viewer to look beyond the false stuck on stomach and see the woman beneath.

3.2.6.2. Joyce Tenneson (1945-)

Goldberg (1993: 8) believes Tenneson photographed beautiful pictures of beautiful women with beautiful bodies, in an era when beauty had been so commercialised that artists and photographers approached it warily. Tenneson's models were all part of her life and she viewed them as almost part of her family. She attempted to find a comparable, if inverse, combination of sensuousness and otherworldliness with her use of thin, translucent cloth, which was wrapped around the figures. Goldberg (Ibid.: 1) stated that Tenneson's

photographs spoke of the fragility of life, its poignant beauty and its pains. The images, she believes, were deeply affecting, evoking forgotten memories.

Joyce Tenneson used the image of the pregnant woman in several of her works. The work *"Leslie Pregnant" (fig 11)* was a compelling photograph of a pregnant woman who regards the viewer with a combination of openness, self-assurance, and gravity. Tenneson, while doing a page spread for a fragrance in the American *Taxi magazine*, suggested one page of the spread should feature a pregnant woman. When the editors declined, she offered to shoot the picture at her own expense. Goldberg (Ibid.: 7) states that the result was feminine in a way that rarely sees print. The magazine ran the image. Tenneson's images of pregnant women are almost spiritual, the works capture the beauty which can be found in the image of the pregnant woman.

3.3. Alice Neel (1900-1984)

Alice Neel was born in Philadelphia in 1900. She attended an all girls school, The Philadelphia School of Design, where she acquired a knowledge of Western art history. Neel rejected the Impressionist style, taught at the school and was recorded as saying *"I didn't see life as a picnic on the grass"* (Bauer, 1994: 21). Neel's art and her life were closely intertwined throughout her life. From a very early age she rejected gender inequalities. According to Bauer, being a female early in the twentieth century because of society's opinions at this time, her options in life were severely restricted. As a pretty, blond, bright and gifted child, Neel remembers her mother often telling her *"I don't know what you expect to do, you 're only a girl"* (Ibid.: 21). Comments like these were the likely catalyst in encouraging Neel to develop into a free spirited, non-conformist.

In 1926 Neel married a Cuban art student, and much to her dismay, in the same year fell pregnant with her first child. Just before the child's first birthday, Neel was to suffer her first tragedy, the loss of her child to diphtheria. In 1928 she had another daughter and

shortly thereafter her husband left her, taking the child, to return to his family home in Havana, Cuba. Overwhelmed by the loss of two daughters and a husband, combined with the oppressive atmosphere in her family home, Neel suffered a nervous breakdown and not long after, was institutionalised following a suicide attempt (Belcher, 1991: 71-96).

According to Bauer (1994:21-22) Neel remained charming, witty and ebullient despite her lifelong troubles and was soon to become a colourful presence in the New York art scene. However her terrible luck with men was to continue and she was to have four children with three men, only one of whom she married. Neel appears to have chosen men that continuously abused her. When asked by her friends why she endured this, she inevitably said that as long as the men did not interfere with her art, she didn't really care (Belcher, 1991: 167; 179-180).

After Neel's stay at the mental institution she went to live in Greenwich Village, New York, among other artists, politicians and authors. It was here that she acquired many lifelong friends and admirers of her art and began to voice her communist sympathies. After many years she moved to the Hispanic section of New York, Spanish Harlem, where she again encountered a poor Latin American society. Neel was a single mother raising two sons, in a society of restrictive gender norms (Belcher, Ibid.: 200-210).

Neel's aspiration to be a successful painter was to be the central force throughout her life. She gave up custody of her child, reportedly stating that that she loved her daughter, but she wanted to paint (Bauer, 1994: 21). Neel considered her purpose in life to be her art and to keep it intact she was prepared to pay any price. An example of this single minded devotion to her chosen profession is illustrated in the following quote: *"Well for me art is everything (even though I have these sons and everything else); instead of buying clothes I bought art materials"* (Belcher, 1991: 202). She believed she was her own movement, she had never followed a leader; even though, through every decade, the universe was changing, she would never give up her vision, her portrayal of the figure (Ibid.: 203).

According to Bauer (1994:22) Neel had an expressionistic style of painting, wherein she brought the realist traditions into a female perspective, in the process, often dealing with concerns of the effects of social life on women and children. Neel's views were particularly anti-bourgeois (influenced by her Communist sympathies) which influenced her to portray the poor and downtrodden. Bauer (Ibid.: 22) believes one of the unique aspects of Neel's work, was her ability to capture body language and facial expressions. Neel's figures told tales simply by the way they sat or lay. She used expressive line, often even outlining her figures to create their form. Her palette possessed a vibrancy that helped to bring her figures to life.

Neel was praised as a preserver of the figure, she was also praised for her use of metaphor and her hypersensitive understanding of body language. She seemed to have had a special connection with her models and was quoted saying *"I would leave myself behind and enter the painting and the sitter and afterward feel lonely and disoriented"* (Belcher, 1991: 202). She closely identified with people, places and things. Her work was believed to be a visual diary of the people, places and events of her life. Neel searched for the complete person inside and outside and urged the sitters to expose their entire character (Ibid.: 202).

Neel respected the integrity of each woman's experience of pregnancy, never generalising or exploiting her models or romanticising their condition. Allara (1994: 7) believes that Neel was influenced in her portrayal of pregnant nudes, by the feminist Adrienne Rich's (1979: 40) belief that the most ancient of men's fears was the continuing envy, awe and dread of the female capacity to create life. Allara (1994: 7) believes Neel's pregnant nudes to be a subject certain to block a "controlling male", gaze. Instead, Neel believed in evoking an erotic response and with these female nudes arouse men's elementary fears.

Neel is on record as saying that she portrayed the image of the pregnant woman, despite the fact that the image didn't appeal to her because it was a portrayal of a fact of life. Bauer

(1994: 24) stated that Neel felt the subject was perfectly legitimate, that out of false modesty or cowardice it was seldom displayed, despite its importance. Neel also found the image practically very exciting in her art. Bauer (Ibid.: 24) described the taboos associated with portraying childbirth and pregnancy throughout art history, as an exclusion of a vitally important area of women's physical and spiritual experience. The naked pregnant female, Bauer believes, is controversial (in a patriarchal society which has elevated the female nude to a public icon), because the image does not conform to the established definition of physical beauty.

3.4. Alice Neel's Art works

Neel was famous for her portraiture and for ensuring the survival of the figure as subject matter in contemporary Fine Art. At a time when most other artists were experimenting with abstract expressionism and other styles, Neel stuck relentlessly to her belief in the power of the human image. Her figures were more than simple portraiture, in them, she exposed the souls of her models. The nude sitters to appear to be pinned to the studio like specimens, frontal, exposed and often staring directly at the viewer. Neel's interest between 1964 and 1978 centred on the making of representations of pregnancy, as experienced in widely differing ways, by various acquaintances. Two of her works are representations of her daughter-in-law, another a friend of her son's, one a resident of the neighbourhood, and the last three are of artists or artist's wives. The women appear in turn sexually self-confident, childlike, earthy, physically drained, vain, emotionally anxious and catatonic (Allara, 1994: 10). However varied their psychological states, all but one of these women are identifiably white middle-class, and their bodies conform to the ideal of their era. Within that frame of reference, their swollen breasts and bellies represent an unexpected and initially shocking intrusion representing a distortion of the decade's ideals (Ibid.: 10-11).

3.4.1. Pregnant Maria (fig 12)

"Pregnant Maria" was one of the first works done in this series. The work consists of a relaxed woman reclining on a settee. The figure's head rests on her bent left arm and the woman's extended right arm draped leisurely on her hip. The figure's body parts are shaped by this pose as the breasts fall downward and the pregnant stomach rests on the bed. She appears to be totally at ease looking directly at the viewer. In this work Neel has reinvented the academic treatment of the reclining nude, with a whimsical interpretation of Manet's (1832-1883) *"Olympia"* (fig 13) by making the naked woman heavily pregnant.

According to Allara (1994: 16) this work was created in the same year that the birth control pill was becoming widely available. The pill promised sexual pleasure without the consequences of pregnancy. Allara (Ibid.: 16) stated that this event, was of great historical importance to Neel, as it symbolised the moment when sex and reproduction became disconnected. This work has reunited both sex and reproduction. The figure is heavily pregnant but remains a sensual woman. The figure's naked body represents a body to be surveyed, but the swollen stomach blocks the gaze, transfiguring the sensuous woman into a pregnant one (Bauer, 1994: 24). According to Allara (1994: 16) this work represents the changing opinions of women towards pregnancy and sexual pleasure in the 1960's.

The pregnant figure is a representation of a woman confident with her naked, pregnant body. The painting is simple in composition and it contains very little symbolism or decoration. The work, however, is successful in its simplicity, proving to other artists that it is not always necessary to fill an art work with obscure symbols or symbolism.

3.4.2. Pregnant Julia and Algis (fig 14)

According to Rich (1979:111-113) this work deals with the belief (of feminist and free thinking women alike), that the medical professions have placed pregnant women within a

patient category (cf. Chapter 2: p13). Allara (1994: 20) stated that by being so defined, pregnant women are believed to be suggestible, childlike, and in need of strong (male) guidance.

The work depicts a young doctor and his wife reclining on a couch. The male gaze is again intercepted, but this time the male within the picture parries it. A crucial aspect to consider when interpreting this art work is to note that the bodies appear to be coupling. The male figure has been exotically garbed in a white ruffled shirt and tight black pants, the perfect masquerade of machismo. Allara (Ibid.: 20) believes the male body also serves as a wall for protection, while his narrowed eyes extend a gaze of possession over the female's petite vulnerable body, which is exposed, in the fullest sense of the word.

Neel argues that once a male partner enters the picture, the old social and art historian stance of male to female, is again apparent, hence the male is clothed and dominating and the female is unclothed, vulnerable and depending. According to Allara (Ibid.: 21) the cloth on which the figures lie is symbolic of after birth, reminding the viewer that childbirth is an "unfeminine" act, both messy and animal-like.

The female figure's body language is ambivalent. Her left arm is held back or anchored by the male figure, a blatant symbol of possession. The female figure looks directly at the viewer almost as if she is challenging society's medieval opinions. Despite the impending parenthood the couple appear to be disconnected from one another, their roles in the creation of the child, seemingly unequal.

3.4.3. Margaret Evans Pregnant (fig 3)

The velvety skinned figure depicted in this painting looks directly at the viewer, as she grips the chair on which she is seated. Her expression is wide-eyed, gentle and anticipatory. The strain of pregnancy can be seen in the blue veins, discoloration and stretch marks on her

skin. Neel is trying to capture each woman's unique experience of pregnancy and childbirth. The chair on which the model sits doesn't appear strong enough to hold the vast expanse of the pregnant figure. Allara (1994: 26) believes that the figure's physical instability bears witness to her psychological insecurities. With the use of a ramrod stiff pose, the figure appears to have the regal bearing of an Egyptian statue. The figure's condition appears to have invaded and filled every part of her body (Ibid.: 26).

Allara (Ibid. : 26) believes Neel has conjured up a phallic mother, the woman who in Freudian terms, has compensated for her lack of a penis, by producing a child. The work also shows Neel's agreement with Tiemersma (1989: 67) who believes that women become emotionally disconnected from their children during pregnancy (cf. Chapter 2 p.9). These women often feel that they are standing behind their bellies rather than their stomachs being a part of their bodies. This work proclaims this attitude, with its prominent mound of flesh, protruding from the woman's midriff.

The mirror behind the figure creates an image within an image. This reflection according to Bauer (1994: 26-27), suggests the lurking anxiety which the figure is experiencing during her pregnancy. Allara (1994: 25) believed the mirror image to hold a vast amount of more complicated symbolism. Allara (Ibid.: 26) stated that the image is a representation of the same model in her postpartum state. She also believed the black triangular space found within the mirror image, was the female symbol of the void through which the child must pass. Allara also declared that the mirror-image of the figure is an older representation of the woman, which suggested a tripartite identity or a split between self-and-mother and self-and-daughter, suggesting that the mirror image is the ghost of the figure's future-former-self.

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3.5. Conclusion

This chapter studied a number of artists, all of whom, at some time in their art careers, used the pregnant female image in their art works. If one looks at pregnancy as a theme, it is evident that the image was seldom used throughout art history or in contemporary Fine Art. The artists studied, each treated the image in their own individual style of painting, for example in the cases of Chagall and Klimt, where Chagall's art work *"Pregnant woman"* is different in regard to both theme and content to that of Klimt's work *"Hope "1.*

Chagall used the image to show maternal instinct, peasant life and devoted love. Matisse incorporated the image in his Odalisque series, in which the woman was displayed as a receptive vessel. The artist Gustav Klimt, preferred to use the pregnant form to portray the ever-present possibility of death even in birth. The feminist artists utilised pregnancy as a useful concept in the portrayal of the oppression of women. Fine Art photographers, such as Cindy Sherman, occasionally also used the image in a similar way. The photographer Joyce Tenneson, however, was more inclined to display her pregnant women as great beauties, opting to show the attractive and pleasant side of pregnancy.

The main artist studied in this chapter was Alice Neel with her series of art works containing pregnant female imagery. Neel displayed the many emotions pregnant woman feel, also dealing with the issue of male domination and the attitudes of society. She achieved this by blatantly displaying defiant naked pregnant women, in contemporary environments in varying situations. Neel's figures appear to challenge their audience proclaiming their right to be portrayed. Neel illustrated the potential of the image to show contemporary women in their everyday lives.

According to Allara (1994: 7) the pregnant nude is all but unprecedented in Western art history. Keeping in mind the limited number of artists to use this image of the pregnant woman, Allara (Ibid. : 8) concluded that Neel's pregnant nude paintings were some of the

twentieth century's more successful portrayals of the image. Her nudes also addressed a generation of politically active women, not only agitating for social change, but for all redefinition's of motherhood.

Each artist portrayed the image in his or her own unique artistic style. Expressionistic painting was apparent in Neel's works, whereas works by Freud were more realistic in nature. Chagall's portrayals were childlike, while Klimt used the decorative style that made him so famous. This range of artists, with diverse artistic talents, shows the diversity of the image and its aesthetic possibilities. With regard to concepts and the philosophies of individual artists they were all fairly diverse. Chagall's deep respect and love for women influencing how he portrayed them was very different from Klimt's fear and inclination to portray women as no more than sexual objects. These diverse outlooks were also evident in how each artist utilised the image of the pregnant woman. Klimt, with his ambiguous titles of "Hope", showed evil elements surrounding his pregnant images. In the case of Chagall however, the opposite is apparent, his pregnant figures portrayed the love, maternity and security.

The photographers mentioned also had definite differences in their portrayal and philosophies of women and women pregnant. Tenneson, for example, portrayed her pregnant figures as beauties that represented fragility of life, poignant beauty and its pains. Sherman, on the other hand portrayed her figures with fake body parts using the image to illustrate a feminist theme.

Both male and female artists were studied to determine the different ways each of the sexes used the image of the pregnant female, within the context of their art. Male artists seem to have approached the image from an outsider's perspective, preferring to illustrate the male perspective of pregnancy or woman in general, for example Klimt who portrayed his women as femme fatale types or sexual objects. This male perspective was also apparent in the photographer David Bailey's works, in which the outside male view, actually becomes the

theme of the studies of his pregnant wife. Female artists, however, appear to have used the theme to portray contemporary feminine issues, ranging from the oppression of women, in the case of the feminist artist's, to the female emotions and feeling during pregnancy, evident in Alice Neel's works.

The apparent reason for the use of the image of pregnant woman appears to have been similar in the cases of most of the artists. The majority of artists studied, utilised the image primarily because their model or somebody with whom they were in close contact became pregnant. Even Alice Neel with her series of art works containing the image was inspired by friends and family being pregnant and available to pose.

Each artist studied was unique in his or her use of the image in terms of subject matter, philosophy and technical application. The image is useful when attempting to portray contemporary issues, women's opinions and feminist thoughts on oppression.

With this chapter the second hypothesis is proved correct as it can be concluded that the image can be utilised in diverse contexts, is interesting and holds various aesthetic possibilities to be dealt with and explored more extensively in the realm of Fine Art.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION OF PRACTICAL RESEARCH: Analysis and application.

4.1. Introduction

In the period leading up to the researcher's final year the subject of pregnancy featured as an integral part of her life. In the years prior to the initiation of the research, her eldest sister embarked on an intensive series of fertility treatments. As a result of the continued failure of this treatment and the close personal relationship between the sisters, this was a traumatic period that strongly influenced the selection of the theme of research. Furthermore, her other sister became pregnant with her fifth child during this same period and the involvement with the development throughout the entire gestation period and ultimate birth of the researcher's godson, also influenced the diverse portrayals of pregnancy in regard to the pictorial research.

Fourteen paintings containing the image of the pregnant female form were completed as a practical application of the subject. Ten art works were selected for the purpose of the discussion of this chapter.

4.2. The application of the image in the works of the researcher

The employment of the pregnant female image shows the versatility of the figure as subject matter, in the realm of Fine Art. As will be shown in the following sections, the image has been applied in a number of different contexts, yet there is no definite link between paintings and no palpable progression in the series. Each art work dealt with a unique concept and was approached from a fresh perspective where possible.

The plethora of theoretical material researched greatly influenced the artist in her works. The painting *"The bridal suite"* (fig 20) in which the contemporary topic of pregnancy before marriage is explored, is a clear illustration of the impact of the theoretical reference on the content of the art works. Other examples would include the depiction of the feminist, Emily Martin's, views (cf. Chapter 2 p.13) of women as the *"Reproductive machine"* (fig 27) or *"The loss of identity"* (fig 28)(cf. Chapter 2 p.10) inspired by Davis-Floyd's theory that the pregnant body is separate from the self.

Prominent artists and their use of the image also prompted many paintings. Their influence is apparent in numerous examples, including the composition of certain works done, examples of which are the *"Loss of identity"* (fig 28) which was inspired by Klimt's composition in the art work *"Hope 1"* (Fig 4) and *"Kathleen"* (fig 24) where the composition was swayed by Neel's painting of the *"Pregnant Maria"* (fig 12). Other art works which were influential with regard to the choice of certain themes, is discernible again in the painting *"Kathleen"* (fig 24) in which, similarly to Neel's depiction, a positive, confident pregnant woman is portrayed. Biblical narratives and artists, in their portrayals of these narratives also played a role in the creation of both *"Fall of man"* (fig 22) and *"Annunciation"* (fig 32) in which the historical or biblical theme was portrayed in a contemporary context.

Additional guides instrumental in the practical application of the theme include a number of events in the life of the researcher. This incorporates, as mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the gestation period of the researcher's sister (this sister also modelled for several of the art works and shared her feelings about this and her previous pregnancies during this time). Religious themes and symbolism seem to have repeatedly found their way into various portrayals. The religious theme was the belated effect of a two-year period at a Catholic convent where the researcher was desperately miserable. This experience resulted in many years of spiritual indecision and the questioning of religion. This was presumably

the source of the religious connotations, within a contemporary context, found in several of the paintings.

4.3. Discussion of individual art works

4.3.1. The bridal suite (fig 20)

This painting is a depiction of the contentious belief that all pregnant women should be married. The wedding night is implied in this painting with the use of the images of the bridal bed, veil and bouquet. Beyond the window, the viewer can see a barren landscape, which is in total contradiction of the huge pregnant bride (the dead *infertile* ground contrasted with the large pregnant, obviously *fertile* figure). This contradiction was created to create awareness of the reproductive aspect of married life. The mirror on the back wall insinuates an outsider's view into the room, representing society's opinion of pregnancy before marriage. Numerous images found within *"Bridal suite"*, subtly coincide with Jan Van Eyck's (1390-1441) *"Arnolfini wedding" (fig 1)*. These include the bridal bed and its red colouring, the representation of a mirror and shoes on the floor, marking the room as a holy place (a satire on the consummation of marriage being a spiritual act). Irony is also apparent when one considers that in the *"Arnolfini wedding*" the woman's bridal gown was typical of the time and intended to symbolise fertility in marriage (accepted symbolic behaviour), and in *"The Bridal suite"* the woman is portrayed as pregnant yet hers is a state frowned upon by contemporary Western society before marriage.

The colour usage within this painting creates a peculiarly sordid atmosphere. This was achieved with the use of bright expressive colours on the carpet contrasted with the green walls of the room. The carpet is depicted as a suggestion of hope and fertility with its stylised version of the fallopian tubes, uterus and ripe ovaries. The large scale of the work was chosen to prompt viewers into feeling they are interrupting a cloistered moment, the

painting is also large enough to incorporate the viewer, yet the content, implies the desire for privacy (bedroom, bridal suite connotation).

Outside observers may view this painting as a scrutiny of contemporary issues such as the result of sex before marriage. They may question the absence of a male figure within the context of a *bridal* suite. Each viewer should acquire something different and significant with regard to his or her diverse life experiences from this art work.

4.3.2. In the house of God (fig 21)

Two specific intentions motivated the creation of this painting: the first being experimentation with a larger format, the second, experimentation with more abstract symbolism. The main theme implied in this art work is that of the position of women in the Catholic Church. Each pregnant figure was placed in a different position and clothed in a unique colour symbolising her role and attitude. The figure on the far right was painted with her hands raised in worship; this figure represents spirituality and love (she is clad in the uplifting colour of yellow). The blue clothed figure was painted to appear held back with straps preventing her movements, a suggestion of the strict rules in the church and the inability to express oneself freely. The figure clothed in the cold colour of green crawls, in an implied position of subservience, representing blind acceptance. The final figure (dressed in the neutral colour pink) sits on top of an hourglass with an attitude of indifference.

Symbolism is apparent throughout this painting: the lit candle on the altar is a well known symbol of the presence of God within the church, and the use of the patterned carpet (also seen in the earlier work *"Bridal Suite"*) containing the stylised female sex organs representing hope (hope being represented by the presence of reproductive organs making procreation possible). Within the context of this work, the symbol of hope was used to hint at the possibility of overcoming the apparent prejudices toward women, as well as hope for

females being viewed as equal within the context of the Catholic church. Another object, which is loaded with imagery, is the hourglass. The glass holds two embryos, one of a human foetus, the other a snake. The researcher was surprised to discover how similar these embryos appear and found it ironic that the snake, a historical and biblical symbol of evil, looks at this stage, so similar to man. These embryos (representing the creation of life) are ironically framed by *the biblical symbol* of evil or the devil, two snakes.

The technical aspects of this work which are important include the large format and busy composition. The colour usage is vibrant and spontaneous. The overall effect of this painting is reliant on the intuition and imagination of individual viewers and their views and opinions on the multitude of symbols employed.

4.3.3. Fall of Man (fig 22)

This work was inspired by the many representations of the Old Testament narrative of Adam and Eve, throughout art history. The painting is based primarily upon one of these historical representations by Albrecht Dürer (1417-1528*) "The Fall of Man"(fig 17*). It is not a direct representation of Dürer's print, instead it borrows imagery and incorporates the image of the pregnant woman, thereby creating an historical or biblical art work. Many of the symbols used by Dürer are repeated in this painting. Similarities include the use of the cat and mouse (representing the interplay between dominant and subservient forces) the rabbit (a well-known symbol of fertility) and the snake (the snake being portrayed is almost camouflaged in this painting, implying lurking evil). Animals which are not found in Dürer's work but have been incorporated in the researcher's portrayal, include the owl, representing wisdom (the prudence of procreation is questioned) and the copulating frogs.

The male figure is clothed, hinting at the apparent male dominance in the area of pregnancy, which often leaves the woman bare, exposed and vulnerable. This particular aspect was directly influenced by Feminist opinions promulgated by people such as Adrienne Rich (cf.

Chapter 2 p.13). A lush background surrounds the figures in an environment of fertile luxury and life (the Garden of Eden is suggested). The painting lends itself to a number of connotations. The name *"The fall of man"* utilised in association with the pregnant figure hints that procreation is not advisable. Other elements, which could hold varying meanings for different viewers, are the portrayals of the animals.

The technical approach toward this art work was a more freehanded one with much of the colour usage instinctive. The composition is similar to that of Dürer's art work. This painting was one of the later in the series, which is possibly why it appears less contrived and more vibrant.

4.3.4. Biological ticking (fig 23)

Biological ticking although appearing very simple in content and composition, still portrays an important aspect of the feelings of pregnant women. The two pregnant women represent the importance of *"sisterhood"* during pregnancy. It is imperative to show this aspect because for many people, pregnancy is a time of great loneliness. The closeness experienced by the researcher and her sister also inspired this work and its content.

This painting is a depiction of the myth that every woman, at some time, will want a child to make her life complete (cf. Chapter 2 pp. 16-17). The portrayal of the *soft clocks* is the suggestion of the biological clocks which society believes, remind all women of their desire to procreate. The melted appearance of the clocks implies the prospect of impotence, which would result from the inability to procreate. This image and its meaning was borrowed from the Surrealist Salvador Dali's (1904-1989) work *"Persistence of memory" (1931).* Dali's utilisation of the symbolic clocks was in the context of a subconscious dream and the image is portrayed within a landscape. Dali's utilisation of the image represented his fear of impotence. In *"Biological ticking"* the clocks portrayed, draped over the stomachs of the

pregnant women, suggest that impotence would have to have been overcome to ensure fertility.

The bodies of the women were painted to appear soft and feminine as they hold one another in a suggestion of support. The figures also hold their swollen bellies protectively, gently touching the mound of flesh that will change their lives so completely. The painting implies love, guidance and family support, in an uncertain world. The background was left fairly plain with only a suggestion of curtains to give the work a tranquil, simple feeling. The painting hints at the possibility of the pregnant figures listening to their *"biological clocks"* and becoming pregnant.

4.3.5. Kathleen (fig 24)

Kathleen was directly influenced by the artist Alice Neel's (1900-1984) work *"Pregnant Maria" (fig 12)* and the researcher's sister, Kathleen. Neel's art work shows a sexually attractive, pregnant woman, reclining on a divan. The woman is represented in the prime of her life, appearing confident with how she looks and what she is experiencing. An attempt was made to present these positive experiences of pregnant women as it became apparent through the research that there are, indeed, many women who experience these uplifting feelings whilst pregnant.

A number of subtle negative symbols are also apparent in the art work. These include the use of the pot plant taken directly from Carol Travis's (1992: 116) *"women as flowerpots"* view of pregnancy. Another example is the patterned and bright red settee, the meaning of which is again drawn from one of Neel's art works *"Pregnant Julie and Algis" (fig 14)* in which the red patterned couch represented afterbirth, implying that "naturalism" was now equated with debasement (Allara, 1994: 20). There are also a number of images taken from Manet's *"Olympia"*(fig 13) such as the cat and the necklace. These images possibly suggest to many viewers, a new connotation in regard to the painting. The use of the

images implies that the figure was possibly a prostitute. The incorporation of these symbolic elements are intended to make the painting more mystical and to supplement the overall content of the art work giving it an improved motif.

The figure is portrayed wearing sensual lingerie, showing that pregnant women are still sexually attractive and that, even during pregnancy, these women remain glamorous and beautiful to many people.

Technically, the painting was approached in a similar way to Neel's art work in regard to both composition and colour usage.

4.3.6. An exhibit at the circus (fig 25)

This painting is a portrayal of the feeling experienced by many women during their pregnancies, that they are under constant scrutiny during this time. This painting does not deal with a specific statement, neither was it influenced by any particular external force like a previous art work. It is rather based solely on the fact that pregnant women often feel they are on display, to amuse an audience. (This idea was however dealt with briefly in the case study by Taylor and Langer (cf. Chapter 2 p. 20)).

The child is dressed in a joker costume, representing the well-known symbol of laughter and entertainment. However, the child is depicted sadistically squeezing the nipple of the pregnant woman (historically the nipples of women were squeezed and when milk came from them it was considered proof of the woman's pregnancy). The entire work is based on satire and is best left to the discretion of the viewer, when deciphering its content.

The child and pregnant figure occupy the major region of the art work. They are both painted in bright and light colours thus becoming the unquestionable focal point. The background of this work is left very simple with a suggestion of a circus tent and laughing

pregnant women, suggest that impotence would have to have been overcome to ensure fertility.

The bodies of the women were painted to appear soft and feminine as they hold one another in a suggestion of support. The figures also hold their swollen bellies protectively, gently touching the mound of flesh that will change their lives so completely. The painting implies love, guidance and family support, in an uncertain world. The background was left fairly plain with only a suggestion of curtains to give the work a tranquil, simple feeling. The painting hints at the possibility of the pregnant figures listening to their *"biological clocks"* and becoming pregnant.

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audience. The composition is important to the overall understanding of the painting because it encourages the viewer to feel part of the audience observing and laughing at the exhibit. With this, the researcher hoped to encourage viewers to question their reactions, when confronted with pregnant women.

4.3.7. A return to nature (fig 26)

"A return to nature" is a painting surrounded with feelings of happiness, health and love. The name of the work is particularly significant as it is often believed that the only way women can experience the positive emotions, dealt with in this painting is for them to distance themselves, from the absorbed, technological lifestyle of our society and return to the naturalness of pregnancy and childbirth.

The pregnant woman in this work is represented as healthy and fit (the model maintained her muscular body and avoided being controlled by her pregnancy). The female figure and her young child are surrounded by a lush green landscape while walking though a bed of bright red flowers. These bright flowers are suggestions of fertility and health. There is also a powerful feeling of guidance in this work. The strong family ties, love and guidance the researcher experienced throughout life, influenced this. The head of the woman was excluded from this work to remove her identity, thus including female viewers, encouraging each one to imagine themselves as the mother figure, both literally and symbolically.

The different figures suggest a progression through life. There is also a possible hint at the return to innocence (innocence and nature holding similar connotations). Viewers who enjoyed the pregnancies of their wives, their own pregnancies or simply the idea of pregnancy, will find this painting more amicable owing to its more pleasant and uplifting content.

4.3.8. Reproductive machine (fig 27)

As mentioned previously *"The reproductive machine"* was inspired by the section of the theoretical research, dealing with feminist attitudes toward pregnancy, and the belief of the feminist Emily Martin (cf. Chapter 2 p.13) that women have been linked with an industrial metaphor, by society.

The figure is painted to suggest violation and to appear "opened up" and dishonoured, for the sake of the scrutiny of the viewer. The background suggests another link to the industrial theme and the feminists' belief that there has been a male take over in the field of childbirth which has been made possible by technology (cf. Chapter 2 p.14). The machines appear to chug, squeal and pump around the semi-nude figure. The surrounding machines are painted to appear connected to the foetus through an industrial lifeline into the stomach. This rather blatant, perhaps disturbing image, is depicted to draw attention to the destruction of pregnancy and birth as natural occurrences, it underlines how "nature" has been replaced by a never ending flow of machinery, often an unnecessary intrusion of privacy. To the viewer, this image may also suggest the possibility of violence, abuse and neglect. The portrayal of the machinery may be interpreted as a reaction against the industrial revolution or the intrusion of technology into the most private aspects of life.

4.3.9. The loss of identity (fig 28)

"The loss of identity" as mentioned previously was influenced in regard to both composition and format, by Klimt's work *"Hope 1" (fig 4)*. The format is long and thin to enhance intimacy between viewer and painting.

Through the research it became apparent that many pregnant women feel they are no longer viewed by society as individuals, but as *pregnant women* or vessels carrying a foetus. When viewed in this light pregnant women lose their identity. The African mask in this

work robs the woman of her identity, emphasising the experience. The horns are incorporated onto the mask on account of the fact that within many African cultures, the horns are believed to hold the magic, which ensured fertility. In this painting, the figure is surrounded by the reproductive organs of plants. The anterior brightly coloured flower was painted to appear dissected, putting the reproductive organs on display. This image suggests that when women are pregnant, their privacy is disregarded. The other images of herbaceous reproductive organs, imply fertility, the central theme of this work.

4.3.10. The ever present instinct (fig 29)

This painting is analogous to the previously discussed art work, *"Biological ticking"*, it too, deals with the belief that all women want to have children, to fulfil their lives. This painting is also a representation of contemporary society's obsession with physical appearance and how many women fear pregnancy because it would destroy their figures; when pregnant, many view themselves as unprepossessing and corpulent (cf. Chapter 2 p.20). This obsession is portrayed by the figure appearing as society deems attractive (thin and young) and garbed in brightly coloured "sexy" attire.

The composition is imperative in this painting as it serves to "box in" the figure into the shallow space, suggestive of a baby cot. The importance of the figure appearing captured, was to portray how the figure (representing women in general) is unable to escape the foetus, (representing the instinct or ever present desire to reproduce) boxed in above her.

Possible interpretations may include the idea of a rebirth or that the painting represents the circle of life. The painting also may imply to many, the unnatural or supernatural because of the floating foetus'. The question of whether the figure is pregnant, (early stages) will also feature.

4.4. Conclusion

The potential for the theme to be more extensively researched both theoretically and pictorially is great. Theoretically, by delving deeper into the history of the image in Fine Art highlighting possible reasons for the neglect of the image by artists, thoughout history and in contemporary society. Pictorially, further experimentation could be done uncovering the potential of the image within the context of Fine Art.

Attitudes and Fine Art are continuously evolving, this should result in the theme developing in numerous directions, creating possible topics for future research.

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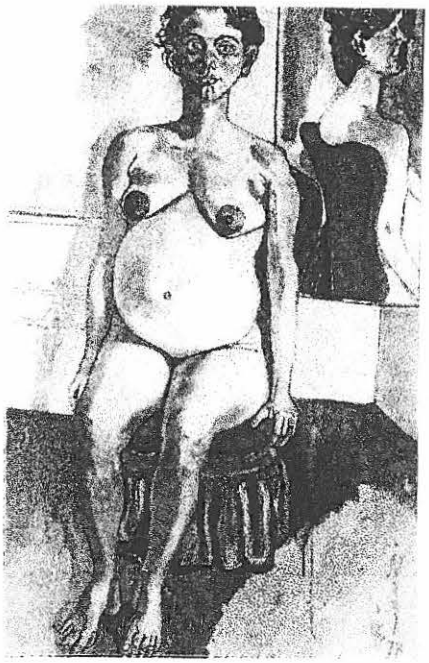
Fig 1 ***"Arnolfini wedding"*** 1434
Jan van Eyck
oil on canvas
(32\23.5 in)

Fig 2 ***"Pregnant woman"*** 1913
Marc Chagall
oil on canvas
(194\116,5 cm)



rgaret Evans Pregnant" 1978
Alice Neel
oil on canvas
(146.7|96.5 cm)

Fig 4 ***"Hope 1"*** 1903
Gustav Klimt
oil on canvas
(188\67 cm)

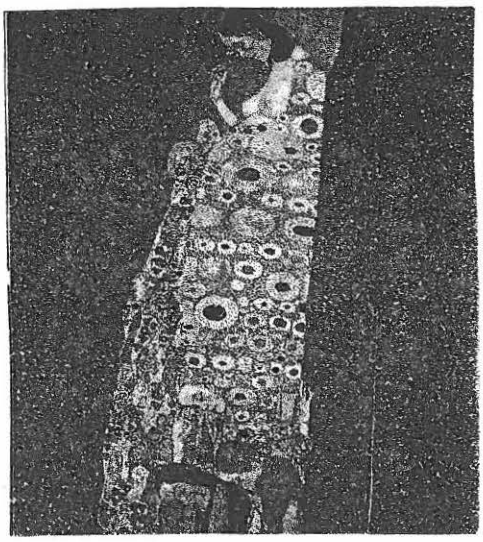


Fig 5 ***"Hope 2"*** 1907
Gustav Klimt
oil on gold canvas
(110\110 cm)

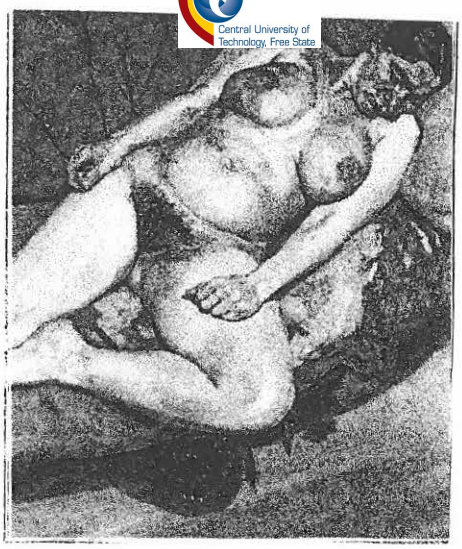


Fig 6 ***"Naked portrait 2"*** 1980
Lucian Freud
Oil on canvas
Dimensions unknown

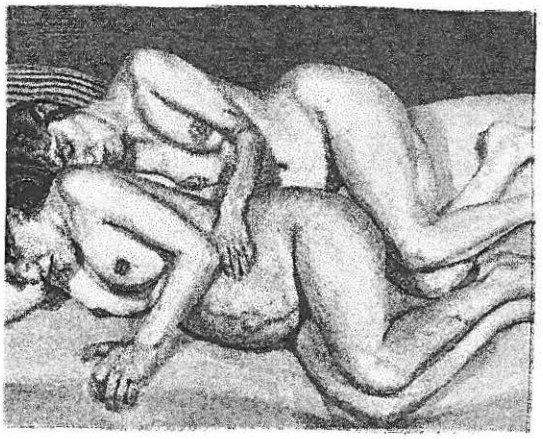


Fig 7 ***"Annie & Alice"*** 1975
Lucian Freud
Oil on canvas
Dimensions unknown

Fig 8 ***"Untitled 1989"***
Cindy Sherman
colour photograph
(61.5\48.25 in)

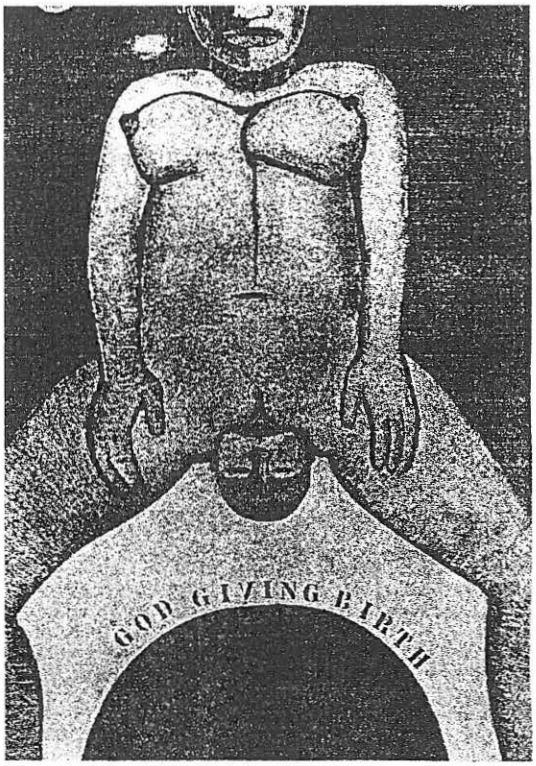


Fig 9 ***"God giving birth"*** 1969
Monica Sjoo
Oil on canvas
Dimensions unknown

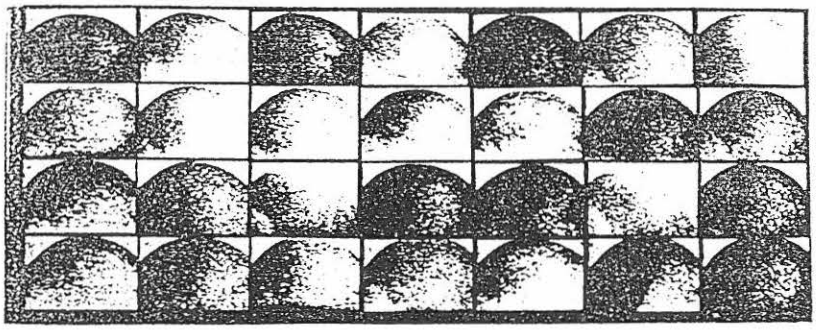


Fig 10. Detail

Photograph

Fig 10 ***"10 Months"*** 1977-9
Susan Hiller
10 composite monochrome photographs with captions
Dimensions unknown

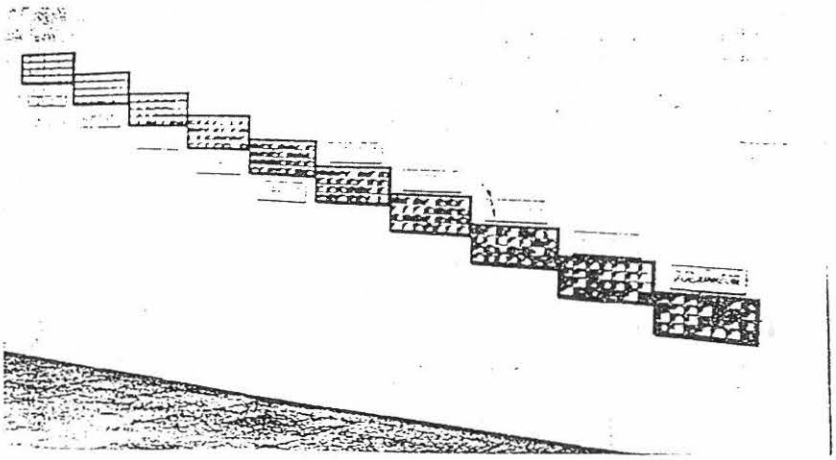
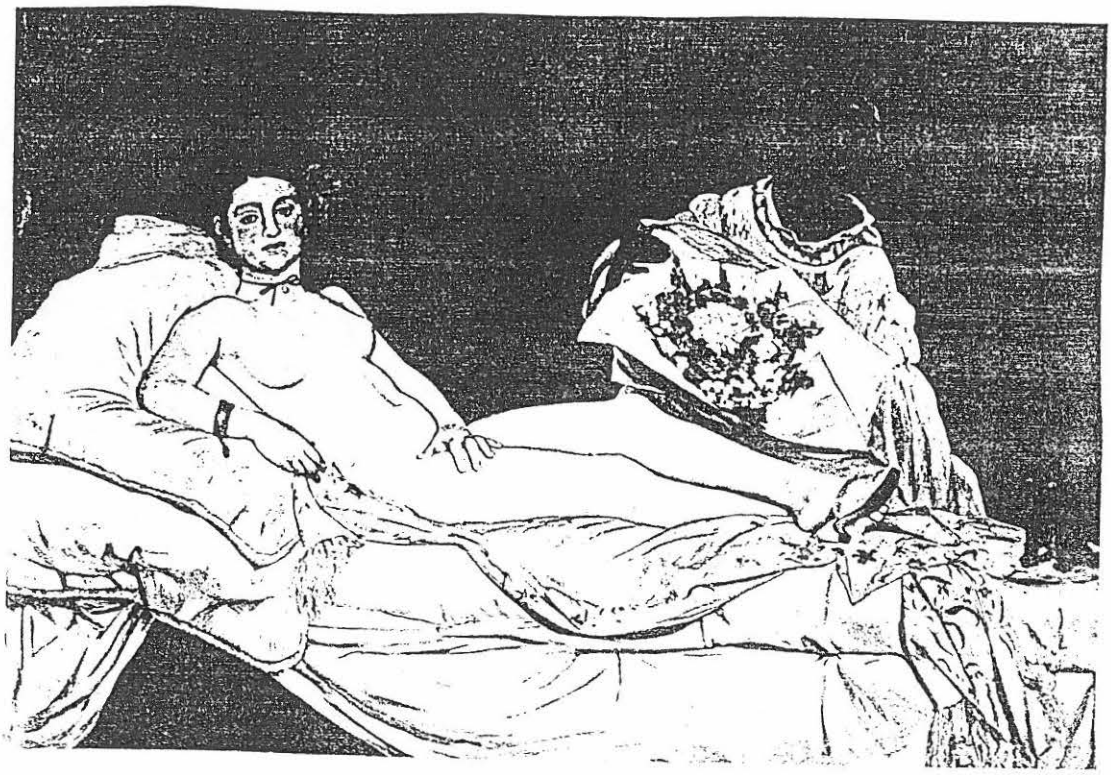


Fig 11 **"Leslie pregnant"** 1987
Joyce Tenneson
Colour photograph
Dimensions unknown

12 ***"Pregnant Maria"*** 1964
:e Neel
ɔn canvas
\47 in)

"Olympia" 1863
d Manet
canvas
sions unknown



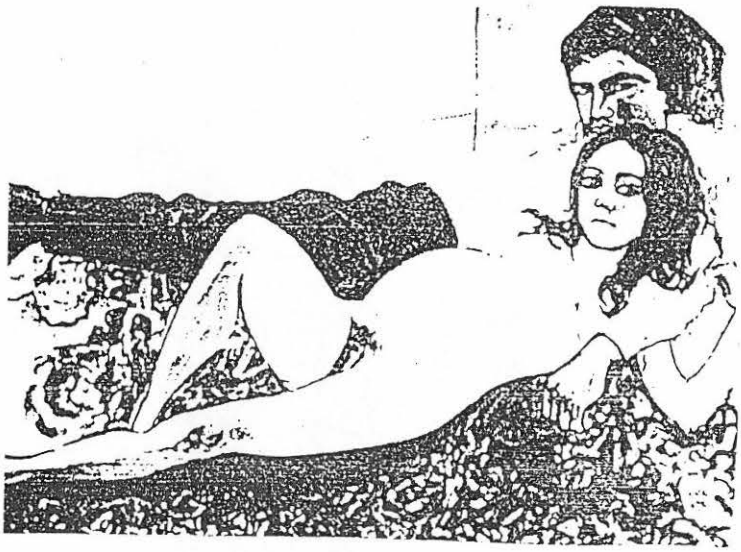


Fig 14 *"Pregnant Julia and Algis"* 1967
Alice Neel
oil on canvas
(106.7\162.6 cm)

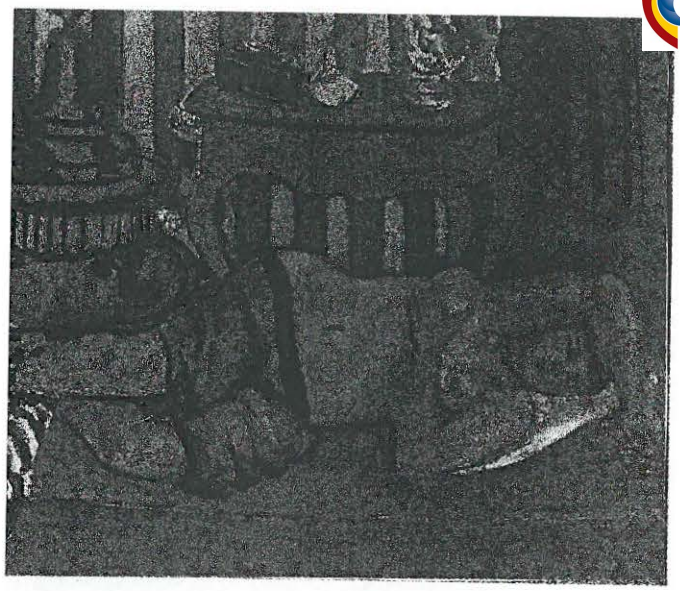
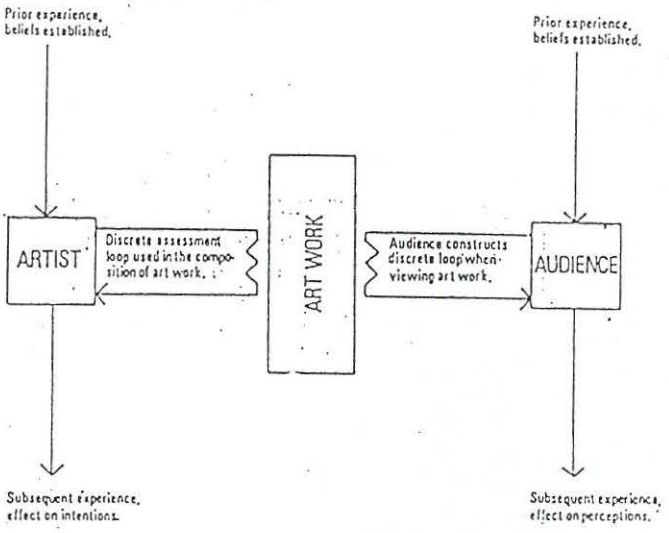


Fig 15 ***"Odalisque with green sash"*** 1927
Henri Matisse
Oil on canvas
Dimensions unknown

Fig 16 ***Art works traditional place*** 1976
Stephen Willats



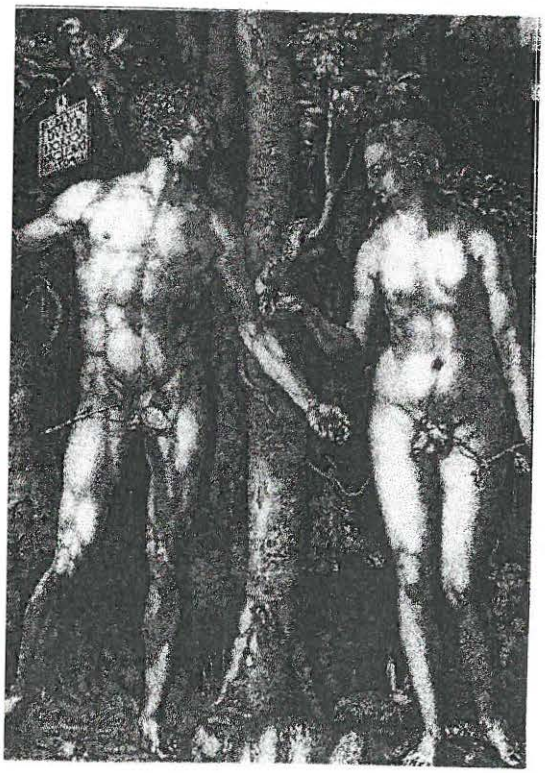


Fig 17 ***"Fall of man"*** 1504
Albrecht Dürer
Engraving
(10\7.5 in)

Fig 18 *"Visitation"* 15 century
Dirk Bouts
Oil on panel
Dimensions unknown

Fig 19 *"Venus of Willendorf"* 28000-25000 BC
Artist unknown
Stone
Dimensions unknown

Fig 20 *" The bridal suite"* 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
(1.25m \ 1.5m)

Fig 21 *"In the house of God"* 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
2m \ 1.5m

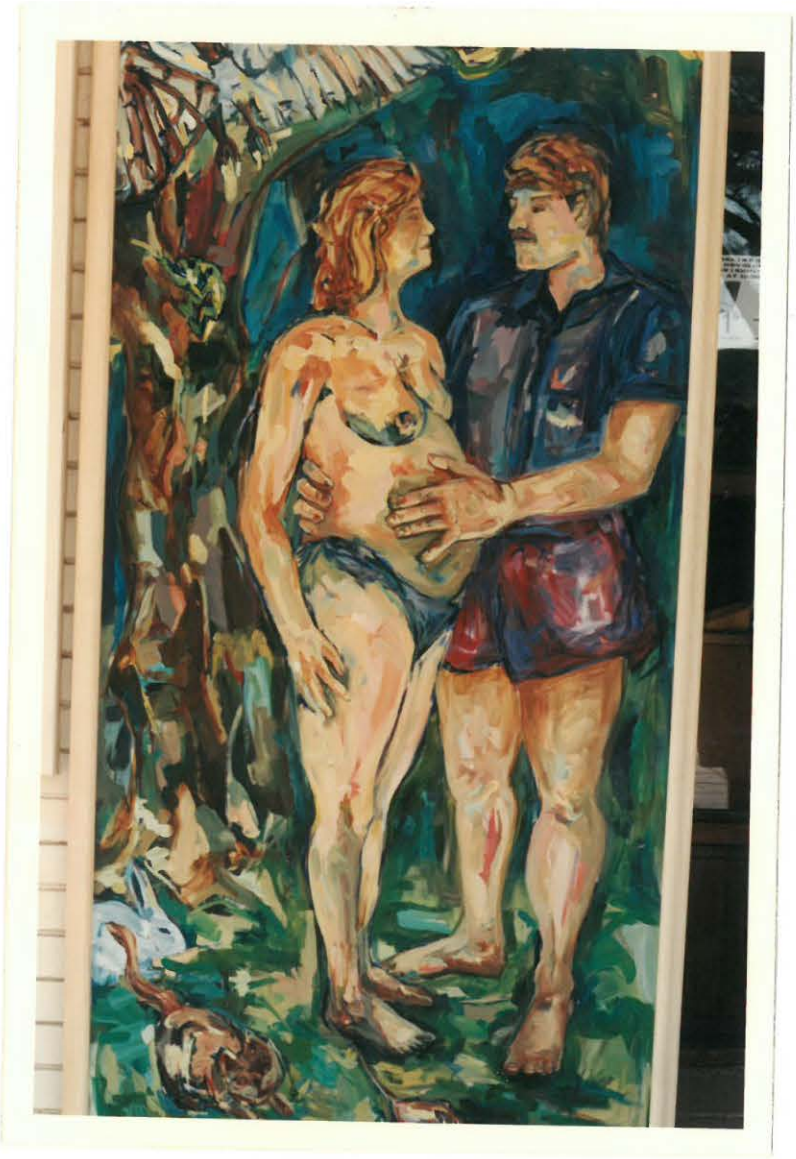


Fig 22 ***"Fall of man"*** 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
2.5m \ 1m

Fig 23 ***"Biological ticking"*** 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
0.75m \ 1.25m

Fig 24 *"Kathleen"* 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
1m \ 1.5m

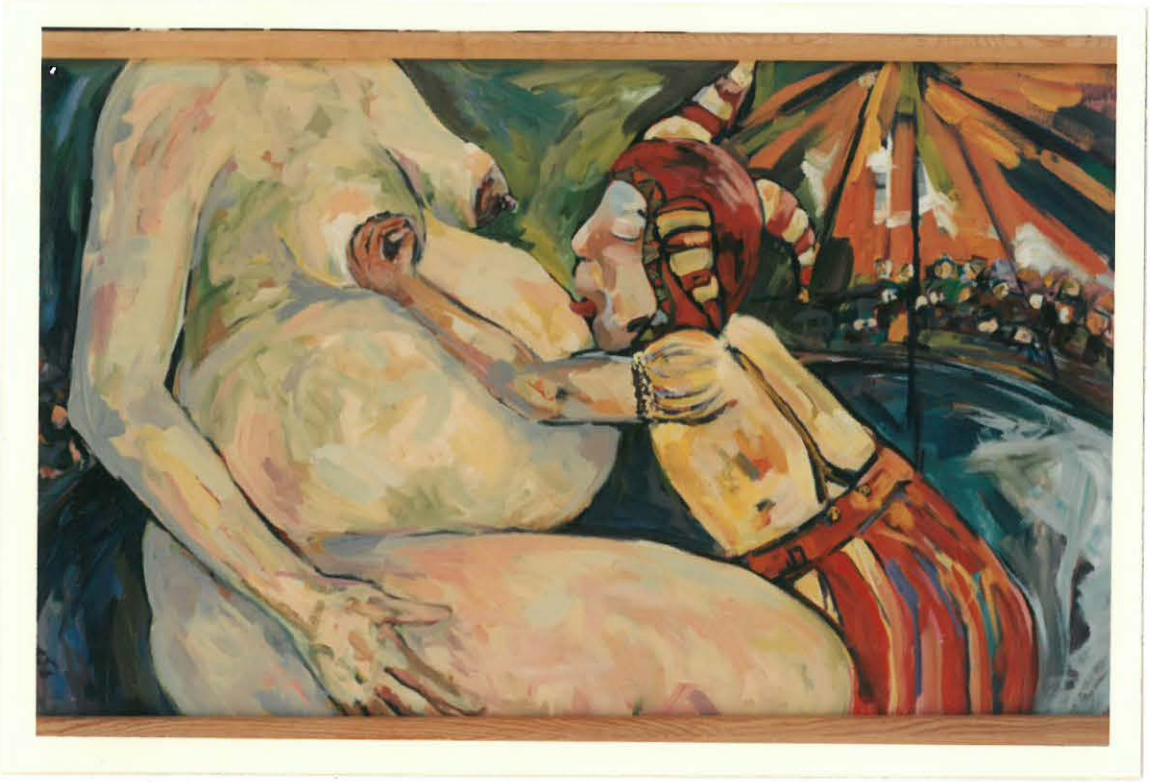


Fig 25 ***"An exhibit at the circus"*** 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
0.75m \ 1.25m

Fig 26 ***"A return to nature"*** 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
1m \ 1.5m

Fig 27 *"Reproductive machine"* 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
0.75m \ 1.25m

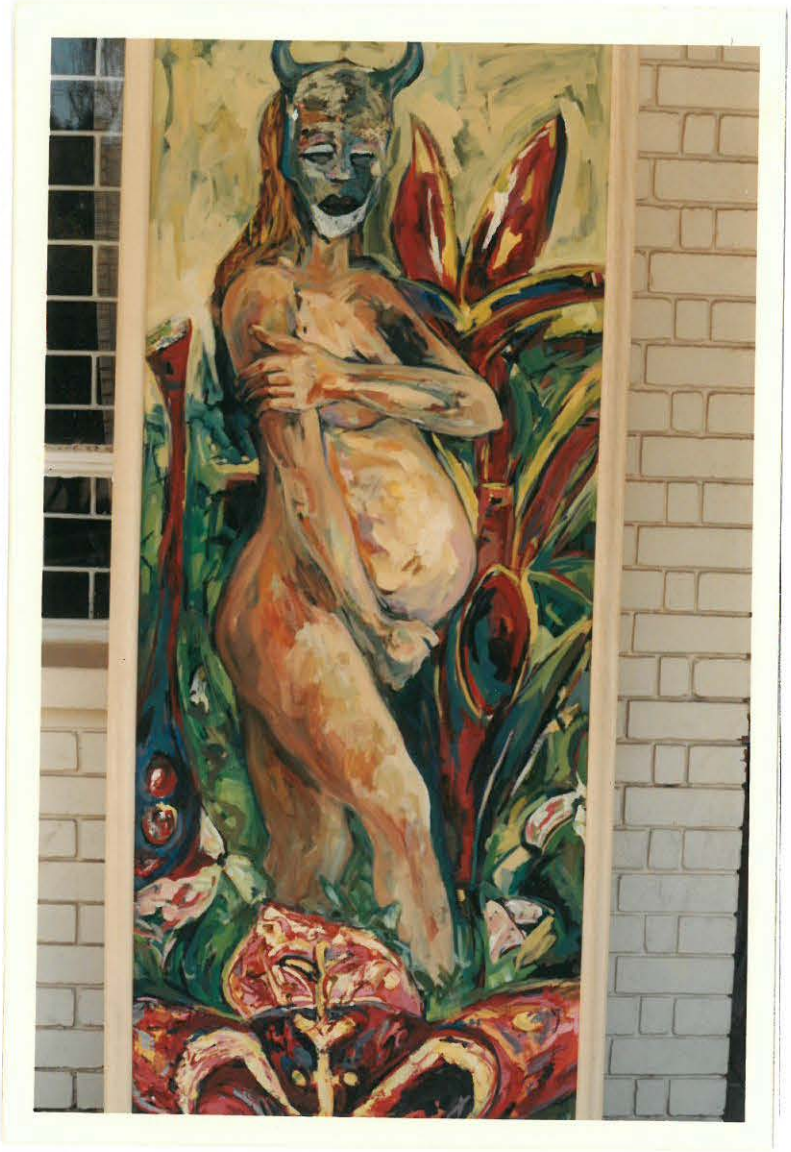


Fig 28 ***"The loss of identity"*** 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
2.25m \ 0.75m

Fig 29 ***"The ever present instinct"*** 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
2.25m \ 0.75m

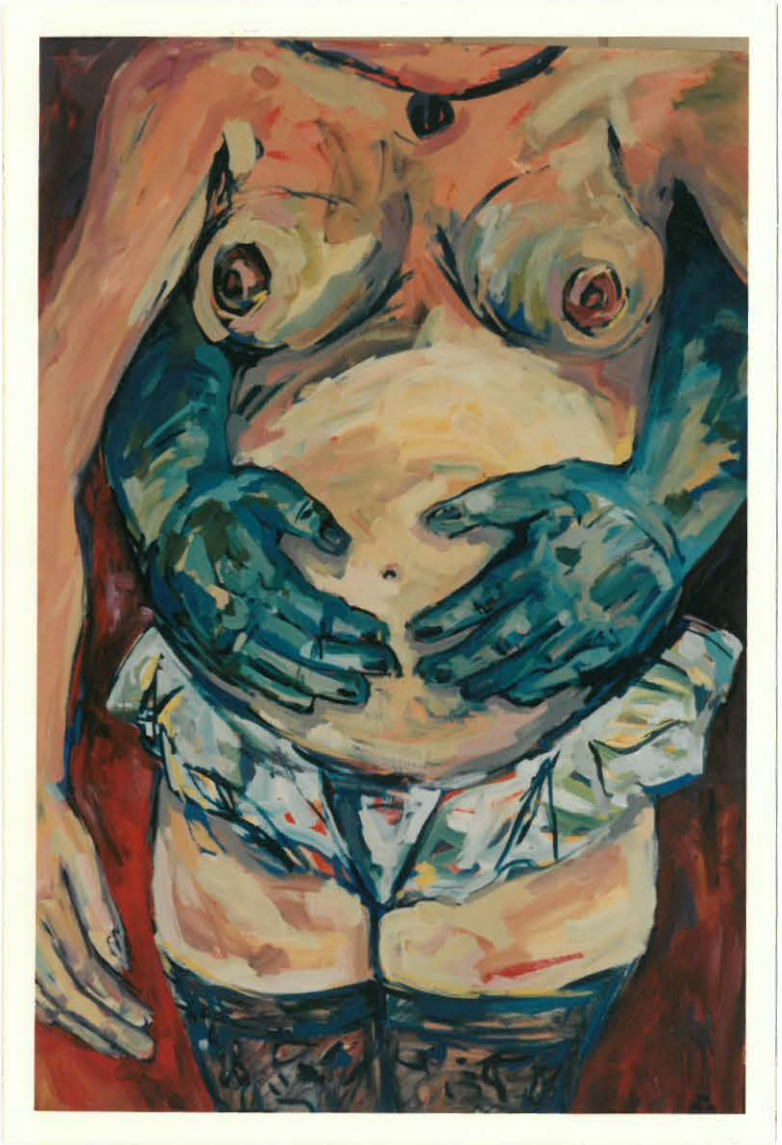


Fig 30 "*Alien possession*" 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
1m \ 1.5m

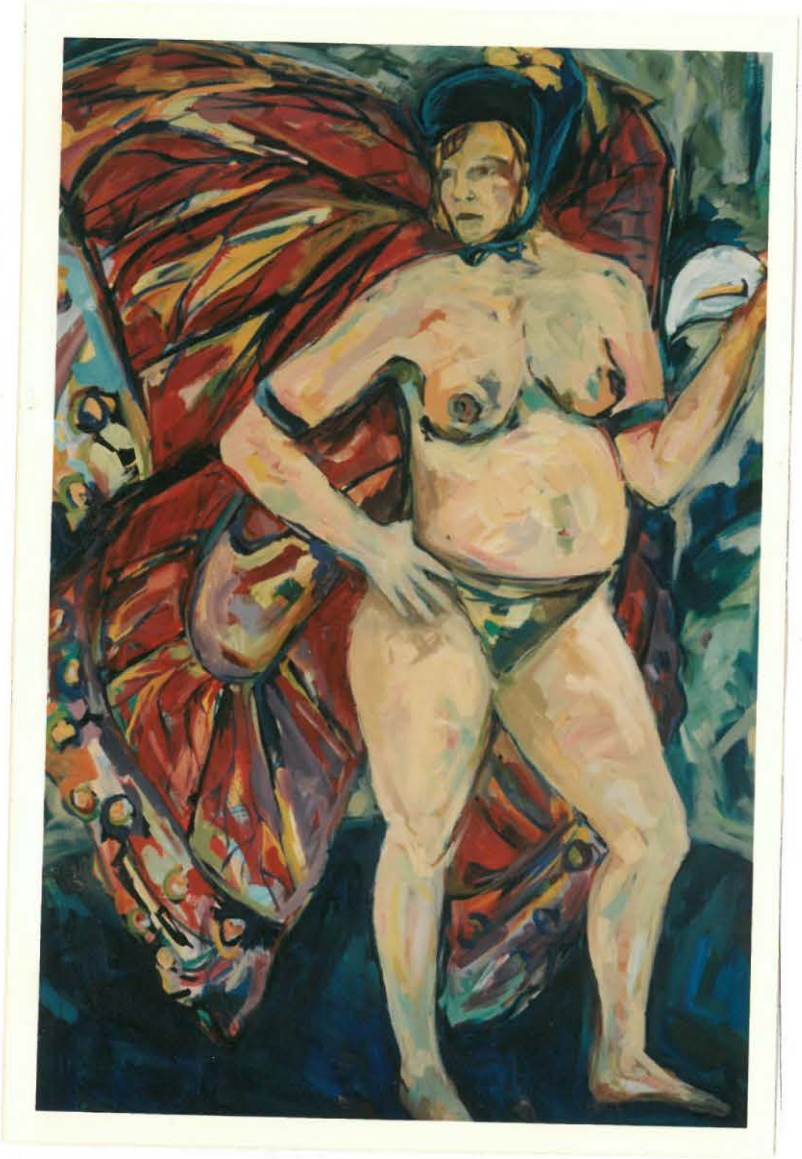


Fig 31 ***"Butterfly"*** 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
1m \ 1.5m

Fig 32 ***"Annunciation"*** 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
1m \ 1.5m

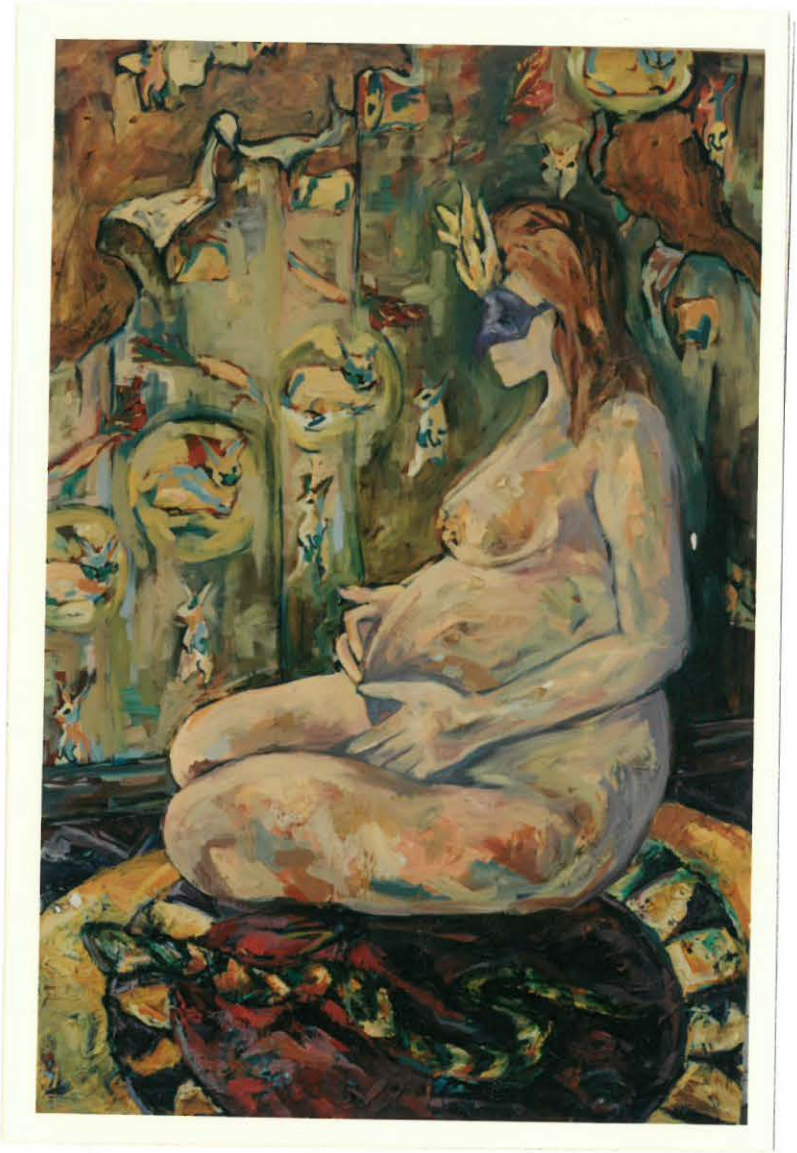


Fig 33 *"Home"* 1997
Sheena Martin
oil on canvas
1m \ 1.5m

Illustrations: Bibliography

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Fig 3 Hellar, N. G. 1987. Women Artists. New York : Abbeville Press. p. 49

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Fig 20 " The bridal suite" oil on canvas. Sheena Martin. 1.25m \ 1.5m

Fig 21 "In the house of God" oil on canvas. Sheena Martin. 2m \ 1.5m

Fig 22 "Fall of man" oil on canvas. Sheena Martin. 2.5m \ 1m

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