UNLOCKING TRAUMATIC MEMORIES THROUGH DIGITAL STOP-FRAME ANIMATION: A FREUDIAN ANALYSIS

by

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ABSTRACT

This study critically investigates the significance of a Freudian model in an analysis of artworks included in my video-installation, *Loss.* A practice-led research approach is followed. The medium employed in creation of the artworks is digital stop-frame animation as video art and video-installation. An application of theoretical positions is integral to my creative work in the way that it evokes, reveals and excavates personal loss and traumatic memories. Video, and more specifically digital stop-frame animation, is argued to be a medium which advances creativity. It is perplexing, multidimensional and unique in the way that it brings together distinctive components of Freudian and contemporary trauma theory. In the research analysis visuals and narratives are used not only to contribute to or further an understanding of Freudian theory, but also to criticise and test the applicability of his theories in modern society. Performative and qualitative research methods as well as self-reflexivity assist in visual and theoretical exploration of the particularities and nature of video artworks produced by technology. These methods focus on digital stop-frame animation, which is presented as a new form of creative expression, and the way trauma, memory and loss are visualised through the medium. It includes processes such as digital painting and drawing using, for instance, a computer mouse and Adobe Photoshop. The video-animations are done by using the layering function, paint-box effects, colour filters and the Liquify tool. This tool is employed as the single means by which moving images are created. Through both the theoretical and practical components of this study it is argued that the digital layering and erasure of images mimic the process of engaging with repressed as well as remembered trauma. The practice of digital stop-frame animation is integrated in Freud's analysis of traumatic memory, anxiety, repression, screen memories, mourning, melancholia, hysteria, Nachträglichkeit and trauma-dreams. The video artworks emphasise memory as a complex system which triggers the repression of traumatic memories of child sexual abuse, the loss of a childhood friend and miscarriage. A dominant theme that reinforces the conclusion of the study is the extent to which traumatic memory, loss and child sexual abuse are interlinked in Freud's trauma-model. It is further supported by contemporary theory.

KEY WORDS

traumatic memory, digital stop-frame animation, Freud, *Loss,* video art, trauma, trauma theory, repression, screen memories, mourning, melancholia, child sexual abuse, hysteria, Nachträglichkeit, trauma-dreams.

ABSTRAK:

DIE ONTSLUITING VAN TRAUMATIESE HERINNERINGE DEUR MIDDEL VAN DIGITALE STOPRAAMANIMASIE: 'N FREUDIAANSE ANALISE

Die doel van hierdie studie is om sommige van die videokunswerke wat deel vorm van die video-installasie, *Loss,* vanuit 'n Freudiaanse oogpunt te evalueer by wyse van praktykgebaseerde navorsing. Digitale stopraamanimasie as videokuns en video-installasie is die kunsmedium waardeur die kunswerke geskep is. Die ondersoek en toepassing van traumateorieë met betrekking tot traumatiese herinneringe vorm 'n integrale deel van die studie aangesien die kreatiewe werke persoonlike verlies en traumatiese herinneringe ontsluit, blootlê en ontgin. Daar word geargumenteer dat kreatiwiteit bevorder word deur video, en meer spesifiek digitale stopraamanimasie. Hierdie medium is immers multidimensioneel en uniek in die wyse waarop dit kenmerkende komponente van Freudiaanse en kontemporêre traumateorieë bymekaar uitbring. Analise van die visuele sowel as narratiewe word nie net in die navorsing aangewend om 'n begrip van Freud se teorieë te bevorder nie, maar ook om die toepassing daarvan in 'n moderne samelewing krities te toets. Performatiewe en kwalitatiewe navorsingsmetodes sowel as selfrefleksie bevorder die visuele en teoretiese ondersoek van die besondersheid en aard van videokunswerke wat met behulp van tegnologie geskep is. Hierdie metodes fokus op die aanbieding van digitale stopraamanimasie as 'n nuwe vorm van kreatiewe uitdrukking en die manier waarop trauma, verlies en geheue daardeur gevisualiseer word. Dit sluit kunsprosesse soos die aanwending van Adobe Photoshop om digitaal te teken en verf, in. Die video-animasies word geskep deur die gebruik van die "layering"-funksie, "paint-box"-effek, kleurfilters en die Liquify-funksie wat deel vorm van die Adobe Photoshop-pakket. Die Liquify-funksie word as die enkele wyse waarop bewegende beelde geskep word, aangewend. Daar word deur middel van beide die teoretiese en praktiese komponente van die studie geargumenteer dat digitale "layering" en uitwissing van beelde die hanteringsproses van onderdrukte traumatiese herinneringe sowel as die onthou daarvan naboots. Die beoefening van digitale stopraamanimasie is geïntegreer in Freud se analise van traumatiese herinneringe, angstigheid, onderdrukking, skermherinneringe ("screen memories"), die rouproses, melancholie, histerie, Nachträglichkeit en traumatiese drome. Geheue word deur die videokunswerke beklemtoon as 'n komplekse sisteem wat verantwoordelik is vir die onderdrukking van traumatiese herinneringe met betrekking tot die seksuele misbruik as kind, die verlies van 'n vriend tydens die kinderjare en miskraam. 'n Dominante tema wat die gevolgtrekking van die studie versterk, is die mate waarin traumatiese herinneringe, verlies en seksuele misbruik as kind onderling verbind is met Freud se traumateorieë. Dit word verder versterk deur kontemporêre traumateorieë.

SLEUTELBEGRIPPE

Traumatiese herinneringe, digitale stopraamanimasie, Freud, *Loss,* videokuns, trauma, traumateorieë, onderdrukking, screen memories, rouproses, melancholie, seksuele misbruik van kinders, histerie, traumatiese drome, Nachträglichkeit.

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AV: Audio video
CD: Compact disc
CGI: Computer generated images
CSA: Child sexual abuse
DVD: Digital versatile disc
fMRI: Functional magnetic resonance imaging
HD: High definition
LCD: Liquid crystal displays
NLE: Non-linear editing
PLR: Practice-led research
PTSD: Post-traumatic stress disorder
VHS: Video home system

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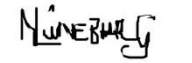
Signature:  Date: 17/07/2017

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and background to the study

Over the past decades the moving image movement has become a significant medium used by contemporary artists. Catherine Elwes (2005:11) argues that fascination artists HAVE with moving visuals stems from the influence of media and technology in daily life. The interaction between visual art, new technology and movement has changed over time. Personal and collective stories are expressed and dispersed extensively through video (Sherman 2005:3). Some artists use video as an intimate medium to portray their own bodies and thoughts. Many video artists are concerned with memories of historical events, whether personal or collective, and how these memories interlace with the present. Some artists use video to present personal subjective narratives, almost like small fragments, to reflect their own emotions, interpretations and memories regarding their history. For instance, some artists used video art during the traumatic aftermath of World War II to deal with and express collective and personal traumatic war memories (Rush 2003:85-87).

Throughout the relatively short history of video art many artists employing this medium have often been sensitive to trauma such as personal loss and oppression. Some video artists have the ability to preserve traumatic memories and loss through video art and to integrate loss and trauma with his or her personal narrative. In my artworks video is used to explore my experiences of loss and traumatic memories; it thus becomes a medium by which memory is remembered, forgotten and contained.

My body of artworks plays a crucial and dynamic role in my research process. The research, so to speak, revolves around the artworks and I follow a practice-led research (PLR) approach. Thus it is paramount that my practical work is firmly entrenched in the relationship between conceptual and theoretical aspects of video as medium. An important aim of the research is to produce a substantial body of artworks involving moving images that explore loss and traumatic memories. The study involves an exhibition of video artworks presented in an installation titled *Loss*, a theoretical component comprising this thesis, and a catalogue of the artworks.

These artworks engage in a dialogue with certain aspects of Sigmund Freud's (1856-1939) psychoanalytic theories. I apply these trauma theories to the Freudian interpretation of traumatic memories and trauma as a result of loss and child sexual abuse (CSA) in three

separate chapters. Subsequently I critically explore a number of concepts that emerged in Freud's theories regarding trauma, namely anxiety and repression, screen memories, mourning, melancholia, hysteria, Nachträglichkeit and trauma-dreams. The analytical framework for this investigation underpins the argument that video art facilitates the processing of these theories.

In the creation of my artworks I explore traumatic memories as understood in relation to Freudian trauma theory. This is done by using autobiographical reflexivity which implies that I grasp the idea of self through my artworks. By using autobiographical reflexivity, visual knowledge is revealed as a central part of my subjectivity. Throughout the study I am always aware of my personal experiences since it is in my artistic nature to produce work that is self-reflexive. Although the study is partly self-reflexive by nature, I aim to maintain a critical perspective on personal events. I achieve this by attempting to create a critical distance between the emotions surrounding my personal experience.

Seeing that this study takes a PLR-approach, the theory guides the practice, and the practice guides the theory. In doing so, both components remain meticulously cohesive. I follow Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean's (2009:3) design of PLR wherein "creative work in itself is a form of research and generates detectable research outputs". Furthermore, they argue that "creative practice – training and specialised knowledge that creative practitioners have and the processes they engage in when they are making art – can lead to specialised research insights which can then be generalised and written up as research" (Smith & Dean 2009:3). Research elements directly influence the creative processes in the way that writing and theorising are interweaved in the artworks (Smith & Dean 2009:7). Thus the artworks are visual signifiers through which traumatic memory is expressed.

1.1.1 "Loss": a video-installation

Loss (2014) is a solo video-installation that was exhibited for the first time at the Unisa Art Gallery (Pretoria) as the practical component of the degree DPhil in Fine Arts. The installation was later on also exhibited in Mbombela at the Innibos National Arts Festival. I therefore refer to the video-installation as an "ongoing" artwork which may be exhibited again at any time in the future. The exhibition was also captured on video as an installation artwork. *Loss* comprises, firstly, seven video-animations projected in large-scale format (15 x 6 metres) on artificial white walls; secondly, seven video-animations displayed in peeping boxes which include miniature ceramic furniture and houses; and lastly, three video-animations displayed on miniature screens mounted on a secluded white wall. The seven projected video-animations

are individually titled as *Dream from Afar, Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities, Desolate Slumber. An Attempt to Trace the Tainted bride, Wither, Dreaming of Home, Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures* and *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*. The seven video-animations displayed in the peeping boxes are individually titled as *Contrap(c)tion, The Moon and the Tree, Goodbye Little Miss Perfume, Departure, Janey Flew Away, In a little box* and *If I Did(n')t*. The three secluded small-scale video-animations are *Voyage, Lovers* and *Earth*.

The peeping boxes are large rectangular white boxes with peeping slits. By peeking into the peeping slit, the viewer sees a miniature set in which tiny ceramic furniture is arranged and positioned, imitating scenes of a bathroom, a family room, a girl's dormitory in an orphanage, gardens and houses. Small rectangular screens are mounted in wooden frames at the back of these scenes and display video-animations. These peeping boxes combine video artworks and miniature ceramic sculptures, using clay in a very specific and unconventional manner. Smooth hand movements shaped the soft, damp clay into sculptures in a process which echoes the liquified and fluid morphing movements of colours, shapes and objects in the video-animations. Every single mark made in the clay is evident on the surface just like traumatic events leave scars. Although the firing process changes the raw clay sculptures into harder solid structures, they are still easily damaged if not handled with care. The fragility of the raw ceramic objects relates to the delicateness and vulnerability of the sexually abused child.

The following images provide an overview of *Loss* as video-installation to the reader who has not experienced the exhibition. Figures 1 to 4 provide a view of the exhibition space as well as an idea of the size of the large-scale projections. *Loss* as video-installation is further investigated and explained in Chapter Two.

Figure 1: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014*.*
Interior of the video-installation.
Photograph by Elmarie Naudé.

Figure 2: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014*.*
Interior of the video-installation.
Photograph by Carla Crafford.

Figure 3: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014*.*
Interior of the video-installation.
Photograph by Nicolene Olckers.

Figure 4: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014*.*
Interior of the video-installation.
Photograph by Catherine Tereblanche.

The objective of *Loss* is to explore memories of traumatic events and experiences that give form to past and present narratives. These narratives involve traumatic experiences and the effects thereof. Another significant objective of *Loss* is to demonstrate how the moving images in the projected video-animations imaginatively represent personal traumatic experiences that have had an effect on my personal memory. The form and nature of the large-scale projections and peeping boxes create an expansive space in which traumatic and disturbing events are revisited.

1.1.2 Digital stop-frame animation as medium to portray trauma

I describe my video artworks as *digital stop-frame animations*.[1] It is a new technique in the field of video art which I developed. Digital stop-frame animation adds to academic discourse by contributing new knowledge to the visual arts field. The technique is unique since the Adobe Photoshop Liquify tool is used as the only tool to create movement from one frame to the next. Distortion is applied in layers to allow for a constant transformation between layers, and from one frame to another. While based on traditional 2D stop-frame methods, digital stop-frame animation takes this method a step further by also applying the Liquify tool to manipulate images to undergo a metamorphosis, which I call *morphing*. The digital paintings in these animations are referred to as *frames* since their position in time is calculated in frames. A sequence of frames creates the illusion of movement observed by the viewer and the position of the frames within the video-animation determines the timing of the movement. This is done with the intention to create moving images that spasmodically jump from frame to frame without the use of key frames to smooth transition uninterruptedly. This type of movement is different

[1] In this study my digital stop-frame animations are also called “video-animations” or “video artworks”.

from analogue morphing which requires two frames transforming seamlessly. By using the Liquify tool, pixels are pushed, dragged and expanded, peeling one layer from the other with the intention of revealing a new layer.

The distortion caused by the morphing connects to the ever-changing and fragmented nature of traumatic memories. These memories are stored in dissociated fragmented sections in the unconscious mind, which emphasises the fact that traumatic memories cannot be recalled in a normal manner (Van der Kolk 1998:52-64). In this way, the digital stop-frame animations and video-installation establish an intimate correlation between the nature of the medium and its visual context and content.

Several stop-frame animation artists such as William Kentridge, Monica Cook and Nathalie Djurberg deal with personal and collective trauma. As far as I am aware, I am the first video artist to specifically use digital stop-frame animation as a technique to express personal trauma and to explore the potential of this medium in this way. Video artworks and installations that employ video as medium to portray trauma include well-known exhibitions such as *In the aftermath of trauma: contemporary video-installations,*[2] *Reality bites: making avant-garde art in post-wall Germany,*[3] *Haunted: contemporary photography/video/performance,*[4] *On the margins,*[5] *Dream and trauma*[6] and *Built to break,*[7] to name but a few. The main aim of this study is to explore the unique properties of digital stop-frame animation as video art that render it ideally suited to portray traumatic memories. Chapter Two provides an overview of video art and a discussion on digital stop-frame animation as video art in more detail.

[2] This 2014-exhibition was curated by Sabine Eckman and illustrated collective traumatic memories regarding war and political instability across the globe.

[3] This 2007-exhibition illustrated artists' reactions to the trauma caused by the Berlin Wall politics and to the changes that shaped New Germany.

[4] This 2010-exhibition portrays personal and collective trauma through video art and film, sound art and performances.

[5] This 2008-exhibition showed artists' involvement with war and political conflict at the beginning of the 21st century.

[6] This 2005-exhibition draws on the unconscious, dreaming and trauma.

[7] In 2016 this exhibition by artist Katharine Dowson dealt with the personal trauma of a woman that was stalked for 25 years.

1.1.3 Autobiographical element

Two main characters appear throughout the 17 video artworks which form part of *Loss.*[8] The first character is the young woman and the second is the young girl. The young girl is the young woman as a child. Although I use my own face and body to portray these characters, the narratives are not wholly autobiographical. Through these characters I attempt to portray trauma, its consequences and the importance of healing. As the narratives of loss and trauma unfold in each video-animation, a spontaneous desire to revisit those traumas occurs. Thus it could be argued that my own traumatic experiences and its consequences inspired me to portray trauma. As a video artist I have been shaped by these personal traumatic experiences.

As a child I experienced trauma by losing a loved one to death and losing a childhood friend, and as a young woman I lost a love object[9] through miscarriage. In adulthood I have become aware of the importance of dealing with such traumatic memories. These traumatic experiences and memories form the framework of some of my video artworks and are visually expressed through a series of digital stop-frame animations.

I am also deeply aware of trauma as a result of CSA and feel compelled to portray it in my artworks. As is evident in Chapter Five, I have done extensive research on this subject and its consequences. Although for the sake of economy I do not discuss collective trauma, personal trauma could, in some instances, also become collective trauma (Veerman & Ganzevoort 2001:3). Alexander L Veerman and R Ruard Ganzevoort presented a paper on clergy sexual abuse and its personal as well as collective traumatic consequences. They refer to 'secondary trauma' which results from the 'primary trauma' (Veerman & Ganzevoort 2001:3):

> They [researchers on trauma] consider congregations dealing with clergy sexual abuse to be indirect victims, describing victimization as a "ripple effect", imposing waves of damage from victims onto those in circles around them. Thus, the community is treated as if it were an individual affected by some other person's trauma. Usually, the term secondary trauma is used for transferred trauma, suffered for example by therapists and relief workers.

As already mentioned, I explore the specific traumas of miscarriage, CSA and the loss of a love object in this thesis. I acknowledge the fact that an individual's trauma could also become the trauma of those around him or her. In cases where many children experienced CSA by a perpetrator or perpetrators, as happened among the clergy, for instance, as explained by Veerman and Ganzevoort, the "secondary trauma" is far-reaching and significant. I see myself

[8] For the purposes of this study, I do not refer to all 17 artworks, but only to ten selected video-animations.
[9] In this thesis a 'love object' refers to an important person in the victim's life. Loss of a love object is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

as part of this group who experience secondary trauma when a case of CSA and its details become publicly known.

My artworks are inspired by personal emotions portrayed through soundtracks, large-scale projections and video-animations displayed on miniature screens. These emotions are brought forward by using moving images, video-installation and sound. The creative process started with an emotion developing as a result of a traumatic experience. At first I was burdened by the emotions, but working on the artworks was therapeutic and the burden later diminished. Through the process of creative expression the emotion became more comprehensible and conscious. Therefore the creative process served as a form of self-discovery. My artworks were also inspired by Freud's trauma theories, although these theories are not explicitly directed at the emotions of artists.

1.1.4 Trauma theory: why Freud?

Freud is recognised as the forerunner in trauma theory and psychoanalytic approaches, and his idea of trauma is considered the basis of contemporary trauma theory. Although widely criticised, his theories still have a profound influence on investigative literature and contemporary criticism of the visual arts (Caruth 1996:10-12). The relevance of Freudian trauma theory in *Loss* naturally points the research towards a psychoanalytical investigation of trauma. Psychoanalysis, whether clinical or sociological, involves an observation and investigation of images in dreams which symbolise trauma. The phrase 'trauma theory' is used by Cathy Caruth in her book *Unclaimed experience: trauma, narrative and history* (1996) in which she elaborates on Freud's submissions surrounding traumatic experiences. Freud refers to 'traumatic neurosis' which was officially recognised and termed Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980.[10] According to Cathy Caruth (1995:3-5) PTSD is a condition usually caused by a traumatic event and symptoms include the recurrence of offensive images, flashbacks, hallucinations, dreams and obsessive re-experiences. Since trauma is widely experienced, it affects many fields, including psychology, neurobiology, literature, social sciences, law and history. In this study I focus specifically on psychology by exploring Freudian as well as contemporary trauma theories.

[10] According to The Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs (2007:[sp]) PTSD is a psychiatric disorder which could commence after the experience or viewing of a threatening event, for example military battle, natural catastrophes, terrorist attacks, serious accidents or sexual assault in adulthood or childhood. Most survivors of trauma can recover in time, though certain survivors suffer from recurring episodes of stress. These symptoms might deteriorate over time. PTSD sufferers frequently re-experience the traumatic events through nightmares, flashbacks and sleep deprivation and might experience detachment or feel estranged from their surroundings. These symptoms can be grave enough to negatively influence the survivor's day-to-day life.

Contemporary trauma theorists apply Freudian trauma theories as a starting point from which to investigate trauma further and to develop new theories. Thus Freudian trauma theory cannot be explained without referring to contemporary trauma theory and vice versa. Freud acknowledges the significance of unconscious psychological activity. He was the originator of the term 'psychoanalysis' and instituted revolutionary theories at the end of the nineteenth century. Some of his contributions include the concepts of dream analysis and observing of the human and unconscious mind (Beystehner 1998:[sp]). This study draws on and applies Freud's theories on trauma in the following way:

Firstly, Freud's theories regarding traumatic memories are revisited, analysed and applied to selected video-animations by means of reflecting on these memories. Arguments of Freud regarding repression of memories, anxiety and screen memories are paramount to my reference to traumatic memory. Repression of traumatic memories occurs when traumatic and stressful experiences are cognitively processed by the brain. These memories are reduced in such a way that they are not remembered as rational storylines (Porter & Birt 2001:102-103). The memories are sometimes repressed and the traumatic event is recalled by traumatic reliving and intrusive thoughts or dreaming.

In the second place the topic of loss is dissected according to the assumption by Freud (1917:244) that mourning is a normal process of parting with a love object. The loss of a love object may also result in melancholia and this is harmful to the mourner. Freud (1917:244) describes this as a painful process where the melancholiac has little interest in the outside world and has lost the ability to love. It is obvious that loss should form an integral part of the video-installation, *Loss.* For the purposes of this study I specifically refer to loss through miscarriage and how a woman's subconscious mourning revolves into obsessive melancholia, as well as the loss of a child's love object when a childhood friend is lost.

Lastly, CSA is explored by referring to three Freudian theories, namely hysteria, Nachträglichkeit and trauma-dreams. Freud and Josef Breuer ([1893-1895] 1995:207) hypothesised that some psychological disturbances in female patients result from trauma of a sexual nature and argued that all their patients could recollect being sexually seduced during childhood. Therefore I propose that hysteria is identified as originating from memory and is associated directly to an experience of CSA. Another Freudian theory relevant to CSA is Nachträglichkeit which refers to a delayed understanding of sexual trauma and establishing a connotation between this delay and earlier events. The dream theory of Freud also applies to CSA, but only certain aspects thereof will be applied and evaluated in this thesis. Instead, I focus on the relationship between trauma and dreams. According to Freud (1920:32) traumatic

dreams trigger and provoke anxiety which causes traumatic neurosis or PTSD in the dreamer. These dreams are often repeated and are ineffective efforts to fulfil wishes by dreaming. It results in the formation of nightmares.

1.1.5 Criticism of Freud

There are discrepancies in the scientific proof of Freud's theories, some of which are indeed outdated. Therefore this thesis focuses on Freudian theories of trauma in a non-scientific rather than in a scientific sense. From the start Freud's work was entwined with the recognised literature of his time. He uses Sophocles's *Oedipus*, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust* and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet, King Lear* and *Macbeth* to explain his understanding of unconscious drives and the multifaceted allegories and displacements of dreams (Sharma 2014:[sp]). Freud also employed the language of poets and novelists to outline irrational behaviour by pioneering concepts we have come to think of as commonplace. I rely on Freud's assertion that suffering is strangely obstinate in the lives of some people.

Critics of Freud, John Kihlstrom (2000) in particular, oppose Freud's relevance in the twenty-first century. Kihlstrom ([2000] 2003:[sp]) maintains that Freud cannot be described as a scientist and casts him off as a writer rather than a psychoanalyst. According to Kihlstrom ([2000] 2003:[sp]), little experimental evidence is found for Freud's psychoanalytic theories. One such idea is the notion that psychological development proceeds through oral, anal, phallic, and genital stages. Another is that young boys desire their mothers and fear their fathers. Kihlstrom ([2000] 2003:[sp]) further states that no empirical evidence specifies that psychoanalysis is more active, or more effective than other devices of psychotherapy.

As I am a female artist exploring Freud's trauma theories, it is important to refer to criticism of his theories from a feminist perspective.[11] According to George Dvorsky (2013:[sp]) as well as Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (1983:45), Freud's theories regarding gender, particularly with regard to female sexuality and homosexuality, is incorrect and widely criticised. This resulted in several feminists dismissing his legacy (Mitchell & Rose 1983:45). Likewise, psychoanalysis has been criticised for its male-centred interpretations of psychological theories, including trauma theories. Freud's view on women was disputed throughout his life and still is. In a 1925 paper titled *The psychical consequences of the anatomic distinction between the sexes* he wrote: "Women oppose change, receive passively, and add nothing of their own" (Freud 1925:137). With regards to this demeaning comment, Lawrence A. Pervin

[11] In Chapter Four critique on Freud's notions on women are discussed in more depth.

(1989:165) notes that Freud observes the behaviours of self-importance, compassion, obedience and dependency as distinctly entrenched in women. Freud also refers to differences in gender to emphasise subordination of the female patient and their unconscious practice thereof. As a woman, I bring certain elements of female sentiment, personal feelings and emotions to my artworks while Freud belittles women from a male high ground. Freudian theory regarding female emotions is developed from a male perspective. It harshly criticises femaleness and often misreads female emotions, diagnosing experiences of intense emotions as an illness or hysteria. This led to several feminist critics, for instance Nancy Chodorow (1978:142), Simone De Beauvoir (1949:70), Shulamith Firestone (1979:56) and John McMahon (2012:42) pronouncing Freud's analysis of the female as incorrect.

1.1.6 Freud and "Loss": art and dreams

Despite the shortcomings of applying a Freudian perspective to my practice, I am inspired by Freud's interest in art. His theories have had a constant resonance in art since the 1920s when the surrealist movement first claimed him as its "patron saint" (Jones 2006:[sp]). Freud's book *The interpretation of dreams* (1900) greatly influenced the surrealists, as further discussed in section 1. 1.7. He emphasises the prominence of dreams and the unconscious as mirrors of human emotion and wishes. His arguments regarding repressed inner worlds of sexuality, wishes, and violence provided a theoretical base for surrealist artists. Freud (1925:65) was interested in the particular stimuli resulting in the ambition and inspiration of an artist to produce artworks. His knowledge of art is founded on the psyche of artists and their aim to use different mediums to produce finished artworks. Freud theorises that an artist's life and experiences construct the psychological undercurrent of his or her creative output. From this perspective, art is profoundly connected to the expression of emotions and desires, such as sex and violence. According to Freud, a crucial component of artistic expression is the manifestation of unconscious wishes (Freeland 2001:158). Following Freud's analysis of artistic expression, I explore memories that are hidden in the unconscious, accessing it by probing and excavating selected traumatic memories that reside in the depths of my mind.

Antonio Di Benedetto (2009:347) suggests that artists were the first psychologists. Furthermore, he contends that there has been and still is a close relationship between art and psychoanalysis since the latter was first mentioned and investigated by Freud. Freud (1907:3-93) emphasises the artist's ability to portray psychoanalytical views through his or her artworks which unknowingly give insights into his or her unconscious. He also advocates artists' instinctive ability to visualise thoughts that persons would noticeably identify with. Freud further suggests that artists also have the ability to depict unconscious, traumatic memories without

recognising it as such. Similarly I also produce reflections on my own unconscious experiences through dreamlike landscapes and explore the functioning of the human mind and how it processes trauma.

Four of my video-animations' titles include the word 'dream.' These artworks mimic the formations, functioning and contents of dreams and portray them as multifaceted and coded arrangements of everyday events. These arrangements of memories manifest as visual metaphors in the artworks. They are visualised through an intricate pastiche of the characters' psychological state and comprise fragmented symbolic representations of childhood fears and repressed traumas. Freud's emphasis on the fact that the unconscious is entered through dreaming relates directly to the content of these artworks. According to Freud's interpretation, emotions repressed in the unconscious are hidden and manifest as cryptic signs. Remembered fragments of dreams can aid the exposure of repressed emotions. Repressed traumatic memories embedded in the unconscious are exposed by dreaming. This echoes the notion of Freud (1926:166) that traumas are not forgotten, but hidden. In my video-animations, the young woman unconsciously hides traumatic memories. When these memories surface in her dreams, she awakens in a state of angst, unable to fully remember the traumatic events since they are hidden in repressed memories.

Freud's interest in dreams accrued from his interest in neurotic symptoms and the use of the therapeutic method of free association (Trosman 1993:[sp]). In his search for understanding, his patients were required to associate freely and during the process many patients mentioned their dreams. He approached the dreams in the same way in which he approached symptoms, leading patients to spontaneously mention the first thing which came to mind when referring to specific elements that occurred in their dreams. Freud then applied this information in identifying dream symbols and their meanings. He thus interpreted dreams by applying psychoanalysis (Trosman 1993:[sp]).

Dreams are an effort by the unconscious to recall repressed memories of past events (Freud [1899] 2006:257). Freud ([1933] 1987:168) also refers to dreams as an attempt to fulfil a wish: when a dream is known to a person, it is the "hallucinated fulfilment of a wish". He regards dreams as "the royal road to knowledge of the unconscious" (Freud 1900:216,219). According to Freud ([1899] 2006:147,257) a person's thoughts manifest in dreams and personal experiences are repeated and remembered in dreams. Not all dream content is remembered in the waking life of the dreamer, however. Freud ([1899] 2006:148-149,285-286,400-401) identifies two types of content in dreams, namely manifest and latent content. Manifest content can be explained as the information which the conscious person remembers. It comprises real

images, feelings and thoughts within the dream which the dreamer is mentally aware of immediately after waking up. Manifest content is only a glimpse of the meaning of the dream. Other content is hidden and is exposed to the conscious mind only in a limited capacity (Freud [1899] 2006:148-149). This is referred to as latent content which, on the other hand, describes the concealed meaning of the unconscious feelings of the person, his or her drives and needs. The unconscious mind dynamically controls exposure of the latent content in order to shield the person from original emotions which are challenging (Freud [1899] 2006:148-149). Dreams become distorted as the content is profoundly hidden and imitative of the latent dream thoughts in the unconscious (Freud [1899] 2006:292-294). The true meaning of a dream is obscured because of this distortion and suppression and therefore the dreamer is not able to identify the real significance of the dream. Therefore it is possible that the true meaning would probably never be discovered.

The interpretation of dreams is known to be difficult. In *The interpretation of dreams* (1900) Freud moves around these difficulties by recognising five processes which assist in the interpretation of dreams. These processes are known as dream works. Trosman (1993:[sp]) explains it as follows: “The latent dream thoughts, stirred by the day residues, seek some form of expression. The vehicle for this expression, the means by which the latent dream thoughts are transformed into manifest dream content, is known as the dream work.” The first process is ‘displacement’, which takes place when the wish for one thing or person is represented by something or someone else (Freud [1899] 2006:341-343,535-537). Secondly ‘projection’ takes place when the dreamer projects his or her own personal wishes and needs onto a different person (Freud [1899] 2006:293,535-537). In the third place ‘symbolisation’ occurs which allows repressed wishes to be figuratively carried out in a dream. Fourthly ‘condensation’ demonstrates how the dreamer conceals his or her emotions and wishes by reducing their depiction into a transitory dream picture or event. Lastly, ‘rationalisation’ can be recognised through the dreaming mind as it renders a disjointed dream into a more cohesive experience (Freud [1899] 2006:318;496-498).

Freud (1920:13) refers to dreams as a “most trustworthy method” used to examine profound psychological processes. He notes that the dreams that fit with traumatic neuroses (which we refer to as nightmares) repeatedly return the patient back to his or her trauma, from which he or she awakens. Here Freud (1920:13) points to an obsession with the traumatic event. He claims that these patients do not seem anxious throughout waking hours, and he maintains that their dreams carry them back into these traumatic events during sleep.

1.1.7 Creation process

I follow a complex, interesting process when creating an artwork. The video-animations are created intuitively, and through the years I have realised that many of my traumatic memories stored in the unconscious were unlocked through the creation process. It is also worth mentioning that I sometimes dream vividly and can, many mornings after a night of dreaming, remember the dreams in excessive detail. This is reminiscent of the surrealists who created artworks reflecting their dreams and imagination, which in turn reflects their unconscious. My artworks seem to spontaneously seek the unconscious and images from my dreams flow freely during the creation process.

According to Dan Turkel (2009:4) surrealists reject rationalism and argue that the rational mind supresses the power of the imagination. As already mentioned, Freud is seen as the patron saint of the surrealist movement (Jones 2006:[sp]). Strongly influenced by his book, *The interpretation of dreams* (1900), surrealists attempt to tap into the unconscious. Their method is based on Freud's accentuation of the significance of dreams. Throughout his career, Freud emphasised that dreams are the unlocking devices of human feelings and wishes (Turkel 2009:[sp]). To Freud the unconscious is constructed in a similar way as language, but the language of the unconscious cannot rationally describe what the unconscious is. He argues that the unconscious conceals private and individual memories through displacement and transference and speaks in metaphors and symbols (Turkel 2009:[sp]). He used free association,[12] which is the unconscious flow of thoughts and automatic drawing or writing to discover hidden parts of the unconscious minds of his patients during therapy (Rubin 1999:229). His ideas regarding automatism strongly influenced French poet André Breton, the father of the surrealist movement.

With the publication of the text *Manifesto of Surrealism* (1924), Breton defined surrealism as a psychic automatism where controlled thoughts are absent, as well as all morals and preconceived aesthetic concerns (Breton [1924] 1969:26). Breton and his contemporaries produced the earliest samples of automatism in their automatic writings,

[12] Free association is a technique which Freud employed to assist in discovering the thoughts and associations a patient forms at an unconscious level. In her book, *Sigmund Freud,* Pamela Thurschwell (2009:24) describes Freud's technique of free association: "The importance of free association is that the patients spoke for themselves, rather than repeating the ideas of the analyst; they work through their own material, rather than parroting another's suggestions." Guy Thompson (1998:207) explains that free association allows the therapist or psychoanalyst to gain access to the patient's repressed memories by allowing him or her to speak unreservedly. Christopher Bollas (2008:21) elaborates on this method and argues that the process of free association has no fixed or linear-structured plan. It rather employs intuitive connections which may result in new subjective meanings. Thus free association could be described as a method to facilitate access to unconscious thoughts.

aiming to write as fast as they could without using conscious movements to guide their hands. The first surrealist artists recreated dream states through automatic drawing and painting (Bauduin 2015:1).

To access their dreams or unconscious thoughts, surrealists make use of automatism which, in psychology, refers to "involuntary actions and processes not under the control of the conscious mind" (Wilette 2011:[sp]). Examples of such actions and processes are sleeping and breathing. Techniques used by surrealists include automatic writing and free association (Turkel 2009:6). In terms of art production, automatism involves a certain creation process which does not entail any preconceived ideas or planning and commences without conscious thought. The artist unconsciously accesses images and memories from the unconscious to create the artwork (Tate Britain ([sa]:[sp]). It could be argued that the artist creates the perfect environment by standing in front of a canvas, for instance, and allows his or her mind to do the painting. The canvas is, so to speak, a land waiting to be ploughed for the first time and the artist does not think, but reacts. In ploughing, new possibilities and hidden thoughts grow from the unconscious. The surrealist artists also sometimes use dreams as mechanisms to uncover unspoken emotions and wishes, and are subsequently fascinated by the understanding of the symbolism and meaning thereof (Wilette 2011:[sp]).

Automatism and Freud's notion of free association are prominent in my artworks. I apply digital paint to a blank digital canvas, drawing a digital image. The image is then liquified and morphed into a second canvas to create the next image in the sequence. Although I apply automatism, the movement of my hand is admittedly not entirely uncontrolled.[13] It rather produces a dream element that is more composed than automatic drawing but still ethereal, similar to Salvador Dali's paintings. My artworks are still committed, however, to what is named '*poesie-peinture',* which is a poetic, visionary form of painting. During the creation process I disconnect myself from any rational process and completely submit to random thoughts and images that are surely sourced from my unconscious mind. In many instances these images have also occurred in my dreams at one time or another. Subsequently, a visual expression of the actual process of my thoughts takes place by creating on instinct. I, therefore, follow intuition and one surrealistic image flows into the next, apparently randomly. At the end of the creation process, the narrative is usually comprehensible, although in an ambiguous way.

The interpretations of the video-animations that form part of *Loss* expose a repressed inner world of trauma stored in the unconscious. Just as the surrealists' visual representations, the

[13] The marks produced in surrealist artist André Masson's automatic drawings, are uncontrolled and seem to be random.

imagery retrieved from my unconscious is bizarre, mystifying and strange. Chance creates my art and through free associations and automatic responses to my unconscious, I unlock memories surfacing through dreams.

1.2 Research question

My central research question is divided into two main components: Firstly, how can the unique character of digital stop-frame animation be manipulated to portray psychological trauma? Secondly, what insights can be gained when applying Freudian trauma theory to my video artworks which deal with traumatic memories, loss and CSA?

In order to deal with the first question, the particular qualities which distinguish digital stop-frame animation from other media are explored. These unique qualities include the way in which stop-frame animation results in self-reference, self-portraiture, time and space, and narrative. An in-depth examination of these concepts reveals that video art is uniquely capable of depicting personal thoughts and traumatic memories.

The second research question involves an investigation of my video artworks from a Freudian perspective. This investigation centres around three themes: traumatic memories, loss and CSA. Traumatic memories involve repression, anxiety and screen memories.[14] Critical analysis of my artworks highlights how traumatic memories can be depicted through video art. The second theme, loss, involves mourning and melancholia and the third theme, CSA, is explored through hysteria, Nachträglichkeit and trauma-dreams.

1.3 Aims and objectives

This study has four main objectives, which are the close exploration of video art, traumatic memories, loss and CSA, as explained below.

1.3.1 Video art

The predominant aim of this study is to identify how specific ideas in Freudian trauma theory, as well as contemporary trauma theory, relate to the digital stop-frame animation video artworks and video-installation in *Loss*, and how the latter, through projections using electronic screens and projectors, facilitates the representation of trauma. Trauma theory is reviewed

[14] Freud (1915:147) describes screen memories as undesirable traumatic memories which enter the unconscious and are not prone to surface. It is further discussed in section 3.3.3.

critically and gaps in theories are identified. My own submissions based on personal experiences of trauma are also included. Consequently, the interrelated theoretical frameworks of trauma and memory studies are brought into dialogue with the ontology of video art and video-installation as representational media. Aspects such as the unique nature of video art, the representation of time and space, and narrative are investigated. More specifically, attention is paid to the following characteristics of video art: 1) the use of electronic devices such as video recorders, computers, projectors and digital screens in conjunction with a variety of image-processing tools like video editing software; 2) the artistic language of video; 3) the time-based aspect of video which is, firstly, viewed in real time by the spectator, but also, secondly, gives him or her insight in my memories regarding past events; 4) installation space as a significant feature which resonates with the artworks; 5) disjointed or fragmentary narrative in video created by means of editing software; 6) immersive environment in the video-installation which accentuates the interaction between the viewer and the artworks; and 7) a soundtrack that works in harmony with the movement of images. All of the mentioned characteristics of video art are applicable to my artworks.

My digital stop-frame animations give shape to my traumatic experiences. The digital 'liquifying' of figures and objects present fragments of childhood memories by way of movement. When a viewer looks at my artworks, he or she does not only get a view into my personal memories, but also identify with it. His or her personal traumatic memories may even surface by viewing my works.

In order to achieve the objective of demonstrating video art as a medium that possesses unique capabilities to unlock memories of trauma and loss, reference is made to supporting theorists on video art.[15] It is suggested that video art speaks an aesthetic language exploring self-identity and gender issues and ties time, space and concepts together to form a visual representation of a certain message the artist wishes to convey. Like other media, video art can also be used to preserve historical footage and therefore plays a role in the structuring of memory – whether collective or personal.

[15] I refer to, amongst others, Helen Westgeest (2016), John Potts (2015), Chris Meigh-Andrews (2014), Michael Z. Newman (2014), Yvonne Spielmann (2006), Tom Sherman (2005), Florence De Mèredieu (2005), Elwes (2005) and Marita Sturken (1996).

1.3.2 Traumatic memories

Although Freud's trauma theories are my main focus, I also refer to some of his other theories which intersect with his position on trauma. A second objective is, therefore, to visually express, through video art, his repression theory as a defensive process that buries upsetting memories and emotions. This study aims to visualise the repression of traumatic and screen memories in representation of the unconscious, dreaming young woman in the video artworks. Certain symbols and layering of the images in the artworks are employed to portray her attempts to repress traumatic memories. Layering, stacking and liquification of images present processes of "screening" harmful memories. The numerous image layers symbolise protective shields which repress these memories.

1.3.3 Loss

The Freudian theory of loss is also expressed in my artworks and forms a third objective. I visualise the emotions regarding mourning and melancholia by focusing on metaphors that symbolise miscarriage and its effect on women, as well as the effect of losing a friend as a child.

Loss because of miscarriage is visually presented by morphing the woman's body into a pregnant shape, using symbols such as sonar images, flowing umbilical cords and disintegrating female reproductive organs. It is then brutally ripped apart by powerful movements, portraying loss of a baby through dilation and curettage[16] procedures. To portray the loss of a childhood friend, morphing is used to symbolise repression of the memories regarding the traumatic loss, but also the lingering of such a memory in the unconscious.

1.3.4 CSA

A fourth objective is an analysis of Freudian theories regarding CSA as well as an investigation of the visualisation and application thereof in my artworks. In the context of a sexual act imposed on a young child without him or her provoking such an act, hysteria might occur,

[16] This surgical procedure entails the dilation of the cervix and the surgeon uses a special instrument such as a clamp to scrape the uterine lining. Dilation and curettage procedures enable the surgeon to remove tissue in the uterus to induce a miscarriage or an abortion.

especially after sexual abuse in infancy (Whetsell-Mitchell 1995:5).[17] Recurring memories of the abuse are particularly repressed and do not surface consciously.

This is accomplished by conducting a Freudian analysis of two of my artworks titled *Departure* and *Earth.* The artworks subtly suggest CSA and the fractured memories thereof through visual references to vertically inclined objects such as trees. Thus the male genitalia in these works are symbolised by phallic objects which suggest penetration and damaging of the body.

1.4 Research method

A performative research approach is employed with the help of an auto-ethnographic model.[18] Performative research is described by Brad Haseman (2006:5) as a category of research aligned with many values of qualitative research; it differs from quantitative research methods because it includes representational forms of practice such as stills and moving images. The artworks express the research but also become the research itself. The research is practice-led and the artworks are the principal research objects. I critically position this research approach within a Freudian framework and conduct research through a method I call practice-following-theory-following-practice – the practice follows the theory and vice versa. The theoretical component includes integrative research.[19] This research employs specific trauma and memory theories which inspire the artworks. Thus the theoretical investigation consists of an analytical visual investigation of the video artworks forming part of *Loss.* The analysis of these works focuses on combining theory with the visuals through investigating the choice of images, narrative and the use of video.

The auto-ethnographic approach is useful in enabling me to analyse and examine my own identity and narrative, which becomes apparent in my artworks. As a methodological tactic, an auto-ethnographic approach is suitable for both the theoretical and practical components as it allows for a spontaneous interpretation of personal involvement and self-understanding, in as far as this is possible. Such an interpretation becomes particularly important to this research since the primary subject of the artworks in *Loss* is represented in an autobiographical manner.

[17] I do not necessarily agree with the fact that a young child could possibly provoke a sexual act, but will discuss this later on in the thesis.

[18] Carolyn Ellis (2004:xix) defines this research method as research that connects autobiographical and private forms of thinking to cultural, social and political thoughts.

[19] Marcela Tavares De Souza, Michelly Dias Da Silva and Rachel De Carvalho (2010:102) describe integrative research as “the methodology that provides synthesis of knowledge and applicability of results of significant studies to practice”.

As part of the qualitative research methodology, I include reflexivity as a research methodology that enhances the conversation between the subject matter, which is myself as the artist and researcher, and Freudian trauma theories. This methodology emphasises the fact that, although it may seem difficult to distance myself from my personal traumatic memories, I consciously attempt to discuss my artworks in an objective, critical manner. I do not randomly pour out all my traumatic memories in my artworks and the process is critically reflexive. In the process I become an important subject in the research process since my artworks speak of personal experiences. Freudian trauma theories are then applied to my artworks. I also argue that my personal experiences enhance the research effort instead of inhibiting it. Throughout the creation of my artworks, reflexivity helps me to understand past traumatic experiences which influence the present research.

As the research questions developed from my artworks are seen as a starting point, reflexivity forms a crucial part of my PLR. In the case of a study in which practice plays a significant role, PLR demands that the art practitioner executes the knowledge captured through aesthetic experiences and that the artistic production relates to its relevant contexts (Borgdorff 2011:47). The art practice and artworks can, in a sense, be regarded as research data (Arlander 2011:328) and therefore the artist as researcher must reflect on his or her own thought processes during and after the creation process. Thus documentation of the creative process makes it more transparent and also enables the artist to keep track of the developments of the creative project.

Loss as an artistic project was not documented in the standard textbook way. The use of multimedia and many artmaking processes complicated the project of documentation. The following, for example, had to be mastered: Adobe Photoshop as a digital painting and drawing programme, clay sculpturing, management of the logistics of the installation, and the workings of technical equipment such as display monitors, screens and projectors. PLR regarding reflexivity involves documentation, discussions, literature studies, journal entries, workbooks, research in archives and experimentation with colour, form and format. As an artist I created *Loss* through working reflexively by continuously considering what has been achieved and what needs to be adjusted to achieve certain effects. Since most of my video-animations are created through the use of automatism, prior planning does not take place. Alternatively, documentation takes place through the digital drawings and paintings in their raw form, sequenced into storylines. To me each digital image is a storyboard in its own right, since each frame determines the content of the next. Another observation is that each digital image can be seen as a photographic documentation of my unconscious thoughts and, in some instances, repressed memories. The reflexivity in these video-animations also lies in the discovery of the

theoretical perspectives, which is strongly rooted in Freudian theories regarding repressed memories, loss and CSA. Therefore powerful dynamics existed between the different forms of reflection, between me as an artist and the artworks, and between theory and practice.

This study also follows an exploratory research approach. It is relevant to the practical component of this study since the outcome is reached by an exploratory process employed in the creation of my artworks. In my audio-visual video art, the mentioned process pertains to certain production criteria, including the use of software to create the artworks. The practical component is the visual representation of an idea expressed through the use of a series of chosen media and production processes. In *Loss,* a wide range of media was used in the video-installation. These included artificial walls and a corridor, a range of peeping boxes, miniature ceramic objects, large-scale screens, projectors and electronic screens.

As previously mentioned, according to Freudian trauma theory, traumatic memories are buried in the unconscious. In my artworks I attempt to form the illusion of unlocking these memories. The artworks consist of images arranged in layers. Each image is made up of numerous layers which are then peeled off one by one in order to unlock memories stored in the unconscious. For this reason the whole process of creating the digital stop-frame animations can also be seen as a research method I employ to illustrate the so-called unlocking.

1.5 Theoretical framework

In this thesis digital stop-frame animation, as a form of video art, is seen to function as an art medium which has the potential to unlock traumatic memories. I use the unique characteristics of video art to accentuate and elaborate on ideas that are visually presented in *Loss*. With the purpose of contextualising the young girl and young woman's experiences of trauma, I offer a view on trauma theory in relation to video art, and more specifically digital stop-frame animation. The ways in which the Freudian trauma discourse is related to the unconscious worlds of these females unfold in the artworks and they are further explored in each consecutive chapter.

The theoretical framework of this study is broadly based on the characteristics of video art and theories surrounding traumatic memories. In this study the characteristics of video art are employed to understand video art as a medium, which is in this case used to portray traumatic memories. Video was first used as an art medium in the 1960s and the history and development of video art through the technological revolutions of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is further investigated in Chapter Two.

In the arguments dealing with the different trauma theories I identify and discuss two useful concepts, namely anxiety and repression on the one hand, and screen memories on the other. Freudian theories of anxiety and repression propose a process by which the ego recognises a threat and subsequently penetrates the protective defence guarding against such an external stimulus (Freud 1916-1917:393-394). Both anxiety and repression are based on Freud's (1899:320) dominant conception of screen memories which includes the connection between the content of one memory and that which is repressed.

Supporting the theoretical framework, the concept of loss in Freudian trauma theory is explored by applying his theories to mourning and melancholia. As already explained, his theories with regards to mourning and melancholia are based on his views that grief is "the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on" (Freud 1917:243) and that melancholia is connected to the loss of a love object. Melancholia, in comparison to mourning, is described by Freud as an emotion "through which nothing about the loss is unconscious" (Freud 1917:245). In other words, loss of a love object is experienced in the conscious as well as the unconscious.

Finally this study refers to the Freudian theories of hysteria, Nachträglichkeit and trauma-dreams and its applicability to CSA. During his years as psychoanalyst, Freud considered traumatic, repressed memories of CSA as the main reason for female hysteria. Although hysteria, as will be shown later on, has been and still is quite a controversial point of discussion amongst theorists, I refer to it as it plays a crucial role in some of my video artworks portraying CSA. Freud's notion of Nachträglichkeit further extends a psychoanalytical understanding of trauma and in this study it is applied to traumatic memories of CSA. Dreams and, for purposes of this study, trauma-dreams in particular, play an important role in Freud's psychoanalytic approach with regards to trauma. Repressed memories of CSA can surface in trauma-dreams and thus trauma-dreams are discussed.

1.6 Literature review

I group the literature that underpins this study into two sections. The first focuses exclusively on video art as a means through which concepts and ideas relating to trauma and memory are processed visually. The second plots out a trajectory of Freudian positions, focusing on the seven mentioned notions of Freudian trauma theory. While discussing Freudian trauma theory, contemporary versions of trauma theory are also investigated.

1.6.1 Video art

For background and current information regarding representational, artistic, technological, contemporary and narrative characteristics of video art, I draw selectively on a series of relevant texts. Video art is discussed as a medium which employs digital stop-frame animation to explain traumatic memories. It is also a medium by which self-reference and self-portraiture are portrayed, time and space are explored, narrative is expressed and memory and trauma are unlocked. Writings by video art theorists include Westgeest (2016), Potts (2015), Meigh-Andrews (2014), Newman (2014), Spielmann (2006), De Mèredieu (2005), Elwes (2005) and Sturken (1996).

For contextual information on video art as a recurring medium in the history and scope of the visual arts, I consult Meigh-Andrews's book *A history of video art* (2014) as an important source. The theories offered in this book underpins my suggestions that video art is a complex and multi-layered art form which dates back half a century. These suggestions are deeply entrenched in Meigh-Andrews's (2014:20-30) theories regarding the impact of the technical revolution on contemporary video art. My argument that video is an art medium uniquely suited to evoke and convey traumatic memories is supported by Spielmann's article *Video: from technology to medium* (2006). Her argument is useful in substantiating my point that video, encompassing a wide range of technology, functions as an independent medium. Spielmann (2006:59-60) theorises that one of video's many defining characteristics is the fact that its audio-visuality contributes to the medium's aesthetics or visual value.

Explaining my use of multi-media (digital painting and miniature ceramic sculptures, for instance), Elwes argues in *Video art: a guided tour* (2005:11) that video is a contemporary medium where some video artists also incorporate self-portraiture, painting and sculpture in their video art. Another significant key element to this study is observations by Elwes (2005:12) that narrative in video art was, from its onset, ever-present and evolving and that it stays an important component thereof. This confirms my argument that video art encompasses features of narrative and representation of space and time.

I demonstrate that video art can be interpreted as an addition to modern and developing practices of former and new media such as performance art and video-installation. Through qualifying video as a medium in contemporary art, Westgeest's publication *Video art theory: a comparative approach* (2016:16) substantiates my argument that video art is a narrative, representational, time-based and spatial medium intertwined with technology. Westgeest (2016:15-16) also submits that video is concerned with proximity and real time and is similar

to disjointed memory-like structures (Westgeest 2016:81) in the way it immerses the viewer and in the way sound plays a crucial role (Westgeest 2016:83-107). A key source supporting the argument that video art is influenced by and dependent on the development of technology, is Newman's *Video revolutions. On the history of a medium* (2014). Newman (2014:16) confirms that, through the evolvement and development of technology, video artists have a wider spectrum of tools to improve visual production.

Virtual and real time and space are important characteristics of video art. With regards to my arguments concerning time and space, Potts's text, *The new time and space* (2015), is imperative to this study. Potts states that "video artists, exploiting the possibilities of digital video and computer editing, have created video works that manipulate time and build contained and particular versions of space." Potts (2015:174-175) contends that the digital revolution stimulated many video artists to explore the possibilities of digital techniques and that video art permits the artist to include, duplicate, fast-forward, pause, accelerate and stop time.

Digital and video art (2005) by De Mèredieu critically examines video art and multimedia installations. Her ideas support my observation that space in video art stimulates the emergence of video-installation. De Mèredieu (2005:59) contends that video-installations function in space-time settings and are "spatio-temporal" constructions.

Sturken (1996:1-8) argues in *Electronic erasures and inscriptions* (1996) that images produced by means of video art can be used to construct personal and collective remembrance of traumatic events. This submission enforces my contention that video preserves memories and histories and also becomes a means of forgetting traumatic memories. Drawing from Sturken's (1996:1-8) observation that video as a form of technology embodies traumatic memories, I argue that various artworks by video artists focus on the remembrance of traumatic events and that these memories portray the present. I further argue that some video artists display personal stories in small snippets which imitate their individual feelings, understandings and recollections concerning their own history. The argument by Sturken (1996:2-3) strengthens the idea that video has become an autonomous medium in which individual memory and the association between memory and self is used by artists.

1.6.2 Freudian trauma theory

Trauma theories by Freud are presented by numerous of his texts as foundational sources. I also use other sources that critically discuss Freud's works and theories in order to try and illuminate his controversial and illusive and often evolving and changing ideas on psychoanalysis. All of these sources are necessary to my research and provide insight into Freud's life work and his thinking processes.

1.6.2.1 Traumatic memories: anxiety, repression and screen memories

In his influential publication *Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety* Freud (1926:93) explains that anxiety leads to the unconscious forming a shield protecting the self from traumatic external stimuli. This forming of a protective shield is visualised in my video-animations and demonstrates that a Freudian interpretation of anxiety occurs in my artworks. Freud's *Studies on hysteria* (1893-1895) strengthens my understanding that neurotic symptoms separate emotions and rational thought. It further describes neurotic symptoms as resulting from the repression of intimidating, hostile and excruciating events (Freud [1893-1895] 1995:276).

I discuss the effects of repression further when I refer to Freud's *Instincts and their vicissitudes* (1915). This is significant to the study since it supports the argument that memories of trauma are hidden in the unconscious and do not simply manifest in the conscious. Referring to Freud's *Five lectures on psycho-analysis* ([1010] 1995:28-29), I demonstrate how traumatic memories are underpinned by deepened emotions. This is based on Freud's ([1910] 1995:28-29) discovery that traumatic memories can be extracted from the unconscious. Freud's *Screen memories* (1899) proclaims that childhood memories surface in adulthood, but often as twisted and fragmented or even imaginary memories with little relation to what actually happened in the past (Freud 1899:301-322). This assumption is evident in my artworks in the way that the layered images veil each other and, in return, how these layers melt away, leaving residual marks on the following layers. In *Delusions and dreams in Jensen's Gradiva* (1907), Freud (1907:49) posits that thoughts are only repressed in the way they are connected to an expression of emotions, and that the content of a repressed thought can reach consciousness only if it is brought to the surface (Freud 1925:235-236).

1.6.2.2 Loss: mourning and melancholia

The important Freudian essay *Mourning and melancholia* (1917) underlines his arguments regarding loss of a love object, melancholia and mourning (1917:248). This source is significant to this study since it underpins my video artworks in which loss through mourning and melancholia in the form of a miscarriage is presented. I locate this argument in relation to melancholia, ego-loss[20] and the mother's identity. These are held together by Freud's (1917:252) postulation that melancholia stems from a deeply agonising misery, an interruption of awareness in the external world, loss of the capability to love and self-consciousness. The loss of a baby in this sense is synonymous with a loss of motherhood and a compromising of the ego-ideal.[21] In *Totem and taboo* (1913:vii–162) Freud argues that the growth of the ego-ideal occurs when the Childhood and ego of the developing subject are effected by the social and ethical standards ingrained in a wider societal framework.

My contention that the video-animations validate and illustrate melancholia is supported by Freud's (1917:262) assumption that the concept of self-loss raises the idea that a loss of the melancholiac's ego causes a blow to the ego. Several of the video-animations accentuate Freud's presentation of motherhood as the single pathway to real womanhood. In *Femininity* (1932:162) Freud describes the awakening of womanhood as a young girl's desire to become a mother.

1.6.2.3 CSA: hysteria, Nachträglichkeit and trauma-dreams

Through his significant text *Heredity and the aetiology of the neuroses* (1896:191-192,211) Freud hypothesises that in CSA the memories of the victims are particularly repressed and do not arise consciously in everyday thoughts. His conclusions support my arguments that particular memories of CSA are repressed in the pubertal stage and surfaces later on in adulthood.

Both *Heredity and the aetiology of the neuroses* (1896) and *The aetiology of hysteria* (1896) are important since Freud articulates a defence as a foundation for psychoneurosis[22] in both

[20] Ego-loss involves a far-reaching loss of self-identity. The term is used in various intertwined contexts, with related meanings (Johnson, Richards & Griffiths 2008:603–620).

[21] The ego-ideal refers to the inner-image of what one wants to become.

[22] Freud used the word psychoneurosis to describe random feelings of anxiety brought forth by unconscious memories which cannot be expressed but must still manifest somehow. Therefore repressed events or traumas surface later in life in the form of neurosis.

these publications. Both texts underline Freud's argument that adults who have experienced CSA struggle with unconscious memories and the emotions associated with it. Psychological disorders such as these are a direct result of supressed memories buried in the unconscious.

An additional crucial text is *Sexuality and the aetiology of the neuroses* in which Freud (1898:511-512) presents the point that psychoneurosis is explained by the theory of Nachträglichkeit. This implies delayed action because of the fact that the traumatic memories are stored in the unconscious. Freud (1939:127) also highlights neurosis throughout the influential publication *Moses and monotheism* (1939) where he argues that repression as a defence mechanism is the most sufficient means to differentiate between reason and feelings and that it forms a dominant basis of neurosis. This is demonstrated by my video-animations in which present-time visual fragments of the initial traumatic event only occur when a later event associated with the initial trauma, takes place. Freud (1898:511-512) comments that the "nachträglich"-effect, which only manifests later during adulthood, triggers a response to the childhood trauma and is activated when the child enters a particular stage of sexual development.

The interpretation of dreams (1900) is valuable to this study since most of the video-animations represent the young child and young woman entering sleep and the systematic unfolding of their dreams. The unconscious is expressed through the dream world in which traumatic memories are represented by outlandish metaphors and symbols. Freud ([1900] 2006:292-294) argues that dreams become distorted as the content is deeply concealed in the latent dream thoughts[23] in the unconscious. The dreamer is not able to recognise the true meaning of the dream. In *New introductory lectures on psychoanalysis* ([1933] 1987:168) Freud defines dreams as fulfilment of wishes.[24] These are attempts by the unconscious to remove current struggles and conflicts of the past. Hidden codes and symbols in the form of hybrid creatures and foreign objects are used in my video-animations. These function as fragments of the traumatic memories of CSA as described by Freud. My video artworks comprise of content relating to CSA in the way it imitates the characteristics of a nightmare and recalls Freud's text *A general introduction to psychoanalysis* (1920). In this text Freud describes how traumatic

[23] Latent content or thoughts in a dream defines the hidden connotation between the individual's unconscious emotions, energies and desires. The unconscious suppresses the latent content in order to protect the individual from emotions which is difficult to express (Freud [1900] 2006:148-149). This concept is elaborated on in Chapter Five.

[24] According to Freud (1900:134) dreams are demonstrative of the unreal realisation of a childhood wish or desire before wishes have been suppressed. The dream metaphors signify the unconscious desires masked through symbols and distorting devices.

dreams dominate the unconscious by raising anxiety levels and causing traumatic neurosis (PTSD).

1.6.2.4 Contemporary trauma theory

To validate and critically apply Freud's theories, I employ various annotations, observations and arguments formulated by contemporary trauma theorists that have in some way worked critically with Freud's theories of trauma.

With regards to traumatic memories I rely on Caruth's notions of trauma formulated in *Unclaimed experience: trauma, narrative and history* (1996) and *Trauma: explorations in memory* (1995). Caruth (1995:17) submits that it is not the experience itself that creates trauma, but rather the memory of it, and her argument that there is a time delay between the time of the event and suppression is illustrated in my video-animations.

The video-animations further illustrate Caruth's (1996:7) notion of traumatic memories by constantly referring to elements of trauma throughout the dreams and visits to the unconscious. This connects with Caruth's (1996:7,94) significant description of traumatic memories, which entails that persons who endure trauma have "to live it twice" – first, when the trauma happens to the survivor, and secondly when the trauma repeats itself through flashbacks and nightmares. This indicates that the traumatised person lives with emotional suffering for an extended period of time or possibly endlessly since curing the injured mind is almost impossible.

Caruth's work relates strongly to the findings of Van der Kolk. His research into traumatic memories contributes to this study since it gives a neuroscientific overview of memory systems and the impact of trauma on it. Bessel Van der Kolk and Annette Streeck-Fischer (2000:239) also draw from Freud and Breuer's text *The phenomenology of hysteria* in which he points to certain perceptions on (or insights into) traumatic memories that are reinforced by current psychological and neuroscientific studies of traumatic events.[25] In Van der Kolk and Rita Fisler's *Dissociation and the fragmentary nature of traumatic memories: overview and exploratory study* (1995) as well as in Van der Kolk, Lars Weisaeth and Onno Van der Hart's

[25] These insights include the division of the conscious after a person experienced a deeply terrifying trauma. The person detaches from reality during the traumatic event and his or her memories regarding it are, although outside of the consciousness, still unconsciously present. The memory is thus dissociated from consciousness and remains in the unconscious. If these dissociated memories are not freed, they continue to persist for a long period, and the initial trauma will still be experienced repeatedly. However, most memories will diminish over time. In the case of a traumatic memory the mental scar stays as deeply as it was when first experienced (Van der Kolk & Streeck-Fischer 2000:239).

publication *History of trauma in psychiatry* (1996), Van der Kolk and his co-authors argue that trauma can cause functional disturbances in the memory which lead to traumatic amnesia, global memory impairment, dissociative processes and the sensorimotor organisation of traumatic memories.[26] These memory impairments are moderately evident in the analysis of my video-animations, particularly through the depiction of fear and the psychological disturbance of the young child and young woman whose memories are haunted by the traumatic re-experiences of the original traumatic event in flashbacks, amnesia and dissociation. In *Post traumatic stress disorder and memory,* Van der Kolk (1997:1-5) argues that traumatic amnesia manifests through dissociation and general memory impairment. The latter includes the combination of amnesia, hypermnesia, a lack of narrative-based recall, a lack of autobiographical memory and dissociation, which may be caused by childhood trauma. This portrays the impulsive revisitation of the origins of childhood and adulthood trauma experienced by the characters in the video-animations.

Jean Laplanche's ideas on Nachträglichkeit are emphasised in his and Caruth's *An interview with Jean Laplanche* (Caruth & Laplanche 2001:1-32). Caruth and Laplanche (2001:1-32) raise three arguments: 1) Nachträglichkeit is multifaceted in that it has binary meaning and is ephemeral; 2) a traumatic event is repetitive, continuously recurring; and 3) throughout life an impulse to stop the re-experiencing of the traumatic event occurs. These arguments come forward in the video-animations as the young woman recalls a memory of CSA through a later event which is sexual in nature. Though the second event is not traumatic in a sexually offensive manner, the video-animations' subtle references to a male figure indicates a connection to an earlier experience of sexual abuse. Laplanche's notion of Nachträglichkeit is echoed in Ruth Leys's *Trauma: a genealogy* (2000) in which Leys refers to Freud's characterisation of trauma as a "dialectic between two events, neither of which was intrinsically traumatic, and a temporal delay or latency through which the past was available only by a deferred act of understanding and interpretation" (Leys 2000:20). The trauma victim is not prepared for the experience and therefore ceases all rational response.

In *Trauma: a genealogy* (2000), Leys constructs her argument around a conceptual tension between a mimetic methodology and an anti-mimetic methodology to trauma. The mimetic approach recognises trauma as related to formation of identity which establishes the self. The

[26] It has been noted that traumatic amnesia occurs after experiencing traumatic incidents such as war, natural disasters and concentration camp experiences (Wilkinson 1983:1134-1139, Sargant & Slater 1941:757-764). The amnesia that follows can lead to global memory impairment, which refers to the patient's inability to construct a coherent narrative out of these events. When this impairment takes place, personal memory disintegrates and the individual struggles to reconstruct the past. Dissociation as a form of memory failure points to an isolation of traumatic experience. Elements of the traumatic experience are not included in a chronological order but as isolated fragments (Van der Kolk & Fisler 1995:8).

anti-mimetic method, on the other hand, hypothesises trauma as an event deconstructing self-identity. Thus, trauma revolves around a primeval directness that at the same time externalises and internalises the self, but will only be recognised through primeval identification. My argument that a person's first discovery of the self involves initial absence of the self and that this is where one searches for the unconscious, is supported by Leys. This connects with her contention that primeval self-identification would clarify the re-experiencing of the past trauma in the present, in a state lacking the self (Leys 2000:32). In discussing traumatic memories, Leys (2000:2) writes that emotions of horror and disbelief produce certain events that result in the mind being divided or dissociated. The mind is incapable of recording trauma as a wound to the mind since normal consciousness and perception are demolished. Consequently, the trauma victim is incapable of remembering and incorporating the upsetting experience in everyday experiences. He or she is thus troubled or obsessed by invasive traumatic memories. My video-animations relate to this argument since the young woman experiences invasive traumatic memories spontaneously. Each frame produces a traumatic memory which follows chronologically at a random pace.

1.7 Overview of chapters

Following the Introduction, Chapter Two provides a substantial exploration of the unique characteristics of video art by focussing on its particular nature and how it is used as a medium. In this chapter justification is given to my claim that video art is uniquely capable of facilitating the process of unravelling traumatic memories. I also portray video as a complicated and multidimensional medium which has formed part of a series of historical art movements, theoretical concepts and technological developments and have contributed thereto. In this chapter it is also shown how video art is often combined with self-portraiture, painting and sculpture and how this has evolved over time. The importance of time and space within video art is also discussed. I further argue that the way in which images in videos unfold can be compared to fragmented memory-like constructions and that video reserves memories and histories along with a form of forgetting.

In Chapter Three I critically discuss certain theories – contemporary as well as Freudian – with regards to traumatic memories. Memory as a complicated system which employs different defence mechanisms to protect the victim of trauma against traumatic memories of the traumatic experiences, are also discussed. This chapter further critically evaluates two selected video-animations which are visual representations of traumatic memories and its impact on the victim's psyche.

Chapter Four discusses the Freudian theories of loss in relation to mourning and melancholia. Miscarriage, childhood loss of a love object, loss of ego, self-reproach, self-blame and failure of the ego are illustrated in some of my video-animations. By investigating these concepts I present the argument that the melancholiac person mourns the loss of a love object in a self-destructive way and accepts this as part of his or her ego.

The fifth chapter revolves around CSA as theorised by Freud. The history of CSA and hysteria is investigated and Nachträglichkeit is explained and exemplified with reference to my video artworks through an analysis of the signs and visual images used to evoke a past experience of sexual molestation. Freudian trauma-dreams are explored and I subsequently argue that sufferers of CSA usually experience nightmares after a traumatic occurrence, resulting in a fearful emotional state.

Chapter Six concludes the study. In this chapter I explore the limitations of this research and offer suggestions on further research that can expand on this topic.

CHAPTER TWO

VIDEO AS ART MEDIUM AND *LOSS* AS VIDEO-INSTALLATION

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explain why I use video art, and more specifically digital stop-frame animation as a form of video art to portray traumatic memories and unlock *repressed* traumatic memories. It is argued that the distinctive properties of video art render it uniquely capable of representing these traumatic memories. It may even, in some cases, evoke traumatic memories in the viewer.

Broadly speaking, video art can be described as any artwork that makes use of video recordings, computers and representational devices such as projectors and digital screens.[27] A variety of image-processing tools such as video editing software and hand-held scanning devices are also used. Video art was initially named after the video tape, but as it evolved as an art form, use of the term became more complex. At present it refers not only to a multidimensional art medium employing a series of electronic signals, but also to the manner in which it is presented, for instance video-installation and digital interactive installation (Hilderbrand cited in Westgeest 2016:13).

According to Elwes (2005:16) the development of video as an art medium goes hand in hand with the evolution of video technology – new progresses such as "colour processing, digital editing and image layering" stimulate artists to investigate more artistically creative styles and formal visual resolutions.

The discussion of video art starts by presenting a brief overview of the history of video art, compiling a definition thereof and reference to video art used by performance artists. Following this, digital stop-frame animation as video art, the self in video art, the representation of time and space, the way in which video conveys narrative and the portrayal of memories and trauma in video art are investigated. These are all properties that contributed to the creation of my video-installation, *Loss,* which includes the arrangement of screens, peeping boxes, and sounds within a darkened space. In a discussion of *Loss* as a video-installation, the relationship between the viewer and the space is important as the viewer ultimately becomes part of the installation.

[27] 'Video' indicates audio-visual media while 'video art', on the other hand, indicates the use of video as artistic medium within the framework of visual arts. Although I attempt to put together a workable definition of 'video art', I agree with Westgeest (2016:13) that a simple definition thereof is almost impossible.

2.2 A short historical background of video art

The history of video art is inseparably linked with the emergence and history of video. For this reason it is pertinent to briefly refer to the development of video in conjunction with the history of video art.

It is necessary to first explain certain terms, without going into the complex and technical details relating to each. The terms ‘video’, ‘film’, ‘cinema’ and also ‘digital’ and ‘analogue’ are occasionally used in the wrong context and as synonyms, which they are not. Other terms which may cause confusion, are explained in the footnotes.

2.2.1 Terminology

Although the terms ‘film’, ‘video’, ‘cinema’ and ‘movie’ are sometimes casually used as synonyms, there are technical and sometimes subtle differences. According to LeCambrioleur (2012:[sp]) film, cinema and movie “are not simply three different ways of saying the same thing, but in fact three different approaches to how we think about the classification of what we’re watching”. The term ‘movie’ is a casual term which refers to “the economic commodity of the industry” and “ease of viewing” and seems to be a term widely used in and with regards to Hollywood, whereas ‘film’ is a more artistic, complex term which includes “the idea of an aspect of art and its relationship with the entire world around it” (LeCambrioleur 2012:[sp]). “Cinema” and “film” are closely related, with cinema attempting “to define the aesthetic and deal with the internal structure of the art” (LeCambrioleur 2012:[sp]). Cinema is further explained as being “a closed art form, unavailable to something without thought, without premise, without stylistic approach. It is high-art because it is in relation to its aesthetic properties” (LeCambrioleur 2012:[sp]). These are, however, not the only definitions of these terms. In *Film, video and movies: What’s the difference?* (2007:[sp]) a movie is described as a “fictional or scripted, edited motion-based story” whereas film usually “refers to the motion-picture media format, whether it be celluloid, digital video or magnetic tape”; video, on the other hand, generally refers to the technology used when initially capturing the moving footage, “and the conversion of other media into its many editable formats”.

I refer to the term ‘digital’ throughout this document. It also forms part of the name of the medium I employ to create my artworks, which is ‘digital stop-frame animation’. I therefore find it important to briefly explain the meaning of the term ‘digital’. With regards to digital video and film, there is a difference in terminology. According to *Film, video and movies: what’s the difference?* (2007:[sp]) any material captured by digital video or on film are “digitized and

encoded to facilitate non-linear editing [NLE]". Thus the format of most modern films, whether it is later returned to celluloid or not, has been digital at one time or another. This means that the film material is still digital although it is presented in analogue form.

Although I mostly refer to the term 'digital', it is necessary to also define 'analogue' and the difference between the two terms since the reader may get lost in the complexity of the technicalities. Paul Wotel ([sa][sp]) describes the difference as follows:

> As a technology, analog[ue] is the process of taking an audio or video signal … and translating it into electronic pulses. Digital on the other hand is breaking the signal into a binary format where the audio or video data is represented by a series of "1"s and "0"s. Simple enough when it's the device – analog[ue] or digital phone, fax, modem, or likewise – that does all the converting for you.

The writer of *Film, video and movies: what's the difference?* (2007:[sp]) further states a very important fact:

> [W]ith today's integration of technology, optics and software, the word video has become a blanket term reaching beyond its initial magnetic, low quality, amateur format. Video today, describes the motion aspect of the picture, a film is the intent, or storytelling purpose of the motion picture and a movie is the genre of the completed motion picture.

2.2.2 A compact history of video

The origin of video started in 1895 when Auguste and Louis Lumière patented the world's very first motion picture camera and projector, the cinematograph. After that, video technology developed rapidly and in 1912 a film camera was developed by Bell and Howell. This specific model was used by the film industry until 1957. After film, television followed in 1927. It was revolutionary since it could broadcast live. Another important development was Sony's production and marketing of the Portapak, the first portable video camera, in 1967. Nine years later, in 1976, JVC launched the Video Home System (VHS). In 1981 camcorders were first seen on the market and two years later a model which was a recorder and camera in one, became available to the general public. In 1984, digital video was created by the International Telecommunication Union. With the emergence of Digital Versatile Disc (DVD) hard-drive technology in 1997, immense enhancements in the capturing and display of images were brought about. Since 2001, however, DVD is rapidly being replaced by web streaming. Web streaming directly affect the dispersal and broadcast of moving images, especially in more public broadcasting applications such as television (Zhu 2001:273-280).

2.2.3 The history of video art

Although video art has not always drawn wide attention in the art world, it has developed as an independent art discipline since the early 1960s and has impacted and altered the visual art scene considerably. As discussed below, it emerged with great success in the 1960s, faded again in the 1980s and later on re-emerged in the 1990s. After its re-emergence it remains, to this day, a crucial genre in fine arts and video artworks are commonplace in many galleries, online-galleries, museums, art festivals and art biennials worldwide.

According to Michael Rush (2005:82-91; 2003:13-15) video art evolved from technologies invented and explored in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as photography, theatrical cinema,[28] film, video and television. In their early works photographers Ettiene-Jules Marey and Eadward Muybridge experimented with movement within still imagery in 1882. In 1878 Muybridge took the concept of the still photographic image further and developed chronophotography, which is the process of capturing frame-by-frame movement of live objects. Muybridge's chronophotography led to another way of capturing motion and speeding up time, namely film. Thomas Edison and William Laurie Kennedy Dickson developed cinema in the late 1800s and early 1900s (Rush 2005:12-18), but it was Auguste and Louis Lumière that made film popular. Georges Méliès's *A Trip to the Moon* (*Le Voyage dans la lune*) (Méliès 1902) was one of the first art films.[29]

Film became a popular catalyst for creative output, but at first it was an expensive medium and not all artists had access to it (Rush 2003:7). With video and the handheld video tape recorder (half-inch tape) as a cheaper medium, the moving image was presented to a new group of artists by way of video. According to Sturken (1996:107) video art first emerged at a time when the art world was experiencing disruption. These disruptions were caused by artists such as Nam June Paik and Andy Warhol rebelling against traditional art practices, such as painting.

Although many people believe Warhol to be the first video artist, Camille LeFevre (2012:[sp]) confirms Korean-American artist Paik as the establisher of video art. On 4 October 1965 Paik filmed Pope Paul VI and his entourage in Fifth Avenue, New York using a Sony Portapak and

[28] Video art should not be confused with theatrical cinema. One of the key differences between video art and theatrical cinema is that video art does not necessarily rely on many of the conventions that define theatrical cinema. Video art may not employ the use of actors, may contain no dialogue, may have no discernible narrative or plot, or adhere to any of the other conventions that generally define motion pictures as entertainment (Westgeest 2016:165).

[29] This is a fourteen minute long French black-and-white silent science fiction film. It consists of several special effects and animations.

later that same day screened the footage at the Café au Go Go in Greenwich Village. He also exhibited modified television sets in galleries as the first video art installations (Horsfield & Hilderbrand 2006:8). According to Rush (2005:86), Warhol was the first American artist to use a portable video camera and he created video art since the mid-1960s. Other artists such as Bruce Nauman, Vito Acconci, Bill Viola and Steina Vasulka used video as an alternative art medium to create an extension of their bodies and employed it to envisage a concept (Rush 2003:9; Horsfield & Hilderbrand 2006:4). This was the beginning of a new revolution in the creation of images. Artists and activists with a more technologically orientated approach were now able to participate in the visual communication revolution which was rapidly changing social and cultural life worldwide. Video became very popular amongst documentary filmmakers,[30] choreographers, activists and artists and by 1968 video art was widely exhibited in countries such as Argentina, Japan, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Germany, UK, Spain, Switzerland and the USA (Horsfield & Hilderbrand 2006:3; Rush 2003:7).

Since the end of the 1960s video art has moved from screenings on small televisions to vast video-installations and video projections (Kotz 2005:101-115). Today many artists use large-screen projections on gallery walls or in cinema-style darkened rooms. In this manner, video artists boldly present moving images and accompanying soundtracks, immersing viewers entirely in the time and space presented by the artworks (Gern 2003:[sp]).

Keeping in mind the difference between analogue and digital as already mentioned, it is also important to refer to the development of technology used for the digitisation of information. With the emergence of storage devices[31] and the way in which recorded information is screened,[32] the video tape became obsolete as the storage device for footage (Meigh-Andrews 2014:6-7). Since the creation of the first digital video in the mid-1980s, the digital revolution with regard to video gained momentum exponentially. This new format and its advanced resolution capabilities, coupled with the fast reducing costs and growing processing power of desktop computers, stimulated the growth of digital image-processing computer software packages such as Adobe Creative Suite (Meigh-Andrews 2014:407-408).[33]

[30] Although video art is closely linked to documentaries, short films and experimental film, it differs mainly because of its transitory and illusive nature as a medium (Meigh-Andrews 2014:26).

[31] Such as the hard disk, compact disk (CD), DVD, Blu Ray Disk, flash drives and external hard drives.

[32] It may be screened by way of digital uploading and downloading, video streaming and web-casting videos on the internet.

[33] Adobe Creative Suite includes digital image editing software such as Adobe Photoshop and video-editing software such as Adobe Premiere and Adobe After Effects.

During the 1960s and 1970s, several video artworks critically commented on television's dominating role in mass media and its challenging of the concepts of time and immediacy (Rush 2003:14-21; Horsfield & Hilderbrand 2006:2). According to Hoogeveen ([sa]:[sp]):

> The relationship between visual arts and television was, and partly still is, a peculiar one. As both are visual media, one should expect them to be in competition. But unlike the competitive relation between television and that other visual medium – the cinema – the visual arts and television seemed to live in parallel worlds, barely touching on each other's existence.

With regard to the struggle between the visual arts and television, video artists such as Richard Serra created video artworks that attempted to expose television as a false institution which entices viewers to buy into mass media through advertisements. An example of such a work is Serra's video *Television delivers people* (1973). Serra (cited in Hoogeveen [sa]:[sp]) states that "in commercial broadcasting the viewer pays for the privilege of having himself sold" and further remarks that television audiences in the 1970s were not open to art and that such audiences wanted to be amused, not mentally stimulated. Video artists such as Antonio Muntadas (*Between the lines,* 1979) and the art collective Ant Farm (*The eternal frame,* 1975) created artworks that commented on television's control over the masses through cable access and the public television networks. But video art's criticism of television soon faded owing to its limited impact on television consumption by viewers.

Sherman (2005:4) argues that the worldwide economic recession in 1981 caused video art to fade – many museums and galleries withdrew support since there were no funds available for the required AV (audio video) equipment needed for installation, and video art was not yet lucrative (Sherman 2005:3). The reason for its low value as commodity was the fact that it could not be exhibited in the same way as paintings, drawings and sculptures. The rise of popular music culture and the release of the first personal computer also played a role in its declining popularity.

Sherman (2005:4) postulates that, despite video art's difficult position in the 1980s, several video artists used the opportunity to employ the development of popular music and entertainment culture to their advantage. Performance artists such as Laurie Anderson used the development in music and music videos to enhance her art through performances. During this time video artists also started to embrace installation by exhibiting video-installations in public spaces.

In the 1990s museums and galleries revived their interest in video art, and the manner in which it was presented, for instance on screens and by projections, came to be perceived as

'sculptural objects' to be exhibited (Meigh-Andrews 2014:236). Sherman (2005:6) and Meigh-Andrews (2014:5-6) note that the millennial information age brought about technological developments such as "…consumer electronics, broadcast television, computer hardware and software, video surveillance, thermal imaging, magnetic resonance imaging…" as well as digital film.[34] These technological changes brought along the merging of video and film.

Today, video in contemporary society is not an elitist technology but one used widely by many artists and it can be described as an important art language of the twenty-first century. A platform has been established for video art to become exclusive, exhibited on plasma and LCD (liquid crystal displays) screens by collectors and buyers in upmarket living spaces (Sherman 2005:8). Sherman (2005:10) and Rush (2003:9,137-167) propose that video art is a medium uniquely suited for artists to represent their personal experiences and their understanding of identity and reality.

2.3 Video art used by performance artists

Performance art played a key role in the development of video art, and still does. It is worth mentioning in this study since it is one of the art genres which strongly connect to video art – the artist's body is recorded in order to prolong the duration of the artwork. This is also known as 'live action recording'. Although I refer to my video art as digital stop-frame animation and not live action recording, performance art does influence my artworks to some extent since I use my body as reference in my work.

Artists constantly explore new mediums and visual languages to express themselves. In the past fifty years, performance artists experimentally used video art as an extension of existing art practices. The first artists who explored video as a medium, such as Paik, Warhol, Vito Acconci and Bruce Nauman, experimented by integrating video and conventional, performance and conceptual methods and political activism. Meigh-Andrews (2014:48-49) notes how these artists preferred to use video as medium to portray social activism and political transformation.

The intended outcomes that video artists have in mind with their artworks vary. It may, for instance, include the exploration of the boundaries of the medium itself, for example Peter

[34] Digital film entails high definition (HD) video shot on 16 mm film using a wide 16/9 aspect ratio which moves at a rate of 24 frames per second and 30 interlaced frames per second.

Campus's work *Double Vision* (1971),[35] or the rigorous attacking of the viewer's expectations of video as shaped by conventional cinema. Joan Jonas's *Organic Honey's Vertical Roll* (1973) is a good example of the latter.[36] Rush (2003:9) mentions that video art has the ability to link the physical and conceptual in a technological time-space. According to Kate Horsfield and Lucas Hilderbrand (2006:6) numerous video artists use the medium to portray awareness of time, space, self-reflection, perception or social designs of prejudice. This link between the physical and conceptual mentioned by Rush first occurred when artists such as Acconci and Marina Abramovic used video cameras as an "addition" to their own bodies while they were carrying out performances. Video artworks by these artists reflect a search for self-awareness by means of crossing psychological barriers due to political and cultural changes during the 1960s and 1970s (Krauss 1976:54).[37]

Just as performance art was influenced by the emergence of video art, the latter was also influenced by the former. Performance art has vastly influenced video art and has appeared as the primary element used in the creation of video art since the 1960s (Horsfield & Hilderbrand 2006:5-6). Ever since the repercussions caused by World War II in countries such as Japan and Austria and the emergence of second-wave feminism in the 1960s and 1970s, performance has played a vital role in video art. During these times several video artists portrayed collective and personal trauma by means of video art (Rush 2003:85-87). Video was used as a medium and a mirror to personally examine the self, identity, gender and society (Elwes 2005:16). It can also be described as a medium which has the potential to successfully portray a wide range of psychological issues (Elwes 2005:33;54-55).[38] According to Rush (2003:85) activist artists such as Martha Rosler[39] and Jonas[40] used video and performance art to express their concerns regarding self and gender as well as their disapproval of patriarchal society. Horsfield and Hilderbrand (2006:6) argues that these activist artists' video artworks

[35] This artwork is a single-channel video which is made with two video cameras. The video footage is processed by a 'mixer' which gives the effect of double exposure through a photographic process of image-making. Playing with binocular vision, both cameras are set at various lengths, recording an empty room and its distant wall. It is an exploration of vision through the use of basic video technology.

[36] This video artwork is a video-documentation of Jonas's performance *Organic Honey.* The video artwork includes mirrors and masks and she implements video to create spatial, psychological and temporal layering (Neidich [sa]:[sp]).

[37] Rosalind Krauss (1976:54) argues that video art relies strongly on the use of the human body and psyche. The artist using an autobiographical angle in his or her videos needs to recurrently rethink his or her self-image. She (1976:53) frames the body and the psyche as the main elements to be found in video art.

[38] These issues may include questions regarding identity, gender and trauma.

[39] In *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975), Martha Rosler reviews the publicly prearranged image of a housewife in her responsibility as food preparer.

[40] In *Vertical Roll* (1972) Jonas portrays the objectification of the female body.

could be reviewed through diverse dialogues such as “art, performance, feminism, cultural studies, politics, gender studies, philosophy and psychology”.

Sherman (2005:3) points out the fact that performance artists have, since the emergence of video art, discovered that video provides a seamless method of documentation. Since then video has primarily been employed as an inexpensive medium to record performances that were previously short-lived, making it available to all audiences (Horsfield & Hilderbrand 2006:4).

2.4 Animation and digital stop-frame animation as forms of video art

2.4.1 The use of animation in video art

Although my artworks are video-based, I rely on neither real time recordings[41] captured by handheld video cameras nor traditional editing techniques such as film splicing and linear editing.[42] Instead, I use digital computer editing and my work is created by using digital stop-frame animation.[43] The aim of this section is to explain how video-animation can be used effectively in video art. According to Viktoria Perevoznikova (2015:[sp]), contemporary artists often use animation in “video art, video-installations, [and] kinetic objects”. She argues that animation can be perceived from different angles and that all video artworks differ in movement, time, light, form and energy. Though Maureen Furniss (1998:3-4) claims it to be the ‘underdog’ when it comes to being recognised as an actual art form, animation has become more popular throughout the twenty-first century.

Although the term ‘animation’ commonly refers to a sequence of pictures, it was derived from the Latin term ‘animationem’ and means “to breathe life into”. This indicates giving life to a static or stationary image by creating movement. According to the *Stop-motion Magazine* (2016:[sp]) animation is a manifestation of life, or even, an extension of life. Movement applied

[41] Real time recordings were used by first-generation video artists such as Paik, Campus and Acconci.

[42] Film splicing is a method used to edit moving images and forms the foundation of all video editing techniques. It includes manually cutting sections of the film strips with scissors and splicing tape. A splicing machine which lines up film footage, holding it in a correct position so that it can be cut and spliced simultaneously, could also be used. Linear editing refers to the method of video tape editing which was used before the emergence of computers in the 1990s. It was a selective copying process from one video tape to the other by means of two connected video machines (*Film, video and movies: What’s the difference?* 2007:[sp]).

[43] Digital or computer editing involves the downloading of video footage onto a computer and applying editing techniques by using specialised software such as Adobe Creative Suite. Digital or computer editing operates with NLE which allows access to any specified video frame without needing to play, rewind or fast-forward the footage. NLE allows the video editor to easily remove or manipulate a sequence so that the video would spontaneously flow forward or backward as needed. All the video sequences, once digitised, can be stored in the computer’s hard drive (Meigh-Andrews 2014:408).

to time, form and light brings life to an object and a concept and it is a significant part of storytelling in contemporary cinematography, television and art (Stop-motion Magazine 2016:[sp]).

'Animation' is a term which may refer to a fine artist working with animation or traditional animators as part of a creative process.[44] Several fine artists use video-animation as medium: Artists Steina and Woody Vasulka are pioneers of video art and have been creating video artworks since the early 1960s (Bonin 2003:[sp]). They began to include animation in their artworks in the 1970s by means of analogue imaging devices and the artwork, *Transformations* (1978), is one of their best-known works. As seen in Figure 5, they used electronic effects to animate ordinary objects in their video-animations. Multiple styles are introduced and in this way the artists are able to illustrate the diversity of the artwork's aim. In the process they challenge conventional art methods and therefore create new outcomes (Sito 2013:45). *Transformations* is a good example of the early imaging practises of "colorizing; keying; horizontal drift of layered image planes" (Electronic arts intermix 2016:[sp]).

Figure 5: Steina and Woody Vasulka, *Transformations,* 1978.
Video artwork. 29:00 minutes, black and white and colour, sound.
(Electronic arts intermix 2017:[sp])

[44] Traditional animators refer to those who create animations by drawing and painting each frame on paper. These animators create animations by methods such as cel animation, animation loops, xerography, stop-frame animation, and rotoscoping. They usually pay attention to planning of the layout by using story boards. Alexander Petrov, Winsor McCay, Walt Disney, Jan Švankmajer and Lotte Reiniger were all traditional animators (Wells and Hardstaff 2008:84). Even though my arguments do not deal with traditional animation in great detail, I recognise the contribution made by these artists.

Yoichiro Kawaguchi also employs animation in his artworks. *Gigapolis* (1995) and *Cytolon* (2002) are good examples. In the latter, the rhythmic movement of liquid shapes transforms from one colour to the next, as is evident in Figure 6. Morphing tools are used to fold and melt masses which move from one part of the screen to the next (Alchetron 2017:[sp]).

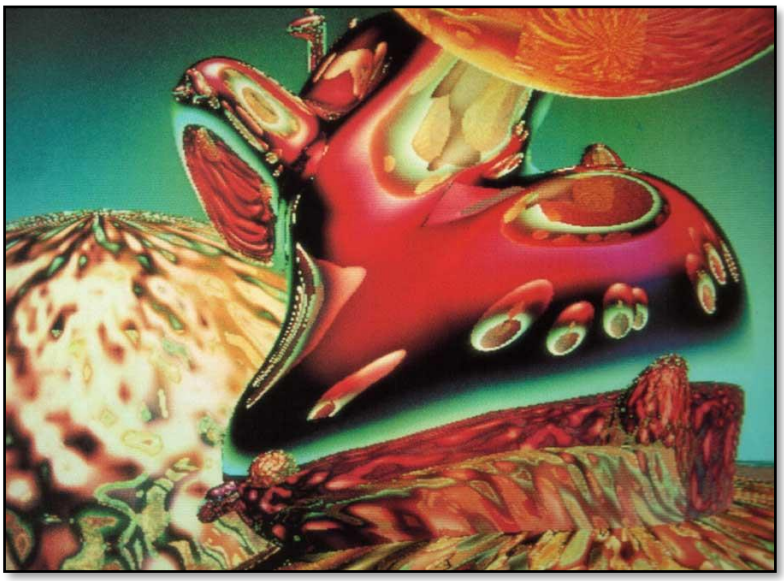


Figure 6: Yoichiro Kawaguchi, *Gigapolis*, 1995.
Video animation and artificial life sensor.
(Alchetron 2017:[sp]).

The video artist Carl Sims's artwork, *Liquid Selves* (1992), presents the artist's subjective view through the use of dreamscapes and the way in which shapes morph and coloured liquid enters and exits the composition (Liquid selves 1992:[sp]). An assemblage of computer techniques, for instance particle systems,[45] was used to create this animation and to disassemble and recreate a multitude of images. A good example of this technique is shown in Figure 7.

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[45] Particle systems are a technique in motion and computer graphics which employ numerous tiny sprites, which are two-dimensional bitmaps, and 3D models to form images (Martin [sa]:[sp]).

Figure 7: Carl Sims, *Liquid selves*, 1992.
Computer graphic animation.
(Liquid selves 1992:[sp]).

Animation is used to create moving images. Although it differs considerably from live action recordings, it plays a vital role in video art since it contributes to the art of telling complex stories through drawn or painted moving images. Moreover, animation provides a unique method of storytelling in video art and is also dependent on time, just as time plays an important role in stories. It also sometimes takes far longer to create than a live action video artwork. I can, through personal experience, confirm that by working long hours, the animation artist constantly reflects on what has been achieved and, as a result, may reconceptualise the work throughout, which, in turn, may contribute to the depth of the narrative of the animation. Animation implies the creation of characters and worlds that do not necessarily exist and which have an endless scope for originality and exploration – the possibilities are, so to say, endless. Through my experience in creating animations and viewing its consequences, I find that it may stimulate emotions and viewers could be captivated by the fantastical in a different way than being captivated by a real life recording.

2.4.2 Digital stop-frame animation as a new form of video art

Animation as a fine arts medium can take many forms and because of the wide spectrum of techniques it offers, video artists are in the position to experiment with cel animation,[46] pixel-based animation,[47] vector-based animation,[48] computer generated imaging (CGI) and stop-frame animation. Stop-frame animation techniques can, in turn, include frame-by-frame illustrations or sculpted prototypes which are moved and shifted millimetres at a time. In contrast with cel animation, stop-frame animation uses two-dimensional hand drawings and sculpted forms to create "simulation, motion and timing, anticipation, staging, follow-through, overlap, exaggeration and secondary action" (Lasseter, Pixar & Rafael 1987:36). This enables the artist to physically control the visual effect of movement as well as to remove a required detail through a manipulation of small changes in time and space. Examples of video artists employing stop-frame animation are Czechian animator and surrealist artist, Jan Švankmajer,[49] Swedish artist Nathalie Djurberg,[50] American artist Monica Cook[51] and South African artist William Kentridge.[52]

My art technique differs from stop-frame animation and I created the term 'digital stop-frame animation' to refer to my own video-animations. This method functions in a similar way to stop-frame animation. However, the frames are created through digital drawing and painting and not cel animation. It consists of a sequence of digital paintings and drawings shaped into motion through the use of computer programmes. Digital brushes are used to imitate traditional painting and mediums such as water-colour, acrylic, oil, charcoal, pastel and pen (Jansson 2004:i). In most digital painting programmes, particularly in Adobe Photoshop, artists can

[46] In the cel animation-technique each frame is drawn by hand. The frames are then placed over a stationary background drawing. Each frame may consist of more than a million drawings.

[47] Pixel graphics, also known as 'raster graphics' and 'bitmaps', refer to an image which is constructed by a dot matrix data structure, indicating a four-sided network of points of colour (RasterVector [sa]:[sp]). Examples of computer software programmes using pixel graphics are Adobe Photoshop, Pixen, Artweaver and IcoFX.

[48] Vector-based animation refers to animation in which the motion is created by vectors, which consists of points or nodes instead of pixels (Kaufman 1993:86-87). Vector animation permits cleaner, more even animation since images are created using mathematical values as an alternative to pixel values. Examples of computer software programs based on vector graphics are CorelDRAW, ConceptDraw PRO and Adobe Fireworks.

[49] Švankmajer's artworks employ overstated sounds and lifeless objects being resurrected through movement. He also uses clay objects. This technique is called Claymation. His work has significantly influenced artists and film directors such as Terry Gilliam and Timothy Quay (Solomon 1991:[sp]).

[50] Djurberg employs Claymation and has since 2001 refined a characteristic style of video-animation which employs the malleability of clay to explore the shady recesses of society (Zach Feuer Gallery 2009:[sp]).

[51] Cook makes life-size sculptures of hybrid creatures which she brings to life through animation. Her stop-frame animations are revolting and upsetting (McBride 2012: [sp]).

[52] Kentridge has been creating video artworks and stop-frame animations since the 1980s. His artworks are based on a sequence of twenty to forty charcoal drawings, generally in large sizes with some developments in pastels (Moins 1998:[sp]). Kentridge (*Artist William Kentridge on charcoal drawing* 2009:[sp]) states that charcoal drawings are instantly alterable through stop-frame animation.

create their own brush styles by combining textures and shapes, applying erasers, and setting up digital canvasses in any size imaginable. Mistakes can be effortlessly corrected through different computer commands (Shamsuddin 2014:52). Meigh-Andrews (2014:180-181) is of the opinion that by employing digital imaging tools, one can generate a moving image artwork where each image transforms into the following. Although this was previously anticipated in hand-drawn animation, Gene Youngblood (1989:29) points out that digital codes allow one to blend the distinctiveness of painting and the gravity-free motion of hand-drawn digitally produced images.

I am not aware of any other artists using the exact same technique and therefore I regard this method as a new contribution to fine art and more specifically digital art. Digital art developed as a result of the rapid growth of twentieth century technology.[53] This led to artists using electronic materials and computer software programs. Digital technology naturally plays a vital part in the artistic processes employed by digital art. Images are digitally generated by applying vector or pixel graphic software by means of a computer mouse or a graphics tablet to create movement (Paul 2006:27-67).[54] To construct the illusion of movement, an image is presented on the computer screen followed by a slightly altered image, normally at a speed of twenty-four frames per second.

Various artists such as Canadian artist Michael Snow,[55] London-based artist Natalia Stuyk,[56] Tokyo-based art collective teamLab,[57] Spanish artist ClaRa ApaRicio Yoldi[58] and the South African artist Daandrey Steyn[59] experiment with video through digital computer generated imagery and sound. They explore new potential content and methods and widen the possibilities and trajectories of digital animation through the manipulation of moving pixels.

[53] Digital art is a form of computer art. Other forms of computer art include virtual, robotics and interactive art. Initially there was some resistance to digital art but with the overwhelming digitalisation of everyday life, its impact on traditional art practices could not be ignored (Kuspit 2016:[sp]).

[54] This is a computer input device that allows the artist to create hand-draw images, animations and visuals by using a pen-like stylus, which imitates hand-drawn sketches on paper.

[55] Snow has been experimenting with digital images since the 1970s and makes use of a Quantel Paintbox to digitally expand and crush images (Meigh-Andrews 2014:234).

[56] Stuyk's digital animations rely on continuous and flowing movements created through looped GIFs (Graphics Interchange Format) and are accompanied by sound (Dazed [sa]:[sp]).

[57] TeamLab creates digital animations as "projection mapped water simulations", morphing abstract plants and musical spheres (Mufson 2014:[sp]).

[58] ClaRa ApaRicio Yoldi's digital animations consist of painting, footage and digital collages.

[59] Steyn's digital animations apply digital morphing where pixels are stretched and pulled to reveal inner awkwardness and the macabre.

Although these artists, like me, create imaginary worlds through their animations, my digital stop-frame animation technique differs from theirs in two unique ways. Firstly, I use a frame-by-frame technique where each image in the sequence can be seen and recognised because of its 'jumpy' movement and flow. The frames do not flow in a smooth movement and the frames per second can be controlled throughout and even differ from moment to moment. Steyn's animations move at standard frame rate of twenty-four frames per second for HD video. Mine, on the other hand, vary from ten to twenty-five frames per second in one animation. I literally control the speed at which the frames change. This creates a different sense of time in each frame and sets my animations apart from the works of the above-mentioned animators. Secondly, I combine frame-by-frame animation, which is a traditional technique, with digital drawing and painting, which is a more modern technique. The latter entails the digital creation of images, as well as the digital sequencing of the frames. Although I experimented with live action recording in the past, I have been using digital stop-frame animation as technique exclusively since 2006. I rely on neither the combination of live action footage that becomes animated, (as in the case of Steyn's artworks), nor do I employ 3D animation techniques, such as used by Stuyk and ClaRa ApaRicio Yoldi.

2.5 The self in video art

According to Olivier Asselin, Johanne Lamoureux and Christine Ross (2008:47, 49) video art shows a natural tendency towards self-portraiture. This is echoed by Marlène Monteiro's (2015:42) suggestion that video art is uniquely suited to portray the self since it captures the self in a specific time and space in either the present or the past. I consider the representation of self in video art an important concept. It is a well-known fact that video artists have, throughout the history of video art, explored issues of 'the self' by employing their own bodies, identities and portraits, especially in the documentation of performance art. I do the same by digitally painting and changing my own body and face since my work is autobiographical in nature and portray my own traumatic memories.[60]

Many artists use different mediums to employ self-portraiture in their artworks, but I refer to video art specifically for the purpose of this study. Self-portraiture in video art is inherently linked to the concept of self-consciousness – Holly Marie Armishaw ([sa]:[sp]) argues that self-portraiture is used to confirm or establish the existence of the 'I' and therefore portrays consciousness of the self.[61]

[60] See section 1.1.3 for a discussion of the autobiographical element in my artworks
[61] Self-portraiture differs from autobiography as the latter refers to narration where elements are stored in a logical assemblage. Self-portraiture is closer to analogy, symbol and dramatics than it is to narrative (Asselin *et al* 2008:40).

Self-portraiture is crucial in my artworks since I portray personal traumatic memories in some of my video-animations. To support my argument that video art has the ability to portray traumatic memories in a unique way, I concur with Raymond Bellour's (1989:340-342) argument that video is specifically suitable for self-portraiture since the video image is constant without deferment. Furthermore, video is the ideal medium to enable the artist to position his or her body within the image as the screen takes the shape of a mirror. With video art it is also easier to alter and manipulate the recorded image. Another characteristic of video which renders it suitable for self-portraiture, is the fact that it provides a means of resistance against mass media and television by way of the self-portrait as a subjective expression of video art's specific struggle with television (Bellour 1989:341).

Contemporary video artists who experiment with self-portraiture are, to name but a few, Tom Lightfoot, Luis Lamadrid, Chiara Mazzocchi, and Steven Hoskins. These video artists reveal how video is employed for self-documentation and how it may successfully use the body in this regard. The body is preserved as a physical object through which specific occurrences and aesthetic forms become resonant (Video.Net 2017:[sp]).

There is a distinct parallel between my digital stop-frame animation technique and the concept of self-portraiture. Through the labour-intensive method of digitally drawing and painting myself I am not only the artist, but also the main character and director. I practice a certain level of control in the conscious choice of visuals, but also lose control through the complex process of applying movement from one frame to the next by using the Liquify tool. This tool breaks down time and has the ability to distort my body and face in a sometimes ghastly and horrific manner. Thus my body and psyche are often portrayed in a self-destructive way. My identity and the manipulation thereof are therefore visualised through 'jumpy' movement which reflects the self as fragmented.

2.6 Time and space in video art

This study refers to two forms of time and space with regards to video art. Firstly, it refers to the time and space within the video, which is the time and space portrayed in and through the footage; and secondly, reference is made to the time and space with regards to the installation or exhibition. Elwes (2005:29) states that video has the capacity to move across spaces and is able to connect space with time within the video. Susanne Jaschko (2002:4) argues that time and space in video art reflects the artist's desire to portray correlations between the two by using various software-based methods of representations. Throughout the history and development of video art, time is presented as a significant element (Potts 2015:174). In its

early days, time was essential in video art, meaning that capturing a specific time was the aim and not necessarily the portrayal of narrative as is the case with cinema. According to Potts (2015:173), the emergence of video art has led artists to realise the potential of the plasticity of time. It also allows the artist to control time through replicating, fast-forwarding, stalling, quickening and stopping it (Potts 2015:174-175).

Installation space in video art also plays an important role in the aim of the video artworks presented therein, as is the case with *Loss*. According to Westgeest (2016:104) installation space refers to "multi-channel video presentations projected on to multiple screens". To Margaret Morse (1990:154-156) installation refers to a number of "objects in a space" which is generally temporary in nature. De Mèredieu (2005:59) proposes that video-installations operate in the context of space and time and that these are 'spatio-temporal' constructions which envelop a set of physical elements creating a work of art or "providing the framework for art in which a work of art can unfold".

Video art has a sculptural quality through its use of space in both the footage and the installation. Sherman (2005:3) argues that space creates sculpture in video art since the artist is able to fragment, reproduce and change space and time through installation. Elwes (2005:160) further describes a tension between the physical dimensions of the installation and the space represented in the video footage. This tension contributes to the viewer's immersion in the artwork in its totality. The video-installation is a simulated, manipulated and transformed space creating its own time. Liz Kotz (2005:101-115) emphasises how the use of projection methods in video-installations makes it possible for the artist to link space, images and themes. The projected moving image, the spectator, the constructed space and time are brought into the same conceptual and creative space (Kotz 2005:101-115).

Kate Mondloch (2010:xiii) argues that video-installations using digital screens and technical objects are architectural, time-specific and sculptural, and that the viewer's presence also becomes integral to the installation. The video-installation offers the viewer an experience of a conceptual world which manifests through the installation as well as the footage or images set in physical relation to each other (Morse 1990:159). Morse (1990:154-156) describes "the space-in-between" the artwork and the viewer's presence as the passageway through which the viewer's body passes through space and time. She further postulates that video-installation focuses on how human bodies and visuals come together in space as a result of the time-based passageway that the particular space provides (Morse 1990:153,154). A video-installation thus engages the viewer who roams around the installation space. Therefore the viewer becomes the dominant subject (Morse 1990:159). The space portrayed on the screen

in an installation thus works in tandem with the real exhibition space. Installations of this kind provide the viewer with an experience of being simultaneously assimilated into the exhibition space as well as the screen spaces being viewed (Mondloch 2010:62). Spatial displays of video art occupy the bodily space, visual field and the psychological and emotional space of the viewer and thereby impact directly on the spectator's experience of the work (Mondloch 2010:62).

2.7 Narrative in video art

Video artists narrate stories of the past, present and sometimes the future.[62] The artist uses the strength of the visual image to trigger and build imaginations, arouse emotions and capture identity, gender and culture, as well as desires (Lucas museum of narrative art 2017:[sp]).

In my own video artworks narrative plays an essential role since both narrative and my works are time-based, continuously moving from past to present time and back. Since the stop-frame quality of the video artworks is emphasised by the 'jumpy' movement from one frame to the next, the narratives also have a fragmented quality. This is symbolic of the randomness of the manifestation of repressed traumatic memories.

According to Elwes (2005:12) narrative in video art has been very important from its earliest inception and remains a significant element of this art form. Numerous video artists focus on the construction of their ideas by working with "a group of images [which enables] them to tell a story" (Elwes 2005:12).

Rosalind E. Krauss (1999:31-32) suggests that video art often portrays incoherent narratives which are fragmentary in nature. The fragmentary nature of these narratives connects with the fragmentary nature of traumatic memories which are stored in the unconscious and surface in the conscious as disjointed bits of a non-linear narrative (Van der Kolk & Fisler 1995:505-525). This study proposes that fragmentation and displacement of memories are also portrayed in my own video artworks. More specifically, the fragmentation and displacement of traumatic

[62] Edward Branigan (1992:4) describes narrative as a linguistic or pictorial arrangement where an individual, object or event undergoes a specific transformation. It is a way of experiencing a collection of sentences or images which together form a start, middle and conclusion. Narrative is, therefore, the art of storytelling in which language is used as the voice of human development and behaviour. Language offers narration, remembrance, personal disclosure, history and imaginary and autobiographical structures. Narrative is a way of communicating with others and with oneself and could be understood as a form of interpretation (Gunning 2004:470). Tom Gunning (2004:472) is of the opinion that chronology in narrative is valuable and that it refers to a series of events or the arrangement of a sequence of events.

memories which cause linearity in thought processes to deteriorate and subsequent chaos in the chronology and intelligibility of the narrative, are portrayed.

2.8 Video art, memory and trauma

Since this thesis deals with the portrayal of traumatic memories through video art, and more specifically digital stop-frame animation, a discussion of video art, memory and trauma is necessary. In conjunction with this document, my video art-installation, *Loss,* portrays traumatic memories, repression thereof, its manifestation and the consequences of trauma and repression. I employ digital stop-frame animation to illustrate that video is indeed a medium which is uniquely suitable to portray this process of repression and unlocking of traumatic memories.

I agree with Sturken's (1996:2) argument that video art is "a medium in which issues of collective and individual memory are being examined". Several video artists and video art collectives[63] preserve traumatic events by using video as medium and therefore it has played a role in the construction of those specific memories since the 1970s (Sturken 1996:1). According to Patricia Zimmermann (2000:111-112) video artists such as Daniel Reeves use both the recording and editing of the video to represent personal trauma and memory. Reeves's video artwork *Smothering dreams* (1981), as shown in Figure 8, portrays a psychological re-enactment of his inhuman and traumatic experiences during the Vietnam War.[64] In the video his personal trauma caused by the war is visualised through the recording of real action. Fragmented editing techniques do not only accentuate personal trauma, but also explore collective memories (Electronic arts intermix 2017:[sp]).

[63] Such as Videofreex and Raindance.

[64] This artwork is a multimedia production which consists of video art, installation, performance and photography.

Figure 8: Daniel Reeves, *Smothering dreams*, 1981.
Video artwork, single channel, 23 minutes.
(Zimmermann 2000:[sp]).

Sturken (1996:3) argues that personal memory and the relationship between memory and identity has been exhaustively employed by artists. I do not wholly agree with her since occurrences of collective as well as personal trauma, as part of the broken world we live in, will never completely disappear. Artists, as commentators and activists, are the voices of society and the marginalised. Thus, in my opinion, the exploration and portrayal of the relationship between memory and identity with regards to traumatic memories will never be exhausted.

Video artists who deal with traumatic memories include Chinese video artists Shi Jian and Chen Jue who created *Tiananmen Square* (1991). This comprises a series of video artworks portraying the traumatic historical event of the 1989 student uprisings against communist China in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Hungarian video artists explored the memories of traumatic historical events during the Communist occupation. The Hungarian video artist Péter Forgács created a documentary of everyday life under Stalin in a video artwork called *Private Hungary: The Bartos Family* (1988). After the fall of the Apartheid regime in South Africa, William Kentridge created a series of animations including *Felix In Exile: Geography Of Memory* (1994) and *History Of The Main Complaint* (1996) which illustrates traumatic memories of events during Apartheid.

Video as a medium enables memories to be represented through art (Cubitt 1993:106). Memory representation by way of video art mimics those brain processes which facilitate the

collecting of past events and experiences. It is also important to mention the fact that the representation of memories through projected video art could instil fearful or sentimental feelings when viewed. Sean Cubitt (1993:106) argues that video records the present moment which is, within seconds, lost to the past. Video art, therefore, represents memories that have already slipped from cognitive thought processing.

Video art thus serves as a valuable tool to portray traumatic memories, repression thereof, its manifestation and the consequences of trauma and repression. In addition, by its very nature, video is able to present a narrative in such a way that it resembles fragmented memory-like constructions. It could therefore be suggested that video is a medium which is ideally suited to the excavation and exploration of memories.

2.9 Art-making as therapy

During the creation of all of the artworks forming part of *Loss*, the process of art-making became a safe way of expressing my traumatic memories. I could avoid the embarrassment and uncomfortable process of talking about these extremely painful events. Digital stop-frame animation is a medium which proved uniquely suited to reveal my deepest unconscious thoughts. According to Dori Laub and Daniel Podell (1995:991-1005), the visual arts are an effective way to express the upsetting consequences of trauma related to CSA. It is not only therapeutic for the artist but also for the viewer – it may even start the unlocking process of his or her own repressed memories. Verbal reporting may, on the other hand, only unlock these memories up to a point since much of the victim's trauma is "beyond words" (Laub & Podell 1995:991-1005). By expressing traumatic memories through visual arts, controlled distance from devastating emotions can be reached (Bowers 1992:15-24; Meekums 1999:247-259) and art as therapy can increase integration between rational thoughts and emotions (Serrano 1989:114-125). It can also decrease symptoms of depression (Howard 1990:79-86) and the occurrence and brutality of nightmares (Morgan & Johnson 1995: 244-247).

The process of working with multiple layers in the creation of moving images in digital stop-frame animation is also therapeutic. The reason for this is the fact that I start with a complex image consisting of thirty or forty layers. I peel back the layers one by one to reveal the last layer in order to lay it bare in its full simplicity and innocence. In this way the initial memory corrupted by external stimuli, imagination and the lapsing of time, is restored, if only partly, to its most basic occurrence. To remember is the only way to find healing and closure.

2.10 *Loss* as video-installation

This thesis critically analyses my exhibition, *Loss,* in order to strengthen the argument that video art, and more specifically digital stop-frame animation, has unique qualities which renders it suitable to portray traumatic memories. Although I discuss certain aspects of selected video artworks in detail in later chapters, it is necessary to describe the exhibition as a whole in this chapter. The dynamics between all its different parts, such as the artificial walls and corridors, peeping boxes, large-scale projections and technological devices must be discussed.[65] The reader will notice that the most important aspect discussed is space.

2.10.1 Installation art and space

Without discussing installation art in great detail, I need to mention the fact that I combine video and installation art in *Loss.* The exhibition in its totality conforms to the characteristics of installation art and can be seen as a separate artwork containing numerous smaller artworks – seven large-scale projected video artworks, as well as ten small-scale artworks contained within peeping boxes and exhibited in conjunction with ceramic sculptures. I refer to this as a 'video-installation'. There is a distinct difference between installation art and artworks exhibited individually, such as paintings, drawings, videos and sculptures (Bishop 2005:11).[66] The viewer could be immersed in these artworks individually, but not necessarily in the space it is exhibited in. According to Claire Bishop (2005:11) installation art, on the other hand, provides a pre-arranged three-dimensional space in which the space forms part of the artwork. The artist intends for the viewer to be overwhelmed by and immersed in the installation. Thus installation is an artistic strategy. Eileen Hall (2012:20) argues that an installation artist engineers a specific space and creates a particular ambience by controlling "light, colour, scale and materiality".

Loss is specifically designed according to the layout of the Unisa Art Gallery Space, where the exhibition took place in August 2014. When planning commenced, I realised that it is important to create harmonious synergy between the gallery space and all the aspects of the installation. It was a huge experimental undertaking and I worked with a technical team consisting of interior

[65] As a video-installation, *Loss* also consists of peeping boxes which presents living spaces, as already explained in Chapter One. The video screens it contains range in size but are approximately 20 by 15 cm big.

[66] According to A. J. Artemel (2013:[sp]) installation art is mainly reliant on interior architecture since it operates within the limits of a certain space. Installations usually include objects hanging or suspended from interior planes and attached with, amongst others, wires in drywall. It could also be objects secured to more permanent constructions. Similar to Artemel, Sarah Bonnemaison and Ronit Eisenbach (2009:1, 14) argue that installation, as in architecture, is a three-dimensional work of art which is place-specific. An installation artist will fuse and position objects within the available space to produce a structure which invites the viewer to experience the art work.

architects, sound engineers and installation experts.[67] Planning the exhibition required a thorough three-dimensional organisation of the space and started with an examination of the gallery floor-plan. Next the peeping boxes had to be designed and constructed according to the layout and size of the gallery space and then miniature rectangle screens and ceramic furniture into the miniscule sets. The artificial walls and the secluded space where the peeping boxes were exhibited were arranged, positioned and constructed in order to ensure the effortless flow of movement of viewers.[68] Every video artwork had its own soundtrack which was composed and recorded separately. The sound engineer then combined these seventeen soundtracks into one two hour-long soundtrack using parts of each so that it fitted with the eerie visuals and the uneven movements of the digital stop-frame animations. Testing of the acoustics in the gallery space to avoid echoing or white noise was also essential. The engineering logistics were problematic since installation materials such as the huge artificial walls and the peeping boxes had to be fitted through the gallery's back and front entrances. The team also had to plan the technical aspects, for instance fixture of the projectors to the ceiling. The projectors had to be disguised by suspending them from the ceiling grids using construction tools such as bolts, projector-hangers, power cords, wire and cables. Safety was also a concern as visitors could easily trip over wiring or be injured in other ways.

The whole exhibition is dependent on screen displays. Small-scale installations, which are the miniature scenes in the peeping boxes (Figure 9) are combined with large-scale projections (Figure 10) within the uncluttered space of the larger installation. The large-scale projections portray a universe or dream world where many things are happening – largely traumatic events and the subsequent manifestation of memories of these events and the viewer acts as a spectator in this universe. Within this universe, the rooms in the peeping boxes introduce smaller, more intimate worlds in which the viewer acts as a voyeur.

[67] The interior architects involved were Elana Van Der Wath, Elmarie Naudé and Mirella Bandini. Musicians Jason Thomas, Masa Milovanovic and Stefan Hefer worked with sound engineer Fridrich Kirsten to create the soundtrack. Rozan Cochrane and Matthew Du Plessis assisted with the technical aspects and Jana and Marc Barclay with the graphic design-aspects. I employed Daandrey Steyn, who, as I already mentioned, also practices video art, as the technical installation expert.

[68] The white walls become screens which force the viewer to move around so as to experience the moving visuals from different perspectives.

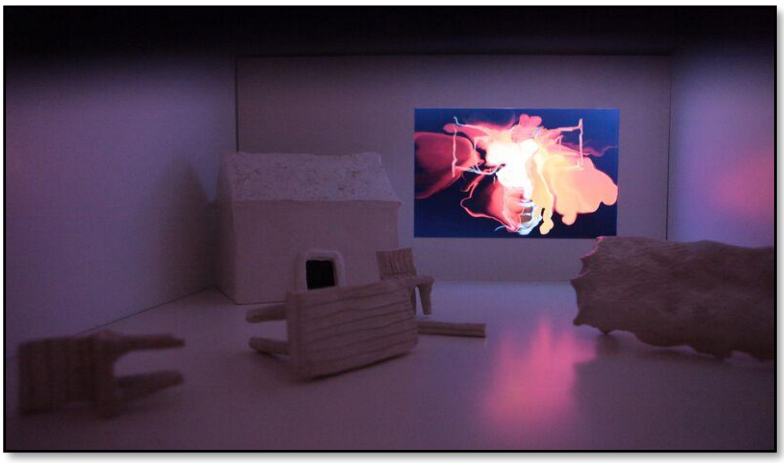

Figure 9: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss*, 2014.
Video-installation.
An example of a miniature set including tiny ceramic furniture and a small electronic screen within a peeping box.
Photographs by Nicolene Olckers.

Figure 10: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss*, 2014.
Video-installation.
An example of a large-scale projected video-animation.
Photograph by Carla Crafford.

The screens serve a wider purpose than only being walls on which the artworks are projected. In the use of the projection the digital artwork becomes part of the object and thus also becomes an object. The large-scale projections (which play simultaneously) relate to Westgeest's (2016:104) argument that the viewer is directed from one artwork to the next by simultaneousness. He or she is involuntarily forced to consider the link between the artworks and also the role he or she plays within the installation space. In *Loss* the viewer stands between opposite screens showing different projected video artworks simultaneously (see Figure 11 for an example of how the screens are placed opposite from each other). He or she turns his or her head frequently between the screens in order to see whether either of the projected images have transformed and also to see how the video-animations respond to each

other. I also observed that the light provided by the projectors falling on the viewers created the illusion that the viewers have been placed there as part of the installation. As shown in Figure 12, the video artworks are not only projected on the large-scale screens, but also reflected on the floors. Thus the inner space of the gallery comes alive through the play of light on different surfaces. This effect is symbolic of traumatic memories not only affecting the victim, but also the people living in close proximity to him or her as well as his or her environment.

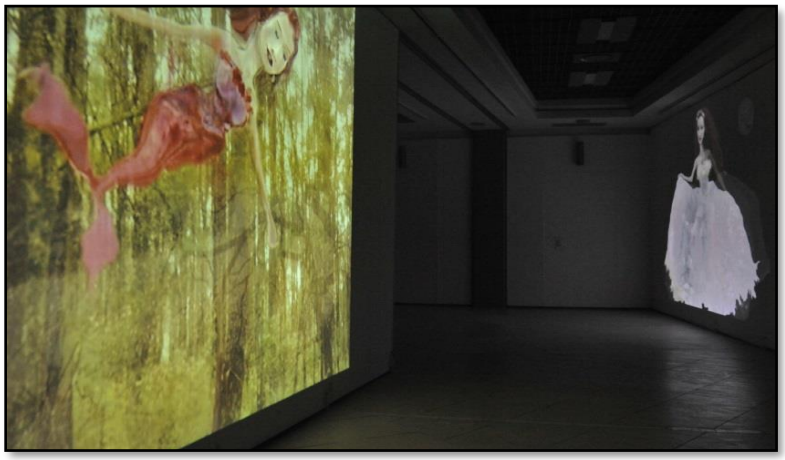

Figure 11: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss*, 2014.
Video-installation.
The projections function as opposing theatre screens.
Photograph by Carla Crafford.

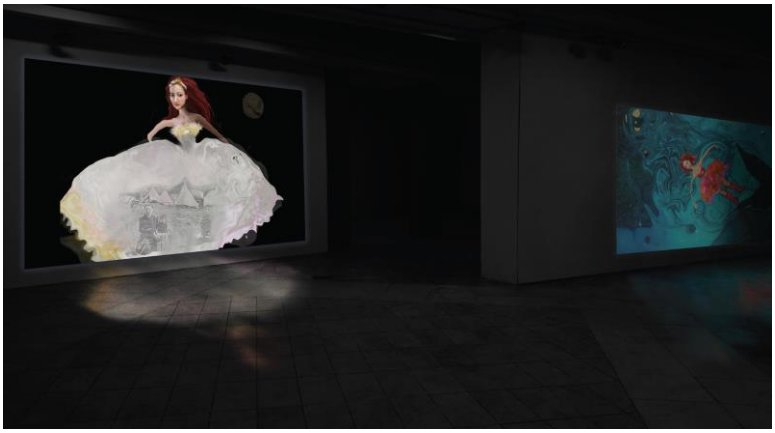

Figure 12: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014.
Video-installation.
An example showing the projected light in the inner space of the gallery.
Source: Photograph by Carla Crafford.

2.10.2 The viewer with relation to space

The relationship between the viewer and the space with regards to the video-installation is important. The viewer's presence, participation, viewpoints and likely response patterns are all taken into consideration when planning and setting up an installation (Ring Peterson 2015:182). De Mèredieu (2005:64) argues that video-installations create the opportunity for viewers to act on and respond to the video-installation and, as a result, to the artist as well as his or her artworks. Within an installation artwork, the viewer is in the present "experiencing temporal flow and spatial awareness... there is no separation or dichotomy between the perceiver and the object" (Rosenthal 2003:27).

Although I have my own agendas and aims when creating the artworks and the video-installation, I must accentuate the fact that every viewer interprets the space, narrative and animations in his or her own way according to his or her own background and circumstances. I became acutely aware of this fact when casually discussing the exhibition with many different visitors after they viewed the installation. These discussions took place in order to allow me to also be able to understand the viewers' experienced as they differ vastly from my own. Thus, when I mention something the viewer did, experiences or understood, I refer to the aim of the installation I had in mind. In other words, what do I, as the artist, see as the ideal outcome of or impression left by the installation?

The floorplan of *Loss* as video-installation illustrates how the viewer enters the exhibition through an artificial corridor and is then immediately introduced to a large-scale projection, marked "A" (Figure 13). As further indicated by the floorplan, the visitor is presented with two options: firstly, he or she can access the rest of the installation by either following the paths from the left or the right which lead to the rest of the projections; secondly, he or she can choose to walk past the large-scale projection to first visit the part in which the peeping boxes are exhibited, marked "B". The layout of the exhibition and the arrangement of the objects it contains suggest a certain continuity, structure and flow throughout the gallery space. The flow of movement is uninterrupted and smooth and viewers are naturally led from one projection to the next.

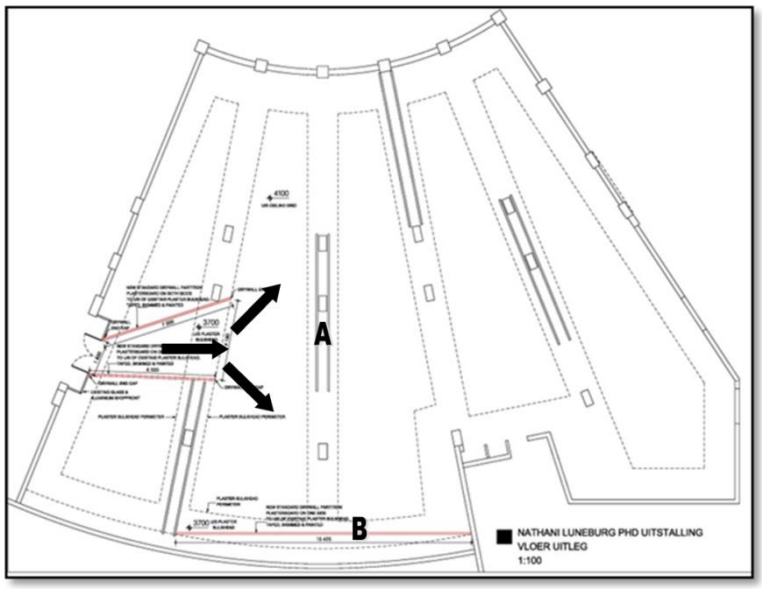

Figure 13: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss*, 2014.
Video-installation floorplan and layout documenting entry points into the gallery space.
Floorplan provided by the UNISA Art Gallery and digital layout drafted by interior architect Elmarie Naudé.

The secluded space where the peeping boxes are situated, part “B”, is enclosed by lightweight white panels suspended from the ceiling grids as shown in Figure 14. The purpose of the panels is to slightly isolate each peeping box in order to allow the viewer to focus solely on the specific peeping box and the artworks it contains. The panels are mobile and move slightly when viewers pass by. The laser-cut image of the wolf, which can be seen in Figure 14, is a prelude to the fairy-tale atmosphere which can be sensed throughout the exhibition of the peeping boxes.

Figure 14: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss*, 2014.
Video-installation.
The suspended labyrinth.
Photograph by Carla Crafford.

One of the aims of the installation is for the viewer to take a journey through his or her own memories. Such a journey could even unconsciously reach the deepest recesses of the mind and may, consequently assist in unlocking possible repressed memories through a symbolically charged dream scene which engulfs the whole gallery space. The mentioned separate spaces which are combined into a whole create a world in which the recalling and unlocking of traumatic memories are magically possible. For this to be achieved the viewer must become immersed in the installation. Immersion can be obtained by placing the viewer in a location where his or her understanding of space is challenged. In doing so, an intense awareness of space is created (Rendell 2010:191-193) and immersion follows. *Loss* aims to create an immersive environment by manipulating the available space. Upon entering the viewer is lured into a space where an invented world unfolds. Even though viewers need not necessarily move too close to the projections, they become part of the artwork's extended space by walking on the reflections of the various projections on the floor. He or she also becomes part of the exhibition by blocking the light beams from the projector and subsequently casting a shadow on the screen as shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss*, 2014.
Video-installation.
A viewer blocking the light beams from the projector.
Photograph by Carla Crafford.

The viewer's relationship with *Loss* and his or her immersion in the space is intriguing. I observed, as captured in Figure 16, that the installation produces a particular type of movement in the viewer's body within the open space of the gallery. Upon entering the exhibition, a connection between the viewer and the installation is immediately established since he or she is closely confronted with the first large-scale projection. The viewer is awed and he or she rapidly moves from screen to screen, not fully comprehending the meaning and the extent of the installation. He or she is not immediately immersed in the artworks, but gradually the

inactive awareness turns into an active one. A physical closeness to the projections – both within the peeping boxes and the large-scale projections – involuntarily draws the viewer into an intimate space created by the artist as he or she views the projections for a prolonged time. The woman in Figure 17, for instance, intently stares at a large-scale projection and it is evident that she is very much aware of and immersed in the artwork. This awareness may be enhanced by the positioning of the screens and also the peeping boxes, the careful planning of the soundtrack, the vast space and strategically placed seats in front of the large screen, the colours ranging from greyscale to vibrant and the overall ambience created by the dimmed lights, sounds and images.

Figure 16: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014*.*
Video-installation.
An example portraying how the installation induces movement of the viewer's body within an open space.
Photograph by Carla Crafford.

Figure 17: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014*.*
Video-installation.
An example showing how the projections immerse the viewer into an intimate space.
Photograph by Nicolene Olckers.

Rectangular cabinets serve as peeping boxes which provide the setting for the miniature scenes. The particular placing of these boxes contributes to the immersive effect of *Loss*. Peeping slits (ten centimetres high and sixty centimetres wide) force the viewer to view the interior by bending down, stretching and crouching. This is illustrated in Figures 18 to 21. With these actions the viewer unknowingly becomes part of the installation by acting as performer and voyeur.

Figure 18: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014*.*
Video-installation.
The peeping boxes activate the viewer's bodily movement.
Photograph by Nicolene Olckers.

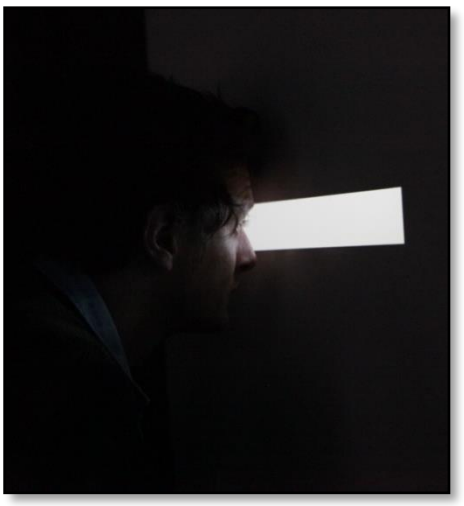

Figure 19: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014*.*
Video-installation.
The peeping boxes activate the viewer's bodily movement.
Photograph by Nicolene Olckers.

Figure 20: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014.
Video-installation.
The peeping boxes activate the viewer's bodily movement.
Photograph by Nicolene Olckers.

Figure 21: Nathani Lüneburg, *Loss,* 2014.
Video-installation.
The peeping boxes activate the viewer's bodily movement.
Photograph by Nicolene Olckers.

The viewer's awareness of space intensifies when looking through the slits in the peeping boxes, since the miniature scenes are watched at a close and intimate distance. By looking at detailed close-ups of private spaces and secretive settings, the viewer becomes a voyeur and gazes intrusively in on the young woman's private memories. This viewing process exploits and exposes the weakness and vulnerability most likely felt by the young woman as a young girl. The viewer feels helpless since he or she is unable to intercede or ease the victim's

trauma. This act of voyeurism may become particularly agonising when the viewer is isolated from reality and subsequently immersed in the young woman's traumatic memories.

Sound also plays a role in the immersion of the viewer in the video-installation. As already explained, *Loss* includes a looping soundtrack which reverberates throughout the installation space and which is distinctly different from commercial music. In the exhibition space the sound is distributed by hidden speakers. The soundtrack comprises of re-mastered extracts from collected sound recordings and has a multichannel audio output. The aim of the soundtrack is to metaphorically convert the walls of the whole exhibition space into speakers, creating surround sound which is experienced by the viewer through body and mind.

Loss's soundtrack does not function within the genre of sound-installation but is more accurately understood as part of the video-installation. In *Loss* the video-installation strongly relies on moving images and screens and not as much on the soundtrack. In video-installation the sound adds to the visual experience and sometimes appears as "submissive to the images" (Westgeest 2016:83-107). An additional difference between video-installation and sound-installation is that the latter has a time component (Ouzounian 2006:71) which, in my opinion, provides the viewer with the option of remaining in the space for a longer period because of an interest in the progression of the sound. When combining sound with visuals in a video-installation the sound reinforces "real time experiences and comes out of the image into the space of the public which leads us [back] to the various spatial characteristics of video art" (Westgeest 2016:83-84). The soundtrack in *Loss* echoes this argument of Westgeest's in the way it functions closely with the projected videos. The composers viewed all seventeen video-animations simultaneously on different screens as they created the soundtrack. They then joined the different soundtracks of the different animations to form one universal soundtrack. This process produced interdependency between sound and visuals. *Loss* is an audio-visual video-installation where image and sound become partners, and through listening and seeing the viewer is able to form a narrative of their own.

In *Loss* viewers are surrounded by a number of screens and are confronted with sound which seems to be produced by the moving images since the sound-technology is invisible. These sounds, in conjunction with the visuals, enable full spectator immersion into a three-dimensional image/sound structure. The installation displays dream-like features that, combined with the sound recording, produce certain liveliness. Hundreds of small sounds such as the crunching of paper, murmuring, aggressive voices, laughter, jewellery box melodies, piano playing, crying and whirling progress and blend into an all-inclusive audio space. The role each sound plays is observable since all of the sounds are shaped and enforced by the

moving images. The viewer hears sounds that closely relate to and affect what he or she observes. Thus the audible transforms into the visible.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter focused on video art as a medium. It is evident from its historical development that technology has played an immense role in developing video art as an art form in its own right. Video art is an ever-changing medium which is always reinvented and adapted by artists, even though it has, in the past, at times faded from the fine art scene. Performance art also assisted in the development of video art with regards to self-portraiture, which plays a significant role in my artworks.

I argue that the technique of digital stop-frame animation, as a form of video art, is a unique medium to portray traumatic memories and to assist in the unlocking of such memories. Adobe Photoshop is the ideal program to use as it features digital brushes and drawing tools. The Liquify tool is also paramount to my art and is used to create movement from one digital image to the next. Pixels are pushed and pulled to form symbols and images. Digital stop-frame animation is different from stop-frame animation in that digital images are created and moved through liquification, whereas stop-frame animation involves the physical movement of objects between frames. The suitability of digital stop-frame animation to unlock traumatic memories renders it a medium which is therapeutic in nature. The medium is also capable of telling stories or portraying narratives in a unique way. These narratives are created through intense processes of construction of characters and imaginary worlds through digital painting and drawing. The ways in which I create frame-by-frame movement in my artworks makes it distinctly different form the work of other video artists. Narrative in my animations is portrayed in the same way in which traumatic memories hide and emerge in the conscious and unconscious. The narrative structures are based on the fragmentary and non-linear nature of traumatic memories.

Loss is not only an exhibition where individual artworks are exhibited, but could be viewed as an installation art piece in its own right. One of the aims of installation art is for the viewer to be overwhelmed by and immersed in the installation. The viewer also becomes part of the installation by moving through the installation space. It is evident that installation art provides a pre-arranged three-dimensional space in which the space forms part of the artwork.

Chapter three discusses how *Loss,* with particular reference to selected video-animations, portray traumatic memories.

CHAPTER THREE
DEPICTIONS OF TRAUMATIC MEMORIES IN *LOSS*

3.1 Introduction

Memory impairment appears when traumatic and stressful experiences are cognitively processed by the brain. In some instances these memories are reduced in such a way that they are not remembered as rational storylines. These memories are sometimes repressed and stored in the unconscious, guarding the conscious against the consequences of the traumatic event. Repressed traumatic memories resurface later on by way of flashbacks, anger, anxiety and nightmares. Traumatic amnesia or repression of memories presents the complex reality and an inaccessibility of the traumatic history.

This chapter involves a discussion of three of my video artworks which are visual representations of traumatic memories. The works are explored from a Freudian perspective and the analysis proceeds from the assumption that memory is a complex system. Owing to its complexity, scientific research into its nature and characteristics is forever developing and evolving, and the many insights, theories and criticisms are in themselves rather complex. For this reason it is paramount to first briefly discuss the workings of the memory systems of the brain. Next I explore trauma theories in order to explain and critically investigate aspects of traumatic memories in terms of neurobiology and modern psychoanalysis. In doing this I refer to, on the one hand, Freudian trauma theories and, on the other hand, contemporary theorists who each offer particular insights in debates surrounding traumatic memories.

The second part of this chapter comprises the critical discussion of the video-animations *Departure* and *Earth* through reference to trauma theories. During the creation process images were digitally merged using the methods of morphing, multiple layering, paint-box effects, flowing movements and colouring as discussed in Chapter Two. The process involved the creation of a new frame and the partial erasure of the previous one to form a sequence, which mimics the idea of fragmentally forgetting and remembering trauma. In this sense, the artworks enter into a dialogue with Freudian theories of anxiety, repression and screen memories.

3.2 Memory as a complicated system

Memory is a complicated system and scientific explorations into its nature and characteristics are extensive, ongoing and incomplete. Without excavating the subject too deeply, it is necessary to attempt to gather some insight into the workings of memory systems. This will enable a clearer understanding of theories with regards to traumatic memories – those of Freud as well as contemporary theorists. Aristotle ([350] 1941 BCE:607) noted that memory is of the past, and that it is also quite different from the future and the present. Along similar lines, Paul Ricoeur (2004:21) more recently states that we are capable of remembering past events and that memory is our only link to the past. Although a memory may appear in the form of an image, which depicts the mind's own visualisation of the past reality, it may not always depict the past in a truthful manner. It sometimes incorporates the imagination which colours an image of the past. In other words, these images can reveal memory as a real experience, but altered by the imagination (Ricoeur 2004:21). Memory seems to function by constantly exploring and engaging with the truth through imagination and actual remembered events (Van Tonder 2010:19). Therefore, although memory comprises knowledge of previous events and is devoted to the truth, it does not always interpret the past in a truthful manner (Ricoeur 1995:5).

By recording and storing present events, memory provides the ability to learn from past experiences through recollecting processes (Mastin 2010:[sp]). From a neurological perspective, memories are a set of programmed links between nerves that reconstruct past experiences. Accordingly, memory is structured like collages scattered throughout areas of the brain (Mastin 2010:[sp]). Furthermore, memory has the ability to encode, store, preserve and evoke certain events (Sidran Institute & The Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Health System 1994:[sp]). This ability suggests that the normal commencement of memories is narrative-based and starts with the action of recording present events. Subsequently, memories are stored in the brain, acted upon and remembered (Van der Kolk 1997:2). Events are thus most likely to be remembered as narratives that transform and fade with the passing of time.

The Atkinson-Shiffrin memory model proposes three key types of memories that act in a sequence when memorisation takes place, namely sensory, short-term and long-term memory (Mastin 2010:[sp]). Each of these has its own particular functioning method, but all three work together when memorisation occurs. According to Luke Mastin (2010:[sp]) sensory memory is the memory with the shortest span and it has the capability to preserve sensory stimuli received through all the senses. The recall process of sensory memory does not involve cognitive control. In contrast, short-term memory functions as a momentary recall and has the ability to

process information and to memorise it simultaneously. However, the collected data will disappear unless the information is transferred to long-term memory (Mastin 2010:[sp]). The latter provides permanent storage if the memory recurs, associations are drawn and the information is significant. According to Larry R. Squire and Stuart Zola-Morgan (1991:2380–2386), long-term memory is often divided into two subtypes of memory, namely explicit and implicit memory. Explicit memory, also known as narrative or declarative memory, refers to an awareness of realities or events that have occurred (Squire & Zola-Morgan 1991: 2380-2386). It further refers to responsiveness and the ability of the individual to recall facts and experienced events and is remembered in a narrative way. Implicit memory, on the other hand, refers to memories of behaviour and emotions, which include memories with regards to skills and habits. Implicit memory also includes emotional reactions and impulses, and is associated with areas in the central nervous system (Van der Kolk & Fisler 1995: 505-525). All of the above-mentioned memories refer to the normal functions of the memorisation process. In the following section the darker side of memory, which refers to the processing of traumatic memories, is discussed.

3.3 Theories with regards to trauma and memory

In this section trauma and its impact on memory is investigated through reference to Freudian as well as contemporary trauma theories. Freud is still recognised as the forerunner in psychoanalysis by many theorists and his theories with regards to trauma is considered the basis of contemporary trauma theory. Freud contributed several theories to important discourses that have since been further developed by contemporary theorists and which are applied widely in psychotherapy and psychology. Despite various and sometimes fierce criticisms of Freudian theories, a transformed appreciation of and revisitation of his legacy shows that Freud's contribution is ongoing and relevant in a study of trauma and trauma-dreams (Kaplan 2005:32). Despite being a Freudian critic, Dvorsky (2013:[sp]) does acknowledge that Freud's finding that the brain can be compartmentalised and disjointed into separate fragments, undoubtedly is an astonishing assertion. He also claims that Freud was correct about the unconscious mind with regards to human experience, thought and action which is determined not by cognisant rationality, but by illogical powers outside consciousness and control (Dvorsky 2013:[sp]).

Freud acknowledges the significance of unconscious psychological activity and some of his contributions include observations with regards to the human and unconscious mind (Beystehner 1998:[sp]). As Drew Westen (1998:[sp]) points out:

> But on some of the central postulates of psychodynamic theory, such as the view that much of mental life is unconscious, Freud has left an important – and I believe indelible – mark on human self-understanding. As psychology moves into its second century, we would do well to attend to and integrate some of these disavowed psychodynamic ideas, which need not remain, like classic psychodynamic symptoms, outside the consciousness of the scientific community.

Westen's argument is supported by Phil Mollon. Mollon wrote a paper titled *Freud and false memory syndrome* (2000) in which he questions the reason for "false memory syndrome".[69] He critically evaluates Freud's theories and earlier cases with regard to, amongst others, psychopathology, trauma, memory, screen memories and repression of traumatic memories. He came to the following conclusion (Mollon 2000:65):

> However, he [Freud] also – and this is absolutely crucial – emphasised the ways in which memories of experiences, especially those of long ago, are subject to all manner of distortion, mixing elements from different sources, and are rarely available to conscious recall in coherent and accurate form. In this way, Freud's views of memory, as well as his understanding of the impact of childhood sexual abuse, seem remarkably in tune with today's perspectives. Moreover, in drawing attention to the quicksands [sic] beneath many of our apparent certainties and realities, Freud could more accurately be regarded as the father of postmodernism rather than of "the recovered memory fad".

Contemporary theorists not only developed Freud's theories further, but also developed new theories. Thus Freudian trauma theory cannot be explained without referring to contemporary trauma theory and vice versa. It is important to note that, although trauma could be either personal or collective or even both simultaneously, I refer to personal traumatic experiences and traumatic memories since this thesis investigates exactly this. My artworks also portray personal and not collective trauma.

3.3.1 Trauma and its impact on memory

Van der Kolk (1997:[sp]) explains that trauma "... by definition, is the result of exposure to an inescapably stressful event that overwhelms a person's coping mechanisms". Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis (1973:465-469) describe a traumatic event as a harmful event in a person's life and highlights some victims' inability to sufficiently process the experience. This then becomes a severe psychological disturbance with long-lasting effects on the unconscious

[69] False memory syndrome first emerged in the 1990s. It was reported that patients undergoing psychotherapy had false memories of CSA which had never happened. Questions with regards to the reasons for the manifestation of these false memories were asked and some believed that unethical psychotherapeutic practices were to blame. Freud, with his views on psychoanalysis which is followed worldwide by therapists, was named one of the culprits (Mollon 2000:3-7).

(Laplanche 1976:129-130). According to Soshona Felman and Dori Laub (1992:69) “the traumatic event, although real, took place outside the parameters of ‘normal’ reality, such as causality, sequence, place and time. The trauma is thus an event that has no beginning, no ending, no before, no during and no after.” This implies that victims of traumatic experiences and events can at no time recover from those experiences and live with the traumatic event continuously, reaching no conclusion. Thus it does not only impact the present and the future, but also the way in which the past is remembered.

The word ‘trauma’ emanates from the Greek word τραῦμᾰ, which means “wound” (Glosbe - the multilingual online dictionary). In the nineteenth century theorists came to the conclusion that psychological effects of physical trauma also included the idea of a mental wound caused by bodily trauma (Beyond Blue. Depression. Anxiety [sa]:1). It is a “wound to the soul” – the flesh wound would naturally cause a wound to the state of being and therefore to the soul (Hacking 1995:4). Greg Forter (2007:263) highlights the connection between psychological and physical trauma in Freudian theories. Freud ([1920] 1981:18, 31-32) proposes that the mind guards itself against the effects of physical wounding of the body by adapting to circumstances. If it does not adapt, a traumatic experience can surface and break through the protective layers of the mind. Thus, an event can be experienced as traumatic if the mind does not prepare itself in advance (Beyond Blue. Depression. Anxiety [sa]:1-4).

In other words, the metaphorical protective skin or layer is pierced by the trauma and the consciousness is wounded. Taking it another step further, I agree with Caruth (1996:10-11) that trauma is more than a wounded consciousness. It is “a story of a wound” which narrates reality. The traumatised victim can never be restored to the state that existed before the traumatic event, and thus the experienced trauma keeps the wound ‘open’ (Kaplan 2005:19). This stressful event is stored in the memory together with the emotions experienced during the event (Van der Kolk 1997:[sp]). Van der Kolk (1997:[sp]) further argues that clinical observations have shown that these upsetting emotions experienced by trauma victims cannot be converted into logical storylines, and consequently explicit memory[70] is affected by the trauma. He also asserts that trauma and the emotions experienced during a traumatic event are kept in the unconscious – the victim develops a fear of remembering the traumatic event and therefore the traumatic memories are unconsciously kept away from normal consciousness. These memories are then portrayed in visual depictions and behaviours but not in logical formats (Van der Kolk 1997:[sp]).

[70] Explicit memory is also known as narrative or declarative memory and includes everyday events that are remembered in a narrative format (Squire & Zola-Morgan 1991:2380–2386).

Van der Kolk *et al* (1996:3-23) state that traumatic experiences can change a person's mental and biological balance in such an intense way that the memory of one specific event deflects all other experiences, impacting heavily on later everyday experiences. Traumatic memories overpower the cortex of the brain and are consequently not immediately and rationally processed, which means that the traumatic event is not entirely recallable (Kaplan 2005:42). In other words, the consequences manifest because of the delayed response and not always because of the traumatic event per se (Caruth 1995:5,8). Consequently some of these traumatic memories become difficult to remember. It is due to the lack of remembering that the traumatised person agonises as the mind unconsciously attempts to comprehend the event that was forgotten (Caruth 1995:17).

Freud and Breuer ([1893-1895] 1995:6) argue that certain traumatic memories stay repressed long after others have manifested in conscious thought. Judith L. Herman and Emily Schatzow (1987:12) suggest that trauma victims and sufferers from PTSD may be completely unaware of the history of their trauma due to severe repression. On the other hand, other victims also suffering from PTSD, can recall their traumatic experiences effectively (American Psychiatric Association 2000:463-468).

3.3.2 Repression of traumatic memories

Repressed memory is a particularly topical subject in modern psychology. Some authors have determined that it may occur in a variable, but normally small fraction of trauma victims. Richard McNally (2007:1083-1090) postulates that certain psychologists support the principle of repressed memories and further argues that these memories may be accessed through treatment. Still, most psychologists believe that treatment is actually a process through which false memories are formed by randomly mixing real memories and external stimuli. Notwithstanding the fact that it seems to be a controversial issue on which theorists do not seem to agree, I find it important to refer to repression for two reasons. In the first place, this study involves an application of and critical engagement with Freudian trauma theories, which include repression. In the second place, repression forms an integral part of some of the artworks which will be discussed in this chapter.

The core of repression is to shield the conscious from the traumatic memories regarding the trauma by concealing it in the unconscious. These memories are stored in the unconscious until it recurs when the associated anxiety is triggered through therapy (Freud [1910] 1995:28-29). According to Freud and Breuer ([1893-1895] 1995:10) traumatic memories are inaccessible due to the function of motivated forgetting. This points to events the trauma patient

wishes to forget. As a consequence, traumatic memories are repressed (Freud & Breuer [1893-1895] 1995:10). According to Van der Kolk and Fisler (1995:4) traumatic events, such as ongoing domestic violence and rape, may result in the mentioned repression of memories with regards to the trauma, which complicates the capacity of patients to recall it. Repression was recognised by Jean-Martin Charcot (cited in Van der Kolk 1997:[sp]) as one of the first consequences of trauma. Certain experiences are violent enough to damage the neurobiological processes that are responsible for consciousness and memory (Flanagan 2002:387). The traumatic memories are repressed and consequently the normal neurobiological processes allow the memory to resurface by way of flashbacks, anger, anxiety and nightmares (Anker 2009:52).

Caruth (1995:152-156) describes trauma as an experience so overwhelming that it cannot be entirely represented through images or symbols. The result is an inability to attain a strong separation from the shock. Sven-Åke Christianson (cited in Van der Kolk & Fisler 1995:505-525) argues that a person's consciousness becomes restricted when he or she is in a threatening situation and thus only essential details can be absorbed. Trauma produces photographic-like as well as false memories, influenced by the imagination. These are known as invasive flashbacks – what occurs is remembered after the fact (Caruth 1995:5). However, according to Caruth (1995:62), a traumatic invasion is never just a consequence, but rather an effort to understand what was never completely comprehended in the first place. Such an invasion simultaneously refers to the impenetrability of the event and the unobtainability of the memory by conscious memory. The invasion, which could take place by flashbacks, also signifies the mind's struggles to comprehend what happened. Caruth (1995:59) draws from Van der Kolk's (1997:[sp]) analysis of flashbacks and observes that "the painful repetition of the flashback can only be understood as the absolute inability of the mind to avoid an unpleasurable event that has not been given psychic meaning in any way". For Freud (1899:307) screen memories and repressed memories are tightly knitted since both function as defence mechanisms in the mind. Screen memories belong to the earliest years of childhood, while repressed memories feature later in the adult period.

Freudian repression, in which the conscious mind evades painful memories by pushing it down into the unconscious, is a valuable method of protecting the conscious from vivid reliving of traumatic events.

3.3.3 Screen memories

A reference to Freud's trauma theory with regards to screen memories is important and his work, *Screen memories* (1899), offers a useful point to start an investigation thereof. As already mentioned in Chapter One, Freud (1899:301-322) is of the opinion that childhood memories surface in adulthood but often as twisted and fragmented or even imaginary memories with little relation to what actually happened in the past. These surfacing memories are called 'screen memories'. Freud's understanding of screen memories is radical. He contends that they are shaped at a specific time and not necessarily reliant and dependent on truthfulness as a primary contributing factor (McMahon 2012:59-88). Freud ([1899] 2003:64) explains that it is likely that a person has absent childhood memories and therefore there are confusions concerning the complications these memories hide. Childhood memories reveal the primary years of childhood, not as they are, but as they seemed at later times when the memories were evoked (Freud 1899:301-322).

Freud (1899:320) believes the formation of screen memories to be protective sensors. These protective sensors refer to past traumatic events in which the primary methods of disguise are condensation and displacement. Condensation involves a process by which repressed memories recur in unknown or unpredictable ways, for instance in dreams. Dreams could consist of numerous associations and thoughts and are short-lived, daring and compact in contrast with the variety of dream-thoughts (Freud Museum London [sa]:[sp]). Displacement in Freudian psychoanalysis is an unconscious defence mechanism. The mind directs conscious thoughts away from intended actions that are either treacherous or offensive. It transfers feelings, thoughts or desires often used to relieve anxiety in the context of violent or sexual instincts. Freud (1917:49-50) originally interpreted displacement as a means of dream distortion, fluctuating from significant to insignificant essentials, or the reinstatement of something by a simple delusion (Freud 1917:208).

According to Laplanche (1999:264-269) Freud was of the opinion that the unconscious does not necessarily reinstate knowledge of events that took place in the past by restoring repressed memories, but rather stores an individual's traumatic history in the unconscious. This history is incoherent and the traumatic memories diverge from the historical event (Laplanche 1999:148). Van der Kolk and Fisler (1995:505-525) argue that elements of the traumatic experience are not integrated into a unified whole, "but are stored in memory as isolated fragments and stored as sensory perceptions". As traumatic memories are repressed, they are dispersed, fragmented and repetitive in dreams, and they are unreachable when in a conscious state (Laplanche 1999:161).

There are definite elements in Freud's theories that have been questioned by several contemporary and late-twentieth century theorists. A review on memory by Mark Solms (1999:58-70; 1997:681-703), for instance, does not mention Freud at all.[71] Phyllis Greenacre (1975:693–712) argues that Freud's research of screen memories had, by the 1960s, slowly fallen out of favour and the phrase 'screen memory' was not included in Moore and Fine's 1968 *Glossary of psychoanalytic terms and concepts* at all (Greenacre 1975:693-712). This declining interest in screen memories may have emerged from the unsatisfactory outcomes of later analytical investigations thereof. I agree with Lucy LaFarge's (2012:1251) argument that screen memories do not disappear when they have been recognised. They rather contribute to the psychoanalysis of a patient. Through psychoanalysis screen memories can be located in the larger framework of childhood experiences. However, screen memories are at no time completely engrossed in childhood experiences only. Screen memories may change as progress in treatment is made. On the other hand, as Greenacre (1975:708) argues, they may maintain a persistent inflexibility.

3.4 Freudian traumatic memories depicted in selected video artworks

3.4.1 Repressed memories of trauma and anxiety in "Departure"

In this section Freud's notion of repressed memories are visually excavated through the method of free association. *Departure* portrays the unlocking of repressed memories and through reference to this video-animation I explain Freud's repression theory through non-linear presentation of a traumatic memory and the constant referral to visual symbols.

Departure is a video-animation that is displayed on a small digital screen in a peeping box. The title of this artwork suggests the process of journeying into the unconscious to uncover repressed traumatic memories caused by CSA.

As shown in Figure 22 the peeping box includes ceramic sculptures of furniture and represents a dormitory for girls. The peeping slit is situated at the top of the box and the viewer witnesses the video-animation from above. The reason for this is to demonstrate the vulnerability and exposure of the young girl and by placing the viewer in this position he or she becomes a

[71] Memory and psychology expert, Eugen Tarnow (2003:3), observes that numerous psychologists disapprove of Freud's theory for its scientific deficiencies, since, for a theory to be measured scientifically, it must be able to clarify interpretations and offer testable suppositions. According to this positivist approach, Freud's theory is flawed in that it presents explanations only after the events or actions have occurred and thus does not comply with scientific criteria.

voyeur observing the dormitory in which the young girl lives with other girls. The observer thus becomes involved in her intimate and private traumatic memories manifesting in the video-animation. I have chosen to portray a girl's dormitory to accentuate the fact that many young girls traumatically experience CSA every day. It could also be argued that it portrays the young girl's silent suffering as she is unable to share her feelings of anxiety with her friends. As the traumatic memories are repressed, the origin of the anxiety keeps eluding the young girl and she cannot fully understand these feelings.

Figure 22: Nathani Lüneburg, *Departure,* 2014*.*
Video-installation in a peeping box.
Photograph by Carla Crafford.

The images in *Departure* provide visual codes or symbols which confirm Freud's argument that trauma victims unconsciously reject upsetting thoughts and memories and bury them in the unconscious. Thus, symbols are used instead of factual recognition and visual detail, for example the perpetrator's face or body. Freud (1915:147) argues that "the essence of repression lies simply in turning something away and keeping it at a distance, from the conscious". The visual codes in the video-animation are a string of random memories which the memory systems of the young woman find difficult to structure into a linear storyline, as seen in the sequence of images in Figure 23. Thus the storyline is fragmented and at times it turns purposefully towards sentimentality as demonstrated through the symbols associated with a young girl's room.

Figure 23: Nathani Lüneburg, *Departure,* 2014*.*
Video-stills from the video-animation.
A sequence of images representing random memories.
Video-still provided by the author.

In the opening scene the pink pillow case alludes to comfort and support (Figure 24). As the pillow case morphs across the screen, a tree develops (Figure 25). Freud (1913:370) suggests that a tree symbolises “an elongated object”, resembling a phallus. The tree dissolves into a rose which, in turn, is symbolic of the female body. Andrea Frownfelter (2010:11) argues that a flower symbolically refers to external female genitalia; thus in Figure 26 the flower becomes a metaphor of external female genitalia. The young woman perceives her genitalia as contaminated and shameful – she does not know why, but fragmented memories and symbols

regarding the CSA result in a notion of taintedness. Following the image of the rose, a swan appears. The way in which a swan immerses its head under water to feed suggests the workings of the unconscious mind. The visible conscious is above the surface while the unconscious takes shelter in the deep waters. When the traumatic memories are triggered, they lie in wait to be discovered just beneath the surface. By discovering the unconscious, a whole new world arises.

Figure 24: Nathani Lüneburg, *Departure,* 2014*.*
Video-still from the video-animation.
A close-up of a pillowcase.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 25: Nathani Lüneburg, *Departure,* 2014*.*
Video-still from the video-animation.
A tree emerges from the pillowcase.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 26: Nathani Lüneburg, *Departure,* 2014*.*
Video-still from the video-animation.
A rose representing flesh.
Video-still provided by the author.

In the scene following the emergence of the swan, the image of a young girl and a series of heart shapes morph from the image of the swan. In Figures 27 and 28 the young white-haired girl now further disintegrates or metamorphoses into a cloud of butterflies which signify vulnerability and transformation. This metamorphosis suggests how the young woman transforms as she struggles to process repressed memories of a traumatic childhood experience which surface fragmentally without making sense. A soft toy (Figure 29) morphs from the remaining colours and shapes. When the young woman was a young girl, she, like many other small children, found comfort and safety in her soft bear doll. The soft toy thus suggests safety, affection and an ability to control rather than to be controlled. By thinking of the toy bear as an adult, the young woman longingly remembers the feelings of safety she experienced through the closeness of the toy.

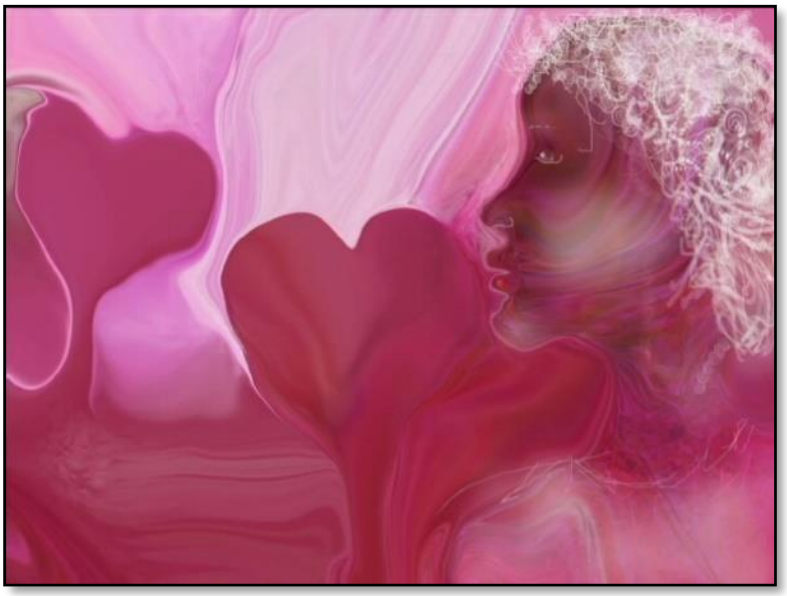

Figure 27: Nathani Lüneburg, *Departure,* 2014*.*
Video-still from the video-animation.
The young girl and red heart shapes.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 28: Nathani Lüneburg, *Departure*, 2014.
Video-still from the video-animation.
A cloud of butterflies.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 29: Nathani Lüneburg, *Departure,* 2014.
Video-still from the video-animation.
The young girl's soft toy.
Video-still provided by the author.

The disjointed flow of objects and symbols in *Departure* echoes Van der Kolk's (1997:[sp]) postulation that upsetting emotions cannot be converted into logical storylines, and consequently explicit memory is negated by the traumatic experience. The traumatic memories are suggested in the behaviour of the characters in the artwork, but not in a logical format. The non-linear narrative comprises multi-layered images and movements that can merely hint at

the traumatic experience. While experiencing the trauma, amnesia develops and explicit memory retreats into the unconscious. The individual is not capable of coherent narrative (Van der Kolk & Fisler 1995:505-525). Here the non-linear presentation of a traumatic memory and the constant referral to visual symbols draw on Caruth's (1995:153) argument that traumatic memories cause memory fragmentation and also disturb the flow of associations. The traumatic memory is not well integrated into the conscious and thus cannot become a coherent memory. This is perceived in the non-linear arrangement of the video artwork. Coherent memory becomes impossible since a traumatic event tends to occur too suddenly. This leads to the event not being understood completely while it is happening (Caruth 1995:153). As LaCapra (1996:174) explains, a traumatic event numbs the victim's senses and the linear narrative flow of the event cannot be recorded at the time of the occurrence.

I see the disjointed surfacing of the traumatic memories and the consequent struggle to remember coherently as the first step in unlocking the traumatic memories. This struggle to regain memories relates to Freud's (1900:600) argument that repressed memories are not only hidden from the conscious, but overlooked by it. The struggle to remember the traumatic event is demonstrated in the continuous process of metamorphosis in the video artwork. Unwanted memories of trauma do not easily surface because of self-censorship. This refers to memories psychologically obstructed through unconscious defence mechanisms, of which repression is one (Freud 1915:147). To Freud (1939:127) repression as a defence mechanism is the most effective means to divide logic from emotion and is a central cause of neurosis. Repression is the ego's protective response to trauma induced anxiety.

Anxiety is an important theme in *Departure* and an atmosphere of anxiety is palpable throughout the video artwork. These feelings of anxiety are enhanced by the grim setting in the peeping box, the soundtrack, the disfiguring of the ceramic furniture and by the warped and distorted appearance of the pixels, as illustrated in Figure 30. The erratic and irregular movement between the frames produced by the stop-frame techniques accentuates the anxiety and suggests a feeling of being out of breath or hyperventilating. The soundtrack of video-installation, as well as the individual soundtrack of *Departure,* also provoke emotions of anxiety through the use of echoing and threatening voice recordings, child-laughter, snippets of an out of tune piano recording, subtle sounds of women singing, crackling sounds of car toys moving and sounds of jewellery box melodies. The soundtrack and artwork aim to illustrate and trace the young girl's anxiety felt during the traumatic event.

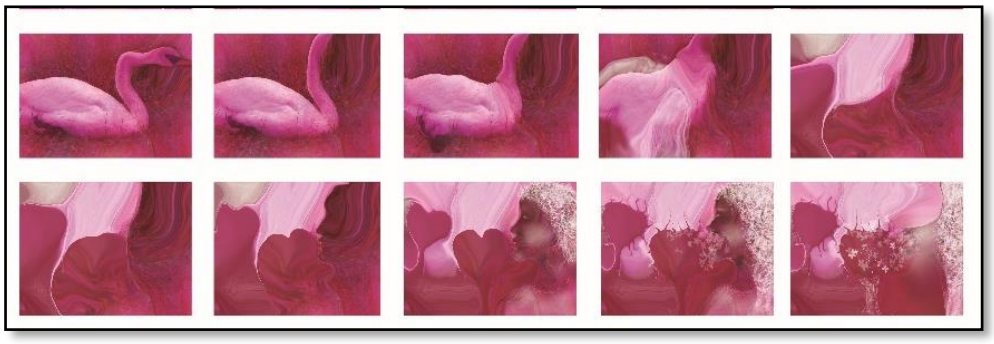

Figure 30: Nathani Lüneburg, *Departure,* 2014*.*
Video-stills from video-animation.
Distorted appearance of the pixels.
Video-stills provided by the author.

The video-animation portrays surfacing of the young woman's repressed memories with regards to a traumatic event of CSA which took place when she was a young girl. These random memories result in anxiety since the young woman cannot remember the event and thus she does not understand these feelings of anxiousness. The memories which do surface are fragmented and this contributes to the anxiousness. As part of Freud's anxiety theory he recognises three kinds of anxiety: reality, neurotic and moral anxiety (Thompson [sa]:[sp]). Reality anxiety is the most elementary form and concerns the ego. It is normally experienced because of real and likely events. Neurotic anxiety originates in the unconscious. Moral anxiety, on the other hand, originates from the superego and occurs because of the loss of values or ethical encryptions, and is presented in the form of emotions similar to blame or embarrassment (Thompson [sa]:[sp]). Freud ([1886-1899] 1966:1919) argues that anxiety is a result of stress caused by the traumatic event. He (1900:337) further contends that anxiety is a libidinal impulse which has its foundation in and is repressed by the unconscious. After repression the instinctual impulse does not disappear, but is malformed into anxiety. Freud (1933:86) claims that "it is not the repression that creates the anxiety, but the anxiety is there first and creates the repression!"

The way in which traumatic memories are structured in the unconscious could be explained by Freud's theories of repression and defence mechanisms, as explained earlier in this chapter. Both of these function to repress traumatic memories in conscious reality. *Departure* resonates with Van der Kolk *et al*'s (1996:7) argument that the traumatic event is stored in the brain dissimilarly to conscious memory. The memory system stores information in groups which are connected to one another by association. Therefore, one memory could recall or trigger associated memories (Collins & Loftus 1975:407-428). Humans have the ability to encode, store, preserve and evoke certain events (Sidran Institute *et al* 1994:[sp]). These abilities suggest that normal memories are narrative-based. It starts with the recording of present

events which are then stored in the brain. Later on a person remembers these memories and acts on them (Van der Kolk 1997:2). Thus events are most likely to be remembered as narratives which transform and fade with the passing of time. According to Van der Kolk, Robert Blitz, Winthrop Burr and Ernest Hartmann (1984:187–190) memories of normal daily events are simplified and specific details of these events eventually fade away. In contrast, the recall of traumatic memories is dissociative in nature and cannot easily be verbally communicated in a comprehensible narrative. *Departure* depicts this dissociative nature of a traumatic memory by portraying symbols such as trees, a flower, a swan and a soft toy which do not portray logical verbal communication. In the video-animation memories of traumatic events become eternally etched in the mind and are unaffected by the passing of time since they only surface during adulthood.

3.4.2 Screen memories depicted in "Earth"

Earth was created by free association and depicts strong characteristics of Freudian screen memories. As already explained, screen memories are memories which shield "unwanted" traumatic memories that enter the unconscious and are not prone to surface. This is visually explored through the use of layered effects which peel from each other.

Earth is displayed on a small screen on a gallery wall and is positioned so that the viewer has to bend to view the work. The animation commences with the young woman, portrayed as a ceramic sculpture, lying in a foetal position, sleeping and breathing heavily (Figure 31). As she sleeps, tentacles in the shape of small trees emerge from her body (Figure 32). Figure 33 shows how her body morphs into a round shape and the growing tentacles changes into architectural structures resembling the shapes of buildings. The architectural structures become machine-like and reshape her body into a rectangular shape (Figure 34). The structure flattens the rectangular shape and diminishes into the white background.

Figure 31: Nathani Lüneburg, *Earth,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The sleeping young woman in the form of a ceramic sculpture.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 32: Nathani Lüneburg, *Earth,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
Tentacles growing from the young woman's body.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 33: Nathani Lüneburg, *Earth,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
Architectural structures growing from the young woman's body.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 34: Nathani Lüneburg, *Earth,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The architectural structures become machine-like.
Video-still provided by the author.

Earth portrays screen memories. As explained earlier, Freud argues that traumatic memories from childhood resurface in adult life and carry no exact association with what occurred in the past. Freud (1899:320) termed this occurrence 'screen memories', which he believed are protective sensors and function as a negotiation amid repressed components.

In this sense, the title *Earth* refers to screen memories as protective layers guarding the conscious against traumatic memories, just as the earth protects its core in layers. These layers shield the core and the mantle with a thin outer crust. Just as the latter can easily deteriorate through erosion, landslides and collapsing, screen memories can also fail to completely protect the conscious mind. I understand screen memories to not always be childhood memories, but sometimes memories *about* childhood. They are characterised by their lucidity and the seeming unimportance of their content. Significant truths are not always remembered.

Earth presents screen memories as the fragments of remembered childhood events which accompany the young woman through her life-cycle. This video-animation reflects Freud's interpretation of screen memories, but also presents a modern re-interpretation of it. For, according to LaFarge (2012:1249-1265), screen memories can be understood as resonances of a reserved, personal way of thinking. The person remembers in a state of solitude and this way of remembering carries the same significance as the content of the memory.

The ways in which the images are used in *Earth* resembles the functioning of screen memories. The unfolding of the screen memory echoes the private nature of the young woman's thought process, especially recalling traumatic memories related to CSA. Freud (1899:321) argues that traumatic memories, and predominantly memories and desires connected to child sexuality, can be remembered only secondarily, in edited and biased form. This is accentuated in the images in *Earth* which metaphorically illustrate the traumatic childhood memory through the presence of tentacles. The tentacles aggressively grow from the young woman's body and in turn morph into tumour-like structures engulfing her body, pressing and pulling her figure which grows smaller until she finally disappears. These growing, deconstructed and morphing visuals symbolise her traumatic childhood memories. The constructed screen memories do not represent the trauma as truthful and direct but rather function as personal memories of the distorted and subjective outside world. Freud's (1915:174) interpretation of the connection between the outside and internal worlds functions through his understanding of memory.[72]

[72] In *Unconscious* (1915) Freud ([1915] 2001:174-175) puts forth two theories on how the external and internal unconscious are related. The first - the structural model - relates to the imprints given by psychoanalysis in which case unconscious components are obtainable from the conscious structures. The second - the active model - on

External events are recorded in or engraved on the memory of the victim and, if traumatic, are repressed, only to surface again as screen memories.

Freud (1899:321) assumed that all childhood memories are probably screen memories because of their vividness and the distinguishable distortion thereof. He (1899:321) maintains that "[i]t may indeed be questioned whether we have any [true] memories at all from our childhood: [screen] memories relating to our childhood may be all that we possess". He further stated that all of what is important in childhood are indirectly remembered in screen memories (Freud 1914:147).

To Freud (1901:42) childhood memories of momentous imprints could develop from unresponsive memories. This is portrayed in *Earth* in which real childhood memories are blended with imaginary memory. This leads to screen memories providing an entry point into the unconscious. Greenacre (1949:72-84 & 1975:693-712) argues that childhood trauma is frequently graphic or visual in nature and relates to the experience of seeing or experiencing something terrifying. Even non-graphic or emotional trauma may manifest in the mind as a graphic or visual image. Thus, the memory is represented through a self-made image. Taking this idea even further, according to Bertram D. Lewin (1946:419-434), a screen memory leads to hyper-stimulation of the psyche. The hyper-tangible feature of the screen memory mirrors this quality of stimulated 'seeing'. According to Freud (1937:255-270), screen memories are resilient because of their traumatic roots. Instinctive protection of the individual against the memories of childhood trauma takes place. Freud (1901:44) discerns between the durability and steadiness of screen memories "which seem to have the power of staying with us through a large part of our lives".

Whilst producing *Earth* I tried to illustrate that the force and steadiness in which the screen memory is presented involves imagination and defence mechanisms being combined to protect the conscious from the memories associated with the traumatic event. Another function of the imagination and defence mechanisms is to recall a specific event by remembering. The memory is remembered as a real component in which self and others can be viewed in a logical way, and consequently the young woman is able to create a world of her own. The remembering of traumatic events produces fantasies concerning the young woman's private world which are portrayed in the video-animation. These fantasies and private memories

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the other hand, is the most suitable for giving an interpretation of repression. According to this model, conscious imprints develop the unconscious.

continue as indicators of the young woman's ability to uphold a stable view of her own emotional experience.

Both *Departure* and *Earth* were created through automatism by practising the method of free association where one image leads to the next. The creation process commenced with the first random image that entered my mind and the subsequent images and details spontaneously developed. After concluding the artworks I realised that the creation process unlocked personal memories of a brush with CSA. It also evoked memories of friends who were traumatised by more serious experiences of sexual abuse as children. The dreamlike quality of the artworks mimics the fragmentation of the memories which struggle to surface. It is also interesting to note that the event is remembered in more detail as the artwork progresses. Free association has thus proved to be a powerful tool in unlocking repressed memories. This video-animation illustrates that digital drawing and digital stop-frame animation are valuable tools to assist in the practice of free association. Unlocking of the repressed memories is symbolically illustrated through the "peeling effect" where a top layer dissolves to reveal the next layer. Using Adobe Photoshop and its imaging tools allows the artist to document and reflect on the imagery both during and after creating the artwork. Thus a relationship between thinking and drawing exists.

3.5 Conclusion

Human memory is regarded as an intricate system that not only assists humans in remembering facts and details, but also employs coping mechanisms in order to protect their psyches against trauma and the horrible memories associated with it.

Through research I have found that the memory system has many seemingly contradictory capabilities. The workings thereof also differ from person to person. It has the ability, for instance, to remember events and facts in great detail, or repress it to stay hidden in the unconscious for many years. In some cases traumatic events are remembered and in some cases they are repressed. Sometimes these repressed traumatic memories resurface in dreams and at other times in fragmented flashbacks. Some victims show signs of extreme symptoms, such as anxiety. In certain cases where the repressed memories attempt to leave the unconscious and be remembered in a logical manner, while others don't. With regards to memories and remembering, no two persons' memory systems seem to operate exactly the same. This contributes to its complexity.

Despite criticism by contemporary theorists, some justified and others less so, I still regard Freud as the forerunner in psychoanalysis and the development of trauma theories. He brought

into play many discourses with regards to the psyche and contributed hugely to others. Although he sometimes, in retrospect, missed the mark, he forced psychiatrists and psychologists to start asking the right questions with regards to the psyche and to start searching for answers – some of which to this day are still not sufficient.

Freud's observations with regards to unconscious psychological activity, trauma and its consequences, repression, screen memories and anxiety are particularly helpful in understanding traumatic memories and are in many instances still used as points of departure for studies and research of these phenomena.

In addition to Freud, reference to contemporary trauma theorists is also important, and as I have noted: contemporary theorists not only developed Freud's theories further, but also developed new theories. Thus Freudian trauma theory cannot be explained without referring to contemporary trauma theory and vice versa. In this regard I refer to Van der Kolk, Caruth, E. Ann Kaplan, McNally and others in order to form a better understanding of traumatic memories and its consequences for the psyche.

In order to further explain and investigate traumatic memories, I refer to two of my digital stop-frame animations forming part of the video-installation, *Loss*. Another reason for referring to these artworks is to further illustrate how digital stop-frame animation as art medium reveals a unique capability to portray traumatic memories and repression thereof as well as screen memories. The artworks are rich in suggestion and visual codes and the medium provides the ideal opportunity to incorporate many symbols. Stop-frame animation also enables erratic and irregular movement which accentuates the fragmentation of the memories as well as the palpable atmosphere of anxiety and stress.

Creation of the artworks relied strongly on creative experimentation through automatism as well as free association. I submit that the creation of digital stop-frame animation artworks serve as a therapeutic tool assisting in the recovering of traumatic memories and healing. The fact that the artworks I refer to in this chapter are partly autobiographical, I can confirm my above-mentioned observations. The specific use of layering engages processes of peeling and revealing layers which, in the same way as the recovery process of traumatic memories, uncover the initial raw memory of the traumatic event.

CHAPTER FOUR
CRITICAL APPLICATION OF THEORIES OF LOSS AND TRAUMA IN *LOSS*

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I critically apply theories of loss and trauma through reference to selected artworks forming part of my exhibition, *Loss.* Although my artworks are partially inspired by personal experiences of miscarriage and loss of love objects, I aim to maintain objective distance by also employing my art to portray universal traumatic experiences to which many women could relate. These themes of loss are discussed through analysing six selected video-animations titled *Dreaming of Home, The Moon and the Tree, If I Did(n't), Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures, Wither* and *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume*.

My intention is to critically probe not only Freud's, but also other theorists' understanding of both mourning and melancholia through analysis of my own artworks. Although Freud does not refer to miscarriage specifically, several of his theories organically surface in my video-animations as the main themes featured in these selected works are mourning and melancholia as a result of loss. As will become clearer in this chapter, his views on femaleness are inadequate and even referred to as socially unacceptable in modern discourse on gender studies and female psychology. For this reason, I view his theories with caution throughout the chapter. Notwithstanding this, I am of the submission that some of his theories were and still are ground-breaking and could indeed be applied to miscarriage and, subsequently, explain a traumatised woman's reaction to loss.

Other authors, such as Dinora Pines (2010), discuss miscarriage as a reason for trauma. With reference to Pines and Freud, I explore how miscarriage could give rise to the loss of the ego, which is portrayed in *Dreaming of Home*. The melancholiac questions her own ego and self-blame and self-criticism emerge. I then investigate silent grief and the misconception that womanhood is experienced to be lost after miscarriage by discussing *The Moon and the Tree*. Other authors, such as Linda Layne (1997) and Rosalind Pollack Petchesky (1981) discuss Freud's theories, but take his arguments a step further by focusing not only on the loss of a love object, but also on the loss of motherhood after a miscarriage. In *If I Did(n't)* the young woman experiences severe feelings of loss of the love object after miscarriage and consequently her ego is affected. By evaluating the young woman's experience, I investigate whether mourning and melancholia could indeed affect a woman's emotional as well as psychological health.

Freud's theory of loss is further critically investigated with regards to the young girl's loss of a love object. This is explored in *Wither* and *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume. Wither* deals with the traumatic loss of a grandmother through death. *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume* involves fragmented traumatic memories caused by the loss of a childhood friend, who is the love object. I explore both the young woman and young girl as mourner and melancholiac by applying Freud's theories of melancholia, amongst others.

With regards to miscarriage, it should be noted that I acknowledge the fact that all women do not react the same. For some it is an excruciatingly painful, traumatic experience, while for others it could possibly be less so. It depends on many factors, including, but not restricted to, whether the pregnancy was wanted or not, whether the woman was aware of the pregnancy and the emotional and psychological state of the woman. My personal experience of miscarriage was severely emotional and traumatic. As will be illustrated, this fact surfaces in my artworks. Although I attempt to emphasise throughout this chapter the fact that experiences differ, it should be kept in mind that the descriptions and analysis of my artworks are mainly based on my own experiences.

All of these video-animations portray dreams in which visits to the unconscious take place. In documenting the dream through automatism, memories of miscarriage which are well hidden from the conscious are, through visualisation, revealed in the artworks. According to Dawn Ades (cited in Nikolakouli 2012:[sp]), dreams are the direct connection with the unconscious and through automatic digital drawing and painting, the obstacle between the conscious and unconscious is breached.

4.2 Traumatic loss depicted in selected video artworks

Dennis Klass, Phyllis R Silverman and Steven Nickman (1996:3-16) argue that mourning instigates the process whereby the grieving woman[73] adapts to the reality of her loss, allowing her to disconnect and detach from the traumatic incident and reinvest in new relationships and human interaction. A mourner may, however, later descend into melancholia, which is an unhealthy state. Melancholia is, in comparison to mourning, described by Freud as an emotion "through which nothing about the loss is unconscious" (Freud 1917:245). In other words, loss of a love object is experienced in the conscious as well as the unconscious. Mourning and melancholia are based on Freud's (1917:243) views that grief is "the reaction to the loss of a

[73] For the purpose of this study I refer to the female and not the male for the reason that I discuss a woman's response to loss and not that of a man.

loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on" and that melancholia is connected to the loss of a love object. In addition to the difference between 'mourning' and 'melancholia', it is also important to mention the difference between 'mourning' and 'sorrow'. These terms are used as synonyms in many instances, which they are not. Sorrow is defined as "a painful, complex emotional state that changes with time and a process of confronting the loss (e.g., by yearning for and repeatedly reliving the lost relationship) in the service of gradual detachment from the lost person or object" (Beutel, Deckardt, Von Rad & Weiner 1995:518). Mourning, on the other hand, is characterised by various symptoms – both psychological and physical – that impact emotions regarding the traumatic event and how it is understood. After some time, which may vary depending on the circumstances, these feelings of grief diminish in intensity and the grieving woman may gradually return to showing an interest in, and enthusiasm for life (Beutel *et al* 1995:518). For instance, after miscarrying I experienced a difficult mourning process that was characterised by invasive visualisations, rejection of the significance of the loss to the self, and an overall inability to deal with day-to-day activities. I literally grieved for the death of my baby, whom I had already visualised as being born alive before the miscarriage occurred.

The first theme, which is portrayed in *Dreaming of home, The Moon and the Tree, If I Did(n't)* and *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* is the loss of an unborn child through miscarriage and the mourning process which may result in melancholia. These artworks explore the conscious and unconscious extents of the maternal fantasies experienced by the young woman in relation to her unborn child. After the young woman's miscarriage, her childless state involves the loss of the possibility to fantasise about motherhood. On the surface Freud's hypotheses regarding trauma and loss seem to be relevant to the loss that women may suffer through miscarriage.

Freud (1917:244-245) postulates that mourning encompasses acknowledgment of the loss of a love object by the mourner. Acknowledgement leads to detachment and detachment will eventually lead to the freedom needed to conclude the mourning process and recognise a new love object.[74] Thus, if prolonged, longing for the loved one will result in an inability to detach from the lost love object, and melancholia will set in (Freud 1917:244-245). Mourning is a process through which loss is confronted in a therapeutic sense. This process is challenging and uncertain, often taking substantial time and emotional and mental energy. A proverbial

[74] I find the recognition of a new love object a curious subject, but I shall not excavate it here for the purposes of economy. Notwithstanding, I find some of the questions which arise quite interesting and mentionable: Is the dead foetus easily replaceable by a subsequent pregnancy? Is it advisable to quicken the pace of mourning by getting pregnant again soon after the miscarriage? Could a living baby replace the miscarried foetus by becoming a new love object? Could a foetus even be seen as a love object and thus be mourned? The last question is compactly answered in the next footnote.

detangling of the ties that bind the experience of loss is central to the mourning process. Freud termed this process 'hypercathexis'. By this, he refers to an emotional counteracting of each memory and feelings of hopefulness (Rosenblatt 1983:53). It can be understood that once the mourner moves beyond 'decathexis', which is the withdrawal of energy and attachment toward the love object as well as memories of the lost love object, the hopeless feeling that the mourning will never end, is experienced. From this, I maintain that mourning could in some cases continue throughout the life of the mourner.

In order to connect Freud's theories on loss and trauma to miscarriage, I do not only draw from personal experiences, but also refer to additional contemporary writers. I found that loss through miscarriage produces emotional instability and an excruciating sense of loss.[75] This finding is not applicable to my experience only, but seems to be universal among many women who have experienced loss through miscarriage. It is also supported by Pines (2010:127-128) who confirms that a miscarriage results in dire psychological consequences. Hilary Mantel (2003:228) states that if a child is lost through a miscarriage or fails to have its first independent breath outside the womb, that child becomes a ghost within the mother's life. This notion connects with George Pollock's (1961:353) observation that the loss of a child cannot ever be entirely integrated and completely accepted by the mother. According to The American Pregnancy Association (2017:[sp]) most miscarriages occur during the first 13 weeks of pregnancy. This is a crucial time for the conscious mother-to-be in which the development of the foetus is intensely experienced. According to Pines (2010:127), a mother-to-be's dreams may show aspects of unconscious as well as conscious fantasy and anxiety regarding the foetus. The woman consciously fantasises about her unborn child through daydreams and experiences unconscious fantasies through dreaming when an image of an actual child is visualised. Although miscarriage affects women differently depending on their specific life experiences and time of life, it stays a painful and traumatic loss for many women affected (Pines 2010:128).

[75]An interesting question which arises from this subject, is whether a foetus is 'mournable' as it has never lived. In this regard it is interesting to note that many pro-abortion activists use "person-denying arguments" in terms of which a foetus lacks 'moral status' (Porter 2015:59). Thus, it is argued that a foetus does not have the right to life. According to Lindsey Porter (2015:68) the person-denying argument results in grief because of miscarriage not being taken seriously. She further asserts: "My worry is that grief is a very common response to miscarriage, and that grief presupposes moral status. In grieving the loss of an entity, one perceives that entity to be someone of special value. The claim that the foetus lacks moral status then implies that feeling grief over the loss of it is based on a mistake – a cognitive error, like a mistaken belief – since the evaluative content of the belief runs contrary to the lacking moral status claim" (Porter 2015:59). I support her concern and rather agree with her submission that, although it shouldn't be dismissed altogether, the person-denying argument should not be accepted lightly. It is a grave insult to deny a woman who has miscarried her emotional pain and mourning because of the opinion that a foetus does not have moral status (Porter 2015:75).

To further support my argument that miscarriage may be traumatic and may result in dire consequences, I refer to Keefe-Cooperman's (2005:281) hypothesis that perinatal loss is distinctly disturbing, since the child was never concretely alive and no memories of joint life experiences exist. The death is unexpected and frequently characterised by an absence of acknowledgment by families and friends concerning the importance of the loss and much needed support. Individual narratives of many women who miscarried echo emotions of loss, desolation and guilt. These feelings of guilt infuse with the woman's grieving process. Keefe-Cooperman (2005:281-282) argues that each trimester of a pregnancy comprises emotions which form part of the process of forming an attachment between the mother-to-be and foetus. The first trimester includes uncertainty and a need for validation, determining primary doubt, accepting the pregnancy, revisiting one's childhood and altering emotions concerning body image and sexuality. Throughout the second trimester, a woman starts to perceive the foetus as an individual in his or her own right. Attachment is formed and strengthened by the foetus's rapid development and observation of the foetus by means of an ultrasound. The mother-to-be begins to visualise the perfect child. In the third trimester, she takes on the role of caregiver and emotionally prepares for the delivery of the newborn. In the event of a perinatal death, the mother starts to process the significance of the loss through an experience of intense sorrow (Keefe-Cooperman 2005:281-282).

The loss of a love object through death and by saying final goodbyes to a childhood friend, along with the accompanying processes of mourning and melancholia, are recurring themes in *Wither* and *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume.* Both video-animations reflect the young woman's inner world, which has continually been constructed since childhood. When loss occurs, this inner world plunges into chaos. If the mourner, in this instance the young woman, struggles with the mourning process, melancholia occurs and the mourner's ego cannot be easily reinstated.

John Bowlby (1980:7,8) explains the loss of a loved one as an agonising experience that everyone suffers at one time or another, and refers to the long period of grief that follows and the difficulty in recuperating from the experience. He (cited in Fraley & Shaver 1999:740) claims that an individual can display either a healthy or challenging pattern of mourning, followed by separation from the love object.[76] The severity of the trauma is closely linked to the strength

[76] Challenging or complicated mourning occurs when the mourner remains in the intense and severe stages of mourning or submerges into melancholia. It can last for years and even decades. Sometimes the mourner never recovers (Brody 2015:1). Healthy or normal mourning occurs when the mourner goes through all the stages of grief in order to reach acceptance of his or her loss (DerSarkissian 2016:1).

and nature of the attachment between the lost love object and the mourner. Collin Murray Parkes (1993:241-247) further highlights the significance of the psycho-social changes brought on by the loss and consequent mourning. Again, these changes are dependent on the nature and extent of the impact that the departed person had on the mourner's life.

In *On death and dying* (1969) Elisabeth Kübler-Ross recognises five stages of mourning: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. According to Greg Madison ([sa]:[sp]), these stages of mourning enable the mourner to react to her loss. Ideally, a mourner should go through these phases successively. Theorists propose hypothetical insights into what is seen as 'normal' behaviour during mourning. Melanie Klein (cited in Henderson 2012:233) postulates that mourning encompasses sadness and depression. She compares sadness to feelings of loss and describes depression as a 'defence mechanism' which protects the mourner against sadness because of the loss. Although the mourner *identifies* with the lost love object, she *focuses* on the self because of depression. I agree with Klein (cited in Henderson 2012:233) that this is not necessarily a good thing as it may cause deep feelings of blame, oppression, punishment and revulsion toward the deceased who 'abandoned' her. At the same time, however, the mourner may experience a desire to restore and accept the lost and broken connection with the lost love object. Through a process of restoration, the mourner reconstructs internally what was lost.

In the next section, I further investigate mourning and melancholia through analysis of the mentioned artworks.

4.2.1 Loss of ego in "Dreaming of Home"

Dreaming of Home portrays the loss of ego, explained below, that occurs as a result of the development of melancholia after miscarriage. The title suggests that the young woman sees 'home' as the place where she and her lost baby will be able to meet and spend time together. In the artwork the sleeping young woman, who has recently experienced a miscarriage, enters her unconscious through dreaming. The artwork depicts the young woman's unconscious thoughts regarding the miscarriage and portrays images that represent mourning and melancholia. Figures 35 to 38 show how various magical creatures enter and exit the screen as the young woman's dream world unfolds. While asleep, she is ever-present as a character in the dreams. As the dream progresses, her body shapes into that of a pregnant woman's. The pregnant body morphs and then dissolves into tiny string-like fragments, which appear to be umbilical cords (Figure 39). The artwork's ongoing engagement with the loss of a foetus does not only reflect the loss of the love object, which is the foetus, but also the loss of the self

or ego. The existence of the child that would have been born and loved is imagined in the dream and the consequent lost pregnancy is physically reconstructed. The psychological impact of the miscarriage is evoked by the dream and a renewed sense of loss is still felt intensely after the woman wakes up.

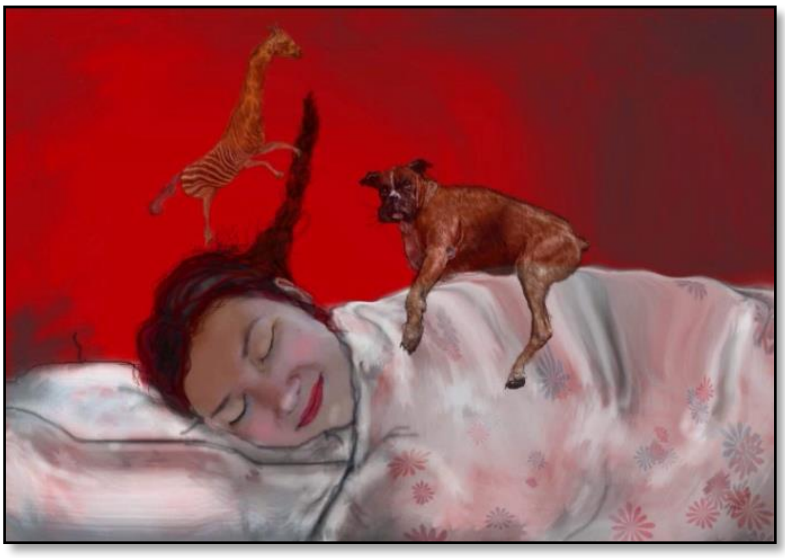

Figure 35: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Home,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
Creatures entering and exiting the screen.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 36: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Home,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
Creatures entering and exiting the screen.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 37: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Home,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
Creatures entering and exiting the screen.
Video-still provided by the author.

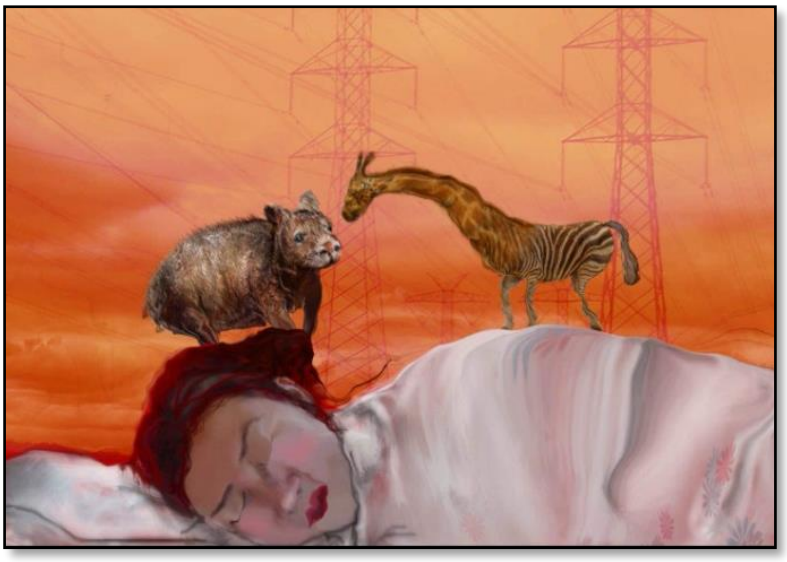

Figure 38: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Home,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
Creatures entering and exiting the screen.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 39: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Home,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
Tiny string-like fragments which appear to be umbilical cords.
Video-still provided by the author.

Freud contends in *Mourning and melancholia* (1917:252) that ego loss and the mourner's, in this case the young woman's, understanding of self are characterised by "a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, [and] inhibition of all activity". He argues that melancholia presents an unusual decrease in the melancholiac's self-regard and results in ego loss. In the case of melancholia, it is the ego itself which becomes lost and the melancholiac deems her ego as insignificant (Freud 1917:247). This supports my argument that melancholia occurs as a result of anxiety, uncertainty and change, self-doubt, feelings of worthlessness, and obsession with the past. According to Esther Sanchez-Pardo (2003:63), the melancholiac fails to recall the positive characteristics of her ego.

According to Freud ([1917] 2001:249), the melancholiac is still unhealthily attached to the lost object and internalises this attachment. This leads to severe feelings of loss without being fully aware of precisely *what* has been lost. Freud ([1917] 2001:249) explains this by arguing that the loss of the love object metamorphoses into an "ego-loss and the conflict between the ego and the loved person [results in] a cleavage between the critical activity of the ego and the ego as altered by identification". The melancholiac (who, for the purpose of this study, is the woman who miscarried) rebukes herself and becomes vulnerable to being rejected and chastised (Freud 2001 [1917]:254). Freud (2001 [1917]:257-258) describes how the loss of self-regard involves laying blame on the ego rather than on the lost love object. Death has ended the relationship between the love object and the melancholiac and results in an amalgamation of

the libido (as part of the id) and the ego.[77] This enables an identification of the ego with the lost love object and consequently the ego loses itself when changing into the love object. Freud ([1917] 2001:257-258) argues that the change from a loss of the love object to the loss of ego is the result of the amalgamation of the libido and the ego.

To further explain Freud's theory of melancholia, it is useful to refer to Judith Butler's (1997:246) observation that the ideal end result of mourning is attained by breaching the attachment to the love object and attaching to a new love object. Her viewpoint is that Freud's explanation of the ego and id suggests that the melancholiac's identification with the love object is the precondition to disregarding the love object, and that this process is integral in rediscovering the ego (Butler 1997:246,252). An understanding of melancholia assists in comprehending Freud's (1917:252) statement that loss of the ego and feelings of guilt after loss are suggestive of the irrational nature of melancholia. The guilt and self-reproach experienced because of the loss of ego indicate that loss causes an individual to lose a realistic understanding and conception of self.

In *Dreaming of Home,* the woman experiences blame and self-criticism due to the loss of her pregnancy and potential motherhood. Her face does not only reflect the pain, suffering and sorrow experienced after the miscarriage, but also self-disgust (Figure 40). I particularly portray her different facial expressions, which can be seen in Figures 41 to 42, to illustrate the loss of the love object and subsequently the ego. The young woman's mourning turns into melancholia as she fails to identify with a healthy ego. Her self-blame and self-reproach stem from this loss of ego, which is instigated by a combination of a strong maternal instinct and the societal construct that the ideal woman should also be a mother.

[77] In the Freudian context libido refers to "the energy, regarded as a quantitative magnitude of those instincts which have to do with all that may be comprised under the word 'love'" (Freud 1921:90). The term 'libido' is used in psychoanalytic theory to define the energy shaped by survival and sexual instincts. According to Freud, the libido is part of the id and includes all behaviour and more particularly sexual behaviour. Freud assumes that the id is the single fragment of behaviour present from birth. He describes it as a vessel of unconscious, primordial energy. The id pursues pleasure and stresses the instant gratification of its needs and is organised by what Freud called the 'pleasure principle'. Fundamentally, the id guides all of the body's actions and development to attain the utmost extent of pleasure possible. Since the id is nearly completely unconscious, people are not immediately aware of several of these needs. The ego is the fragment of the personality driven by the id's libidinal energy and ensures that these needs are articulated in normative behaviour. The ego is ruled by the reality principle which is fixated on assisting the individual with attaining his or her objectives in ways that are truthful and authentic (Cherry 2016:1).

Figure 40: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Home,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman's facial expression.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 41: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Home,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman's facial expression.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 42: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Home,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman's facial expression.
Video-still provided by the author.

Adrienne Rich (1976:34) argues that the female body, from a male viewpoint, is contaminated, immoral, and physically tainted by discharges such as menstrual bleeding and is subsequently threatening to maleness. It has even been described as "the devil's gateway". In *Dreaming of Home* this so-called 'devil's gateway' comes to life when devilish creatures hover above the sleeping young woman, waiting for her pregnancy to show (Figure 43). Her pregnant body nightmarishly becomes entangled with the residue of these creatures, suggesting a certain contamination through hybridised forms. These creatures destroy not only her pregnancy, but also her future, joy and comfort.

Figure 43: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Home,* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
Devilish creatures morphing above the young woman's sleeping body.
Video-still provided by the author.

In contrast to the male perspective to which Rich refers, Kristeva (1989:161) remarks that motherhood is not only socially dictated but also consistently seen as sacred. The young woman in *Dreaming of Home* is depicted as philanthropic, holy, uncontaminated, nonsexual and wholesome through the incorporation of a heavenly angel descending onto her sleeping body (Figure 44). This sacred being rescues her from the devils, purifies her body and covers the screen in clean, white hues.

Figure 44: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Home,* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
A vague representation of an angel descending.
Video-still provided by the author.

In the video artwork, I portray the positive as well as the negative in order to illustrate Rich's (1976:34) argument that a woman's body could be both virtuous and immoral, fertile and infertile, and untainted and contaminated. Perceiving the female body in this way generates 'ideal identifications' (Yannakis 2006:8) through which women experience the threat of losing their identification with the image of a socially constructed ideal female. When a woman, after miscarrying, feels that she did not give form to the image of the ideal woman, her femaleness is called into question by herself and sometimes society. Donna Yannakis (2006:8-9) argues that a woman then experiences a loss of ego which is entangled with the loss of the foetus.

Just as the images in *Dreaming of Home* are forever morphing from one to the next, the processes of mourning and melancholia experienced by the woman are also changing and developing. She goes through the different phases of mourning, but loses touch with reality along the way and surrenders to melancholia for a time. Later she reconnects with reality and proceeds on her way to healing. Her waking from the dream is symbolic of the fact that she will later on also 'wake' from the mourning process, regain a healthy ego and find meaning in life. There is even the possibility of finding a new love object to attach to.

4.2.2 Silent grief and loss of womanhood in "The Moon and the Tree": a critique of Freud

The Moon and the Tree reflects loss as multi-layered and symbolises it as both absence and presence. This video-animation suggests how a woman who experienced miscarriage suffers silent grief and loss of womanhood

Figure 45 shows an image of *The Moon and the Tree* which is displayed on a small digital screen in a peeping-box. It is important to note that I have deliberately chosen, for reasons explained later on, not to use a soundtrack in this animation. The miniature installation portrays the interior of the young woman's bedroom in which white ceramic furniture is placed. The young woman lies sleeping in the white bed, covered in blankets. A rocking horse and a notably small, empty cradle are placed in the room.

Figure 45: Nathani Lüneburg, *The Moon and the Tree,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The installation of a video-animation and ceramic furniture in a peeping box.
Video-still provided by the author.

The Moon and the Tree as a whole portrays the young woman's memory of a miscarriage and the fact that her grief is 'silenced'. The artwork commences with a hazy image of a woman holding the area where her womb is located in a protective manner (Figure 46). In the next scene, the woman's femaleness is revealed by her hand morphing into her womb, which is visualised in Figure 47 as a black and white sonar-like image. Within seconds small tentacles rise from the contracting womb, which in turn morphs into a tree. The growing tree symbolises the growth of a foetus. Figure 48 shows the tree being uprooted by a growing moonlike shape. This demolishing of the healthy tree by the moonlike shape metaphorically symbolises a threat to the pregnancy, which then ends in miscarriage. The grey mass, which at this stage represents the aborted flesh of the foetus, morphs into the face of a baby (Figure 49). The face quickly transforms from a baby's into that of a woman. She is shown mouthing words which cannot be heard. The woman's face morphs into a heart shape and black lines appear over her eyes (Figure 50). The heart-shaped face slowly evaporates until only whiteness is visible in the last scene. The whiteness symbolises the loss of ego caused by the miscarriage, self-blame and self-reproach.

Figure 46: Nathani Lüneburg, *The Moon and the Tree,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
A vague image of the young woman holding her abdominal area.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 47: Nathani Lüneburg, *The Moon and the Tree,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
A black and white sonar-like image.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 48: Nathani Lüneburg, *The Moon and the Tree,* 2014*.*
Video-stills from video-animation.
A sequence of a tree being uprooted by a growing moonlike shape.
Video-stills provided by the author.

Figure 49: Nathani Lüneburg, *The Moon and the Tree,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
A baby's face.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 50: Nathani Lüneburg, *The Moon and the Tree,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
A baby's face morphing into a heart shape.
Video-still provided by the author.

The inclusion of tiny pieces of ceramic furniture in the miniature installation is symbolic of the loss of a pregnancy and temporary loss of womanhood. It reflects the multi-layered loss found in both absence and presence: the absence of a baby in the cot in contrast to the presence of the woman sleeping under a blanket. The furniture, together with the morphing images in the video-animation, accentuates the woman's traumatic experience of loss by presenting a world of remnants of what could have been but will never be. The palpable silence and apparent lack of life in the room comments on societal non-recognition of the feelings of loss experienced after miscarriage. It also symbolises the fear or self-reproach which miscarriage causes and, as Della Pollock (1997:14) suggests, points to a more profound narrative of motherly guilt.

The Moon and the Tree comments on what Kristeva (1989:163) refers to as a wider social restriction of the 'maternal'. This social restriction entails that a woman who miscarries cannot adopt the role and position of 'mother' and thus cannot meet the ideal image that society has created around the association and identification of femaleness with maternity. According to Alyssa N. Zucker (1999:768), Western history and society have rendered, promoted and enforced motherhood as mandatory in order to establish true womanhood.[78] Petchesky (1981:233) further asserts that, since the late eighteenth century, the pro-life belief in Western societies embraces the notions that motherhood is a woman's real purpose and occupation –

[78] Although different societies, for instance Western, Oriental and African societies, perceive woman- and motherhood differently, I particularly refer to 'Western' opinion and society for the purposes of economy. It could also be noted that the characters in my video artworks are of Western origin.

childless women are seen as weak and without voices due to their imagined bodily defects and emotional pathology.

Freud argues throughout his career that the main aim in life for a woman is to reproduce. It is well-known that he was one of the most influential psychiatrists and authors of his time and even today. He became a cult figure with numerous devoted followers. However, as I have already mentioned, his views on womanhood and female suffering could be described as controversial and, perhaps, even outrageous. The content of the animation accentuates my criticism of his argument that motherhood is the only path to 'true womanhood' (Freud 1932:162). According to Freud, the female's true identity is based on her lifelong wish to become a mother. More than a century later, many authors on women's studies perceive these views as archaic and offensive. Nancy Chodorow (1978:142), for instance, postulates that:

> Freud was only sometimes describing how women develop in a patriarchal society. At other times, he was simply making unsupported assertions which should be taken as no more than that or as statements about how women (and men) should be.

I agree with these authors. In contemporary times many women choose to have control over their sexuality and bodies by, for example, using contraceptives or, for various reasons, choosing to terminate a pregnancy. Owing to financial reasons some women, mostly between the ages of twenty-five and forty, choose not to have children (Stobert & Kemeny 2003:1-4). Among these women are those who are educated and who practise a profession. For many women, childlessness is a choice made early in life, for whatever reasons. They choose to live their own lives without being suppressed by society's ideas regarding womanhood and motherhood (Stobert & Kemeny 2003:1-4).

When psychoanalysis first emerged, Freud centred his analyses, treatment and theories on the reactions of males to traumatic experiences and other psychological conditions. Simone De Beauvoir (1949:70) maintains that Freud basically adapted his theory of male psychology to include women, disregarding the gender differences between the two sexes. Shulamith Firestone (1979:56) adds to the criticism by proposing that Freud examines the female simply as 'negative male'. From his male perspective, women are not receptive to change and are unresponsive, passive members of society who do not contribute anything constructive and knowledgeable (Freud 1925:137). As mentioned in Chapter One, Pervin (1989:165) notes that, according to Freud, women are prone to self-importance, compassion, obedience and dependency. In Freud's eyes, women should be obedient and submissive. He even contends that these characteristics are part of female pathology and that women enjoy being subordinate and weak (Pervin 1989:165).

Female psychoanalysts such as Karen Horney, Chodorow and De Beauvoir, along with other feminist theorists, describe his views as one-sided and patronising. Horney (1939:108) points out that Freud considers women to be restricted by their physiology, which led him to concentrate on the innate limitations of women. He views women's sexual development as inadequate as they do not have male genitalia, labelling them as destined to hysteria and mental illness. Kaplan (2005:27) questions Freud and Breuer's ([1893-1895] 1995:154) assertion that hysteria, as defined in Chapter Five of this study, manifests in female patients only. John McMahon (2012:39) points out that many of Freud's works, including the influential *Female sexuality* (1931), emphasise the disconnection and disregard of psychoanalysis as treatment for women suffering from psychological conditions. Considering Freud's views on femaleness and the critique by mostly feminist authors, I do not have any other choice than to deduce that Freud would have had little sympathy for women who have suffered a miscarriage and would have labelled them as "hysteric". This could point to the silent suffering of many women who has experienced miscarriage.

The lack of sound in the video-animation is crucial as it symbolises the fact that miscarriage is sometimes perceived as a lesser trauma, which should not be mourned as intensely as the loss experienced following the death of a living person. Nevertheless, the woman who miscarried experiences the loss as traumatic and feels isolated. She is 'silenced' and is expected to go on as normal, as if the child never existed. Ann Oakley, Ann McPherson and Helen Roberts (1990:5) argue that Western society seems to veil experiences of miscarriage in a 'conspiracy of silence'. According to both Shulamit Reinharz (1987:235) and Layne (1997:290), women who have miscarried are not always aware of other women in their direct environment who have endured the same traumatic experience. Thus, they feel isolated in their suffering. The absence of a burial and memorial ceremony strengthens this "conspiracy of silence". Layne (1997:292) describes this absence of ceremony as a "culturally sanctioned nonexistence", meaning that the child, for all intents and purposes, never existed.

4.2.3 Loss of emotional and psychological health in "If I Did(n't)"

The video-animation *If I Did(n't)* is closely connected to *The Moon and the Tree* as both portray traumatic loss resulting from miscarriage. Both are presented in grey scale, but the first has its own soundtrack while the latter is silent. *If I Did(n't)* is displayed on a small video screen placed inside a peeping-box. The setting is a miniature bathroom equipped with a bath, basin and toilet. Figure 51 shows how mirrored walls form the sides of the set, and a triple reflection of the video-animation as well as the infinite reflections of the furniture create a dramatic visual effect. The video-animation presents the abdomen of the young woman, which forms the

canvas for the stop-frame animation (Figure 52). Soon a black and white sonar-like image appears and a foetus starts growing in the womb. As the foetus develops, its size increases rapidly and reaches that of a full-term baby. Figure 53 shows how the foetus splits into two black and white ghost-like figures. The two figures develop into the face of one foetus that is then violently ripped from the womb (Figure 54). This sequence in the video directly refers to the violence associated with an ending of a pregnancy by miscarriage. After the disappearance of the foetus, as seen in Figure 55, the young woman's hand appears and violently strikes and grabs at her abdomen. The navel area contracts and enlarges into a dark circular void, which depicts emptiness after the foetus is intrusively and violently wrenched from the womb. This is visible in Figure 56. The video-animation paints a picture of extreme loss and sorrow as experienced by the young woman. The title refers to self-blame which is a psychological response to miscarriage and a characteristic of melancholia.

Figure 51: Nathani Lüneburg, *If I Did(n't),* 2014.
Video-animation and ceramic furniture installed in a peeping box.
Photograph by Carla Crafford.

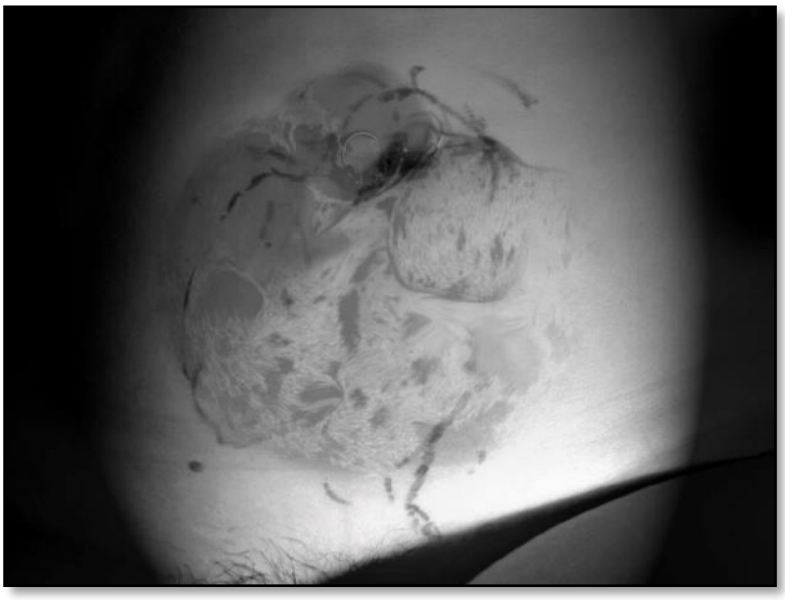

Figure 52: Nathani Lüneburg, *If I Did(n't),* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The abdomen of the young woman forming the canvas for the stop-frame animation.
Video-still provided by the author.

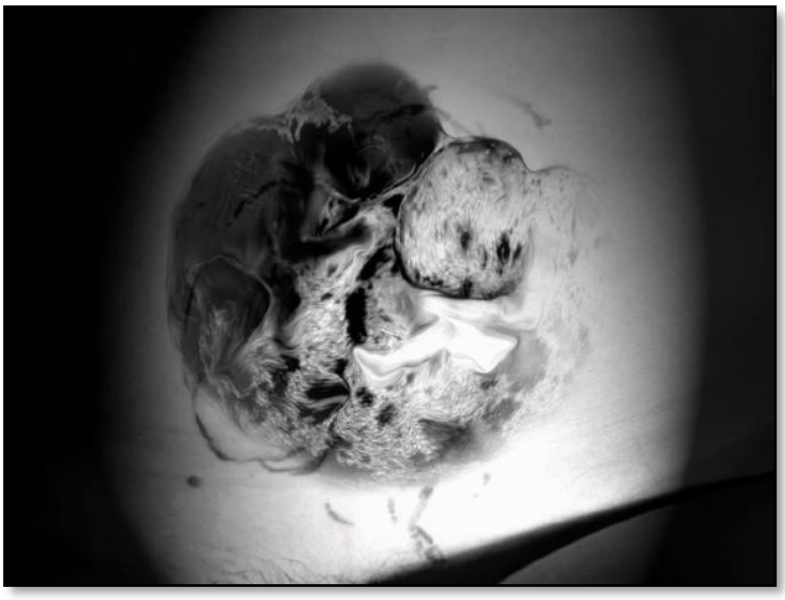

Figure 53: Nathani Lüneburg, *If I Did(n't),* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The foetus splits into two black and white ghost-like figures.
Video-still provided by the author.

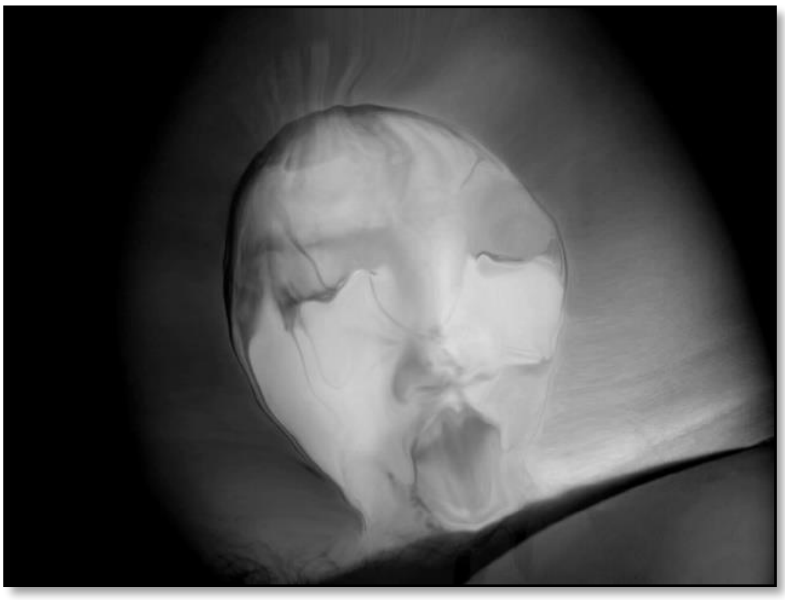

Figure 54: Nathani Lüneburg, *If I Did(n't),* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The foetus is violently ripped from the womb.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 55: Nathani Lüneburg, *If I Did(n't),* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The woman punches her abdominal area.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 56: Nathani Lüneburg, *If I Did(n't),* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman's navel area contracts and enlarges into a dark circular void.
Video-still provided by the author.

In order to understand miscarriage and the suffering it entails, it is important to fully realise what is lost by the woman. According to Edwin C. Jesudason (2011:39-45) miscarriage is the spontaneous, unplanned termination of a pregnancy during approximately the first half of pregnancy.[79] If the spontaneous termination occurs during the next stage, or second half of pregnancy, it is called 'stillbirth'.[80] It should be kept in mind that the foetus is already developing into a human being early on in the pregnancy. By the fourth week, the heart begins to beat, the nervous and digestive systems start to develop and the eyes and ears appear. The embryo is a mere 2,5 centimetres in length at this point. During the next four weeks, the brain and facial characteristics develop and the fingers and toes appear (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists 2015:2). It could be assumed that, in the case of a wanted pregnancy, the mother-to-be develops an interest in and becomes fully aware of the development of the foetus as soon as she realises that she is pregnant. She may already think of the baby as a living human being. This information aggravates the psychological as well as physical trauma experienced in the case of miscarriage.

The sorrow and trauma inflicted on the young woman's body and psyche jeopardizes her psychological, emotional and physical health. She goes through a process of mourning and

[79] Although EUROCAT (European Registry of Congenital Anomalies and Twins) states that miscarriage occurs during the first twenty weeks of pregnancy and stillbirth thereafter, different countries have different stipulations. It ranges from twenty to 28 weeks or could even be measured by the weight of the foetus (cited in Jesudason 2009:7).

[80] When referring to miscarriage, I also refer to stillbirth for the purpose of this study.

possible melancholia caused by the traumatic experience of losing her baby. Psychological responses to miscarriage occur shortly after the event and research indicates that many women who miscarried suffer from grief, guilt, depression, and anxiety (Bennet, Litz, Sarnoff & Maguen 2005:180-187; Brier 2008:451-464; Klier, Geller & Ritsher 2002:129). In addition to the view of the above-mentioned authors, I posit that psychological responses could even commence before the actual miscarriage takes place – at the moment the mother-to-be realises that the foetus is no longer alive. The process of mourning starts the moment the love object perishes. This psychological reaction is quite natural if the loss of the foetus is understood and perceived as a distressing and life-altering experience, which incapacitates the woman for a time (Bowles, James, Solursh, Yancey, Epperly, Folen & Masone 2000:1689-1696). Iris Engelhard, Marcel Van den Hout and Arnoud Arntz (2001:67-78) state that a "study on the psychological sequel after miscarriage found that one month after a miscarriage, 25%-39% of the women meet the diagnostic criteria for PTSD, and this prevalence reduced to 7% at four months."

According to Engelhard *et al* (2001:67-57) one of the symptoms of PTSD is the re-experiencing of the traumatic event through emotional reflection and nightmares. Psychological responses may include avoidance of pregnant women, excessive fits of anger and sleeping problems. Negative changes in thoughts and mood are also noted (Engelhard *et al* 2001:67-57; Lee & Slade 1996:54-62). I can also add feelings of disappointment, blame and embarrassment to the list of responses, as I experienced all of these after miscarrying. In *If I Did(n't)* I express the metaphorical visualisation and anticipation of anger, especially through the representation of the woman self-inflicting violence by punching her womb.

If I Did(n't) aims to depict the traumatic aspect of a miscarriage and emphasises the emotional impact of a traumatic experience which is barely recognised in society. The bodily and emotional harm caused by miscarriage are often experienced as intensely as the death of a child who was born alive and lived for a time (Zucker 1999:767-786). The miscarrying woman experiences a sometimes life-threatening procedure, discomfort, bleeding, faintness and angst. Kathleen A. Kendall-Tackett (2005:11) found that, for most of the women who took part in her research, miscarriage is essentially one of the most traumatic experiences they will ever encounter. The study reveals that a woman might be overcome by the traumatic understanding or realisation that her baby is dead when looking at a lifeless ultrasound screen. This is portrayed in *If I Did(n't)* by the sequence of growth and death of the foetus in the setting of an ultrasound screen showing the womb. The violent removal of the foetus from the womb symbolises the intrusive medical procedures, which is employed in the case of miscarriage.
In Figure 57, it is evident that the living foetus, which is white, is struggling with the dead foetus, which is black. In the end, death prevails and the foetus is violently and spontaneously aborted.

The young woman experiences a state of mourning and is challenged by the struggle to maintain her mental or psychological health. This process is made ever more difficult through the loss of ego and a yearning to replace the dead baby with another love object. She is unsuccessful in finding an appropriate replacement and can't accept that the object is lost. I identify with Freud's (1917:14) contention that the ego literally withdraws within itself and that the shadow of the lost love object falls upon it.

Figure 57: Nathani Lüneburg, *If I Did(n't),* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The living foetus is struggling with the dead foetus.
Video-still provided by the author.

Pines (2010:127) analysed female patients who miscarried several times. She found that these women experience feelings of loss and mourn continuously. This results in long-lasting despair, a loss of self-worth and revulsion in their female bodies which "do not bear live children as their mothers did. Their self-representation is damaged" (Pines 2010:127). Drawing from Pines's analysis, I metaphorically depicted this despair in the way in which the young woman represented in *If I Did(n't)* damages her own body by punching her womb (Figure 58).

Figure 58: Nathani Lüneburg, *If I Did(n't),* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman damages her own body by punching her womb.
Video-still provided by the author.

The young woman in *If I Did(n't)* blames and criticises herself for the miscarriage and expects to be chastised by society for failing to live up to the expectations of motherhood. She can be described as a melancholiac since her violent actions display something other than mourning: a strange decrease in her self-regard and a wounded ego. In this sense, the young woman's ego becomes appalling to her. An uncertainty is experienced by the ego and as Robin Carhart-Harris, Helen S. Mayberg, Andrea L. Malizia and David Nutt (2008:7-9) argue, uncertainty manifests in guilt and guilt results in the griever believing that she is responsible for the loss of the love object.

The choice of the bathroom as a setting for the miniature installation is significant. It is a haven for the young woman and provides a private space in which she can mourn for a few minutes and then recover her composure. The bathroom mirrors reflect the young woman's miscarriage as portrayed through the video-animation. The images are reflected into infinity and symbolise the ongoing process of mourning through experiencing melancholia.

Another important characteristic of *If I Did(n't)* and *The Moon and the Tree* as well as *Wither,* which is discussed later on, is the fact that all three video-animations were created in greyscale. The reasons are worth mentioning, as they are symbolic of the woman's struggle with the psychological and emotional consequences of loss. To me, the colour grey symbolises depression, grief and sadness – a life devoid of colour and joy. Grey is also the colour of ashes, which are linked to death and destruction. It accentuates the emotional pain and suffering

experienced by a woman after the loss of a love object. When one keeps in mind that all three artworks portray the disturbing day- as well as night-dreams of the woman, the greyscale quality assumes special meaning. Michael Balint (cited in Simon 1997:36), a Hungarian psychoanalyst, was interested in interpersonal relationships between love objects, especially between a mother and her child. Without discussing his psychoanalytical techniques in detail, I deem his view on the fact that the unconscious does not use language, but images, colours and sound to express itself, to be highly important. He describes imagery and creativity as crucial in psychoanalysis and the subsequent process of therapy and healing. He further describes how images, colours and sound compel the therapist to use his or her own creative imagination to interpret the patient's psychological state:

> The task of translating the meaning of observed phenomena into adult language – whether for scientific or therapeutic purposes – is based on the presence of an adult vocabulary and an adult grammar that exist only at the oedipal level. As far as we know, the unconscious has no vocabulary… mainly pictures, images, sounds which may without much ado change their meaning or merge into each other – as they do, in fact, in dreams. It seems that in the unconscious, words have the same vagueness of contour and colour as the images seen in a dream, a kind of grey in grey; though cathected with a great deal of fleeting emotion and affect (Balint cited in Simon 1997:36).

The woman's sorrow and loss is experienced in a dreamlike environment of shades of grey, totally devoid of colour, joy and meaning. It can be safely assumed that her life was clad in vibrant colours of joy and expectation minutes before she realised that the loss is imminent. With the death of her love object, she submerged into an achromatic pool of murkiness. It could be argued that recovery from the psychological consequences of traumatic loss would involve restoring her life back to colour.

4.2.4 Mourning and melancholia depicted in "Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures"

In *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* the woman descends into a state of melancholia*.* Miscarriage and the memories thereof are represented in a dream. 'Peculiar creatures' points to the hybrid and other creatures entering and exiting the screen on different occasions. These creatures are not threatening and refer to the woman's extreme feelings of love and her need for comfort and support. As she is melancholic, it can also be argued that she is searching for a new love object to replace the lost one and to mute the pain experienced because of the loss. The symbols presented by the creatures entering the young woman's dream are important since they portray certain characteristics and symptoms of mourning and melancholia.

This large-scale projected video-animation opens with a scene of the young woman sleeping (Figure 59). A dream unfolds and her naked body is revealed. It morphs into a pregnant state and shortly thereafter her legs separate and her face contorts into a painful expression (Figure 60). Figure 61 demonstrates her abdominal area shrinking as the child is aborted. The foetus materialises as a pinkish liquid-like shape (Figure 62). The umbilical cord is still attached to the mother's body. The latter tears open from the vaginal area and splits the scene in two (Figure 63). The next scene, shown in Figure 64, displays the remains of the aborted child as a flesh-like pink flower, which is growing rapidly. As the flower grows, a giraffe-zebra hybrid creature enters the scene and kisses the flower, which has changed into a rosebush (Figure 65). After the kiss, the flower grows into the body of the woman as a young child, dressed in pink. In Figure 66, the child appears to be bound by several umbilical cords. The child then breaks free from the cords and suddenly finds herself in water (Figure 67). The water is symbolic of the child in the womb, safely surrounded by amniotic fluid. Different animals appear and disappear in the fluid. These include a blue fish, wombat, giraffe, jellyfish and kangaroo, as seen in Figures 68 to 71.

Figure 59: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman sleeping.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 60: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman's body morphs into a pregnant state.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 61: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman's legs separate and her face contorts into a painful expression.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 62: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman's abdominal area shrinks as the child is aborted.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 63: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The vaginal area tears the screen in two.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 64: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The remains of the aborted child as a flesh-like pink flower.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 65: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
A giraffe-zebra hybrid creature kisses the flower which has changed into a rosebush.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 66: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The body of the woman as a young child.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 67: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The young child in water.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 68: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
A jellyfish appears.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 69: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
A blue fish appears.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 70: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
A kangaroo appears.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 71: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
A wombat appears.
Video-still provided by the author.

The animals in Figures 68 to 71 metaphorically represent the young woman's mourning process. According to Barbara J. King (2013:64) certain mammal species grieve the deaths of their infants.[81] The video-animation ends where it started: the sleeping young woman opens her eyes. In Figure 72 she happily realises that the giraffe-zebra hybrid is tucked under her duvet. Metaphorically this entails the ongoing process of the young woman's struggle with the grief of her unborn child. The hybrid creature brings a sense of comforting peace and a possible replacement for the lost love object, but when she blinks the hybrid creature has disappeared. Darkness descends and the video-animation loops and starts again at the scene where it ended. The continuous playing and repetition of the video-animation suggests an ongoing experience of melancholia. The young woman cannot detach from the lost love object.

Figure 72: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures,* 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
The zebra-giraffe appears.
Video-still provided by the author.

Digital stop-frame animation is the ideal medium to portray this continuous state of melancholia and the sorrow and pain which seem to be never-ending. Magdalena Murlikiewicz and Piotr Sieroszewski (2012:158) comment that miscarriage, as a traumatic event, is obstinately re-experienced in recurring images, feelings, dreams, delusions and flashbacks. *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures* presents the re-experience of trauma through dreaming and the consequent unlocking of the traumatic memories regarding the miscarriage. The artwork reflects the continuous nightmarish state of melancholia and also the emotional suffering experienced by

[81] In the journal *Scientific American,* King (2013:63-67) discusses a case study where a mother dolphin grieved the death of her new-born calf by pushing and nudging the dead infant above the water, trying to revive the dead body into motion but without success. The mother removed pieces of dead skin, fussing with the calf.

the young woman caused by the traumatic loss of the love object. To her, time stands still and suffering is repeated after the miscarriage. She finds it difficult to wake up or escape from the recurring dream. Ortal Slobodin (2014:163) describes the continuous experience of a traumatic event as the freezing of a moment in time. She describes how women who experience miscarriages feel as if the movement of time has been stalled and find themselves shocked by the fact that life is ongoing. Freud (1939:23:7-137) is of the opinion that the freezing of time after a traumatic event has a protective role: the sense that time stops numbs the melancholiac and all memories and feelings related to the traumatic experience are kept at bay. On the other hand, Slobodin's (2014:163) notion that the trauma is kept dynamic by the freezing of time as the memories and emotions are experienced over and over again is a plausible account of how many women, including myself, actually feel when dealing with miscarriage. Some women experience emotions of yearning, love and sorrow and they continuously search for the foetus as the lost love object (Swanson 1999:288-289). If the trauma is not psychologically processed, traumatic memories will continue to be experienced in fragments. Unless the reality of loss is acknowledged by the woman herself, the trauma cannot be resolved (Bourne & Lewis 1991:1167-1168). If the trauma is not resolved, the healing process cannot commence. This process is portrayed in the repeated dream sequence in *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures*. Instead of grieving the traumatising past, the future without her child becomes the subconscious basis of her anxiety. Thus the video-animation depicts how miscarriage abruptly and violently ends the psychological and physical progressive stages of pregnancy. The woman's life radically and chaotically changes direction.

When analysing *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures* it is valuable to keep the already discussed difference between mourning and melancholia in mind. Mourning allows the mourner to move on with life, working through and accepting the memory of the traumatic experience, while melancholia prevents healing. The young woman unconsciously realises that she needs to make peace with the traumatic event in order to conclude the process of mourning. She needs to separate from the aborted foetus. This process of conclusion is portrayed in her unconscious dream. The fact that the dream is repeated *ad infinitum* by looping the stop-frame digital animation accentuates the fact that mourning stays but a dream and that she is still consciously lost in melancholia. Freud (1917:143-151) postulates that the ego is able to discover a new love object once the mourning is completed. The young woman has not yet reached this point in the mourning process, as she is still melancholic and not ready to abandon her connection with the lost love object.

It is common knowledge that many psychoanalysts value dreams, their symbols and the role they play in therapy. Dreams are filled to the brim with a legion of symbols and meanings that subconsciously comment on personal as well as collective experiences. I did not choose particular symbols before creating the artwork, but was rather surprised when the meanings became clear – upon reflection the peculiar creatures became even more peculiar. I created the artwork by the method of automatism, using free association. It resonates with Freud's opinion that dream symbols do not always have universal meaning, but that every case must be evaluated according to merit, background and personal significance (Freud cited in Jonty-Pace 2003:248). As already explained, he also used free association during therapy. During the creation process, I drew the first image coming to mind, which was the young woman sleeping. This image led to the following images, forming a sequence of events and creatures appearing and disappearing again. In retrospect, it is interesting to note that I have used creatures which have special meaning to me. These creatures wish to press certain truths and realities on the young woman's mind and will reappear until she rises from melancholia and the process of mourning is completed. Without mentioning all the numerous symbols, I refer to the giraffe-zebra hybrid, the jellyfish and the kangaroo to briefly illustrate the significance of symbols in my artworks.

The first creature to appear is the giraffe-zebra hybrid.[82] The hybridisation of an animal with stripes and one with spots could mean that the young woman, although submerged in a well of melancholia and despair, unconsciously realises that it is time to move forward. She needs a change in her life, which constitutes a leap from melancholia back to mourning and, subsequently, healing.[83]

Later in the artwork the aborted foetus grows into a jellyfish. The jellyfish provides for a very interesting symbol. Years ago I have come across an article mentioning a rare jellyfish species called *Turritopsis dohrnii,* commonly known as "the immortal jellyfish"*.* This jellyfish is viewed to have an immortal lifespan since its cells regenerate (Bavestrello*,* Sommer & Sarà 1992:137-

[82] This creature also makes an appearance in *Dreaming of Home* and *Yrotsih & Yromem's galaxy of impossibilities* and is a recurring recollection of the trauma victim's dire situation, difficulty to find the way back to 'normality' and her unconscious need to seek healing.

[83] According to Tony Crisp (2010:[sp]), a giraffe symbolises vulnerability and, because of its long neck, difficulty in getting up when down. He suggests that it may also refer to the "distance between the heart/feelings and the head/thought; suggesting that one may be out of touch with ones feelings" (Crisp 2010:[sp]). For academic reasons, I do not intend to meander too deeply into popular dream analysis – the market is flooded with numerous clandestine websites and self-help books. Nevertheless, it is interesting to, after the fact, note the significance of certain symbols and their meanings. Tony Crisp is a renowned dream interpreter and well-known for his teachings on how to employ dreams to assist in healing and personal growth. He is a self-acclaimed psychoanalyst and has written numerous books on dreaming, of which *Dream dictionary* is the most noted – it has been translated into seven languages. He also acted as the London Broadcasting Company's dream therapist for close to a decade (Penguin Random House 2017:[sp]).

140). The symbol of longevity becomes a symbol of the seemingly everlasting melancholia of the young woman who struggles to complete the mourning process. It could also reflect the immortal and unforgettable existence and yearning for the love object. According to Crisp [2010:[sp]), it could refer to unconscious emotions which are painful, mimicking a sting of a jellyfish and could be indicative of feelings of helplessness and spinelessness.

A kangaroo appears in the young woman's dream, and not without cause. The female kangaroo is known for keeping her young in a protective pouch or marsupium. According to Crisp (2010:[sp]) the pouch is symbolic of the safety and protection of the mother's womb. He further explains that "kangaroos are also things that jump around, and could be associated with something that you cannot get hold of or is changing too fast to connect with" (Crisp 2010:[sp]). The young woman could not protect the foetus from death and perceives her own womb as defective and thus unsafe. Later in the artwork, she finds herself back in her own mother's womb where she once felt safe and protected. She longs to feel safe and loved again. The lost love object is now but a dream and still she craves its return and a possible physical connection to it. But the lost love object will forever evade her vain attempts.

4.2.5 Loss of the young woman's love object in "Wither"

Wither has two themes. Loss of the young woman's love object because of death is the main theme in the large-scale projected black and white video artwork. A secondary, and rather interesting theme, is the grandmother's loss of the young woman as a love object through her own death. Three main characters occur in the video-animation, namely an old woman dying, the young woman and the young girl. The older woman is the love object while the young woman, witnessing her grandmother's demise, experiences traumatic loss because of her imminent death. The young woman remembers her own childhood in which she appears as the young girl. Her memories of her grandmother are portrayed in three fairy tales as told to her by the older woman when she was a young girl. She becomes a character in these fairy tales as she remembers her grandmother's influence on her life.

The video starts with the face of the elderly woman. She laboriously breathes through an oxygen mask (Figure 73). Her face morphs into a white elephant, which first becomes an abstract black and white shape and then morphs into the image of a foetus. The foetus then changes into the young girl as a newborn baby (Figure 74). From this point, the image further morphs into a young girl dressed as Little Red Riding Hood on her way to deliver apples to her grandmother. In the grandmother's room, as seen in Figure 75, a wolf appears from under the bed. He consumes the young girl and changes into an amorphous shape, which, in turn, is

devoured by the young woman whose face resembles that of the grandmother. The young woman's face morphs firstly into a little pig, as shown in Figure 76 and then into a house. This transformation portrays the fairy tale of *The Three Little Pigs*. Figure 77 shows how the wolf reappears in a more threatening manner and consumes the young woman. The wolf then morphs into a tree in the woods as the young girl appears again, this time as the character Peter in *Peter and the Wolf*. In Figure 78, a goose is seen following the young girl while she walks through the forest with a shotgun in her arms. Yet again, the wolf appears and catches the goose. The scene fades out into the moving image of the elderly woman breathing heavily. Her face transforms into the face of a wolf before she dies.

Figure 73: Nathani Lüneburg, *Wither,* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
An elderly lady breathes through an oxygen mask.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 74: Nathani Lüneburg, *Wither,* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young girl as a new born baby.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 75: Nathani Lüneburg, *Wither,* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
A young girl dressed as Little Red Riding Hood.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 76: Nathani Lüneburg, *Wither,* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman transforms into a character from the fairy tale of The Three Little Pigs.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 77: Nathani Lüneburg, *Wither,* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The wolf reappears in a more threatening manner.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 78: Nathani Lüneburg, *Wither,* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
A goose follows the young girl.
Video-still provided by the author.

The title of the video-animation refers to the grandmother's weakening condition and the brittleness of her diminishing body as well as mortality – death is imminent for all living creatures. The title also refers to the fact that memories wither with time. As the painful process of dying is visualised, the young woman struggles to recover straightforward memories of her love object. Her memories are muddled and fragmented by the traumatic experience of death. The video-animation depicts her anxiously clutching those memories, which are already progressively starting to wither. After the grandmother's death, the legacy she leaves behind

will also wither. She will no longer have an immediate impact on the young woman's life and during the subsequent process of mourning, her image will start to fade.

Both the grandmother and the young woman are already mourning. The grandmother experiences angst through fear of death and realises that once she dies, her loving relationship with her granddaughter will end. She will not have traumatic memories after dying, but the idea or prospect of loss brings on mourning. In a state of near-death, she falls asleep and an inner dream world is revealed in which the young woman's emotions and anxiety regarding the loss of her love object are portrayed. The narrative in this scene shows the grandmother's transition from life to coma to death. In a comatose state the grandmother and young woman's memories are revealed and seem to be entangled as both remember the same experiences that they shared. The two women's anxiety resulting from the traumatic experience of death is palpable throughout the video artwork.

Earlier in this thesis, I explained the unique capability of stop-frame video animation to portray loss. *Wither* is a good example of this, as internal as well as external experiences of loss are visualised simultaneously in one artwork. Although the grandmother is not yet dead, the young woman has started to permanently part with her and the mourning process has commenced. She is already experiencing separation, which is the first stage of mourning. Freud (1917:255) argues that memories evoked by the mourner during the mourning process establish the attachment to the lost love object. The mourner could easily fall into melancholia. Freud (1917:243-258) is of the opinion that mourning and melancholia are related but that the melancholiac and mourner have different responses to loss. In the process of mourning, the mourner's responses are lucid and conscious, whereas the melancholiac does not fully grasp or recognise the loss and therefore the memories are fragmented. The melancholiac is caught up in the memories of the love object and finds it difficult to escape (Freud 1917:243). While melancholia is pertinent to the exhibition, *Loss,* it is particularly applicable to this video animation. *Wither* illustrates how both the mourners' memories are already starting to become fragmented and incomprehensible. The grandmother will die shortly, but the young woman could easily further submerge in melancholia, especially after the death occurs.

As already pointed out, fairy tales play a significant role in *Wither.* The young woman remembers the stories her grandmother told her when she was a young girl. Her memories take on a film-like quality in which the narratives of the fairy tales change and in which she becomes a character. According to Violetta-Irene Koutsompou and Anastasia Kotsopoulou (2015:154-156) fairy tales such as *Little Red Riding Hood* create a world where death is a common occurrence. Over time, the fairy tales in which death features has expanded into the

moral struggle between good and evil, as well as life and death. For example, in several tales the wolf is killed because he is a symbol of evilness and death. The occurrence of death in children's stories is for many children their first encounter with mortality and it is usually associated with evil. This may lead to anxiety, as small children frequently hold themselves responsible for the death of their love objects (Koutsompou & Kotsopoulou 2015:154).

In *Wither* the loss of the love object does not only occur through the death of the young woman's grandmother, but also through the loss of fairy tales told by her. The fact that the tales were told by her beloved grandmother brought comfort to the young girl. As she grew up, the grandmother stopped telling stories because the adult woman did not have a need for fairy tales. She now remembers those tales and, having a need for comfort, feels anxious because she will never again hear her grandmother's voice. In the twisted memories of the fairy tales, the young girl finds herself alone in the woods, abandoned by her grandmother. According to Helga Benediktsdóttir (2014:17) children associate their suffering with elementary fears. One of these fears is the fear of abandonment. Young children are entirely reliant on their caretakers for basic care and are justifiably horrified at the idea of being ripped from them and left to fend for themselves. The notion of being 'lost in the woods' is frightening to children (Benediktsdóttir 2014:1-31). In *Wither,* the grandmother reluctantly abandons the young woman. Although she is now an adult, the innate fear of abandonment by a mother-figure and love object excavates that fear again, which leads to feelings of doubt and terror.

The appearance of the wolf in the fairy tales symbolises death and fear. The young girl faces the wolf in several scenes and she appears to feel threatened. This is symbolic of the young woman's fear of imminent danger, the danger being abandonment because of the death of her love object. A wolf may also symbolise loyalty and an instinct to protect loved ones (Crisp 2010:[sp]). Crisp also argues that "[a]s such it can depict your intuitive understanding of life on earth, the seasons of life and death, and the deep wisdom of group relations. In some dreams the wolf is a protective companion…" Contrary to the standard ending in most fairy tales, in which the good character always prevails, the young woman finds it impossible to emerge as the victor. She cannot turn to her trustworthy grandmother for help as they are permanently separated by death. In the end scene, which can be seen in Figure 79, the grandmother morphs into the wolf. She metaphorically becomes death.

Figure 79: Nathani Lüneburg, *Wither,* 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The elderly lady's face transforms into a wolf.
Video-still provided by the author.

4.2.6 Loss of a childhood friend in "Goodbye Little Miss Perfume"

Goodbye Little Miss Perfume is a video artwork portraying a child's mourning and melancholia after the loss of a love object. The love object is an imaginary childhood friend named Perfume. The artwork consists of a colour video-animation installed in a peeping box on a small screen as well as a ceramic child-like house and garden furniture (Figure 80). One of the ceramic garden chairs is tipped over and creates a disturbing sense of abandonment.

Figure 80: Nathani Lüneburg, *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume*, 2014.
The video-animation and ceramic sculptures are installed in a peeping box.
Photograph by Carla Crafford.

In the opening scene of *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume,* a colourful background appears and morphs into a tree (Figure 81). In its turn the tree changes into an image of Perfume. Perfume's features are painted according to the young girl's vivid memories of her. Figures 82 and 83 show how she transforms into a mushroom which then morphs into a giraffe. A series of abstract pools of digital paint appear and gradually transform into lines portraying two sketched dogs which are hybridised into the elephant (Figure 84). I have selected an elephant and giraffe since these species are known to mourn their dead and this evokes a strong metaphorical association with mourning practices in humans.[84] The animals also signify the melancholia caused by the loss of the love object as well as the melancholic state of the girl who cannot detach from her disappeared friend and guardian.

Figure 81: Nathani Lüneburg, *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume*, 2014*.*
Video-still from video-animation.
A colourful background appears and morphs into a tree.
Video-still provided by the author.

[84] A study by King (2013:65) shows that female giraffes mourn the deaths of their infants. The study shows how seventeen cows, including the calf's mother, restlessly gathered around a bush where a calf had died earlier. They displayed intense awareness of the calf's carcass and later on twenty-three females and four adolescents were observed pushing and nudging it with their muzzles. During the following days many adults joined the group to keep vigil by the carcass. On the third day the mother giraffe still lingered around the spot where her infant had died, although the carcass had been devoured by hyenas. A further observation by King (2013:64) shows that the death of a dying elephant matriarch was mourned by several elephant families. One elephant came to her aid, trying to assist her back to her feet even though she had already died. During the week that followed, female elephants showed intense attentiveness to the body. Some were distressed, pulling at the body and pushing it with their trunks and swaying back and forth while standing over it.

Figure 82: Nathani Lüneburg, *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
Little Miss Perfume transforms into a mushroom.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 83: Nathani Lüneburg, *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The mushroom transforms into a giraffe.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 84: Nathani Lüneburg, *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The giraffe transforms into an elephant.
Video-still provided by the author.

It is important to highlight the background to, and my motive for creating this specific video-animation. The young girl befriends Perfume and becomes attached to and dependent on her. Perfume is always available to play with and partake in fun activities and the fact that she is imaginary means that she is loyal and always willing.[85] She also acts as guardian of the young girl. According to Marjorie Taylor and Candice M. Mottweiler (2008:47) an imaginary or invisible friend, usually an invented person or animal, is created to meet the particular desires of their maker. Paul L. Harris (cited in Taylor & Mottweiler 2008:48) argues that the act of imagining thoughts, actions and feelings of an imaginary person or creature creates a context in which children can control a situation from many perspectives. This acts as a simulation of real life interaction with others and assists the child in developing a concept of friendship. Taylor and Mottweiler (2008:51) further state that a child has strong emotional attachments to imaginary friends, which might suggest that the child confuses the boundaries between fantasy and reality.

As the young girl grows older, the image of Perfume progressively withers until she one day does not appear to play. The young girl experiences feelings of loss and enters into a time of mourning and becomes melancholic. It is her vivid memories of the loss that are portrayed in the artwork. The reason for the vividness of the young girl's memory of Perfume is because of

[85] The inclusion of animals and a doll-house is symbolic of the young woman's fond memories of Perfume and their games.

her ability to draw pictures of Perfume and describe her personality. According to Taylor and Mottweiler (2008:50):

> Children seem to have clear mental images of what these [imaginary] friends look like and how they behave … For example, they might include details such as the imaginary companion being funny, making them laugh, and being a good companion (e.g., "we always know what the other one is going to say"). Some of the imaginary companions have characteristics that take them out of the realm of what might be expected of a real child playmate. For example, some have special capabilities such as being able to fly, fight crocodiles, or perform magic. Others have unusual physical characteristics, like being very small…

Jacques Derrida (2001:107) postulates that mourning a lost friend unavoidably arouses a struggle with loyalty. When a friend is lost one also loses a part of oneself. The mourner's emotions, which had been established around the lost friend, are also lost. He explains that:

> [T]he world [is] suspended by some unique tear … reflecting disappearance itself: the world, the whole world, the world itself, for death takes from us not only some particular life within the world, some moment that belongs to us, but, each time, without limit, someone through whom the world, and first of all our own world, will have opened up… (Derrida 2001:107)

Although Derrida refers to loss of a friend by death, I believe that friends could be lost in other ways as well, for instance by moving away. Adults have the means to keep in touch with such friends, but small children do not and the friend could just as well be dead. In *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume* the absence of the friend is visualised in the haunting scene created by the ceramic objects. The house seems to be abandoned and the abandonment is accentuated by the chair, which is tipped over. This is a symbol of the loss of the friendship and the void it leaves. Derrida (2001:115) argues that the mourner's self and world descends into a void. The image of the lost friend now dwells within the young girl's consciousness and manifests in memories. Throughout *The politics of friendship* (1997) Derrida focuses on the law of friendship. This law prescribes that one of the friends will die or leave first and that the other will mourn the loss (Derrida 1997:28).

Freud (1917:245) postulates that mourning and melancholia result from an attachment to loss, which is also a state of detachment. The way in which the mourner responds to the loss entails an understanding of the attachment. Through a long agonising battle the mourner gradually recognises the reality of the situation and detachment from the lost love object takes place. According to Freud (1917:245), the lost ego is only freed after the mourning process is completed.

The melancholic girl's unprotected ego is hurt by memories with regards to the lost love object which, in the video-animation, are metaphorically represented in the form of imaginary landscapes and creatures. Freud (1917:246) cautiously argues that in mourning, it is the world which becomes deprived and vacant and in the case of melancholia the ego itself becomes deprived. The ego slowly develops identification with the lost love object and the melancholiac's attachment to loss becomes ongoing. For the melancholiac the lost love object takes on deeper colours through vivid memories once the sensation of loss increases in the realm of basic instincts.

In *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume* the young girl has to part with her lost love object but fails to find a substitute for the friendship. As a result the pain of the loss becomes part of her ego, assembling the loss as part of her identity. This is preserved in her inability to clearly distinguish between delusion and reality. In this sense, the young girl has transformed the object-loss into an ego-loss and thus her ego cannot assist her in going on with her life since it has been threatened by loss. The young girl refuses to embrace reality and is petrified to admit the fact that her yearning for the lost love object is real. The visualisation of the animal-figures throughout the video-animation metaphorically signifies the lost love object which the girl cannot let go. These moving images in *Little Miss Perfume* reflect what Hans Loewald (1989:271-272) terms 'degrees of internalization'. The shapes, which alter and shift, represent mourning in the way they unfold in the child's inner world.

A further observation worth mentioning is that *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume* visualises the inner world of the young girl as a threatening space in which she anxiously awaits the return of the love object. The moving, morphing images portray the disappearance of Perfume as well as the continued search for her in different places and figures. Sánchez-Pardo (2003:215) posits that when the absence of the love object is noticed and experienced, the place where the friends spent time together in the past now becomes a place where the lost friend might perhaps reappear. In the case of *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume* this space is portrayed in the scene created by using ceramics. This space is experienced as threatening by the melancholic girl, a space which is void of comforting objects, in other words a malicious space.

4.3 Conclusion

The six selected artworks portray mourning and melancholia caused by miscarriage, death and parting from a childhood friend. All three of these traumatic experiences suggest the loss of a love object.

I strongly disagree with Freud's misconceptions with regards to femaleness and women's psychological response to trauma and loss. Although these misconceptions of woman- and motherhood render some of his theories unsuitable, others are employed to successfully explain certain responses to mourning and melancholia. Freud does not name miscarriage specifically as a reason for mourning and melancholia, but I refer to Pines's works, amongst others, to highlight the fact that miscarriage could indeed lead to psychological trauma.

Through an investigation of trauma theories with regards to loss, I argue that mourning is a natural, therapeutic way to respond to loss and is characterised by the fact that the mourner comprehends the extent of the loss, starts on a journey to detach from the lost love object and concludes the process after a time of mourning. Melancholia, on the other hand, occurs when the mourner finds it difficult to fully understand the loss and detach from the love object. In these cases the mourner finds herself in limbo where the process of mourning has been halted and the ego and love object are entangled. This leads to the loss of ego. The loss of ego is explained through reference to the video artwork *Dreaming of Home*. The young woman, who recently miscarried, submerges in melancholia and in the process her self-regard and ego are lost. This is aggravated by society's inadequate view, which is illustrated by Freud's arguments, that women are defined by motherhood and reproduction. The destructive loop of melancholia is also portrayed in *Dreaming of Peculiar Creatures.* By discussing the peculiar creatures entering and exiting the screen as important symbols, I illustrate how the young woman is literally unconsciously conscious of the need to resume and conclude the process of healing and again play an active role in society.

The psychological pain and mourning brought on by miscarriage are in many cases endured silently, because of this idealisation of women. The mourner feels as if she has failed as a woman and mother and loses her femaleness for a time. This silent suffering is portrayed in *The Moon and the Tree* which is a silent video-animation. Considering Freud's views on femaleness and critique thereof by mostly feminist authors, I deduce that Freud would have had little sympathy for women who have suffered miscarriage and would probably have labelled them as 'hysteric'. Notwithstanding, I submit that some of his theories regarding loss, mourning and melancholia, could still explain certain aspects of women's suffering and its consequences with regards to loss through miscarriage.

The psychological and emotional health of the young woman is unexpectedly stolen by the miscarriage in *If I Did(n't)*. The impact of the trauma is far-reaching and, as shown by Kendall-Tackett (2005), for many women miscarriage is the most traumatic experience they have ever encountered. The medical procedure by which the abortion of the dead foetus is effected is not

only invasive, but could also cause bodily and psychological injury. I have argued that the psychological injury is worsened by the fact that the mother-to-be has probably been following the development of the foetus with expectation and has started to idealise a future with her baby. These injuries could only heal when the mourning process has been concluded.

In *Wither* both the older as well as the young woman are preparing to lose a love object. The young woman is losing her grandmother who is gravely ill, while the near-comatose grandmother is also taking permanent leave of her granddaughter. Both are experiencing trauma, and for the young woman the mourning process has already started with fragmented memories of past events, which the two women shared. I have argued that the fragmentation of the memories could be a sign that the young woman is in danger of submerging into melancholia.

The lost love object is an interesting character in *Goodbye Little Miss Perfume*. The young girl has befriended an imaginary friend, Perfume. As the young girl grows up, her friend withers and then disappears for good. I posit that young children cannot understand the loss of a friend and experience it as abandonment. This feeling of abandonment is traumatic, and this trauma is aggravated by the vivid memories of the lost love object. For a young child, the imaginary friend could just as well have died.

In conclusion, it is worth accentuating that digital stop-frame animation as medium has unique characteristics which render it suitable to portray mourning and melancholia resulting from the traumatic loss of a lost love object. Looping, repetition and jumpiness of frames in my video-animations emphasise the fact that the state of melancholia can be repetitive and may never ends. The digital stop-frame technique assists in portrayal of memory and its loss by means of one frame replacing the next, as if memories are forgotten and replaced by the next.

CHAPTER FIVE
FREUDIAN THEORIES ON CSA DEPICTED IN SELECTED VIDEO ARTWORKS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I analyse four selected artworks from my video-installation, *Loss,* in order to apply Freud's theories regarding CSA to the works at the same time that I critically engage with these theories. Although many of his theories could be applied to both CSA and the video artworks, I refer here specifically to critique on his arguments with regards to female hysteria. This chapter firstly provides an overview of trauma theories concerning CSA – I draw from texts describing the nature of CSA and its consequences. Furthermore the feminist interpretation and re-evaluation of CSA are discussed by pointing to male repression and power, as well as the powerlessness of children.

Secondly, an overview of and background to Freud's theories regarding CSA are offered. These theories include his theories on hysteria and Nachträglichkeit as well as trauma-dreams. Freud's abandonment of his seduction theory is also discussed since diverse opinions exist around this shift in his thesis, especially regarding hysteria. In this regard I refer to Freud's texts as well as those of other and more contemporary theorists.

Freud's take on hysteria, with specific reference to repressed memories of CSA, flashbacks, and the case of Freud's patient, Dora, is explored through analysis of the artwork *Janey Flew Away.* The discrepancies surrounding Freud's notion of hysteria are underlined by referring to authors who have commented on the female body as repressed by male power. Following on hysteria, this chapter also discusses Nachträglichkeit with reference to *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*. The final Freudian concept of CSA discussed in this chapter involves the visual depiction of his theories surrounding trauma-dreams. I show that trauma-dreams are an important theme in *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities.* Neurological studies of sleep processes, memories of CSA and the working of emotions and memories are investigated with reference to these artworks. Freud's hypotheses in *The interpretation of dreams* and *Beyond the pleasure principle* (1920), in conjunction with other views on nightmares, are applied to these video-animations with specific reference to the censorship of dreams and the provocation of anxiety through trauma-dreams.

5.2 CSA: a historical overview

Although CSA is now widely regarded as a serious offence, awareness of the vast prevalence and extensive psychological damage thereof has only fully emerged during the past thirty years (Mintz 2012:[sp]). Notwithstanding this social shift, CSA is still more widespread than comprehensible.

It is now known that CSA was prevalent and acceptable during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and that children were sometimes treated as sexual objects – even amongst the elite. According to Steven Mintz (2012:[sp]), King Louis XIII of France was, as a young child, sexually abused by members of the royal household, who "fondled his genitals and ladies in waiting played sexual games with his tiny fists". In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, 30 to 50 percent of rape victims in New York City were minors, and during the 1820s this number increased dramatically to 76 percent. Father-daughter incest was also common. In many instances, CSA-victims' outcries were ignored or passed off as unimportant (Mintz 2012:[sp]).

Mintz (2012:[sp]) reaches three conclusions regarding the history of CSA: firstly, society has literally taken millennia to acknowledge the simple fact that CSA is criminal and that it causes long-lasting trauma for its victims. In the second place, there has, for many years, been a more sympathetic attitude towards the perpetrator. Thirdly, he submits that government institutions have ignored either the very existence of CSA or viewed it as the exception rather as the rule and perpetrators were not held accountable.

In 1857, Ambroise Tardieu, a French forensic scientist, published the first ever academic work on CSA (Collings 2009:67). After studying 632 cases of CSA, he concluded that it was widespread – also under the elite – and that the perpetrators were mostly men abusing young girls. Tardieu further concluded that the patriarchal society contributed to the helplessness of children and that the offenders were, in many cases, known to the victims, with the consequence that families did not always protect children as they should. Needless to say, Tardieu's work made little impact on his contemporaries (Collings 2009:67).

In 1896, Freud published a number of articles in which he made valuable contributions to psychoanalytical theories regarding CSA (Collings 2009:67-68). He found that many victims of CSA suffered from hysteria later in life and that it had far-reaching psychological consequences for the victims. In these essays Freud confirmed Tardieu's findings of a half century earlier that CSA was common and not only limited to the lower classes, that perpetrators were not always

unknown or unrelated to the victims, and that girls were more often the victims of sexual abuse by men. He even went so far as to write in a letter to Wilhelm Fliess, a medical practitioner and friend, that fathers were always the perpetrators (Collings 2009:67-68). Although he later on renounced his seduction theory and adopted others, he never divested himself from his above-mentioned findings. As with Tardieu, Freud's theories were widely criticised and ridiculed by his contemporaries (Collings 2009:67-68).

During the twentieth century, theorists became increasingly aware of the fact that CSA does exist and that it has traumatic consequences (Fishman 1982:270). Theories regarding child sexuality and CSA, especially those by Freud, contributed towards this awareness – Freud's claims led various theorists and psychoanalysts to investigate further and expand his theories to the point that child sexual development and sexuality are seen as natural manifestation in infants and children and CSA is acknowledged as being wide-spread and criminal (Fishman 1982:270).

During the 1900s, depictions of child sexuality were standard, predominantly in the framework of sexual encounters with adults (Constantine 1983:55-67). Cases of sexually active children are, for instance, discussed in Lauretta Bender and Abraham Blau's *The reaction of children to sexual relations with adults* (1937:5). They argue that pre-pubertal children who have sexual relations with adults are competent in seduction and are frequently involved in it (Bender & Blau 1937:5). During the past decades, however, feminists have critically re-evaluated CSA and attempted to denounce and reverse the inclination that children could be guilty of the sexual seduction of adults by focusing on male authority and child helplessness (Angelides 2004:149).[86] Twentieth century feminists were dominant in discovering concepts such as "victim-accusation", the "blameless", "helpless" and "non-compliant target" and "survivor" of sexual abuse (Angelides 2004:142). Nancy Whittier (2016:95-208) argues that feminist trauma theory contends that childhood trauma causes emotional problems. She proposes that both the abuse and the trauma that follows manifest within the framework of masculine power, the male-controlled home environment, and the male drive for supremacy and restraint.[87] Feminists such as Judith Lewis Herman and Lisa Hirschman (1977:735-756) re-describe CSA as a forceful action which seeks to claim power, and not a sexual deed as such. They argue that children are unable to wilfully agree to sexual interactions with adults.

[86] Although offenders of CSA can be male or female, this section focuses on male offenders.

[87] Freud (1896:210) also argues that in the case of sexual assault, the adult misuses his or her superior strength and abuses for pleasure. Freud briefly refers to paedophilia in his book *Three essays on the theory of sexuality* (1905) in a segment entitled *The sexually immature and animals as sexual objects.* He further argues that children are typically the subjects of desire when a weak person, who is the paedophile "makes use of such substitutes" (Freud 1905:18-20). In these cases the paedophile seeks instant pleasure, but cannot at that moment find a more fitting object than a child (Freud 1905:18-20).

Owing to the strides made by feminists, CSA is now typically understood to include bodily contact, as well as penetrating and non-penetrating acts (Philpot 2009:9). More precisely, Kempe and Kempe (1978:60) define CSA as:

> Involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities that they do not fully comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

Many factors could contribute to an ideal setting for CSA to take place. It is notable that all of the factors listed by Mintz (2012:[sp]) could be seen as placing the child-victim in a subordinate and powerless position. He identifies the following factors:

> … [i]solation and social disconnection, both of the abused and the abuser; emotionally needy and disempowered young people; a self-validating ideology that rationalizes abuse; institutional settings that shield individuals from public scrutiny; and institutions intent on protecting their reputation and safeguarding themselves from liability – and that do so in part by decentralizing decision-making about crucial issues (Mintz 2012:[sp]).

From the definition as well as contributing factors, it is clear that CSA concerns the difference in power between the victim and offender and the child's inability to consent.[88] Sexual power is held by adults and not children and children are now viewed to be at the mercy of adults as their rights as human beings are sometimes not recognised (Herman & Hirschman 1977: 735–756). Child-adult sex is based on the integral power disparity between adults and children (Groth & Wolbert Burgess 1980:79). In the case of CSA the perpetrator uses his or her power over the child to involve him or her in sexual actions. CSA is thus not only sexual in nature but also forceful and a statement of power (Herman & Hirschman 1977:735–756). To David Finkelhor (1979:695) the contradiction between the perpetrator's power and the child's helplessness forms an integral part of contemporary society's disapproval of CSA: children are dependent on adults for their physical means to survive, their psychological wellbeing and overall care, thus rendering them vulnerable to CSA. Furthermore, adults have power and knowledge of sexual encounters whereas children do not. Susan A Clancy (2009:7) explains that CSA, similar to other trauma, harms victims since it is a terrifying, disturbing, devastating,

[88] For the purpose of this thesis a child is a person under the age of 18, as stipulated in the South African Law. The South African statistics on CSA is shocking and frightening. According to *Optimus study: sexual victimisation of children in South Africa* (Artz, Burton, Ward, Leoschut, Phyfer, Loyd, Kassanjee & Le Mottee 2016:11) one in every three young South Africans who had been interviewed for the study had experienced some form of sexual abuse in their lives. Despite this fact it is valuable to note that the South African judiciary system is protective of children with regard to the sexual exploitation of minors by adults. Children are also protected by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) which states that "a child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child". In terms of The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (Act 32 of 2007) a child under the age of 16 cannot consent to sexual acts as defined in the act. If a child between the ages of 12 and 16 does consent to sexual penetration or violation, the crime is called "statutory rape". Act 32 of 2007 also refers to the crimes of sexual exploitation of children, sexual grooming, compelling or causing children to witness sexual acts, intentionally letting a child watch a sexual act, and exposure of genital organs, anus or breasts to children under the age of eighteen. The question of whether these laws really protect children against CSA is a question which justifies an extensive study in its own right.

and hurting experience. She argues that, according to trauma theory, a child will only involuntarily partake in sexual abuse if he or she is endangered, or forced (Clancy 2009:41); by interviewing victims of CSA, she finds that many of them do not contest the forced sexual act. Clancy (2009:7) further argues that although CSA is not always forceful, victims who did not necessarily experience the event as traumatic at the time, later on in life deal with thoughts of indignity, humiliation, and self-blame, which prolong their suffering.

In many cases the child's efforts to deal with the trauma of CSA is inhibited by the feelings of doubt, guilt and denial instigated by the perpetrator. The victim is also sometimes accused of lying, manipulation or an overactive imagination by parents, officers of law, and clinicians (Summit 1983:177). Freud ([1905] 2006:16-19) traces trauma back to the child's experience of CSA and the consequent delayed reaction. He argues that the child may later on have a sexual experience during puberty and a delayed pathological response to the earlier CSA may result from this.

5.3 Freud's theories on hysteria, Nachträglichkeit and trauma-dreams applied to selected artworks

The Freudian theories regarding hysteria, Nachträglichkeit and trauma-dreams are applicable to CSA. Freud's seduction theory is placed within the theoretical framework by focusing on childhood trauma experienced specifically as a result of CSA. Hysteria is identified as originating from memory and is connected directly to an experience of CSA. In Freudian terms, trauma is mostly linked to sexual assault. His notion of Nachträglichkeit further extends a psychoanalytical understanding of trauma. In this framework, memory releases a sexual emotional impulse which was absent in the initial traumatic experience (Freud 1896:213,216). The function of the unconscious and memory in dreams adds to the Freudian notion of CSA, since to Freud ([1899] 2006:47-49), memories are embedded in dreams and the dreams are part of a wish fulfilment through which the unconscious presents itself in the dream state. Freud (1900:578) notes that unconscious imprints of thoughts and emotions such as humiliation and trauma can be experienced repeatedly in comparable ways later in life.

In this section of the chapter, I critically analyse Freudian concepts of CSA – specifically hysteria, Nachträglichkeit and trauma dreams – with reference to *Janey Flew Away, Dreaming of Those Things I Fear* and *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities.* The foundation of these discussions are Freud's (1936:66) notion that a traumatic experience in the victim's past carries personal significance, sometimes throughout his or her life, due to the emotional injury it causes. Furthermore, memories of CSA cannot be remembered until they are triggered by

some sort of association after puberty. In some cases, but not always, the victim may suffer from one form of hysteria or another in later life.

In his book *The psychology of love* ([1905] 2006:16-19), Freud traces trauma back to the child's experience of sexual abuse and the delayed reaction thereto. He argues that the child may have a sexual experience during puberty and a pathological response may result from this. Masson ([1984] 2012:16) supports Freud's analysis that trauma is related to CSA and claims that seduction, in the context of a sexual act enforced on a young child without him or her encouraging such an act, is an act of brutality. The child's efforts to reunite his or her private experiences with the truths of the outside world are complicated by the doubt, guilt and denial they experience from adult offenders (Masson [1984] 2012:131-132). The child's everyday behaviour is at odds with rooted assumptions held by adults. The child is stigmatised and accused of lying, being manipulative or imagining by parental and law structures as well as clinicians (Summit 1983:177).

As a result, CSA involves a disparity of power between the victim and offender and the absence of any consensual understanding. Sexual power manifests exclusively with adults. The child, in this case female, is compared to a captive, incarcerated in the context of the adult (Herman & Hirschman 1977:735-756). The adult's power comprises an alluring tendency where the child is induced into sexual behaviour irrespective of whether the child is aware of what is taking place or not. According to Herman and Hirschman (1977:735-756), CSA is defined not as a sexual act but as an act of forcefulness and a proclamation of power.

5.3.1 Hysteria and "Janey Flew Away"

In the late 1800s, Freud made a valuable contribution towards the psychological understanding of hysteria by presenting his seduction theory. Before Freud, it was widely believed that hysteria was the result of a woman's disability to conceive and have children. Freud brought on a paradigm shift when he claimed that hysteria is a disorder caused by "a lack of libidinal evolution" and that the inability to conceive is the result of hysteria and not the cause (Tasca, Rapetti, Carta & Fadda 2012:115). His seduction theory is based on his argument that all cases of hysteria is caused by sexual abuse during childhood and are only suffered by women. He defended his arguments regarding hysteria in *The etiology of hysteria* (1895).

Before discussing Freud's take on hysteria, it is important to first investigate the origin and meaning of 'hysteria'. The first cases of hysteria were documented as early as 1900 BC by the ancient Egyptians. They identified the causes as "spontaneous uterus movement within the

human body" (Tasca *et al* 2012:110). 'Hysteria' derives from the Greek 'hystera', which refers to the uterus (Cherry 2016:[sp]) thereby belying its "gendered etymological roots" (Du Preez 2004:47). Similar to the Egyptians, Ancient Greeks attributed hysteria to the movement of a woman's uterus between different body parts. Terri Kapsalis (2017:[sp]) describes this notion, which was used to diagnose women in cases where no other known illness was present:

> The uterus was believed to wander around the body like an animal, hungry for semen. If it wandered [in] the wrong direction and made its way to the throat there would be choking, coughing or loss of voice, if it got stuck in the rib cage, there would be chest pain or shortness of breath, and so on. Most any symptom that belonged to a female body could be attributed to that wandering uterus. "Treatments," including vaginal fumigations, bitter potions, balms, and pessaries made of wool, were used to bring that uterus back to its proper place. "Genital massage," performed by a skilled physician or midwife, was often mentioned in medical writings. The triad of marriage, intercourse, and pregnancy was the ultimate treatment for the semen-hungry womb. The uterus was a troublemaker and was best sated when pregnant.

Until the 1950s, hysteria was used in psychoanalysis to refer to a condition characterised by a diversity of symptoms, which included angst, difficulty breathing, collapsing, insomnia, wantonness, tension and 'strange' sexual behaviour (Webster 2004:[sp]). In 1874, George Beard published *Cases of hysteria, neurasthenia, spinal irritation and allied affections – with remarks.* He submitted that the symptoms of hysteria "are a part of the price we pay for civilization, being confined mostly to the enlightened peoples of modern times…" (Beard 1874:2) He also listed 75 pages of numerous possible symptoms, but declared the list as incomplete, with the result that almost any illness or condition could fit the diagnosis (Briggs 2000:247).

Without excavating the history of hysteria too deeply, it is essential to briefly refer to the main role players who contributed to the development of hysteria, as we know it today. During the late eighteenth century Jean-Martin Charcot, a French neurologist and Freud's teacher, studied hysteria in female patients in the dreaded La Salpêtrière hospital (North 2015:499).[89] Charcot hypnotised his patients and argued that only hysterical women could indeed be hypnotised. He observed strong parallels between hysteria and possession by demons, which he viewed as a form of hysteria and termed 'demonomania'. Charcot was well known for his dramatic, public performances where he paraded hysterical women in large lecturing halls, pointing out their symptoms to large crowds of students and curious guests (North 2015:499). Charcot was widely criticised for "failing to consider potential contributions of malingering and

[89] King Louis XIV of France founded la Salpêtrière. In the late 1600s, 5 000 poor Parisians, mainly women, were forced to inhabit the hospital since the king could not abide their presence on the city's streets. Later on, it became a women's hospital where problematic adolescents, prostitutes, prisoners and those believed to be insane were kept in separate quarters. By 1833 nearly 1 500 mentally ill women were housed in the hospital (Berlin 2003:1579).

suggestion in the production of hysterical phenomena, especially when hypnosis was used, and for promoting social contagion by housing hysterics and epileptics together and… various other methodological shortcomings" (North 2015:499). Notwithstanding these criticisms, Freud's fascination with and observations on hysteria were born from his studies under Charcot.

Freud and Pierre Janet, both students of Charcot, took his findings on hysteria a step further. Amongst many contributions to psychology, Janet was also the father of the dissociative theory. He concentrated on the dissociative symptoms of hysteria, which included "… disturbances of conscious awareness involving amnesia and identity confusion…" (North 2015:499). Freud, on the other hand, is renowned for his influential findings regarding hysterical conversion. He argued that traumatic memories, which are too painful to contemplate, are repressed, stored in the unconscious and converted into physiological symptoms. Freud's repression theory gained popularity, while Janet's dissociation theory at the time nearly disappeared (North 2015:499).

Freud also developed the now widely used "talking cure" or "talk therapy". Contrary to Freud, Charcot practiced the "silent gaze", which was popular amongst clinicians at the time (Du Preez 2004:48,50). Du Preez (2004:49) explains the silent method:

> Hysteria was treated as a condition to be observed, and as a result there was no apparent need to address the predominantly female patients or to listen to their plights. In other words, patients diagnosed with hysteria were not consulted about their condition but, on the contrary, they were silenced in many ways.

When speaking out of turn, Charcot would rudely put his patients in their place or ridicule them (Du Preez 2004:49). Talk therapy is still seen as a huge leap in the treatment of hysteria and other psychological disorders. Freud found that it helped his patients to unlock traumatic memories by using language to recall past trauma. According to Freud, the talking cure freed the patients from their hysterical symptoms through the "cathartic method", which entails hypnotism (Du Preez 2004:50).

Many of Freud's colleagues, including his former mentor, Charcot, fiercely criticised his seduction theory. They could not believe that parents had the ability to sexually abuse their own children. In addition, his contemporaries were suspicious of the lack of scientific evidence to support his arguments (Brown 1998:1013). As a result, he abandoned his seduction theory and replaced it with his theory of the unconscious, which formed the basis for his theory on infantile sexuality. This theory basically entails that a young child sexually desires the parent of the opposite sex while hating the other parent (Oswalt [sa]:[sp]). This means that humans

are born with an instinctual libido which develops through five psychosexual phases, which Freud describes in *On sexuality: three essays on the theory of sexuality and other works* (1905). During the 'oral' stage of sexual development, a baby takes pleasure in sucking. He refers to the second phase as the 'anal' stage during which an infant derives pleasure through the anus, for instance when defecating. In the 'phallic' stage, a young child develops an interest in his or her sexual organs and feels strongly attracted to the parent of the opposite gender. He termed this occurrence the 'Oedipus complex'.[90] At the age of around five the 'latency' phase follows, during which the child outgrows the Oedipus complex and starts to associate with the parent of the same sex. The last stage is the 'genital' stage during which the child develops a strong sexual attraction to people outside the family.

Freud experienced severe consequences because of his replacement of seduction theory with that of infantile sexuality, the most noticeable being the fact that misunderstanding of infantile sexuality caused several psychoanalysts such as Janet (1919:603,607) to reduce CSA to mere fantasy. Alfred Kinsey, Wardell Pomeroy and Clyde Martin (1948:180), for instance, argued that it is challenging to comprehend why a child should be troubled when his or her genitalia are touched or by seeing the genitalia of an adult. Although theorists at the time disapproved of Freud's thinking, it has been argued that in the absence of critique, ideas concerning the unconscious, repression, change and resistance, and the recounting of psychosexual stages of childhood would never have been added to human knowledge (Joyce 1995:199-214).

In other words, notwithstanding resistance to seduction theory and his abandonment thereof, certain aspects are still valid today. Studies on Freudian theory confirm that hysteria could result from unconscious memories of CSA. Masson ([1984] 2012:16), for instance, supports Freud's arguments that CSA is traumatic and that seduction, in the context of a sexual act enforced on a young child, is an act of brutality and "…violence which wounds the child in every aspect of his or her life". He further argues that hysterical symptoms typically do not arise until long after the traumatic experience of CSA (Masson [1984] 2012:131-132). According to Summit (1983:177) the victim of CSA encounters secondary trauma when memories with regards to the repressed traumatic event resurface later on in life.

[90] During this phase boys, especially, are afflicted by feelings of guilt, which Thornton ([sa]:[sp]) describes as follows: "This, however, gives rise to (socially derived) feelings of guilt in the child, who recognizes that it can never supplant the stronger parent. A male child also perceives himself to be at risk. He fears that if he persists in pursuing the sexual attraction for his mother, he may be harmed by the father; specifically, he comes to fear that he may be castrated. This is termed 'castration anxiety'. Both the attraction for the mother and the hatred are usually repressed, and the child usually resolves the conflict of the Oedipus complex by coming to identify with the parent of the same sex."

Throughout Freud's work it is evident that he relied profoundly on physical markers in his diagnosis of hysteria, but not as much as Charcot did. He observed, amongst others, the following symptoms through case studies: convulsive actions in the face and neck and spontaneous utterances; hallucinations focusing on smell; feelings of de-personalisation; prosopagnosia (which is the inability to recognise faces); illusions which include the misidentification of items; distortions in which standing objects seem lopsided, or the walls of the room seem to curve; double-vision and blurry vision; pain in the legs and abdominal pains (Freud 1896:146). Freud insisted that physical illnesses could be symptomatic of hysteria (Gossy 1995:87). He documented this by referring to the case of an ill young girl whom he diagnosed with hysteria. Freud claimed that the hysteria resolved under his supervision but shortly thereafter she died of sarcoma of the abdominal glands (Gossy 1995:87).

These observations by Freud have been under attack by theorists. Richard Webster (2004:[sp]), for instance, is of opinion that, in contemporary medicine, these Freudian symptoms of hysteria could be diagnosed as Tourette's syndrome, temporal lobe epilepsy, rheumatic, appendicitis, non-fluent aphasia, or a lesion in the language-area of the brain. According to Webster (2004:[sp]) arguments in favour of the success of Freud's diagnoses of hysteria have lost all reasonableness since several of his analyses were ineffective. Thus Freud's symptoms of hysteria are questioned even though he himself contended that "…hysteria is based entirely on physiologic modifications of the nervous system and its essence should be expressed in a formula which took account of the conditions of excitability in the different parts of the nervous system" (Freud 1888:41).

Notwithstanding these critiques, an interesting study by King's College London and the University of Melbourne supports Freud's findings (Gale 2014:[sp]). Researchers have found that trauma could possibly lead to the symptoms Freud described as hysteria, which is now known as conversion disorder. The research confirms that patients who have experienced trauma show different brain activity to patients who have not. The study is revolutionary in that it may lead to treatment of patients who have formerly been ignored or doubted. Participating patients all experienced traumatic events in the past. While patients are probed about these traumatic events, functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) is used to indicate the areas where brain activity centres. In patients with repressed memories, the left dorsolateral prefrontal cortex is activated (Gale 2014:[sp]). Other memories activate the hippocampus, the part of the brain that plays a role in formation of memories. According to the researchers this means that patients who repress their traumatic memories activate a different part of the brain in order to still the hippocampus. It could be seen as a defence mechanism to guard the patient from the stress related to remembering the traumatic memories. As with the symptoms of

hysteria described by Freud, the researchers noticed stroke-like symptoms which included paralysis and seizures. No physiological reason for the symptoms could be found as the areas of the body which were affected seemed to be normal. This led them to suspect that the symptoms are psychosomatic in nature and may confirm Freud's notions on hysteria (Gale 2014:[sp]).

During the early 1900s, cases of female hysteria started to decline. This decline has provided for much speculation and different opinions as to the reasons why (Du Preez 2004:53). Jon Stone, Russell Hewett, Alan Carson, Charles Warlow and Michael Sharpe (2008:12), for instance, claim that hysteria has not disappeared but has been and still is 'ignored' by medical practitioners on many occasions:

> The split between neurology and psychiatry, neurological disinterest in hysteria, physician anxiety over misdiagnosis, embarrassment at the excesses of psychological theory and the enthusiasm of patients with conversion symptoms to be told they have a neurological disease are all powerful reasons why hysteria has for so long been resided in a no-man's land between neurology and psychiatry.

I agree with Mark Micale's (2000:4) more plausible explanation. He argues that classical Victorian hysteria was a diagnosis used for many disorders or illnesses which doctors could not diagnose. This was due to inadequate medical knowledge with regards to psychological conditions and other illnesses. Today, many separate illnesses and conditions have been identified which were formerly diagnosed under the umbrella of hysteria (Micale 2000:4). Not all are mental conditions or illnesses. Two examples of illnesses that have *physiological* origins and were formerly diagnosed as hysteria, which originates *psychologically*, are epilepsy and syphilis. Both show a number of the many symptoms of hysteria, but are today easily diagnosed and treated (Micale 2000:4).

In 1980 the concept of hysterical neurosis disappeared from the *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders III* (DSM III) published by the American Psychiatric Association. According to North (2015:496-517), medical science now distinguishes between four main types of disorders formerly known as hysteria: somatization disorder, conversion disorder, dissociative disorder and borderline personality.

Thus, I argue that hysteria has not disappeared, but is now merely refined with regards to its causes, symptoms and treatment, and that patients who have been diagnosed with, for example, conversion disorder, suffer from a form of hysteria. Although all forms of hysteria do not originate in CSA, a person who has endured CSA could suffer from one of the modern day forms of hysteria. After investigating numerous sources, I submit that the unconscious stress

associated with repressed memories could in some cases result in symptoms associated with Freud's notion of hysteria; however, every case should be evaluated by merit and facts. For the purposes of this study, because of my focus on Freudian trauma theory, I refer to hysteria throughout this document.

In a Freudian sense, hysteria refers to an ungoverned expression of emotions in patients (Fineman 2003:12) and is a symptom of unconscious memories of CSA. *Janey Flew Away* provides a glimpse of Freud's theorisation of hysteria as formulated in *The Aetiology of Hysteria* (1896:106):

> Our view then is that infantile sexual experiences are the fundamental precondition for hysteria, are, as it were, the *disposition* for it and that it is they [the infantile sexual experiences] which create the hysterical symptoms, but that they [the infantile sexual experiences] do not do so immediately, but remain without effect to begin with and only exercise a pathogenic action later, when they [the infantile sexual experiences] have been aroused after puberty in the form of unconscious memories.

Freud (1896:154) further argues that "no hysterical symptom can arise from a real experience alone, but … in every case the memory of earlier experiences awakened in association to it plays a part in causing the symptom". In other words, according to Freud, hysteric symptoms only occur and manifest when an association triggers the traumatic memories.

In *Janey Flew Away* the victim becomes hysteric owing to the repression of the memories regarding CSA. It is a portrayal of the young woman's inner emotional processes as the repressed memories of CSA, in her case, result in hysteria. In *Studies on hysteria,* Freud and Breuer ([1893-1895] 1995:154), not unlike Charcot, asserted that hysteria manifests specifically in female patients, and they closely linked its occurrence to a woman's repressed memories of traumatic sexual experiences in childhood. Freud and Breuer argued that hysteria – and therefore trauma – originally indicated a connection between nervous illnesses of the "female sexual and reproductive organs" (Gray [sa]:[sp]). It was believed that hysteria is a symptom that originated from the female sexual and reproductive organs and from certain nervous behaviour. For Gray ([sa]:[sp]) this clarifies why hysteria has frequently been considered as a condition to which women are prone – it is founded on biology and is gender-orientated.[91]

[91] Kaplan (2005:27-28) and a whole cohort of feminist theorists argue that Freud's theory of hysteria is gendered and sexualised. According to Horney (1939:108) Freud saw women as restricted by their physiology. She claims that he emphasised their vital function in reproduction and viewed women's sexual development as deprived, founded on the realisation that women don't have male genitalia and were destined to hysteria and mental illness. Kaplan (2005:27) questions Freud and Breuer's (1895:154) assertion that hysteria manifests specifically in female patients while obsessive psychoses is particular to male patients. Freud's take on femaleness and critique on it has been discussed in Chapter Four and, for the sake of economy, is not repeated in this chapter.

Janey Flew Away is displayed on a small video screen which is installed in a peeping box which consists of two ceramic towers and trees constructed from paper (Figure 85). The video-animation contains two characters which are portrayed in two parts: the young girl who grew up to be the young woman. The first part portrays the young woman as a young girl, and in the second part the young woman relives the memory of CSA she experienced as a young girl. The video-animation commences with an orange pillow covering the screen. The young girl morphs from the pillow, as is shown in Figure 86. At first she is smiling, but as she moves closer to the centre of the screen, her facial expression seems anxious and scared (Figure 87). Figure 88 shows how she then morphs into a fairy-tale castle which, in Figure 89, tumbles into chaotic circular patterns, representing destruction. The chaotic patterns unite and form the shape of the young woman grinning vaguely (Figure 90). Seconds thereafter her face contorts and she anxiously bursts into tears and eventually her face changes into a silent scream. Her face then shrinks as if it is attempting to escape (Figure 91) and then disappears into a shape (Figure 92). This shape mimics the form of a neuron connected by a synapse in the nervous system. In Figure 93 a swan enters the scene and flies away. The video-animation ends with the legs of the young girl swinging back and forth, as seen in Figure 94.

The evolvement and sequence of the symptoms of hysteria are seen in Figure 95. The title of the artwork refers to the young woman's emotional turmoil as well as her connection with the young girl, whose alias is Janey. She unconsciously attempts to escape from the repressed memories by flying away, and thus she becomes detached from reality. The video-animation portrays certain aspects of Freud's notion of hysteria, in this case some of its symptoms: seizures, shortness of breath, anxiety and screaming.

Figure 85: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
The video-animation and ceramic sculptures installed in a peeping box.
Photograph by Carla Crafford.

Figure 86: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young girl morphs from a pillow.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 87: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young girl's facial expression seems anxious and scared.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 88: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young girl morphs into a fairy-tale castle.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 89: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The castle tumbles into chaotic circular patterns.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 90: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman grinning vaguely.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 91: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman's face contorts and she anxiously burst into tears. She utters a silent scream.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 92: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman's face morphs into a shape suggesting a synapse.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 93: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
A swan enters the scene.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 94: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The legs of the young girl swinging back and forth.
Video-still provided by the author.

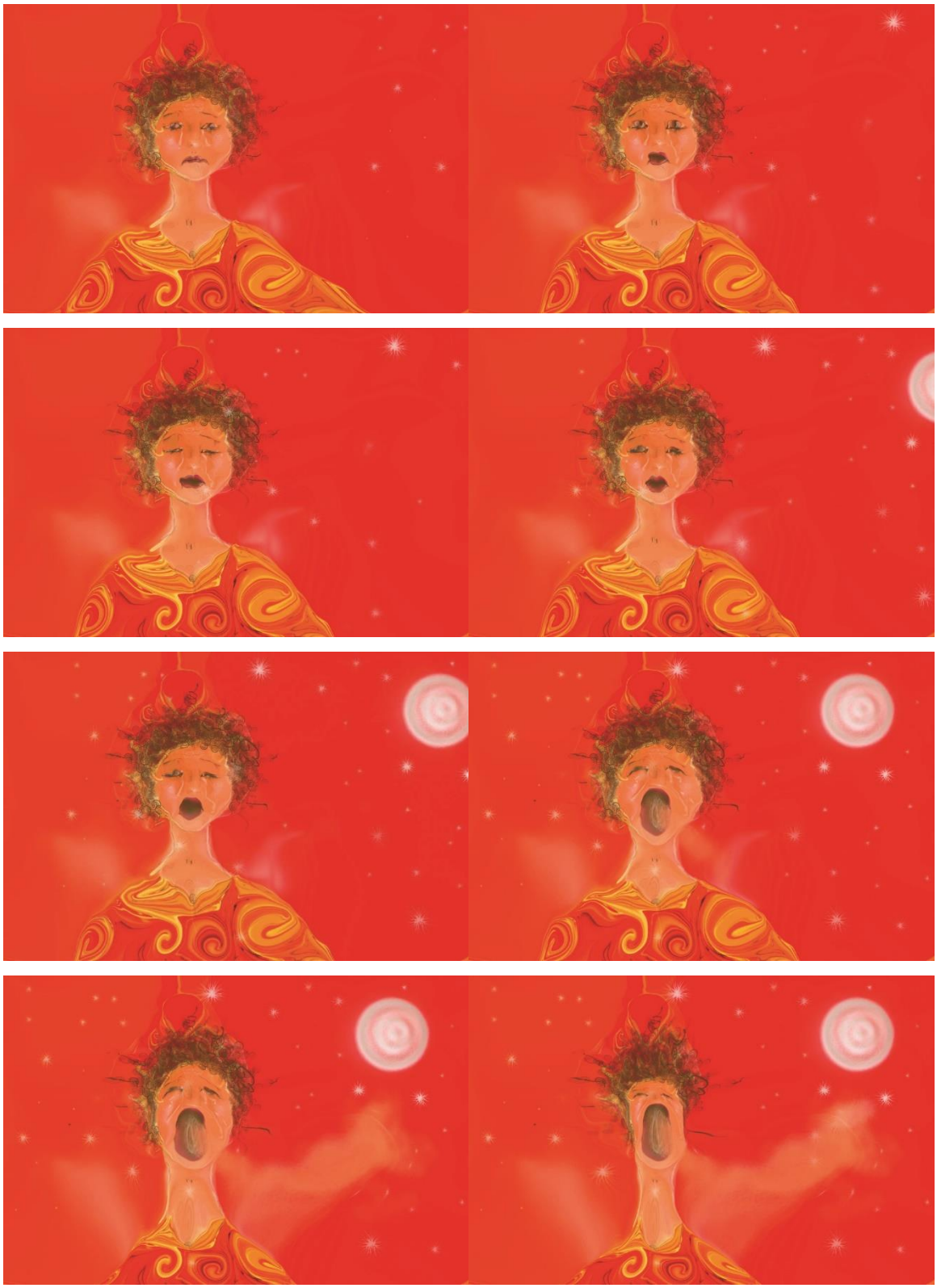

Figure 95: Nathani Lüneburg, *Janey Flew Away*, 2014.
Sequence of stills from video-animation.
The young woman's facial expressions show anxiety and screaming.
Video-still provided by the author.

Even though Freud's diagnoses of hysteria has been criticised widely, I align my artwork with his account of hysteria, especially with the fact that hysteria could indeed, in some cases, be a symptom of CSA. In *Janey Flew Away* the young woman shows definite signs of hysteria. In the first scenes the young woman has memories of herself as a young girl. In the next scene she has memories of a castle and then everything gets muddled and goes to pieces. She remembers some of her childhood experiences while other memories with regards to a traumatic event are repressed. When fragments of these memories appear, she becomes stressed and symptoms of hysteria occur, as illustrated in Figure 95 above. Her body moves spasmodically as if a seizure and shortness of breath are experienced. Her facial expressions show anxiety and screaming, but it could be noted that the screaming is silent, which indicates loss of voice as a symptom of hysteria. The silent scream also relates to Du Preez's (2004:47) argument that hysteria is a condition in which the patient's voice is silenced.

The suggestion that the symptoms of hysteria are portrayed in the video artwork is accentuated by the soundtrack, which is a composition of noise: female vocals are distorted, stretched and delayed, and produces a chaotic chorus. The combination of the haunting soundtrack and ghastly moving images in the video-animation portray the young woman's stress. This panic-stricken performance by her and the accompanying soundtrack recalls Paul Chodoff's (1982:390-405) postulation that hysterical behaviours include repulsive, noisy and expressive performances. The young woman's facial expression also recalls images of *The Scream* by Norwegian artist Edvard Munch, which is shown in Figure 96. According to Hina Azeem (2015:52) Munch struggled with mental health issues throughout his life, and this deteriorated toward the end of his life. She submits that the state of an individual's psyche influences the way in which that person expresses him- or herself. Although Munch may have had different intentions when creating *The Scream,* it is widely recognised that it may evoke feelings of anxiety and fear in the viewer. Azeem (2015:52) describes it as follows:

> The Scream is a widely recognised image, used commonly in popular culture as a symbol for fear and anxiety. At first glance, I felt that it symbolised depression. I could relate it to times of my life when I had felt hopeless and out of options. To me, the bridge represents the end of the road, with nowhere left to turn. The figures in the background represent the people in my life, at that moment just shadows around me. The central figure is almost alien-like. A unique form, it appears to be neither male nor female. The scream seems to take over the painting, distorting the figure, the sky and the water.

The young woman's silent scream portrays a breakdown – she feels as if she has reached the end of the road with nowhere to turn to. Anxiety and fear are palpable. She feels isolated; she may even have seen a physician about her symptoms of hysteria and has been ignored or

doubted. Just as she doesn't understand her symptoms, people surrounding her also do not understand it and retreat. Her situation seems to be hopeless.

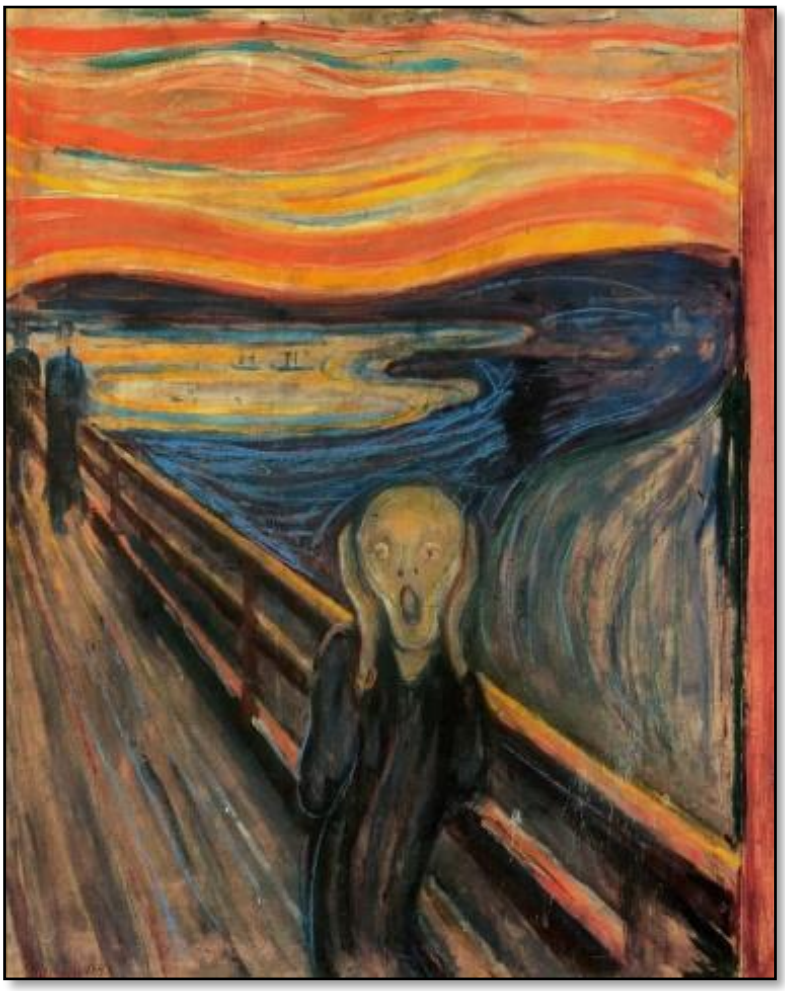

Figure 96: Edvard Munch, *The scream,* 1893.
Oil, tempera and pastel on cardboard; 91×73.5 cm.
Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo, Norway.
Source: http://totallyhistory.com/the-scream/

Janey Flew Away triggers questions with regard to the criticisms that have been lodged against the validity of Freud's notions of hysteria. It implies that there may be truth to some of his theories. It draws from Freud's seduction theory which maintains that hysteria is triggered by repressed memories of CSA. Gray ([sa]:[sp]) refers to Freud's conclusions of hysteria when stating that a sexual incident experienced in childhood is the only source of hysterical indicators. Freud insists that assaults by adults are the aetiology of hysteria and that this is contextual, not physiological or inherited.

5.3.2 Nachträglichkeit in "Dreaming of Those Things I Fear"

Nachträglichkeit is a Freudian concept applied in this study to more effectively understand the psychoanalytical implications of trauma. In a simplistic way, Nachträglichkeit can be described as "memory … reprinted, so to speak, in accordance with later experience" (Phillips 1994:33). Thus belated or delayed reaction arises from the interaction between two events: an earlier traumatic experience is recalled by a second traumatic event at a later stage in the trauma victim's life (Fletcher cited in Braddock & Lacewing 2007:230).[92]

Regardless of the influence of Nachträglichkeit on psychoanalysis in trauma studies, it has not received much consideration in the current arena of trauma studies (Bistoen, Vanheule & Craps 2014:668–687). The reason for this might be the difficulties regarding the translation of the term. According to Friedrich-Wilhelm Eickhoff (2006:1453–1469) varying translations include "deferred action", "*après-coup*", "afterwardsness", "retroactive temporality", "belatedness", "latency", and "retrospective attribution". Contrary to Eickhoff's statement that the different translations of Nachträglichkeit differ from each other, several theorists such as De Lauretis (2008:118) and Phillips (1994:33) argue that Nachträglichkeit and its translations are synonyms.

In his *Notes on Afterwardsness* (1999) Laplanche refers to various ways in which the past and the present affect each other in the time-based sphere of Nachträglichkeit. In relation to Freud, Laplanche (1999:222) argues that Freud's notion of "afterwardsness":

> …contains both great richness and great ambiguity between retrogressive and progressive directions. I want to account for this problem of the directional to and from by arguing that, right at the start, there is something that goes in the direction from the past to the future, and in the direction from the adult to the baby, which I call the implantation of the enigmatic message. This message is then retranslated following a temporal direction which is sometimes progressive and sometimes retrogressive.

Laplanche argues that Freud's Nachträglichkeit creates a fluctuating effect amid two events; he later on elaborates that Nachträglichkeit implies that there is a twofold directionality at play in the exploration of trauma (Laplance 1999:235-236).

[92] It is important to note the difference between Nachträglichkeit and screen memories, which is discussed in Chapter Three of this study. Nachträglichkeit describes deferred actions by which memories of traumatic events are triggered by another event. The memories are reorganised and surface during the second event. On the other hand, screen memories are recollections that shield repressed memories of traumatic experiences such as CSA. For a victim of CSA, these screen memories may conceal the traumatic event which occurred during childhood (Renn 2012:4).

An example of Nachträglichkeit is Freud's study of Emma. At the age of eight she was sexually molested by a shopkeeper. As a result she refused to enter a shop by herself as an adult (Freud [1886-1899] 1966:353-354). Laplanche (1985:41) maintains that, although the second event was a nonsexual occurrence, an ordinary part of everyday life, entering a shop awakened the memory of the initial experience. In the case of Emma, the young woman's previous experience echoes Freud's ([1895] 1975:354) claim that the second event "aroused what it was certainly not able to at the time, a *sexual release*, which was transformed into anxiety". Freud ([1895] 1975:356) explains that "the memory arouses an affect which it did not give rise to as an experience, because the changes brought about by puberty have permitted a different understanding of the memory". Thus Freud ([1886-1899] 1966:356) explains that in Emma's case, memory does not awaken a change in the experience of the sexual assault, but a change triggered by puberty. He elaborates that repressed memories have only become traumatic through deferred action *(nachträglich*) and identifies that the cause of this situation "… is the retardation of puberty as compared with the rest of the individual's development" (Freud 1895:356). This change prompted a different understanding of what was remembered. Here Freud's ([1886-1899] 1966:356) use of nachträglich makes it clear that Emma's traumatic memories were repressed and only manifested later on with the occurrence of the second event.

Fletcher (2013:59-88) draws from the case of Emma when he explains that Nachträglichkeit relies on memory to activate a sexual effect which was absent in the first traumatic experience, leading to a "defensive repression". This indicates that repression is a defence mechanism used with the intention of avoiding the anxiety triggered by irrational impulses. In the case of Emma these impulses originate from sexual trauma.

Nachträglichkeit is evident in my video artwork *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear.* In this particular artwork, a delayed reaction to a previous traumatic experience is evident. The traumatic memories regarding this first event are triggered by a later event. This animation was created without much planning and was an act of pure intuition. Traces of memories were uncovered as the creation process developed, and at that time I was not aware of the meaning of the images that appeared. After completing the artwork, the story told by the language of automatism used during the creation process, is mysteriously coherent. The narrative is disturbing and after completion, I realised that use of the Liquify tool facilitated and eased automatic drawing, which unlocked traumatic memories. My hand on the computer mouse acts as an extension of the unconscious. The dream-like images are produced through the use of free association, and by pulling and dragging pixels using liquification, images spontaneously emerge from the unconscious.

Dreaming of Those Things I Fear is a large-scale projected video-animation which commences with a white film covering the screen. The opacity of this white film fades and unfolds into a scene presenting the young woman sitting by a window with a white curtain which moves slightly as the wind enters through the window (Figure 97). The young woman's heartbeat is fast and an awareness of anxiety rises as she passes into a deep sleep. Next the background is replaced with a green-orange colour scheme. The young woman stays in the same position (Figure 98). Figure 99 shows a giraffe passing through the new scene and the white curtain morphs into a transparent circular shape which resembles a cloth (Figure 100). At the same time a tree emerges from the young woman's arm, as demonstrated in Figure 101. Figure 102 shows the young woman's face enclosed by the transparent cloth and her torso changes into a forest as her head transforms into a tree. Then the young woman again becomes the young girl. The forest transforms by liquifying into a green dress belonging to the young girl, while the background of the scene transforms into visuals of trees from a lower angle, as shown in Figure 103. Figure 104 portrays the young girl falling from the sky and uttering a silent scream. The young girl again morphs into the young woman who appears through the branches, flying and then falling, as indicated in Figure 105. In the end the young woman meets a man. They appear to be in love, hold hands and then suddenly depart separately, as seen in Figures 106 and 107. Figure 108 shows the young woman morphing into a mermaid and then into a heart shape (Figure 109). Another image of the young woman appears. The heart shape moves towards this image and embeds in her body. She is now surrounded by black. A rabbit mask, as seen in Figure 110, covers her face and eventually disappears. The young woman screams and the video-animation ends.

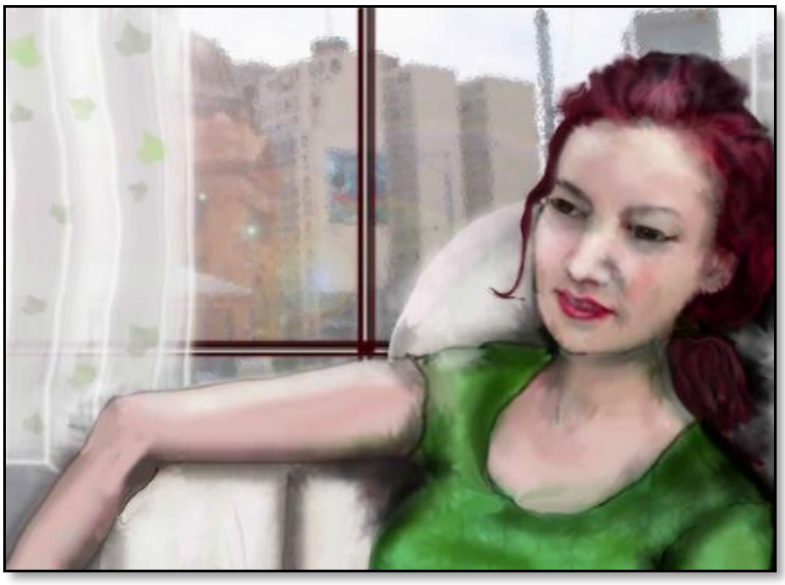

Figure 97: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman sitting by a window.
Video-still provided by the author.

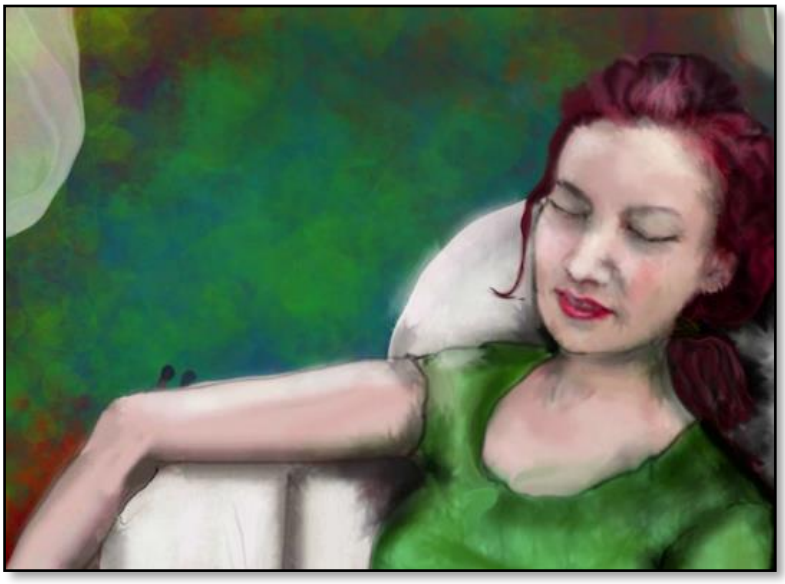

Figure 98: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The background is replaced with a green-orange colour scheme.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 99: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
A giraffe passes through the scene.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 100: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The white curtain morphs into a transparent circular shape which resembles a cloth.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 101: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The white cloth covers the young woman's face and a tree emerges from her arm.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 102: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman's torso changes into a forest.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 103: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The forest transforms into a green dress belonging to the young girl.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 104: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young girl falls from the sky and utters a silent scream.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 105: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman appears and falls through the branches.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 106: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman meets a male.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 107: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman and male depart separately.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 108: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young woman morphs into a mermaid.
Video-still provided by the author.

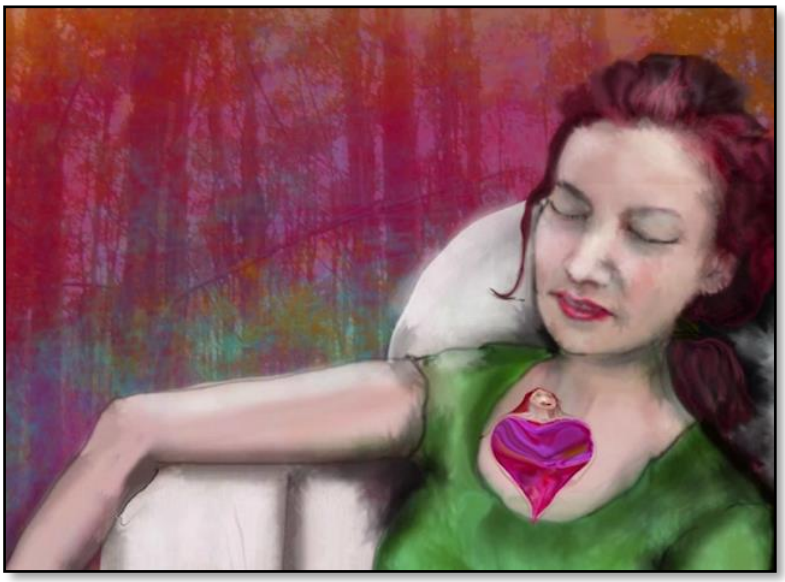

Figure 109: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The heart shape moves towards the young sleeping woman.
Video-still provided by the author.

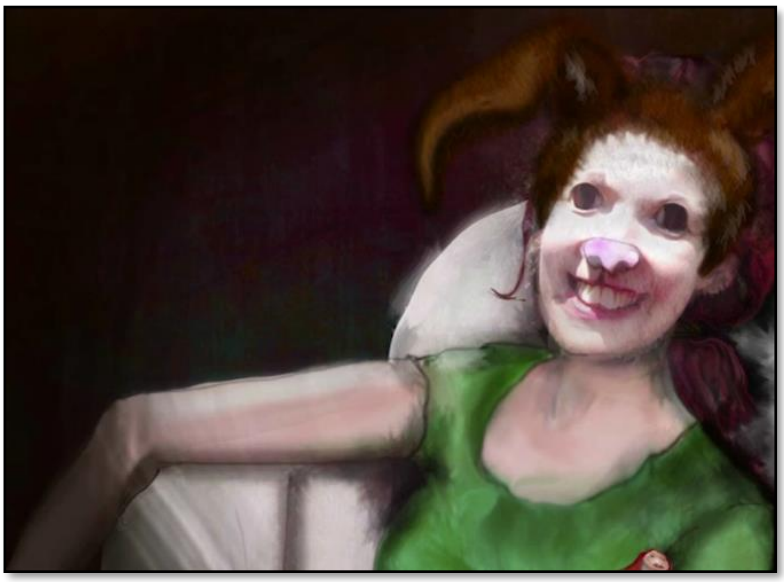

Figure 110: Nathani Lüneburg, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
A rabbit mask covers the young woman's face.
Video-still provided by the author.

The title of the artwork, *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear,* refers to a dream with upsetting content and its analysis is based on repressed traumatic memories surfacing in the unconscious. It portrays both the young woman and young girl, who is the same person in different stages of life. The artwork refers to a dream consisting of fragments of memories of CSA and the belated reaction to it. The reaction is triggered by a second event which is

subconsciously associated with the first. The video-animation consists of three parts or events which take place in a dream: 1) the young woman falling into a deep sleep, transforming into a forest and then into the young girl tumbling, reflecting pictorial symbols denoting the experience of CSA; 2) the young girl transforming into the young woman experiencing an association which triggers a memory of CSA; and 3) the young woman awakening from her dream, remembering the event of sexual abuse which she experienced as a young girl.

In *Sexuality in the aetiology of the neuroses* Freud (1898:511-512) remarks that the childhood sexual experience has a marginal effect at the moment it happens. He states further that "…much more important is the subsequent (nachträglich) effect, which can only appear at later stages of maturity. This following effect (nachträglich) is essentially grounded on the psychic traces left by the childhood sexual experience". Thus Nachträglichkeit triggers the memory and not the event. This is reflected in *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear* through the representation of the memory of the traumatic event in childhood through symbols, which include the cloth, the trees, the young girl and woman falling, the mermaid, the heart shape and the rabbit mask. These symbols unfold after the opening scene in which she passes into a deep sleep and represent fragments of memories of the first traumatic event which happened in childhood. It illustrates how the young girl becomes submissive and loses power over her body and mind when the CSA occurs. A later event then triggers these repressed memories.

The visualisation in *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear* draws from the treatment of Katharina, an eighteen year old patient of Freud, who found it hard to recall memories of her father sexually abusing her. These memories were experienced as traumatic only in later years (Freud & Breuer [1895] 2001:131). The video-animation presents a similar situation to that of Katherina's in the sense that the first traumatic event is triggered and recalled at a later point in life when sexual maturity has been reached. In the scene where the young woman meets a young man, she at first seems happy and content as the male figure touches her hand. At that moment she remembers and realises what happened to her during childhood and automatically fears romantic involvement with the young man. According to Dennis Thompson ([sa]:[sp]), romantic relationships require a great deal of closeness. A victim of CSA cannot tolerate sexual intimacy of a more permanent nature, even later on in life when she has found a loving, reliable partner. As a result of CSA the victim does not trust people and believes well-being and safety to be imaginary. As the young man in the video-animation exits the scene, the young woman's facial expression is quickly replaced with sadness and angst. The young woman changes into a mermaid. The reference to a mermaid symbolises how the young girl was sexually molested as a child. This leads to a fear of sex and doubting of her femininity.

Following the symbol of the mermaid, the young woman further transforms into the shape of a heart which is formed from all the previous visual symbols. The heart, as the final symbol in the video-animation, indicates that the first traumatic event, which was the CSA, is recalled by the second event, which is the encounter with the male figure. The heart shape moves towards the young woman's chest and symbolises unification of the events. Upon awakening, the young woman shows signs of the emotions she felt during and after the first traumatic event, which is a compulsive feeling of fear. This is portrayed through the darkened background of the scene as well as the contorting, frightful rabbit mask covering her face. The rabbit motif also indicates the vulnerability of the young woman and the mask attempts to disguise her identity as a victim of CSA.

5.3.3 Trauma-dreams in "Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities"

Traumatic dreams trigger and provoke anxiety which causes traumatic neurosis or PTSD in the dreamer (Freud 1920:32).[93] These dreams are often repeated and are ineffective efforts to fulfil wishes by dreaming. It results in the formation of nightmares. Dreams of traumatic events could cause severe anxiety. In *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities* the fear the young girl experienced at the actual time of the CSA is later on experienced in the young woman's dream. Significantly, Freud (1900:580) suggests that the content of a dream is retrieved from the unconscious, and that the unconscious skilfully prevents the content to move to the conscious when the dream turns traumatically violent or troublesome. In the artwork the dream ends abruptly which suggests that the dreamer has woken up. This portrays the ability of the unconscious to end the dream before further anxiety occurs.

Hartmann (1998:64) refers to nightmares or trauma-dreams as dreams causing severe anxiety. After a traumatic event, dreams sometimes occur as nightmares which usually end in an anxious emotional state. It is argued that fear and anxiety seem to be primarily experienced in and through nightmares (Hartmann 1998:64). According to the Sexual Assault Centre of Waterloo Region (2016:[sp]), nightmares are invasive thoughts – unforeseen and undesirable – and victims of CSA normally experience two kinds of nightmares. The first offers a realistic version of the CSA; the other presents CSA in a symbolic way, exposing themes of intrusion, vulnerability, violence and danger. The first seems to occur shortly after the event of CSA, while the second appears sometime after. Nightmares are different to "sleep terrors, narcolepsy, sleep panic attacks, and other awakenings" (Agargun, Kara, Özer, Selvi, Kiran &

[93] Freud's fascination with dreams and the role they play in trauma and the repression of traumatic memories, and the value thereof with regards to therapy has been discussed in section 1.1.6 as well as throughout the study where applicable. It is thus evident that dreams play a significant role in my artworks as well as Freud's trauma theories. In this section reference is made to the significance of trauma-dreams.

Kiran 2003:[sp]). They normally happen later at night during the rapid eye movement (REM) phase of sleep. Nightmares cause intense dream images and anxious awakenings, and sometimes the traumatic event is experienced in detail in the dream. It may also lead to psychological suffering (Agargun *et al* 2003:[sp]) and result in reoccurring nightmares (Nielsen & Zadra 2000:753-772).

Freud referred to the word 'nightmare' only twice in *The interpretation of dreams* (Freud [1899] 2006:94,139; 1900:34) and argues that it comprises disturbing emotions linked to trauma and recurrences of traumatic events. His closest explanation of nightmares is that they are the continuous dreams of emotional breakdown (Freud 1920:32). According to Robin Truda (2007:[sp]), nightmares within Freudian dream theory can be understood as dreams which are characterised by great levels of aggressive and intimidating emotions and recurrences of traumatic acts and themes. These nightmares are usually related to combats, tragedies, wounds, abuses, and distortions of childhood events that the dreamer experienced as trauma. A person who has suffered a great shock or serious psychological trauma frequently returns to his or her traumatic dreams, which entails ascending into the unconscious to re-experience the traumatic event (Truda 2007:[sp]).

Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities portrays a trauma-dream. This large-scale projected video-animation commences with a young girl dressed in a diving bell and a pink jacket (Figure 111). An antique filming camera is mounted on the diving bell and she travels through a galaxy evoking an image of outer space. The first scene portraying the galaxy is shown in Figure 112. While she tumbles through a non-place devoid of gravity, she encounters various creatures as shown in the sequence of images in Figure 113. In Figures 114 to 116 a nightmarish scenario is visualised through continuous falling, being surrounded by dangerous and intimidating beings, through being hunted by outlandish creatures and swallowed and eaten alive by these creatures. *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities* reflects an attempt to remember and acknowledge traumatic events through a dream. It presents an isolated landscape that evokes the non-place which conveys feelings of abandonment. In this context 'non-place' refers to a place of dreams and imagination where one is half awake and half asleep. It is described by Pessoa (2003:417) as a place where the dreamer falls into a lucid, deeply immaterial stupor – a dream which is a shadow of a dream. The presence of creatures in the sequence involving the young girl floating and falling signals the unrestrained and unpredictable world of dreams. The visual structure of images is made bizarre through the camera's selective vision. The symbols suggest a message from the unconscious. It recounts the trauma-dreams of the young woman dreaming of herself as a young girl.

Figure 111: Nathani Lüneburg, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young girl dressed in a diving bell and a pink jacket.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 112: Nathani Lüneburg, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
An image of outer space.
Video-still provided by the author.

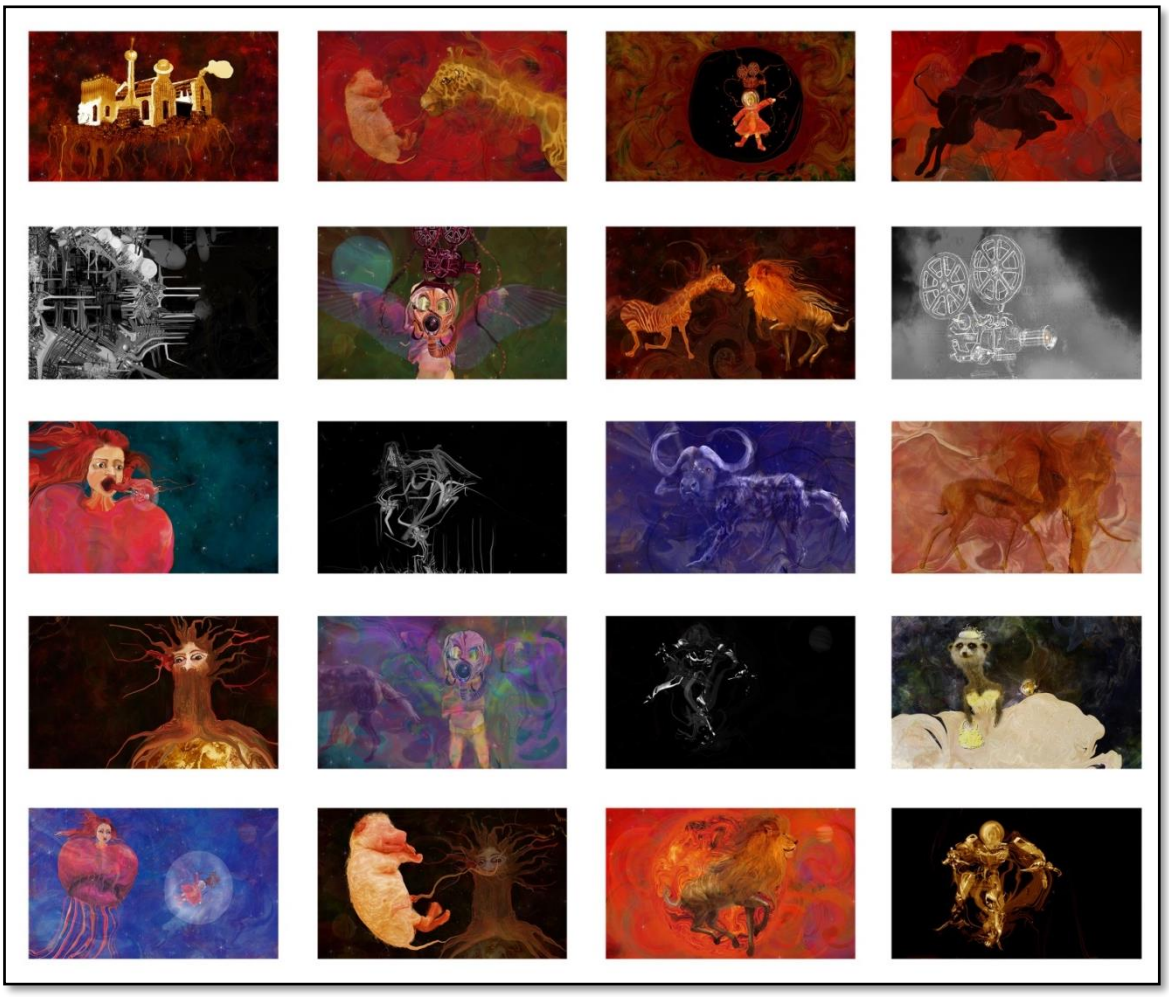

Figure 113: Nathani Lüneburg, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*, 2014.
A sequence of video-stills from video-animation.
The galaxy and its creatures.
Video-stills provided by the author.

Figure 114: Nathani Lüneburg, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young girl falls continuously through the galaxy.
Video-still provided by the author.

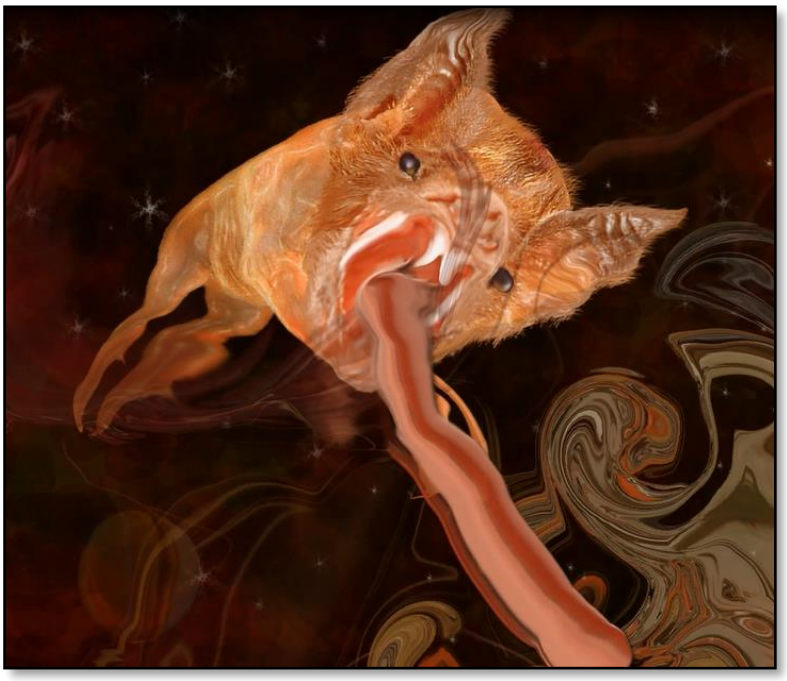

Figure 115: Nathani Lüneburg, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
A dangerous and intimidating being.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 116: Nathani Lüneburg, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
A dangerous and intimidating being.
Video-still provided by the author.

The title of the artwork, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities,* presents the words 'memory' and 'history' written in reverse. It refers to traumatic memories surfacing in the young woman's dream state as well as the actual traumatic event which took place during the history of her life. Blight (2002:[sp]) defines history and memory as two separate concepts of the same past, strangely interwoven. According to Bernard Bailyn (2001:245-252) history consists of

facts and is dependent on structure, while personal memory entails personal experiences and a person's reaction to it. He argues that memory's "relation to the past is an embrace ultimately emotional, not intellectual" (Bailyn 2001: 245-252). For Bailyn, then, memory is only emotional and history is intellectual. Greene (2004:6), on the other hand, agrees with W. Walter Menninger's (1994:97) comment that "history is a record of present beliefs and wishes, not a replica of the past". Accordingly, history is not just a factual representation of past events but includes emotions and beliefs which are connected to personal sentiment. Menninger (1994:97) furthermore suggests that the process of remembering entails reconstruction of "bits of past experiences to describe the present state". As a result one may deduce that memory is constructed from history and history is constructed from memory. The two are intricately intertwined. This is resonated in the video-animation since the young girl represents both the history of the traumatic event as well as her memories of it.

According to neurological studies by Payne and Nadel (2004:671) memories arise in dreams through a connection between sleep, dreams and memory – they argue that the hormone Cortisol affects the brain structures involved in memory. The concentration of Cortisol intensifies as the sleep pattern develops, thus the memory centre of the brain is active during sleep and dreaming. The video-animation presents a series of disjointed memories of CSA remembered through the dream. According to Randle (2008:[sp]) it is common for memories of sexual abuse to appear in dreams. These memories may be repressed since the victim found it difficult to cope with the CSA at the time the event occurred. Memories may be mentally obstructed through unconscious defence mechanisms, such as repression. These defence mechanisms are driven by censors which block the network between the conscious and the subconscious and restrain angst-generating memories from incoming conscious memories (Randle 2008:[sp]). The defence mechanisms are raised, leaving a dream-censor to repress the unconscious memories of traumatic events (Freud 1900:311). Since the information in the unconscious is stored in an illogical and disorderly fashion, as portrayed in *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities,* the dream censor performs an action which deliberately hides logical content. Censorship of dreams refers to the distortion of dreams to the point that they cannot be understood. If a person can only recall certain fragments of a dream it indicates that there are parts that are being censored. Through censoring, the real meaning of the dream is partly concealed. This censor is active during waking hours and prevents repressed memories stored in the unconscious mind from overwhelming the conscious mind (Freud [1899] 2006:294-296). This explains why images in dreams are not what they seem to be, but rather symbols with deeper meaning which need to be interpreted. This may clarify why a person may not have any conscious memory of the traumatic CSA (Randle 2008:[sp]).

The creatures portrayed in *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities* are cryptic visual codes symbolising fragments of traumatic memories of CSA. These symbols take different forms and include creatures such as an antelope-lion hybrid, a pink jellyfish with the head of the young woman, a giraffe-zebra hybrid, a bat, a dog embryo, a meerkat dressed in a wedding gown, a buffalo-wild dog hybrid and a crocodile with the head of the young woman. The young girl is faced by these creatures who time and again consume her. This is visualised in Figures 117 to 119 through reoccurring tongues penetrating and swallowing her body. The presence of the creatures accentuates the young girl's vulnerability and victimisation. She is shown to be anxious and frightened but also determined to banish the creatures from the galaxy. This becomes apparent in Figure 120 where she destroys the bat with a white liquid squirting from her arm.

Figure 117: Nathani Lüneburg, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
Reoccurring tongues penetrating and swallowing the young girl's body.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 118: Nathani Lüneburg, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
Reoccurring tongues penetrating and swallowing the young girl's body.
Video-still provided by the author.

Figure 119: Nathani Lüneburg, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
Reoccurring tongues penetrating and swallowing the young girl's body.
Video-still provided by the author.

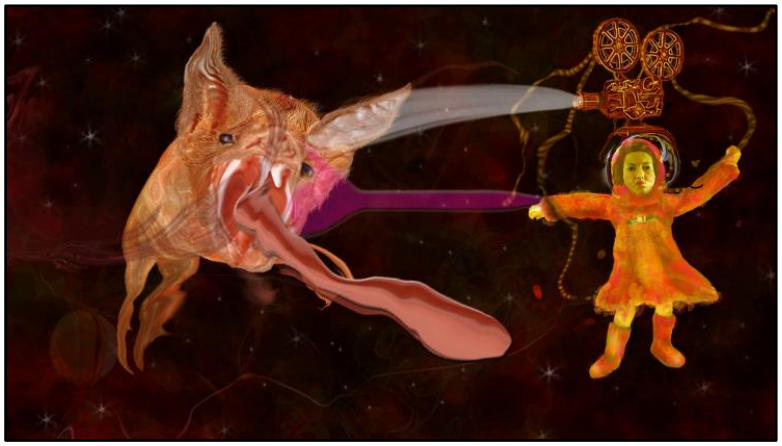

Figure 120: Nathani Lüneburg, *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*, 2014.
Video-still from video-animation.
The young girl destroys the bat with a white liquid squirting from her arm.
Video-still provided by the author.

Freud (1900:578) argues that there is no erasure of memories or emotion in the unconscious. An interesting observation is the correlation between this fact and the process of creation of the artworks. I employ a computer to create the digital stop-frame animations. Although I delete some images and information which are not needed at the time, they are still stored and available on the hard drive. A computer expert could easily retrieve these images if needed. Just so, the repressed memories are not destroyed, but only stored and could be retrieved again.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, Freud's theories on seduction, Nachträglichkeit and trauma-dreams are employed as a starting point from which to explain repression of traumatic memories with regards to CSA. In the process I refer to hysteria caused by repression of traumatic memories and the manifestation of repressed memories in trauma-dreams. These repressed memories could also be triggered by a later, sometimes unrelated event.

By applying the theories regarding CSA to and analysing *Janey Flew Away, Dreaming of Those Things I Fear* and *Yrotsih & Yormem's galaxy of impossibilities* the unique capabilities of digital stop-frame animation to portray trauma and its consequences are illustrated. The digital creation process creates and mimics the fragmented nature of the repressed memories of CSA. By nature a digital stop-frame animation is a moving, evolving artwork in which different spaces and times can be portrayed consecutively, as in *Janey Flew Away,* or even simultaneously, as illustrated in *Dreaming of Those Things I Fear,* for example. In the latter the artwork portrays the time and space in which the young woman is sleeping as well as the time

and space in which the dream takes place. It could even be argued that it also portrays the time and space in which the later event, which triggered memories with regards to the earlier traumatic event, took place.

In all of the mentioned artworks, personal symbols play an important role. These symbols, which are visually portrayed in the works, imitate the fragmentary nature of traumatic memories. It also illustrates how the unconscious mind protects the conscious by employing clever defence mechanisms.

Although many aspects of Freud's theories and arguments are widely criticised and seem to be outdated and inadequate, many more do shed light on the very complex occurrence of CSA and its far-reaching psychological consequences. Other theorists' arguments with regards to Freudian theory are hugely helpful in understanding his notions. I illustrate that CSA and its after-effects have, for many centuries, been either ignored or grossly misunderstood – as did Freud in a certain sense. Many efforts have been made during the past few decades to critically rethink his theories, and still this field is not fully understood. It is obvious that the consequences of CSA reach far into adulthood and are deeper and darker than will ever be fully comprehended.

CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

6.1 Digital stop-frame animation as medium to portray traumatic memories

Loss focuses on the way traumatic memories are closely intertwined with repression, loss and CSA and suggests how past traumatic events fade into the distant psyche of the mind, concealed in the unconscious through the process of repression. The digital stop-frame animations forming part of *Loss* were created by employing the Adobe Photoshop Liquify tool. This tool enables the artist to create frames which flow into each other to create a sequence of frames creating a video. The action of partly erasing the previous frame and adding detail to the next to form a new frame is symbolic of the processing of traumatic memories by the brain's memory systems, which is quite complicated. Through layering each image, a video-animation is revealed frame by frame and this process of revelation could be interpreted as layers of memories and the traces of the past being unlocked and excavated through the use of free association. Free association is a therapeutic process which was employed by Freud during psychoanalysis. It is still used by therapists today. By using the method of automatism each image in a video-animation is created without any planning or pre-conceptualisation. Thus this method provides unique ways to assist in the unlocking of traumatic memories, which are hidden in the unconscious, and could be described as an "intuitive creative process". Through the use of free association obsessional reference is made to my own image, which points to self-portraiture. The incorporation of self-portraiture is a means whereby I acknowledge personal trauma, attempting to unravel and discover it in a way I can comprehend. This is achieved by analysing the digital-stop-frame animations retrospectively through a critical analysis of Freudian trauma theories.

Freud has acknowledged that memories of traumatic events, caused by experiences such as CSA, could cause repression, anxiety, screen memories, hysteria, mourning and melancholia and that these could manifest through the complex processes of Nachträglichkeit and trauma-dreams. His notion of loss, with reference to mourning and melancholia, are exemplified in the personal interpretation of miscarriage and the repressed memories thereof. Although he did not refer to miscarriage as a reason for trauma, and although I criticise his archaic notions on femaleness, I do apply his theories to miscarriage. Digital stop-frame animation, as a form of video art, assist in unlocking repressed memories through the actions of looping, de-layering and the repetition of jumpiness of frames which suggests the ever-lasting effect of melancholia. The repressed memories could also be unlocked through the reoccurring traumatic memories, which for some trauma victims such as myself, surface in the conscious and quickly re-enters

the unconscious in a “jumpy”, fragmented fashion. Freud’s theories of CSA resulting in hysteria and trauma-dreams are emphasised and represented in digital stop-frame animations by means of constant expression of the chaotic disorder of traumatic memories. Despite criticism, the Freudian analysis of the selected digital stop-frame animations strongly reflects Freudian trauma theories which suit these video-animations in an organic and natural way. Although the artworks developed through automatic free association, the application of Freudian analysis gives them meaning.

6.2. Contribution to art

The main contribution of this study is the introduction and investigation of digital stop-frame animation as a unique medium to portray traumatic memories and to comment on trauma theories. The study is based on trauma theories grounded in empirical information from theorists such as Van der Kolk, Caruth, Laplanche, Masson and Leys, but mainly Freud. Trauma theories map the relationship between the victim and his or her trauma and mechanisms of the unconscious to repress traumatic memories. It establishes links between concepts such as traumatic memories, loss and CSA and the process of portraying these through digital stop-frame animation. It visually explains how trauma victims repress traumatic memories in the unconscious and how these can be unlocked. In addition, this study reveals that it is possible to portray Freudian and contemporary trauma theories through digital stop-frame animation, especially through its unique abilities to layer, peel and reconstruct images of memories through digital manipulation.

The second contribution is the suggestion that video art employs an artistic language well-suited to voice, self-portraiture and traumatic memories, which ultimately contributes to the forming of the self. By employing automatism and free association, I have found, upon reflection, that this specific medium and the art-making process are therapeutic and could assist in the unlocking of traumatic memories. Video art preserves historical material and consequently plays a part in the constructing of memory, whether collective or personal. It could thus place the artist’s present life in context with his or her past and provide a better understanding of a possible future and the factors which shape it. But it is not only the artist who is affected by the artworks. *Loss* illustrates how a video-installation could link a certain time and space in which the *viewer*, while meandering from projection to projection, becomes part of the video-installation itself. I suggest that the installation could even possibly present a starting point from which the viewer’s own trauma can be explored as the artist’s portrayal of traumatic memories may evoke images of the viewer’s repressed memories.

Although Freud is known as the father of psychoanalysis, some of his theories are, though in many ways still relevant, controversial and even unacceptable in today's modern society. These theories need to be applied and their relevance critically assessed. The third contribution of this study is to illustrate how the unique qualities of the video artworks forming part of *Loss* renders the video-installation a capable starting point from which to critically investigate Freudian trauma theories. Digital stop-frame animation is an ideal medium to create movement and dream worlds in which chaotic traumatic memories surface in a surrealistic way. Freud is to this day known not only as the father of psychoanalysis, but also patron saint of Surrealism and the artworks forming part of *Loss* have a certain surrealistic character. Every single one of the seventeen artworks portray loss – loss of innocence, loss of love objects, loss of femaleness and even, in a certain sense, temporary loss of sanity and rational thought. In many cases trauma is a consequence of loss, and traumatic memories are a consequence of trauma. These traumatic memories are not always processed consciously, but are repressed in the unconscious. Repressed memories fester in the unconscious and surface sporadically and illogically, making no sense. Freud developed and employed certain trauma theories which attempts to explain traumatic memories and the body's and mind's reaction to it.

Fourthly, this study illustrates and critically engages with certain Freudian trauma theories by using digital stop-frame animations portraying trauma. Repression of traumatic memories and screen memories are represented in the digital stop-frame animations which portray the unconscious through symbols and cryptic codes. The artworks under discussion offer a new visualisation of Freud's repression theory and render it as a defensive process that conceals distressing memories and emotions. Through the use of digital stop-frame animations the trauma victim's efforts to repress traumatic memories are portrayed by employing peculiar symbols and layering of the images in the artworks. Layering, assembling and liquification of images points out "screening" processes of damaging memories. The various image layers represent defensive shields which repress these memories.

A fifth crucial contribution is to employ certain video animations to illustrate which of Freud's theories with regards to mourning and melancholia could still be relevant today. More importantly, I conclude that I strongly disagree with some of them, particularly Freud's revealed misconceptions with regards to femaleness and women's psychological response to trauma and loss. Although these misconceptions of woman- and motherhood render some of his theories unsuitable, others are employed to successfully explain certain responses to mourning and melancholia. Freud does not name miscarriage specifically as a reason for mourning and melancholia, but I refer to Pines's works, amongst others, to highlight the fact that miscarriage could indeed lead to psychological trauma. The artworks portrayed in Chapter

Four visualise the emotions concerning mourning and melancholia by concentrating on visual codes which represent loss by miscarriage and death and the loss of a childhood friend. Loss by of miscarriage is visually presented through digital stop-frame animation by transforming images such as a woman's body into a pregnant form by means of symbols such as sonar images, fluid umbilical cords and decomposing female reproductive organs. It is then viciously torn apart by dominant movements achieved through the application of the Liquify tool, portraying loss of a baby. To portray the loss, a morphing technique is used to signify repression of the memories about the traumatic loss, but likewise the festering of such a memory in the unconscious.

The final contribution of this study is to show how Freudian trauma theories with regards to CSA are visualised and criticised through the artworks. In the framework of a sexual act forced on a young child without him or her provoking such an act, the digital stop-frame animations indicate that hysteria might occur, especially after sexual abuse in infancy. This is visualised through the liquifying technique where the young woman morphs into shapes representing bodily symptoms of hysteria. Recurring memories of the cruelty are predominantly repressed and do not surface consciously, but in the unconscious.

6.3 Limitations of the current work

For the sake of economy, the investigation and findings of the study are based on a limited number of Freudian and other trauma theories. I selected only seven Freudian theories based on trauma, which is his theories regarding repression, screen memories, mourning and melancholia, hysteria, Nachträglichkeit, and trauma-dreams. Contemporary trauma theory is limited to those theorists who focus specifically on personal trauma regarding traumatic memories, loss in the form of mourning and melancholia and CSA. Thus, the outcomes of the are based on a small model and therefore not generalisable across the broader scope of trauma theory. In reaction to this, it should be emphasised that it was not the aim of this study to conduct an extensive Freudian-based analysis encompassing his wider scope of psychoanalytic theories such as the unconscious mind, the psyche, defence mechanisms such as denial, projection, displacement, regression and sublimation, psycho-sexual stages or dream analysis. Instead, an applicable theory approach is used to visually and theoretically explain the phenomenon of a trauma victim's memories, repressed or recovered, through digital stop-frame animation.

A second limitation in the research is a feminist analysis of the artworks. Although the research is conducted from a female point of view and does not continuously agree with all of Freud's

theories, it does not make use of a feminist theoretical framework in terms of rejecting Freud's theories. It rather focuses on how Freud's trauma theories organically relate to the artworks by using applicable theories.

The fact that the study as a PLR-project refers only to my own digital stop-frame animations could also be seen as a limitation. Although this study mentions various video artworks that consist of life-action recordings which produce works relating to trauma, my artworks are the only digital stop-frame animations available. Furthermore, this study specifically deals with selected trauma theories by Freud and others. No literature or visual examples are available for digital stop-frame animations, and thus no comparison could be drawn with other works of art employing the same medium. Another limitation is the fact that viewers of the video-installation might misinterpret the theme of the artworks and might not experience it as traumatic, or within a Freudian framework. The standing phrase that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, could very well apply to art. Since art can be viewed from a subjective point of view, the author only interprets the work according to his or her own understanding of Freudian trauma and there may arise more than one theme when viewing the works. Consequently, the results of analysing the artworks may not be generalisable to personal trauma only.

Analysis of my artworks exclusively might appear to be a limitation, especially since I describe my technique as part of the wider spectrum of video art. However, this study could be used as a model to further investigate other artworks, especially animation within the scope of video art. Despite these limitations, this study attempts to identify theories contributing to personal trauma and the conclusions and recommendations should be viewed against these limitations.

6.4 Future Work

The research that has been undertaken for this thesis stresses several themes on which further research could be conducted. This study mentions several points where information is not obtainable – in both the fields of video art and trauma. Although some of these are addressed by the research in this thesis, others are "missing in action". In particular, there is an overall lack of research pertaining to digital stop-frame animation. Future studies might, for example, look at digital stop-frame animation as a powerful technique to portray not only personal trauma, but also collective trauma and other forms of suffering and pain. As already mentioned, this study investigates and consequently illustrates how digital stop-frame animation generates narratives of personal traumatic memories through the application of the Liquify tool. It presents the importance of layering, which relate to the repression of traumatic memories since the mind, according to Freud, consists of various layers such as the conscious, preconscious

and unconscious. Since I found that the process of layering is important in the visualisation of trauma, further investigation in layering methods such as stacking, merging and masking which references Freudian notions of the layers of the mind, could be conducted.

Another area where information is lacking is extensive video artworks with specific focus on the portrayal of CSA. Although some video artworks on this concept do exist, expansive visualisation of CSA is lacking. Since video as an art medium is still young, it does not feature the trauma related to CSA as extensively as it is referenced in more traditional art practices such as painting. Further investigation could include research questions such as: How are CSA portrayed in contemporary video artworks and does it visually increases the awareness of such? Do existing video artworks improve the representation of the characteristics of trauma related to CSA? Do existing video artworks present other Freudian themes of CSA such as the Oedipal complex or the Freudian cover-up? This would help to confirm the extent of visual associations which may result from trauma. The degree to which the representation of CSA and its related trauma determines the field of video art may also be investigated, and may give an indication of how realistic existing trauma theory may be.

Another recommendation for further studies is to analyse video artworks related to traumatic memory, loss and CSA from a feminist perspective, rejecting Freud's seduction theory. Feminists have played an immense role in emphasising and supporting women and children in the area of sexual abuse. There is an extended past of child/adult sexual relations. The role of feminists in addressing the issue of CSA and related traumas, could be investigated.

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