The Photographic Representation of Light and Space as Medium and Metaphor

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This exegesis is presented in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Signed statement of originality

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Acknowledgements

I extend my gratitude to the following people for their assistance and advice:
David Stephenson, Jonothon Holmes, Geoff Parr and the library staff at the School of Art, Hobart.

I would like to thank my family for their support and encouragement, particularly my daughter Georgia and son Thomas.

I am deeply indebted to David Martin for his continuous support, constructive advice and interest in this project.

This exegesis is dedicated to the memory of my dear father, Captain George Alexander Hunt who navigated by the stars.
Abstract

This project has investigated the photographic representation of light and space, as medium and metaphor. Cognitive and emotional phenomena are normally regarded as related to, or occurring within the mind. But what is the mind? Whenever we say "within" the mind, we give our mental faculties a space or place of existence, even though we cannot “picture” this site. In other words we describe the mind in terms of metaphorical associations that are connected to a contained space. Architecture is a much used metaphor for the mind, but the mind may also be analogically suggestive of architecture, hence the photographic images created in this research project represent a “non-specific” site that may incite interpretations related to the duality and/or multiplicity of the metaphoric exchange.

The photographic work produced throughout this research represents an investigation into manifestations of light as the ethereal counterpart of thoughts, objects and emotions. Placing the camera in a central position before the constructed light receptacle, I have created a series of images that are associated with the symbolic equivalent of consciousness; the self as centred. Light has been manipulated in such a way as to represent the analogous “spirit” of the self. Repeatedly photographing the same space, from a central position, light is recorded as both the subject within the boundaries of the constructed space, and the subject that appears to extend outward, blurring or dissolving the boundaries of representation. Hence the project, rather than replicating reality, or representing a convincing illusion of reality, the project has explored ways of representing a mediation between the physical and the metaphysical – between inner and outer realities.