Corrigenda.

"reading intertextually: art, fiction, and material culture in Patrick White and Sidney Nolan"

Hollingdrake, Philips, Scanlan, Stowe and Whitely are mis-spelt throughout this thesis and should be spelt "Hollingrake", "Phillips", "Scanlon", "Stow" and "Whiteley" respectively.

Line numbers denote those included in the body of the text and do not take account of the line numbers in epigraphs, quotations, or captions which are signified separately.

Volume 2

page 218, line 18: opera Voss (for opera Voss). 
page 218, line 26: may imply (for may infer). 
page 252, line 21: Eve (for eve). 
page 260, line 5: myriadic (for myradic). 
page 278, line 4: savages who (for savages that). 
page 296-978, lines 2-5: 
Kelly and Scanlon, 1945 (fig. 69): a similar bearded likeness appears on Kelly's jail record (SNLL 74); 
[unhelmeted framed] Ned Kelly, [1946] (fig. 65): a similar youthful likeness appears on Kelly's jail record (SNLL 74); and [unhelmeted ] Kelly Head, 1947 (fig 201). 
(for Kelly and Scanlon, 1945 (fig. 69). A similar likeness appears on Kelly's jail record (SNLL 74). 
[unhelmeted framed] Ned Kelly, [1946] (fig. 65). A similar likeness appears on Kelly's jail record (SNLL 74). 
[unhelmeted ] Kelly Head, 1947 (fig 201).) 
page 306, line 1: dependent (for dependant). 
page 371, 1st quotation, line 6: There (for there). 
page 371, 1st quotation, line 9: God, (for God). 
page 371, 1st quotation, line 10: 48-50 (for 49-50). 
page 371, line 9: also on the cover (for also one the cover). 
page 375, line 5: Patricia Morley (for Morley). 
page 375, line 8: the colours blue and yellow are the colours (for the colours). 
page 375, line 10: Letters 120 for (120). 
page 382, line 9: World Wide Web (for world wide web). 
page 396, line 19: World Wide Web (for world wide web). 
page 396, penultimate line: but an (for but I an). 

Bibliography

In the bibliography U P should appear as UP. 
Barthes: Macmillan (for MacMillan). 
Bird: Reception: Shirley (for Reception – Shirley). 
Carrion: Salt Lake City, Utah (for Utah). 
Davids: Salt Lake City, Utah (for Utah); 149-65 (149-165). 
Fish: Macmillan (for MacMillan). 
Geldzahler: N.p.: International (for International). 
Higgins: Salt Lake City, Utah (for Utah). 
Johnson, Barbara: Johns Hopkins (for The Johns Hopkins). 
Krieger: Johns Hopkins (for The John Hopkins). 
Lynn: Nolan: Australia (for Nolan – Australia). 
Lyons: Salt Lake City, Utah (for Utah). 
Rice: Salt Lake City, Utah (for Utah). 
Sanders: Cambridge: Cambridge UP (for Cambridge U P). 
White. Happy Valley: Harrap (for Harrap & Co.). 
Yeats: Macmillan (for MacMillan). 

Diane Caney 
(15.8.1997)
reading intertextually:
art, fiction, and material culture
in Patrick White and Sidney Nolan

by

Diane Caney
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BA (Hons.), University of Tasmania, 1991

Volume II

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English
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December, 1996
Henceforward we walk split into myriad fragments ... 
we walk against a united world, asserting our dividedness ...

Henry Miller

Figure 100 — Diane Caney, Inter-imagic reading III, 1996: Rothko’s Untitled, 1951 (fig. 166, inverted) as detail from Nolan’s Kelly, Spring, 1956 (fig. 165).

Child, certain skies have sharpened my eyesight.
Their characters cast shadows on my face.
The Phenomena grew excited.
— And now, the ever-lasting inflection of moments and the infinity of mathematics hunt me throughout the world ...

Rimbaud
3: flux
The drawing of breath and the exchange of it for speech seems the rarest of all gifts in our brief possession... There are so many things that need us to be looking at them to speak their names before they can appear in our poems in our lives...

David Malouf

The power this to breathe out air that has been taken deep and give it voice clear vocables move into the real world glow there as stone

knife forest...

objects out of time sway forward light up unknowable space in us a wind as from the planets lifts our ribs rolls through us sustaining syllables They rise hum wheel in a holding pattern

star anise holy oak fox cup bayonet angel

David Malouf

semiotics and intertextuality

Rather than a discourse, contemporary semiotics takes as its object, several semiotic practices which it considers as translinguistic; that is, they operate through and across language... In this perspective, the text is defined as a trans-linguistic apparatus... (Kristeva 36)

Kristeva uses both “language” and “text” to denote all forms of communication constructed in every sort of textual medium. Non-artificially produced existents, such as actual trees, when they form interactions with readers, become texts that may intertext with any of readers’ virtual (inter)texts (including virtual understandings of cultural-codings) in order to form intertextual readings. And of course, it is possible to argue that trees have no objective existence outside the various ways in which we perceive them. For the purpose of my argument, however, I assume that entities called
trees do exist as non-artificially produced material existents even though when they intertext with readers their form is mediated in different ways for every reader.

Because I am investigating the intersections of a wide variety of (inter)texts that exist in varying textual media, I have intertexted a graphics of semiotics with this study in order to investigate what the practice of reading intertextually requires of semiotic apparatus. The semiotic graphics developed in this thesis have been designed as useful aids to reading intertextually. They are not assumed, however, as the only ways in which those reading activities can be described. In all language there is play, and while I use semiotic graphics to signify certain ranges of meanings, there can be no exact formulae capable of mapping the complex interactions of human beings with the unending world of texts. The textual topography surveyed in this study is not a stable entity, but rather an exploration of dynamic, ever-changing combinations of substances that become even more unstable during readerly interventions. A reader can be described as both an aspect of the dynamic ever-changing combination of substances involved in signic play; and as an instrument that apprehends those substances. There is a paradox inherent in all attempts to describe readerly/(inter)textual relationships, because (inter)textual/readerly boundaries are continually shifting and mutating.

An appropriation and expansion of Umberto Eco’s note on graphics from A Theory of Semiotics forms the basis of the semiotic graphics used in this study (Eco xi). In order to explore and expand these graphics I investigate various possible ways of representing the sign-vehicles Voss and Voss. I use a word that alters meanings when italicised, in order to demonstrate, from the outset, that language is always potentially ambiguous, and that a small shift in the structure of a material signifier can alter radically the range of signifieds for that signifier. The use of italics conveys both an exact and an ambiguous set of messages. Voss indicates a novel, an opera, and a film-proposal. Voss also signifies any of numerous versions of a character (as well as actual people) whose surname is Voss. The italicised “Voss” may indicate a writer’s desire to draw attention to the word, Voss, or to represent the fact that the name is being emphasised in direct speech. /Voss/, then, will not be the same as /Voss/, but
there will be an intertextuality at work between the two sets of signifieds that is somewhat less complex than the intertextuality that operates between *Voss* and Voss, which convey every possible Voss, rather than the more delimited terms within the semiotic graphics.

A word with no semiotic graphics inhabits the ambiguous space of language that is at its least constrained semiotically. I use single slashes to indicate a written (material) sign-vehicle. Double slashes indicate an artificially produced (material) visual sign-vehicle (as opposed to a sign-vehicle that is not an artificially produced [material] text. Non-artificially produced [material] sign-vehicles are indicated by braces). I have distinguished between artificially produced visual images and the visual apprehension of actual objects because of the problem expressed in Magritte’s *The Treason of Images*, 1928-29 (fig. 101), and my vandalism of Nolan’s illustrated dust jacket for *Voss* (fig. 102), after the style of Magritte’s painting of various signifiers for “pipe.” The vandalism of the E&S cover of *Voss* points to the fact that there is no actual Voss, or *Voss*, and that there are myriad versions of Voss and *Voss*. The ambiguity that operates between Voss and *Voss* is heightened in this image because it is only convention (mainly a convention of literary criticism) that says the italicised word, *Voss*, refers primarily to a novel called *Voss*, and not to any particular character called Voss. The letters “V,” “O,” “S,” “S,” on both the cover and the spine of Nolan’s illustration of the E&S dust-jacket can signify either Voss or *Voss*. Nolan’s letters are not italicised; neither are the letters on the covers of most books. We write *Voss* so easily, but what is it? It is not just the object of material culture we hold, nor is it the virtual intertextual collage we construct as we read that object. In literary criticism we so easily refer to texts by using their italicised titles, but how can we describe the dynamic, ever-changing combinations of substances that comprise the range of signifiers inferred by a title?

The Nolan depiction of Voss in figure 4 has as much right to be labelled //Voss// or //Voss// as any other imagic depiction of Voss or *Voss*. Figure 4 is an act of reverse ekphrasis. The features of the man in Nolan’s drawing match White’s descriptions of Voss in the novel (even though White thought that the illustration was
Figure 101 – René Magritte, *The Treason of Images*, 1928-29, oil on canvas, 23.5 x 37 in., Los Angeles County Museum of Art, page 245 of *The Shock of the New*.

Figure 102 – Collage distortion (after the style of Magritte’s *The Treason of Images*, 1928-29 [fig. 101]) of Sidney Nolan’s cover illustration for E&S edition of *Voss*, London: 1957.
less than successful \cite{Letters 160}), \"[T]he German's ragged beard ... was of a good black colour, rather coarse\" (11). \"The shabby stranger, with his noticeable cheekbones and over-large finger-joints ... [a]nd Voss was a bit of a scarecrow\" (12, 16). \"He had a strong back, sinewy rather, that began to obliterate the general seediness\" (19). \"The German sucked in the fringes of his moustache\" (20). \"Thin about the face, with veins in the forehead ... [h]is teeth were inclined to be pointed\" (39, 48). \"He was grinning in a way which made his face most irregular, leaner. His lips were thin and cracked before the season of thirst had set in, and there was a tooth missing at one side. Altogether, he was unconvincing\" (69). \"The light was tangling with his coarse beard\" (71). \"[H]er mind's eye dwelt on the masculine shape of his lips, and his wiry wrist with the little hairs\" (72). \"Voss listened, touching his beard. He was smiling, or that was the shape his face had taken\" (364). There is nothing here that does not read as the man in figure 4.

The combination of landscape and man in Nolan's E&S illustration (fig. 4) might as well represent //Voss// as the Viking cover which displays torn letters and aboriginal artefacts (fig. 103). White wrote to Viking’s editor Huebsch,

I don't think I have written since I received the copies of Voss, so I have not said how pleased I was with its appearance. (Incidentally, I read last night that the colours blue and yellow are the colours of introverted and extrovert spiritual perception. I wonder whether the designer was conscious that he had hit the nail so subtly on the head?) \cite{Letters 120}

Where is the real //Voss//, or the real //Voss//, however? Can there be //Voss// or //Voss/!? Are later illustrations, chosen or commissioned by publishers, entitled to be referred to as //Voss// or //Voss//, or are they more appropriately entitled //covers of Voss// or //artist's impression of Voss or Voss//? And, if so, why use double slashes when the words “cover” and “artist’s impression” indicate artificially produced images (even if those images are largely or totally made of words). What, then, are //Voss// and //Voss//?

In this thesis, triple slashes indicate complex (material) film-text sign-vehicle. I also use triple slashes to indicate the (material) texts of operatic and theatrical performances, and their cinematic recordings. Purely audio versions of sound such as audio-tapes of books, plays, and opera, are indicated by \textit{fVossf}. I use this phonetic
Patrick White
... towers over most other living novelists by his ability to supply, to lay bare the conscious, romantic yet private daydream, the unlived life.

— JAMES STERN, New York Times Book Review

From the comments on

**THE TREE OF MAN**

... a novel of such majestic proportions as one rarely encounters... a beautiful and a near-perfect thing.

— EMERSON PRICE, Cleveland Plain Dealer

"A majestic and impressive work of genuine art that digs more deeply into the universal experience of human living than all save a few great books."

— ORVILLE PRINCOTT, New York Times

"Something not so much for its depth and heights of experimentation and for the new dimensions which the author gives to words."

— FANNY BUTZNER, Chicago Tribune

"...has all those ingredients which make a novel endure in seasons and become a permanent part of our memory."

— GLENDY COLLEMAN, Washington Post & Times-Herald

Figure 4 (repeated) — Cover illustration by Sidney Nolan credited on dust-jacket of E&S edition of *Voss*, London: 1957 (viewed from front-cover only).

Figure 103 — Cover illustration by George Salter credited on dust-jacket of *Voss*, New York: Viking, 1957.
symbol to indicate that the written word is being spoken, is being produced in the
textual medium of breath and sound waves. The symbol I have chosen to indicate
audio versions of signifiers has an inherent irony, however, as it is the phonetic
symbol for the sound “sh” which can signify, “Be quiet.” I have drawn a distinction
between written and spoken signifiers, because poetically the spoken word can create a
very real difference in the complex signifying process. Eco does not draw the
distinction by creating separate signifying graphics to differentiate between written and
spoken verbal signifiers. Listening to a section of writing being read aloud, where the
writer has been aware of rhythm and poetry, and/or where a speaker is aware of
making the most of the rhythm when speaking those written words, can make a piece
of writing, or poetry, or written art, convey a very different set of signifieds to those
which might be conveyed as readers regard the written word, or read the written word
aloud without paying attention to the poetry of that writing. Music, and other sound
effects that are associated with audio productions could be assigned their own semiotic
graphics, but as I am not discussing music and sound effects specifically in this thesis,
I have allowed those sign-vehicles to be covered by the graphic being used to indicate
spoken sign-vehicles. One version of \fVossf\ might be the audio soundtrack to the
opera Voss, but I would represent this as \f///Voss///f\ to distinguish if from a spoken
version of the novel \Voss, f/Voss/f, f//Voss//f\ might be a composer’s musical response
to any //Voss//.

Eco uses double angle brackets to refer to all possible signifieds for any
semiotically contained signifiers, “[t]herefore /xxxx/ means, expresses or refers to
«xxxx»” (xi). I use angle brackets to infer the broad range of possible signifieds for
\Voss\ before it intertexts with all possible virtual readerly intertexts. Whereas Eco’s
/xxxx/ is referring to «xxxx»), I see an intertextuality at work and play between these
two sets. /Voss/ may infer «Voss», which I read as a kind of intertextual dictionary
description (described in diagram 11 in section four of this thesis). As /Voss/ enters a
readerly space, however, it intertexts with various virtual (inter)texts, including that
reader’s current understanding of «Voss». As that reader further investigates /Voss/,
though, the current understanding of «Voss» will alter, and that reader’s perception of
/Voss/ will also be affected by the many (inter)textual shifts that take place as s/he continues to read intertextually. I use double angle brackets, then, to indicate the total set of all possible signifieds for a sign-vehicle for any one reader (as they exist [theoretically] outside intertextual readings) for that reader.

I indicate an imagined universal set of all possible signifieds (which can only exist in the realm of theoretical philosophical possibility) by underlining a signified set. Hence «Voss» represents a theoretical, universal set of all possible signifieds for any Voss, if that signifier could be viewed over an infinite time-span throughout all possible readerly realms. So, reading intertextually, readers will arrive at various transient understandings of Voss that resonate around Voss. I indicate each of these understandings or interim conclusions by ™Voss.™ I use the ™ symbol to designate transient meanings or transient moments in readerly interaction with texts and their intertexts because of its typographic meaning, “Trademark,” which conveniently alludes to the uniqueness of each of these readerly sets, and the “personal ownership” attributable to those sets, even if the notion of “personal ownership” of readings can be disputed. Transient intertextual readings, mean that a range of signifiers, virtual texts, virtual intertexts, and signifieds, which have been in a state of flux inside a reader’s personal space, have settled into an “interim” conclusion. Those transient moments may fluctuate again as new virtual (inter)textual information is sorted and assimilated during any reading process. I have represented this flux in diagram 5. A reader may draw from as many or as few of these signifiers (according to the sort of reading being performed, and the sort of reader making that reading) in order to construct a transient understanding of the text being read. In this instance the material text being read might be any of those represented, but there may be reading experiences where several texts are material, or where all the texts being drawn upon are virtual texts.

The set ™Voss™ does not necessarily have to be only a range of meanings, of course, it can include perceptions of a signifier, a combined set of meanings and perceptions for a signifier, or a range of responses to signifiers that intertext; as well as the play between all these possibilities and signifieds that intertext with these
possibilities. In these instances “™” might suggest “This Manifestation,” or “These Manifestations,” rather than “This or These Meaning(s).” It is also possible to consider a transient moment or a transient reading as a transient intertextual meditation. Whatever “™” might suggest, however, it designates the interplay between a transient set of signifiers and signifieds (that have resulted from interaction with one or more texts). ™ also suggests an interim virtual-intertextual-collage. Personal transient moments may have components drawn from shared cultural understandings, but the sum of any one person’s interaction with any Voss will be his/her own. The symbol “™” can suggest “the meaning,” and this is a convenient playful reminder of reading theories that propose that such fixed truths exist as palpable entities for which readers are meant to search. The trade-mark symbol can also be read as a warning that
meanings can be easily manipulated by the operation of advertising, corporate ownership of texts, and the trading of those textual ownerships, all of which operate in powerful and insidious ways in societies that are informed by Capitalist theories.

There will be a continual movement from transient moments, which are in states of relative flux, to intertextual readings that are stored in virtual memory, and which are later translated back into transient moments again (and so on), whenever a reader is considering a particular set of texts over a period of time. The textual status of a set of texts that is being considered without interruption over an extended duration of time, have the potential to be in almost constant states of flux for long periods of time. When a reading is settled upon as an interim conclusion, that reading may be stored in a reader's memory as "reading," but its status as completed text can never really be assured because at any time a reader may receive new textual information causing a readerly desire to edit, revise, or transmute the earlier "reading." A "reading" is only slightly more stable than a "reading," in a world where all texts are unstable entities. I classify a "reading" as a "reading" when a reader is no longer thinking about, or considering a "reading," and it is "stored" in memory for a time as a "reading." Memory is an unstable place in which to store intertextual readings. That readings will be retrieved from the readerly space known as "memory," unchanged, is entirely dependent upon innumerable, unpredictable readerly conditions.

"Voss" will always be shifting as new information enters readers' minds, as material sign-vehicles intertext with the world of other material sign-vehicles (and thus mutate, no matter how subtly), and also as any personal readerly range of meanings for "Voss and its intertexts". I indicate a societal or group moment for "Voss and its intertexts" by underlining. Such a set would be influenced by incidents like the death of Patrick White and attempts by the mass media in Australia (and also internationally), cultural commentators, and literary academics, to place White and his novels into cultural and historical perspective. After Nolan's "Voss" (as it appears on the Penguin covers of Voss) was changed to Mel Odom's "Voss," group understandings of "Voss and its intertexts" that were influenced by visual images of Nolan's "Voss" (and the other Nolan intertexts potentially drawn into those readings)
were altered. Obviously, neither group nor personal ranges of meanings and/or perceptions can be exactly articulated, and this fact is expedient. A desire to articulate meaning and/or perception with great precision fails to consider the shifting nature of meanings and perceptions as they vary from reader to reader, from place to place, and from moment to moment. Such sets of meanings and/or perceptions can also be affected by a reader/viewers’ deliberate choice to wilfully suspend knowledge of any, or all, of their personal set of «Voss and its intertexts» or «Voss and its intertexts».

By appropriating the mathematical language used in representing Venn diagram sets, an intertextual reading made after interacting with the music White listened to when writing the death of Voss, might be represented as (/death of Voss/) U (/Marr’s life of White/) U (/Bartok’s violin concerto/) U («Voss and its intertexts»). In the language of mathematics, the symbol “U” represents the union of sets that occurs when the circles of Venn diagrams intersect. Normally these intersections mean that the circles of sets overlap. In diagram 6, however, those unions are liberated from their mathematical counterparts by the fact that each set has porous boundaries. This indicates that the attributes of one textual set can infiltrate and affect another set during the reading process, without that infiltration being a deliberate readerly act, by a sort of intertextual osmosis. I infer that intertextual union takes place inside readerly virtual space (represented by the inner-concave diamond-shape), rather than in the realm of material intertextuality (represented by the circle-boundaries and the space they enclose). There are alley ways in the diagram to indicate that a reader can deliberately choose to draw from any textual set (or its intertexts), or they can choose to suspend knowledge of those textual sets as they make an intertextual reading. There may be intertextuality in material textual realms (for instance where Marr’s writing overlaps with White’s writing), but rather than designate this fact by overlapping the circles (as in conventional Venn diagrams), I prefer to insinuate the possibility/fact of material intertextuality via the porous boundaries being side by side to represent potential (inter)textual osmosis.

The resultant reading in the central concave-sided shape of this diagram is
transient. It is in a state of flux as signifiers and signifieds are assimilated. Any reading will be completed either when a balance is reached between all the components being considered during a reading (at which point a reader settles on that reading as an interim conclusive reading), or alternatively when a reader chooses to stop interacting with that signic flux for any of various reasons. The reading of diagram 6 would have to be further mediated, however, by placing certain semiotic graphics around the outside of that reading: a superscript "c" would indicate that the reading had been culturally mediated, a "™" would indicate that the reading was the result of an intertextual reading process (which may have involved more than the four intertexts indicated), and a superscript "v" would indicate that the entire process had taken place in a virtual readerly place where it could be stored away in a reader’s memory, and
drawn upon at a future date in order to intertext with future intertextual readings being made, and/or to be modified during those readings. Hence, the entire intertextual set will be enclosed inside those semiotic graphics: \( \text{V}^{\text{TM}} \text{C}/\text{death of Voss}/ \cup /\text{Marr’s life of White}/ \cup /\text{Bartok’s violin concerto}/ \cup (\text{«Voss and its intertexts»}). \text{c}^{\text{TMV}} \)

I use braces to indicate material sign-vehicles that are understood via personal experience, that are not exclusively the result of interacting with artificially constructed signifiers. Hence viewing (or smoking) an actual (material) pipe is represented by \{pipe\}, as opposed to the \//pipe// or /pipe/ of Magritte’s *The Treason of Images*, 1928-29 (fig. 101). Interaction with any text, whether or not it is artificially produced, also involves readerly involvement in understandings of cultural context (whether conscious or not). This cultural mediation is indicated by the use of ‘pipe’. Hence, ‘pipe’ indicates the cultural mediation of any possible sign-vehicle for pipe, whereas ‘{pipe}’ indicates the cultural mediation involved in interacting with any actual pipe. Usually the process of cultural mediation will mean that a reader accesses a variety of virtual texts that have been stored as virtual texts, many of which will have begun as “lived texts.” “Lived texts,” as referred to in the introduction to *Myths of Oz*, are also indicated by braces because they are (from one point-of-view) non-artificially produced material texts. I surround semiotic representations of these texts with a superscript ‘c’ because our “texts of lived-experience” are usually mediated by cultural considerations (Fiske x).

The editors of *Myths of Oz* argue that their analysis of Australia focuses particularly on “lived texts” (the pub, the beach, the shopping centre) where the meanings are often unconscious and implicit in various practices and forms of behaviour ... Lived texts are more difficult to read than “produced” texts (e.g. books, films, plays), and most cultural analysts ignore them. (Fiske x-xi).

It is difficult to isolate “lived texts” from “produced texts,” except in theory, however, because every aspect of interaction with lived texts is quickly intertexted with produced texts, and vice versa. The storm on the beach scene in White’s *The Eye of the Storm* is understood because readers intertext that sequence with {personal beach experience, both actual and dreamed} and also {personal storm experience, meteorological, emotional, and metaphorical}. Readers also intertext those sets of information with
numerous other texts, especially those found in the art world that intertext with the world of the irrational. Remembrance of profound personal experience may also intertext, given that White’s text points to the fact that Elizabeth’s ordeal is otherworldly, deeply moving, and also a near-death experience. Conversely, when on a beach living \{beach experience\}, it would not be uncommon for many produced beach-texts (whether cinematic, television productions, advertising material, written, or imagic) to intertext with \{beach experience\}. A superscript “c,” around \{actual experience of beach\}, in this instance would imply that everything within those braces is mediated via readers’ acculturation, and a $TM$ would indicate that the entire experience is a transient intertextual moment. Hence, $TMc\{beach experience\}^{CTM}$ indicates the assimilation of any one experience on a beach, as it is mediated through all cultural and other intertextual experiences. All cultural mediation is the result of various (inter)texts, whatever their media, having become virtual (inter)texts within the personal space of any reader. Those intertexts are thereafter, capable of being intertexted with that reader’s reading of any new (inter)text, whether that intertextuality operates on a conscious, semi-conscious, or unconscious level. Intertextuality is integral to acculturation, and neither the ways in which reading intertextually takes place, nor the ways in which we become part of various cultures and sub-cultures, can be exactly mapped.

An example of \{Voss landscape\} would be actual interaction with the country described in White’s novel, either before or after having read /Voss/. The information used to assemble any understanding or perception of Voss would then be enhanced by remembrance of that \{Voss landscape\}. There is an irony at work here, however. In order that \{Voss landscape\} exist at all, /Voss/ or //Voss// or ///Voss/// had to exist first. In order for //Voss// or ///Voss/// to be made, /Voss/ had to be written. And much of /Voss landscape/ was drawn from Sidney Nolan’s //landscapes of the centre// (PW 316). Therefore, if we visit, or remember, \{Voss landscape\}, we are actually intertexting /landscape/ with \{landscape\} when much of the landscape that was used to form that /landscape/ was actually drawn from //landscape/., and /landscape/, not \{landscape\}. White used Nolan’s images, and the diaries of Leichhardt and Eyre, as
Figure 104 — Voss, 1948, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 121.6 x 91.4 cm, Verso. "Voss Explorer 1948 Nolan," plate 10 of N.

well as other writings, in order to construct much of the landscape of Voss. Of course, there is always a becoming-{Voss landscape} of /Voss landscape/ and //Voss landscape//, and vice versa, but the semiotic distinctions (even though they are pure theory) increase our ways of understanding the various different processes by which both material (inter)texts, and virtual (inter)texts, are constructed. These "becomings" apply when creating texts by either writing, painting or reading intertextually.

Given that double angle brackets indicate something intended as content or "the total set of all possible signifieds for the sign-vehicle" (Eco xi), «Voss and its intertexts» may include of the following: any characters called Johann Ulrich Voss in any /Voss/ or ///Voss///; the version of Voss that is dreamed by Laura in the novel; the E&S Nolan ///Voss/// (fig 4); the yellow smoke letters "VOSS" that form part of that same Nolan cover set against the blue sky; the yellow smoke letters "VOSS" that form part of "ceci n'est pas VOSS" on my vandalism of the same cover (fig. 102); the Nolan ///Voss/// used on Penguin covers (figs. 36 & 205); the Nolan painting of David Sands entitled Voss, 1948 (originally titled David Sands DSC [fig. 104]); the Leichhardt-like character in the Mel Odom illustration of Voss that replaced Nolan’s illustration of Voss on the cover of the 1980 Penguin edition of the novel (fig. 95); Geoffrey Rush as he appears in the enactments of scenes from Voss in The Burning Piano (fig. 9); any of various critical interpretations of either Voss or Voss; and Voss as he intersects historically with the "real" explorer //Leichhardt// as represented by John Mann (fig. 96). «Voss and its intertexts» may also include intertextual information gained if readers have read Leichhardt’s diaries, and/or those of Burke and Wills; any autobiographical or biographical information about White or Nolan; biographical or historiographic information about Leichhardt, Burke, or Wills; and/or innumerable other textual interactions whatever the media in which they have been constructed. Readers will draw from any information they have read about Voss, in order to interact with any Voss or Voss. A reader fluent in Spanish may be familiar with the Picasso portrait of Pedro Mañach, which is used as the cover illustration on the dust-jacket of L’Esploratore (fig. 105). The cultural coding of Picasso in twentieth-century art history (in spite of protestations that High Art is dead) can also
inter-text with the Spanish translation of *Voss* to valorise it as a work of “international renown.”

To try to explain exactly how an intertextual signifier assimilates into readerly space is as difficult as trying to explain exactly how a thought or a dream enters consciousness, semi-consciousness, or sub-consciousness. All these events occur, and there are numerous texts that attempt to provide explanations for them. My use of semiotics are attempts to map this process, rather than to provide detailed descriptions of such events. In this thesis I make intertextual readings and descriptions of the intertextuality between the texts of White and Nolan, and as such, they cannot be other than transient readings and descriptions. At the end of this project those intertextual readings and descriptions of the intertextuality between the texts of White and Nolan will be stored in my memory as intertextual readings and descriptions of the intertextuality between the texts of White and Nolan, and will appear in somewhat more formal (inter)textual media in this thesis as intertextual readings and descriptions of the intertextuality between the texts of White and Nolan and intertextual readings and descriptions of the intertextuality between the texts of White and Nolan. These readings have been made in the 1990s by a scholar whose construction of cross-media textual assemblage (including the choice of images and technical terms), is being affected by the self-awareness provoked by living in the post-postmodern era (and by being surrounded by readings of both the postmodern and the post-postmodern eras). In the virtual spaces of the readers of this thesis, however, individual reading-events will be mediated by various readerly virtual intertexts (unknown to me), in order that those readers form their own virtual intertextual understandings of this text. Surveys can provide overviews of the sorts of intertextual readings and intertextual readings that are arrived at by a range of various communities, but rather than studying how particular reading groups read, I am interested in proposing models for the activity of reading intertextually. It will be another project, however, to test those models on readers other than myself.
From where he was lying the window contained nothing but sky, and he was content with that. Around the frame the bare walls, white once, and still presentable in spite of flies, did not detract from the abstraction which the faulty glass perpetuated ... the black canvas no longer frightened him ... The window was blinding him ...

Patrick White

I describe inter-imaging as intertextual readings of images and/or texts that foreground resultant inter-images or inter-surfaces, rather than foregrounding intertextual enmeshment based predominantly upon various contents. In both intertextuality and inter-imaging there will be a variety of movements from surfaces to contents and back to surfaces, but what I call inter-imaging allows for a greater degree of consideration of surfaces and inter-surfaces, where the boundaries between textual surfaces and contents are never clear-cut. I do not want to set up a binary opposition between surfaces and their contents, or signifiers and their array of signifieds, but I want to suggest that different textual genres, as well as different ways of reading texts, affect the sort of intertextuality that is apprehended. Diagram 7 is an attempt to map what I mean. Each of the four smaller images are metaphoric maps of the intertextuality between the four circles displayed in various textual modes. In image 1, visual intertextuality is foregrounded, in images 2 and 4, the intertextuality of written text is foregrounded, and in image 3 the different textual modes are equally allocated.
Readers always have the ability to decide what aspects of a text they will choose to foreground. Even in image 1, a reader could decide to focus on the absent text, "CIRCLE," and read the intertextuality from the point of view of the invisible, but present, (inter)text. Each of the circle images could be read by foregrounding either /CIRCLE/ or //circle//, then, or by attempting to create text that focuses equally on both textual modes. Because we are trained to read the surfaces of images as less intellectually engaging than their contents, and because the surfaces of written texts are considered to be mere sign-posts, we tend to move directly towards the contents of most texts. Even so, we tend to consider the surfaces of images for longer, before moving to consideration of their contents, and we are more likely to move back to a re-examination of the surface of an image, than we are to re-examine the surface impact of a written text.

Diagram 8 is one way of representing the blurring that occurs between surfaces and contents in virtual readerly spaces. The four circles in diagram 8 can be read differently, depending upon whether colour, shape, or written text is taken into consideration. In poetry especially, the imagic surface of the text can greatly affect the ways in which we read the entire text. White was always aware of the surface image of his texts, and the ways in which that surface related to how a text might be read aloud, or read as complex written/imagic signifying event. He often fought to prevent punctuation being removed from his texts, and is well known for having wanted to be
Figure 120 — Leda and swan [standing with swan overhead], 1960, polyvinyl acetate on hardboard, 120 x 90 cm, page 132 of SNLL.

Figure 121 — Bird, 1964, oil on hardboard, 122 x 122 cm, page 147 of SNLL.
a painter rather than a writer, and also for wanting to create a painterly affect with his words. Even though it would be very difficult to refrain from reading contents into written works at all, there needs to be a continual interplay between surface and content in order to fully interact with a text.

In *The Eye of the Storm*, when Elizabeth Hunter is watching Lotte Lippmann dance she hears “a bird’s glistening call then the gulls scraping colour out of the sky” (*ES* 546). This “scraping colour out of the sky” inter-images with many Nolan images in which a scraping-back technique can be read. In *Leda and the Swan*, 1958 (fig. 120), for instance, the sky has been scraped away to reveal other tones, and also in *Bird*, 1964 (fig. 121). Of this process, Cynthia Nolan wrote that Nolan painted on the floor, “first placing areas of colour on the prepared board, next sweeping on poly-vinyl acetate until the whole ... area was thick with paint, then seizing a short-handled squeegee and slashing and wiping, cornering and circling like a skater, until another painting was completed” (224). It is quite possible that Cynthia Nolan wrote to White of this process, and certainly White could have observed the results of Nolan’s scraping for himself. Without knowledge of any authorly intention, however, readerly inter-imaging of Nolan’s scraping technique (as viewed on any of various Nolan skies) with White’s passage from *The Eye of the Storm* produces an inter-imagic reading that foregrounds the surfaces of Nolan’s paintings and one way of reading the surface/content interplay of White’s words. If *Leda and the Swan*, 1958 (fig. 120) is drawn into this readerly inter-imagery, the swans in Elizabeth’s eye/storm and eye/death experience can be read inter-imagically as having mythical over-tones (*ES* 424-25, 550-1). I discuss this possibility further in my conclusions.

If we allow intertextual reading to remain at the surface, the resultant inter-imaging can become a site where our suspension of knowledge enables new perceptions of the texts being read. For instance, the following intertextuality is freed from the necessity to draw conclusions by allowing the inter-images to be “becomings [that] interlink and form relays in a circulation of intensities” that is unceasing (Deleuze & Guattari 10). The red and white linoleum (or tiles) in Nolan’s *The Trial*, 1947 (fig. 106) inter-image with White’s description of “the harlequin lino” in Molly Khalil’s
Figure 106 – *The Trial*, 1947, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.5 x 121.5 cm, ANG, page 88 of *SNLL*.

Figure 107 – *Constable Fitzpatrick and Kate Kelly*, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 16 of *SNNK*. 

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brothel in *Riders in the Chariot*:

[Mrs Godbold] fixed her eyes on the floor of Mrs Khalil’s kitchen, on a harlequin lino, where much had been trodden in ... [Alf] said, ‘...I will sing and dance for you instead.’ ... So he sang, and stamped, and stamped ... Suddenly the abo fell down. He lay on the harlequin lino ... The abo lay on the harlequin lino. (RC 278, 279, 280, 282-83).

Alf Dubbo, the abo artist, laying on “the harlequin lino” of an establishment where he is an outsider, inter-images with Nolan’s depiction of Ned Kelly, the outlaw, who has the role of “artist” ascribed to him when he appears in Nolan’s painting of Ned Kelly’s death mask which is entitled, *Death of a Poet*, 1953 (fig. 111). Both Kelly and Dubbo, then, read as outsider artists. In *The Trial*, 1947 (fig. 106), Ned Kelly can be read as both standing on a court-room floor, and also laying on that floor, because of the lack of depth in the picture plane. In this image, Kelly is very much the outsider. The colonial court and the constabulary, however, has been undermined by its farcical representation throughout the Kelly series. By the end of the series, a viewer of the entire sequence is far more likely to have sympathy with the black outsider than with the imported justice system.

Alf’s treatment as an outsider in Molly’s establishment is also depicted as an act of hypocrisy because after demeaning Alf, Molly Khalil remembers “dimly [that] she had been married to ... [an aboriginal] in all but writing” and that her daughter, Lurleen, is “coloured” (278). Furthermore, Lurleen is “not so black as not to know what she was worth” (275). The irony, or black humour continues, however, with Lurleen’s only worth being equated, in this scene, with the price she can put on her body so that people like “the constable” can use her as a prostitute (280). Because both White and Nolan play with the word, “constable,” there is an oblique inter-imagery between Lurleen and the constable, and Nolan’s *Constable Fitzpatrick and Kate Kelly*, 1946 (fig. 107). White might have used any of the words “policeman,” “inspector,” “cop,” or “copper,” in place of “constable,” but his choice of the word, constable, enables an inter-imagic reading with both the title and the content of Nolan’s painting. To describe the inter-imaging of Nolan’s painted images with White’s written text enables slightly different angles of reading-perception to be
Figure 108 – *Death of Constable Scanlon*, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 81 of *SNLL*.

Figure 109 – *Stringybark Creek*, 1947, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 81 of *SNLL*. 
foregrounded, than those possible in readings foregrounding intertextuality (even though both sorts of reading can be described as intertextual).

Alf dances a frenzied dance as part of his “mission of love” and then falls on the floor. His dance inter-images with Ned Kelly dancing a figurative jig across the planes of Nolan’s paintings, while leading his pursuers on “a merry dance” in works such as *Death of Constable Scanlon*, 1946 (fig. 108), and *Stringybark Creek*, 1947 (fig. 109). On the harlequin lino of the brothel and the court-room floor, however, both Alf Dubbo and Ned Kelly are still, and the kinetic activity of the harlequin floors that surround them is all that is left of their dancing. Inter-images act like the components of collages. In inter-imagic readings, images, inter-images, texts, and intertexts, are allowed to relate like the fragments of Nolan’s *Collage*, 1939 (fig. 110), in which the signifiers seem totally unrelated. The inter-mingling of such unlikely inter-imagic elements, however, while upsetting traditional reading expectations, invites associations that might not be considered without the collage arrangement. Readers can form their own intertextual and inter-imagic collages of texts during the reading process, embellishing with virtual intertexts (and inter-images) what is placed on the surface of artists’ texts. The amount of textual disruption, harmony, meaning and/or association read, is entirely at the discretion of the person interacting with those texts and images.

Ned Kelly’s face, when it is seen in profile through its visor, has become synonymous with “the man of sorrows,” in Nolan vocabulary (figs. 112, 113, & 114). Nolan’s depiction of Kelly’s death mask, *Death of a Poet*, 1953 (fig. 111), inter-images with these depictions of Kelly as Christ, and is also one of only four times (I have found) when Kelly is depicted by Nolan outside his steel helmet. Nolan’s Kelly-Christs also inter-image with Himmelfarb, the Jewish reffo, who is crucified as a joke by his Australian work-mates, led by Blue:

> there is almost no tragedy which cannot be given a red nose ...
> So they pushed him up against the tree trunk. Ramming. And jamming. His head was heard once.
> "Hey, hold hard!" shouted Blue.
> He was not exactly protesting, but could not lose sight of the convention which demanded that cruelty, at least amongst mates, must be kept at the level of a joke. (*RC* 408, 410)
Figure 110 – Collage, 1939, collage of steel-engravings on steel-engraving, 30.6 x 22.5 cm, ANG, page 231 of Surrealism.

Figure 111 – Death of a Poet, 1953, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 91.5 x 122 cm, The Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, page 120 of SNLL.
Nolan's telling of the Kelly story, especially the earlier paintings where the narratives of history, tragedy, and joke are interwoven, obey the convention that "there is almost no tragedy which cannot be given a red nose" (RC 408). While it is not a convention that is peculiar to Australia, there is certainly an Australian tradition of telling almost all stories in the form of jokes, in order to milk them of their venom. Nolan's depiction of Kelly's death-mask, *Death of a Poet*, 1953 (fig. 111), however, moves away from the larrikin mode of story-telling, and yet its significances are all the more poignant for its intertextuality with the larrikin works.

*Death of a Poet*, 1953 (fig. 111), forms inter-images (rather than "meaning-full" intertexts) with White's descriptions of Himmelfarb on the blue/Blue jacaranda:

> [t]here was that old jacaranda, which they had lopped back before its season of blue, perhaps for the very purpose of preventing it. But, although deformed and angular in its present state, the painter was made to visualize the divine tree in its intensity of blue, wrapped in shawls of it, standing in pools of it... Then Blue reached down, and yanked the Jew up... So, in his mind, [Alf] loaded with panegyric blue the tree from which the women, and the young man His disciple, were lowering their Lord. And the flowers of the tree lay at its roots in pools of deepening blue. (409, 436).

These words can be read on a realistic level, forming word-pictures of an actual jacaranda in full bloom. On a more surreal plane of imaginary image, however, the pools of blue in Nolan's abstract tree, in which lays a brownish mask of the type of Christ often seen hiding behind Ned Kelly's visor, form inter-images with White's text. The tree in Nolan's image is //deformed and angular//, and White's "painter," Dubbo, can read as Nolan as the two texts inter-image. Dubbo later paints the event,

Dubbo was unaware how many days he had been at work ... Once on emerging from behind the barricade of planes, the curtain of textures, he ventured to retouch the wounds of the dead Christ ... Dubbo added many other details to his painting ... There was the trampled blue of fallen jacaranda. There was the blue showing between the branches of the living tree. (RC 454-55)

The blue back-ground in Nolan's image becomes the blue blossoms of the tree in Dubbo's tree. The //flowers of the tree/ that //lay/ in //pools of blue/ inter-image with the //pools of blue// that lay around the flat picture plane of Nolan's tribute to the dead Kelly.
Figure 112 – *At Glenrowan*, 1957, ripolin on masonite, 36 x 48 in., Tate Gallery, London, plate 62 of *SN*.

Figure 113 – *After Glenrowan*, 1955, ripolin on masonite, 36 x 28 in., plate 66 of *SN*.
Figure 114 – *Kelly at Glenrowan*, 1955, ripolin on masonite, 48 x 36 in., MOMA, New York, plate 73 of *SN*.

Figure 115 – *Miner*, 1972, oil on hardboard, 122 x 122 cm, AGSA, page 162 of *SNLL*.
In *Miner*, 1972 (fig. 115), Nolan paints an image that might be read as a type of “Blue the Vindicator,” whose bare chest is like a muddy landscape, upon which is the image of a crucifix. The hardened miner is depicted as both landscape and human being. The crucifixion is again taking place on Australian soil, and also upon Australian flesh. Blue might either be finding redemption, or re-living the glory of the crucifixion. The inter-images meet and fall away, merge and yet remain separate. Like the inter-images in Nolan’s *Collage*, 1939 (fig. 110), there are slippages of perception and various different view-points. Inter-images can be surreal and dream-like as readers’ minds are challenged by patch-work material and virtual collages, rather than direct inter-imagic (ekphrastic) translations, such as Nolan’s depiction of Voss on the cover of the E&S, and Penguin versions of *Voss* (fig. 4, 35, 36, 205).

Postcolonial intertextual readings can link the works of both White and Nolan because both their works refer frequently to the status of Australia as a colony. The “harlequin lino” of Nolan’s *The Trial*, 1947 suggests that the British court-room is a joke, just as Molly’s brothel’s refusal to accept Alf’s “mission of love” is a multi-layered joke:

“This is no visit. This is a mission,” announced the abo.
So surprisingly that Mrs Godbold looked ...
“A mission?” shouted Mrs Khalil. “Wot sorta mission, I would like to know?”
“A mission of love,” replied the abo.
And began to laugh happily. (*RC* 278-79)

It was fine for the Reverend Calderon to “convert” the aboriginal child to Christianity (including, by inference, rape), but it is not acceptable that an aboriginal person go to a “white” brothel on either a “mission” of Christian intent, or a mission to obtain, or give, (sexual) love:

Mr Calderon and his widowed sister, Mrs Pask, took the boy to institute what they christened their Great Experiment ... [After Calderon has engaged Dubbo in an unspecified act of incest/rape], [t]hey lay together on the honeycomb quilt. Pleasure was brief, fearful, and only grudgingly recognised. Very soon the boy was immersed in the surge of words with which his lover lamented his own downfall. [As he touches Dubbo, Calderon says of the boy’s skin], “A kind of dark metal ... But metal does not feel ... that is what makes it desirable.” Metal submitted, however. (*RC* 313, 331)

The vision of Alf lying on a harlequin lino serves to make a joke of the petty suburban mentality of the 50s that governs the brothel. Alf is now lying on the lino of a brothel,
which intertexts with the “Christian Institution” (and the “honeycomb quilt”) that made racist and uncaring use of the young boy’s body and mind. It is the actual establishments that are represented as clown-figures in both post-colonial inter-images. Kelly’s blackness, and refusal to be defined by the British court room, as well as Nolan’s visual translation of serious verbal historiographic text into comic visual narrative all inter-image with Alf Dubbo’s treatment by colonial Australia, and with his representation as a detached reader and cultural observer of that society.

Often [Alf Dubbo] would take refuge by slipping into the Public Library, to look at books. But reading did not come easily; an abstraction of ideas expressed less than the abstraction of forms and the synthesis of colours ... In the great library ... [a]ll the readers had found what they had been looking for, the black man noticed with envy. But he was not altogether surprised; words had always been the natural weapons of whites.(342).

White’s construction of Alf enables readings that reveal how colonial power operates. The last sentence in the quotation from Riders in the Chariot is a pun on White’s own name, and a political jibe at white colonial power both to name and to construct histories. Alf prefers to look at books rather than to read them, treating them as if they were *livres d’artistes* rather than viewing them primarily as written texts with illustrations. In doing so, however, Alf *is* reading. He is reading in a way that does not privilege written text, that does not approach texts from a logocentric point of view. On a metaphoric level, Nolan’s trial can be read as Alf (Kelly) inside the white man’s library (courtroom) where he is defined as an outsider because of his abnormal reading practices.

All these readings are entanglements of inter-imagery and intertextuality. They involve imbuing both images and words with both surfaces and contents, and allowing for both meaningful and un-meaningful relays of intersections between those surfaces and contents. Interpretations may or may not be involved in the process, but during inter-imagic intersections, interpretations will neither be conclusive, nor will they be as important, as in other reading practices. In “intertextuality and play,” in the *conclusions* of this thesis, I perform inter-imagic readings that are not constrained by the need to point towards any underlying contents or interpretations of inter-images, readings that are not expressed solely in words. I would suggest, however, that all
intertextuality, whatever its (inter)textual media, operates in an inter-imagic way during the reading process. Readers are involved in the constructions of collages as they meld absent and present texts into intertextual/inter-imagic sets. These constructions of collages often mean that text-surfaces are foregrounded. Readings of intertextual contents are necessarily delayed until (inter)textual surfaces are assimilated. Only after readers have performed these acts of readerly constructions of virtual intertextual (or inter-imagic) surface-collages, then, can those collages be examined for content(s), and/or for further possible intertexts or inter-images. And because the play between surface and content inter-images and intertextualities, “interlink and form relays in ... circulation[s] of intensities” that are unceasing, that play is an endless process, interspersed only sometimes by interim readerly ™conclusions™ (Deleuze & Guattari 10).
The Christ, of course, was the tattered Jew from Sarsaparilla and Rosetree’s factory ... If Dubbo portrayed the Christ darker than convention would have approved, it was because he could not resist the impulse. Much was omitted, which, in its absence, conveyed. It could have been that the observer himself contributed the hieroglyphs of his own fears to the flat, almost skimped figure. (RC 455-6)

The title and the body of The Tree of Man can intertextually complete what is “omitted” in the blank background of Nolan’s Crucifixion, 1954 (fig. 122), which also interimages with the description of Dubbo’s painting of the “skimped figure” (RC 456). The Himmelfarb crucifixion from Riders in the Chariot, and Nolan’s fabric dye drawing of The Tree of Man, 19 (fig. 81) can also be drawn into this inter-imagic medley. And as yet, I have only considered the surfaces of the medley of art-works mentioned; no interpretations have been drawn. The surface of a work is like Bachelard’s poetic image: “[t]he poetic image is an emergence from language, it is always a little above the language of signification” (xxiii). What is above, below, within, and absent from, textuality, however, is always affected by its intertexts. The
surfaces and contents of texts are ambiguous entities which might be better described as the becoming-surface, and the becoming-content, of texts. Intertextual readings will usually explore a range of (inter)textual possibilities from more-surface to more-content, settling finally on an intertextual collage of all these factors as they are assimilated from any intertextual set.

The following words from Voss operate in range of ways: "[t]he morning that followed the storm was set in splendour of enamels" (258). Different surfaces will be immediately apparent to different readers. There is a morning, there has been a storm, the morning is set in enamels, and there is a splendour of enamels. I have enlarged the letters of this quotation to foreground the fact that these words have an imagic quality as hieroglyphs, as well as surface meanings that can only be supplied by readers. On a hierarchy from most surface to most content, one possible movement is: "m" "o" "r" "n" "i" "n" "g," morning (neither of which sets have any particular meaning if we wilfully ignore knowledge of their possible significations as letters and words), morning as the beginning of any day (or any era), morning as the beginning of a specific day in Voss, an intertextual morning in a Nolan painting, morning as a potential pun on "mourning" given that there had been a storm (and also given that some Nolan paintings represent dying explorers in enamels), and even moaning (as an oblique poetic intertextuality between both the sounds and meanings of "morning" and "mourning"). Such a hierarchy is only theoretical, however, as there will always be movement within such a set during the dynamic process of intertextual reading. There are images associated with each of the enlarged words that can hover, suspended by readers for a time, before contents are explored. The morning could be any of innumerable remembered mornings, whether remembered from readerly lives as lived, or from texts and images read. The enamels could be paints, or the enamels of jewellery. The words create textual spaces waiting to be filled with images imported from readers’ virtual (inter)texts and (inter)images.

The word enamels suggests the art of Nolan because Nolan used enamels exclusively for a time (certainly for his outback paintings and his depictions of Burke
Figure 123 – Albert Tucker, *Burke and Wills*, 1960, oil and sand on canvas, 122 x 156 cm, MOMA, New York.

Figure 61 (repeated) – *Burke and Wills*, 1950, ripolin on board, 91.5 x 120.2 cm, page 104 of *SNSIL*. 

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and Wills). Albert Tucker also painted Burke and Wills (fig. 123), but his work is a mixture of oil and sand. The word “enamels” invites readers to remember or re-view any of a vast number of enamel artistic works, including those of Nolan, and to intersect those images with White’s words. Given that David Marr contends that White’s guide to the Australian landscape, once Voss’s party had left Jildra, were the paintings of Sidney Nolan, “a splendour of enamels,” is more specifically imbued with intertextual reference to Nolan’s art-works (PW 316). Inter-imagic reading I, 1996 (fig. 5): an expression of the inter-imagery between “a splendour of enamels” (Voss 258) and Central Australia, 1950 (fig. 44), is an example of the way in which the texts and images of both artists can converge in readerly space during the process of reading intertextually. The use of “enamel” also intertexts with the description in The Vivisector of the “enamel of daylight” (225).

Foregrounding the operation of intertextual readings that are “more-content,” “a splendour of enamels” might also be investigated for interpretative gestures back to Angus’s thoughts of the night before “the morning,” where the narrative voice is given for a time to “the young man.”

Then the young man [Angus] realized the distance he had come from the Palladian façade and emerald turf into that desert country, and how he had sunk himself almost gratefully to the level of his sleeping companion. (257).

Turner, his sleeping companion, alternately interests and repulses Angus. Given that Angus has been thinking about the surfaces of landscapes and their connections to the realm of “Palladian façade,” neo-classical art and architecture may both be drawn into readings of the passage. “Palladian” refers both to Pallas Athene, the goddess of wisdom, and “the Italian architect Andrea Palladio (1518-80), who imitated ancient Roman architecture without regard to classical principles” (OED). The reference to the morning landscape looking like a contrived work of art (which intertexts with Nolan as a painter with little regard for “classical principles of painting”), serves to reinforce the young man’s struggle to believe in what he is doing on the expedition and to make it fit the kinds of stories he might have read about heroic journeys, rather than Voss’s journey, which is by now, turning into somewhat of a fiasco. All these readings are valid. Many other readings could also be argued, by foregrounding various
Figure 116 – *Figures in Tree*, 1957, polyvinyl acetate on hardboard, 152.9 x 122.3 cm, page 127 of *SNLL*.

Figure 117 – *Jacob’s Ladder*, 1948, ripolin on masonite 48 in x 36 in, page 85 of *SN*. 

— reading surface/ imposing content —
understandings of contents, and apprehensions of textual surfaces. As these inter-imagic/intertextual resonances sporadically, brighten and disappear, become loud and then soften, there will be a continual medley of intertextual reverberations.

Mrs Fraser also forms links between the oeuvres of both Nolan and White. *Figures in Tree*, 1957 (fig. 116) reveals a naked, active, pointing Mrs Fraser, with her back to the viewer, seemingly directing a command to a clothed Bracefell who is leaning away from the woman. Bracefell is clothed in a standard black and white horizontally-striped American prison outfit. Both figures are diminutive and are located in the upper left-hand-side of the farthest left tree in the picture plane. (There are two other trees.) All the trees are large, with trunks which would be difficult to climb. The rainforest is black, cream and olive green. Nolan has employed a scraping-back technique to represent the rainforest, but his depiction of Mrs Fraser with a pink body and bright yellow hair links this character with his earlier ripolin depictions of the woman, and serves to demonstrate that she is most definitely out of place in the jungle. The naked woman is wearing a lightly depicted blue-black and red belt around her waist. The belt can be read as representative of the only vestige of national identity left to her. The same gesture is made by Nolan in the *Gallipoli* series where the soldiers often have stripes of colour to symbolise the flag of their national origins (see *Soldiers Bathing*, 1959 [fig. 134]).

White uses a similar motif throughout *A Fringe of Leaves* where Ellen literally wears the cords of a fringe of leaves around her waist. The fringe, to which her wedding ring is tied, symbolises her European acculturation (which is equated with "civilisation"), and the fringe is also an attempt at actual, modesty. White has Jack Chance and Ellen Roxburgh climb a tree together towards the end of their journey back towards "civilisation" in order to see the white settlement:

> [s]he remembered how the blacks had fired her to climb a tree ... she swarmed up trees regularly in search of birds' nests and wild honey. Much of this experience had been difficult and abrasive, when here was a tree furnished with branches almost as a ladder with rungs. 
> She could not resist it.
> ... She was soon climbing, breathing deep, planting her spongy, splayed feet on sooty rungs ... She continued climbing, and as she rose the sun struck at her through the foliage, furbishing her with the same gold.

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Figure 118 – Woman in the Swamp, 1957, polyvinyl on hardboard, 152 x 121 cm, plate 19 of N.

Figure 119 – Mrs Fraser, 1959, oil on board, 152.4 x 121.9 cm, Exhibition Catalogue, London: Waddington Galleries, 1989.
“Hey! Ellen!”
Jack Chance too, was climbing ... “Better climb no higher, Jack. Between us we may snap something.” ... He did not accept her advice, but seemed to become more stubbornly determined to stand beside her, or else to bring them down in a simultaneous descent, in a blaze of light and cataract of green, to be driven deep into the earth, still together ... [I]n her anger she descended to meet him ... Upon arrival at the convict’s level, she panted, “Do you want to kill us?” At that height the mast between them was still pliant enough to sway, though less alarmingly.(285-87).

There is an inter-imagery of surface, rather than direct ekphrasis, at work in the intertextual readings of Nolan’s paintings with this passage. The tree in *Figures in Tree*, 1957 (fig. 116), seems quite sturdy (in comparison to White’s tree), but the tree to its right is bending quite a deal. The female figure in Nolan’s painting is displaying an authoritative stance, which inter-images with the passage from *A Fringe of Leaves*. The text, “almost as a ladder with rungs” (286), inter-images with *Jacob’s ladder*, 1948 (fig. 118), which depicts a ladder ascending to heaven. Ellen reads as undergoing a type of apotheosis up the tree when the gold of the sun is “furbishing her with the same gold” (286). Nolan often depicts Eliza Fraser as standing out from the landscape in which she is found, whereas the convict is more often depicted as merging into it, but in images such as *Woman and Billabong*, 1957 and *Woman in the Swamp*, 1957 (fig. 118), the female figure is shown as taking on an identity other than that of a displaced, pink, colonial woman in harsh Australian landscape. The texts of both artists are involved in intertextual play as they depict both woman and convict against the landscape. Reading their works intertextually, then, is not a matter of simple analogy or direct ekphrasis.

White’s lines describing Ellen and Jack in the tree, also read inter-imagically with Nolan’s *Arabian Tree*, 1943 (fig. 72), which then draws the lines of Malley’s poem, “Petit Testament,” into the intertextual/inter-imagic reading:

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I said to my love (who is living)
Dear we shall never be that verb
Perched on the sole Arabian tree
Not having learnt in our green age to forget
The sins that flow between the hands and feet
(Here the Tree weeps gum tears
Which are also real: I tell you
These things are real)
So I forced a parting
Scrubbing my few dingy words to brightness.(Heyward 261)
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Of Arabian Tree, 1943 (fig. 72), Nolan said in a letter to Sunday Reed, that the two figures are perched "in a word like trembling when read in a poem" (SNLL 56). There is trembling in White’s tree, literally. The tree is not strong enough to support two people. Ellen says, "[w]e may snap something" (287). Ellen and Jack are lovers in White’s tree. When Ellen joins the convict at the lower level in the tree,

[t]hrough running sweat, his skin felt cold, which she now tried to warm, after sidling around the mast, by pressing against him as far as she could, by chafing, moulding with her free hand a flank, a shoulder, the sinews of his neck.(287)

A parting of the lovers is enforced, however, when Ellen sees civilisation and "could not wait to feel the ground under her feet" (287); and in Malley’s tree, “[s]o I forced a parting” (261). When read intertextually, the words of the poem, “forced a parting,” refer not only to the separation of two lovers, however, but also to the enforced parting of flesh by violent incision. Chance is in the penal colony because he forced a parting in Mab’s flesh, and a parting between her life on earth and her premature death, “I killed ’er. I slit ’er throat” (291). When Ellen sees civilisation, Jack sees the “vicious snake” of the Brisbane River (287), which draws the Eden myth into this inter-imagic assemblage.

Resonating in this inter-imagic reading, then, are White’s depiction of a man and a woman in a tree (which is based on the same historiographic myth as is Nolan’s Eliza Fraser series); Ellen’s apotheosis up a tree; Ellen’s anger at and bullying of Chance in the same tree; her attempt at physical love in the tree; two lovers perched in a verb or word (like trembling); Nolan’s depiction of both the Figures in Tree, 1957 (fig. 116) and Jacob’s Ladder, 1948 (fig. 117); Nolan’s depiction of various animals, archetypes, and Christ-figures in trees (figs. 58, 72, 77, 78, 81); Adam and eve and the tree of knowledge; the “forced parting” of both Malley’s poem and Mab’s throat; and the nexus between fiction and reality in all its forms. This inter-imagic (intertextual) web will continually interweave, moving always through a complex interplay of various (inter)texts, until interim conclusions are reached. We tease out the threads of meaning, and the fibres of inter-images that might over-ride other inter-images for a time. We make interpretations, but never definitively interpret an inter-imagic/intertextual web: intertextual resonances are often diffuse and many. Semiotics
The flow of reading moves through a range of texts (some virtual, some material [each of which have their own intertexts represented by the smaller circles and also by the wider space, to which all circles are open]). The flow of reading moves from becoming-surface to becoming-content again and again, until an \textsuperscript{TM} interim conclusion\textsuperscript{TM} is reached in the inner area, which represents the actual reading. Reading involves intertextual osmosis (through porous boundaries), and deliberate acts of reading intertextually (which are designated by the alley-ways).

diagram 9

cannot map the ways in which surface-readings merge into understandings of content, entangle, and then circulate into other intertextual fields, regardless of their surfaces or their contents, always erasing, editing, and/or embellishing.

In diagram 9 each circle represents all the possible (inter)texts clustered around a particular reading. Perhaps the circumferences of the circles might represent the nebulous surface, and the inside of the circles might infer the unquantifiable contents of every text. In order to construct readings, readers move in and out of texts and their intertexts, and out into the wider realm of all (inter)texts, in order to assemble any one \textsuperscript{TM} intertextual reading,\textsuperscript{TM} which may, at any time, mutate into a slight variation of itself, or indeed, which might become quite another \textsuperscript{TM} intertextual reading.\textsuperscript{TM} Any of Nolan’s figures in a tree might become Eliza Fraser and her convict rescuer, but oddly enough, at the same time “they can never be” either those historical figures, White’s fictional characters, or any other mytho-text. They can only ever be intertextual sets that will be filtered differently by every reader/viewer.
Where we have ekphrastic translations from medium to medium, the surfaces of material texts become foregrounded; the underlying content is assumed to be the same. The text we all think we know is being represented in different ways, and the surfaces of these significations become the focus of our attentions. White and Nolan both represented Eliza Fraser. Many people only know the legend through art, and hearsay, never having read historiographic accounts of the “facts.” Kay Schaffer’s examination of various depictions of the Eliza Fraser myth grapples with the surfaces of the various treatments of that myth, in order to create a cultural study. In examining those texts, however, Schaffer’s discussion moves quickly from surfaces to the alleged contents of the works and their political implications. In doing so she observes the ways in which a variety of works circulate around the myth, but often risks digging “‘behind’ the text, to find a sub-text which is the true one,” or perhaps overlaying the texts with veils of cultural construction and interpretation that obscure what else the texts might be saying (Sontag 655). Reading art intertextually, however, can allow the surfaces of art to be linked to any of various contents. The actual surfaces of art remain important, however, in and of themselves. The materiality of art requires our close attention because if we move too quickly to signifieds, we may miss many nuances of surface that might radically alter the ways in which that surface can be related to contents. The art of reading surface needs to be foregrounded in a world that is intent on imposing interpretations, on using texts primarily for the transference of messages, and on making cultural studies of those texts. All these ways of interacting with texts are valid and necessary, but in reading texts, the politics of surface must neither be neglected, nor assumed.
Mrs Fraser: Queen Nebuchadnezzar, or Queen Lear?

The ripolin on masonite depiction of *Mrs Fraser*, 1947 (fig. 68) naked on all fours has been interpreted in different ways. There is a sense in which Eliza Fraser is entirely absent from the painting, *ceci n’est pas Eliza Fraser*. Ned Kelly is also often painted as...
an absent, or a semi-absent creature in Nolan iconography. Nolan’s images are works that intertext with historiography, but that can also tolerate deliberate suspension of all knowledge of historical intertexts. Mrs Fraser, 1947 (fig. 68), is a surreal image of either a male or female figure, naked in a landscape, reaching for something. The pale flesh indicates the vulnerability of uncovered white skin in the heat. The landscape might be “wilderness,” but there is a suggestion of a pathway, and logs or plants having been lain cross-hatch over the path, so that the landscape’s placement in relation to colonial “civilisation” is ambiguous. The trees are tropical, and the sky is blue. The most menacing thing about the work is the oval framing. It seems incongruous that an undignified naked figure would be celebrated in an oval frame that is conventionally placed on display on a mantelpiece. A more “likely” reading of the painting is that a hunter is sighting the figure to secretly watch, or more probably, to shoot the figure. In the Australian bush naked indigenous people have been more traditionally hunted and shot, although escaped convicts and bushrangers were also routinely hunted.

Because of both the title and the narrative of the painting, Mrs Fraser, 1947 (fig. 68), intertexts with White’s depiction of Ellen in A Fringe of Leaves after she is stripped bare of her clothes by aboriginal women following the death of her husband:

[...] thus isolated and naked, Mrs Roxburgh considered what to do next. While still undecided, she stepped or tottered a pace or two backward and trod upon something ... She was propelled, logically it seemed, in the opposite direction, up the slope, and found herself amongst those burning mattresses of dry sand laced with runners of convolvulus such as she had noticed farther back along the beach. She bent down and began tearing at the vines, in her present state less from reason than by instinct, and wound the strands about her waist, until the consequent fringe hanging from the vine allowed her to feel to some extent clothed. (218-19)

The only time Ellen is depicted naked is at this point in the narrative, and also just before she arrives back at the Moreton Bay outpost after she loses her skirt of leaves (296-97). For the remainder of her journey she “wears” a fringe of leaves in which is entwined her wedding ring. The scene just after Ellen is stripped by aboriginal women, inter-images vividly with the image of Mrs Fraser, 1947 (fig. 68), straddled across a //burning mattress// of //dry sand laced with runners of convolvulus// where
she bent down and began tearing at the vines (219). The vines around Nolan's trees seem more like convolvulus than the cross-hatching depicted over the path, but the cross-hatching can read as vines. The fact that Ellen is described as pulling at the vines, "less from reason than by instinct," intertexts with the fact that she appears to be "animal-like" in an inter-imagic reading of Mrs Fraser, 1947 (fig. 68), and also reads as intertextual play (by both artists) with Eurocentric representations of aboriginal people (imitated in irony in A Fringe of Leaves) as savage, primitive, ape-like: "the monkey-woman snatched" (218).

By creating a narrative sequence for Nolan's image, White's text reads the grey border around the painting as movie-camera, and supplies the next frame or two. By the end of the passage we have moved outside the Nolan image, but the intertextuality of Nolan's image(s) continues to pervade the White novel. In Mrs Fraser, 1947 (fig. 68), the woman's hair is hanging over her face. When Ellen arrives at "civilisation," there is another direct intertextuality with this painting,

"Do I look a fright, Jack? My awful hair!" It worried her more than her nakedness, for hair is a curtain one may hide behind in an emergency ...

It was here that Mrs Roxburgh looked down and saw that she had lost the vine she had been wearing as a gesture to propriety; worse by far was the loss of the wedding ring threaded upon her fringe of leaves. (297).

White plays with the name Mrs Roxburgh and Ellen. Using the formal name Mrs Roxburgh in this passage (and in that where Ellen pulls at the vines to make her "skirt"), highlights the fact that the naked woman is far from the realm of her cultural heritage. Before she re-enters that culture she worries about her hair, and also just before she is stripped bare by her captors, she hides behind her hair:

Mrs Roxburgh had taken refuge inside the tent of matted hair which, hanging down, could be used to protect her face from the flies. (215).

Mrs Fraser, 1947 (fig. 68) also hides behind her hair, in what can be read as "a gesture to propriety," as an act of desperation and fatigue, as a signal that this woman has not yet had her hair shaved marking her as an aboriginal tribes-woman, and/or as a mark of her being animal-like.
The image of *Mrs Fraser*, 1947 (fig. 68) can be read intertextually with Boyd’s image of *Nebuchadnezzar eating grass in a hilly landscape*, 1968-71 (fig. 124), and also with the Bible passage from the Book of Daniel, to infer that many human beings are treated like animals, either in acts of inhumanity and/or brutality. *The Vivisector* also plays with the boundaries that separate acts of brutality from what our various “civilised” societies condone as fair treatment of human beings. In *A Fringe of Leaves* the convicts are described as “those unfortunate human beasts” (75). Janet Frame writes of having to keep secret from her family what she had seen of the inmates at *Seacliff* hospital for the mentally ill, where she was interned for many years:

I didn’t tell them how ... there were strange men in striped shirts and trousers and some without trousers walking round and round in a paddock with the grass worn away; and ... a paddock of women, too ... and how there was a cart, like a rickshaw ... full of coal and two men harnessed to the cart carried the coal, driven by one of the attendants. (Frame *Angel* 71).

Nolan’s figure might easily be the inmate of a mental institution, either now or at any time in history, lost to the “civilised” world of his or her own society, gazed at down the telescope of mainstream psychiatric terminology and health bureaucracies, both of which have the power to “frame,” and to “treat,” and also the potential to kill.

Even though the figure of *Mrs Fraser*, 1947 (fig. 68) is very much like that of Boyd’s *Nebuchadnezzar eating grass in a hilly landscape*, 1968-71 (fig. 124), the female gender of the title has prevented some critics from interpreting the inter-gendered nature of Nolan’s image. *Mrs Fraser*, 1947 (fig. 68) is depicted as anonymous and androgynous (but for the title of the work). The figure depicted can be associated with Eliza Fraser, but she also reads as a figure divorced from the myth. It is only the title that places the figure inside a set of historical writings. The fact that the artist has depicted the woman as if seen through a pair of binoculars or a telescope (or the barrel of a gun) forever places her within the framework of a creature to be gazed upon. But is this a female body that will become the preoccupation of a male gaze, or, as Schaffer’s cultural study suggests, is the figure in Nolan’s image representative of a creature who will be gazed upon by using the various telescopes of history, cultural study, art, and many other textual framing devices, all of which have cultural biases that affect the sort of intertextual constructions that result.
Within the framework of literature, the human-figure degraded to an animal-like status intratexts throughout White’s oeuvre. In The Tree of Man, Amy Parker becomes obsessed by the beautiful, mysterious Madeleine, who is to marry the rich Tom Armstrong. After Madeleine is burnt in a house fire, the marriage is no longer to take place. Amy is secretly glad to learn that the young woman will not marry Tom Armstrong after her narrow escape from the fire, but more because her life of obsession with Madeleine can end: “[t]his information Amy Parker took, and shut up, and picked over in cold pleasure, for Madeleine, since a burned thing, retching on all fours in the ash and grass, was exorcised” (185 [emphasis added]). The image of Madeleine burned and “on all fours” intertexts with Nolan’s depiction of Mrs Fraser, 1947 (fig. 68). The inter-image then also resonates with fall from social position and privilege. White’s depiction of Madeleine also intratexts with Ellen Roxburgh, who finally arrives to civilisation, crawling on all fours:

[s]he fell among the cow-pats and crawled farther, a lopsided action dictated by the ruts, until halted by the barn and a pair of man’s boots, the latter serviceable in the extreme, as grey and wrinkled as the earth in which they were planted. Mrs Roxburgh could not have explained the reason for her being there, or whether she had served a purpose, ever. (300).

Elizabeth Hunter also scrabbles in the sand during the storm sequence in The Eye of the Storm, as well as being metaphorically “on all fours” throughout the novel, where she is confined to bed unable to walk unaided:

[i]n this solid rain herself a groping survived insect a staggering soaked spider ... Without much thought for her own wreckage, she moved slowly down what had been a beach ... she was no longer a body, least of all a woman: the myth of her womanhood had been exploded by the storm ... She was on her knees in the shallows offering handfuls of the sodden loaf the sea had left for her. (422-25).

If we intertext the storm that overwhelms Elizabeth with ocean, and the notion of Elizabeth as a type of Lear, and also as a type of Nebuchadnezzar, the entire “eye and storm” sequence can intertext with Boyd’s Nebuchadnezzar’s head in a wave, 1968-71 (fig. 125). Because Nebuchadnezzar intertexts with Mrs Fraser, 1947 (fig. 68), and because this image is also presumably located near a beach, all these images and descriptions intratext and inter-image to produce a medley of interim conclusions.

signify the artificial construction of *reading*, as we view that work, or any work, through readerly perception. Binoculars, gun-barrel, or kaleidoscopic-intertextual-reading: there is a sense in which all acts of reading explode the art-work being read into mirrored, variegated, multi-dimensional fragments (which already exist within a shattered, fragmented collage of cultural and other contexts). That myradic intertextuality can only be assembled, reassembled, edited, embellished, contextualised, and/or recontextualised by readers, or not, as they desire, into endlessly shifting, intertextual, readerly collages.
the escaped convict

Before there is an //escaped convict// there was presumably a captive convict; and before that, there was a free man. Nolan’s frames read very much as film-stills from a narrative, and in some ways the intertexts of White’s writings provide an intertextual “back story” for those stills. The notions of human freedom and human imprisonment can be read into the works of both White and Nolan. In terms of feminist foregrounding of gender difference, however, the convict can also be read as a site for the exploration of masculinist notions of the imposition of societal imprisonments upon men, of the stereotypical roles by which they can be bound. For White, as a homosexual writer, not wanting to formally embrace gay politics, the notion of male imprisonment and escape from that space, must have been a powerful metaphor. White plays with notion of “miscreants” in A Fringe of Leaves (322). This idea reads as a metaphor for some psycho-medical readings of the “homosexual condition.”
Figure 127 – *Blackboys*, 1948, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 122.5 x 92 cm, page 99 of *SNLL*.

Figure 128 – *Convict Crossing Creek*, 1948, ripolin on masonite, 36 x 48 in., plate 3

— the escaped convict —

Various Christian models of homosexuality are also metaphorised in the convicts who are kept in a “morally infected country like Van Diemen’s Land” (73). The moral infection reads in various ways when current laws against sodomy in Tasmania are considered. The idea of convicts escaping from these textual constructions act as metaphors for the liberation of socially and legally-imposed homosexual inscriptions of abnormality and moral imperfection.

The escaped convicts in Nolan’s works vary from being naked, to being naked with the stripes of healed flogging marks, to being clothed in black and white striped uniforms. Charles Osborne says of Escaped Convict, 1948 (fig. 126) that the work reveals Bracefell reduced to the non-personality of the convict, a series of horizontal black and white stripes, posing as though for an amiable snapshot which Mrs Fraser is taking ... Behind Bracefell, the trees echo the stripes of his prison suit. The jungle is, after all, only another kind of prison. (Osborne 3)

It is not only the literal jungle that is a jail, however, but, as I have suggested, the whole notion of masculinity (both homosexual and heterosexual) in Australia. The four poles that emanate from the blackboys behind Bracefell are reminiscent of Australian Rules goal-posts. The convict’s black and white striped outfit makes him look like a bewildered footballer suddenly transplanted by fate into the jungle. The stance and the expression of the Escaped Convict (fig. 126) are almost exactly the same as those of the Fullback, 1946, an Australian rules footballer who stands, somewhat bewildered, beside one goal-post. Nolan’s choice of flora, blackboys, demonstrates Nolan’s interest in camouflage and game-playing. The blackboys might well be aboriginal people, well known for their ability seemingly to vanish into the landscape. In a comment on Carron Plains, 1948, which also features blackboys Nolan said, “I wanted to grasp the idea of dry winds blowing through the trees with the blackboys being trees or perhaps native boys” (SNA 82). Jane Clark remarks of Carron Plains, “the trunks of the blackboy grass-trees are marked as well, like Dreamtime Aboriginal warriors painted for a corroboree” and of Blackboys, 1948 (fig. 127):

[j]It would seem that the spirit of David Bracefell, roaming the bush in his convict uniform, followed Nolan from Fraser Island to the mainland, for here the great flowering “kangaroo tail”
Figure 129 – Swimmers at Gallipoli, 1958, oil crayon and acrylic on card, 30.4 x 25.4 cm, AWM, page 41 of NG.

Figure 130 – Escaped Convict, 1962, oil, synthetic polymer paint on hardboard, 152.3 x 122 cm, AGNSW (reproduced with their kind permission).
wands of the blackboys ... are boldly striped black and white. (Clark, SNLL 99).

Of the figure of Bracefell, Robertson remarks: "[t]he figure is often insubstantial, almost like a vibration in the air, however palpable; and it is given charm and a slight pathos, like a bedraggled figure from a carnival, rather than any sinister implications" (SN 88). This is particularly so in Convict Crossing Creek, 1948 (fig. 128), in which the stationary figure of Escaped Convict, 1948 (fig. 126), is now moving in disguise across a creek. Alluding to "lack of substance" is a part of Nolan's iconography. The stripes of the convict are often unconnected, revealing the landscape behind. It is as though there is no-one inside the suit, just as Ned Kelly is often not present in the landscape, or is just departing from it. Kelly's helmet is often depicted as empty. Many of the soldiers in the Gallipoli series are so transient as to seem translucent. This reads as a nearness to death, and might seem morbid or bleak, but in images such as Swimmers at Gallipoli, 1958 (fig. 129), there is such a sense of play and whimsy that, as a whole, the Gallipoli series becomes an enmeshment of tragedy and great triumph of spirit.

Many of the subjects treated by White and Nolan are less than pleasant. These works are not simply comedies of manners, but the humour and play exhibited in both oeuvres enables their texts to operate in many different contexts, to be malleable, rather than closed in their significations. Of Escaped Convict, 1962 (fig. 130) Nolan says:

[t]he escapee is fleeing and it seems as if he must flee forever; and, of course, in Australia that is what he had to do because there was no place to go to, in the ordinary meaning of place. So his escape is rather a dream in pleasant colours. He has one arm; the dream is maimed; he's no angel floating in the sky. (SNA 128-29) 12

Nolan does have conventionally depicted angels floating in some of his skies: Angel over Ely, 1950, for instance. Many of Nolan's religious images are maimed, however, such as the upside-down Christ and the saint with bleeding palms set against central Australia in Stigmata, 1951 (fig. 131), and the upside down devil and tortured saint in Temptation of St Anthony, 1952 (fig. 177). The escapee of Escaped Convict, 1962 (fig. 130) has stripes upon the flesh of his body. He is leaping out into space.
Figure 131 – *Stigmata*, 1951, ripolin on masonite, 48 x 36 in., plate 41 of *SN*. 
There is a sense in which the maimed dream of Australian identity, particularly Australian male identity, is embodied in these fleeing images. Jack Chance cries, “Ah, Ellen, I can hear 'em settin' up the triangles ... They'll be waitin' for me” (AFL 299). The opposition of rigid societal impositions represented by triangles, stripes, and enforced labour, and the desperate need to escape, informs much of the intertextual play that still surrounds our constructions of both “the Australian male” and Australian identity in general.

As well as punishment, imprisonment and societal restrictions, stripes are also Nolan vocabulary for identity, particularly national identity. In Woman and Lagoon, 1957 (fig 132), the female figure has a thin blue belt and a thin red belt about her hips. In Woman in Jungle, 1957 (fig. 133), the woman has a thin stripe of blue, yellow and red around her waist. These stripes intertext with Ellen’s fringe of leaves (or vines), which come to represent her modesty and her connection to a life away from her present captivity. They represent “civilisation,” but also national identity. Nolan-text often uses various blue and red motifs to suggest a person’s connection with his/her country, most often Britain or Australia, but sometimes France. The ambiguity of the flag motifs, however, means that intertexting any kind of national identity is invited.

One soldier in Soldiers Bathing, 1959 (fig. 134) has blue, red and flesh-coloured diagonal and horizontal lines on his chest. All the other soldiers are naked, and so is the striped man in figure 134, apart from the partially drawn lines, and his hat.¹³ In Soldier, horse, and gun carriage, 1961 (fig. 135), the colours of some flag or other are forlornly strewn on the ground. Jane Clark asks of the camel in Camel and Figure, 1962 (fig. 136): “can that be a rainbow reflected on the camel’s neck?”(135). Yes, but it also reads as a pitiful mark of a half-hearted Union Jack to show that the ill-fated animal has been used and is still being used to serve “the empire.”

Nolan sometimes uses stripes to symbolise personal identity, as in Self Portrait, 1940 (fig. 137), in which Nolan is depicted with stripes of yellow, blue and red drawn horizontally across his forehead. Jane Clark suggests that the artist had seen “very similar mask-like heads with striped foreheads illustrating Viktor Löwenfeld’s Book, The Nature of Creative Activity” (SNLL 54). The stripes, however, also read
— the escaped convict—

Figure 132 - Woman and Lagoon, 1957, polyvinyl acetate on masonite, 48 x 60 in., plate 85 of SN.

Figure 133 - Woman in Jungle, polyvinyl acetate on masonite, 60 x 48 in., plate 96 of SN.
Figure 134 – Soldiers Bathing, 1959, dye on paper, 10 x 12 in., plate 109 of SN.

Figure 135 – Soldier, horse, and gun carriage, 1961, textile dye and crayon on card, 52.2 x 63.8 cm, AWM, page 67 of NG.
Figure 136 – *Camel and Figure*, 1962, ripolin on hardboard, 121 x 121 cm, AGNSW, page 135 of *SNA*.

Figure 137 – Self-portrait, 1943, ripolin enamel on hessian sacking, mounted on hardboard, 59.5 x 55.5 cm, page 54 of *SLLL*.
— the escaped convict—

Figure 138 — Bathers, 1943, ripolin enamel on canvas, 63.5 x 76.2 cm, Heide, page 47 of SNA.

Figure 139 — Pablo Picasso, Bathers with Beach Ball, 1928, oil on canvas, 15.9 x 21.9 cm, page 130 of Surrealism.
as tribal inscriptions that mark the artist as “creative” or that mark the artist as part of a group, just as Nolan’s other symbolic stripes link the subject or subjects of his paintings to a wider group. Nolan’s *Bathers*, 1943 (fig. 138) makes playful use of striped towels to intertext with the signification of “flag.” This image also intertexts with Picasso’s *Bathers with Beach Ball*, 1928 (fig. 139). Picasso’s image of bathers also inter-images with Nolan’s depiction of a striped naked *Convict*, 1962 (fig. 140) standing on a beach. The convict, however, is not playing ball, but is forlorn, lost, and hunted.

Nolan based an unstriped naked figure emerging from the sea in *Fraser Island*, 1947 (fig. 141), on a forest worker he met while living on Fraser Island (*SNLL* 91). Clark reports that, “[i]n his eyes the figure ... was also that of David Bracefell – free, for the moment of his striped convict garb and indeed all the trappings of ‘civilization’ – as seen by Eliza Fraser a century before” (*SNLL* 91). This unmarked figure, however, is extremely unsettling. He does not read as Bracefell/convict either in his attire of striped naked flesh, or in the title given to the painting. The title functions to open doorways to both geographic and historiographic regions, but the figure is still oddly displaced. It is his utter nakedness which is unusual. Nolan’s convicts are usually striped, even though naked; the naked Burke and Wills are ethereal and merging into their historical landscapes; and even though these images are unhappy in various ways, their significations are at least familiar. The figure in *Fraser Island*, 1947 (fig. 141) has the bleakness associated with his unfixed identity, that of a lost anonymous figure. Nolan’s naked figure in *Fraser Island*, 1947 (fig. 141) is set against a dull grey/brown sea. The lack of historical context magnifies the bleakness of both the figure and the sea. If historiography or other myth is intertexted with the image they will not enmesh easily or lead anywhere in particular. This man is like the black-suited men depicted in Nolan’s deserts, but here there is nothing to identify the figure, even anything that is as laughable, such as a name inscribed onto the shopfront of an outpost store or hotel. *Mrs Fraser*, 1947 (fig. 68) was used to illustrate the cover of Michael Alexander’s *Mrs Fraser on the Fatal Shore* (fig. 142), a title which imposes an attitude of land as deadly, harsh, unnatural and untameable. The anonymous figure
Figure 140 – Convict, 1962, oil and enamel on hardboard, 151 x 121 cm, page 141 of SNLL.

Figure 141 – Fraser Island, 1947, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 77.4 x 105.4 cm, page 91 of SNLL.
Figure 142 - Cover illustration by Sidney Nolan credited on dust-jacket of *Mrs Fraser On the Fatal Shore* by Michael Alexander, London: Michael Joseph, 1971.
in *Fraser Island*, 1947 (fig. 141) might illustrate the cover of Marcus Clarke’s *His Natural Life*, which inscribes Australia as prison, inescapable, torturous and unconquerable. The naked male figure in *Fraser Island*, 1947 (fig. 141) is neither colonist nor colonised. He has escaped (and his flesh is even unmarked), but he is lost and doomed in a mythology that dictates that he must be lost, unable and impotent.
aboriginal motifs

Readings of traditional societies and people have until recently been made as sole prerogative of the colonisers. In *Gone Primitive: Savage Intellects, Modern Lives*, Marianna Torgovnick writes:

[t]hey exist for us in a cherished series of dichotomies: by turn gentle, in tune with nature, paradisal ideal — or violent, in need of control; what we should emulate, or, alternately, what we should fear; noble savages or cannibals. (3)

Nolan-texts such as *In the Cave*, 1957 (fig. 143), *Woman in Mangroves*, 1957 (fig. 144) and the images used for “Rite of Spring,” 1962 (fig. 145) can be read as appropriations of aboriginal images. By not intertexting the reading of these texts with assumptions about the intentions of the creator of those texts, however, the depiction of Mrs Fraser as aboriginal art-work and dancers with indigenous inter-imagery can read as empowering acts. By depicting aboriginal vocabulary, the images invite readers to intertext aboriginal art and culture with the works. *In the cave*, 1957 (fig. 143) suggests that Mrs Fraser had an effect on the culture into which she was thrust after her ship-wreck. The work suggests that her story is not only part of white histories, but will also be represented in other ways, by other cultures, as part of their
Figure 144—Woman in Mangroves, 1957, polyvinyl acetate on masonite, 48 x 60 in., plate 91 of SN.

Figure 145—Décor for Rite of Spring, 1962, mixed media on paper, 63.6 x 50.8 cm, page 127 of SNA.
historiographies. In *Dr Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World*, the text alleges that Tasmanian aboriginal culture was far more civilised than that of its colonisers. Wooreddy is depicted as an anthropologist observing an uncouth bunch of savages that rape his fellow country-women, plunder his land, and eventually round up his people as if they are wild animals.

The exploration of aboriginal life in *A Fringe of Leaves* is also complex, innovative, and is certainly not an easy display of white cultural superiority. The text continually questions white society, thereby already undermining the position of the whites who find their way into aboriginal society. Ellen has been viewed by her (now dead) husband as a work of art that he has been creating. White is conscious of constructing a woman as “a work of art,” as he places as one of the book’s epigraphs:

> A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
> To warn, to comfort, and command. (7)

Ellen is shown as having been transported around the world as property. The text is sensitive to the fact that she is constrained by her husband, her society, and even by her society’s dress-codes, “[t]he victim of her clothes ... Ellen Gluyas ran down bellowing towards the water” (192). When she first sees Jack Chance, the convict is depicted as having come from a harsh society into aboriginal society. But aboriginal society is not depicted as a paradise. There is no easy dichotomy. There is a harsh reality to both societies. Cannibalism is likened to Christian communion (which was likened to, and thought to be, cannibalism in Roman times). The rite is positioned within the text so as to disrupt the expected narratives about cannibalism, sacred rites, and life in the aboriginal community. Both artists’ texts read as unsettling explorations of colonial Australia’s past and present, especially of the notion of pre-colonial Australia as “*Terra Nullius.*” In contrast to the colonist explorers in *Voss*, who are concerned about almost every aspect of their apparently doomed journey, we are told of the aboriginal Dugald:

> when the horse lay down and died, one afternoon in the bed of a dry creek, the black was not unduly concerned. If anything, his responsibilities were less. Before abandoning the dead horse, he cut out the tongue and ate it. Then he tore a stirrup-leather off the saddle, and went forward swinging it, so that the iron at the end described great, lovely arcs against the sky. (219)
This is a person at ease in a land in which he has learned how to survive. The land is not depicted as an uninhabited wilderness.

In *A Fringe of Leaves*, both Jack and Ellen become members of aboriginal tribes. The narrative reveals aspects of both aboriginal and white culture that are both good and gruesome. When Ellen first sees Jack, he is described thus:

> [o]ne giant of a fellow, a natural clown by any standards, would twirl, and leap in the air slapping his heels, and entertain those within earshot of his patter ... Then during one of his leaping turns, she found herself so close to the clown she realized that what she had taken for conventional scars were unlike those left by tribal incisions. The expanse of the man’s back was covered with what appeared to be a patternless welter of healed wounds. (250).

The “patternless welter of healed wounds” intertexts with Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, where the scars from floggings have formed a tree on Sethe’s back:

> Something in the house braced, and in the listening quiet that followed Sethe spoke. 
> 
> “I got a tree on my back ... Whitegirl. That’s what she called it. I’ve never seen it and never will. But that’s what she said it looked like. A chokeberry tree. Trunk, branches, and even leaves ...”
> 
> [But] the wrought iron mass he had explored in the kitchen like a gold miner pawing through pay dirt was in fact a revolting clump of scars. Not a tree, as she said:’ (15-16, 21).

Both the “patternless welter” and the “revolting clump of scars” read as “uncivilised” when set against tribal rites so often denigrated as “uncivilised” by colonial texts.

Ellen learns survival skills while in captivity to the aboriginal tribe, and even after she has left the tribe Ellen climbs a tree and dives for water-lily roots (284-85).

*Fern*. 1948 (fig. 146) intertexts with the fact that, “Mrs Fraser repeatedly survived her trials on a diet of ‘a kind of Fern Root which we were obliged to procure ourselves in the swamps’” (Clark, *SNLL* 98) and also with the fact that the letters Dugald does not deliver for Voss include “the pictures of fern roots” (*Voss* 219). Nolan depicts Mrs Fraser in swamps and billabongs throughout the *Eliza Fraser* series. In *Woman and Lagoon*, 1957 (fig. 132), a figure that reads as //Mrs Fraser// wades in a pool of lilies. These images inter-image with White’s depiction of Ellen:

> growing restless in the later afternoon, she got up and wandered off on her own, without any explicit aim, and burst through the thicket upon a sheet of water strewn with lilies. In this instance the beauty of the flowers conflicted with knowledge acquired during her enslavement by the blacks ... she plunged in, and began diving, groping for the roots ... This was how he
Figure 146 – *Fern*, 1948, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 121.5 x 91.5 cm, Sydney College of Advanced Education, page 98 of *SNLL*.

Figure 147 – *Paradise garden (detail no. 1, grass tree)*, c. 1969, synthetic polymer paint on paper, 30.4 x 25.4 cm, AGNSW, gift of Patrick White 1974 (reproduced with their kind permission).
found her, breathless, goggle-eyed, and half-blinded as she surfaced, hair plastered, shoulders gleaming and rustling with water. (284-85)

Even though Ellen experiences cruelty during her brief time with indigenous people, she also learns how to live in a landscape that is coded as “un-survivable” by colonial mythography.

The text of *A Fringe of Leaves* does not show white enslavement of blacks, but white enslavement of whites, and black enslavement of Ellen. Ellen becomes a member of her tribe by force where she participates in a ritual communion, albeit in secret from the other tribe-members, and where she is subsumed by a drunkenness as she takes part in a ritual dance ceremony: “[s]he clapped and thumped and moaned, and bowed her head until it hung between her thighs. It inspired her neighbours to increased frenzy” (254). This passage intersects with Rimbaud’s *A Season in Hell*:

> Do I know nature yet? Do I know myself? *No more words.* I will bury the dead in my belly. Yells, drum, dance, dance, dance! I can’t even see the time when the whites will land and I will fall into the void.

> Hunger, thirst, yells, dance, dance, dance, dance! (*Rimbaud* 181)

The desire to transcend words drives the work of Rimbaud, Nolan and White. Burying the dead in one’s belly sets up a textual play between cannibalism and Christian communion. Nolan’s costume designs for Vaslav Nijinsky’s 1962 version of Stravinsky’s “The Rite of Spring” (fig. 145) intersect with the aboriginal ritual dancing in which Ellen Roxburgh participates (254-55). According to Jane Clark, both Nolan and the ballet’s choreographer, MacMillan, “aimed to evoke an epitome of primitive ritual [sic]” (*SNLL* 136). The dancers appeared “almost naked, with stencilled hands on their flame-coloured leotards, and make-up applied by Nolan, like Aboriginal body decoration. Nolan’s designs have a powerful life of their own, rhythmic and erotic as the ballet in performance” (136).17

Contemporary productions such as *Ochres* by Bangarra Dance Theatre, inter-image with various textual sites: Sidney Nolan’s costumes for “The Rite of Spring” (fig. 145), Rimbaud’s poetry (181), and the depiction of Ellen Gluyas lost in a “frenzy” of aboriginal dance (254). Intertextual readings of indigenous motifs appropriated by colonial Australia will always intertext with texts about invasion,
genocide, and colonial superiority. Depending entirely upon readerly strategies, however, the //woman in the cave// (fig. 143) and Nolan's costume designs for "The Rite of Spring" (fig. 145) will either read as insights into indigenous cultural perspectives, modernist (or other) appropriations of images, or intertextual/interimagic combinations of these readings with other inter-referents.
In a letter to John Tasker in 1963, Patrick White commented: "[o]ne can no longer imagine Mrs Fraser apart from the Nolan paintings" (Letters 413). Perhaps White could not, but it is another thing altogether to read into his comment that this fact is so for every reader of the historiographic myth, even every Australian reader. The intertextuality that operates between White's *A Fringe of Leaves* and Nolan's *Eliza Fraser* series, however, is arguably the most self-evident of all the intertextuality at work between the works of the two men. It is the only instance of both men creating sustained works of art based upon the same intertext. Chronologically, White's work not only intertexts with the historiographic myth, but also with Nolan's artistic intertextual responses to that myth.

White first heard ... [the story of Eliza Fraser] in Florida. Sid Nolan had hitch-hiked up to the island in 1947 with the poet Barrett Reid, who had discovered in a Brisbane library the old blood-and-guts account of Mrs Fraser's ordeal, *The Shipwreck of the Stirling Castle* ... [F]or a few weeks they lived among the timber cutters with Nolan sketching, photographing and painting his first Mrs Fraser paintings on scraps of hardboard scavenged
from the camp... Years after he left the island the theme still pursued him, and in London he painted another thirty Eliza Fraser paintings to hang in the Whitechapel Gallery's 1957 retrospective of his work. The following year in Florida he saw the Everglades, which reminded him of the swamps of Fraser Island, and... at Fort Lauderdale, Nolan told... [White] about the wreck and the island and Mrs Fraser's rescue. (PW 378).

Marr's rendition of this story seems to suggest that another mythography is attaching itself to the history of Fraser Island... that of the famous painter's visit. (How many readers associate Gauguin with Tahiti?) The cultural myths with which we surround our artists become intertexts with which their works are often also read, almost automatically at times, in a world that encrusts artists with "garlands of rarest... prose" (Voss 440). That prose is most often a laboured event as various constructs and counter-constructs intertext (either wittingly or unwittingly) to assist/hinder the apotheosis of artists into cultural heroes.

When Nolan first began investigating the theme of Eliza Fraser in 1947 he worked in ripolin. This medium gives the earlier works a plasticity that is absent from the later polyvinyl acetate works. The ripolin works are also deliberately naive, after the style of Nolan's first Kelly series. Nolan did not totally abandon the use of ripolin, however, for his 1957 Eliza Fraser works. Many of the later works combine ripolin enamel and polyvinyl acetate, and some are exclusively ripolin, but with an alteration in style. The fact that in the first series Nolan painted on "scraps of hardboard scavenged from the camp" on Fraser Island, lends a blokey, larrikin edge to the paintings. In Nolan's tropical rain-forest paintings, and in his 1957 (and beyond) Eliza Fraser [and the convict] series, viewers first see the artist's use of a new technique. These works are more densely layered, while also having a translucence because of Nolan's scraping-back technique. Robertson comments:

[The materials used for both these new groups of pictures was polyvinyl acetate, a synthetic emulsion. With this new medium came a decisive change in Nolan's working methods. The painting gesture became broader and more varied. The tonal density and comparative opacity inherent in the earlier use of ripolin gave place to a new use of colour, which was scraped down on the board... Nolan scours and scrapes the paint away to produce an illusion of light: the rich, filtered light that one finds under dense foliage, shot through with strong rays of sunlight. Here, the artist works back from dark to light, (SN 47,150).
This alteration in medium and technique enables ekphrastic intertextual readings between the earlier and the later works, as the same narrative is translated into the vocabulary of a different media. The ripolin works are more colourful and, while there is always a degree of the ephemeral to Nolan's figures, the polyvinyl acetate medium combined with his scraping-back technique foregrounds a sense that the figures in the works are going to float away, or at least, that they are about to melt into their backgrounds. This alteration in medium and style is visually evocative of the variations in the textuality of *A Fringe of Leaves*. White's writing is, at times, social comedy, which is more after the style of Nolan's ripolin works; at other times the text of *A Fringe of Leaves* is layered, image upon image, with fragmenting of narrative surface causing readerly expectations to be disrupted, just as Nolan's layering of paint causes viewers to search continually for points of reference.

Nolan's imagination created an intertextuality by filtering, excluding, and combining to some degree, every Eliza Fraser-text with which he interacted, including the lived text of his personal interaction with the geographical region of Fraser Island and the rainforests of Queensland, and any other texts with which he may have chosen to intertext his thought processes. Some material representations of these intertextual processes were made while he was in Queensland in the late 1940s. Later his intertextualities became enmeshments of virtual Eliza Fraser-texts, and virtual texts of the remembered geographical text, as well as other Nolan virtual texts about nationality, myth, and identity (both male and female). White, however, interacted notions of Eliza Fraser drawn from historical text, the everglades (which became a type of Northern Queensland), texts about nationality, myth, and identity, and Nolan's paintings based on the historico-mythical story. White also visited Fraser Island. The intertextual webs inherent in both men's material art are further complicated by the virtual texts readers bring to the historico-mythical sites of Eliza Fraser, Australia, Patrick White, and Sidney Nolan. No intertextual reading is an uncomplicated production. The more familiar we become with reading intertextually, however, both
Figure 149 – *Mrs Fraser and convict*, 1962-64, QAG, cover illustration of *A Fringe of Leaves*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1976.

Figure 150 – Cover illustration credited to Cornelia Gray on dust-jacket of *A Fringe of Leaves*, New York: Viking, 1976.
readers and creators of material texts of production are becoming incredibly adept at processing and filtering widely varying intertextual sets.

The 1982 German translation of *A Fringe of Leaves* has a dust-jacket depicting a wooden female fertility goddess painted gold. This statue is depicted from its bust to its hips, and is voluptuous. The image suggests Ancient Egypt, sensuality, and female power. The image as epigraph invites readers to intertext with primal desires, texts of ancient times, rather than those written within the last century. Australia is immaterial in this visual epigraph, rather the universal feminine and primordial rites, however they are understood, become sites with which to intertext. The 1976 Viking dust-jacket for the first edition of *A Fringe of Leaves* (fig. 150) is credited to Cornelia Gray and depicts on the back a black and white etching of a fast-sinking ship (of Eliza Fraser’s period). The front cover also relies heavily on the narrative of historic realism to make its point. A pale-skinned, classically beautiful woman is depicted in centre front, being watched by brown natives who are positioned to her right-hand side. Three native huts (non-Australian aboriginal, more after the style of Pacific Island huts) are behind the natives. The woman’s face is similar to historical representations of Eliza Fraser. The cover illustration acts to link the novel to the genre of “historical novel,” an activity which was also promoted by Penguin when it published the work as a “powerful historical novel” with Nolan’s image of *Mrs Fraser and the convict*, 1962–64 (fig. 151). Nolan’s images, however, while they are based on historical incident, move immediately away from the vocabulary of historical realism. His images of Mrs Fraser’s appropriation into aboriginal society consider the ways in which indigenous Australian society may have been affected by her presence, and do not read solely as colonist or modernist points-of-view. Neither White nor Nolan wished to relate simply what had been recorded as happening in Australia at that time, but what would happen forever, potentially, in the texts they were creating, texts that would mutate as time passed.

Nolan’s *Mrs Fraser and convict*, 1962–64 (fig. 148), which was used for both the cover of the 1976 Jonathan Cape edition of *A Fringe of Leaves* (fig. 149) and also for that published by Penguin in 1982 (fig. 151). The work depicts two naked figures
— Mrs Fraser and the convict —

Figure 151 – Cover illustration by Sidney Nolan credited on back cover of *A Fringe of Leaves*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982.

Figure 152 – Cover design by Neil Stuart and cover illustration by Mel Odom credited on back cover of *A Fringe of Leaves*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979 (First published 1977).
walking on the left-hand side of the work.\textsuperscript{19} They appear to be supporting one another. The colour of their flesh is the same as that used to depict the soldiers at Gallipoli. There is a wooden-ness to the colour, which reads both as suntan, and also as inter-imaging with the Biblical suggestion that people were made from earth. Paradoxically, however, there is also an ethereal sense to Nolan’s use of medium. The convict has stripes across his flesh, that simulate both whipping stripes, the initiatory incisions of Aboriginal cultures, and also cliché, black-and-white striped, American prisoners’ uniforms. The stripes also suggest that this creature is not a man, but a wild camouflaged inhabitant of the land, an animal-like being. The fact that the man and the woman seem to be fused together suggests the physical connection of marriage, and intertexts with the Biblical myth that a man shall “cleave” to his wife. Their downcast faces suggest that they have been evicted from some paradise, like an antipodean Adam and Eve. The work obviously intertexts with \textit{A Fringe of Leaves} where chance, rather than God, seems to have evicted Ellen and Jack from the relative (and dubious) paradise of colonial “civilisation,” into another place which is, in White’s vocabulary, not “hell,” but an alternative culture.

When Ellen and Chance walk back towards colonial “civilisation,” White’s text forms an intertextuality with Nolan’s \textit{Mrs Fraser and the convict}, 1962-64 (fig. 148),

[y]et a little distance further they put their arms round each other, as of one accord, hobbling, staggering, on ... she was thinking of the engraving in the book she had found in Mr Roxburgh’s library, in which the inhabitants were shown escaping from the Cities of the Plain. Whatever had happened the couples were holding to each other as desperately as she and the convict, and every bit as naked. Because of the nakedness she had not asked her husband to explain the situation.

Now, as they escaped from one hell into what might prove a worse, however fulsome their reception at Moreton Bay, this man was leaning on her so heavily she hoped she was not a similar drag. She no longer believed in physical strength; it was the will that counted. (298-299)

The couple in Nolan’s work seem to be holding one another upright. Their eyes are downcast, and even though the couple seems united there is a sadness, a sense of fatigue, and a stoicism, to their demeanours. They are also marginalised within the frame of the picture. The woman is only just inside the frame on the left hand side. The convict is more central to the discourse of the text than the woman, but he is still
to one side. This marginalisation is evocative of the hierarchies of centrality, both at
the time of Eliza Fraser’s life, and at the time at which Nolan was painting: woman
was marginalised; criminal man was more central, but still displaced in a patriarchal
colonial society; and in colonial society, aboriginal person was absent. There is a sense
in which the sea in this image might be torn from pieces of paper and pasted onto the
work, like the fragments of a collage. This suggestion of collage causes a disruption to
the surface of the picture, unsettling readerly expectations and foregrounding the fact
that the painting is a construction, not an easy space into which to be submerged.

In Australia, beach images are often associated with happiness and recreation.
Here there are two figures who are confronting viewers with a physical, and even a
metaphysical, unrest. They upset our expectations by being naked (without being
joyful and youthful in their nakedness), criminal (in the man’s case), criminal by
implication (in the woman’s case), and unhappy. The painting operates like one of
Cindy Sherman’s film stills. We are invited, compelled, to finish the narrative. Who
are they? Where are they going? Where have they been? As White’s narrative intertexts
with this work, we can read the ploughed ground of the farmer’s paddocks (across
which Ellen crawls towards “civilisation”) as a virtual sea of uncertainty. In this inter-
image reading, we know that the male figure in *Mrs Fraser and the convict*, 1962-64
(fig. 148), is going to make a decision that will return him to the horizon, leaving the
woman to crawl in “a lopsided action dictated by the ruts, until halted by the barn and a
pair of man’s boots” (300). The ground in Nolan’s painting suggests ruts. His
painting of *Escaped Convict* running without a right arm might even be the next frame
in which we see the convict of this intertextual collage. Nolan says, “critics shouldn’t
worry about a missing arm” (*SNA* 128). Perhaps the convict left his severed limb
with the woman of *Mrs Fraser and the convict* after their uneasy separation. *Escaped
Convict*, 1962 (fig. 130) might well have been chosen to be put on the back of the
novel.

There is a shift in meaning that occurs when the Odom-illustration used on the
cover of *A Fringe of Leaves* (fig. 152) is read as a visual epigraph, when compared to
the intertextual play set in place by the use of Nolan’s *Mrs Fraser and convict*, 1962-
64 (fig. 148) as the cover-illustration for the novel. The use of Nolan’s painting invites viewer/readers to import all the other Fraser/convict series into their readings of the novel, and thereby enrich inter-imagic readings of the novel. Nolan’s painting is also blurred and allows each reader to invent Mrs Fraser or Ellen to some extent. Ellen is described in the novel as a physically strong woman. After her shipwreck and capture by aboriginal people her hair is hacked off with a shell and we are told “the victim put up a hand and found she had become a stubbled fright … [and] [f]rom the bloodied hand returned to her lap she knew she could only look horrifying. But the women had not finished their work … [They smeared rancid fat and charcoal] into … [her] shamefully white skin.” (224-5). This is not the finely drawn, delicate, fragile young girl of Odom’s illustration, with her clear, almost translucent skin (fig 152). In Mel Odom’s painting, the feathers in Mrs Fraser’s hair may be read as intertextual imports from Nolan’s representation of Mrs Fraser in Death of Captain Fraser, 1948 (fig. 153). As far as I have been able to discover, this is Nolan’s only image of Captain Fraser. That his dying moments (and death) are depicted here (as they are in the historico-myth), inter-images with A Fringe of Leaves, in which the Captain’s counterpart, Austin Roxburgh, is shown to be weak, impotent, and finally, dead.
Intertexting these facts with Australian mythography, the colonial patriarchy reads metaphorically as maimed and doomed. This man is not Prospero, Crusoe, Bligh, or even Fletcher Christian shipwrecked, but the weakened Captain Fraser. It is the female who triumphs in this myth. In *A Fringe of Leaves*, when Ellen returns to the colonial patriarch, the commandant, Ellen will not betray either the aboriginal people or Chance. The commandant has been fatally wounded. His authority is exposed as impotent.

The Fraser/Bracefell legend is that Mrs Fraser, after having been ship-wrecked on Fraser Island, lived with the aboriginal people for 52 days before she came into contact with Bracefell, a deserting convict who had lived with aboriginal people for six years. The official version of the story is that she was rescued by a convict, John Graham, who offered to rescue her, hoping to receive a pardon. The legend suggests that Mrs Fraser asked Bracefell to assist her to return to civilisation, in return for which she would ask the Governor for his free pardon. According to Colin MacInnes:

> [at] the first sight of European settlement, Mrs Fraser rounded on her benefactor and threatened to deliver him up to justice if he did not immediately decamp. Bracefell returned, disillusioned, to the inhospitable Bush ... This "betrayal" theme — in which the traitress is portrayed naked in grotesque postures and the stripes of her saviour’s convict dress in skeletonic bars — is evidently one that preoccupies [Nolan] ... Of what can these potent pictures be the allegory? Possibly of some personal conception of an essential factor in the man-woman relationship (as if Bracefell and Mrs Fraser were an Adam and Eve in a latter-day and rather terrible Eden). (SN 21-2).

Readerly freedom to interpret the works, however, certainly enables readings that oppose such closures of the works. In *A Fringe of Leaves*, White subverts the misogyny of both the Adam and Eve myth (which involves Eve’s betrayal of both God and Adam), and the official mythico-history of Eliza Fraser’s betrayal of the convict: Ellen does not betray anyone in the novel. Kay Schaffer provides an insightful revision of the his-story of Eliza Fraser in her book *In the Wake of First Contact*, teasing the intertextual site open to reveal a complex diversity of texts and intertextual readings. The historico-mythical story operates within the intertextuality at work between White and Nolan, but the intertextuality that operates, and plays, specifically
between the works of the two men invites explorations that desire both transgression and innovation.

Readings of texts and intertextualities are constrained by the complex biochemical, emotional and physical responses of human beings, but they are also necessarily constrained by material textual and intertextual signifiers. Nolan’s *Mrs Fraser and convict*, 1964 (fig. 148), which appears on the dust-jacket of Jonathan Cape’s first edition of *A Fringe of Leaves* (fig. 149), exists as a painting which is currently held by the Art Gallery of Queensland. The work also exists as reproductions in various pamphlets and catalogues, as postcards, and inside numerous text-books in varying shades and mutations of the “original” painting’s colours. Various editions of White’s *A Fringe of Leaves* exist in many and varied sites around the world. There are numerous historical and historico-mythical texts (including films) about the wreck of the *Stirling Castle* and the survival of Eliza Fraser. Other intertextualities also exist, such as Fiona Foley’s art-works; Michael Ondaatje’s book of poetry, *the man with seven toes* (based on Nolan’s images of Mrs Fraser and the convict); and critical revisions such as Kay Schaffer’s book, which offers a cultural study based on the various representations of Eliza Fraser. There is a physical intertextuality of all these texts because they all intersect to greater and lesser degrees, with various stories of Eliza Fraser. But within virtual readerly spaces, versions of these material texts can be envisaged and modified, intertextualities that are formed by drawing on other virtual-intertextual-collages, and/or virtual texts that have been imagined and/or dreamed (and that have no material textual existence anywhere). Textual boundaries blur as the process of reading allows us the freedom to intertext what it is that we see in material space with what we have seen in the past, and also with what we can imagine and/or dream.

White-text becomes Nolan-image, and Nolan-text becomes White-image, and both these intertexts are continually becoming-other-texts, sometimes both becoming the same text of history, poetry, imaginative prose, or art at the same time. To map the reading process, a diagram (or a series of diagrams) needs to take into account all aspects of signic inter-relationships. They need to allow for the inter-relationships
between reader/viewers, material works in all their forms, intertextualities in all their material forms, other material written discourses, artists' readings of their own works, other readings, myths, and cultural contexts. And those diagrams also need to allow for the inter-relationships between sets to be in continual flux. Diagram 10 is an attempt to map these relationships. Circle E represents a reader's interaction with a range of texts, any one of which may be the "primary" or "new" text. During the reading process, information is drawn into the reader's virtual space by readerly interaction both with material texts and remembered virtual texts. Circles A, B, C, and D might be material or virtual depending upon the type of reading being described. The intertexts of *A Fringe of Leaves* will include cultural constructions of Patrick White as cultural hero/fiend, as will the *Eliza Fraser* series include intertextualities with Nolan as national myth. The porous boundaries of the circles imply that texts can easily be infiltrated by other texts. The alleys represent those times during the reading process when readers make deliberate choices to include or to exclude potential intertexts. The open-ness of all the circles to "extra-reading" space represents the ways in which any text can suddenly become a potential intertext during any particular reading event. It
also allows for intertextuality with entities such as "the collective unconscious," dreams, and/or any other constructions that might be theorised as intertextual sites. The central concave-sided diamond-shape represents any particular transient reading, or, in order to account for non-meaningful readings, the shape may represent any variety of transient signified, transient moment, or interim conclusion that is arrived at by interaction with a variety of (inter)intertexts. These readings are limited only by readerly creativity.
list of written epigraphs

"Henceforward we walk" (epigraph to Jardin Exotique in The Aunt's Story 133).
"Child, certain skies have sharpened my eyesight" (Rimbaud 221).

semitotics and intertextuality
"The drawing of breath" (Malouf 81-82).
"The power this" (Malouf 77-78).
image/inter-image
"From where he was lying" (RC 451).

Mrs Fraser: Queen Nebuchadnezzar, or Queen Lear?
"The same hour was the thing fulfilled" (The Book of Daniel 4:33).

notes

1 I consider all virtual texts to be artificially-produced texts (texts that are made by human beings). Artificially-produced texts that exist outside the spaces of human beings, however, are material artificially-produced texts. For the sake of clarity, I only refer to material "artificially-produced" texts as "artificially-produced" texts in the body of this thesis, in order to distinguish between material "non-artificially-produced texts" such as "actual" trees, (which, of course, once they intertext with readerly intertexts, become artificially produced virtual intertextual readings of "actual" trees).

2 It is possible to argue that «Voss» infers any end-results of reading intertextually, but this would mean that any Voss could mean not only «Voss», but also, theoretically, «Judd» or any «xxxx». A reader might intertext Voss with sufficient intertexts to conclude that it means «Judd». To avoid the confusion of such a wide range of meanings being always attributable to the set, «Voss», I use angle brackets to infer the range of meanings that are more specifically attached to the culturally and otherwise understood range of meanings for any word at any particular time (see diagram 11 in section four of this thesis). Reading intertextually it is possible to infer that one reading of Voss is «Judd», but to widen semiotics to the extent where Voss could logically read as «Judd», would make semiotic graphics almost meaningless.

3 Material sign-vehicles mutate when they are read, become virtual texts, and are then re-uttered into the realm of material sign-vehicles by reader/writer/artists. Material sign-vehicles also mutate when the intertexts, with which they are normally read, alter.

4 White writes, "I couldn’t get the death of Voss right, and I was in bed with bronchitis feeling like death. I suddenly got out and put on the Bartok Violin Concerto, and everything began to come right" (PW 318).

5 From another perspective, all "lived texts" are artificially produced because they cannot be understood, or read, without intertexting with the virtual (inter)texts inside any readerly space. So, {lived experience of beach} is always already an intertextuality of actual beach and activity, with readerly cultural and other intertextual understanding of that experience. That intertextual reading can then be read as an "artificially produced" text, not as a "non-artificially" produced text. Reading intertextually, however, enables readers to separate texts (theoretically) for a time, to choose not to intertext with certain texts. Hence, {lived experience on beach} can exist as a text that is observed (in theory) before it intertexts with all the intertexts that will transform it into an intertextual reading of that {non-artificially-produced experience}.

6 "Mañach, whom Picasso met at the beginning of his stay in Paris, was his first dealer. They separated at the end of 1901, but Mañach continued to show Picasso in the exhibitions he organised for Berthe Weill" (Daix et al 162). Riva Castleman writes, "No other artist in the twentieth-century produced more artist’s books than Pablo Picasso" (73).

7 The scraping-back technique is also evident in Landscape, 1957, which depicts a kind of Leda with an enormous swan in the sky. The swan reads as scraping the colour out of the sky. This image is part of the Leda series, but is removed from it because of its open title.

8 Other Nolan depictions of Kelly’s head outside his helmet are:
Kelly and Scanlan, 1945 (fig. 69). A similar likeness appears on Kelly’s jail record (SNLL 74)/
[unhelmeted framed]Ned Kelly, [1946] (fig. 65). A similar likeness appears on Kelly's jail record (SNLL 74).

[unhelmeted ] Kelly Head, 1947 (fig 201).

9 Ellen also reads as a type of Christ figure, a type of Daphne who was turned into a tree by Apollo, and a kind of Ariel, who was ensnared in a tree by the witch Sycorax (in Shakespeare's The Tempest).


11 Kathy Acker reports seeing King Lear performed in New York with males playing all the female parts and vice versa (42-3).

12 This convict intertexts with Rimbaud's "Dance of the Hanged Men," "On the black gallows, one-armed fellow. /The paladins are dancing, dancing" (Rimbaud 37).

13 Robertson sees these lines in the following terms: "Nolan has continued to develop paintings based upon many small Gallipoli studies. In these, there are references back, in time, to the paintings of batters at St Kilda, with striped towels used as a motif against figures, as decoration or to suggest a possible wound or stigmata" (SN 48).

14 Jeanette Hoorn writes, "In Self-Portrait (Gone Primitive), 1992, [Gordon Bennett] inserts himself into the story of his own positionality by intervening into the symbolic inscription of his own identity. He places an image of himself onto a cover of Marianna Torgovnick's study of how "primitivism" became big in the west' (220). The photograph positioned over Torgovnick's book, depicts Bennett as a young boy on one side, and a hand holding up an African mask on the other side of the image.

15 Marcia Langton writes, "A major theme of Australian art ... has been landscape, and only with a few exceptions, such as Elizabeth Durack, Sidney Nolan and Russell Drysdale, the landscape art has been a virtual representation of the myth of terra nullius [the poignant depictions of Aboriginal people in Durack and Drysdale's works coincide with the introduction of administered reserves and the sentiment of 'smoothing the pillow of the dying race'] (14).


17 "Both Nolan and MacMillan had studied Axel Poignant's photographs of Arnhem land Aboriginal dances" (SNLL 137).

18 Kay Schaffer critiques Nolan's images of Mrs Fraser as aboriginal image because, she argues, Nolan is attempting to contact an "essential" human nature by modernist appropriations of indigenous images (147-152). This reading, however, is closed. I read these images as investigations of how indigenous peoples represent other cultures (even though the "indigenous" images were made by a white person).

19 White writes, "Sid Nolan has said he will do a jacket for A Fringe of Leaves, but that may mean going to his studio and carrying off something not connected with the book at the last moment. That is what happened in the past; sometimes the drawing suited the book, sometimes not at all. I'd be happier about Desmond doing it, but I had to ask Sid because he is the one who discovered Mrs Fraser. If he can produce the right thing at the right movement without interfering with his serious work, that will be perfect" (Letters 461).
Figure 154 – *Paradise garden (detail no. 2, flowers)*, c. 1968, synthetic polymer paint on paper, 30.4 x 25.3, AGNSW, gift of Patrick White 1974 (reproduced with their kind permission).

Figure 155 – *Paradise garden (detail no. 3, lily)*, 1968, synthetic polymer paint on paper, 30.4 x 25.3, AGNSW, gift of Patrick White 1974 (reproduced with their kind permission).
Figure 156 — *Shark (detail)*, 1958, synthetic polymer paint on paper, 30.5 x 25.3 cm, AGNSW, gift of Patrick White 1974 (reproduced with their kind permission).

Figure 157 — *Snake (detail)*, 1958, synthetic polymer paint on paper, 30.5 x 25.3 cm, AGNSW, gift of Patrick White 1974 (reproduced with their kind permission).
4: deterritorialisation
I knew I hadn’t a scholar’s mind. Such as I had was more like the calico bag hanging from the sewing-room door-knob, stuffed with snippets of material of contrasting textures and clashing colours, which might at some future date be put to some practical, aesthetic, or even poetic use. I believe it is this rag-bag of a disorderly mind which has more than anything offended some of my Australian academic critics.

Patrick White

*Christmas Day Collage* (fig. 158)

Identities drawn from diverse contexts and levels of value are confronted not only physically, within the limits of the work they form, but metaphysically and associationally, within (and modified by) the unique sensibility of the spectator. Even taken in isolation, the possible meanings of objects and fragments are equally rich...

William C. Seitz

*the Art of Assemblage*

collage and bricolage

Collage is text-production that actively destabilises notions of textual territory. Assemblage is neither (merely) construction nor (merely) production. Assemblage is a means of producing text that involves editing texts, and placing fragments of intertexts into “new” texts. Assemblage may or may not involve making and/or altering meanings, but it always involves making and/or altering signifiers. Intertextuality involves assemblage at both material and virtual levels of textuality. It is not merely chance that led Nolan and White to make works so full of intertextual references; and it is not merely chance that leads readers today to so willingly, actively, and (sometimes)
even involuntarily participate in acts of intertextual reading. Both artists and readers have been well-tutored.

Collage emerged onto the art scene in Europe in the early twentieth-century with the birth of Cubism. Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso were some of its first exponents. Collage may have existed at any time, however, and Eddie Wolfram traces its origins through various cultures throughout the last millennium, citing examples of silk on parchment in Germany in the early seventeenth century; both cutting paper and decorating poems with cut paper in Japan for over a thousand years; thirteenth century Persian collage leather book bindings; fifteenth century, western European collage heraldic coats of arms in family registers; Mexican feather work in the sixteenth century Persian paper collages of delicately cut images of blossoms and leaves; and Wolfram also provides many other examples (7-10). The potential for the practice of collage that involves cutting complex images, and complex word-texts (and/or ideas), from their contexts and re-instating them out of their original contexts, has always existed. Many forms of collage have proliferated this century, however, with the increased use of the camera and other tools of reproduction making it possible to vandalise images in ways that used to be either illegal and/or impractical.

If the camera had not existed, it is still conceivable that Max Ernst and others may have stolen images from library books, or may have removed them from valuable books that they owned. Collage that involves moving complex images would not have been as likely to continue, however, if obtaining those images had become cost prohibitive (and/or illegal). From the practical performance of acts of collage, such as the works of Ernst, have evolved all manner of variations. Nolan experimented with collage, using such diverse objects as images from books, his sister’s smocking, gift-wrapping, the feathers of birds, and twigs (figs. 58, 110, 158, 200). The movement of collage technique into painting took place as a matter of course as artists presented papier-collé in the medium of paint. Nolan often depicted a piece of painted wallpaper in his works as if it were actually papier collé (figs. 113 & 114). He did occasionally glue pieces of paper to his painted works. In *Kelly and Sergeant Kennedy*, 1945, the policeman’s head is a piece of paper that has been painted over. All collage involves
intertextuality, but it is the collage of artists in the twentieth-century, with its ability to create slippages of meaning, to "speak ... of the irrational," to merge while also signifying separation, to subvert and revise the ordinary, which makes that collage an ideal tool for the concerns of both White and Nolan.² It has always been possible to imagine disjunction and slippages of meaning, but to be presented with so many new images and texts, in such a diversity of textual media, as we have been this century; to live, now, in what is like a collage society, makes the operation of intertextuality seem common-place.

Werner Spies says of collage,

[p]robably no other term defines more comprehensively the conditions and possibilities of twentieth-century art than collage. Though basically a technical term, it seems to be applicable to every modern style; and yet the meaning and function that collage assumes within each style, each work even, are fraught with contradiction. (Spies 11)

And so it is with intertextuality, collage is integral to our understanding of the intertexting of texts. Words, images, and ideas are cut from other texts and are re-contextualised, as well as being re-contextualised, within new textual planes that are both virtual and material. And yet the texts that have been cut still exist within their older contexts.³ A "new" collage-text invites its reader/viewers to interact both with its fragments as they exist in that new context, and with the whole texts from which those fragments were taken and reproduced. And this is only the physical surface of an intertextual-collage. The collage metaphor is equally applicable to the virtual texts inherent in readerly constructions of intertextuality where physical texts are re-constituted into virtual space, re-arranged, and interspersed with other remembered texts, to form new collagic virtual signifying surfaces. Most virtual collages are moving collages, rather than the static forms of collage that result from the medium constraints (usually) accepted by artists working inside the tradition of painting. Film, television, and computerised virtual realities, however, involve us in dynamic intertextual collages on a daily basis. Life itself involves a continual process of editing, assembling, and intertexting widely divergent (inter)textual experiences.

White and Nolan both led privileged lives that enabled them to move in company that valued literary and other written texts, lives that enabled them to travel
and see many works of art. Thus they were able to refer to those texts because they had their own virtual texts to use as resource centres. The intertextuality that operates both between and within White and Nolan texts, however, would not be as accessible to reader/viewers today, without the proliferation of visual texts that has occurred with the advent of mass-reproduction. The proliferation of reproduced art-works such as plates in books, high-quality prints, postcards, book-covers, advertising materials that have appropriated images of visual art, and images on wrapping paper and T-shirts; and the increase in the availability of printed texts, tape-recordings, television productions, and cinematic productions; all provide reader/viewers with the potential to enter some of the text-worlds known by White and Nolan when they were creating their works. This is not to say that White and Nolan needed to have known all the texts with which readers might read their works intertextually. Translation rights belong to readers. As well as the intertextual creativity brought to texts by readers,
however, White and Nolan both deliberately placed into their works invitations to read many intertexts, either by intertextual reference, direct quotation, or, in the case of Nolan, direct pasting. With the general proliferation of available (inter)texts in our society, though, the operation of intertextuality initiated by readers, especially intertextuality that operates across different textual media, is being greatly facilitated.

Intertextualities are multi-layered collages over which new images are printed, multiple exposures over multiple exposures that sometimes form into meanings, that sometimes form into spaces where textual apprehension is devoid of meanings. The multiple visual references of Joan Letcher (while also being examples of material inter-images) are excellent metaphors for the intertextuality and inter-imagery that operates between both written and/or visual (inter)textual spaces. As part of textual space of this thesis, Letcher’s *Untitled*, 1993 (fig. 159), acts both as a visual metaphor for intertextuality and it also demonstrates that both words and images can operate as critical language. Appropriating Letcher’s image, and using it to suggest metaphors and meanings that specifically serve the purpose of this text, counters the assumption that critical language must always be analytic; and asserts that the vocabularies of critical languages are diverse, and that their intended meanings (as with all meanings) can never be dictated by the words or other signifiers that are used in an attempt to convey those sets of meanings. The action of collage upon our understandings of what can comprise texts has enabled a potential becoming-other of all texts to be assimilated into our vocabularies.
One curious fact emerged. From certain angles the canvas presented a reversal of the relationship between permanence and motion, as though the banks of a river were to begin to flow alongside its stationary waters. The effect pleased the painter, who had achieved more or less by accident what he had discovered years before while lying in the gutter.

Patrick White

The swaying motion on the bank of the river falls ...

Rimbaud,

‘Motion’

*becoming-other*

Textual assimilation is dependant upon any readers’ various perceptions of textual information. Transient readerly moments are in continual flux. The activity of mutation is the hallmark of all readerly/textual interaction. In Magritte’s *The Treason of Images*, 1928-29, (fig. 101) the depiction of the word *pipe* within the picture plane is at the same time the French word for pipe with all its attendant meanings, the English word for pipe with all its attendant meanings, and part of the word *parallelepiped*. The images of the letters “p,” “i,” “p,” and “e” may be read as pure forms, devoid of linguistic implications, if any reader chooses to wilfully suspend their knowledge of any virtual (inter)texts that suggest that “p,” “i,” “p,” and “e” signify either alphabetical letters, or various signifieds for “pipe.” There are innumerable other signifieds for the signifier *pipe*. Any reader’s understanding of an image or a word will be affected by any of numerous virtual intertexts that might be associated with that word or image. For example, when reading *The Eye of the Storm*, a non-Australian who knows very little about the Australian bush might equate the word “gum” exclusively with Elizabeth Hunter’s dentureless oral cavity, or, indeed, her dentured cavity. Flora thinks: “[p]ower couldn’t resist trampling. Not even while mumbling a prayer *through* bluish gums. Was it prayers Elizabeth Hunter mumbled on?” (*TES* 300 [emphasis added]). But the prayers might be words uttered *through* a bluish oral cavity, or they might be spoken by a person who is walking *through* bluish eucalypts (gums), or both -- whether the walking or the praying be actual, remembered, or dreamed. The prayer might even be mumbled while Elizabeth is chewing various different shades of bluish bubble gums. In *Riders in the Chariot* White writes of the “ladies” on Himmelfarb’s train, “[a]s they sat and talked together, of cakes, and illnesses, and relatives -- or just talked, they worked the words inside their mouths like
the bread of kindness, or sugared lollies [or sugar gums]. The mauve plastic of their gums shone" (TES 382). These lines also have a bizarre intertext with Rimbaud's "Bottom" from "Les Illuminations," “[a]t the foot of the baldaquino supporting her precious jewels and her physical masterpieces, I was a fat bear with purple gums and thick sorry-looking fur” (227).

The word “gum” does not have a completely open-ended range of meanings, however, even though it might be possible to argue philosophically that it does have an infinite range of meanings if observed over an infinite time-span through all possible metaphysical spaces. For most English-speaking people, however, the word “gum” might convey all the dictionary descriptions of gum (past, present, and future, given that readers are always entering what is called “the future”); a range of associated meanings of words that include the letters of gum, but that do not convey
the dictionary descriptions of gum, (for example gumma, Gumby™, or gumption); a
range of meanings for words that are not “gum,” but that might enter any reader’s
mind while deciding that the word being read is “gum” and not “gun” or “hum”; a
range of intertexts to do with “gum” both when it is being read in its particular context,
and when it is not, (such as other Whitean references to “plastic gums,” the experience
of {walking among gum-trees}, paintings by Francis Bacon of what might be
interpreted as large dentures, and numerous other intertexts); and also the current
context in which the word “gum” is being read. The set of meanings is always
potentially unstable. The instability can be represented by a modified Venn diagram.
The four circles in diagram 11 have not been allowed to intersect because circles A, B,
C, and D may be constructed in ways so as to make them mutually exclusive, even
though it would be possible to intersect certain aspects of the circles. The possibility of
such textual osmosis, then, is allowed for by the boundaries of the circles having been
made porous, rather than overlapping them. The semi-solid boundaries allow for the
mutations and movements of meanings and perceptions that are always possible in
intertextual relationships, no matter how fixed any sets of meanings or perception may
appear to be.

If Jacques Chirac’s surname had happened to be Gum, a new set of cultural
meanings for “gum” could have been drawn into set C, “intertexts,” via its porous
boundaries, which are open to all other potential intertexts. The fifth circle (which
represents any particular reader reading the word “gum”) intersects with each circle,
and acts of deliberate intertextual reading are indicated by parallel lines. Such alleys of
deliberate textual reading have also been allowed to access the space outside the sets in
this diagram to demonstrate that readers are always capable of deliberately interacting
with any of many other intertexts that exist outside the intertextual set immediately
being considered, and also that readers are capable of choosing to ignore such
intertexts. The deliberate readerly filtering of word-sets, and the textual/intertextual
movement that operates at a subconscious level through the porous boundaries of each
circle, result in transient intertextual readings of “gum,” in the above-mentioned
context within The Eye of the Storm. These transient readings are located in the central
concave-sided diamond-shape of the diagram. Those understandings, however, are always unstable, and subject to alteration (even if a reader has been taught that there is a definitive truth that is attached to any signifier, or any signifying set). Oblique intertexts from BE sets can lead to slightly bizarre intertextual misreadings. If *gum* intertexts with {plum} because that fruit is being eaten at the time of reading, this intertextuality could lead to a deeper blue being attributed to the gums in the text during that reading. Even poetic rhythms from BE sets might affect intertextual readings. The word *hum* might intertext with “gum” as a reader sorts through meanings for gum, and *hum* might remind a reader of prayers being hummed. The word *hum* might then intertext with images of humming birds, flight, birds in general, bees, flies, and/or any other of innumerable other possible intertextual/inter-imagic links.

French readers of *The Eye of the Storm*, who are familiar with the works of Odilon Redon, may be able to access, via their memories alone, numerous Redon inter-images, of which an Australian reader might remain unaware. Numerous Redon etchings and their captions can be drawn into intertextual readings of *The Eye of the Storm* when readers are invited to read both intertextually and inter-imagically with Elizabeth, who reads a book of Redon's etchings (*TES* 200). Even after viewing Redon’s works, non-French readers may still not understand many of the possible intertextualities and inter-images that only long-term cultural exposure to art-works can enable readers to know, especially in all their intertextual cultural contexts. Similarly, with the poetry of Arthur Rimbaud, which intertexts with the works of both White and Nolan, French readers would be much more aware of the extent of intertextuality playing between the various (inter)texts than most Australian readers.

I have suggested that there is an interplay between material texts and virtual texts that takes place within virtual reading spaces during the reading process. There are, of course, numerous other ways of describing the reading process. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari suggest that one possible inter-relationship between a text and a reader is like that of the wasp-orchid and the wasp. The metaphor of “becoming-other” during the process of intertextual reading, is fertile with suggestivity. In “Rhizome,” Deleuze and Guattari propose that,
The orchid deterritorializes by forming an image, a ... [map] of a wasp; but the wasp reterritorializes on that image. The wasp is nevertheless deterritorialized, becoming a piece in the orchid's reproductive apparatus. But it reterritorializes the orchid by transporting its pollen ... [What is happening is] a veritable becoming, a becoming-wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp. Each of these becomings brings about the deterritorialization of one term and the reterritorialization of the other; the two becomings interlink and form relays in a circulation of intensities pushing the deterritorialization ever further. (Deleuze & Guattari 10).

There will be many ways of interpreting this fragment of text. "Rhizome" is an ambiguous and ambivalent essay, and it is not possible within the boundaries of this thesis fully to explore its implications, but I have suggested two possible analogous readings of the fragment quoted. The wasp-orchid, (really a bee-orchid) in figures 160 and 161, serves to re-inforce the visual aspects of my appropriations of Deleuze and Guattari's theory. My first reading substitutes a reader for the orchid, who, having read a text (wasp), will make a virtual map of that text-wasp inside her/his virtual reading space. That reader's virtual space is now deterritorialized by being partially made up of newly re-constituted virtual-material-wasp-text. Within readerly space there is a map of the text, but the map is in a state of flux as that reader moves through a series of possible understandings of the "wasp-text," as the wasp-text intersects with other virtual texts stored in that reader. There is a sense in which the virtual wasp-text may find virtual readerly-orchid-texts within that readerly orchid-space (deterritorialising again and again), provoking a virtual circulation of intensities to continue within that virtual space, as well as interlinking back to the textual world outside virtual readerly space.

The material text, however, has also become unstable in the process of interaction with the reader-orchid, as it not only exists within the framework of its own physical form, but has been recorded, at least partially, into the reader-orchid's virtual world. If that reader re-interacts with the same material text (or with an intertext of that text) the original virtual wasp-map (that is always already metamorphosing into different forms), might be overlaid by the material wasp-text again, forming a modified virtual map, and the process will continue. Texts become even more a part of a reader's mind, then, every time that reader interacts with the same texts, whether by

memory or by re-reading those texts. The text that moves away from the orchid-reader will not carry the reader’s “pollen,” unless that reader has physically marked a text, or a tutor, perhaps, has marked a student’s work with comment; but the virtual map of the wasp-text (that stays with the reader) might emerge covered with readerly pollen, in an intertextual metamorphosed form, onto the pages of critical text, as an epigraph, or as part of a creative gesture inspired by the virtual, intertextually edited map of the wasp-text.

Alternatively, a text-orchid might destabilise its boundaries by displaying a wasp-image of “wasp-reader-speech” in order to “attract” a reader. A reader-wasp might then become deterritorialized when it interacts with the orchid-text, thereby allowing its boundaries to include orchid-text. There is an illusion that the wasp-reader becomes part of the orchid-text, but that reader is still defined by the boundaries of the orchid-text. This analogy well suits our textual interaction with the actual world in which we move rather like wasps on an enormous orchid. The analogy also works for larger texts, which cannot easily be recalled in full, and meditated upon in one sitting. By reading an orchid-text, a reader reterritorializes the text, because, by reproducing the orchid-text (as virtual text) a wasp-reader is able to transport that text elsewhere and relay its substance to others. The text, then, multiplies. And also, by perceiving the orchid-text, the reader-wasp defines and gives life to what might (as well) otherwise have no being at all, literally.

It is a mistake to attempt to carry these analogies too far. The creative reader-directed intertextual editing to which I have been alluding, is not well conveyed by the analogy of various pollen-texts intermixing on the legs of a reader-wasp, or pollen-text intermingling inside a reader-orchid, having been transported there by a wasp-text. After initial interaction with material texts, people need nothing other than their own virtual worlds in order to create myriad texts and intertexts, even in the absence of all present external sensory stimuli. Oral history is testimony to the fact that texts can survive in the absence of tangible material texts. Many texts do not really attract readers at all, even though we speak of “being attracted” to texts, and even though the advertising world operates on the premise that its texts are capable of such orchid-
waspful attraction of wasp-reader-consumers. Where the analogy is successful is in considering that two entities can be both separate, and also (inter)textually enmeshed. The notion of a becoming-reader of texts and a becoming-text of readers is especially useful when considering intertextuality. In diagram 12 material text becomes virtual text (or reader). This process involves an intertextuality between the two different media during the reading process, material text and virtual text. (Thus all acts of reading can be read as acts of intertextuality.) The diagram works equally well for the becoming-other of material text and material intertext as shown in diagram 13. The model of becoming, appropriated from “Rhizome,” involves the notion of sexual
reproduction in its metaphoric apparatus. When we view the world, we reproduce that physical place as part of our visual virtual space, but it is not the actual world, it is a map. If we were blind, we would be aware of the many other ways in which we reproduce aspects of the physical world that are not visual – complex sensory-olfactory-gustatory-sound maps. The notion of mutual becoming-other, however, does not require that off-spring be produced. It is the metaphor of "mutually becoming-other" that I have found most useful in mobilising "Rhizome" as a model for the process of reading intertextually.

The disguises used by fauna in the natural world can also make useful models for (inter)textual relationships as they also involve the mutual destabilisation of boundaries. There is a species of praying mantis that disguises itself as an orchid in order to protect itself from predators (fig. 162), but its ability to thus create camouflage may be read as yet another analogy for textual-intertextual play. If a real orchid is a virtual Nolan-text constructed by a reader, that reader may adapt a White text (like the praying mantis) to nestle onto the orchid's stem disguised as an actual orchid by wilfully deceiving him/herself into believing that the two orchid apparitions are the same species of text, even while knowing they are different textual species. The act of believing, or suspending disbelief, in this apparition is a necessary part of intertextuality.

The motif also works for authorial/artistic practice of creating material intertextual text. If an author/artist's new text is thought to be the bark surface of a tree (fig. 163), a gecko-intertext can be disguised by an artist so as to merge with that new text as an artist blurs textual boundaries to the point where the gecko seems indivisible from bark-text, and yet is still gecko-text in disguise. Diagrams 12 and 13 can be further altered to better demonstrate the idea of becoming-other in diagrams 14 and 15 where traditional circles of a Venn diagram mutate, causing a new shape to emerge. The sentences of both diagrams are meant to read either way. The becoming-reader of text is not a simple process. Any text is in a continual state of mutation because it is part of a continually changing culture, an intertextual environment, and because it is
Figure 162 – *Orchid Mantis*, photograph by Densey Clyne, page 41 of Densey Clyne, "Masters of Disguise," *Geo* 3.4 (1981): 38-55. Photograph accompanied by the text: “Even when all by herself and conspicuous on a stem, at first glance you would take a young orchid mantis (opposite) for a solitary flower” (41).

The gecko represents the becoming-other of both texts, and yet it is also becoming an entity that has an existence that is beyond the two texts on which it depends. Once texts become involved in a reading process there will be a multitude of factors which affect the ways in which a text might become part of any reader’s reality. The becoming-other of texts and intertexts means that there will be a variety of contexts from which to view any and all of the entities involved in those textual intersections. The text that is becoming-reader in diagram 14 is almost always a complex entity like that in diag. 15. And, of course, each text and each intertext has myriad other intertexts...
The wasp-orchid, the praying mantis-orchid, and the lizard analogies can all represent material-texts. There can be a becoming Nolan-text (or Nolan-image) of a White-text (or a White-image), and vice versa.

As chameleon, Nolan-image becomes part of the surface of a desert-White-text, not for the purpose of attracting other chameleons (as with the wasp-orchid), but as a camouflage. Viewing its disguise, and its hiding place, becomes an analogy for what happens when a text is read intertextually by a predator-reader: intertextual masks are discovered, uncovered, and then replaced (or partially replaced). Sometimes intertextual masks are altered before being replaced, or partially replaced. Intertexts are disguised as part of a new text, thus being deterritorialized. As a new text assimilates intertexts onto or into its textuality, the new text is also deterritorialized. The image of this mutual becoming-other relies on the perception of a predator-reader/viewer to re-contextualise each an (inter)textual set, while also devouring the resultant new texts. Again, as with collages, and double exposures, there is a becoming-other of two or more others, while, at the same time, a becoming-the-same of all those textual and imagic intertexts. There is also the becoming-virtual-text of material (inter)texts, and the becoming-material-(inter)texts of virtual (inter)texts. The deterritorialization of each (inter)text is an exciting destabilisation of textual/imagic boundaries that allows each text to be more open. Given that each interaction with another text will allow for more intertextual interactions, there is the potential for an endless intertextual kaleidoscope of shifting readerly perspectives.
1. To us art is an adventure into an unknown world, which can be explored only by those willing to take the risks.

2. This world of imagination is fancy-free and violently opposed to common sense.

3. It is our function as artists to make the spectator see the world our way — not his [or her] way.

Mark Rothko and Adolf Gottlieb

becoming-reading

Neither Rothko nor Gottlieb, nor any other author, can ever predict what intertexts their reader/viewers will bring to any text. Therefore, their hope that they will be able to “make” spectators “see” the world their way can never have its success guaranteed, nor is it necessarily desirable that such a wish be achieved (Rothko 7). The process of reading intertextually is not dependent on any author intending that intertextuality operate, nor would it be affected by an author’s resolve to insist that either a certain set of intertexts, or no intertext at all, be intersected with his/her art/text. When an author or a painter has deliberately placed invitations to explore other texts intertextually, a new text will include signifiers from other texts, or signifiers that refer to other texts.
Readerly creativity in reading intertextually, however, need not be constrained by either what is invited or what was "intended" by the makers of the material (inter)texts with which s/he interacts.

Reading intertextually, Nolan's *Spring*, 1957 (fig. 165) has a miniature Mark Rothko painting *Untitled*, 1951 (fig. 166) in the right-hand-side of Ned Kelly's visor. The Rothko painting is inverted. (Nolan often placed inverted figures such as birds and other inverted floating figures in his works, perhaps to allude to the Antipodean myth about the "Land Down Under.") Reading intertextually, the Rothko-image I read in Kelly's eye, intertexts with the scientific fact that when the human eye views an object, the object is inverted on the eye's retina (before being translated by the complex workings of the brain, so that what we perceive is an upright image). Rothko's *Untitled*, 1951 (fig. 166) is very large, 56" x 65." Intertexting this work with *Spring* lends a scale to Ned Kelly that elevates the bush-ranger to the level of the god-like figure in *Kelly in Landscape*, 1969 (fig. 167). Rothko wanted to draw viewers into his works:

"you paint the larger picture, you are in it." Rothko scaled his pictures to human size ... and wished for them to be exhibited in small rooms, drawing observers close up to the surface, enveloping them in luminous atmosphere while compelling them to contemplate the nuances of the painting. (Sandler 86)

Rothko writes, "[t]he familiar identity of things has to be pulverized in order to destroy ... finite associations" (Sandler 85). Irving Sandler comments that Rothko "soon stopped titling his pictures and expunged from them any semblances of nature, symbols or sign. These had become 'obstacles' in the way of a clear presentation of his 'idea'" (Sandler 85). Rothko ceased from publishing statements about his works in 1949. Art critics continued to explain, however, at a time when criticism often aspired to state definitively the meanings of works. Robert Goldwater wrote, however, in an essay that Rothko admired, "these pictures compel careful scrutiny of their physical existence ... all the while suggesting that these details are means, not ends" (Goldwater 44). -I want *Inter-imagic reading III*, 1996 (fig. 100): [Rothko's *Untitled*, 1951 (fig. 166, inverted) as detail from Nolan's *Kelly, Spring*, 1956 (fig. 165)] to be "fancy-free," and primarily imagic, so as to intertext with the
Figure 165—Kelly, Spring, 1956.

Figure 166—Mark Rothko, Untitled, 1951, plate 31 of Marc Glimcher, ed., The Art of Mark Rothko: To an Unknown World.
first two aims of Rothko and Gottlieb's manifesto, to which my intertextual reading activities aspire.

Many Rothko rectangles intertext with Ned Kelly helmets (figs. 164 & 168). Intertexting Rothko works with Ned Kelly paintings can be seen as another critical attempt to read meanings into works of art. By making these intertextual readings, however, I am not meaning to imply that the intertextual connections were intended by either artist. The Ned Kelly of *Kelly, Spring*, 1956 (fig. 165), however, is a figure that transcends strictly historical readings of the Ned Kelly myth. Inside the helmet is a profile of a Kelly-Christ, the "man of sorrows" often hiding inside Kelly’s armour. Nolan stated that in this image he was also referring to the Hungarian uprising in November 1956 (*SNLL* 120). When Soviet tanks entered Budapest, all that could be seen of the tank-drivers were their faces reflected in their driving mirrors, which the Hungarians smashed in an attempt to immobilise the Soviets (*SNLL* 120). The red rectangle that is being read as a Rothko intertext might also be alluding to the blood-bath of war. Reading Rothko’s work as though it has been taken from inside the mind of a Kelly-Christ, and enlarged, and turned upside down, make Rothko’s work an inter-imagic unspeakable poem or irrational artistic vision dreamed by Ned Kelly; an impossible work, imagined in the Antipodes, a century before Rothko painted; a work of art that would have been a better meditation for Russian tank drivers than the invasion of Budapest. This postmodern reading can itself be read as a desire to see Australian art rise out of its often self-imposed ("You can’t call him an amateur; he fetches too much" [*TV* 580]) subjection to the international art world, to shine on a world-wide stage, unhindered by intertexts of local identity, and hints of hoaxes, "[t]his is the biggest con man Australia has produced" (*TV* 579).

In the act of accepting the bizarre juxtapositions of Max Ernst’s images, in his collage-novels, as works of art, and, if it is accepted that Ernst’s images may serve as analogies for written texts and their intertexts, even the wildest intertextual readings become possible (fig. 169). The art of collage, and particularly the collages of Ernst and his Surrealist colleagues, serves to make even the most surreal intersections of texts acceptable to a world that might previously have argued that such works were not
Figure 167 – *Kelly in Landscape*, 1969, oil on hardboard, 91.5 x 122 cm, Marlborough Fine Art, London, page 159 of *SNA*.

Figure 168 – *Mark Rothko, Untitled*, 1961, oil on canvas, 105 x 83 in., plate 42 of Marc Glimcher, ed., *The Art of Mark Rothko: to an unknown world*.
art, even less so, the acceptable stuff from which to construct either a novel, or a critical reading.

Intertextual collages created by readers, may involve snippets of information about the writerly construction of a text. This does not mean always choosing to intertext with what I know about White when I make readings of his works. White wrote in a letter to Geoffrey Dutton:

I have been haunted ever since I was a young man by the painting of an Apollonian chariot by Odilon Redon, which I saw in a Bond Street window. It finally became the chariot by the unnamed French painter Dubbo sees in the art book. Redon was a minor painter, but his work has a peculiar magic, and apparently the idea of the chariot appealed to him too, as I saw another one in a gallery in Paris when we were ... there in 1958. (Letters 193)

The following intertextual reading, however, does not depend upon the information in White’s letter in order to be a valid intertextual reading:

[The voices of the Prophets intoxicated him ... and soon he was laying on the grave splendour of their works with the colours of his mind. At this period, too, he constructed the skeletons of several works which he did not have the strength or knowledge to paint. *The Chariot*, for instance. Ezekiel’s vision superimposed upon that of the French painter in the art book, was not yet his own. All the details were assembled in the paper sky, but the light still had to pour in. And suddenly he furled the cartoon, and hid it. To forget about it, at least with the waking part of his mind. (352-54)]

The description of the picture he does paint at this time inter-images with Arthur Boyd’s *The Fiery Furnace*, 1968-1971, from the *Nebuchadnezzar* series (fig. 171).

Boyd’s painting post-dates the narrative relating to Dubbo’s work:

[The picture he did paint now was *The Fiery Furnace*, almost the whole of it one Friday – he had gone sick on purpose – then the agony of Saturday, in which he sat, touching the surface of paint]
Figure 170—Odilon Redon, *Apollo’s Sun Chariot with Four Horses and a Dragon*, c. 1910, pastel, 47 x 57.5 cm, Amsterdam, Cleyndert, page 95 of Klaus Berger, ed., *Odilon Redon: Fantasy and Colour*, trans. Michael Bullock, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964.

once or twice, but not seeing how to solve, or not yet daring. And did at last, in several soft strokes, of such simplicity he was exhausted by them ... He brought paintings and paintings. They lit a bonfire in the mediocre room, the walls of which retreated from the blaze of colour ... “Ah,” he [Mortimer “the connoisseur”] began intimately, for the painter alone, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego?”

“Yes!” The abo laughed gently ...

If he could have seen it, the work was already sufficient in itself. All the figures in the furnace were stiff but true. The fire was final. Neither time nor opinion could divert a single tongue of flame into a different shape. (359-360).

The figures in Boyd’s work are “stiff,” but “true.” It is well known that Boyd paints using his fingers, as well as other implements. If all of Boyd’s works in the Nebuchadnezzar series were to be placed in one (very large) room there would be a “bonfire” of “colour.” There are no clear renditions of “feathers” of fire in Boyd’s painting, nor of the “Angel of the Lord,” but they could be read as abstract intertexts with the very free application of paint in Boyd’s depiction of the story (354, 359). There are large clasped hands depicted on the top right-hand side of the work, and there is a type of lion on the bottom right-hand side of the painting, either or both of which might be interpreted as the Angel of the Lord.

It is impossible that White was referring to Boyd’s actual work as it post-dates White’s novel. Boyd may well have envisaged the work as he read the novel, and he may have decided to make a work of reverse ekphrasis. Alternatively, Boyd’s response may be read as Boyd identifying with the character of Dubbo. White may have based the character of Dubbo on Boyd (even though there is no extra-textual evidence [that I can find] of this intention). Boyd’s painting may be read as Boyd responding to feeling an intertextuality between his art and the descriptions of Dubbo’s paintings. The reading of intertextual play between Boyd’s work and White’s novel may simply be an act of creative inter-imagic reading, and while I have not created an imagic version of this reading by making a collage of White’s words and The Fiery Furnace, 1968-1971 (fig. 171), it exists as a virtual readerly inter-imagic text.

The visual works of Odilon Redon and his captions pervade The Eye of the Storm with an interlocked visual/verbal intertextuality that is difficult to ignore once having seen Redon’s work. The invitation to view the lithographs and to read their captions occurs when Elizabeth is seen interacting with the works. To view the
Figure 172 – Odilon Redon, *Sciapode*, 1892, etching, plate 25 of *Redon*.

Figure 173 – Odilon Redon, *À l'horizon, l'ange des certitude, et, dans le ciel sombre, un regard interrogateur (D'albun À Edgar Poe)*, 1882, etching, plate 41 of *Redon*.
lithographs is imaginatively to experience Elizabeth Hunter's night at Kudjeri, and to see the visual/verbal intertexts that shimmer throughout the novel in their original contexts.

She was looking through a book of French engravings and lithographs. Added to Alfred's remark, the artist's insistence on death, his marsh flowers and detached, blandly staring eyeballs made her material self seem even more trivial and ephemeral. She quickly turned the pages to escape her unwilling fascination by reaching the end of the book; when she became spellbound by the artist's image of what he called a skiapod: not her own actual face, but the spiritual semblance which will sometimes float out of the looking-glass of the unconscious. Unlike most of the other monsters in the book, this half-fish half-woman appeared neither allied to, nor threatened by, death: too elusive in weaving through deep waters, her expression a practically effaced mystery; or was it one of dishonesty, of cunning?

“What are you looking at?” Alfred asked.

“Glimpses of the morbid mind of Odilon Redon.” She made this attempt at complacency as she snapped the book together. (TES 200) (figures 172-74).

Intertexts with Redon's images are interwoven throughout the text of the novel. In Elizabeth Hunter's under-water dreams, “Oh the dreams with which the bottom of the sea is littered,” her notion of self-hood becomes closely linked with the image of the skiapod (192):

“Do you know, Edvard, there's a dream I dream – on and off ... always in my dream I am walking on the bed of the sea ... One is always rather fluid in a dream. Or if I took on a form, I don't believe I was ever more than a skiapod.” (TES 403)

Such intertextuality is author-intended, and it would be difficult to imagine how it could be otherwise. Nevertheless, the boundaries between author-intended, text-initiated, and reader-initiated intertextualities are always difficult to define. Even if they are defined, given the notion of becoming-other that pervades (inter)textual interactions, there will always be a blurring of those defined boundaries.

Authorially intended intertexts may spawn many other un-intended intertexts, even intertexts that are completely unknown to the authors of material intertextual productions. Textual references to Redon's lithographs, which include images of free-floating eyeballs, in The Eye of the Storm, makes intertextual readings plausible in which The Eye of the Storm is enmeshed with paintings of eyeballs such as those depicted in Max Ernst's "The eye without eyes, la femme 100 [cent/sans] têtes garde son secret" (fig. 169) and/or Albert Tucker's Death of an Aviator, 1942 (fig. 175)
Figure 174 – Odilon Redon, *L’œil, comme un ballon bizarre se dirige vers l’infini (D’album À Edgar Poe)*, 1882, etching, plate 38 of Redon.

Figure 175 – Albert Tucker, *Death of an Aviator*, 1942, oil on plywood, 74.6 x 55.5 cm, ANG, page 285 of *Surrealism*.

Figure 176 – Joy Hester, *Gethsemane*, c. 1946-47, brush and ink, gouache on cream paper, 25 x 30.9 cm, ANG, page 143 of *AP*.
and/or Tucker’s *Image of Modern Evil* 24, 1945 (fig. 18). In Tucker’s painting the darkening sky, or sea, and the luminescent yellow of the desert or beach sand, intertext with White’s novel merely because a beach is the site where the storm is experienced. The eyeball suspended on sticks outside the wreckage of its owner’s eerie sockets, that are part of a face which is more like a rock-cave surface than a human being, joins together with readings of the landscape as beach-setting to form an intertext with a text about a woman interacting with the eye of a storm, amidst wreckage and rubbish that is scattered on a beach:

> [t]here was a continual juggling of fireballs, either in the sky, or was it at the back of her eyesockets ... Without much thought for her own wreckage ... her physical self ... the glazed stare, the salt-stiffened nostrils ... All else was dissolved by this lustrous moment made visible in the eye of the storm. (*TES* 422-45).

The eyeball in *Death of an Aviator* also inter-images with the eyeballs of Hester’s *Gethsemane*, c. 1946-7 (fig. 176). There is a glazed stare to the face of Hester’s creature which is based upon a “faceless doll...stuffed with lavender [made by Sunday Reed] which sat on Sunday’s bed where it was greeted personally by visitors” (*AP* 143). Intertexting Hester’s image with the texts of White, Tucker, and Redon, a reading emerges that intertexts Elizabeth’s own eyes with the eye of the storm. Both Elizabeth and the woman in *Gethsemane* are staring at the storm, the wreckage of the storm, and the eye of the storm, and that eye in the sky is staring back at them, and merging into their beings. The inter-images are oblique, and operate on the level of dreams, the irrational and the sub-conscious mind. The becoming-other of authors and texts, artists and images, of texts and readers, images and viewers, texts and images, signifiers and everything they might signify, however, are open to endless exploration, on conscious mind-planes, on sub-conscious and semi-conscious planes, and even in the dream-plane that lies semi-submerged in the sand of Albert Tucker’s *The Death of an Aviator*, 1942 (fig. 175).
The Temptation of St Anthony, 1952 (fig. 177).

O seasons, O castles!
What soul is without flaws?
Rimbaud

Alchemy

This section represents an intertextuality of the alchemy that works and plays across the art of Patrick White, Sidney Nolan, and Jean-Nicolas-Arthur Rimbaud. Rimbaud lived from 1854 until 1891 in both France and Africa. He was a precocious student, both winning a prize for a Latin poem and composing his first French poem in 1869 at the age of fourteen. During the period from 1870 until 1875, he developed his aesthetic doctrine, and led the life of a poet, an alchemist, and a debauchee in search of the derangement of all the senses that would enhance his ability as a poet and a seer. But at the end of 1879, at the age of 25, “he left his friends and none of them was ever to see him again” (Starkie 329). Probably his best known poems are “A Season in
Hell," and "Illuminations [or Coloured-Plates]." Both Nolan and White were avid readers of Rimbaud’s poetry and various texts about his life. The works of both artists intertext with Rimbaud’s poetry, his letters, and the myth of his life.

Various White characters, as well as various narrative sequences in White’s writing, reflect aspects of Rimbaud’s life and writing. Hurtle Duffield displays aspects of Rimbaud’s actual life in his debauchery and artistic precocity as a child. White was greatly influenced by the works and the life of this tragic young figure. Marr writes:

One important influence at the time of Voss was Rimbaud. Frank Le Mesurier, the poet on Voss’s expedition, a man with dark thin lips, dark eyes and proud nose, emerged from White’s passion for Rimbaud. He had grown drunk on the poetry when he first discovered it, and read Enid Starkie’s study of the poet several times. By the time he wrote Voss he was “soaked in Rimbaud.” Le Mesurier, though he is a “comparatively undeveloped character in the novel ... just had to be there.” (PW 317)

White’s narrator describes Frank Le Mesurier, the young poet in Voss:

Somebody soon discovered that he had written a poem on a metaphysical theme, for details of which nobody dared ask. It was known, however, that he liked to discuss God after he was drunk, on rum for choice, ploughing through the dark treacle of seductive words and getting nowhere at two o’clock in the morning. (Voss 34).

When Turner and Le Mesurier are sparring before the journey commences, Turner accuses the poet of drunken debauchery:

“I seen you ... whorin’ after women under the trees. And holdin’ forth to the public. Contracted with a practisin’ madman, you was, accordin’ to your own admission, for a journey to hell an’ back.”

... “If it was I, and I was drunk, then I cannot remember. Except that I have been drunk,” said Le Mesurier. (Voss 43).

There are intertextual resonances with Rimbaud’s own reputation for drunkenness and whoring, and also because Rimbaud wrote, “A Season in Hell.”

From the beginning of his career as an artist, Nolan read Rimbaud, whose “Illuminations” he repeatedly called “a book of miracles” (SNLL 32). Nolan painted responses to having read Rimbaud early in his career; as well as later in the Africa series; and also in his extended response to Rimbaud’s Les Illuminations in 1982-83. Other Nolan works also resonate with Rimbaud. For instance, Nolan inter-images Rimbaud, Ned Kelly and Barrett Reid. Of Nolan’s Ned Kelly, [1946], (fig. 65) Clark says: “[t]his portrait is taken from the ‘mug shot’ photograph at age eighteen on
Kelly's jail record" (SNLL 74). But Nolan has added an oval frame which did not form part of the jail record. The frame inter-images with the frame around the Portrait of Barrett Reid, 1947, (fig. 66) (as a young poet), which in turn inter-images with the famous portrait photograph of Rimbaud, taken by Carjat in 1871 (fig. 67). Clark argues that "unmistakable [resemblances range from:] the cameo frame, stiff collar and jacket ... to hairline, facial structure and piercing eyes" (75). The "unmistakable resemblances" are also evident in the portrait of the young Kelly. As well as these inter-images, Nolan super-imposes himself over the Kelly image: "[Kelly's] eyes, described as 'hazel' in the records, are here as blue as Nolan's own" (Clark, SNLL 75).

The framing device is being used to signify both endearment and the closeness associated with family portraits, and also to juxtapose this device of intimate, sentimental, family remembrance with the unsettling "down-the-barrel" view also associated with the oval frame around Nolan's image of Eliza Fraser on all fours (fig. 68). Nolan's alignment of Kelly with the poet Rimbaud also intertexts with his entitling of his depiction of Kelly's death-mask as Death of a Poet, 1953 (fig. 111).

Cynthia Nolan writes of the time when she and Nolan were in Africa in One Traveller's Africa. While chasing the life of Rimbaud at Harar, Sidney Nolan says:

"Even after he left France [Rimbaud] was an extraordinary poet rather than a trader and explorer. He was a civilized man who lived the life of an outsider, and I suppose I felt the same way about him as I do about Ned Kelly ... I must try to make it clear that Rimbaud is a kind of Kelly, or Kelly a kind of Rimbaud. That there was, in both these men, a force that they didn't hide or try to disguise. They really played it out nakedly, for what it was worth:" (Cynthia Nolan 241).

These inter-imagic connections make Nolan's Kelly works resonate with the poetry of Rimbaud, and because of Rimbaud's obsession with various texts of Christian religion (mostly to subvert and revise those texts), Nolan's inter-imaging of Kelly with Christ also intertexts with Rimbaud's poetry:

"Oh! the malice in attentiveness in the country ... Satan, Old Nick, runs about with the wild grain ... Jesus is walking over the scarlet brambles, without bending them down ... Once Jesus walked on the troubled waters. The lantern showed him to us, standing and pale, with long dark hair, beside an emerald wave ..."
Figure 179 – Head of Rimbaud, [1938-9], Pencil, oil and Kiwi boot polish on cardboard, 26.9 x 34.3 cm, Heide, page 38 of SNLL.

Figure 180 – Collage [precursor to Kelly Helmet], 1939, collage of steel-engravings on steel-engraving, 30.6 x 22.5 cm, ANG, page 228 of Surrealism.
I intend to unveil all mysteries: religious mysteries or those of nature, death, birth, the future, the past, cosmogony, the void. I am a master of hallucinations.

Listen! ...

(Rimbaud 185 [ellipses are part of the poem])

The image of Christ-as-Kelly-as-poet in Death of a Poet, 1953 (fig. 111) makes Rimbaud also read intertextually as a type of Christ. The images of the man of sorrows inside various depictions of Kelly’s helmet might also be hallucinations inspired by Rimbaud’s poetry.

Nolan’s other early responses to Rimbaud’s work, and Rimbaud as myth were: Head of Rimbaud, 1938-39 (fig. 179) and Rimbaud Royalty, 1942 (fig. 181). Nolan also included Rimbaud in his Africa series in works such as: Rimbaud at Harar, 1963, and Rimbaud Head, 1963 (fig. 98). Nolan’s earlier abstract Head of Rimbaud, 1938-39 (fig. 179) bears a strong resemblance to Nolan’s early collages, especially the head in Collage, c. 1938-40 (fig. 180) which also inter-images with Ned Kelly (and has been read as an early version of the helmeted outlaw). Thus there are more intertextual links between the poet/outlaw myth of Kelly and the poet/debauchee/enigma myth of Rimbaud. Nolan based his first Head of Rimbaud, 1938-39 (fig. 179) upon Carjat’s photographic portrait of 1871 (fig. 67). Jane Clark reports that: “[t]he producers of the [1939 Contemporary Art Society’s] catalogue called it simply “Rimbaud,” against the wishes of Nolan, whose chosen title deliberately pointed to the relationship between his work and the famous photograph of the French poet taken by Carjat in 1871” (SNLL 38). The controversial work was done in pencil, oil and Kiwi boot polish, demonstrating Nolan’s talent as a bricoleur and his ability to intermix Austral(as)ian culture with that of Europe.

As well as Kelly and Rimbaud, Nolan’s Illuminations series inter-images with The Vivisector, and with the person of Patrick White. Speaking of Nolan’s Illuminations in the Age in 1983, Nolan says of Face of the Damned, “[t]hat one is Patrick, with his electric blue eyes and cursed mouth” (1). Of I shall offer myself to the god of the sun, 1982 (fig. 178), “That’s another from ‘Vivisector’ – he talks about an old man having bladder trouble, and I’ve made it a young man having bladder
Royalty

One fine morning, in a land of very gentle people, a handsome man and woman cried out in the public square. “My friends, I want her to be queen.” “I want to be queen.” She laughed and trembled. He spoke to his friends of a revelation, of a trial ended. They swooned over each other.

They actually were monarchs for an entire morning, when crimson draperies were hung from the houses, and for the entire afternoon when they walked toward the palm gardens.

Figure 181 - Rimbaud Royalty. 1942, enamel on hardboard (reverse side), 59.5 x 90 cm, Heide Park, page 49 of SNLL.
trouble, misbehaving himself” (1). Nolan goes on to indicate other paintings connected to the life and work of White:

That’s Cutbush (a character in “The Vivisector”) observing the two lovers under the bleeding moon, and being less than good... There’s the prostitute from “The Vivisector” standing in front of the blind with the light shining through the slats... Rimbaud belongs as much to me as to him — that’s the link. (2)

In the Illumination series, Nolan appears to be setting up a correlation between his relationship with White, and the infamous affair between Rimbaud and Paul Verlaine. Nolan represents the Shooting of Rimbaud by Verlaine, 1982, [Patrick White as] One of the Damned, 1982, and Rimbaud on Verlaine, 1982 (which is very similar to Nightmare, 1982, painted as a form of revenge upon Patrick White for publishing his comments about “The Nolans” in Flaws). The intertexts are tenuous, but clear. Nolan’s relationship with White was not homosexual, but their friendship and mutual respect for one another’s work was strong for many years. The intertextuality created in Nolan’s Illuminations series aligns Nolan with the “genius” Rimbaud, and White with the writer Verlaine (who turned from lover into attempted-murderer of Rimbaud). Nolan is depicted, by implication, as the victim of White’s attack upon him in Flaws in the Glass. The relationship between Rimbaud and Verlaine, both economic and sexual, ended in Verlaine shooting Rimbaud. Nolan’s images read as arrogant jibes, as teasing gestures aimed at fuelling creative jealously. They also read as the desire for artistic supremacy. In aligning himself with Rimbaud, and White with Verlaine, Nolan was perhaps attempting, by intertextual reference, to elevate his feud with White to the level of myth, or historico-myth. If so, it was to be a myth in which Nolan plays the role of the star figure. Verlaine’s art is far less remembered than that of Rimbaud.

“Biographical” intertexts aside, however, I find the Rimbaud intertextuality between the works of White and Nolan a refreshing site for inter-imagic exploration. Because it is grounded neither in Britain, nor mainstream twentieth-century European or American art (all of which sites I read as colonising influences in Australian art), the Rimbaud intertextuality prompts readings that need not always grapple with issues of post-colonialism. The readings are also liberated because Rimbaud’s poetry is so resonant with images drawn from a diverse range of (inter)textual webs.
“Mrs Macready says London and New York are off him. He was never what he's cracked up to be. But there's still a market for him in Australia.”

Patrick White

The Vivisector

By the time White wrote The Vivisector, he was aware of Nolan's fascination with the young poet. The Vivisector was dedicated to Cynthia and Sidney Nolan, and while the life of Hurtle Duffield cannot be read as an analogy for the life of Sidney Nolan, the text resonates with inter-imagery drawn from both the texts of Nolan, and those of Rimbaud. The cover illustrations for The Vivisector were done by Mel Williamson for Viking (fig. 182) and Tom Adams for Jonathan Cape (fig. 183). The Viking cover merely depicts grey paint applied thickly, and photographed at close range. Tom Adams's image is reminiscent of a 60s psychedelic Led Zeppelin record cover. Given that White drew from the lives of various painters to create the life of The Vivisector, Viking’s choice of cover is more epigraphic than that of Jonathan Cape. Penguin’s later appropriation of John Brack’s Still Life with Self Portrait, 1963 acts as a visual epigraph because it intertexts well with the notion of vivisection, it depicts various surgical instruments, and there is an eerie peeping artist’s face behind the facade of shelves housing the implements. Marr comments:

Duffield’s paintings are more than anyone’s the paintings of Francis Bacon.

In September 1967 the Art Gallery of New South Wales held a great retrospective to mark Sid Nolan’s fiftieth birthday. Nolan came to believe that he and he alone was Hurtle Duffield, and has in his library in Herefordshire a copy of The Vivisector closely annotated to demonstrate all the many links between the two lives. When White was asked if his old friend was his inspiration, he replied, “Not in the least.” But the retrospective was an event in both painter's lives. White and Lascaris were there the night before the opening, as Nolan drifted through the deserted courts looking at his life's work, all these paintings along the walls, the windows to your actual, willed, life, your every iridescent tremor and transparent thought. (PW 475 [TV 572]).

“Patrick” even appears at Duffield’s retrospective: “If you want me to tell you why you’re a misfit, Patrick, it’s because you hate everybody” (TV 580). Many of Duffield’s paintings inter-image with Nolan’s works. The early rocks intertext with the rocks in Sole Arabian Tree, and also with Nolan’s later African animals that blend in with the landscape almost to the point of being indistinguishable. Leda might be the...
Figure 182 – Cover illustration by Mel Williamson credited on jacket of The Vivisector, New York: Viking, 1970.

Figure 183 – Cover illustration by Tom Adams credited on jacket of The Vivisector, London: Jonathan Cape, 1970.
“cool, naked, fairly naturalistic, though sexless, girl,” Kathy (TV 425). Kathy is also described as having a “lithe, mackerel body” (TV 427). Robertson comments of Nolan’s figures, and in particular of Leda: “Nolan’s figures have always been curiously sexless, or androgynous” (SN 172). The indigo skies intertext with those from Nolan’s Antarctic series (TV 549; fig. 121); and Rosa mutabilis, 1945 (fig. 186) also inter-images with “Flowering Rosebush” (TV 425).

Perhaps one image that would make a wonderful cover illustration for contemporary editions of The Vivisector is Nolan’s painting of a mauve egg, inside

\[ I \text{ shall offer myself to the god of the sun, 1982 (fig. 178). } \]

which is depicted a curiously large embryo-child. \textit{I shall offer myself to the god of the sun, 1982 (fig. 178)} seems to have been painted in direct response to Nolan’s having read the novel, and also intertexts with Rimbaud’s poetry, being part of Nolan’s \textit{Illuminations} series:

\begin{quote}
In deepest sincerity, I had pledged to convert him back into his primitive state of a sun-child, – and we wandered, sustained by wine from caverns and traveller’s crust, with me impatient to find the place and the formula. (Rimbaud 233)
\end{quote}

(Oh! Man has raised his free proud head! 
And the sudden ray of original beauty 
Makes the god tremble in the altar of his flesh!)
— The Vivisector —

Whence does he come? Does he sink into the deep Ocean
Of germs, of Foetuses, of Embryos, to the bottom
Of the huge Crucible where Mother Nature
Will revive him, a living creature,
To love him in the rose, and to grow in the wheat? (Rimbaud 31)

The Sun, hearth of tenderness and life,
Pours burning love over the delighted earth,
And, when one lies down in the valley, one smells
How the earth is nubile and rich in blood;
How its huge breast, raised by a soul,
Is made of love, like God, and of flesh, like woman,
And how it contains, big with sap and rays of light,
The vast swarming of all embryos! (Rimbaud 27)

These lines inter-image with the painting of an embryo-like child in a large womb-egg (fig. 178), and also with Duffield’s drawing of a child embryo:

[[There was one drawing in which all the women he had ever loved were joined by umbilical cords to the navel of he same enormous child. One cord, which withered apart, shuddered like lightning where the break occurred; yet it was the broken cord which seemed to be charging the great tumorous, sprawling child with internal or miraculous life ... [H]e could always bask in his own artistry: that monstrous child, for instance, with the broken umbilical cord. Superficially the cord was reminiscent of a dry string of bryony waving from an English hedge (519).]]

The inter-imagery operates to resonate, rather than to signify particular sets of meaning.

Rimbaud’s life and works intertext throughout The Vivisector. The last epigraph to the novel is the following text from one of Rimbaud’s letters to Paul Demeny in 1871 (the same year that the photograph of Rimbaud was taken by Carjat [fig. 67]):

He becomes beyond all others the great Invalid, the great Criminal, the great Accursed One — and the Supreme Knower.
For he reaches the unknown.

Rimbaud

Placed in context, these words intertext with the notion of the vivisection of both body and soul; and with the notion of kidnapping and exhibiting a child. Hurtle Duffield is portrayed as a bright child who, while he is not kidnapped, is sold by his parents to rich buyers in order that his intelligence can be “cultivated.” Irony is always at work in White’s writing. The Rimbaud epigraph in The Vivisector is taken from a letter in which Rimbaud was expressing his artistic manifesto:

[The first study of the man who wants to be a poet is the knowledge of himself, complete. He looks for his soul, inspects

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it, tests it, learns it. As soon as he knows it, he must cultivate it! It seems simple: in every mind a natural development takes place; so many egoists call themselves authors, there are many others who attribute their intellectual progress to themselves! — But the soul must be made monstrous: in the fashion of the comprachicos if you will! Imagine a man implanting and cultivating warts on his face.

I say one must be a seer, make oneself a seer.

The Poet makes himself a seer by a long, gigantic and rational derangement of all the senses. All forms of love, suffering, and madness. He searches himself. He exhausts all poisons in himself and keeps only their quintessences. Unspeakable torture where he needs all his faith, all his super-human strength, where he becomes among all men the great patient, the great criminal, the one accursed — and the supreme Scholar! — Because he reaches the unknown! Since he cultivated his soul, rich already, more than any man!

The idea of the comprachicos unites Rimbaud’s ideas strikingly with the notion of vivisection, both literal and figurative.

Nolan wrote in an article for Angry Penguins entitled “Faithful words:”

Arthur Rimbaud ... was a specialist from the beginning. Whether in his poetry, which established a legend less durable, more adorable than Shakespeare, or in his acts in Africa, he bears the birthmark of an angel, naked and possessed. The mob likes a crucifixion. Rimbaud gave them a crucifixion and resurrection all in one; upsetting at once their idea of a genius and the hand he should play ... Language is what counts. (SNLL 38).

Jane Clark argues that:

Nolan’s series of quilt-like collages of nineteenth-century engravings [fig. 110] were created in the spirit of Rimbaud’s poetry: pictorial equivalents of the poet’s “systematic derangement of the senses” in order to create a new reality. As Nolan explains, he had “no mercy on the figurative elements — in other words just cut 'em up and ... used them as a means to an end”; and the end was “the lucidity of the non-figurative image.”(33).

Lynn argues that the “natural” incongruities chosen by Nolan as subjects for his paintings were incongruities such as those he “relished early in his life in Rimbaud”:

[L]he Rock and the Olgas ... painted by Nolan as if he did not want to separate magic, mystery and oddity from art ... the Todd river, usually flowing only with coarse sand, the anthills with their thin edges pointed towards the sun as though they were sensible, living menhirs, [and] the desert contoured like waves of the sea and grey slate as still as opaque lakes.(Lynn, SNA 14).

Lynn uses a comment by Claude Lévi-Strauss on the nature of poetry to elucidate what he means by this reference to the influence of Rimbaud’s writing on Nolan’s art, “the poet may proceed by a process of disintegration, as Rimbaud does. Poetry therefore seems to exist between two conflicting formulae: linguistic integration and semantic
disintegration" (SNA 14). Rimbaud’s notion that the poet must “derange all his senses” (and thereby derange his art) affected the artistic practices of Nolan (and also those of Duffield).

Jane Clark compares Nolan’s compositions (in which the dissected fragments of printed mechanical and geological diagrams are assembled with photographs and pieces of clothing) to those of Kurt Schwitters or Ben Nicholson (SNLL 33). Collage can be read as a form of artistic vivisection. Following on from this idea, and the notion of the comprachicos, alluded to in the Rimbaud epigraph, comes Hero Pavloussi’s question to the painter: “‘But you must admit,’ she cried in self-protection, ‘the painter is cruel. Why do painters have to deform everything they see?’” (315). Mrs Davenport’s reaction to the artist’s portrayal of his deformed sister is the text’s way of investigating the same point:

she cried out: “How could you be so cruel to poor little Rhoda?”

It was his turn to become emotional; in an attempt to disguise these emotions he heard himself shouting: “How can you say it’s cruel? It’s the truth!” (292)

In a letter to Maie Casey, White wonders “whether the Australians who call me ‘crool’ have ever read Barbara Baynton. She’s a prolonged knife job” (PW 480). Mrs Davenport’s thoughts are based on the notion that what is aesthetically pleasing is the best form of both art and reality, but where does that leave the “un-beautiful”? And more importantly, who decides what is aesthetically pleasing?

Barbara Baynton’s early feminist depictions of life in the colonial bush have been overlooked in favour of Lawson’s romanticisation of life in the bush. It is only now that other points of view are being allowed to filter through. Until recently colonial Australia has been represented so as to beautify, cover, mask, or erase that which is not part of the colonial myth. At Hurtle’s retrospective, Boo Hollingdrake/Davenport says, “You know I’m living in Rome? For purely aesthetic reasons ... It’s never too later to be converted to other forms of beauty” (586). Australia itself is insinuated as (un)beautiful. “Or was it distorted? Just as you distort appearances to arrive at truth” (TV 229). Is truth imagined as whole or fragmentary? Fracture/deformity/collagic strategies operate in continual opposition and resistance to
the forces that would unify/heal, make whole/meld the collage/reading into one single assemblage. Can we learn to allow readings to remain divergent, unresolved, fragmentary?

The artistic process of progressive abstraction described by Duffield is probably one modelled by White on that process used by Roy de Maistre:

> From De Maistre’s work he learned that "by fragmenting and distorting the customary image of the world, it can become more vivid and arresting" [Hawley 291]. The working method White described for Duffield was exactly that used by De Maistre all his life. De Maistre started with a realist image (either his own or a photograph) and progressively abstracted it through three or four stages. (Heather Johnson 68).

Nolan also experimented with progressively abstracting images, particularly in his early collages, and images. Abstraction and distortion are also particularly evident in the images he painted/drew to accompany the publication of Patrick White’s “The Woman Who Wasn't Allowed to Keep Cats” in *Australian Letters* (figs. 184 & 185). These two images also intertext with *The Vivisector*, in both their artistic style and their content. Figure 185 depicts a pink and white background onto which has been drawn or painted in black, at last one cat in the top right-hand corner of the work, and the distorted figure of a woman, whose breast, hands, and possibly her head, are discernible. In figure 184 a more easily discernible female figure has been drawn in blacks and greys on a white background. The cat has been incorporated into the image so as to appear like a mutation of the woman’s form. This mutation, combined with the deliberate deformity of the woman’s legs not only intertexts with Rhoda Duffield’s deformity, but also with the lines muttered by Máro in “The Woman Who Wasn’t Allowed to Keep Cats,” when her husband insinuates that her friends are making love in bed rather than answering the door to receive her visit: “‘Some people are like animals,’ she gasped; it was so hateful” (AL 57). In *Portrait of Arthur Rimbaud*, 1970-71, Brett Whitely, who also found Rimbaud fascinating, has placed, among other sculptural features, a mummified cat’s head. This cat intertexts with Rimbaud’s *Illuminations* in which it is said of a prince, “He took delight in cutting the throats of pet animals” (225). The cat’s head also intertexts with *The Vivisector*, in which the
Figure 184 — Monotone illustration by Sidney Nolan for “The Woman Who Wasn't Allowed to Keep Cats” in *Australian Letters* 5.2 (Dec. 1962): 36.

Figure 185 — Coloured illustration by Sidney Nolan for “The Woman Who Wasn't Allowed to Keep Cats” in *Australian Letters* 5.2 (Dec. 1962): 36.
Pavloussi's have their gardener drown a bag of cats, "the sack ... [was] convulsed by a struggle inside it" (341). These inter-images also intertext with the fragmentation of cats in Nolan's images, and with the cruelty inflicted upon animals in actual vivisection. Mutilation is not confined to the domain of art, but is practised widely, in various forms, in the world in which we live.

Nolan wrote to Sunday Reed in 1942, "I still have the idea to illustrate the [Rimbaud] poems as you translate them" (SNLL 49). Reed, however, sent Nolan a French dictionary so that he could work on the translations himself. The following lines are from Les Illuminations, as translated by Nolan:

_Royalty_

One fine morning, in a land of very gentle people, a handsome man and woman cried out in the public square. "My friends, I want her to be queen." "I want to be queen." She laughed and trembled. He spoke to his friends of a revelation, of a trial ended. They swooned over each other.

They actually were monarchs for an entire morning, when crimson draperies were hung from the houses, and for the entire afternoon when they walked toward the palm gardens. (SNLL 49 [Rimbaud 247])

Of Rimbaud Royalty, 1942 (fig. 181), which was the artist's "only painted response at that time to the magical word-pictures of the young French poet," Jane Clark writes,

[The Wimmera itself has been translated: into a North African landscape. A man and a woman wander arm in arm through a village of adobe dwellings seated patriotically with the tricolour. Nolan's use of the most absorbent, rough-textured side of the Masonite sheet lends an air of gentleness and mystery to the scene. Perhaps he was thinking not only of Rimbaud's "Royaute," but also the famous lines from the later prose poems Une Saison en Enfer: "One must be absolutely modern ... Meanwhile this is the eve. Let us receive all influxes of vigour and of real tenderness. And at dawn, armed with an ardent patience, we shall enter the splendid cities" (49).

In a letter to Paul Demeny, Rimbaud writes, "[t]here you have enamel painting and solid poetry!" (311). In Voss there is a morning "set in a splendour of enamels" (258); and in The Vivisector, there is an evening when Hurtle wonders whether he and Nance will stay "stuck forever in the enamel of daylight" (225). The entire passage from The Vivisector intertexts with the above lines from Une saison en enfer. Nance and Hurtle are together in the evening outside the city (in the bush), and they "receive all influx of vigour and of real tenderness," of sorts:
[t]hough they recognized each other's bodies with delighted shivers and confirming touches, and though they staggered outside, holding hands, towards some intention unnamed by either of them. (226).

And in the morning, "Nance was sitting up, in that very early light he took for granted ... She was swaying and saying: 'I've gotter get out of here – Hurtle' ... 'I'll smell the pavement tonight! I'll hear the bloody trams!'" (226-27). If there is intertextuality, of course, it intertexts also with irony. Neither Nance nor Hurtle are from a land of "very gentle people," nor does Nance head into the (un)splendid city armed with "patience."

Nance and Hurtle do spend time deranging their senses, however, and both have their share of time in Hell. Once its resonance begins, however, the inter-imagery at play both through and across the works of Nolan, Rimbaud, and White, continues to shimmer like a poem that cannot be finished:

For example, on some evening when the innocent tourist has retired from our economic turmoil, the hands of the master bring to life the harpsichord of the fields. They play cards at the bottom of the lake, a mirror reflecting queens and favourites. They have saints, veils, weavings of harmony and chromatic legends in the sunset. (Rimbaud 251)
Like a god with large blue eyes and a snow body, 
the sea and the sky entice to the marble stairs 
the swarm of young, strong roses

Rimbaud

[Rosa mutabilis, 1945 (fig. 186).]

The girl was dazed by roses. She continued to cut the big heads ... She bent to reach others, till roselight was flooding her face, and she was forced to lower the lids of her eyes against the glare of roses. Then she became caught. It was one of the older, the more involved, the staggier bushes, of sinewy black wood. She was held. Neither one way nor the other was it possible to move, however she shook the tough bush. She began to laugh, mirthlessly ... "Help me, Rose! Where are you?"

Patrick White

O Poets, if you had 
Roses, blown Roses, 
Red on laurel stems, 
And swollen with a thousand octaves!

Rimbaud

fragments

I have constructed this section as an intertextual collage of fragments by Nolan, Rimbaud, and White. Rather than a consistent analysis, I read transitory moments of intertextual collisions, arriving at interim conclusions, or not, as the intertextual reading is assembled both on these pages, and in readerly space. While I do not place deliberate typographic ellipses into the blocks of written text in this section, fragments is designed to be an elliptical critical writing/assemblage that invites readerly participation when interacting with the (inter)textual sets explored.
Abstract language means that words are not bound to any particular intention; that the word “rose” is neither the rose that I see nor the rose that a more or less fictional character claims to see.

In the abstract language of the new art the word “rose” is the word “rose.” It means all the roses and it means none of them.

How to succeed in making a rose that is not my rose, nor his rose, but everybody’s rose, i.e. nobody’s rose?

Ulises Carrión

*rosa mutabilis*

Images are transient intertextual moments. Signifiers cannot be signifiers and signifieds at once unless they are in a state of dynamic intertextual flux with a reader. In any virtual intertextual reading of any “rose,” there will be an interplay between the signifiers and the signifieds for various material roses, virtual roses, and any of many other intertextual rose-texts (both material and virtual). This intertextuality results in understandings of the signic play around any particular™rose.™ Nolan’s *Rosa mutabilis*, 1945 (fig. 186) plays with these notions of signification. The botanical name describes a type of rose that changes colour. Nolan comments of the painting, “*Rosa mutabilis* [is] a rose that is partly white and partly pink, and hidden in it is the figure of the lady who planted it” (SNA 22-3). This kind of rose grew, and still
grows, at Heide, planted there by Sunday Reed. Nolan depicts Sunday in the bush, dreaming roses, as it were. But the image is resonant with intertextual possibilities. Shakespeare’s use of roses in the sonnets might trespasses this image, as might the myth of Daphne caught in a (laurel) tree by the god Apollo, which could also draw in Ariel of *The Tempest*, who was rescued from a tree by Prospero, the magician-artist. The painting also intertexts with the writing of White who uses roses throughout his *oeuvre*.

In particular, *Rosa mutabilis*, 1945 (fig. 186) intertexts with *The Vivisector* in descriptions of Duffield’s painting of “Flowering Rosebush:”

[That] night he started work on the flowering rosebush. Each of the big scalloped saucers of single roses was given its tuft of glistening hairs. It was natural that the face should flower at the centre of the bush, humanly radiant amongst the not dissimilar roses, and not all that unnatural for the bush to be growing at the sea’s edge under a livid sky ... After he had rested a little, he began to draw what became during the days which followed a more abstract version of the “Flowering Rosebush:” the face at the heart of the bush reduced to an eye, its remote candour undazzled by its setting of rose-jewels; the original seascape dissolved in space by fluctuations of gelatinous light in which the threat of crimson was still suspended (424-25).

There are echoes of Redon’s menacing eyes in this passage, and also resonances of the storm with its eye that arrives in *The Eye of the Storm*. The passage also resonates with the text of Nolan’s own rosebush in *Rosa Mutabilis*, 1945 (fig. 186). Nolan’s roses are large and numerous and the brush-strokes suggest hair of the same colour as the yellow-green paddock in which the rosebush is situated. The body of a woman is hidden in the rosebush, but it is her head that is most obviously visible at the centre-top of the bush, and its colour is “not dissimilar [to the] roses.” The rosebush is set in a paddock, the green of which might suggest a sea, and while the sky could not be called “livid” (as it has white clouds and is otherwise generally mid-blue), there are “livid” patches to the left and the top right-hand side of the painted board. There is certainly a threat in the sky and a menace about the light of the painting in general, although not a “crimson” threat. There is a crimson threat evident in *Glenrowan*, 1946 (fig. 15), and examples of more threateningly “livid” skies can be seen in both *Heidelberg*, 1942 and *Bicycle Rider*, c. 1945-46 (fig. 188). *Heidelberg*, 1942 is a depiction of the same area as that in *Rosa mutabilis*, and was
painted at about the same time (SNA 27). Joy Hester, who lived at Heide when Nolan was there, also painted the image of a woman with roses. Hester’s *Girl with Roses*, (undated), inter-images with *Rosa mutabilis*, but instead of the diminutive woman inside an enormous rosebush, Hester’s female figure dominates the picture, while her hands clasp a small bunch of roses.¹² There is a sense in which Hester’s image can be read as resisting the conventional alignment of roses with women (and notions of love). There is also a sense in which her image is a direct inversion of Nolan’s excessively romantic image of a woman engulfed in the joy of roses. Both images intertext, however, with Rimbaud’s lines from “Childhood” in “Illuminations:”

“That’s she, the little girl behind the rose bushes, and she’s dead. – The young mother, also dead, is coming down the steps ... The small brother (he’s in India!) over there in the field of pinks, in front of the sunset (217)

Reading intertextually means that moments of potential conclusion are continually over-shadowed, transformed or edited as new inter-images emerge.

*The Aunt’s Story* is also “perfused” with roses. Like Shakespeare, White uses the trope to signify the full gamut of possible signifieds for roses. Again, the image of *Rosa mutabilis* traverses this text. Two white Australian women are consumed by a
mass of English roses; two women are enmeshed in the flowery assumptions associated with the conventional use of roses by Shakespeare (and other poets) to allude to both ideal and “fading” female beauty:

[These years had the roselight of morning, but there were also the afternoons, in which the serious full white roses hung heavy, and the lemon-coloured roses made their cool pools in a shade of moss. There were the evenings when red roses congealed in great scented clots, deepening in the undergrowth.

“Where are you going, Theo?” they asked.

“Nowhere,” she said.

She ran, slowed, walking now alone, where she could hear a golden murmur of roses. Above her she could see the red thorns, and sometimes she reached, to touch ...

“Theodora, I forbid you to touch the roses,” said Mrs Goodman.

“I’m not,” cried Theodora. “Or only a little. Some of them are bad.”

And they were. There was a small pale grub curled in the heart of the rose. She could not look too long at the grub-thing stirring as she opened the petals to the light.

“Horrid, beastly grub,” said Fanny, who was as pretty and pink as roses. (TAS 21-22).

The roses hold in them their own demise. The cankerworm is mentioned in Shakespeare’s sonnet 95 (Kerrigan 124, 295). The cankerworm is at work to destroy even when the rose is at its height of beauty. Rimbaud also explores destruction coming in the guise of something beautiful in “A Season in Hell:”

I had been damned by the rainbow. Happiness was my fatality, my remorse, my worm. My life would always be too immense to be devoted to strength and beauty. (201).

Stephen Nothling’s Cutting a rug, 1995 depicts an enormous pink/mauve rose floating over a weeping emu bush, and above an apocalyptic desert scene in red-ochre tones, behind which is a blood-red sunset. The imposition of English flora (and by implication, English values) against a harsh Australian reality is depicted as surreal. White uses a sense of legend through which to mediate the juncture between actual Australia and colonial imposition:

“There is another Meroë,” said Father, “a dead place, in the black country of Ethiopia.”

... In this dead place that Father had described the roses were as brown as paper bags, the curtains were ashy on their rings, the eyes of the house had closed ... Even in the sunlight the hills surrounding [the Australian] Meroë were black. Her own shadow was rather a suspicious rag. So that from what she saw and sensed, the legendary landscape became a fact, and she could not break loose from an expanding terror. (23-24).
In Nothling's image, two legendary landscapes oppose one another, the enormous imported rose dominates the canvas, but behind it, and advancing all around its edges is the feverish red-earthed, surreal carpet-desert.

The image is called *Cutting a Rug*, and such a rug intertexts with the hallucinations Theodora has when in France, slightly mad, in a hotel-room, not carpeted, but papered with roses:

> [a]nd now the small room was a box with paper roses pasted on the sides ... She looked with sadness at the little hitherto safe microcosm of the darning egg and waited for the rose wall to fall.
> It began to palpitate, the paper mouths of roses wetting their lips, either voice or wall putting on flesh. (196).

Wall-paper, flowers, collage. Nolan's wall-paper cuttings often appear out of context within his Ned Kelly series. Nolan's wall-paper is often floral. Reading intertextually, I might invest these walls, these wall papers with imported meanings, with intertextual voices, with the flesh of otherness. Theodora finally becomes a rose, but black. The symbol from Europe, the botany from Europe, becomes in *The Aunt's Story* an imported thing, which, in Australia, and then in America, is superimposed with the legend of black Abyssinia (and other legends), to become, finally, a blackened gauze flower on a hat worn on the "mad" Theodora's head:

> [s]o Theodora Goodman took her hat and put it on her head, as it was suggested she should do. Her face was long and yellow under the great black hat. The hat sat straight, but the doubtful rose trembled and glittered, leading a life of its own. (287)

Roses, however, usually symbolise beauty, even purity.

Rimbaud's image of gods and heroes, "[c]overed with snow of roses" (*Rimbaud* 33) inter-images with the following passages from *The Tree of Man*,

> "'Once I saw a house,' she said, in the even dreamlike voice of inspiration, 'that had a white rosebush growing beside it, and I always said that if I had a house I would plant a white rose. It was a tobacco rose, the lady said' ... The rose that they would plant was already taking root outside the window of the plain house, its full flowers falling to the floor." (TTM 28-9).

Sometimes she sat beside the bush of full white roses, her arms awkward in unemployment, at the place that was Parkers,’ and looked at the road” (99).

While still in Australia Roy de Maistre painted pale pink-white and off-white roses in *Still Life, 1922* (fig. 187) and *Untitled still life, 1922*. Both images are either
surrounded by black backgrounds or are set against all-black crockery objects. Both works display a tendency towards the abstraction later practised by De Maistre, but the tender, sensual quality of the roses intertexts directly with White’s representation of the sensual beauty of roses in his works, especially in *The Aunt’s Story*, “[s]he felt on her cheek the smooth flesh of roses. This was smoother than faces. And more compelling. The roses drowsed and drifted under her skin” (21). The days are not always so glorious at Meroë however, and the text goes on in a way that continues to inter-image with De Maistre’s paintings, “‘There is another Meroë ... a dead place, in the black country of Ethiopia’ ...There were many bitter days at Meroë when the roselight hardened and blackened. The earth was hollow with black frost” (23, 27 [emphasis added]). It is as though the blackness of De Maistre’s background in *Untitled*, 1922 (fig. 187) leaches into the beautiful, pale roses of Theodora’s youth, until, in the end, Theodora wears a black gauze rose on her hat (287). But the black rose, which comes to symbolise Theodora, is, “leading a life of its own” (287). Reading inter-imagically, Rimbaud’s poetry with the ending of *The Aunt’s Story*, when “[t]he star wept rose-coloured in the heart of your ears,” the star’s tears would become the sea of the night sky (*Rimbaud* 121). We assume that Fanny, who was “as pretty and pink as roses,” could never lead her own life. The same Rimbaud line of poetry, “[t]he star wept rose-coloured in the heart of your ears,” reads inter-imagically with Fanny, as *sad pink tears*, the colour of face-powder designed to smooth away the middle-aged sorrow felt when the “stardom” of youth is lost* (TAS 22).
Few spectators ... will be able to take seriously Sidney Nolan’s “Boy in the Moon” which consists of a flat disc of yellow, with an oblong protuberance at the bottom, set on a flat dark ground. Given a little patience for the brushwork any layman could paint pictures like this, without giving them the slightest thought.

Kenneth Wilkinson

Moonboy

Moonboy, 1939 (fig. 189) (also known as Boy and the Moon, Boy in the Moon, and Portrait of John Sinclair) was painted by Nolan after seeing Don Sinclair at St Kilda beach seated on a bench “in front of the setting moon, or, in fact, perhaps the rising moon” (SNA 20). When Nolan used the moonboy motif in the backdrop he designed as Décor for the Rite of Spring, 1962 (fig. 145), he was fulfilling a defiant pledge made to Airforce Intelligence personnel, after he was forced to remove the “moonboy” from the roof of the Reed’s house in wartime. He told them that he would repaint the symbol thirty feet in diameter (SNA 20, 126). He did. The motif has been likened to “a head, ... a phallic symbol, a disc of pollen, [a] seed-pod ... [a] nuclear mushroom” (SNA 12, 15) and “a lavatory seat” (Clark, SNLL 39). The motif reappears throughout Nolan’s work. The idea of the image as an atomic mushroom intertexts with the following lines from Riders in the Chariot, “Dubbo knew these parts by heart, both from looking, and from dreaming. He had drawn the houses of
Sarsaparilla, with mushrooms brooding inside" (434). The idea that world war (and bigotry) begins at home, in the minds of "ordinary citizens," underscores Riders in the Chariot.

The moon, as it worked to inspire Nolan’s first Moonboy, however, is also present during Hurtle Duffield’s encounter with the grocer, Cecil Cutbush, even though Duffield does not go home to paint a Moonboy-like image. What Duffield suggests that he might paint, however, the image of an “arse shitting,” inter-images with Moonboy, 1939 (fig. 189), even though Duffield proposes a “great white arse,” rather than a yellow one. The two men in The Vivisector are sitting on a park bench:

[There] was a marbled moon coming up behind them almost before the sun had gone ... The stranger continued leaning forward in the dark the sun had left and the moon hadn’t yet demolished ... The moon was by now showering its light on a world which looked as plain and consistent as your hand — but wasn’t, it seemed ... At least the artist had got up from the bench; his figure in the moonlight overawed the grocer ... “Bet you’ll go ’ome and paint a picture of all this — all this moonlight. I’d like to see what you make of it.”

“A great white arse shitting on a pair of lovers — as they swim through a sea of lantana — dislocating themselves.” (256,258, 259,261 [emphasis added])

This scene also inter-images with Nolan’s depictions of lovers in the parklands of St Kilda in Esplanade, St Kilda, 1946 and Catani Gardens, St Kilda, 1945 (fig. 20). The lights in Catani Gardens, St Kilda, 1945 (fig. 20) read inter-imagically as abstract “great white arse[s]” (with touches of yellow) shitting on the lovers who seem to be “dislocating themselves.”

Another instance of the Moonboy motif intertexting with White’s writing is when Duffield first encounters Kathy, from a distance, as her friend Angela tries to entice her to play with a ball:

“You’re not mature, Angela, wanting to play at silly ball. I wanter go home and study.” The cool voice narrowed, and he recognized the code of priggishness. “Go on then! I’ll play by meself. Who wants to study? I’m gunner get married soon as I can leave school.”

“My mother says I mustn’t think of getting married too soon.”

“Mmmm. Who’s gunner pay for yer if you don’t?”

Three or four driblets of the tossed ball punctured the silence that had formed.

“Not yer father!”

At once the ball rose so high the sun turned it into a burning replica.

“What’re you up to, Kathy? I’m gunner lose me ball — me new ball!”

“Your father’ll buy you another one.”

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Voices hesitated after that: time paused; till the molten ball, cooled by its descent, began to re-form, thumped solid, rebounded, and thumped in somebody’s backyard. (420-1)

The ball’s transformation from solid play-object to a burning molten replica resonates with the sort of transformation that Nolan’s painting has upon the head of Don Sinclair as the an earthly spherical head merges with a sphere from the heavens. The yellow *Moonboy* image also intertexts with the enormous yellow haloes used especially in Greek and Byzantine Christian iconography. These images are scattered throughout the “Revelations” section of *The Burning Piano*. In the documentary, Sharman has Theodora and Alyosha Sergei sit at a round bright yellow table (which inter-images with Nolan’s *Moonboy*, 1939), which while the following dialogue is played out by Judy Davis as Theodora, and Geoffrey Rush as Alyosha Sergei. In the novel, the scene is prefaced by this comment, “Miss Grigg watched Alyosha Sergei Sokolnikov receive a communication from the moon ... From the saints’ corner she could hear the descant of gold and silver. Holy faces stared with one brown expression above a fluctuating ruby” (151):

“Drunk? In a moment, Ludmilla, you will talk to me about religion.”

[But she knew, and smiled, because the world was a little crystal ball.]

“But you believe in God,” said Alyosha Sergei.

“I believe in this table,” she said.  
“A vulgar yellow thing that we have because we have nothing else.”

“Ludmilla,” he said, leaning forward, “what a beautiful, luminous thing is faith.”

[He held his head to prevent it bouncing.]  
“Do you also believe in the saints?” asked Alyosha Sergei.

“I believe in a pail of milk,” said Theodora, “with the blue shadow around the rim.”

“Ludmilla, I love you,” said Alyosha Sergei. “Even when you are a sour, yellow, reasonable woman, who rumbles after chamomile tea ... But when you are your two selves among the saints, then Ludmilla, I love you best” (152 [square brackets indicate lines from *The Aunt’s Story* which are omitted from *The Burning Piano* scene.])

The shape, colour and metaphors of *Moonboy*, 1939 (fig. 189) inter-image with both the scene from *The Burning Piano* and White’s novel. There is “the communication from the moon,” Theodora is aligned with the icon of a saint, “the world was a little crystal ball” for Theodora, Sharman’s table is yellow and round, faith becomes the
luminous (which plays poetically with “lune-imous”) moonboy motif, Alyosha “held” (which intertexts with “haloed”) his head to prevent it bouncing (like a ball), the milk in the pail is yellowish and is contained (presumably) in a round pail, Theodora is “yellow,” and she has two selves, the inner (absent “John Sinclair”) head of an icon, and the outer halo which enlarges the self to two (or more).\textsuperscript{13}

Moonboy, 1939 (fig. 189) also intertexts with Voss in several places: “[r]iding down the other side, the young man conceived a poem, in which the silky seed that fell in milky rain from the Moon was raised up by the Sun’s laying his hands upon it” (251). “Through some trick of moonlight or uncertainty of behaviour, the head became detached for a second and appeared to have been fixed upon a beam of the wooden wall ... The moonlight returned Voss to the room” (177). Moonboy becomes Noonboy as the moonboy icon intertexts with these texts as a sun (rather than a moon) eclipses human heads: “[b]y the time the sun had mounted the sky, their own veins had begun to run with fire. Their heads were exact copies of that same golden mirror. They could not look into one another for fear of recognizing their own torments. Until the head of Harry Robarts was rendered finally opaque by the intense heat of the sun. He had acquired the shape and substance of a great reverberating, bronze gong” (Voss 362). “So the tribe remained entranced. Their voices spoke softer than the dust, their shoulders were bowed down with the round, heavy sun, as they continued to wait” (Voss 380). Earlier, in Sydney, before the expedition begins, “[a]t the wharf the sun was shining. It was the lovely, lyrical spring sun, that had not yet become a gong” (110). Rimbaud images that intertext with Moonboy, and its inter-images, include:

\begin{quote}
Oh! Man has raised his free proud head!
And the sudden ray of original beauty
Makes the god tremble in the altar of his flesh! (31).
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
At last, O happiness, O reason, I removed from the sky the blue that is black, and I lived like a spark of gold of pure light. From joy I took an expression as buffoonish and strange as possible:
It is found again!
What? Eternity.
It is the sea mixed
With the sun. (199)
\end{quote}

From a gold terrace - amidst silken cords ... and crystal discs which darken like bronze in the sun ... [p]ieces of yellow gold ... surround the water-rose.(235).
Here, even the shape of the letter "O," seem to intertext with the moonboy icon, even though "O" signifies blue according to Rimbaud's "Alchemy of the word" (Rimbaud 193). The blue inter-image, however, intertexts with the various "noonboy" readings of Moonboy, where, presumably, the yellow sun-head would be surrounded by blue sky. The moonboy icon also inter-images with Whitely's *Patrick White as headland*, 1981 (fig. 52), in which Patrick White's head is enmeshed with a head-like protuberance of land, of earth, rather than moon (or sun).
Unlit Gas Fires

There is a menacing sense in White’s art that the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps might be repeated in Australia. In *Riders in the Chariot*, the implication of Himmelfarb’s crucifixion is that Australians, *even your mates*, are capable of persecuting a person to death. In *The Vivisector*, Duffield tells the grocer that he “was watching the skyline. There’s a brief phase when the houses opposite remind me of unlit gas fires” (*TV* 257). Nolan’s *Lublin*, 1944 (fig. 193) was, according to Jane Clark: “[o]ne of Nolan’s very few paintings in response to specific wartime events ... [The painting] is a tribute to the first Polish city and concentration camp captured by Soviet forces” (*SNLL* 59). Clark reports that later Nolan “linked *Lublin* with a line from the Ern Malley poem ‘Baroque Exterior’ - ‘the windowed eyes gleam with terror,’” but that this was not his intention in 1944 (*SNLL* 59). This image also intertexts with the terrifying image of Nolan’s response to Rimbaud’s poem “The Drunken Boat,” in which the speaker says, “I struck against, you know, unbelievable (*incroyable* or incredible) Floridas/ Mingling with flowers panthers’ eyes and
human/Skin!” (117). Nolan’s image, *Incredible Floridas*, 1983 (fig. 191) is a windowed helmet/skull through the eye-windows of which are seen two eyes and the mouth-window of which has bar-like teeth. This image intertexts human form with prison cells, buildings in general, and the strange “Floridas” described in Rimbaud’s reeling poem.

The motif of “burning” recurs throughout the works of both White and Nolan. These seemingly innocent images of fire continually inter-image with the terrifying flames that particularly characterised the second World War. Of *Landscape*, 1947, a depiction of “Kelly Country” (part of the Kelly series), Nolan commented in 1984, “I put a fire or a setting sun on the horizon ... I wanted a clear ambiguity because this was the tranquil scene for subsequent violence” (*SNLL* 76). Jane Clark argues that: “[t]he horrific grid of tenement cubicles in *Lublin* [fig. 193] echoes the burnt-out skeleton buildings of Nolan’s *Boy in township*, 1943 [fig. 192], with its corpse of a dehydrated child killed by a bushfire in the Wimmera” (*SNLL* 59). Clark also points
out that the “memorable use of a dark rectangular ‘window’ form [of Boy in township] recurs ... as the famous black Ned Kelly helmet” (SNLL 59). This inter-image leads to an awful new intertextual reading of Ned Kelly’s helmet as a single unlit, or burnt out, gas-oven used to destroy human beings during the holocaust. Both the burnt out building in Boy in Township, 1943 (fig. 192) and the building in Lublin 1944 (fig. 193), also inter-image with Nolan’s depiction of Nurses on the Balcony [of a nursing home], c 1944-5 (fig. 190), an image produced during his time at Heide.

In Jim Sharman’s documentary on the life and work of Patrick White, The Burning Piano, the actor portraying Hurtle Duffield is depicted sitting opposite skyscrapers, not houses as in the novel (TV 257). In The Burning Piano, Duffield says to the grocer: “[t]here’s a brief phase where the buildings [when the houses] opposite remind me of unlit gas fires” (the text enclosed in square brackets supplies the words of the novel [TV 257]). This slight alteration of the verbal text from the novel to the film, combined with the image of tall buildings with grid-like windows
Figure 193 – Lublin (Baroque Exterior), 1944, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 60 x 91 cm, AGSA, page 193 of RP.

(rather than the implied houses), in The Burning Piano, enables readings of the filmic text to resonate even more inter-imaginically with Nolan’s Lublin, 1944 (fig. 193), and Malley’s “Baroque Exterior,” in which “the windowed eyes gleam with terror” (Heyward 253).
The Duffield paintings of rocks that look like animals are reminiscent of Nolan’s African paintings of animals that fade into the landscape (fig. 195). Caldicott writes to Duffield:

I am happy to be able to report that Mrs Lopez, or Mrs Davenport as she is now, has bought your “Animal Rock Forms.” (TV 234)

Later when Duffield meets up with Mrs Davenport/Lopez/Hollingdrake, he says: “All these paintings or rocks. I did them as a kind of endurance test” (280). Mrs Davenport comments, “I find the paintings far less cerebral than you want to suggest; and as I’m the one who owns them I see them as I like to see them. Look at these’ – she touched the sleeping-animal rocks which had upset a critic’s sensibility when they were first exhibited” (280-1). Adams reports of Nolan’s Africa series, “the London critics generally regarded them as something of a fraud” (165). Of Nolan’s animals Missingham writes, “[i]n some of these African animal paintings the delineation of the forms is so ephemeral as to be hardly there at all. There is a sense of transparency,
almost of dream, not only of the animals themselves – fugitive, poised for immediate flight into their amorphous and protective surroundings – but of the landscape they inhabit – suggestion at the expense of statement” (Missingham, AA 464). Rimbaud writes to his family from Harar, “[t]rade is carried out principally in hides of animals, which are milked when alive, and then flayed” (335). Many of Nolan’s African animals look like the hides of animals splayed ambiguously across the picture-plane.

Elephant and Mountain, 1963 (fig. 195).

Elephant and Mountain, 1963 (fig. 195) intertext with The Vivisector. When Hurtle is a boy he draws an image:

“What is it supposed to be?” Miss Adams squinted and asked through her cold.
“Death,” he said, and heard her own voice.
“Death,” Miss Adams was frowning. “Looks like a kind of elephant to me. And elephant with hair instead of hide.”
“It is,” he said. “An elephant in a lion’s skin.” (41)

Nolan’s image is an elephant depicted in grassland so that it might have hair protruding from its back. Rimbaud writes to Demeny,

Why scold a child who, not endowed with zoological principles, might want a five-winged bird? You would make him believe in birds with six tails or three beaks! (305)
By reading these three texts intertextually, but the resultant transient moment can shimmer with inter-imagic resonance that is absent when the three texts are read separately.

Of *Train, Wimmera*, 1942 Nolan says, “The train used to disappear among the wheat-fields ... like the animal fading into the jungles and grasslands I saw [later] in Africa” (*SNA* 30-31). The “A” on the back of the train symbolises “black” in Rimbaud’s “Alchemy of the Word” (*Rimbaud* 193). “Blackest Africa” is later to become a place with which Nolan intertexts the text of his life as it was lived, which also intertexts, then, with the life of Rimbaud as it was lived. The intratextuality that Nolan has woven into his own oeuvre (by repeating motifs) can be seen in another image from the time of *Train, Wimmera*, 1942: *Flour Lumper, Dimboola*, 1943 (fig. 194). Painted on the bag of flour is a large crudely striped black and yellow tiger. In 1943, the tiger would represent a brand of flour, presumably, but in the context of the artist’s entire oeuvre, with striped convicts, footballers wearing striped uniforms, striped blackboys, and also striped African animals (such as *Cheetah and Zebra*, 1963), the motif on the bag of flour, shimmering against the heat of the Australian landscape, seems to signify more than just a brand of flour. Cynthia Nolan seems to have been aware of the connections. When in Africa, Nolan searched for the house in which Rimbaud stayed at Harar. In *One Traveller’s Africa*, Cynthia Nolan reports:

> “Let’s go,” Sidney exclaimed, *suddenly back from Dimboola*, where he too had lived in khaki. (233 [emphasis added]).
The Latrine Sitters

"The sitter, as much as paintings come from places, is from Hurstbridge, where the latrines were on a golden hill with two trees on it." The Latrine Sitters, 1942 (fig. 196) is a second attempt at the subject of the Latrine Sitters, after the first, Dream of the Latrine Sitter, 1942, was deemed not to be an entire success by the artist because, "[for one thing, Nolan admitted, the seated figure looked 'more like a little girl than a soldier']" (SNLL 48-9). The first painting was severely criticised by the Communist and Social-Realists of the Contemporary Art Society because "the daydreaming private seated on a privy seemed to be a complete abdication of political responsibility" (SNLL 48).

The motif of the latrine-sitters intersects with James Joyce’s latrine-sitter in Ulysses, which may also have inspired Nolan’s Latrine Sitters, 1942 (fig. 196):

[He felt heavy, full: then a gentle loosening of his bowels. He stood up, undoing the waistband of his trousers ... A paper. He liked to read at stool ... He went out through the back door into the garden ... He went in, bowing his head under the low lintel. Leaving the door ajar, amid the stench of mouldy lime wash and stale cobwebs he undid his braces ... Asquat on the cuckstool he folded out his paper, turning its pages over on his bare knees. Something new and easy. No great hurry. (Joyce 55-56)
Duffield at stool in his outhouse dunny also intertexts with these depictions of latrine-sitters:

He did read Olivia's crucial note, because he was forced to make use of it; he had run out of paper in the dunny at the back ...

When he had read the letter, he wiped himself with it, not from malice, but because there was no other way out ...

The dunny at the back ... enticed the morning sun through its open door. In this shrine to light it pleased him to sit and discover fresh forms amongst the flaking whitewash, to externalize his thoughts in pencilled images, some of these as blatant as a deliberate fart, some so tentative and personal he wouldn't have trusted them to other eyes. Once he had recorded:

God the Vivisector
God the artist
God (306-7).

Duffield's larrikinism in wiping himself with a friend's letter intertexts with the well-documented and Nolan-perpetuated myth of the artist's larrikinism. Nolan's larrikinism undoubtedly existed in a variety of forms, and probably would have had something to do with his submitting the first *Dream of a Latrine Sitter* (which had a depiction of "the dream" included on the left-hand side of the work) for the "Anti-Fascist Exhibition of December 1942 (SNLL 48).

The depiction of a person sitting on a latrine also intertexts with White's representation of Elizabeth Hunter on her commode:

Mrs Hunter was relentless. "Send my nurse to me," she ordered. "I want to relieve myself" ... If she strained periodically on the commode it was as a formality to please her nurses and her doctor... Mrs Hunter had slipped sideways on her throne ... [o]ne buttock, though withered, was made to shine like ivory where the rose brocade was rucked up (551-52).

Mrs Hunter dies while sitting on her "throne." These passages also intertext with Duchamp's urinal, which draws a toilet into, what was considered in 1917 as the arena of "high" art. Before Duchamp, however, was Rimbaud's poem, "Squattings:"

... he takes the handle of a white chamberpot!

Now, he has squatted, cold, his toes
Turned up, shivering in the bright sunlight which daubs
A cake yellow on the paper windowpanes;

And in the evening, in the rays of moonlight which make
Droolings of light on the contours of his buttocks,
A shadow with details crouches, against a background
Of pink snow, like a hollyhock ... *(Rimbaud 75)*
Walking into the Wheatfields on Crutches, 1982 (fig. 197).

I have dreamed of ... the yellow and blue awakening of singing phosphorus!

Rimbaud,
"The Drunken Boat"

blue and gold

The alchemist's goal [is] commonly understood as the transmutation of base into precious metal ... "gold" ... Each stage is represented by a colour. While variations exist, many alchemists identified the beginning of the process with black, and the final stages with green and blue. Both Rimbaud and White use these colour changes as radical metaphors ... In their art, black and blue connote the beginning and end of the alchemical process, while gold is the achieved perfection. In Une saison en enfer, Rimbaud writes: "At last, O happiness, O reason, I removed from the sky the blue that is black, and I lived like a spark of pure light." In "Vowels," black and blue are the alpha and omega of existence, and the black A connotes putrescence, or Dreck:

A black, E white, I red, U green, O blue: vowels,
One day I will tell your latent birth:
A, black hairy corset of shining flies
Which buzz around cruel stench,
Gulfs of darkness: ...
- O, the Omega, violet beam from His Eyes! (Morley 415)

What follows is an alchemical reading of intertextual/inter-imagic resonances, expressed as an assemblage. In alchemy blue metamorphoses into gold. Nolan's use of a yellow colour for the letters of White's name as author and the title "Voss"
against a blue sky) (fig. 3), can be read as homage to White’s ability to transform the poetry and prose of Rimbaud, and other intertexts, into the “gold” of his art.

The inter-imaging of the images and texts in this section produces enmeshments that resonate through three oeuvres: Nolan’s Walking into the Wheatfields on Crutches, 1982 (fig. 197) is an interplay between Rimbaud’s actual life in which he had his leg amputated just before his death, Rimbaud’s poetry, and other images of wheat that include: Nolan’s Wimmera images (and his life in the Wimmera region which is the “flat golden wheat-growing country” of Victoria [SNLL 42]) and also biblical references to wheat and tares (to which Rimbaud also refers in “A Season in Hell” [185]). Both Rimbaud’s “Sensation” and “The Blacksmith” refer to wheat:

In the blue summer evenings, I will go along the paths,
And walk over the short grass, as I am pricked by the wheat:
Daydreaming I will feel the coolness on my feet.
I will let the wind bathe my bare head (17).

To smell the smell of what is growing:
Orchards when it is raining a bit, and hayfields?
To see wheat, and more wheat, ears full of kernels,
And to think that this promises abundant bread? (19)

In Nolan’s E&S cover-illustration //Voss// also becomes a kind of Rimbaud in his wheatfields, even though the wheat is not in the landscape, but is only intimated in
the colours of the letters in the sky, which are the signifiers that point to the text of

_Voss_, where there are wheatfields:

[Earlier in the year Voss had spent several days as a guest of the Moravian Mission near Moreton Bay. It was the harvest, then. The colours of peace, however transitory, drenched the stubbled fields ... _"Ach,"_ signed the old man; haymaking could have been his vocation.

Then he leaned upon his rake, there was behind him a golden aureole of sun.

"Mr Voss," he said, with no suggestion of criticism, "you have a contempt for God because He is not in your own image" (49-50).

These images of wheatfields (and hayfields) also intertext with Van Gogh’s _Wheatfield with crows_, 1890. Nolan’s style of depicting Rimbaud’s amputated leg intertexts with images in the Gallipoli series, in which bodies are depicted in various washes with simple brush-strokes, often in a burnt sienna colour that also signifies earth/clay. The crutches bearing Rimbaud in Nolan’s image read as large eyes that inter-image with the “blue eyes crying yellow streams of tears,” which appear on the tracing paper image between pages 108 & 109, and also on the cover of _Paradise Garden_ (fig. 198). The poem under the tracing paper image is “By the Stile:”

The flowers are feeding
on the dedicated air
you play your favourite part
subtle angel subtle tart
pointing to wings as if in prayer
and I a dog without a hole
in which to hide my smile and soul (109).

This poem may or may not form intertexts with this intertextual medley, as different readers construct inter-imagic virtual collages. Its title intertexts for me with the field into which Rimbaud is walking, and the fact that there is a stile (crutch). The crutches, which read as Nolan “eyes,” have stylised streams of tears pouring from them. The arms of Rimbaud form the eye-balls for the “eyes.” The eye-shape inter-images with shapes used in Nolan’s early images such as those in _“Icare” – Designs for the ballet_, 1939-40 (fig. 199) and _Four Christmas Day Collages_, 1939 (fig. 200), but they also inter-image with the eyes given to the [unhelmeted] _Kelly Head_, 1947 (fig. 201) whose eyes have a hunted/haunted look. The shape of Kelly’s eyes also inter-image with the shield in Troy (fig. 202). The colours of yellow and blue intra-image across the images of Nolan’s E&S //Voss// (fig. 3), _Kelly [as centaur]_, 1946 (fig. 46), and

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Figure 198 — [Blue eyes crying yellow streams of tears], which appears on the cover and also on the tracing paper page between pages 108 and 109 of Sidney Nolan, *Paradise Garden*, introduction by Robert Melville, London: R. Alistair McAlpine, 1971.

Figure 199 — "Icare" — *Designs for the ballet*, 1939-40, ink, paint and collage on paper, various dimensions (maximum 28 x 43.5 cm) within total frame 91 x 122 cm, page 34 of *SNLL*. 
Figure 200 – *Four Christmas Day Collages*, 1939, oil, collage of book illustrations and text, photographic paper and textiles on photographic paper, 69.8 x 87 cm (overall sight size), pages 20-21 of *SND*.
Figure 201 – [unhelmeted] *Kelly Head*, 1947, ripolin enamel on pulpboard, 75.6 x 63.5 cm, plate 5 of *N*.

Figure 202 – *Sack of Troy*, 1955, fibre-tipped pen, collage of cut paper on paper, 30.4 x 25.4 cm, page 46 of *SND*.
the “blue eyes crying yellow streams of tears” (fig. 198). All these images inter-image with Rimbaud’s poetry. Even though the colour of the land in Voss cover (fig. 3) is white, there is an inter-imagery that plays across the image, which is imported from Kelly [as centaur], 1946 (fig. 46). The colours also resonate with alchemic meaning according to Rimbaud’s theory of alchemy (Rimbaud 193). Morley writes: “black and blue connote the beginning and end of the alchemical process, while gold is the achieved perfection” (415). White wrote to Huebsch of George Salter’s Viking illustration for Voss, “I read last night that the colours of introverted and extrovert spiritual perception. I wonder whether the designer was conscious that he had hit the nail so subtly on the head” (120). The intertextuality of this sentiment operates, however, for the Nolan cover illustration as well.

The resonances, once begun, seem not to end, and seem to become intuitive rather than explicable at times. Finding the links that operate across and through language in all its various media, that traverse textual fields in often unmappable ways, means sometimes following seemingly erratic textual paths that mirror the “lines of flight” in Bonnie Gordon’s explorations of The Anatomy of the Image-Maps,
according to Merriam-Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, 1982 (fig. 97):


Figure 97.
list of written epigraphs

collage and bricolage

“I knew I hadn’t a scholar’s mind” (FG 38).

“Identities drawn from diverse contexts” (Seitz 85).

becoming-other

“One curious fact emerged” (RC 458).

“The swaying motion on the bank of the river falls” (Rimbaud 251).

becoming-reading

“1. To us art is an adventure into an unknown world” (Rothko 7).

alchemy

“O seasons, O castles!” (Rimbaud 201).

The Vivisector

“Mrs Macready says London and New York” (TV 580).

fragments

“Like a god with large blue eyes” (Rimbaud 235).

“For Laura herself” (Voss 158-59).

“O Poets, if you had” (Rimbaud 107).

rosa mutabilis

“Abstract language means that words are not bound” (Carrión 39).

moonboy

“Few spectators ... will be able to take seriously” (Wilkinson, LL 39).

blue and gold

“I have dreamed of” (Rimbaud 107).

notes

1 In this painting Nolan has varnished everything but the policeman’s head, which is left matt, thereby highlighting the fact that it is a piece of collage.

2 Ernst asserts that the noblest achievement of collage is its ability to “speak ... of the irrational” (Ernst, Au-delà 110).

3 Describing texts as new and old privileges the notion of chronological readings of reading intertextually. This is not intended. The use of new text and older text here refers to chronological order of the manufacture of material texts, but when readers create mind-text-collages or mind-intertextualities the chronological order of material textual production may or may not be of importance.

4 “Will the collage/montage revolution in representation be admitted into the academic essay, into the discourse of knowledge, replacing the ‘realist’ criticism based on the notions of ‘truth’ as correspondence to or correct reproduction of a referent object of study? The question of post-criticism was first posed in just this way by Roland Barthes in his reply to the attack made on his Racine book by Raymond Picard (who associated Barthes with Dadaism). Barthes explained that the modernist poets, beginning at least with Mallarmé, had demonstrated already the unification of poetry and criticism — that literature was itself a critique of language, and that criticism had no “meta”-language capable of describing or accounting for literature. Barthes concluded that the categories of literature and criticism could no longer be kept apart, that now there were only writers” (Ulmer 86).

5 The central and third panel of Francis Bacon’s Second version of triptych, 1944, 1988, depict large sets of dentures inside otherwise featureless “heads.” The central panel of the triptych appears in The Burning Piano, accompanied by text read from The Vivisector.

6 Of Sydney, White writes, “The waters of Babylon had not sounded sadder than the sea, ending on a crumpled beach, in a scum of French-letters” (TES 392). Since French nuclear testing began in the Pacific Ocean, intertextual readings of “French-letters” can imply that parliamentary directions written in France, have literally polluted (and/or metaphorically “screwed”) the shores of Australia.

7 “Two durable hoaxes of modern Australia have been Manning Clark’s history and the Ned Kelly paintings of Sir Sidney Nolan. The first now trembles on the brink of critical dissolution. The second remains inexplicably secure ... Nolan painted those with his tongue squeezed firmly into his cheek. I find that immense numbers of people agree with me in that estimation — but only in private. Why is it that so many Australians who — deep inside — know better, yet suffer silently, poor toads beneath the narrow-pints of a hoax? I suppose it is because they have been so persistently battered by
aggressive minorities – the academics, the art racket, the Australia Council racket... the gays, the greens and the humourless fanatics of political correctness[!]” (Ryan 88).

It is difficult to separate Redon’s visual images from his verbal captions as the two signifiers are always interactive; but for ease of discussion I will refer to the joint signifiers as “images.”

In “Illuminations,” Rimbaud writes, “You are still at the stage of the temptation of St Anthony. The struggle with diminished zeal, grimacings of a child’s insolence, collapse and fright. But you will begin this work. All the possibilities of harmony and architecture will rise up around your seat” (221).

The incident to which Nolan refers is possibly when Duffield leaves his retrospective: “[h]is body was exhausted, but his mind darted back prickling around him as he ... stood pissing, propped against the fortified trunk of a Moreton Bay fig ... The evening might have remained one of predominantly watery impressions ... if he hadn’t eased his head back, and at once the stars began to ricochet off the branches in a galaxy of resumed activity” (TV 598). The reference to “bladder trouble” intertexts with Duffield relieving himself. The “misbehaving” intertexts with Cutbush masturbating earlier in the novel (262); “fig” inter-images with the shape of Nolan’s mauve egg in I shall offer myself to the god of the sun, 1982 (fig. 178); and “galaxy” inter-images with Nolan’s The Galaxy, 1957-58 (fig. 7).

The image also inter-images with Rauschenberg’s Monogram, 1955-59. Hughes writes, “the goat in the tyre ... is one of the few great icons of male homosexual love in modern culture” (Shock 335).

Both images also inter-image with Girl Holding Flowers, 1956. In this image a girl is holding a diminutive bunch of flowers to her enormous face. Again, the female figure is usurping the textual space and position traditionally given to flowers as a metaphor for both the feminine and for romance.

The equation of Theodora with icons continues when Katina speaks of her Athenian aunt to Theodora, “Oh, Aunt Smaragda has the Great Idea ... She prays for Byzantium. She prays for the day when the saints will blaze with gold.’ Heavy with gold and silver, the icon faces of many aunts smouldered with Ideas” (TAS 177).

The fires depicted by Nolan include: Fire: Palais de Danse, St Kilda, 1945; the fire on the horizon of Landscape, 1947; Burning at Glenrowan, 1946 & Siege at Glenrowan, 1946 (which were originally one painting); and Bushfire, 1953. There are also fires in The Aunt’s Story, The Tree of Man, and Riders in the Chariot:

for the crowd it was essential that the roof would fall. It waited for this intensification of its lives. “Miss Goodman,” said Katina Pavlou, “have you ever seen a burning piano?”

Theodora had not, but she had watched other moments writhe, distorted by less than fire (TAS 250).

The Burning Piano, section entitled, “Nobel Laureate.”

Sidney Nolan, from Dimboola, 9 December 1942 (SNLL 48).

Jane Clark suggests that an interesting comparison may be made with Albert Tucker’s Philosopher, 1939. Tucker depicts a bare-bottomed figure seated on a box next to a picket gate. The figure is facing away from the viewer, and is regarding a moon (or early morning, or late evening sun). The figure is in an elevated position in a hilly landscape. The image is quite surreal.

Jane Clark reports, when commenting on Flour Lumper, Dimboola, 1943 (fig. 194), which depicts a man carrying ground wheat, that “Nolan himself ‘lumped’ heavy bags of wheat whilst on transport duty loading stores” when he was posted to the Wimmera district during the war (SNLL 52).
conclusions
It is in wanting to know that one is often deceived. I presage: then I seek to translate into words what is being written in fevers, in heartbeats, in luminous songs. I wonder what it is called.

Hélène Cixous

**signs in flux**

Human beings are constantly being bombarded with information from the outside world, and also from within their complex selves. Often that information is apprehended “in fevers, in heartbeats, in luminous songs,” and in other heightened states of reality (Cixous 1). Complicated biological, psychological, and intellectual responses result, responses that are affected by enmeshments of all prior experience gained while being alive in sensate bodies within a material world that is able to be perceived, but that is never able to be understood in all its complexities of signification. I have used the word *text* to signify any sort of message: informative, perceptual, sensory, or otherwise. Text is anything and everything: texts exist whether or not they can be apprehended by human beings. Whenever people interact with texts that they *are* capable of perceiving, however, there is a complex interaction between signifiers (that exist in various textual media, both material and virtual), signifieds
(everything those signifiers might convey, or be read as conveying during the process of reading), and readers (including the diversity of their beings). Diagram 16 is one way of representing a reader's interaction with a text. The smaller circles (around the larger circles, which represent each reading component [signifier, reader, and array of signifieds]), denote the intertexts which may be associated with each of those entities.

The text being read by any reader (reader A, for instance), however, might be another reader (reader B). When reading reader B, reader A is not only interacting with the external reality/materiality of reader B (and the multitude of ways in which that person can be coded), but reader A is also interacting with the largely invisible virtual reality of reader B's thought processes (both as they are conveyed by reader B and/or as they are perceived by reader A). Intertexting with the virtual reality of another person, however, is only possible if that person conveys their readerly virtual reality by some sort of outward sign. Intertexting with an absent person, by reading their material art/writing, is almost entirely an act of readerly creativity (and/or intuition). The White and Nolan of this thesis are intertextual, imaginative, writerly and readerly constructions.
Artworks may seem to have no virtuality in and of themselves (in contrast to the living texts of people we read), but art-works are continually being affected by what is happening around them. The mass media, other texts, the seasons, people’s opinions, and innumerable other factors, operate around texts and intertexts to alter our perceptions of those texts. In this thesis, I have used semiotic graphics in an attempt to provide maps for text/reader inter-reactions. Because of the play inherent in all textual transactions, however, the meanings of semiotic graphics are as subject to intertextual changes, as are the word-signifiers with which they interact. The graphics now being used to designate hypertext locations on the world wide web, intertext with Eco’s semiotic graphics in ways that can enable new meanings for both sets of signifiers.

Hypertext addresses are one form of the addressing syntax known as a Uniform Resource Locator (URL). The syntax of a URL is made up of a series of information groups: first, is the indicator of the type of resource to which the URL refers (a hypertext document [in this discussion], identified by the letters http); secondly, is the standard delimiter “://”; after which comes the site-address, followed by a series of path-identifiers (which locate the document resource at that site). For example: http [hypertext transport protocol]://site address/directory path(s)/document name (and type). These information groups are often separated by both slashes and full-stops.

Rather than the closure implied when semiotic brackets are used to designate the signifier //Voss//, then, I would like to suggest that intertextual readings, which are potentially endless, would benefit from being indicated by an expression similar to that used to denote a hypertext address. Such an address (and the reading pathway leading to that address) might be called an: ittp [intertext transient potential]. Hence, an artificially produced image of Voss (/\Voss\/) is being intertexted with the written text of /Voss/, might be indicated by: http://Voss/Voss. Other intertexts in various textual media. In this instance, the semiotic graphic preceding any signifier would denote the sort semiotic graphic relating to the signifier at that part of the ittp; and the full-stop mark would act as a linking apparatus (as did the “U” of the Venn diagram examples in section 3 of this thesis). Following this argument, then, placing a symbol at the beginning of an ittp, plus a superscript C, indicates that the reading is a
Figure 204 – *Pan and Christ*, 1951, ink on paper, 10 x 8 in., plate 80 of *SN*.

Figure 205 – Cover illustration by Sidney Nolan credited on inside front cover of *Voss*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971.
transient, personal reading experience, and that it is culturally mediated. Ending the address with an ellipsis indicates that the pathways involved in the intertextual readings are open-ended. Hence: \texttt{http://Voss/Voss.intertexts in various textual media} . . . would represent a transient, personal, culturally mediated, reading of visual Voss, written \textit{Voss}, and any other intertexts with which a reader interacts in order to read that intertextual set. The contents of hypertext documents can change (and this fact is not necessarily indicated by the hypertext address). In addition, the route a document may take (via the internet network) need not be the same each time that document is retrieved, even though neither the user-location nor the document-location has changed. All these facts read as metaphors for the ways in which intertextual reading directions shift and mutate, as readers intertext various sets of (inter)texts, following individual reading pathways, with differing intertext transient potentials . . .

Intertextual readings are open-ended. For example, the activity of reading intertextually, enables some of Nolan’s reverse-monotone drawings to inter-image with the Penguin reverse-monotone cover-illustrations for \textit{Voss} (figs. 36, 205). \textit{Pan and Christ,} 1951 (fig. 204) intertexts with Voss’s depiction as a type of god/Christ in the novel (379); and both its white lines on a dark back-ground, and the doubling involved in its depiction of one figure overlaying another, also inter-image with the Penguin Nolan reverse-monotone cover-illustrations of Voss (one of which has a red double of Nolan’s Voss off-set over the original image of Voss) (figs. 36, 205).\footnote{Because it is a reverse-monotone Nolan line-drawing, \textit{Figures with buildings and} \textit{.,} c. 1940-45 (fig. 206), also inter-images obliquely with the two Penguin \textit{Voss}-covers. The inter-imagery enables Voss to read as “clown” under Nolan’s night-sky. Voss is transported this time, not to a landscape like that of \textit{Gallipoli landscape with soldier,} c. 1958 (fig. 37), but to a fairytale on yet an “other” Nolan textual plane. Intertextual readings are mediated via various codes: semiotic, cultural, and intertextual. There is a sense, however, in which any reading continues to be modified in a never-ending sequence that can be likened to surfing on the internet, or to the construction (or following) of complicated hypertext addresses that are being constantly modified. The map is always open-ended . . .}
Figure 206 – *Figures with buildings and moon*, c. 1940-45, cyanotype on paper, 40.6 x 50.6 cm, page 29 of *SND*.

Figure 143 (repeated) – *In the Cave*, 1957, polyvinyl acetate on masonite, 48 x 60 in., plate 92 of *SN*.
By appropriation of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of becoming, the flux inherent in signs – the intertextual play – means that ittp addresses are often in dynamic states. The addresses need not be either logical nor linear; the emphasis is not on destination, but on a multitude of pathways, and various places of resting. There is a potential becoming-other of every aspect of every sign. These states of becoming-other do not mean that it is not possible to talk of meanings or perceptions (or readings, or interpretations); they simply suggest that those readings will always be transient and shifting. The lines of flight drawn in diagram 17 represent the ways in which an intertextual reading moves through textual states of flux any reading is assembled.

The flow of reading moves through a range of various textual forms, becoming-other as is required, in an endless relaying of inter-textual and inter-imagic intensities. The intertextual transient potential (ittp) of every (inter)textual set will vary for every different viewer. The central space is where any reading concentrates and is where interim conclusions are reached for a time.
possibility that there is a potential, or an actual, time-gap between perception of any virtual signifier, and its becoming-virtual-signifed (intertextual) set. It seems to me that I can suspend the intertextual assimilation of signifiers into the readerly space I perceive. I experience the reading process in such a way that I can perceive an image without intertexting with that image beyond initial perception (either for a short time, for a longer duration, or theoretically forever). I would argue that this hesitation, or suspension of (inter)textual assimilation, can be a powerful part of the reading process as I consider, “How will I read?”

In these conclusions I make use of ellipses, a writing and reading strategy appropriated from an essay by Carrión:

A book is a sequence of spaces.

Each of these spaces is perceived at a different moment – a book is also a sequence of moments [...]

In the old art the writer judges himself as being not responsible for the real book. [S]He writes the text. The rest is done by the servants, the artisans, the workers, the others.

In the new art writing a text is only the first link in the chain going from the writer to the reader.

Carrión uses bold type, deliberate placement of four-dot ellipses, and he breaks his ideas into regular blocks of text, interspersed with line breaks, and occasionally with ellipses, to foreground the artificiality of his material text. I make use of ellipses, images, diagrams, and both black and coloured print, because I consider every aspect of this text’s materiality as part of its signification. I want this work to read as potential livre d’artiste, and/or as potential-sculpture, not only as academic thesis. I view every component of a sign as text, including its ellipses, and including also, the space that surrounds a text. For all its making (even its gaps), however, this document can only ever be an ittp that will be different for every reader. In order to account for many different intertextual readings of textual sets, then, an ittp might read as: ittp:

material texts (comprised of material signifiers).
virtual texts (comprised of virtual signifiers and virtual signifieds).
material intertexts (comprised of material signifiers).
virtual intertexts (comprised of virtual signifiers and virtual signifieds).
the living, active text of reader/s engaging with all those texts (readers being both material [and readable] texts, and virtual [readerly and readable] texts at the same time) ...
Blood thunders
through a labyrinth more intricate than all the streets
of Sydney nerves
decode as many messages in seconds
as the Exchange that connects us
now in centuries
David Malouf

Play ... elusive change or transition ... the space in or through which
anything can or does move ... [jest], fun, sport ... abstinence from
work ... [t]o move briskly or lightly, especially with irregular motion,
as lighting, flame, etc.; to change rapidly, as colours in iridescence ...
[t]o perform as a spectacle upon the stage ...
OED

intertextuality and play
Without textual play there could be no intertextuality. Materially absent texts are able to
intertext with texts that are materially present (at any particular reading), because a
reader plays with those texts in the virtual realm of his or her self. Readers may also
play intertextually on the material surfaces of their (often written) responses to reading
(intertexts. Postmodernism expresses a love of play, and of postponing any moment
of completion. Every transitory conclusion points to another text, another set of
beginnings ... There is no end, but there is always [emphasis added] Postmodernism works, but
even when we are at our most serious, texts will undermine our labour of exegesis.
During one particular inter-imagic reading of the eye sequence of White’s The Eye of
the Storm, the virtual image I recalled as Leda and the swan (fig. 207), was in fact a
misreading. I saw a virtual inter-image of a black swan at the centre of my inter-imagic
reading of The Eye of the Storm, and Leda and the swan. Discovering that Nolan had
painted a white swan, I scribbled over a reproduction of Nolan’s Leda and the
swan to display the inter-imagery I read in the eye of the storm. I have entitled my
vandalism, Inter-imagic reading IV: Leda and Elizabeth and the swans, 1996 (fig.
210).

After Basil and Dorothy suggest to their mother that she retire to Thorogood
Village, a home for old people, Elizabeth thinks:

[i]f you could describe your storm; but you could not. You
can never convey in words the utmost in experience. Whatever is
given you to live, you alone can live, and re-live, and re-live, till
it is gasped out of you.
So she lay gasping, as though the tide had almost fully
receded from this estuary of sheets, while they watched her, she
could tell, with their unregenerate, gull’s eyes. (414 [emphasis
added]).
Elizabeth's children have not undergone the redemptive experience of the eye of the cyclone on Brumby Island. Their eyes are cruel. During the eye experience Elizabeth feeds black swans, not the gulls she later describes as "white predators," (like the elderly children who are waiting to benefit from their mother's death) (425). Elizabeth's feeding of the swans intertexts with Nolan's *Leda and the swan*, 1960 (fig. 207), which White owned until he donated it to the AGNSW in 1974. In this painting a fragile Leda is leaning forward as though she is stroking the swan, but her action might also be construed as feeding the bird. There is no suggestion of violence or rape in this rendition of the myth, as there are in other Nolan versions of the myth, such as *Leda and swan [attack]*, 1958 (fig. 208). When Elizabeth re-lives the eye experience, just before she dies, there are "swans waiting by appointment each a suppressed black explosion the crimson beaks savaging only those born to a different legend" (550). The text invites a reading that is aware of other legends about women, and violent swans, but the words suggest that such violence will not take place here, that Elizabeth has been born to a "different legend." In effect, the text of the Leda-legend traverses the text, but passes through it, like a squall, perhaps, and leaves.

Elizabeth is not an allegorical version of Leda, then, but the painted figure in Nolan's painting might be Elizabeth's self, communing with one of the swans present in the eye of the storm, "[w]hen they had floated within reach, the wild swans outstretched their necks. Expressing neither contempt nor fear, they snapped up the bread from her hands recognising her perhaps by what remained of her physical self" (425). The swan in Nolan's painting is white, in keeping with the traditional legend, but White's text is multi-faceted. The fact that the swans are "wild" intertexts with Yeats's poem "The Wild Swans at Coole" (where the swans are "wild," but of an unspecified colour), and it also intertexts with his poem "Coole and Ballylee, 1931," where there is one white swan, "That stormy white/ But seems a concentration of the sky" (Yeats 72, 12). This stormy white concentration in the sky intertexts with the "eye" of the storm in one intertextual reading. It also, paradoxically, intertexts with the "suppressed black explosion" of the swans because both the "white concentration" and the "suppressed black explosion" signify "swan" (550). It seems that the swan of
Ledas story, a supernatural being (who could easily arrive with all the force of a
cyclone, being, in fact, Zeus) does, in fact, traverse Whites text, not in the guise of a
swan here, but as the powerful, black storm.

In Yeats poem Leda and the swan, there is, A sudden blow: the great
wings beating still ... Being so caught up/ So mastered by the brute blood of the air,/Did she put on his knowledge with his power/ Before the indifferent beak could let her
drop? (Yeats 247). The violence of Whites storm is certainly sufficient to intertext
with the violent rape of Leda:

her dress pulled inside out over her head then returned her
breasts rib-cage battered objects blood running from her
forehead ... how resistant [the bunker was] to acts of God she
was not of a mind to calculate ... [She] was almost torn off her
shelf by a supernal blast then put back by a huge thrust or
settling of exhausted atoms. She lay and submitted to someone
to whom she had never been introduced. Somebody is always
minkering with something ... [Her spirit later tries] to answer the
explosions of stiff silk with which their wings were
acknowledging an equal. (422-425).

It is not Ledas Elizabeths breast that is pinned, as in Yeats poem: He held her
helpless breast upon his breast (247), but a sooty gull, which is, in turn, a metaphor
for Christ. Elizabeth should have died on the beach, but:

some force not her absent will ... wrenched at her doll’s head
and faced it with the object skewered to the snapped branch of a
tree. The gull, a homelier version of the white predators, had
been reduced to a plaque in haphazard bones and sooty
feathers. Its death would have remained unnoticed, if her mind’s
ear had not heard the cry still tearing free as the breast was
pierced. (425)

Later, before she dies, Elizabeth again remembers, or hallucinates, the swans. This
time death takes Elizabeth, but there is no savaging. Yeats poem (and its associated
myth) and also Nolan’s more violent images of Leda, are all present as potential
intertexts with the passage: [t]he seven swans are perhaps massed after all to destroy
a human will once the equal of their own weapons its thwack as crimson painful its
wings as violently abrasive don’t oh DON’T my dark birds of light let us rather —
enfold” (550-51). A sudden blow: the great wings beating still/ Above the staggering
girl (Yeats 247). White also uses a passage that intertexts with the Leda and the
swan myth when he describes the death of Austin Roxburgh in A Fringe of Leaves:

Mrs Roxburgh became aware of a terrible whooshing, like the
beating of giant wings, infernal in that they were bearing down
upon her more than any other being. Indeed, nothing more personal had happened to her in the whole of her life. For a spear, she saw, had struck her husband; it was hanging from his neck, long and black, giving him a lopsided look. (214) 

The Zeus of these readings is an intertextual metaphor for death (which is an act of violence wrought by the condition of living on earth), and also a metaphor for storms of different kinds: meteorological, the emotions aroused when witnessing acts of violence, tumultuous psychological upheaval, and also grief. Both death, and storms of various sorts, can seem to be unwanted hideous impositions, not unlike rape.

The bright pink strokes in the sky and the hyper-real tone of Nolan’s “Elizabeth feeding swan” painting intersect well with the hyper-reality of Elizabeth’s eye/I experience. The sea in Nolan’s painting is a dark mountain blue and very calm. The calmness of Nolan’s sea intersects with the calm of the eye of the cyclone, but White describes “marbled pyramids of waves” during the eye (424). Such pyramids are present in other Nolan depictions of the sea, depictions that bear a strong resemblance to the colour of the sea in this Leda work. The cover of Australian Letters 5.2 (December 1962), which is described simply as “a new work by Sidney Nolan” is an example of “marbled pyramids of waves” (fig. 209) (1). The fact that Australian
Figure 208 – *Leda and swan*, 1958, polyvinyl acetate on hardboard, 122 x 152.5 cm, AGNSW, page 131 of *SNLL*.

Figure 209 – “A new work by Sidney Nolan” credited on page 1 of *Australian Letters* 5.2 (1962). The image is depicted on both the cover and page 7 of the journal.
artistic texts inter-image with White’s novel is important. Works of art from the great European tradition intertext with *The Eye of the Storm*, but the moment when Elizabeth communes with the eye, with her quintessential self, she feeds a black swan (an Australian native bird, rather than the white swan of the European myth and Yeats’s poems). The moment intertexts with an Australian artistic version of a myth about Leda’s rape, in which the traditional assailant has been rendered docile, and is being fed by its usual victim. This is, after all, the antipodes.

The text subverts the rape myth by making it clear that Elizabeth belongs to her own legend (550). The intersections of the new text, and its inter-images, are particularly unstable because the old myth is always potentially an invader of the new text, even though its actual presence in the new text would be surreal and menacing. If read inter-imaginically (like an Ernst collage), however, a virtual-text that contains the original rape of Leda alongside (and continually intermingling with) Elizabeth’s experience of the storm, is a sustainable reading of White’s work. Indeed years later, we are told, she still fears harm from white predatory birds. The white birds that she fears are gulls (and her children), but the threat of attack also intertexts obliquely with the traditional rape of Leda. The “white birds” also intertext with White’s autobiography (and the text of his life as it was lived), because he feared that he and his sister, “White” birds, had contributed to the death of their own mother, by suggesting that she move into an old people’s home (*FG* 149-150).7

I am arguing that White’s text seems to be inhabited by Nolan’s image, but that the European myth, upon which Nolan’s image is based, only seems intermittently to traverse the novel. When it does, there is also the potential to draw in (inter)textual reworkings of the myth, such as Yeats’s poems. Various intertexts and inter-images, then, cross over the (inter)textual set, leaving behind various resonances or “tracks.” The new text *is* like an Ernst collage. The seamless melding of new text and resident intertexts, and inter-images, means that slippages of meaning occur effortlessly, sometimes without readers even noticing. The conjunctions of new text and intertexts are continually mutating into something new, and then something new again. There is a becoming-new-text of various intertexts, and a becoming-intertexts-(in both their
original and their new contexts) of the new text. These becomings are virtual readings. They are unstable because readers create their own fluctuating readings according to their remembrances of intertexts in other possible contexts, and also depending upon the thoroughness and/or the degree of creativity involved in those readings. In figure 210, I have attempted to convey the image I see when I read *The Eye of the Storm*,

Figure 210 – Diane Caney, *Inter-imagic reading IV*, 1996: *Leda and Elizabeth and the swans.*
Therefore the poet is truly the thief of fire. He is responsible for humanity, even for the animals; he will have to have his inventions smelt, felt, and heard; if what he brings back from down there has form, he gives form; if it is formless, he gives formlessness. A language must be found. Moreover, every word being an idea, the time of a universal language will come! One has to be an academician — deader than a fossil — to complete a dictionary in any language whatsoever. Weak people would begin *to think* about the first letter of the alphabet, and they would soon rush into madness!

Rimbaud

copyright and visual text

Unless copyright restrictions on the reproduction of visual texts are relaxed, there will be no significant growth of intertextual reading, that includes wide-scale knowledge of visual imagery in Australia. Literature has been seen as an elitist domain because of the often elaborate codings used within its structures, but at least literature, and writing in general, are accessible to people who can read. In contrast, however, visual art, both in Australia and throughout the world, is a field that is delimited to varying degrees by laws that govern property ownership, copyright of reproduction, and the moral rights of the artists who create its “materiality.” There are various economies operating throughout the territory of the art world, and as well as these economies are the politics governing both the worth (in every sense) of art-works, and the various ways in which art will be viewed. It is often difficult to find a way through the maze of arts bureaucracies. To publish this document — to procure (and pay for) permission to reproduce all these images, and to publish them in colour — would be an almost impossible (and certainly an economically unviable) proposition. This document is itself a privileged site that aims to question why it is, that images occupy such an exclusive position in this society; and that wishes to see the invisible, but powerful, boundaries that prevent experimentation with, and exploration of, the language of visual images, eroded. In order to read inter-imaginically, reproductions of visual images need to be available to the general community. Many of Nolan’s works, for instance, have never been reproduced in colour, and some are not likely to be.

I have found various web sites that display the works of Sidney Nolan and other Australian artists, but I have also encountered private ownership, and bureaucratic ownership, of Nolan-images that make viewing (or reproducing) those
images, either almost, or completely, impossible. Certainly, many works are currently inaccessible to the general population. Reading intertextually is a creative process, and it is possible to imagine many works, but seeing a text, even if only in reproduction, is obviously preferable to not being able to see the text at all. Intertextuality relies on there being texts with which to intertext. With many texts becoming web-oriented, it seemed that a textual realm had arrived, where reading intertextually and inter-imagically could take place unhindered (by the constraints often implicit in obtaining and reading material texts). Two of the images to which I refer (but do not provide in this text), are available on internet sites. The addresses for these images are cited in the list of *illustrations* on pages 423-24. There are a number of Nolan images available on the web, but many institutions (such as the ANG) are re-thinking the "wisdom" of making their works available in a medium that makes it easy to download those images. Various government institutions, and other web-controlling bodies, are becoming increasingly aware of the potential economics of the web. The availability of many texts, including even written texts, however, may decrease rather than increase with increased use of the web as a textual medium. This will be especially so where texts are available only to readers with access to the, as yet still very privileged, textual space of the world wide web. Copyright continues to restrict the practice of inter-imagic reading; and whereas the world wide web might alleviate this situation, it seems that the economics that surround the world of visual art will continue to operate, even though an ideal (albeit privileged) inter-imagic material textuality is now in operation. Various texts are vying to intertext at this point, but an in-depth analysis of the (inter)textual implications of the web requires another study.
doors and windows: the risks of concluding

The artworks of both Nolan and White convey an uneasiness about what it is that constitutes Australia, what being human entails, and what is represented by official historiographic records of the twentieth-century. Their art gnaws at the histories and myths with which Australians have traditionally been presented, of their place in the world (and in the universe). Like Magritte’s fictional canvas, *The Human Condition I*, 1934 (fig. 212), the art of White and Nolan can always be read as invitations to look behind those constructions, and, indeed behind all signifying structures, to see how and why they were made, and also, to consider what it is that official stories and images of Australia, and of the world, conceal. In 1948 Elizabeth Webb of the *Courier Mail* objected to “Mr Nolan’s blatant extremism and what appears to be deliberate maltreatment of so much useful and hard-to-come-by building material (all his ‘works’ are on masonite)” (*SNLL* 91). Her righteous indignation is humorous today, but is
Figure 212 – René Magritte, *The Human Condition I*, 1934, oil on canvas, 39.5 x 31.5 in., page 246 of *Shock*.

also a potent reminder of the Australia into which both White and Nolan first released their art.

Ned Kelly’s helmet reads as the representation of a piece of Australian mythico-history. The helmet also reads, however, as the ways in which text-books of history frame particular fragments of history and culture, often ignoring much of what might be seen (figs. 40, 46, 70). The helmet is also a metaphor for individual readers, who take what they see, and read it for themselves:

... more often than not, Amy Parker was a bright, industrious young woman, shaking a duster off the veranda or sitting on a log to shell peas ... Only sometimes her face devoured the landscape, or she waited for the roof to be torn off, but only sometimes. (ITM 66 [emphasis added]).

The notion of a face devouring the landscape intertexts with Kelly’s helmet-visor, which devours space; and also inter-images with Burke’s face, which looks more like a landscape than a face (fig. 39). A face literally devours the landscape in Joy Hester’s *Fun Fair*, c. 1946 (fig. 211). Concentration on devouring texts, as a metaphor for what it is that readers do when they interact with texts intertextually, adequately describes the continual dis-assembly and re-assembly involved in acts of intertextual reading. The image of Hester’s helmet also inter-images with the empty helmets of Ned Kelly as centaur (fig. 40 & 46), where the landscape seems to be concentrated inside the square reading of Kelly’s readerly space. If Kelly’s helmet is a metaphor for readers, in *Kelly in landscape*, 1962 (fig. 213), there is no longer any distinction between internal and external readerly space at all. The helmet is merging into the landscape, and the landscape is becoming enmeshed throughout the solid helmet, and the visor. Both entities are in states of becoming-other.

There are many windows in Nolan’s oeuvre and also, metaphorically, in that of White. Kelly’s visor acts as a window in many of Nolan’s images. In *Study for Constable Fitzpatrick and Kate Kelly*, 1946, there is a window, directly outside which the empty helmet, and body, of Kelly is standing. In the final rendition of the painting, however, *Constable Fitzpatrick and Kate Kelly*, 1946 (fig. 107), there is a window through which can be seen the body, and empty helmet, of Kelly standing at a
distance. The empty helmet, in turn, acts as a further window onto either the same sky, or a Kelly-readerly-mediated sky. The window in *Constable Fitzpatrick and Kate Kelly*, 1946 (fig. 107) can also be read as a painting of Kelly, and not an actual window at all. All intertextual reading is a process of following windows rather like the process of following the windows available in computer software and on the Internet. As works transmute into new works, play is established, and contexts shift and change, to varying degrees. Ned Kelly's helmet appears in Tucker's *Sunday Reed*, 1984 (fig. 214), which depicts an elderly Sunday Reed looking at an image on the wall of Nolan's *Kelly* [as centaur], 1955. This image is further re-contextualised as it drawn into Kay Schaffer's various readings *In the Wake of First Contact* (144). The image operates in differing ways as part of Schaffer's cultural analysis; as art-work; as a window onto numerous other (inter)texts (such as Nolan's *Kelly* series, Heide, and his relationship with Sunday Reed); as a window within a window within a window; and the image also has numerous other potential intertexts.

Commenting on Nolan's 1987 Retrospective, Barrett Reid remarked:

[w]e now see that ... Nolan's vision is a tragic one. It is mocking (Ern Malley sticking out his tongue), it is cruel (Mrs Fraser
bestial in abandonment) and it occupies a vast and arid inner space, as lonely as the surface of the moon. It is the peculiar triumph of this painter that when all the time we thought he was painting our landscape, our inland, our drought, he was at the same time painting a private interior space, reflecting, floating, dying. It is the silence after Auschwitz. It is a central fact of contemporary experience which we cannot avoid, even though our humanity turns away to seek other answers, other spaces. (181).

White also combined both Australian, and other, landscapes (of every sort) with the tragedies and comedies of this century. The following lines, which describe Dorothy in her mother’s house, intertext with Nolan’s *Lublin*, 1944 (fig. 193), and inter-image with notions of Australia as prison, and with Nolan’s image of a hare caught in a trap (fig. 19). This intertextual set also inter-images with Miss Hare and the holocaust of *Riders in the Chariot*. The name, Dorothy, intertexts with Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*. Miss Hare intertexts with the Mad March Hare of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. There is even an inter-imagic resonance of the lovers in *Rimbaud Royalty*, 1942 (fig. 181). The intertextual medley is ongoing ...

[Dorothy] arrived on the landing, at the passage leading to the cells of the released prisoners. The doors she tried opened on rooms which must have been unoccupied for years, except by their wire stretchers, and chests, and the corpses of moths; till in the last, the most imposing cell, intended for some more important semi-responsible inmate, she found signs of life; for the housekeeper’s spirit lingered in it, together with the scent of facepowder ... and a few visible possessions such as ground-down, yellow-bristled hair-brushes, a hare’s foot stained brown, the framed snapshot of a woman and a young man enlaced against an empty bandstand, in front of an expanse of white sea. (*TES* 222).

The intertextualities and inter-images form and re-form ...

Arriving at an interpretation is not the aim. The aim moves continually, like a telescope, or binoculars, or a gun that will shatter everything into a kaleidoscope of (inter)textual fragments. *Inter-imagic reading V: this is not Ned Kelly*, 1996 (fig. 215), and the statements: “this is not Patrick White,” and “this is not Australia,” all imply that their opposites exist: that there are entities of which it might be said: this *is* Ned Kelly, this *is* Patrick White, this *is* Australia. Of course we will arrive at transient understandings of all these entities. When we read art, however, the exploration is everything. This thesis seeks to venerate the space explored during reading, to create theories and methodologies in which reading intertextually might be described and

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Figure 107 (repeated) — Constable Fitzpatrick and Kate Kelly, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 16 of SNWK.

Figure 215 — Diane Caney, Inter-imagic reading V: this is not Ned Kelly, 1996, vandalism of Kelly [as centaur], 1955, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 81.5 x 100 cm, page 118 of SNLL.
assisted, to make a set of intertextual domains in which readers are actively and creatively invited to participate in a process that is not regarded as secondary to artistic practice, or other practices of textual construction. I want reading to be recognised as a vital zone of textual production both in Australia, and elsewhere. Obviously, such a process does not take place in a vacuum, and discussion of every aspect of textual production is valid and useful, but the activity of reading intertextually opens the way for readerly creativity, for readerly liberation from the constraints imposed by generations of readers who engaged with texts primarily to glean information.

Foregrounding readerly textual production in a culture that desires to venerate artists and authors, over texts (and readers), can seem futile at times. Both Australia and the world wants cultural heroes. White and Nolan were involved in the process of contributing to their own fame (to varying degrees), and both understood the powerful effect of making their own works intra-reactive. Each artist's oeuvre intratexts with such an intensity that it seems, at times, that they must have been conceived in their entirety, on one night, in a grand plan. White and Nolan both use motifs that appear throughout their works. The Kelly-helmet appears again and again. Even in *Woman and Tent*, 1946 (fig. 216), which depicts an old woman who bought her land by saving from her pension cheques, the tent reads as a type of Kelly-helmet. Nolan says of the Kelly-helmet, “Ned Kelly’s shape against this golden landscape ... It’s a very simple thing ... it’s like Oxo soup ... as it’s turned out. It’s a brand image .. But it won’t go away” (*NL* 5). Nor will Patrick White and Sidney Nolan go away. I would argue that in time the Ned Kelly shape will not represent Ned Kelly, however, but Sidney Nolan. And that, rather than the bushrangers of last century, the two artists will be remembered in Australian mythology, as our twentieth-century cultural heroes. Both artists have ranged across the territories of Australia and the world, both literally and metaphorically, to the extent that the term *bushranger* seems an appropriate form in which to represent their apotheoses into cultural heroes. In an act of visual/verbal intertextual critical and artistic comment, I have re-titled Albert Tucker’s *Ned and Dan*, 1958, as *Inter-imagic reading VI: Pat and Sid*, 1996 (fig. 217).
Figure 216 – Woman and Tent, 1946, ripolin on board, 91.9 x 122 cm, page 27 of Lanyon.

Figure 217 – Diane Caney, Inter-imagic reading VI: Pat and Sid, 1996, re-titling of Albert Tucker, Ned and Dan Kelly, 1958, polyvinyl acetate on hardboard, 36 x 48 in., page 64 of AT. (Also exhibited as Desert with armoured bushrangers.)
Interpretations of intertextual events have been made in this study. Their creation, however, has been self-conscious. I hope that rather than only writing interpretations of texts and art, the practise of regarding art, and making descriptions of art, will be more fully embraced by this society; that wilfully suspending interpretative text (and/or art-intertexts) can become more generally practised; and/or that interpretative text and cultural comment is allowed to filter into the total intertextual experience of viewing art, without overwhelming individual readerly responses to art. By looking and thinking and meditating intertextually (upon, in and around texts), we might begin to expect the flux of (inter)textual readings, rather than the fixity of "destination-based-readings." Creators of texts (including readers who create virtual texts), who use intertextuality as part of their vocabularies, their creatorly-strategies, and/or their readerly practices, will construct (inter)textual readings, the very signifiers of which, point not only towards the enormous array of possible meanings/significations for those signifiers, but also towards vast oeuvres, where there are innumerable other inter-contexts from within which to read those signifiers. Intertextual readers are adept at editing, deconstructing, reworking, and re-making texts in ways that allow those texts always to be viewed from another, and yet another, intertextual point of view. Intertexts intertext in an endless disorderly matrix of intertextuality, both virtually (inside readerly spaces) and materially (outside virtual spaces), where the boundaries between text that is virtual, and text that is material, is acknowledged as a myth of reading theory, and not a statement about what it is that takes place when we read.

Intertextual readings of art will result in innumerable (in)conclusive or (semi)conclusive moments relating to that art, from which readers may choose to move on to other transitory destinations, at any time. Intertextual readings are maps that do not reveal realities; they are merely ways of representing textual terrains, and the forces and desires that attempt to govern those domains. Readers can investigate the language that is used by any text-maker, but inevitably it is readerly language that will intertext with what we read, and determine the sorts of readings that will be made. The intersection of widely differing material texts, material intertexts, and virtual
intertextual readings result in what it is that we call textuality and intertextuality. Textual boundaries blur as the process of reading allows us the freedom to intertext what it is that we see in material space, with what we have seen in the past, and also with what we can imagine and/or dream. Intertextuality, then, can be considered as the many multi-media productions of virtual intertextual readings that occur inside our selves, provoked by our interactions with material and virtual texts and intertexts; and the ways in which those productions continue to interact with our internal and external worlds, and change, in a never-ending process of (inter)textual transmutation. Describing text as everything in existence (whether readable or unreadable) allows the artificially constructed boundaries between ourselves, texts and intertexts of material production, virtual texts and intertexts, and everything in Peirce's "universe of existents" (and all possible universes of existents), to be broken down (Deely xvii).

I could end with an appropriation and revision of a comment by Cixous, in which I substitute Cixous's use of book and writing with the terms, intertext and intertextuality, and her use of God, with the word, everything:

The [intertext] — I could reread it with the help of memory and forgetting. Start over again. From another perspective, from another and yet another. Reading, I discover ... that [intertextuality] is endless ...


I begin this thesis by describing text as everything (whether readable or unreadable), including ourselves. I now want to formally replace the word text with the term intertext, arguing that everything in existence (whether readable or unreadable) is intertext, including ourselves ... Patrick White was fascinated by last words. Could novels have borne images, he would have carefully chosen the images that might have acted as epilogues to his works. The words with which he chose to end The Tree of Man were: "so that in the end there was no end" (479). I will not end, then, with Hélène Cixous, but with an intertextuality of words from Riders in the Chariot, and the image, Death of a Poet, 1946 (fig. 111). This intertextuality between the texts of White, Nolan, and critical reader (fig. 218), enables the status of textual virtuality and materiality (as I have been using the terms) to be foregrounded. Inter-imagic reading VII, 1996: Kelly in Himmelfarb's Jacaranda, 1996 (fig. 218) could be
described as a visual/verbal intertextual epilogue. I am intertexting the materiality of Nolan-image with the materiality of White-text within the framework of one “inter-imagic reading.” Because Inter-imagic reading VII intertexts with the ideas explored in this thesis, however, the inter-imagic reading will, I hope, have a virtual (inter)textuality and inter-imagery (as it is translated into readerly spaces), that is especially resonant, even though those virtual, intertextual paths of flight could never be traced (in all their intricacies and possibilities), either by this writer/reader, or by any other reader/critic.
signs in flux
“It is in wanting to know” (Cixous 1).

intertextuality and play
“Blood thunders” (Malouf 88).

copyright and visual text
“Therefore the poet is truly the thief of fire” (Rimbaud 309).

doors and windows: the risks of concluding
“I dwell in Possibility” (Dickinson 166).

“Her blue hands” (TAS 163).

notes
1 The use of white lines in these reverse-monetone drawings also inter-images with Nolan’s depiction of pale-coloured lines on dark rock in In the Cave, 1957 (fig. 143). Nolan’s //Voss// is like a “rock-drawing” which is drawn, not onto the walls of a cave, but onto the exterior of an artefact called a “book.” The cover might be re-named, “On the book, 1979.”

The use of white print on a coloured background also inter-images with the typeset on the cover of Happy Valley, London: George G. Harrap, 1939. The cover has a pale blue background, upon which is written in white: “Happy Valley: A Novel: Patrick White,” and the “S” from snow is also printed in white. In black print, is written, “For [S]now in Australia is not what one thinks of, but it is in a snowbound public-house in the mountains of New South Wales that this very remarkable novel begins.” The cover’s design is not credited. The blue cover, and white lettering of the cover design, however, intertext with these lines from Happy Valley, “It had stopped snowing. There was a mesh of cloud over the fragile blue that sometimes follows snow” [9]).

2 Elaine Scarry writes, “Reading entails an immense labour of imaginative construction” (21). That imaginative construction can occur with inordinate speed as we read and comprehend complicated text, or it can involve hours of contemplation and meditation as we assimilate material text, and/or consider remembered virtual text.

3 It is possible to argue that any sort of apprehension of textuality involves a form of intertextuality, because the text outside a reader is “material,” and once apprehended by a reader it intertexts with the virtual realm of readerly space (which is itself full of potential intertexts). There is not only intertextuality at work and play between material texts, then, but also between material texts and the virtual texts — both of and within readerly spaces. If readers are taught to decide where their politics/beliefs lay, and to develop reading strategies that will assist them achieve their readerly aims in interacting with texts, they can then read, intertextually, in ways that enable them to interact fully and consciously with the (inter)texts that surround the texts they read.

4 This “sooty gull” pinned to a tree inter-images with Nolan’s collage of bird feathers and twig in The Secret Life of Birds, 1940 (fig. 38).

5 This image intertexts with The Death of Captain Fraser, 1948 (fig. 153) in which the Captain is depicted with long spears emerging from his neck.

6 In fact, Ruth White died in her own flat (FG 150).

7 Gyongyi Smee, of the ANG, says that the ANG has delayed its virtual project because it fears unauthorised down-loading of the images provided in that space (in conversation with me in July, 1996). Stephen Todd reports, however, that both the Musée d’Orsay and the Louvre have just released CD-ROMs, and also have web sites. Clemence Berg, the multimedia co-ordinator for the Réunion des Musées Nationaux (RMN), says, “[I]f we didn’t do it, someone else would ... Technically ... the art works are public property, and anyone can easily get hold of images of the Mona Lisa and whip up a bit of text to go with it” (Todd 6). Todd reports that the CD-ROM Musée d’Orsay Virtual Visit (which accompanies exhibitions of its works), “takes you on an interactive tour of the museum using Quicktime VR to create 360-degree images of galleries spread out over three floors. Click on any of two hundred art-works, and you call up detailed files on the artist’s life and times” (6). The “virtual visit” is designed to accompany the “hard-copy” exhibition of the museums’ works. (“Paris in the Late 19th Century” is being exhibited at the ANG in December 1996-January 1997.)
Volume I

Figure 1 – p. ix.

prologue II

Figure 2 – p. 2.

introduction

Figure 3 – p. 4 (& p. 370).

Figure 4 – p. 4 (& p. 217).
Cover illustration by Sidney Nolan credited on dust-jacket of E&S edition of Voss, London: 1957 (viewed from front-cover only).

Figure 5 – p. 14.
Diane Caney, Inter-imagic reading I, 1996: an expression of the inter-imagery between "[the] morning that followed the storm was set in a splendour of enamels" (Voss 258) and Central Australia, 1950 (fig. 44).

Figure 6 – p. 20.
Diane Caney, Inter-imagic reading II, 1996: the text, "obviously, we do not have text-books wedged into our grey-matter," is inter-imaged with Kelly, 1946, enamel over monotype on paper, 31.6 x 25.4 cm, ANG, page 34 of SND.

Figure 7 – p. 24.
The Galaxy, 1957-58, polyvinyl acetate on two canvases mounted on hardboard, 193 x 256 cm, AGNSW, gift of Patrick White 1974 (reproduced with their kind permission).

Figure 8 – p. 24.

Figure 9 – p. 26.

Figure 10 – p. 26.
Walter De Maria, Lightning Field, 1971-77, earth sculpture, 1 mile x 1 kilometre, DIA Art Foundation, plate 251 of Shock.

Figure 11 – p. 44.

1: translation rights

Figure 12 – p. 52.
Detail from top left hand corner of Kelly in Landscape, 1969, oil on hardboard, 91.5 x 122 cm, Marlborough Fine Art, London, page 159 of SNA. Detail used as cover illustration for SNA.

Figure 13 – p. 52.
Roy de Maistre, The Figure in the Garden (the Aunt), 1945, AGNSW. Image used on the cover of the 1948 E&S edition of The Aunt's Story.
Figure 14 – p. 58.
Aboriginal Hunt, 1947, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 122.1 x 91.8 cm, plate 7 of N.

Figure 15 – p. 63.
Glenrowan, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 48 of SNNK.

Figure 16 – p. 63.
Italian crucifix, 1955, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 91 x 122 cm, page 123 of SNLL.

Figure 17 – p. 66.
Jack-Knife Fish, 1949, ripolin and ink on back of glass, 30.5 x 25.4 cm, page 102 of SNA.

Figure 18 – p. 66.
Albert Tucker, Image of Modern Evil 24, 1945, oil on composition board, 64.8 x 53.5 cm, ANG, page 278 of Surrealism.

Figure 19 – p. 70.
Hare in Trap, 1946, ripolin on masonite, 36 x 48 in., plate 3 of SN.

Figure 20 – p. 72.
Catani Gardens, St Kilda, 1945, ripolin and oil on board, 91.4 x 122.1 cm, Nolan Gallery, Lanyon, page 11 of NL.

Figure 21 – p. 72.
Morning Mass, 1943, ripolin enamel on pulpboard, 76 x 64 cm, Heide, page 46 of SNLL.

Figure 22 – p. 74 (& p. 171).

Figure 23 – p. 74.
Colonial Head, 1947, oil on board, 76.2 x 63.5 cm, Exhibition Catalogue, London: Waddington Galleries, 1989.

Figure 24 – p. 77.
The Alarm, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 30 of SNNK.

Figure 25 – p. 77.
Giggle Palace, 1945, ripolin enamel on canvas, 76.2 x 63.5 cm, AGSA, page 49 of SNA.

Figure 26 – p. 82.
Burke and Wills, 1948, ripolin on board, 91.3 x 122.2 cm, Nolan Gallery, Lanyon, page 29 of NL.

Figure 27 – p. 89.
Burke and Wills Expedition [with aboriginal guide], 1962, synthetic polymer paint on hardboard, 121.9 x 152.5 cm, page 135 of SNLL.

Figure 28 – p. 89.
Aerial Landscape – Circular Contours, 1949, ripolin and ink on back of glass, 25.4 x 30.5 cm, page 101 of SNA.

Figure 29 – p. 92.
(Miner), 1949, oil on glass, 24.3 x 29.2 cm, plate 14 of N.

Figure 30 – p. 92.
Carcase, 1953, ripolin on masonite, 36 x 48 in., plate 47 of SN.

Figure 31 – p. 94.
Desert, 1952, photograph, plate 70 of SN. (Man mounting decaying horse.)

Figure 32 – p. 94.
Kelly and Drought, 1957, ripolin on masonite, 36 x 48 in., plate 71 of SN.

Figure 33 – p. 96.
For the Term of His Natural Life, 1985, wax crayon on paper, 101.5 x 137.1 cm, page 61 of SND.

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Figure 34 – p. 96. 

Figure 35 – p. 98. 

Figure 36 – p. 98. 

Figure 37 – p. 100. 
*Gallipoli landscape with soldier*, c. 1958, acrylic on card, 30.4 x 25.4 cm, AWM, page 47 of NG.

Figure 38 – p. 100. 
*Burke and Wills leaving Melbourne*, 1950, ripolin on masonite, 122 x 151 cm, plate 19 of BW.

Figure 39 – p. 102. 
*Burke*, 1950, ripolin on hardboard, 120.2 x 91.5 cm, page 108 of SNA.

Figure 40 – p. 102. 
*Kelly* [as centaur], 1955, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 81.5 x 100 cm, page 118 of SNLL.

Figure 41 – p. 103. 
*Ern Malley* [detail], 1972, oil on hardboard, 122 x 122 cm, AGSA, page 164 of SNLL.

Figure 42 – p. 103. 
*Perished*, 1949, ripolin enamel and red ochre oil paint on hardboard, 91 x 122 cm, UWA, page 107 of SNLL.

Figure 43 – p. 105. 
*Burke and Wills at Gulf*, 1961, synthetic polymer on hardboard, 122 x 152 cm, NGV, page 134 of SNLL.

Figure 44 – p. 105. 
*Central Australia* [Rhenish turrets], 1950, ripolin on masonite, 48 x 36 in., plate 40 of SN.

Figure 45 – p. 108. 
*Kelly* [fractured head], 1955, oil on board, 77.5 x 63.5 cm, *Exhibition Catalogue*, London: Waddington Galleries, 1989.

Figure 46 – p. 110 (& p. 375, & also as a detail on p. 7). 
*Kelly* [as centaur], 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 13 of SNNK.

Figure 47 – p. 110. 
*Central Australia* [mountain range like a spinal column], 1949, ripolin on masonite, 36 x 48 in., plate 38 of SN.

Figure 48 – p. 114. 
Joseph Cornell, *Untitled (Ants with Playing Cards)*, c. 1930s, collage of lithograph and wood-engravings on card, 17.3 x 13.6 cm, ANG, page 115 of Surrealism.

Figure 49 – p. 114. 

Figure 50 – p. 116. 
*Shakespeare sonnet (Poet with Death’s Head)* [based on sonnet 146], 1967, synthetic polymer paint on paper, 63.4 x 50.6 cm, AGNSW, gift of Patrick White 1974 (reproduced with their kind permission).

Figure 51 – p. 116. 
*Quilting the armour*, 1947, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.5 x 121.5 cm, ANG, page 80 of SNLL.
Figure 52 - p. 118.
Brett Whiteley, *Patrick White as Headland*, c. 1981, oil on canvas, 39.4 x 49.7 cm, plate 134 of BWAL.

Figure 53 - p. 120.
*Pretty Polly Mine*, 1948, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 91 x 122.2 cm, AGNSW, page 88 of SNSIL.

Figure 54 - p. 121.
*Huggard's Store*, 1948, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 91 x 122 cm, UWA, page 102 of SNLL.

Figure 55 - p. 121.
*Feeding the Birds*, 1948, ripolin on masonite, 48 x 36 in., plate 21 of SN.

Figure 56 - p. 123.
*Kelly V* [parrot's head printed over Kelly helmet], 1965, silk-screen print, 75 x 55 cm, cover of *Exhibition Catalogue: Sidney Nolan*, Court Gallery, Copenhagen, 1966.

Figure 57 - p. 123 (& p. 162).
*Tarred and Feathered*, 1945, ripolin on strawboard, 63.5 x 76.1 cm, Nolan Gallery, Lanyon, page 14 of NL.

Figure 58 - p. 125.
*Secret Life of Birds*, 1940, collage of feathers and twigs on paper, 31.5 x 25.3 cm, ANG, page 222 of Surrealism.

Figure 59 - p. 127.
*The Slip*, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.5 x 121.5 cm, ANG, page 43 of SNNK.

Figure 60 - p. 127.
*Policeman in Wombat Hole*, 1946, ripolin on board, 91.8 x 122.3 cm, Nolan Gallery, Lanyon, page 24 of NL.

Figure 61 - p. 129 (& p. 246).
*Burke and Wills*, 1950, ripolin on board, 91.5 x 120.2 cm, page 104 of SNSIL.

Figure 62 - p. 134.

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Figure 63 - p. 137.

Figure 64 - p. 146.
*Moby Dick*, 1940, pen and wash on paper, 8 x 10 in., page 64 of SNMI.

Figure 65 - p. 154.
[unhelmeted framed] *Ned Kelly*, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 74.5 x 61.5 cm, ANG, page 74 of SNLL.

Figure 66 - p. 154.
*Barrett Reid*, 1947, ripolin enamel on pulpboard, 74.5 x 62.5 cm, QAG, page 68 of SNLL.

Figure 67 - p. 156.
Carjat, Rimbaud photographed in 1871, photograph: State Library of Victoria, page 38 of SNLL.

Figure 68 - p. 156 (& p. 255).
*Mrs Fraser*, 1947, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 66.2 x 107 cm, page 91 of SNLL.

Figure 69 - p. 157.
[unhelmeted] *Kelly and Scanlan*, 1946, ripolin on strawboard, 73.4 x 76.1 cm, Nolan Gallery, Lanyon, page 15 of NL.
Figure 70 – p. 157.
Return to Glenrowan, 1946, ripolin on board, 91.9 x 122.3 cm, Nolan Gallery, Lanyon, page 25 of NL. (Policeman visible through open Kelly helmet visor.)

Figure 71 – p. 163.
Le désespoir à des ailes (Despair has wings), 1943, ripolin enamel on pulpboard, 75.5 x 63.5 cm, Heide, page 55 of SNLL.

Figure 72 – p. 163.
Arabian Tree, 1943, ripolin enamel on three-layer plywood, 91.5 x 61 cm, page 56 of SNLL.

Figure 73 – p. 172.

Figure 74 – p. 175.
Cover illustration by Don Finley credited on dust-jacket of The Tree of Man, London: E&S, 1956.

Figure 75 – p. 175.
Cover illustration by George Salter credited on inside front cover of The Tree of Man, New York: Viking, 1955.

Figure 76 – p. 177.

Figure 77 – p. 177.
Carcase in Tree, 1952, photograph, plate 48 of SN. No details of the dimensions of this image are given.

Figure 78 – p. 180.
Ram Caught in Flood, 1955, ripolin on masonite, 42 x 36 in., plate 50 of SN.

Figure 79 – p. 180.
Baptism, 1977, oil on hardboard, 122 x 91.5 cm, postcard attached to Baptism and Flowers, Woollahra, NSW: Rudy Komon Art Gallery, 1977.

Figure 80 – p. 182.
Hal Missingham, photograph of a car in a tree with the caption, “Sidney Nolan has a memorable photograph of a dead and dried-out bullock suspended by floods in the top of a tree [fig. 77]. I like to think of this as a companion picture, taken near Carnarvon, Western Australia” (153). No details of the dimensions or time of photography are given. The photograph is reproduced in Hal Missingham, My Australia, Sydney: Collins, 1969, 11.

Figure 81 – p. 182.
The Tree of Man, 1961, fabric dye on paper, 63.8 x 52.5 cm, page 52 of SND.

Figure 82 – p. 184.
Cover illustration by Sidney Nolan credited on inside front cover of Riders in the Chariot, London: E&S, 1961. (Dust jacket opened out.)

Figure 83 – p. 184.
Gallipoli landscape VI, c. 1958, oil crayon and acrylic on card, 25.4 x 30.4 cm, AWM, page 27 of NG.

Figure 84 – p. 186.
Barbed Wire Entanglement, 1960, oil crayon and acrylic on card, 25.4 x 30.4 cm, AWM, page 51 of NG.

Figure 85 – p. 186.
Cover illustration by Sidney Nolan credited on inside front cover of Riders in the Chariot, London: E&S, 1961. (Front view only which inter-images with Ethiopia, 1963 and Rimbaud at Harar, 1963.)
Figure 86 – p. 189.

Figure 87 – p. 189.

Figure 88 – p. 191.
*Head*, 1964, oil on hardboard, 122 x 122 cm, plate 21 of *N*.

Figure 89 – p. 191.
Four Nolan paintings appear on the E&S first edition of *The Burnt Ones*, 1964. They are, from left to right, and from top to bottom:
- *Country Woman*, 1965, oil on hardboard, 121.9 x 121.9 cm;
- *Greek Head*, 1965, oil on hardboard, 121.9 x 121.9 cm;
- *Adolescent*, 1965, oil on hardboard, 121.9 x 121.9 cm;
- *Suburb*, 1965, oil on hardboard, 121.9 x 121.9 cm.

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Figure 93 – p. 197.
Jacket design by Mon Mohan credited on dust-jacket of *Flaws in the Glass*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1981. (Author’s photograph by J. Wong credited on dust jacket.)

Figure 94 – p. 197.
Jacket design by Mon Mohan credited on dust-jacket of *Memoirs of Many in One*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1986. (Author’s photograph by William Yang credited on dust jacket.)

Figure 95 – p. 198.
Cover design by Neil Stuart and cover illustration by Mel Odom credited on back cover of *Voss*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980.

Figure 96 – p. 198.

Figure 97 – p. 201 (& p. 376).

Figure 98 – p. 208.
*Rimbaud Head (or Head of Rimbaud)*, 1963, oil on board, 60 x 40 in., page 514 of *AA 5.3* (Dec. 1967), reproduced in colour.

Figure 99 – p. 208.
*Rimbaud Head (or Head of Rimbaud)*, 1963, oil on board, 60 x 40 in., page 514 of *AA 5.3* (Dec. 1967), reproduced in monotone.
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Figure 100 – p. ii (epigraph to Volume II).

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Figure 101 – p. 215.
René Magritte, *The Treason of Images*, 1928-29, oil on canvas, 23.5 x 37 in., Los Angeles County Museum of Art, page 245 of *Shock*.

Figure 102 – p. 215.
Diane Caney, Collage distortion (after the style of Magritte’s *The Treason of Images*, 1928-29 [fig. 101]) of Sidney Nolan’s cover illustration for E&S edition of *Voss*, London: 1957.

Figure 103 – p. 217.

Figure 104 – p. 226.
*Voss*, 1948, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 121.6 x 91.4 cm, Verso: “Voss Explorer 1948 Nolan,” plate 10 of *N*. Note: “This painting, then titled David Sands DSC was submitted for the Archibald Prize, 1948. David Sands, a scientist and explorer was an early buyer of Nolan’s work” (*N* 10).

Figure 105 – p. 226.

Figure 106 – p. 233.
*The Trial*, 1947, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.5 x 121.5 cm, ANG, page 88 of *SNLL*.

Figure 107 – p. 233 (& p. 402).
*Constable Fitzpatrick and Kate Kelly*, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 16 of *SNNK*.

Figure 108 – p. 235.
*Death of Constable Scanlon*, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 81 of *SNLL*.

Figure 109 – p. 235.
*Stringybark Creek*, 1947, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 81 of *SNLL*.

Figure 110 – p. 237.
*Collage*, 1939, collage of steel-engravings on steel-engraving, 30.6 x 22.5 cm, ANG, page 231 of *Surrealism*.

Figure 111 – p. 237.
*Death of a Poet*, 1953, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 91.5 x 122 cm, The Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, page 120 of *SNLL*.

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*At Glenrowan*, 1957, ripolin on masonite, 36 x 48 in., Tate Gallery, London, plate 62 of *SN*.

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Cover illustration by Sidney Nolan credited on inside front cover of *Voss*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971. (The white lines of Nolan’s drawing [on a black background] have been overlaid with a red version of the line-drawing. The red version is off-set so that the red creates a doubling effect. The writing on the back of this cover is in red as well.)

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**Nolan Images**

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*Burial of Burke – Triptych*, 1985, oil on canvas, three panels, each 183 x 160 cm, page 169 of *SNLL*.

*Burke at Coopers Creek*, 1950, ripolin on masonite, 48 x 60 in., plate 42 of *SN*. (Bird flying.)

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*Carcase*, 1952, ripolin on hardboard, 91.5 x 122 cm, page 117 of *SNA*.

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*Composition*, 1958, crayon on paper, 24 x 20 in., plate 32 of *SN*.

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*Crucifixion*, 1956, crayon and ink on paper, 12 x 10 in., plate 82 of *SN*.

*Death of Sergeant Kennedy at Stringybark Creek*, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 82 of *SNNK*.

*Defence of Aaron Sherritt*, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 121 x 90.5 cm, ANG, page 82 of *SNLL*.

*Deserted Homestead*, 1953, ink on paper, 10 x 12 in., plate 24 of *SN*.

*Dream of a Latrine Sitter*, 1942, AGWA (no other details provided), discussed on page 48 of *SNLL*.

*Esplanade, St Kilda*, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 91.5 x 122 cm, page 65 of *SNLL*.


*Evening Camp*, 1950, ripolin on masonite, 48 x 36 in., plate 44 of *SN*.

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*Heidelberg*, 1944, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 91 x 121 cm, Heide, page 60 of *SNLL*.

*Hungary*, 1956, ripolin on masonite, 48 x 36 in., plate 75 of *SN*.

Illustration for *Ulysses*, 1936, airbrush on paper, 23.5 x 18.3 cm, page 10 of *SND*.
Kelly, undated (c. 1946), ripolin on board, 91 x 122.1 cm, Nolan Gallery, Lanyon, page 26 of NL.
Kelly, 1958, etching, 18 x 18 in., plate 72 of SN.
Kelly and Sergeant Kennedy, 1945, ripolin on strawboard, 63.5 x 76.4 cm, Nolan Gallery, Lanyon, page 12 of NL.
Kelly V (Head of Ned Kelly), 1965, colour screen-print, 62.2 x 49.5 cm, AGNSW.
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Landscape, 1947, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 121.5 x 90.5 cm, ANG, page 76 of SNLL.
Landscape, 1957, polyvinyl acetate on masonite, 48 x 60 in., plate 87 of SN. (This is part of the Leda series but is removed from it because of the title.)
Mine, 1949, ripolin and ink on back of glass, 30.5 x 25.4 cm, page 95 of SNA.
Mrs Fraser and Bracefell, oil on board, 60 x 40 in., page 450 of AA 5.2.
Narcissus, 1947, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 122 x 91.5 cm, AGSA, page 67 of SNLL.
Nightmare, 1982, diptych, page 184 of SNSIL.
Rainforest, 1957, polyvinyl acetate on hardboard, 152.9 x 122.3 cm, NGV, page 126 of SNLL.
Rimbaud at Harar, 1963, oil on hardboard, 153 x 122 cm, page 145 of SNNLL.
Scene or Figures and Jungle, 1957, polyvinyl acetate on board, 60 x 48 in., TMAG, plate 32 of SNMI.
Siege at Glenrowan, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 121.5 x 90.5 cm, ANG, page 85 of SNLL.
Soldier, Arthur Boyd, 1959, polyvinyl acetate on hardboard, 122 x 91.5 cm, page 102 of NG.
Study for Constable Fitzpatrick and Kate Kelly, 1946, ripolin on hardboard, 61 x 91.5 cm, page 56 of SNA.
Target Practice, 1954, ink on paper, 10 x 12 in., plate 58 of SN.
The Agricultural Hotel, 1948, ripolin on masonite, 36 x 48 in., UWA, plate 22 of SN.
The Chase, 1946, ripolin enamel on hardboard, 90.4 x 121.2 cm, ANG, page 32 of SNNK.
The Dog and the Duck, 1946, ripolin on hardboard, 36 x 48 in., page 88 of SNSIL.
The Glenrowan Siege, 1955, ripolin on masonite, 36 x 28 in., plate 76 of SN. (Wallpaper is painted in large squares so that the flowers and stems on the wallpaper almost double as plants in the painted landscape.)
Train, Wimmera, 1942, ripolin on hardboard, (no dimensions given), page 31 of SNA.
Untitled (Kelly), c. 1946, monotype and enamel, 21.7 x 18 cm (irreg.), 31.6 x 25.3 cm, AGNSW.
Verandah, 1953, ink on paper, 12 x 10 in., plate 20 of SN.
Woman and Billabong, 1957, polyvinyl acetate on masonite, 60 x 48 in., plate 89 of SN.

Works by other artists

Francis Bacon, Second version of triptych, 1944, 1988, oil on canvas, three panels each 198.1 x 147.3 cm, plate 59 of Lawrence Gowing and Sam Hunter, eds., Francis Bacon, London: Thames & Hudson, 1989-90.
Roy De Maistre, Untitled still life, 1922, oil on board, 60 x 50 cm, page 41 of RDM.
Portrait of Patrick White, 1939, AGNSW.
___, Girl with Roses, undated, watercolour on paper, 74.5 x 49 cm, Lauraine Diggins Gallery.
Colour image accessible at:


Stephen Nothling, *Cutting a rug*, 1995, oil on canvas, 98.8 x 65.4 cm, Parliament House, Canberra, exhibited in "Imagining the Real," Parliament House, Canberra, 1996.


Odilon Redon, *Partout des prunelles flamboient (D'album Tentation de Saint-Antoine)*, etching, plate 92 of *Redon*.

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Albert Tucker, *Cynthia and Sidney Nolan*, c. 1968, 1983, oil on canvas, 70 x 90 cm, page 33 of *FIHM*.

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The bibliography lists all works referred to in this study, and others which, although not cited directly, were of value in its preparation.


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——. *A Fringe of Leaves*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987. (Cover illustration credited to Mel Odom [fig. 152].)


——. *Az élet fúja [The Tree of Man]*. Budapest: Magveto Kado, 1972. (Cover illustration is a folk drawing of a tree with a man and a woman underneath it. Not credited.)


——. *Flaws in the Glass*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1981. (Jacket design by Mon Mohan credited on dust jacket; author’s photograph by J. Wong [fig. 93].)


• Happy Valley. New York: Viking, 1940. (Cover design, an etching of a large tree under which a woman on horseback is greeting a man who is wearing a suit and a hat, credited to Hallock.)


• Memoirs of Many in One. Photographed copies of only surviving original manuscript, National Library of Australia.

• Memoirs of Many in One by Alex Demirjian Gray, ed. Patrick White. London: Jonathan Cape, 1986. (Jacket design by Mon Mohan; author's photograph by William Yang [fig. 94].)


• Riders in the Chariot. London: E&S, 1961. (Cover illustration credited to Sidney Nolan [fig. 82].)

• Riders in the Chariot. New York: Viking, 1961. (Cover illustration credited to George Salter.)

• Riders in the Chariot [RC]. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982. (Cover illustration credited to Mel Odom.)

• The Aunt's Story. 1st Ed. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1948. (Cover illustration, a black & white reproduction of The Garden, is credited to Roy de Maistre [fig. 13].)

• The Aunt's Story. 2nd Ed. London: E&S, 1958. (Cover illustration credited to Sidney Nolan [fig. 90].)

• The Aunt's Story. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963. (Cover illustration credited to Sidney Nolan [fig. 22].)

• The Aunt's Story [TAS]. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987. (Cover illustration credited to Tom Roberts [fig. 91].)

• The Burnt Ones. London: E&S, 1964. (Cover illustrations credited to Sidney Nolan [fig. 89]. Back Cover of the dust jacket has a monotone photograph by Axel Poignant [fig. 89] of White seated in front of Nolan's The Galaxy [fig. 7].)

• The Burnt Ones. New York: Viking, 1964. (Cover illustration, a lino-cut print of a sun emanating its rays is credited to James & Ruth McRea, and is featured in The Burning Piano where the aboriginal reader is depicted reading this edition. Back Cover of the dust jacket has a monotone photograph by Axel Poignant [fig. 89] of White seated in front of Nolan's The Galaxy.)


• The Living and the Dead. London: E&S, 1962. (Cover illustration credited to Sidney Nolan [fig. 92].)


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• Voss. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968. (Cover illustration [red ink lines overlaying white lines on black background] credited to Sidney Nolan [fig. 205].)

• Voss. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979. (Cover illustration credited to Sidney Nolan [fig. 36].)


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