

Becoming undetermined

Experiencing the potential of ambiguity in Patricia Piccinini's artworks

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• Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. The Post-human Condition

Over the last past twenty years, scientific and technological progression has changed our relationship with the subject and the body. Moreover, the "human" category changed once cybernetic technology entered our daily lives. [Balsamo, 1996: p. 125-126] Thus, the human body is seen as constituting of information that can be transferred, modified or exchanged. The human body can be dissociated, reconstructed, dis-unified as much as it identifies, and can be multiplied. [Featherstone & Burrows, 1995] The post-human body is open to change and to new perspectives. Indeed, the concept of the human established in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment has disappeared: it is open to its surroundings which can influence human nature. In the same way, the contemporary scientific knowledge, established by biomedical engineering (genetic) - nanotechnology and science information - is also touched by this new way of seeing the human. DNA is seen as a "material" that can be extracted, manipulated and engineered to modify our perspective of life's creation. [Muri, 2008] [Catts & Zurr, 2008] Human definition became problematic when mankind was viewed as an ephemeral material, with its genes and cells that can be manipulated to the infinite. [Franklin, 2000] What we called previously "consciousness", "mind" and "soul" are nothing more than random emergences and fluids produced by a network of neural connections. Humanity and the humankind's concept - its morals and ethics - are seen as a philosophical "ideal" and are challenged as much as the status of "life-itself": life-science and technology influence human sciences. Furthermore, the notion of normality and abnormality are challenged as well. Most scientists and philosophers talk about "post-humanism" where ideologies deal with a world without god, without human transcendence through religion or metaphysics. As Robert Pepperell states in *The Post-Human Condition*, the term "post-human" refers to a different and new condition of the subject. Thus, the term relates to a period after the social development of the "self", known as "humanism", to a profound transformation of the human being and to the general convergence of biology and technology. [Pepperell, 2003: p. IV] Cultural studies, as well as feminist theories, the arts, science and technology question the changing structure of life, the nature-culture continuum and the concept of the human. Hence, in this thesis, I will focus on the bioethical issues and the challenge of the human condition via the confrontation of sculptures representing creatures genetically manipulated. Thus, in my thesis, I will focus on one of the aspects of "post-humanism" that can also be called "post-biological". Furthermore, I want to look at how

biology determinism and relationships between species are challenged by genetic manipulation and embodied in the work of visual art, and especially by one contemporary artist: Patricia Piccinini.

The post-human condition leads to a need to experiment with new views of the “self” and “others”, to create new categories, to explore dichotomies such as self/others or human/animal. Bodies and beings as well as identities (virtual or real) are defined in new ways. [Balsamo, 1996] Indeed, scientific and technological images of this new human are present everywhere, both in fiction and reality, via science magazines and scholarly books but also in science-fiction movies, literature and as well in visual art. Therefore, cultural images are influenced by this new perception of the “self” and of “life-itself”: thus, as Oron Catts and Ionat Zurr already noticed, scientific discoveries directly influence the field of representation. [Catts & Zurr, 2008] These changes articulate new images of the subject and of the body, in both the scientific and artistic fields. Imagination in art questions these new possible definitions of the subject, its new realities and its potential (non) normative effects over the human body. Moreover, science and visual arts have developed a special relationship over the centuries, and notably about the human body and its representations¹. [Harper & Moore, 2005] Both, science and art of representation question human nature and all its possible forms, always related to a given context. The "post/trans-humanist" debate infects all layers of daily human life and the connection between human sciences and life sciences as Allison Muri states in her article about transdisciplinarity: *"Our bodies are open to interventions at the molecular level wrought by equipment and processes that we rarely witness and even more rarely understand: we are compelled, even obligated, to engage in a dialogue about these inevitable penetrations and occupations of our social and economic structures, our day-to-day lives and ultimately our own tissues and cells by the implements of" science and biotechnology.*" [Muri, 2007: p. 3] Moreover, if we follow what Cecilia Asberg observes in her reading of Haraway's text, *A Manifesto for Cyborgs* (1985), that *"Imagination is reality production in process"*, then, it seems mandatory to imagine a new conception of bodies that could destroy power relations between species, between human and non-human subjects, between "normal" and "abnormal" bodies. [Asberg, 2009: p. 35] Then, artistic creativity and representation can be seen as a field of experimentation that can open the “self” to new realities. Indeed, the arts are making us aware about the way we conceive the world, and the “self”. Therefore, in the art field, the exhibition of a portrait created by Marc Quinn named *Sir John Sulston: a Genomic Portrait* in 2001 in the

¹ For instance, cinema and medical history share a lot of connections. Indeed, the cinematograph was created by a doctor, Etienne Jules Marey, in a way to study the resolution of the body movement in 1895. The same year, the X-ray was invented: a machine was allowing us to see inside the body. Moreover, cinema took its iconography in medical's representation of flay, because they were, from the beginning, looking for the same goal: understanding and exploring inside the human being.

National Portrait Gallery in London attests to the acknowledgement of new vision of the “self” and the body related to scientific research. Indeed, the portrait of John Sulston, who played an important role in “mapping” the human genome, is far away from traditional portraits. Thus, John Sulston’s portrait is made of “colonies grown from bacterial cells taken from Sulston’s sperm that contained segments of his DNA”. [Anker-Nelkin, 2004: p. 9] Consequently, this portrait made by Quinn shows new inter-relations established between identity, the dialectic of division of the body (inside/outside), and what can represent the “self” in a post-humanist context. Indeed, for Quinn, this portrait is the most “realistic” one of the National Gallery because it carries “real” information of Sulston that identifies him, from his body shape to the colour of his eyes, but as well via his ancestors (genes are a unit of heredity). [Anker & Nelkin, 2004: p. 10] As well as the art field, science discoveries influence popular movies, from the eighties, such as horror films as *The Fly* directed by David Cronenberg in 1986 or science-fiction movies as *The Matrix Trilogy*, directed by the Wachowski brothers, started in 1999. Both movies represent the body as a set of information that can “molecularly” travel through cyberspaces, cyber realities in *The Matrix* or in space and time in *The Fly*. In this later, the body is even genetically modified and combined with the DNA of a fly, leading the movie to the impossible acceptance of a creature half human half insect. All these transformations of the human’s concept call for a need to rethink ethics and notably bioethics otherwise. Human predominance (androcentrism) is challenged and it affects its relationship between itself and the “others”². Indeed, as Joanna Zalynska argues: “[...] recent advances in scientific technology have called into question not only humans' ontological status as skin-bound, sovereign beings but also their kinship with, and dependency on, other species and material forms.” [Zalynska, 2009: p. 4] Deleuze and Guattari call for the establishment of an “eco philosophy of the multiplicity”, which implies moving away from anthropocentrism towards a new relationship between human and non-human, biogenetic and cultural forces. [Braidotti, 2009 : p. 98]

Artistic productions connected to biotechnology respond, through different lenses and practices, to this "crisis" of the human. Indeed, as Clive Cazeaux explains, artistic production has always took on philosophical, political or social meanings behind its productions: "*as the promotion of transformation (from Nietzsche), as the display of constructed experience or a constructed world (from phenomenology), as revelling in modernist uncertainty (from Blanchot), as the pursuit of excess (from Bataille), as a challenge to orthodox form and a display of alternative possibilities (from critical theory), as the manifestation of the abject (from Kristeva)*". [Cazeaux, 2008: p. 4] As

² By "others", I mean what is seen as different, deviant and excluded from what has been defined as the "normal" human self and which has been attributed less "life- value": what we put in the categories of: animal, half/non-human, unknown, stranger, marginalized groups, handicapped, altered, monstrous, etc...

he noticed, art's field allows ambiguous and pluralistic approaches and interpretations about life and the "self" that contrast with the "*unambiguous language in which scientific research is set*". [Cazeaux, 2008: p. 1] In this context of "post-humanism" artists ask what makes us human (the body? genes? DNA?) And what has become non-human? How to look at humanity from now? Furthermore, is genetic manipulation over the past decades changing our perception of normal and abnormal bodies? For example, genetic manipulation is challenging biological determinism, fixed bodies and gender, as well as identities. I am interested in the connection between the arts and the scientific field because both are exploring what "we are" and "how we relate to the world" in a "post-human" context. [Pepperell, 2003: p. iii] In addition, all these questions are framed by ethical issues: thus, what can be done to the human and to the non-human: what are the limits of genetic manipulation?

1.2. The art of Patricia Piccinini , experiencing "disorientation"

In my research, I am looking for artistic representations that initiate a new concept of the "self", the others, and the body related to scientific discoveries. In the artwork of the Australian artist, Patricia Piccinini, I found some of the most challenging representations of the body in a "post-human" context. Indeed, the work of Patricia Piccinini embodies different questions that are at stake in science, biology, technology and philosophy since genetic manipulation, cloning, animal-human organ transplants, and umbilical cord blood banks are no longer fiction but a reality. Her art combines science and design, technology and biological interest through the use of diverse artistic mediums³ which blur our relationship with the natural and the artificial. Piccinini's artwork translates the "polarized" position of scientific progress: between progression ("*the claim that biotechnology makes 'advances' possible in human beings*") and transgression ("*the claim that biotechnology creates beings which exceed human being*"). [Cazeaux, 2008: p. 3] Her artwork has been valued and recognized all around the world since 1991: she exhibits her works in many exhibitions, in Europe, Asia, United States and Australia. From the beginning of her artistic practice, she has been attracted by science's progress and she has constantly related to scientific topics in her artistic production. As she said, she is interested in the changing relationship over time between the "natural" and the "artificial": then, science engineering is the perfect field of experimentation which articulates both sides. [Piccinini, 2007: Public Lecture Tokyo Art University] Thus, as are many people, Piccinini is influenced by scientific progress and its new

³ Photography, video, sculpture, drawing and painting.

image: her first project named *The Mutant Genome Project*⁴ is directly related to the human genome initiative project from the scientific field, which aims to catalogue the entire human genome that could allow us to modify the genetic makeup of humans in the future. [Piccinini, essays: Public lecture at Tokyo Art University] Piccinini seems fascinated by the potential of creation of genetic engineering that can design new bodies and identities which are half or non-human but close to “perfection”⁵. Moreover, genetic manipulation is challenging dialectical established dichotomies such as inside/outside or inclusion/exclusion, which are my principal interest and at stake in the field of my studies, *Gender studies*. Thus, science defines “bad” genes (code of DNA that belongs to the “inside”) that need to be excluded in a way to design a new “good” body (body shape and appearance belong to the “outside”). Her early projects question the same issues that are at stake in the sculptures that will be analysed in this paper: What are the scientific boundaries for manipulating “nature”? What will our “children” look like with scientific engineering? Are we going to be able to love them, even if they are not human?

The sculptures of Patricia Piccinini that I have chosen to sustain my arguments have been made between 2002 and 2011. Most of them have been exhibited in the famous exhibition of Piccinini settled at the 50th Biennial, named *We are Family*, in 2003⁶. The exhibition displays members of a new trans-genetic family, constituted of humanoid mothers, babies and hybrid creatures (which also carry mother or child's role), some embryonic figures and clones. All the family members from different (hybrid) "species" are playing, holding each other, cuddling or displayed with their offspring suckling, sharing love and strangeness at the same time. Indeed, Piccinini endows her creatures with a form of pathos through their gentle eyes, their caring posture and gesture, which constantly triggers an affectionate response from the viewer's reaction. Moreover, in half the installations⁷, the artist had set up sculptures of humans alongside sculptures of creatures, making them interact with each other in a friendly way. This enhances the affectionate response from the spectator who identifies with the human sculptures. However, this affectionate response is mixed with a feeling of repulsion provoked by the fleshy and repelling aspects of these creatures. Indeed, the creatures are designed in a hyper-realistic way⁸ which gives a sensation of "nausea" to the spectator. This is the reason I have chosen these sculptures to study: because of the

⁴ See Appendix, image 1.

⁵ Piccinini describes her “babies” as “...*intelligent, long-lived, disease resistant, but as you can see, they were not human.*”. [Piccinini, 2003: Public lecture at Tokyo Art University].

⁶ Named *The Young Family* (image 2), *Leather Landscape* (image 5), *Still Life with stem cells* (image 6) and *Game Boys Advanced* (image 13).

⁷ Appendix, Image 3, 5 and 6.

⁸ See for instance the details of the skin, its transparency, the veins, the wrinkles of the mother of *The Young Family* (image 2).

ambivalent and complex set of disturbed reactions they provoke⁹. The other sculptures that I have selected besides those of the *We are Family* exhibition are: *The Long Awaited* (2008)¹⁰, *The Comforter* (2010)¹¹ and *Litter*¹² (2011). For instance, I will not look at sculptures that bring only feelings of threat or discomfort in her artworks, such as in *Nature's Little Helpers'* exhibition, but those which embody the artwork named *The Embrace, Offspring and Progenitor*¹³. In this installation there is no "mise en scène" that could lead to a complex mix of feelings between attraction and repulsion: here the spectator is only affected by fear and disgust. Indeed, the human's sculpture with whom the spectator could identify is threaten by the hybrid creature. In addition, the sculptures I chose for my research are also disturbing the dichotomy of inside/outside on another level. As I already mentioned, genetic manipulation itself establishes a new relationship with the dialectic of inside/outside. In the same way, the sculptures trigger the body's boundary, directly related to the dialectic of inside/outside. What I mean by dialectic of inside/outside is related to a Cartesian way of thinking and it refers notably to the constitution of the subject and of identity via this dialectic. Thus, the "self" sees itself as a unity that cannot be changed by the surroundings, and where the skin is seen as a barrier, a boundary between the inside (the subject) and the outside (the external world). Thus, I want to see if this dialectic can be somehow destroyed by the experience of seeing Piccinini's creatures. Indeed, I want to see when this binary opposition can be destroyed, which means: to what extent the "outside" (artworks) distort the "inside" (the spectator's mind)? How the "outside" can substitute itself to the "inside", and create a new "inwardness", a second nature which could lead to the birth of "a new subject"? The answer I am looking for could be situated in the role of the "disturbing" affects at work in front of the selected artworks by Piccinini. Indeed, as I will explain, ambiguous and complex affects of fear and love, disgust and tenderness, become entangled in her artwork. Thus, in my paper I will look for the consequences of experiencing ambiguity in artworks on the perception of the "self", and by extension, of the "others". Moreover, Piccinini's creatures cannot be defined in one word nor can they be verbally described, but they have to be "experienced": even after, ambiguous affects prevent the spectator to fully understand what happens to him/her when looking at the art. These sculptures bring "uncertainty" to the spectator, which "disorient" him/her towards a new state of mind. These "disorientations" and disturbances are the starting point for my research.

⁹ Which prevent the spectator to take a simple/binary position toward Piccinini's artwork.

¹⁰ Appendix, Image 3.

¹¹ Appendix, Image 4.

¹² Appendix, Image 7.

¹³ Appendix, Image 8.

1.3. Potential of the "Deviant" Art

Contrary to science, which is restricted by ethical problems concerning genetic manipulation, artistic imagination allows experimentations that scientists could only dream about. Thus, I am looking for possible new ways of representing and dealing with difference, via the power of artistic representation. In addition, in this case, the fact that artistic representations are related to scientific progress, its creations, its ethics and issues produces a bigger impact on the spectator's mind. Indeed, as I already mentioned, nowadays people are aware of scientific progress and are themselves deeply curious, worried, or interested in the consequences of genetic manipulation for instance. Moreover, Piccinini's creatures are made at a human scale, from silicone, fibreglass and human hair¹⁴: these materials and characteristics give a hyper-realistic aspect to her sculptures, which blur the boundaries of reality and fiction. Thus, Piccinini creates an alternative world that takes into consideration the scientific implications of genetic manipulation. The hyper-realistic aspect of her creatures is crucial to the reception of her work: the detail of the skin, the attention to the concept of the creatures' shape and perspective confuse the visitor towards his/her relation with representation/reality. In this way, I believe that looking at Piccinini's creatures could disrupt the way of seeing the "self", the "others" and the body in daily life: as artistic imagination has a real impact on reality. Indeed, as she explains: *"People are fascinated by the tiny details, the moles and wrinkles, which almost forces them to accept the possibility of their existing. I also deliberately steer clear of too much sci-fi or horror in my creatures. They stay rooted in the possibilities of real animals. These creatures are almost too easy to accept the real animal world is just as weird anyway."* [Piccinini, Archive: Natural little Helpers] The artistic representation no longer separates reality from fiction: thus, it causes a feeling of uncertainty in the visitor that could disrupt their knowledge about the "self" and the "others". I am looking at Piccinini's artworks because her sculptures provide us with useful representations which cause us to think differently about the subject and the perception of the "others" in a time of biotechnology and crisis of the human's condition. Through the study of Piccinini's artworks, I will see how her sculptures give way to a new understanding of articulation of the post-human subject and the potential impact of such representations on the "normative" body, the "self" and his/her relation to other species, such as animals.

Via the study of Piccinini's creatures I will explore the power of creation and its potentially affective encounters for removing dichotomies and the way we define the human in relation to the

¹⁴ From the materials used there is a mix between the organic/natural and the artificial.

"others". In my research, I will conceive visual and figurative arts as a tool to shift common beliefs and relations to the "others" and the "self". In this way, the arts have the potential to affect the spectator aesthetically, intellectually and sentimentally. However, as the contrary of Kant's aesthetic theory: the arts do not need to be beautiful and sublime to have a positive impact on people and the perception of the body. [Cazeaux, 2000: p.16 - 34] Therefore, I am not looking for the power of the beautiful and sublime in art, that usually affect the spectator positively. What I am looking for is the power of the "deviant" art, of art that we define as "abject", "weird", that disrupt the "norms" and for which the first reaction is rejection. "Deviant" art here has to be understood as pushing the spectator in new directions that differ from what he/she is used to thinking. In this way, the negative aspect of this word will be dismissed, where I will amplify the benefits of not having a "straight or normal"¹⁵ way of thinking about the "self" and the "others". In this paper, I will look at how deviant artworks, such as the one of Piccinini, could shift the common definition of the "self" and our relationship with the "others". In this way, I will focus on the confused feelings that Piccinini's creatures provoke in the spectator's mind. Then, deviance in art has a deeper potential to shift minds and the way we see the "self" and relate to the "others", especially if the art we look at is figurative and represents bodies¹⁶. Difference and "abnormality" represented via art and the way it affects the spectator are central in my paper. In the analysis of the way the spectator is affected by this "deviant" art, I will try to look for the impact it can have on the perception of the "self" and the "others", on the body and in general, on the contemporary conception of the human. Thus, my main research question is: *How "deviant" art can affect the perception of the "self" and the "others"?*

The "becoming monster/other" is a common subject in art and science. Nonetheless, with genetic engineering the "monster" has crossed the line of human imagination, tales and mythologies to reach the field of reality. Moreover, the monster, as explained notably by Rosi Braidotti, has the capacity to give an alternative subject constitution: "[A] shift of paradigm is in course, towards the teratological or the abnormal/cultural decadence. [...] We need to learn to think of the anomalous, the monstrously different not as a sign of pejoration but as the unfolding of virtual possibilities that point to positive alternatives for us all." [Braidotti, 2000: p. 172] With Piccinini, the "monster" cannot qualify only as such, because it is invented as being created by humans, made from human's genes and from nature at the same time: from the animal or vegetable kingdom. Thus, the spectator cannot define in one word, in one way what he/she is looking at in front of Piccinini's creatures

¹⁵ Straight here is related to the word "normal", which is in contradiction with a "queer" way of thinking, considered as "abnormal" or "different" by people. These terms have to be understood and used in the same way of Sara Ahmed in her *Queer Phenomenology*.

¹⁶ Figurative artworks.

because once he/she makes the connection with genetic manipulation, he/she understands that what is depicted could be his/her future kinship.

However, I wish to outline that Piccinini does not relate to scientific discoveries¹⁷ in her art as deprecation, contrary to most of the artists whom started to work in the nineties when the post-human discourse began. Although, her sculptures could be seen from a first reading as aberrations of biotechnological experiments, a second reading opened up to both positive and negative interpretations towards a new image of the human. Indeed, artists easily created "post-human" representations that related to the end of andocentric subjectivity with atrocious perversions¹⁸. Reproductive technologies are associated with issues of cloning, controlling, but then also losing control. For instance, the artist Charles Ray, in 1993, created a group sculpture named *Family Romance*¹⁹. Children and parents in this artwork are of equal stature, referring to potential aberrations of biotechnological experiments. Only discomfort and awkwardness show through this group sculpture where the American family, transgressing the "normal" principles of reproduction, has become even more standard and anonymous. It leaves no space for debate as does Piccinini's creatures. As we can see, and this is the case for numerous artistic works related to the post-human condition²⁰, the doll "look like" appearance is common to most of "post-human" related creations. Thus, the base for their artworks is still the human body, robotized, cleaned of ages, gender or ethnicity, and all the issues related to it. In this sense, the work of Piccinini is really different because it connects to the universe of biomedical, usually seen as sterilized and "anti-imperfection"²¹, with the bodily matter, the organic, the flesh, the defects and flaws of the human and animal's nature. Furthermore, what differs with Piccinini is that the animals, the species of the "others", are as much as the human at the centre of her work. Though, the theme of the animal also takes place in other artistic productions, it is mostly referred to in a negative sense, translating the lost points of reference and control of human's corporeality and identity. For instance, the work of the artist Olaf Breuning is relevant in this way: his photographs²² show half animal half human subjects who seem to be out of place, falling directly into the "monstrous" category which is too "grotesque" to be true and deeply affecting. Here, the animal connotations are directly related to primitivism while Piccinini seems to "elevate" animals' status to something else, via the possibility

¹⁷ Such as genetic manipulation, cloning or organ transplants between species.

¹⁸ Especially in the beginning of the nineties where the new post-human discourse opens the way to all kinds of fantasies and fears about gender, reproduction and transplantation.

¹⁹ Appendix, Image 9.

²⁰ See the work of artists such as Dinos & Jake Chapman or Victorine Müller, for instance.

²¹ Her first project as mentioned earlier.

²² Appendix, Image 12.

of genetic manipulation. In addition, these representations are mostly balanced on the theme of the monstrous "disfigurement" of gender and its genitals, as represented by the photographic work of Inez van Lamsweerde²³. Indeed, as I will explain, the deviance in Piccinini representations is going beyond perversion, with that, the monstrosity and alteration of human genome does not lead to an atrocious perversion of the "self" or "other". Alternatives to androcentrism become positive and abnormality is valued in Piccinini's sculptures, via a set of complex affects and inter-relations that I will look for and outline in this thesis.

1.4. **Methodology: How to rethink the human-subject**

As an ex-student of Art History, the body and its representations have fascinated me for years. Moreover, I have a scientific background acquired in High School, where I mostly developed knowledge in Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics and Biology²⁴. Similarly to Piccinini, I combine and I am interested in both disciplines that are often seen as distinctly different. Moreover, I am fascinated by how humans establish boundaries between each other and set up categories of normalities, of deviance, of difference, for everyone. Piccinini's artworks reveal our closed way of thinking because once we are confronted by her sculptures we realise that we cannot completely define it and it disturbs us. Her art triggers our relationship to "normality", inside and outside the art field, in constant dialogue with the scientific field. Here, I need to explain who I include or exclude in the terms "we" and "our" as well as what I mean by "the spectator". Indeed, I need to situate the object of my study (the spectator). From it I want to produce a certain kind of knowledge about the "self" and the "others". Indeed, as Haraway outlines, the knowledge produced needs to be situated. [Haraway, 1988] Then, the object of my study is not different from myself, the "knowledge producer": indeed, I include myself in the category of "the spectator" from this I will situate him/her. Therefore, the spectator is from a Western country and often attends art exhibitions and is aware of the power and utility of arts in daily life. Other characteristics of the spectator do not matter in my research, as I will explain in the first chapter, due to the "pre-personal" characteristic of the affects. Indeed, I am basing my research on the theory of affects and situating them in the field of the pre-biographical. [Massumi, 1987: xvi] They will also always be prior to and/or outside of consciousness [Massumi, 2002]. This means that it can be applied to each kind of spectator, no matter what is his/her background, sex, gender, ethnicity or class. Nonetheless, a situated knowledge is connected and structured within the existing social aspect, the political aspect, and the

²³ Appendix, Images 10 and 11.

²⁴ In France, High School is from 14 years to 18 years. The student needs to be specialized in their choice of one of three disciplines that are Literature, Political Sciences and Science.

ideology belonging to each culture and each country and the established agency which is born and erected through the one who is speaking. Then the notion of normalization, normality, abnormality, “self”, and "others" have to be thought of as categories elaborated from Western thoughts, notably via "normative" discourses and practices that Foucault frames and explains in his book *Discipline and Punish*.

Firstly, I will look at different and direct reactions that I can find regarding the artworks of Piccinini, mostly from bloggers²⁵ or art critics.²⁶ To establish new knowledge about the “self” and the "others" via the study of Piccinini's artworks, I will use different concepts as a mediator between the experience of seeing the sculptures and what we can interpret from them. Indeed, the mediated character of an experience is the condition that allows the emergence of new knowledge, as Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa explained, due to its explicit uniqueness and subjective characteristics. [Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa, 2009: p. 46] My methodology is to use different concepts and theories and to apply and "re-orient" them towards the work of Patricia Piccinini. Thus, I will study how these creatures physically and psychologically interact with the viewer via the use of different concepts applied to Piccinini's creatures. In chapter two, I will explain why I am going to use the theory of affect, and, notably, the work of Brian Massumi and Silvan Tomkins: I am looking for the potential of affects in reading artworks²⁷ and its productive paradox²⁸. Then I will explain why Piccinini's sculptures embody a new form of the subject - the biomediated one - and how it could initiate the deconstruction of anthropocentrism and help to think in a new way about bioethics²⁹. In Chapter three, I will look at what kind of affects are at work in the reception of Piccinini's artworks, notably via the collection and analysis of interpretations from bloggers on the internet and art reviews. To interpret this data I will use the theory of “queer phenomenology”³⁰ and the concept of becoming animal/“other”³¹, after which I will return to the notion of bioethics and the relationship between animals and humans. At the end of the chapter, I will connect the need for a re-evaluation of human/animal relationship with the concept of the uncanny³². In chapter four I will connect Piccinini's artworks to the concept of the grotesque³³, the abject³⁴, and the anomaly³⁵, in a way to

²⁵ The spectator is also deeply involved with technology and progress, using the internet to discover and talk about subjects such as art.

²⁶ The spectator is well educated in the art field and aware of art history.

²⁷ Via Patricia Clough, Brian Massumi, and Silvan Tomkins.

²⁸ Via Ben Anderson.

²⁹ Via Rosi Braidotti.

³⁰ Via Sara Ahmed.

³¹ Via Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari.

³² Via Carl Gustav Freud.

³³ Via Margaret Miles and Barbara Creed.

³⁴ Via Julia Kristeva.

³⁵ Via Mary Douglas.

understand all different layers of such artworks. At the end of the chapter, I will use interesting concepts of mimetism and mimicry³⁶ which I will connect to empathy in order to understand the special effects of Piccinini's artworks on the spectators. I will link the concept of "affection"³⁷ with the notion of empathy that I will put into parallels with the notion of "contagion". It will outline the potential of affects that circulate in between bodies and its consequences. Via the use of these theories and concepts, I want to see if disturbance and disgust, once related to tenderness and love, can provoke shifts and new paradigms in the spectator's mind. I want to see if the affects-theory can be used in the reading of an artwork such as Piccinini's creatures. I want to understand what Piccinini's artworks and our complex reaction to it tells us about our society and the way we look at bodies and species. Thus, I want to discover if being ambiguously affected by Piccinini's creatures has consequences on the concept of the human and on what is non-human and the way we relate to it. I would like to found out if dichotomies such as animal/human, subject/object and nature/culture can be positively removed by such artworks. Finally, the same way as George Maciunas perceives art and life - in a continuum via the *Fluxus* movement - I would like to see if a particular way of being affected by the artworks of Piccinini could help us to think differently. Thus, I would like to understand how meanings in the artwork of this artist are mediated by affects and a complex range of feelings. Moreover, I would like to see then if this complex range of feelings and affects are creating a starting point to think "differently" over human species³⁸, if Piccinini's creatures can provoke a "new space" in humans' mind to look otherwise at the boundaries established between bodies, the "self", the "others", the animals and the "deviants". At the same time, I want to highlight what is communicated in the work of Piccinini about our contemporary society and notably, the potential power of change that genetic manipulation is bringing along. I wish to be able to see how categories (normal, abnormal, monstrous, cute) are made but also how they can be deconstructed, notably through the "work" of the affects. My main interest is to see how "deviance" in art can be beneficial toward a new concept of the human and its relationship with what we define as the "others".

³⁶ Via Anna Gibbs.

³⁷ French word. Concept initiated by Spinoza and used by Massumi.

³⁸ For instance, if it removes our anthropocentrism.

- **Chapter 2: The dimension of affects, towards indeterminacy**

- 2.1. Concept of affects and its relatives**

In this chapter, I would like to study the theory of affect to understand the consequences of the way the spectator is moved by Piccinini's creatures. Firstly, it is important to make a distinction,

following Eric Shouse, between affects, feelings and emotions. Thus, as Shouse shortly sums up: "*Feelings are personal and biographical, emotions are social, and affects are prepersonal.*" [Shouse, 2005: par. 2] In this sense, feelings are linked to previous experiences and will never be fully comparable in between people because "*every person has a distinct set of previous sensations*". [Shouse, 2005: par. 3] Emotions could be seen as a sort of "mise en scène" ("projection/display" in Shouse's words) of a feeling, which communicate to the others what is at work within the individual³⁹. Here affects are the most interesting part because, as Massumi explains in *Parables*, it happens outside consciousness, it is abstract and it cannot be fully structured or defined. [Shouse, 2005: par. 5] An affect is seen as a "*non-conscious experience of intensity*" that adds a quantitative aspect to feelings: it is a "*bodily response*" at the level of matter to its surroundings⁴⁰. As Massumi states that affects "move" bodies in and out. Affects show that bodies, environment, "self" and "others" are inter-connected and that all these elements should not be seen as excluded from each other. Indeed, as Shouse argues, the "abstract" dimension of the affects allows them to be "transmittable" between bodies which become a potential "social" power. For instance, being affected by someone who is suffering makes a person move toward the one who is in trouble, in a way to help him/her. Moreover, the "pre-personal" or impersonal status of affects is important, as I already outlined in the *Methodology*: all kind of human beings and bodies can experience the same type of affects. In front of artworks, affects allow a "collective involvement" that gives more impact and power to the artistic experience.

The theory of affect is relevant here because it addresses the "*potensia*" of artworks and its potential effects in daily life. [Gibbs, 2010: p. 187] Indeed, as I just outlined, affects emphasize connections between beings, but also between subjects and objects: Massumi argues that affect is "*social in a manner 'prior to' the separating out of individuals*". [Massumi, 2002: p. 9] In this way, the affects-theory implies that objects - such as artworks - could have an impact inside/outside on spectator's body and also on their minds. Indeed, following Spinoza, affects are the effects of another body, as well an art object, on our own body. [Deleuze, 1998: p. 139] In my research, I am interested in the consequences of being affected by visual art: how art, notably "deviant" art, affects the perception of the "self" and by extension, the "others". What effects this can have on self-perception of life-itself and humanism? In the same way, as Ben Anderson states in *Modulating the Excess of Affect*, I am looking for the "productive paradox" provided by specific affects that originate in "deviant" arts. [Anderson, 2010: p. 162] Following Anderson, there are two paradoxical

³⁹ But emotions can be an act as well, and then it could translate as a false/feigned feeling and state of mind.

⁴⁰ Other bodies, beings, objects and subjects.

sides of affects when it seen as an excess. One side is positive in the sense that it provides "*a new way to attend to the social or cultural in a perpetual and unruly movement*" [Anderson, 2010: p. 162] because it is "*a paradigmatic object of forms of vital or life power in the political formation*". [Anderson, 2010: p. 166] On the other side, Anderson explains that affect can be used, re-used, re-articulated, re-educated, and re-directed against itself. Indeed, he presents the case study of "morale" as it was used during the World War I, where the population is "re-educated" via the "re-orientation" of affects such as fear and glory. Governments sometimes used affects to destroy or protect morale. [Anderson, 2010: p. 169] In the same way, I am going to use affects in my case study to "re-orient" bodies and minds. Moreover, I am playing with two different levels of paradox linked to affect: that affect is working itself as a paradox, as Anderson understood it, and that, in my case study, affects of work are themselves paradoxical: they are ambiguous and ambivalent. Indeed, as I will analyse in the third chapter, Piccinini's artworks produce paradoxical affects: a mix of disgust, discomfort, compassion and tenderness. Then, the "productive paradox" that I am looking for is disclosed by the possible relationship between ambiguous affects and "deviant" artworks that could "shift" the anthropocentric way of thinking. In addition, it is interesting to look at the etymology of the word "paradox". Indeed, the Greek, "para", means "beyond" or "contrary to" and "doxa" means "established opinions, thoughts and ideas". Thus, acknowledging the productive potential of "affective paradox"⁴¹ in the reading of artworks such as those of Piccinini could have the power to open to a new way of thinking⁴² beyond established humanist thoughts and ideas. Then, the paradox here becomes a form of power, a paradigm that produces a new complex way of thinking about the human. Thus, Anderson is looking for "*how a named affect becomes power's object*" [Anderson, 2010: p. 163]: in the same way, I am searching for the positive "power object" of ambiguity.

2.2. The potential of Piccinini's creatures to shift the spectator's mind: the biomediated body

Piccinini's creatures embody a new form of the subject, non-defined, in between the "normal" and the "abnormal". Her creatures seem to personify a new concept of the body: the "biomediated body". Indeed, as Patricia Clough explains, the "*body as an organism*", a product of the 19th century industrial capitalism engendering its own boundary conditions, had disappeared and was replaced by the "*biomediated body*", open to energy, fluids, information and to the environment. [Clough, 2010: p. 207] The "biomediated" body sets up a new definition of the body

⁴¹ And not eliminating it.

⁴² About the self and the "others".

and what it can "affectively" do between the boundaries set within "normal" and "abnormal" bodies, from different species to difference in general. Then, "biomediated" bodies, embodied in Piccinini's creatures, offer more possibilities towards a new concept of the "self" and of the relationship with the "others"⁴³. The ambiguity, in Piccinini's position⁴⁴, regarding her artworks, of the affects at work in the lecture of her sculptures, is at the core of my research: it is in this uncertainty of what to think and feel about her creatures that will be explored as a potential solution for the elaboration of a new definition of the subject. Indeed, Piccinini's creatures are merging together animal and human genes, beautiful and monstrous features, abject and transcendent characteristics. For instance, the character in the sculpture *The Leather Landscape*⁴⁵ could be confused with a human if we look only at his face, with his "balding" head or the aspect of his skin. His chest, as well as his genitals, is closer to a male human feature than to an animal. But then, all of this is mixed with animal characteristics such as his numerous nipples, his tail, the way he stands, or the forms of his extremities.

Rosi Braidotti queried, in 1994, how post-human representations can rethink the way we perceive the human subject, without reproducing the eternal dichotomies such as male and female, human and animal, or humanistic beliefs such as the supremacy of the human species over others. She wanted to know *"how to rethink the unity of the human subject"*. [Braidotti, 1994: p. 179]. In my opinion, Piccinini's artworks embodied an example of a new way to represent the subject in a "post-human" context, who is differently and ambiguously non-defined. Following Braidotti, there is a need to see community in a post-human area, as broader, including those who have always been excluded of human community: deviant, monsters and animals. She proposes to focus on the processes of *"interconnections, a post-anthropocentric approach to the analysis of "life itself"* and to elaborate new criteria of the "human". [Braidotti, 2009: p. 3] Braidotti also comments on the need to change *"the arrogance of the anthropocentrism"*, that she articulates through the deconstruction of the human/animal dichotomy. She proposes to think through a "nomadic" philosophy and to re-associate the human being with all different forms of "inhuman aspects", which will empower him/her via *"the productive force of Zoe"*. [Braidotti, 2006: p. 96-97] As Braidotti, I am looking for "anti-anthropocentric" representations that allow *"for a non-binary way*

⁴³ Including animals, deviant bodies, marginalized people, etc...

⁴⁴ Piccinini does not take any particular position to interpret her sculptures and her artwork cannot be reduced to condemnation, warning or criticism. Her artistic position allows her a status of ambiguity, not purely political or aesthetic.

⁴⁵ Appendix, Image 5.

of positing the relationship between same and other, between different categories of living beings and ultimately between life and death." [Braidotti, 2009: p. 99] Indeed, Greeks made a distinction between *Zoe*, which refers to the simple fact of being alive and applied to all living beings while *Bios* corresponds to the "appropriate" form given to a way of life of an individual or community. *Bios* are generally associated to the philosophical meaning of human life while *Zoe* is its animal other, devalued. [Agamben, 1993] Piccinini seems to bring back together the *Zoe-bios* form via the re-shaping of mutated human/animal bodies. In Piccinini's creatures, the human is no longer a stranger to "other" bodies and nature; he/she is a part of a system which is complex and ambiguous. Moreover, there are no "good" or "bad" areas in her creatures: both animal and human features complete each other and make each creature somehow beautiful, in harmony. Thus, the creature of *The Long Awaited*⁴⁶ seems well balanced and the fact that it is asleep, as well as the little boy who holds it, is comforting - a calm and harmonious sensation for spectator. Then, the "flaws" of the creature, its fat, wrinkles, "deformed" hands and feet appear in harmony with the seal shape of its body. It is like Piccinini's creatures represent a new hierarchy, which is not giving privilege to "*the bios - discursive, intelligent, social life - over Zoe - brutal 'animal' life*" but rather her artworks are somehow reconsidering and challenging that notion of superiority. [Braidotti, 2009: p. 105]

Finally, the study of Patricia Piccinini's artwork needs to be "turned" to affects because affect theory is based on the meanings of situated experiences and subjectivity, that can lead to another form of knowledge about the "self" that usually give critical theory and cultural criticism. [Clough, 2010] Indeed, affect allows us to re-focus our attention on the everyday: the everyday experience that could lead to a "*situated knowledge*" is at stake in feminist's theories, more notably in standpoint theories following Sandra Harding. [Harding, 1991] Ethical and existentialist questions should be addressed and understood, and this is my opinion as a student in *Gender Studies*, via the transmission and interpretations of affects and feelings. A subjective "affected" experience of disturbed artworks should be considered as a potential starting point, via the mediation of language and interpretation⁴⁷, of seeing the world/self/others differently, and by building from and about its new knowledge. Indeed, as Simon O'Sullivan states: "*But in fact art is something much more dangerous: a portal, an access point, to another world (our world experienced differently), a world of impermanence and interpenetration, a molecular world of becoming.*" [O'Sullivan, 2001: p. 128] Moreover, art, affects and the theme of the "post-human condition" can be seen as inter-related. Indeed, as O'Sullivan argues, art produces affects which

⁴⁶ Appendix, Image 3.

⁴⁷ This is what I am doing here, by writing this thesis.

connects different worlds between each other⁴⁸. [O'Sullivan, 2001: p. 126] Moreover, both the arts and affects are situated in the realm of the virtual that once the subject experiences it re-activates in reality. Finally, affects and the "post-human subject" are connected because of the nature of affect: it is going beyond the human discursive practice, or as directly said by O'Sullivan, *"It is the matter in us responding and resonating with the matter around us. The affect is, in this sense, transhuman. Indeed, with the affect what we have is a kind of transhuman aesthetic."* [O'Sullivan, 2001: p. 126] In this case, I do not make the distinction between trans and post-human: both mean "beyond humanism". Thus, I will use affect as a bridge, a mediator of the impacts of cultural representations on the spectator's world: how the visitor of a disturbing "deviant" exhibition such as *We are Family*, if he/she is ambiguously affected, can experience it as an open space to perceive humans and "others" differently. In addition, I would like to use the "matter" in "bodily matter", as Clough argues, in the sense that *"matter's capacity for self-organization in being informational"*. [Clough, 2010: p. 207] In my opinion, this means that the body, by being "deviantly" represented as is in Piccinini's work, and is confronting the spectator with new information about how to perceive the "self" in a "post-human" context. By "re-defining" the body, Piccinini pushes the spectator to "re-organise" the way he/she perceives his/her body relating to the others and his/her environment. This new information is mediated via a "non-controlled" bodily reaction (the affects) that can lead toward the production of new knowledge (once interpreted). A knowledge that opens towards more tolerance between bodies and beings seen as "others": animals, deviants or the marginalized⁴⁹. Finally, affect theory seems to present an anti-dualistic/anti-Cartesian way of thinking which is at the core of my thesis: body and mind interact with each other and "help" each other to think differently. Indeed, this statement that body and mind should reconnect together, contradictory to Descartes' statement, is an argument of feminist studies but as well of the 'post-human'. Thus, Steve Nichols in 1988 states this argument in the *Post-human manifesto*: *"The mind and the body act together to produce consciousness. If one is absent consciousness ceases. There is no pure thought, isolated from a body. In order to function, the brain must be connected to a body, even if the body is artificial. Consciousness is an effect which arises through the co-operation of a brain and body. We think with our whole body."* [qtd. in Pepperell, 2010: p. 178]

2.3. "Opening" the body, "opening" the mind

⁴⁸ The world of fantasy (the arts), the world of intensity (affects) and the world of becoming "other" (post-human).

⁴⁹ Which Piccinini's creatures represent.

Affects here should be understood as an "*envelope of possibilities*" that can give the push to "*a subjective force*" towards a redefinition of the "human subject". [Gibbs, 2010: p. 187] Moreover, if we follow Massumi's conceptualization of affects, as re-read by Clough, "*as pre-individual bodily forces augmenting or diminishing a body's capacity to act*". [Clough, 2010: p. 207] Then, when it comes to ambiguous affects, I understand this concept as the body/mind capacity to act/think differently. Thus, I would like to use Massumi's theory about affect in the sense that affect can drive bodies toward "indeterminacy", which I would like to call a stage of "in-between", with no defined judgment about the "self" and the "others". This stage of "in-between" is seen as a "philosophical escape" toward acceptance, tolerance and openness of what is considered different and non-human⁵⁰ or defines outside the norms established by Western society⁵¹. [Clough, 2010: p. 208] Massumi situated the affects outside conscious perception and language: two things that have been over analysed and established via disciplines, which fix identities and meanings to things, people and bodies. Affects, as Massumi explains, are autonomous because they belong to "the virtual", and the non-defined. Then, "the virtual"⁵² allows the creation of potential new spaces towards the new: from a new definition of the subject to a new conception of the human in general, with the (positive) re-evaluation of what is seen as non-human. [Massumi, 2002] If someone is affected by something or someone, he/she allows their body to be metaphorically and physically "opened" and their mind to be "touched". Involuntarily, affects make the one who is affected participate in what they are experiencing. [Massumi, 2002: p. 37] Thus, the visitor, of a hyper realistic exhibition such as that of Piccinini, experiences it on a deeper level because he/she cannot avoid being affected by what he/she is looking at⁵³. In the following chapter I will attempt to see if the particular "bodily response"⁵⁴ of a spectator of Piccinini's creatures has the potential to also move or drive his/her thoughts toward another state of mind.

Next to Massumi's affect theory, I would like to use Silvan Tomkins' writings about affects because, with him, affects "drive" the spectator in between objectification and identification where bodies' boundaries⁵⁵ disappear and melt into something new - a new state of mind. [McIlwain, 2007] Thus, Tomkins analyses nine basic affects "*interest–excitement, enjoyment–joy, surprise–startle, fear–terror, distress–anguish and anger–rage; one affect-auxiliary: shame; and two drive*

⁵⁰ Animals, nature...

⁵¹ Homosexuals, marginalized groups, ethnic minorities, handicapped people...

⁵² The virtual here also refers to the mediated space of art.

⁵³ Due notably to the hyper realistic aspect of the creatures and their life-sizes.

⁵⁴ An affect or an "excess of conscious states of perception".

⁵⁵ Bodies' boundaries refer to boundaries (virtual or real) between animate bodies such as humans or animals but as well in between animate and inanimate bodies, such as beings and sculptures for instance.

auxiliaries: disgust and dispel" that are "are the primary motivators of human behaviour". [qtd. in McIlwain, 2007: p. 500] If affects are the "the primary motivators of human behaviour", then we can suppose that the way Piccinini's creatures affect the spectator could change his/her behaviour, notably toward animals or the "deviants". Indeed, as Doris McIlwain explains, Tomkins' theory is challenging the affect-theory and its use, notably "to examine contemporary issues of psyche, embodiment and subjectivity." [McIlwain, 2007: p. 501] Tomkins sees affects as biological mechanisms to amplify awareness, and I would like to use affects in the same way. [Tomkins, 1991] Indeed, I believe in the power of affects, and its potential to remove spectators believes and knowledge. Thus, I would like to see if the ambiguous and disturbing affects felt in front of Piccinini's creatures "force" the spectator to be concerned with what they are looking at, as if affects are a "primary motivating mechanism". [Tomkins, 1991: prologue xiii] Furthermore, affects in my research are to be seen as a potential toward another state of mind: as Shouse explains, affect "is a moment of unformed and unstructured potentia". [Shouse, 2005] A potential, to act and to think differently, which is not framed by language⁵⁶ but activated via bodies' reactions: as Shouse states: "intensity of the impingement of sensations on the body can "mean" more to people than meaning itself" [Shouse, 2005]. Indeed, Silvan Tompkins explains that affects have the power to influence consciousness and to amplify concerns about things: "The affect mechanism is like the pain mechanism in this respect. If we cut our hand, saw it bleeding, but had no innate pain receptors, we would know we had done something which needed repair, but there would be no urgency to it. Like our automobile which needs a tune-up, we might well let it go until next week when we had more time. But the pain mechanism, like the affect mechanism, so amplifies our awareness of the injury which activates it that we are forced to be concerned, and concerned immediately " [Tomkins, 1991: p. 88]. To be affected is to be concerned with the world, with what surrounds us, to be sensible towards the outside of the "self", to let the "outside"⁵⁷ transform our "inside": it is the first step to be aware of the "others"⁵⁸ and their conditions. As it is explained in the 'The Affect Theory Reader', affects can open an "ethico-aesthetic space" when it encounters "non-discursive arts"⁵⁹ or "new technological lures"⁶⁰. [Gregg & Seigworth, 2010: p. 8] Finally, affect-theory can be applied to the artworks of Piccinini because her work refers itself to the "jamming" of boundaries, between beings and the potential of such a "literal" openness that genetic engineering enables.

⁵⁶ Which is restrictive and ruled by limited meanings.

⁵⁷ Here, visual representations.

⁵⁸ Animals, outsiders, marginalized groups, women, black people, etc...

⁵⁹ Piccinini's creatures are sculptures and the artist never takes any clear position towards the way we should see her artworks;

⁶⁰ Such as biotechnology.

▪ **Chapter 3: The power of ambiguity**

3.1. You are monstrous and I love you

Unfortunately I could not attend any of Piccinini's exhibitions in person or interview the spectators of the Biennale in Venice (2003) directly. However, the virtual here meets again reality: I will use some comments of internet users that were posted on blogs which published Patricia Piccinini's artworks. Some of the internet users were physically present at one of Patricia Piccinini's shows; others are merely reacting from images of her creatures that the blogger has posted. Thus, people at the show are usually more deeply moved by the creatures, and notably, as I already mentioned, because of the hyper-realistic aspect of it. For instance, *Goodby's* comment translates this disturbed amazement in front of the "more than real" appearance of the creatures: "*She's an amazing talent, these pictures just don't capture how real the skin looks in person, and I'm getting nauseas again just thinking about it all.*" [*Goodby's* comments on *Coilhouse's* blog]

Nonetheless, the responses of the internet users who only looked at the pictures are also interesting for my thesis. The comments I found on the internet are mostly using a vocabulary of confusion and disturbance, mixing positive and negative appraisal, describing ambiguous feelings sensed in front of Piccinini's creatures. Indeed, their words are usually contradictory, translating their "disorientation" and their "discomfort" because they cannot decide what to think of the work: "*This makes me extremely uncomfortable. Sooooo uncomfortable.*" [*Stephanie's* comments on *Coilhouse*] or "*me too! I think they are brilliant, frightening, beautiful, poetic, creepy, sad and I just don't know what to think of it.*" [*Elena Bowman's* comments on *Coilhouse*] Most of the comments translate this stage of uncertainty that the creatures provoked in them, this stage of "in-between" I mentioned earlier. Thus, they use adjectives that we can classify into a negative category of description, such as "*creepy, strange, weird, ugly*" and into positive ones: "*amazement, brilliant, beautiful, poetic, adorable, flawless*". It is the same for a vocabulary directly related to feelings and affects: the negatives are: "*repulsion, frightening, sad, cringe-worthy*" while the positive comments use words as: "*attraction, love, awestruck*". However, what appears in the comments is mostly a feeling of compassion and amazement toward Piccinini's creatures. Here, the negative affects are disgust and fear and the positive ones are love and joy. Nonetheless, disgust and fear could be seen as positive affects, because I consider an affect positive from the moment it

drives the “self” towards a particular state of mind. Moreover, for most of the internet users, these negative and positive words are used together and translate an admiration for the deviancy of Piccinini's artworks. For instance, this comment: *"I love her stuff. It's so ugly and weird and flawless. It really makes you question the distinctions of beauty. Saw her stuff in a show for Modern women artists and you really have to see it in person to believe it. They look like bizarre museum dioramas"* [Elinoree's comment on *Pyxleyes*] shows a love for the "weird". If Piccinini's creatures make the spectator love the weird, the non-human, the non-defined, and the extreme other body, then it appears clear to me that "deviant" art is one answer to make us appreciate difference. If we look at the reviews about Piccinini's sculptures by scholars and art critics, we found the same use of affected vocabulary, oscillating between disgust and fascination, between rejection and attraction. Thus, Laura Fernandez Orgaz, a museum director, uses contradictory words as *"repulsion, tenderness, uneasiness"* when she talks about Piccinini's artworks in an interview. [Fernandez Orgaz & Piccinini, 2007] Peter Hennessey insists on the *"uncanny nature, grotesqueness and strange"* of their appearance but he also says that Piccinini *"also sees is a beauty in these things, and she invites us to see that too"*. [Hennessey, 2002] All of the critics wrote about the emotional charge and empathy present in Piccinini's work, that counter point the "strange" and disturbing aspects of the creatures. Juliana Enberg even talks about an *"empathetic atmosphere in her works"*. [Enberg, 2001] Indeed, as summarises Stella Brennan - an artist and writer from New Zealand: *"Piccinini's invented animals are weird but they engender our sympathy."* [Brennan, 2006] The reception of her work, even in the scientific field, is also very ambiguous. Indeed, as says Piccinini, the sculpture *The Young Family*, for example has been requested to support arguments both for and against genetic manipulation. [qtd. in Fernandez Orgaz & Piccinini, 2007]

A part of the ambiguous affects felt from her work also contains a progression and transgression of the boundaries between 'human/animal bodies'. Indeed, as I already described, Piccinini's creatures cannot "decide" from which "side" they are: animal or human or...monsters? But they do not have to choose, it is the human brain which wants to make "them" choose because uncertainty is not bearable for us. In addition, the "mise en scène" of the creatures, and particularly their posture, disturbs the spectator even more so. For instance, the position of the triplets in *Litter*⁶¹ remind the spectator of the numerous "touching" images of new-borns asleep that are available in the cultural field. This brings the young "hybrid" babies closer to reality but also to a "loving" affective response. However, this affectionate reaction from the spectator is again triggered by the

⁶¹ Image 7.

"abnormal" aspects of the little creatures⁶². The spectator has to deal with what he/she sees as threatening his/her own human body boundary and at the same time with signals that are telling them that what he/she is looking at is cute, nice, peaceful. Furthermore, the word "ambiguous" itself is giving way to openness and to the uncertain nature of things. I have chosen the word ambiguous as the "solution" to possible change in the state of mind because this is the opposite of a dualistic way of thinking. Indeed, ambiguity is the key to openness because it is "*the quality of being open to more than one interpretation; to inexactness*". [Online Oxford dictionary, 2013] Ambiguity and ambiguous affects are able to break standard and established dichotomies and categories of beings, because what is ambiguous is "*difficult to comprehend, distinguish, or classify*" and it has an "*uncertain nature*". [Online Oxford dictionary, 2013] What it is ambiguous is not clear for the "self" and then boundaries can be shifted between the "self", the "others", and what surrounds us. Indeed, the word "ambiguous" is from the Latin "ambigus" which means "doubtful", from the verb "ambigere" and "ambi-" means "both ways" and "-agere" means "to drive". Thus, it is interesting to notice that there is already the notion of being driven to something in the term ambiguous itself: "being driven to inexactness", then, to openness? Nonetheless, I cannot dictate whether genetic manipulation is good or not, but I am looking for how artistic representation - when it is related to science and notably genetic manipulation - should be experienced to make us aware of the value of any kind of life, from normal to abnormal, from animal to human, from vegetable to technological, from ugliness to beauty. Genetic manipulation should make us aware about the mutability of the human body and its potential to become part of the "others": difference is relative to the point we start from, and we can all one day become "monstrous". By making hybrid creatures with "lovable" human and animal features, Piccinini is perhaps giving a direction, an orientation towards tolerance.

3.2. Re-orientating the spectator

Most of the time, the comments explain that they do not know what to feel, such as this user: "*Ah! I remember finding this lady's work a few years ago and really not knowing at all how to feel about it...honestly, I still don't!*" [Alice's comment on *Coilhouse*]. Thus, as shown in the previous comments, people feel at the same time attracted to and repulsed by Piccinini's creatures. In phenomenology, scholars are looking for what it means to be oriented toward and against objects in worlds: then, what does it mean to be "disoriented" by Piccinini's creatures? What does it mean, in term of subjectivity/subject's orientation, to be at the same time pushed away and pulled towards

⁶² The hairs on the back, the shape of their ears and nose, etc.

these hybrid creatures? Sara Ahmed and her approach of phenomenology in *Queer Phenomenology* could help us to understand what it is at work in the reactions of the internet users and of the art critics. Indeed, as Ahmed explains in her book, bodies are “re-oriented”, re-directed, toward new lines of direction when they make contact with objects that are not “supposed to be there” [Ahmed, 2006: p.107]. Moreover, Ahmed argues that bodies need contact with other objects to “shift their orientations”. Thus, in my opinion, the disturbing feelings that affect the spectator in Piccinini's creatures have the potential power to “re-orientate” the visitor towards a new state of mind, a new vision of himself/herself, and notably other species such as animals. It re-orientates the way we define animals, nature, and deviancy in relation to the "normal" human's body. It re-unifies, via the drive of ambiguous affects, concepts and bodies that are established apart in society: human/non-human, abnormal/normal or nature/science. Ahmed situates these orientations/disorientations in the “queer zone”. As well, Piccinini's creatures could be seen as orienting the spectator towards an undefined zone of potential change: of “*queer moments of deviation*”, where species melt, sustain and respect each other. A zone where, as Ahmed argues, we need to ask ourselves: “[...] *If the objects slip away, if its face becomes inverted, if it looks odd, strange, or out of place, what we will do?*” [Ahmed, 2006: p. 179] Finally, when bodies experience disorientation/reorientation, Ahmed wonders whether, before we push away the “strange object”, if we understand that there is an opportunity for learning something new about the “self”, the “others”, and the world. The case is that most of the comments attest that they do not run away from Piccinini's creatures but allow them to be disturbed by them and to touch them, allowing maybe a space to learn something else about the “self” and the “others”. In addition, the etymology of the word “deviant”, that I used to qualify the work of the artist have to be noticed here. [Oxford Online Dictionary, 2013] Indeed, “deviare” in Latin means “turn aside”, “off way” and “deviate” means “to turn out of the way”. Thus, I qualified Piccinini's artworks as deviant here because it “turns off” the spectator's “normal” way of seeing bodies, the “self” and the “others”. Moreover, this term has been used since the late fifteenth century to talk about people who do not have a “normal” sexual orientation. It was mostly designated to homosexual people and in a negative way: deviation is associated with sexual perversion. However, here “turning out of the way” has to be seen as positive, that leads towards openness.

Openness here has to be understood as the impossibility to make a decision in front of Piccinini's creatures: whether we love or hate them, whether we are afraid or tenderised by them. This "in-between" stage can be related to the concept of "becoming" by Deleuze and Guattari. Indeed, to be affected by something means to be able to let something/someone be emotionally touched and therefore be "affected". One is "transferred" into a new state of being, or becoming.

Thus, I would like to connect the affect theory with the theory of "becoming" of Deleuze and Guattari. Indeed, as I already mentioned, being affected is being driven into another state of being. This way of seeing the "self", in a constant process of becoming something else, is particularly relevant for my case study. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the subject has become unstable and has folded into a "nomadic mode of existence" in which the human being is viewed as an elusive "anomaly". [Deleuze & Guattari, 1987] In this way, Piccinini's creatures represent this inability to situate the subject in a "post-humanism" period. There is a "*detritorialization*" of the subject: where the flesh has become a material that can transform the human shape and being, where the genetic information codifies more than define the subject (and can also be de- or re-codified). Piccinini's hybrid beings are not fully human, nor completely animal, and so they can be seen as nomadic beings, in-between species, in between several definitions of the subject. Their otherness has not yet an identity that can be framed by philosophical or political categories; they are beings in a state of metamorphosis, kept in a "*zone of indiscernibility*" which is, for Deleuze and Guattari, a condition of freedom. [Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: p. 152] Piccinini's silicone creations could symbolize the movement from molar to molecular combinations that Deleuze and Guattari describe: indeed, her creatures are representations of a fictional scenario of possible consequences of genetic manipulations, and the genetic scale is linked to the micro-molecular. Thus, the hybrid creatures embody the movement from the unity of the modern subject to the complexity of the post-human one, from organization to anarchy. [Deleuze & Guattari, 1987] Moreover, the ambiguity of the spectator's feelings keeps him/her in a state of mind of becoming - hopefully, becoming aware of the unfair supremacy and value of human race over the "others" and of the potential positive aspect of difference, monstrosity and multiplicity. Guattari argues, that the principle of tolerance towards "otherness" and difference needs to meet the condition of "*assuming the multiplicity within oneself*" [Guattari, 1996: p. 216] Then, Piccinini's creatures embody this multiplicity via the experience of genetic manipulation: one is no one anymore, in the literal sense. One can be duplicated (via cloning) or can be melted into another (via transplantation or genetic manipulation). Moreover, multiplicity is also at work inside the spectator's body: this confusion and mix of affects that his/her experience reminds him/her that no one is simple - unity and diversity is also within oneself. In addition, it is relevant to add the connections Elizabeth Grosz highlights the notion of "*becoming-otherwise/other*" and the human relationship to the nature within the creation of art. Indeed, she states that art is the work of activating the "*perceptions and the sensations of the lived body*", sensations that allow our "becoming otherwise". [Grosz, 2012: p. 22] Moreover, Grosz relates art to the power of the non human, to the animal and to the concept of "geopower" of earth. Thus, art is a manifestation of "material and immaterial forces of the universe" to elaborate and experiment the

"possibility of the new" and the possibility of new worlds and futures. [Grosz, 2012: p.3] Here, I agree with Grosz: indeed, by looking at the work of the affects in the lecture of "deviant" artworks, I emphasize the role of art as "producer of sensation" and by so, as "becoming other". These (ambiguous) sensations or affects produced by art is "opening up" forces that lead to a new status of the "self", toward "the others". Art intensifies our "bodily intensities" that make us aware of the inter-relations between the earth, animals, humans, bodies, matters and minds. As Grosz argues: *"Art in its most general sense is a way of experiencing the singularities, the particular qualities of the earth and its living and unlivable forces, as bodily intensities. Art, even human art, is a derivation of the animal's and plant's capacities to harness the forces of the earth not only to live but also to intensify itself, to maximize its sensations."* [Grosz, 2012: p. 974]

3.3. How to disrupt the logic of "otherness": towards new bioethics

Removing the dichotomies and boundaries between animals and humans means also to remove the way of evaluating human life and that of the "others". In our western and contemporary society, and since the Enlightenment and the creation of a superior kind, the human being seems to deserve particular ethical attention. [Braidotti, 2002] Moreover, the human disposes of a legitimate power over animals based on the fact that mankind determine the reasoning, contrary to other living beings on earth. The relationship between humans and animals has been established as all the other ideologies: from an inclusion/exclusion relationship between the "self" and what is defined as the "others". [Haraway, 2003] Mankind proclaims the superiority of the human species as a natural fact that is based on the laws of otherness - of difference. The logic of 'otherness' allows people to build boundaries and values between two kinds of beings. In addition, since genetic creation and capitalist exploitation at all levels, animals are even more mistreated and considered as merchandise that can be produce, reproduce and be eliminated "ad infinitum" to help human conditions, without any reconnaissance and compassion, as Braidotti argues: *"Moreover, animals provide living material for scientific experiments. They are manipulated, mistreated, tortured and genetically recombined in ways that are productive for our biotechnological agriculture, the cosmetic industry, drugs and pharmaceutical industries and other sectors of economy. [...] Other animals, like pigs, are genetically modified to produce organs for humans in xenotransplantation experiments. The category of 'class' is accordingly linked to that of tradable disposable bodies of all categories and species, in a global mode of post-human exploitation."* [Braidotti, 2009: p. 103]

Nonetheless, the mankind cannot continue to follow this way of thinking - a hierarchical

way of seeing the "others" - since biological innovations over genetics or technological creation of artificial intelligence are combining species, different bodies and intelligences. Indeed, men and women need to re-evaluate ethics which are limited to the human species, since animals (like pigs) can for instance help the human species fight diseases via organ transplants. Indeed, as Joanna Zylinska reading Braidotti explains, genetic manipulation and experimentation create a new "interdependency" in between species, in between "normal" ("naturally" born) and "abnormal" (conceived in scientific laboratory) bodies. As she argues, there is a need for a *"humanism of bioethics otherwise - beyond the belief in intrinsic dignity and superior value of the human, and beyond the rules and procedures rooted in this belief."* [Joanna, 2009: p. 4] However, even if science and technology have removed and moved out the concept of "life-itself", it did not yet, as Braidotti noticed [Braidotti, 2009: p. 97], change categories and classification, nor value judgment over human and non human life. As Braidotti outlines, there is still a system of exclusion/inclusion at work along the axis of sexualisation, racialisation and naturalization. Therefore, my attempt is to find a way to go out of human's classification and its establishment of superiority. I believe that the particularity of Piccinini's artworks is an "escape" to the exclusion of "the others" because of the way it affects the spectator and because it does not give one answer to genetic experimentations or the conception of the human/non-human. Indeed, the artist states that she is not interested in telling people what to think about genetics or the mistreatment of other species by the human race, but she believes that *"emotional realities"* have the potential to transform conceptual or ethical issues. [Piccinini & Fernandez Orgaz, 2007] Furthermore, Braidotti looks at the potential of connecting to the "others" via the transformation of negative forces⁶³ to positive ones. Loving the deviant can also be understood as transforming the *"negative into positive passions"*. Once this is achieved, the freedom of the subject is sustained not by the exclusion of the "others", but rather via *"connectiveness to others, an expansion, acceleration, or intensification of interrelation."* [Braidotti, 2009: p. 106] Then, the ambiguous feeling that affects the spectator's mind could be viewed as a move away of his/her body from anthropocentrism and as an attraction to "becoming the Other", positively. As a metaphor of letting them enter into the *"eco philosophical"* dimension of life. [Braidotti, 2009: p. 98] Thus, in Piccinini's imagination, the creatures set up in the exhibition are conceived as potential substitutes for future organ transplants to save human's life. As it has already been done since 1985 in science engineering with pigs [Whyte & Prathdier, 2011], the mother of *The Young Family*, could be also viewed as bearing organs that can help humans to go through diseases. Their lives depends on our well-being: and if human life is in danger, as Piccinini says herself, the one who will be sacrificed is the hybrid creature, without hesitation. [Fernandez

⁶³ Understood here as sensations/affects.

Orgaz & Piccinini, 2007] In the other sense, our human lives depend also on the well development and life of the creatures: if they die before we can use them. However, killing a pig to extract his organ is easy to do because of the establishment of human superiority over other species: but what about Piccinini's creatures? Indeed, their human features blur the mind of the spectator: it is always much more difficult to kill/eat/exploit another being when it looks like "us". The artist, by imagining beings that are, both, human ("owning the reason and intelligence") and animal ("owning the instinct and bestiality"), deconstructs our hierarchical world and self-definition towards "otherness".

4.4. Uncanny: the old and long familiar

Piccinini's artwork touches, as does the genetic manipulation, what Freud defines as the "uncanny" which is "*undoubtedly related to what is frightening - to what arouses death and horror*". [Freud, 1919: p. 219] Moreover, using this theory with Piccinini's creatures give another possibility to re-evaluate human/animal hierarchy. Thus, Freud's "uncanny" defines once a clear boundary is lost: indeed; Piccinini, as all the biotechnology and genetic research do, destroys boundaries between the pure/impure, normal/deviant, human/animal and nature/culture. Furthermore, Freud refers to "the uncanny" in three categories: things that relate to 1). The notion of a double, cyborg, or a twin. 2). The notion of castration anxieties expressed notably over the female genitals or of dismembered limbs, severed heads or hands. 3). A feeling associated with a familiar/unfamiliar place. [qtd. in Creed, 2007: p. 53] Thus, Piccinini's creatures can be related to all these categories as all anxieties raised by genetic manipulation in science: the (deviant) cloning (like in *Games Boys Advanced*⁶⁴), human/animal's double (like in *The Young Family*⁶⁵), dismembered limbs (like in *Still Life with Stem Cells*⁶⁶ where the independent forms of the "stem cells" look like dismembered and deformed parts taken from the body). Moreover, the familiar/unfamiliar relation is reminded through the "mise en scène" of the unfamiliar creatures settled in familiar places such as the home, the child's room, displayed next to familiar human bodies such as children. In addition, the unfamiliar/familiar unclear boundary occurs with the creatures themselves, since, as I already noted, they are a combination of human and animal features. It is as though we have already seen these faces⁶⁷ and at the same time, that we do not want be related to them. Thus, the boundary between the known and the unknowable, the normal and the

⁶⁴ Appendix, image 13.

⁶⁵ Appendix, image 2.

⁶⁶ Appendix, image 6.

⁶⁷ Certainly because of the proliferation of hybrid creatures in visual mass media and popular science-fiction.

abnormal is blurred. In my opinion, the repulsion that Piccinini's creatures provoke is related to the concept of "repression" that is also connected to the relationship between the "familiar/unfamiliar" as explained by Freud. Indeed, boundaries between the human and the animal, between nature and culture have been set up by human beings through centuries of theories and "enlightenment" in a way to prove that the human mind is superior and can dominate the "wild" aspect of nature and the "bestiality" of animals. Therefore, it is interesting to understand the way Freud explains what is hidden by the "uncanny": "*uncanny is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar*". [qtd. in Creed, 2007: p. 54] In other words, what is felt as unfamiliar and uncanny, and so brings discomfort, is actually something that used to be familiar, but that has been repressed in the unconscious, as Freud observes: "*This uncanny is in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old - established in the mind and which has become alienated from it if only through the process of repression.*" [Freud, 1919: p. 241] In this way, we can relate the contradictory reaction that the spectator has towards Piccinini's creatures to repressed feelings, as if what he/she is looking at what it used to be normal, something that was part of life before the glorification of the scientific mind and its need to separate beings into categories: the human and the animal united. It is these "uncanny" particularities of the artist's work which brings complex and ambiguous feelings and affects when we look at the creatures of *We are Family's* exhibition. The title of the exhibition itself allows the re-unification between the human and the animal, genetically but also psychologically. The concept of the uncanny is often linked (and sometimes confused with) concepts of grotesque and the abject. Both concepts also play an important role in Piccinini's creatures and will be analysed in the last chapter.

▪ **Chapter 4: Cherish the Abject and becoming the "others"**

4.1. The female artist, this archaic mother

Ambiguity can also be related to the representation of the grotesque in Piccinini's art. Indeed, grotesque firstly referred to a decorative artistic style characterized by fanciful or fantastic human and animal forms connected to the bizarre. This form of representation has often been viewed as a paradoxical and contradictory art, full of ambiguity, which displays the pure and impure, the noble and ignoble, together. Animal and human images are brought, drawn and represented together, creating a world of "*bizarrierie*"⁶⁸ and discomfort. Piccinini's creatures also bring together animal and humans features. However, what is different here with the grotesque used in decoration is that grotesque is associated with scientific results of gene manipulation. The grotesque enters in the field of the "real" science and it is not kept only in the field of artistic fantasies. In addition, as explains Geoffrey Harpham, the grotesque brings together order and disorder by using the power of imagination to shift the mind of the viewer. In this sense, grotesque and its ambiguous affects on the viewer are also understood as a potential starting point to thinking differently: as Harpham says "*the grotesque implies discovery, and disorder is the price one always pays for enlargement of the mind.*" [Harpham, 1982: p. 191] Then, the grotesque aspects of Piccinini's art also play a role towards a new state of being and thinking differently about humans and animals.

Secondly, the grotesque in Piccinini's creatures can be associated to something else. As Margaret Miles argues, the sense of grotesque is mostly found in image of woman (by male artists). Indeed, the woman and her female procreative body reminds them of animality, the primitive

⁶⁸ French word, means oddity or anomaly.

aspect of the human beings and its primal relation to the flesh, far away from the "purity" of the symbolic order [Creed, 2007: p. 46]. Furthermore, as Barbara Creed says: "*Her ability to give birth links her directly to the animal world and to the great cycle of birth, decay and death. Awareness of his links to nature reminds man of his mortality and of the fragility of the symbolic order.*" [Creed, 2007: p. 47] This is why the female body and genitals found association in art⁶⁹, science⁷⁰ and culture⁷¹ with the devil, the abject, and the grotesque. Reproduction, the power of creation, is therefore negatively associated with a female quality - a monstrous, scary potential that males do not possess. Thus, it is not a coincidence that Piccinini's creatures can be seen as more "female" than "male": they are represented as mothers, carrying and cuddling⁷², qualities which are often associated in our society as feminine attributes. Therefore, the "monstrosity" of these creatures bears different layers: their external form, but also their frightening potential of creation and reproduction ("of otherness"). However, creation is no longer the privilege of the female body: scientists too can create life. Moreover, the artists also bear in their practice this potential of creation. Piccinini gives birth to hybrid "monsters" via her imagination. Her work then appears as subversive; playing with different levels of human male fears through her status and her art production. Patricia Piccinini has reached the "highest" status of "deviant" creator, the "archaic mother": she is a woman and an artist who gives "birth" to abnormal creatures in purpose: "*From the time of Hippocrates to Ambrose Pare, it was generally believed that monstrous offspring were created by the maternal imagination.*" [Breed, 2007: p. 45] However, contrary to Doctor Frankenstein who denounces and reviles his creature, Piccinini cherishes them. Piccinini is empowering herself via her imagination and her creatures: and the fear we felt at the sight of her "offspring" is because of, as Kristeva explains, "*Fear of the archaic mother turns out to be essentially fear of her generative power. It is this power, a dreaded one, that patrilineal filiation has the burden of subduing.*" [Creed, 2007: p. 45] The impossibility of men to give birth and create life brought fear and rejection in their unconscious, especially in a patriarchal society, where this generative power has to be controlled and subjugated to the male power⁷³. In addition, the artist's creatures disturb the visitor because her artworks provoke and remove the way of representing the body in the History of art and in the unconsciousness related to the symbolic order: indeed,

⁶⁹ Hell used to be often represented as a womb.

⁷⁰ From the 19th century, pregnant female body dissections are the most popular because of the mystery that surrounds the female uterus and womb.

⁷¹ We found, as Freud noticed in *The Sexual Life*, that a lot of taboos and rituals occur in different cultural practices related to menstruation or childbirth.

⁷² Appendix, image *The Big Mother*.

⁷³ That can be represented by the scientist.

according to Creed, the body cannot bear the marks of nature in order to represent the symbolic order. [Creed, 2007: p. 47] However, Piccinini's sculptures bear the trace of nature, of the flesh, of the animal, of the human without dissociation from it and without judgement.

Piccinini is opening the way to love that which should not be loved: the anomaly. This “abnormal love” which is staged via the relationships⁷⁴ established between humans' sculptures and hybrids creatures is unnerving the spectator in his/her usual rejection towards those we define as different and abnormal. Then, her artwork embodies a form of a new conceptual creativity that Braidotti outlines in *Metamorphoses*: “*The challenge that the hybrid, the anomalous, the monstrous others throw in our direction is dissociation from the sensibility we have inherited from the nineteenth century, one which apologized and criminalized differences. Conservative cultural critics even today tends to view anomalies or deviant differences as dangerous signs of decadence that is to say both morally inadequate and epistemologically bankrupt. This is, for me, one of the clear signs of that deficit of imaginary energy, or down-right symbolic misery, which is one of the defining features of post modernity I have argued that to overcome such a crisis, new conceptual creativity is necessary. In this chapter I would like to argue that we approach the anomalous and monstrously different others not as a negative force, but as the unfolding of virtual possibilities that point to positive developments and alternatives.*” [Braidotti, 2002: p.213] Thus, Piccinini, through the ambivalence of positive and negative feelings, and affects in her artwork, challenges and removes our old relationship to the “otherness”, towards a “positive” and creative vision of the “deviant”. However, this time the deviant is not an accident of “nature” but a laboratory experiment. Moreover, this balance between positive and negative affects, between love and repulsion, between anthropomorphism forms and others, is also mandatory for the spectator to be able to think and re-think about what he is looking at. Indeed, if the creatures were totally monstrous, the spectator would wish to run away from them and never have to think about them again, paralysed by disgust and fear: as Piccinini stated herself: “*I don't want to shock people because that stops them from thinking*” [Piccinini in Fernandez Orgaz & Piccinini, 2007]. Furthermore, Mary Douglas argues that the act of “perceiving” things is not passive and that the mind is constantly trying to make “a stable world” from the “*chaos of shifting impressions*” created by new perceptions. [Douglas, 1966] She outlines that ambiguous cues will be ignored and tried to be harmonised with the rest of the pattern where the “discordant” are rejected. However, her work is interesting for my research because she states that if the ambiguous and discordance are accepted, then “*the structure of assumptions has to*

⁷⁴ Human children are cuddling, sleeping closed with them (as in *The long awaited*) or playing naturally and happily with it (as in *Still Life with stem cells*).

be modified.” [Douglas, 1966] Thus, I am looking for the acceptance of these cues and then, from it, how the structure (for example the norms or the dichotomies of animal/human) can be modified. Then, as Douglas explains, there is a chain reaction: acceptance brings to a new “reconnaissance” of objects and it will change the way we perceive it next time we are confronted to it. Then, the possible love of Piccinini’s creatures within the exhibition can be seen as future “reconnaissance” of the half/non-human, the animal and the “others”. In addition, Piccinini’s creatures must be perceived by the spectator as “anomalies”: a category labelled by humans of what cannot be classified. Then, how can anomalies be “treated” in positive way and what are the impacts from such a positive perception of something that does not fit the norm? Douglas explains that there are different ways of dealing with anomalies: negatively (ignore them, not perceive them, and condemn them) or positively. If the spectator confronts positively him/herself to the “anomalies” of the exhibition: then, he could “*try to create a new pattern of reality in which it has a place*”: *in which the abnormal, the other, has a place.*” [Douglas, 1966: p. 40] In her book, Douglas states that each culture tries to deal with anomalies by recalling them, killing them, or by giving them another category. However, here, the solution to accept difference via the study case of Piccinini’s creatures is to not put them into any categories, but into the stage of “in between”, by not giving it a name and accepting it as a mother should accept her offspring.

4.2. The abject: a need to kill the purity of the species

The work of Piccinini can also be analysed through the concept of the abject brought to light by Julia Kristeva in her book *Powers of Horror* (1980). Indeed, Kristeva's theory of the abject provides us with an interesting way of reading and understanding Piccinini's art and our reaction to it. As Kristeva explains, the abject occurs when the human reacts (via horror or a feeling of nausea) to a threatened breakdown in meaning caused by the loss of the distinction between subject and object or between “self” and “other”. [Kristeva, 1982] As I said before, the creatures of Piccinini challenge our usual relationship to the “other” and to our own subjectivity. Moreover, the abject spoils established borders between self, other, subject, object, inside and outside: and yet, the concept of abject refers especially to what can be removed from the body, what is seen as wasted, impure, a discharge, and what is made as "other". [Kristeva, 1982: p.2] Piccinini's creatures refer to the abject because what we see is transgressing the "purity", unity of the human species, and our genetic background. Indeed, once the visitor understands that at what they are looking could be their children bearing genetic codes mixed with other non-human species, the creatures are

threatening our "human integrity". In Kristeva's terms, it should be said that Piccinini's hybrid beings are despicable⁷⁵ but, at the same time, they are come from human genomes, sharing our DNA. Then, the spectator, as much as any citizen, who is aware about scientific genetic experiences, has to deal with new conflicts related to the abject which threaten the purity of the species. The spectator feels threatened or alarmed by the sculptures of Piccinini, because it is more close to him/her than he/she expected. Nonetheless, the abject in Piccinini's work has become lovable, the ugliness of the creatures is accepted because, by looking at *We are Family*, indeed we feel a sense of community, of sharing, of love in between the hybrid beings themselves and in relation to the humans characteristics represented. Moreover, an artwork always occurs under interpretation and, as explains Cazeaux, this means that it occurs in relation to emotions, cultural background, and art history. [Cazeaux, 2008] The "sharp emotional" answer to the "abject" work of Patricia Piccinini may remove the spectator's knowledge over ethical or conceptual questions related to the meaning of life, anthropomorphism and science's limitations. As Wendy Hui Kyong Chun asks "*can the abject [...] be a place from which something like insubordination or creativity can arise?*" [Chun, 2012: p. 51], I could answer, that, indeed, Puccinini uses the abject, the despicable, and the repulsive as a "creative insubordination" over the "purity" of species and the role of human beings in science. Piccinini opens the spectator's eyes to the meaning of a "human essence" and its possible alteration (positive or negative) on the human body and mind. Should science and especially, biotechnology be governed by an ethical moral or should we take the opportunity of genetic manipulation to go beyond an old, static, simplistic, dichotomous definition of the human?

In addition, the notion of mothering is especially present in Piccinini's creatures: as I said, children and babies - from hybrids and humanoids - are essentially represented. Moreover, the concepts of the grotesque and the abject can be related to each other. Indeed, these concepts are linked notably via the maternal body, as explains Kristeva. Thus, for them, we must "abject" the mother to reach our own subjectivity. It seems that the way we are affected by Piccinini's creatures reminds us of the way the child tries to dissociate him/herself from the mother's body and authority. Indeed, subjectivity, as Russo noticed, is constructed through the simultaneous love and repudiation of the mother. [Russo, 1994: p.36] Furthermore, Mary Russo in her *Female Grotesque* argues that the grotesque and the abject should be combined to develop a new (positive) aesthetic belonging to the feminine and the female world. [Russo, 1994] She proposes to exploit the negative association between monstrosity and figures of archaic motherhood as a strategy of liberation: as if, the archaic

⁷⁵ As are urine, faeces, internal body parts... all things that "come out" of human bodies.

mother becomes a resister of the "social norms". In this case study, the "social norms" is conformity and anthropocentrism: Piccinini embodied the powerful archaic mother who gives birth to creatures that are breaking an anthropocentric subjectivity. Moreover, the artist rehabilitates the grotesque body, via the work of ambiguous affects, as a complex transcendent body while this has often been, drawing on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, associated with *"the lower bodily stratum and its associations with degradation, filth, death, and rebirth."* [Russo, 1994: p. 8] Indeed, the potential of genetic manipulation enhances the characteristics of the grotesque body, which are usually devalued compared to the "classical body"⁷⁶. Thus, because of what is allowed in genetic manipulation and art creation - melting together "noble" and "humble/ignoble" bodies, "high culture"⁷⁷ and low nature⁷⁸ - Piccinini's creatures start the disruption of categories and social order between humans and other species. This disruption is made possible because of the combination of complex and ambivalent affects at work, which does not allow a simple answer from the spectator. Piccinini's aesthetics - the traditional aesthetics of the grotesque and the abject that lead towards new judgments of value over the "self" and the "others" - are revalued and reoriented. Thus, this fusion of "noble" and "humble" features within the creatures provokes empathy and "affection" in the spectator.

4.3. Empathy: from virtuality to reality

It has to be noted that Piccinini's sculptures are made in such a way that their faces translate emotions and feelings that the spectator associates with human expressions. Their expressions can be viewed as an answer to the spectator's facially expressive response. Physiological mechanisms are represented on the creatures' faces, which create another level of link between the monstrous/non-human and the human. Moreover, as I already said, their expressions can be associated with human kindness and peacefulness, which counter-acts the first spectator's reaction - disgusted and frightened. Then, ambiguity is provoked by juxtaposition of the nice creatures' expressions ("so human") with the repellent creatures' aspects ("so bestial"). The spectator does not feel completely threatened by the creatures because they have friendly faces. Thus, empathic feelings are at work here, and this is also related to openness and tolerance. It is interesting to look at the links that Raymond A. Mar, Keith Oatley and Jordan B. Peterson make between empathy, (science)

⁷⁶ Which is *"transcendent and monumental, closed, static, self-contained, symmetrical, and sleek . . . identified with the 'high' or official culture of the Renaissance and later, with the rationalism, individualism, and normalizing aspirations of the bourgeoisie."* [Russo, 1994: p.8]

⁷⁷ Which are the ideals constructed by Western society: normalcy, purity, transcendence.

⁷⁸ Which are excluded from the norms and human species: abnormalcy, impurity, earthly.

fiction readers, and openness. Indeed, in their paper *Exploring the link between reading fiction and empathy: Ruling out individual differences and examining outcomes* they argue that readers of narrative fictions develop a deeper sense of empathy: “*Specifically, engaging with narrative fiction and mentally simulating the social experiences represented may improve or maintain social skills, especially skills of empathy and social understanding*”. [Raymond, Oatley & Peterson, 2009: p. 408] Thus, I am making a connection between affects produced by fictional narratives on readers and the consequences on the “real world”: it seems that people who are able to be touched by fictions are developing more empathy towards stories of the others, both in narratives and in reality. [Raymond, Oatley & Peterson, 2009] In the same way, Piccinini gives birth to “embodied fictions” and the fact that we are deeply affected by it might increase our empathy towards those different from the “self”, the human (as represented by Piccinini’s creatures, the “extreme other”) both in the exhibition’s realm and in daily life. Then, the “affective” experience gained from Piccinini’s exhibition could be re-activated in daily life, when one is confronted with abnormality or animal abuse for instance. Indeed, as Piccinini says herself: “*My real interest is how the conceptual or ethical issues are transformed by emotional realities*”. [Fernandez Orgaz & Piccinini, 2007] Finally, there are discrepancies between a physical revulsion and an emotional beauty. In the end, Piccinini explores our degree of empathy and how far we can relate to the “others”, even if it means to “betray” human’s race and anthropocentrism. The kindness of the creatures’ faces, the vulnerability of the hybrid babies and their peacefulness, their resemblance to human features and behaviors teases our boundaries of acceptance of what is stranger to us. At the end, what I am attending to see it is if it affects implications in a “deviant” artistic representation, when it is complex and ambiguous, can it also transform conceptual or ethical issues in reality?

Finally, it is also interesting to know that Raymond A. Mar associates empathy with fear: indeed, he argues that we feel empathy for those we are afraid of, the abnormal, notably because we are scared to be turned ourselves into “monsters”. This fear of “becoming monsters” is doubled in Piccinini’s creatures when the spectator discovers that the hybrid creatures are bearing human DNA. Moreover, I am trying to understand the possible shift between the establishment of human superiority over animals and culture over nature. If spectators are ambiguously affected by Piccinini’s creatures, both in positive and negative ways, their bodies are affected as well as their mind (following what we already said). It means that there is “affection” taking place in Massumi’s terms and as Shouse explains: “*L’affection is the process whereby affect is transmitted between bodies. [...] Because affect is unformed and unstructured (unlike feelings and emotions) it can be transmitted between bodies. The importance of affect rests upon the fact that in many cases the message con-*

sciously received may be of less import to the receiver of that message than his or her non-conscious affective resonance with the source of the message.“ [Shouse, 2005]. This "affection" is the first step, theoretically and physically, that blur the lines between bodies, between the spectator and the art object, between the “self” and the “other”, between the human and the animal, between the "normal" and the "abnormal". The theory of affects and the term "affection" already makes impossible dichotomies between bodies, people and/or in between the inside and outside, the body and the "environment'. [Brennan, 2004: p. 6] "Affection" should be understood in the same way as "contagion". Indeed, contagion is from Latin *contagio* (*n-*), from *con-* : 'together with' added to the base of *tangere*: 'to touch' [Online Oxford Dictionary] In Piccinini's creatures, there is an affective "contagion" from "abnormal" bodies (Piccinini's creatures) to "normal" bodies (spectators), from representation to reality. Furthermore, I am talking about affect contagion in the sense that seeing fictional bodies of genetic manipulation can affect the spectator's body and mind by work of "contagion". Indeed, as I already said, the fact that Piccinini's creatures are somehow plausible and close to human features and at the same time totally "alien" from the human body shape create an inter-connection, inter-relation between the visitor's body and the hybrid creatures. Moreover, because the creatures have likeable faces that replicate human expressions, the spectator is encouraged to "feel" the same happiness and beatitude of the Mother of the *Young Family*, for instance. As if the spectator, by being affected by what he/she is looking at, is "contaminated" by Piccinini's creatures.

4.4. Mimetism and positive "contamination"

There is a "mimetism" at work in the reading of Piccinini's art that can be analysed as a positive "contamination" from the hybrid creatures towards the human, the spectator. Indeed, Anna Gibbs is interested in the power of mimetism and mimesis that has been often restricted to children, "primitive" peoples and animals. [Gibbs, 2010: p. 187-189] Moreover, it is interesting how Piccinini's creatures combine primitive behaviour and animal features with high biotechnology (genetic engineering) and human characteristics. Ambiguous affects at work in Piccinini art opens a "permeability" of boundaries between bodies, a permeability which is strengthened by an embodied permeability between animal and human, culture and nature via the representation of these hybrid creatures. Piccinini's creatures are an example of *"how the biological is re-written by culture with the aid of technology"*. [Gibbs, 2010: p. 191] The response to it should not be easy or simple, and ambiguity of affects here becomes a positive reaction to Piccinini's sculptures. Piccinini's "science fictions" could be read and interpreted as opening a space to ask: What if the human was shaped dif-

ferently? What if the monstrous becomes human? Gibbs, in her article, refers to the complexity of mimicry and its inter-relation between nature and culture. Moreover, mimicry had touched humans via genetic engineering and transplantation between human and animal. We could see genetic engineering as a form of embodied mimicry. As explains Michael Taussig, mimicry refers to the nature that culture uses to create a second nature or in evolutionary biology, when a species become similar to another as a form of self-defense. [Gibbs, 2010: p. 190] Mimicry has to be understood in all its complexities and as Gibbs notices, it is not just about copying but a *"complex communicative process in which other sensory and affective modalities are centrally involved"*. [Gibbs, 2010: p. 191] In this way, we could think of the creatures of *We are Family* as a product of "mimicry", where animal and human features, behaviours and sensibility merge together in order to survive in the future or, at least here, in the realm of the museum: the artistic field. It is this mimicry embodied in Piccinini's creatures which reminds the spectator - and certainly provokes a discomfort in them - that humans and animals are inter-dependant and that they should not be seen separately or devalued from one to another. Moreover, Gibbs proposes to look at mimicry in the sense of *"that form of embodied copying that also serves as a kind of hinge between nature and culture"*. [Gibbs, 2010: p. 190] Humans "look like" the faces of the creatures, displaying notably sympathetic expressions which push the spectator to feel closer to the "monstrous" creatures: this is "affect contagion". The "mise en scène" of *The Young Family* for instance, showing tenderness and peacefulness between the hybrid mother and her kinship, is relevant. Moreover, the Mother's face is smiling and peacefully looking after her cute little children: when the spectator looks at them, he/she experiences the same kind of feelings, for example tenderness toward them, by notably the work of mimetism. Indeed, Gibbs refers to Tomkins when she talks about "affect contagion" and she notably focuses on the inter-communication of affects via facial expressions, which then communicate the physiological and neurological aspects of affects, such as joy or anger. Thus, a "mimetic impulse" is activated. Boundaries between bodies are blurred because there is a transmission of, first: facial expression in between the spectator and the hybrid creature, then this facial expression is associated with a state of mind. If the creatures displayed ugly faces with aggressive expressions, which would then compare in the spectator's mind with the "bestiality" of the rest of their appearance, then the ambiguity would not work and the visitor would reject the hybrid creatures. But the mimesis contagion allows the transfer of feelings and emotions in between these bodies: the sculptures and the spectators. In this way, I believe, as Gibbs, that mimicry in between animals and humans, which is illustrated in Piccinini's creatures, is a form of communication that acts firstly on the bodily level (aspect). Then, these new fictional bodies - the human and the animal together - produce *"new affect states in us, which change not only our body chemistry, but also - as a result- our attitudes and ideas shape from*

narrative a structure of meaning". [Gibbs, 2010: p. 194] Mimicry is the good term to describe Piccinini's creatures because as Gibbs said, *"it is not a representation of the other; but a rendering - a relation between a thing in "which like a flash, similarity appears"*". [Gibbs, 2010: p. 193] The artist gives a chance for the "human" spectator to see how humans relate to the others, to other species and to the environment. Science is falling into nature, and fixed dichotomies such as human and animal are destroyed via the power of art, of representation and of the potential of affects at work.

5. Conclusion

In our search for meaning and established knowledge, we discover that there is something beyond the capacity of language that cannot be grasped via words and symbols and cannot be fully described in language. In the power of affect, in between bodies, there is maybe a chance for change towards what we define as different and "other". Thus, Patricia Piccinini's creatures should be seen as mythological creatures, playing their roles to help us understand our contemporary world and to give a new way of seeing and feeling the "self" and the "others" - the human and the non-human. As Mickeal Benedikt observes in *Cyberspace: First steps*, humans need to reproduce and to re-create mythological themes in our advanced (bio-)technological world. As he observes: *"They (mythological themes) inform not only our art of fantasy, but, in a very real way, the way we understand each other, test ourselves and shape our lives. Myths both reflect the "human condition" and create it."* [Benedikt, 2000: p.32] Moreover, Benedikt notices that the generation which is the most inclined to "myth" is the youth. Thus, it is not a coincidence that the sculptures of Piccinini are populated by young creatures, humans and non-humans. Moreover, this is the tension between reality and representation, the ambiguity of feelings and affects in front of Piccinini's creatures that create new possibilities of rethinking the subject. Indeed, it is because we have no definite answers or interpretations for these hybrid creatures, that the gap of the "in between" can be the starting point to open something in the spectator's mind. The contradictory affects provoked by the creatures and unstable statement of Piccinini towards her artwork is the key to open a space for destroying dichotomies and think differently about the "self". Indeed, Piccinini is reflecting on biotechnology and organic bodily boundaries by proposing alternative embodiments of the subject.

In her artworks, dichotomies such as animal/human, nature/culture and technology/biology collapse. Piccinini's creatures give the opportunity to conceive human's future beyond andocentric notions of the subject, via an ambivalent and ambiguous spectacle of attraction and horror, norm and deviance. Moreover, those creatures are a starting point to think in "images", "in real", a possible new association between animals and humans - a dichotomy that I am searching for ways to destroy. Indeed, Piccinini's creatures can be seen as an embodied representation of "bio egalitarianism" between species where human and non-human features melt together into complex beings, establishing a sort of "trans-species solidarity", as argued by Braidotti. In the imagination of Piccinini, science (here, genetic manipulation) and art merge together towards a "philosophical nomadism" of the "self" where the new subject, the creature, *"is fully immersed in and immanent to a network of non human (animal, vegetal, viral) relations."* [Braidotti, 2009: p. 106]. Scientific experimentation and artistic creativity share this ability to reflect on and disrupt human nature. Both disciplines are driven by curiosity, discovery, and to reveal another truth about the world and the "self" (and its corollary, the "others").

However, the contemporary artistic production, the spectator needs to understand the context and the interest of the artist to be fully challenged in their beliefs. Then ambiguity and discomfort in front of Piccinini's creatures is the first stage in the process of being completely affected - mentally affected - by the art. The idea that an artwork can be understood without any explanation is a romantic myth. Nonetheless, the power of Piccinini's artwork is found in its hyper realistic sculptures and anti morphic forms that speak to our primal reaction - a bodily and instinctive reaction. However, the promise of the role of affect in shifting ways of thinking could not work, as Sara Ahmed argues: *"[...] there are no ultimate or final guarantees – political, ethical, aesthetic, pedagogic, and otherwise – that capacities to affect and to be affected will yield an actualized next or new that is somehow better than "now"*.[Gregg & Seigworth, 2010: pgs. 9-10]. Indeed, as attested this internet user is totally reluctant to interact with Piccinini's artwork, *"Her stuff... FREAKS ME THE FUCK OUT!!!"* [Skerror's comments on Coilhouse], sometimes, the spectator/viewer cannot allow themselves to be affected in order to see a potential of change in their philosophy of life. Nonetheless, as one of the internet users mentioned in a blog, *" [...] If Piccinini's work can make a pleasant impression on just a few individuals from that audience, then there might still be hope."* [inachis_io's comments on Coilhouse] In any case, Piccinini's artwork is threatening the normative body and human concept, and this is what makes her work interesting in the field of *Gender studies*, which searches for new discourses about the subject and explores what it is excluded and included within the connotations of the topic. The artist embodies literally -

through the imaginative results of genetic modification between humans and animals - Judith Butler's way of seeing the body: made as a "*set of possibilities*". [Butler, 1988: p. 524] Indeed, the body is described in Foucault's terms as a political place, the "product of normative effects": then, taking over the body becomes a political act that can remove the normative perception that frame and control the subject. [qtd. in Braidotti, 1991: p. 77] In the case of Piccinini's creatures, she questions our relationship to the human body and its normative aspects/effects through the exploration of genetic manipulation with other forms of living beings like animals. Piccinini's creatures provoke and disturb and create uneasiness and awkwardness "in" the spectator that confronts him/her with an extreme form of otherness of being that biotechnology *could* produce. This awkwardness encourages the spectator to wonder about mankind, our body's limits, subjectivity, individuality and anthropocentrism. Foucault's perspective over the body allows us to understand Piccinini's art as a place to manipulate and to question the embodied individual. Piccinini creates new realities and new "science" fictions over the human subject. She outlines the fragile and imaginary boundary between human and non human established in scientific discourse. [Braidotti, 1991: p. 79] Then, Piccinini's artworks embody a new "cycle of marriage exchange" between different beings like Haraway's cyborg. Moreover, Piccinini's creatures are threatening, as genetic manipulation questions the "origins" in both Christian (Eden's garden) and scientific (human sexual reproduction) ways. [Haraway, 1991: p. 157] Genetic manipulation allows the creation of the body and the "self" to free him/herself from the laws of "*biological determinism, of original unity, of identification with nature in the Western sense*", as does the technological background of the cyborg. [Haraway, 1991] Finally, Piccinini's hybrid beings are translating what Haraway has been looking for via the image of the cyborg: "*So my cyborg myth is about transgressed boundaries, potent fusions, and dangerous possibilities which progressive people might explore as one part of needed political work. [...] From another perspective, a cyborg world might be about lived social and bodily realities in which people are not afraid of their joint kinship with animals and machines, not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints.*" [Haraway, 1991: p.155] Piccinini's creatures can be read as the new mythologies that Haraway is seeking for in our post-modern/human world: they bring complexities and contradictions because they are both innocent and dangerous. They threaten mankind but also bring infinite possibilities of new stronger or more adequate species to the changing environment. Thus, they destroy human identities to rebuild something new and more tolerant towards difference. The children and babies that populated Piccinini's imagination represent the future generations that might be able to deal with the contradictions and the complexities of life and understand the "extreme other" without excluding it or mistreating it. The hyper-realistic aspect of her creatures is crucial in the reception of her work:

the details of the skin and the attention to conception of the creatures' shape and aspect confuse the visitor about his/her relationship to representation/reality. This hyper realism of representation blurs the line between reality and the virtual. Moreover, the amount of "life" infused into these super realistic sculptures play a role in the way we react to them: they melt imagination into reality in a surrealistic sense. Then, it becomes a bridge that allows the result of Piccinini's artwork into the spectator's concept of life in general: the disruptive role of visual representations has made the link to reality. Moreover, the "theatricality" of Piccinini's exhibitions and creatures, the presence of humanoids playing and loving the creatures help the visitor to project him/herself inside the show, blurring the line even more between imagination and reality. Thus, this immersion plays a role also in the assimilation of these creatures into the "real" world of the spectator, which can help to influence the spectator also once he/she goes out of the museum/gallery. The ambiguous affects last in the spectator's body, which might have created a space in his/her mind, towards new definition of the subject and the "others". Nonetheless, as much as Piccinini understands that science *"cannot always deliver its promises"* [Fernandez Orgaz & Piccinini, 2007], the arts as well might not shift the spectator's mind, once he/she has left the exhibition.

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Appendix

Image 1

1994-1995



At T.M.G.P. we are justifiably proud of our innovative approach to reproductive technology

Our highly trained technicians work with you to design, create and incubate the child you desire with all the features it needs.

All our L.U.M.P.'s feature T.M.G.P.'s unique, bio-patented, Enhanced Glandular System (E.G.S.) which provides a variety of useful chemicals for enhanced living. These include traditional hormones like Adrenalin, Testosterone, Estrogen, Endorphins as well as cognitive enhancers such as Lactitol, Choline, Dehydroepiandrosterone, DMAE, Ginkgo, Hydrogine, Neotrophy, Sulbutamox and Prozac for quality of life.

Give your children more than just a chance in life. Don't leave it up to Nature...

L.U.M.P.
LIFORM WITH UNEVOLVED MUTANT PROPERTIES

Image 2

The Young family, 2002, *silicone, polyurethane, leather, human hair variable*



Image 3

The Long awaited, 2008, silicon, fibreglass, human hair, plywood, leather, clothing



Image 4

The Comforter, 2010 , silicone, fibreglass, steel, human hair and fox fur, clothing



Image 5

Leather Landscape, 2003, *silicone, polyurethane, leather, mdf, human hair*



Image 6

Still Life with stem cells, 2002, *silicone, polyurethane, clothing, human hair variable*



Image 7

Litter, 2010, *silicone, fibreglass, steel, fox fur*



Image 8

The Embrace, Offspring and Progenitor, 2005, *Silicone, fibreglass, human hair, plywood, leather*



Image 9

Family Romance, 1993



Image 10

The forest, 1995



Image 11

Thank you Tighmaster, 1993



Image 12
Sibylle, 1997



Group, 2001



Image 13

Game Boys Advanced, 2002, *silicone, acrylic, human hair, clothing, hand-held video game*



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