



Negotiating Subjectivities

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These paintings are a conceptual project that has emerged from my study of the art of Gordon Bennett and an interest in Postcolonial Australian identity. Most of the paintings combine sampled images of Bennett's art alongside images of people in a shopping centre. This is done in a manner that simulates negotiations between the colonised and a broader Australian society. The paintings explore the Postcolonial subject as a new understanding of identity. This is an identity based upon encounters and negotiations by subjects with others rather than on conventional racial or cultural identities.

Bennett's most recent series of works, Notes to Basquiat, highlights the function of colonialist ideology through common representational elements that operate on both the 1980s American artist, Jean-Michel Basquiat and Bennett. Despite their completely different racial backgrounds both artists are represented as "black urban artists". All the samples of Bennett's work used in my paintings are from this series. The sampling of Bennett's painting into my own painting introduces a dialogue of Bennett's subjective experience of being colonised.

The images of a local shopping centre taken from random video recordings were developed to paintings using digital manipulation. Images of subjects were modified to preserve their anonymity. The inclusion of these images has a twofold purpose. Firstly, to represent the notion of encounter between subjects and secondly, to introduce the presence of a broader Australian community alongside the Bennett images. The paintings simulate encounters between those that have been colonised and a broader Australian society.