

Piss, perfume and Paris (les odeurs magnifiques)



Kim Lehman

Sawtooth ARI, Cimitiere Street, Launceston, 1 – 23 July, 2016

Works #1 and #2

Two videos from the 'Memoirs vicarious' series: where volunteers 'recreate' memories of places I have been from a set of instructions.

Work #1

Memoirs vicarious: Paris memory #1
(Back to the apartment from the
Île de la Cité), 2014, HD video,
7.39 mins (video still)



Work #2

Memoirs vicarious: Paris memory #2
(A short walk through the Jardin
des Tuileries), 2016, HD video,
7.26 mins (video still)



Work #3¹

The Madeleine moment, 2016

Electronic circuitry, speaker, wooden frame, 42 x 42 X 9cm

“No sooner had the warm liquid mixed with the crumbs touched my palate than a shiver ran through me and I stopped, intent upon the extraordinary thing that was happening to me. An exquisite pleasure had invaded my senses, something isolated, detached, with no suggestion of its origin. And at once the vicissitudes of life had become indifferent to me, its disasters innocuous, its brevity illusory—this new sensation having the effect, which love has, of filling me with a precious essence; or rather this essence was not in me, it was me.” ²

Work #4

Piss, perfume and Paris, 2016

Electric fan, plastic container, glass perfume atomiser, human urine, perfume³, size variable

Purely olfactory in nature this work does not rely on either visual or aural cues to engage the audience in a ‘Proustian rush’.

Work #5

Souvenirs de Paris, 2016

PDF booklet, downloadable via a QR code

13 photographs I have taken in Paris – some of my memories...



There is an argument that a considerable percentage of our current conscious knowledge is held in memory. As you read this you are drawing on memories of what you may or may not know about me, what you have read on memory even just a moment ago (but certainly over your lifetime), your opinions, beliefs and experiences in relation to memory, and life, and art. In the case of the latter arguably you would not be reading this without some interest in art, and this colours your understanding of what I am now saying. Of course, we are delving into other psychological constructs here, and even how memory 'works' has been, and still is, debated by those interested in its epistemology.

Here, though, my concerns are perhaps less esoteric, having been inspired by my interest in how we interpret present events through the filter of past experience to form our perception of the world around us. Overall, this group of works aims to form something of an immersive, sensory story deeply imbedded in my own memories, but also hopefully prompting recollections and reminisces from the audience.

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Notes

¹ 'The Madeleine moment' would not exist except for the generous support of Mark 'Jose' Tyeson (electronic wizardry) and Bernhard Pihan (voice talent).

² Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time, Volume I: Swann's Way* (2003 Modern Library Paperback Edition), The Modern Library, New York, translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin, pp. 121.

³ Jean Paul Gautier's 'Le Male'.