**1. A continually growing bibliography of references.**

2 x Reading List:

**Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living A Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 1-26.**

Ahmed’s text emphasises the importance of language as a means of articulating one’s personal voice and experiences, even while engaging with academic discourse or within an academic setting. “The personal is theoretical”, she writes, arguing for a departure from the association of theory as an abstract concept and instead connecting it to everyday life. This was very much in line with a teaching I received from an Anishinaabe professor a few years ago on invoking one’s own voice (and the use of ‘I’ in academic writing, for example) in practice. Thus, by choosing to focus on cricket bats, the very foundation of this project was rooted in personal memory and experience. Language plays an important role in positioning the scans of the bats within personal contexts and I only realised this when writing the texts about the shots played, as it was a form of positioning my body in relation to the performance of the bats that I hadn’t considered before, but tried to articulate through language. As Ahmed writes, “we hear histories in words; we assemble histories by putting them into words.”

**Barthes, R. (1977). ‘Death of the Author’ in Barthes, R. Image, Music, Text. London: Harper Collins, pp. 143-148.**

I had read this text previously for a different brief and it is interesting to reflect on how my positions have changed in regards to it. Barthes offers a slightly contrasting argument to Ahmed in that he believes in the severing of the author from their work; instead all meaning is focussed in how it is received by the reader. “The birth of the reader” indicates that the destination is far more important than the origin of a text or work. The modern scriptor replacing the author works with inscription as a tool, rather than expression. These ideas are at odds with how this project was developed in the sense that I consciously positioned my own knowledge, experiences and language within the archiving process. Barthes describes Proust as blurring the lines between a writer and their characters and I believe I’ve done the same in my role as owner and archiver of the bats. At the same time, one could argue that this is upended by the fact that the final archive is intended to be fluid and rearranged, so any intentional narrative I imposed on the process dissipates and the reading of the bats ultimately relies on how the viewer sees it, particularly if they aren’t familiar with cricket.

2 x Non-Reading List:

**Green, A. (2019) '*Slide-writing as Site-writing: A Performative Reading of the Women’s Art Library Slides*', *Women: A Cultural Review*, 3(3), pp. 342-362. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/09574042.2019.1653113**

My project primarily responded to the digitisation of physical artefacts that Green undertakes in her curatorial and research practice ‘Slide Walks’. In a similar spirit to Green’s act “that defamiliarized the slide and became an analytical tool to help me answer the question of what an artist’s slide might represent individually and collectively besides artwork”, I considered my project both as an archive itself as well as a performance of archiving, the two allowing me to see and engage with the bats differently as part of their documentation, as individual fragments re/de-constructing a physical object but also the archive itself. Additionally, I drew insipiration from Green’s logistical decision to digitize the slides randomly rather than in a methodical system, and this shifted my practice across the two weeks of the project, where I had first documented the bats in two distinct publications but later added a third and opted to collate all the text and images randomly so as to highlight the idea of ‘glimpses’ and avoid imposing my own overarching narrative.

**Dittel, K. and Edwards, C. (eds.) (2022). T*he Material Kinship Reader: Material Beyond Extraction and Kinship Beyond the Nuclear Family*. Eindhoven: Onomatopee.**

*The Material Kinship Reader* was an eye-opening read, as it introduced me to new ways of thinking about material objects and possession. The idea of ‘kinship’ — even the articulation of this connection through specific language — gave form to the feelings I had about the bats and my reasons for picking them out. Even physically acquiring the book was fitting; a friend gifted it to me and so there was already a sentimental connection to it as an object. Within, texts by Ada M. Patterson, who addresses specific pieces of jewelry and thanks them, and Joannie Baumgärtner, who expresses rituals as acts “that make tangible a metaphysical relation” were particularly key in shaping the tone and form of my own texts, as well as the final form of the archive as a tribute of sorts to the bats. From it, I committed to the idea of writing being a means of creating kinship.

2 x Design Practices/Projects:

**Weiner, L. (1968) *Statements.* New York: Seth Seigelaub.**

Another text and/or practice that works directly with language as a medium for art, Weiner’s *Statements* had a strong influence on the initial form of the printed archive, specifically the publication ‘Sixteen Shots Played with a Bat’, which also includes standalone instructive texts. Unlike Weiner’s descriptions however, I decided to pair these snippets of text with abstract images of the shots they were describing , which began to suggest a sense of dialogue between the two, in contrast to the stark directness and instructive specificity of Weiner’s texts. Instruction does play a key role in *Statements* and my project (being an inherent part of sport in general), but through my enquiry I have realised it can function in different ways. Rather than emphasising technical or material specifics as Weiner does, my focus was on the feeling or sensations that are felt when following said instructions. I believe both are means of offering the same open ended reading.

**Quintanar J. (2020) *A Dutch Landscape III – From Suriname to the Netherlands.* Amsterdam: Ruja Press.**

Quinatanar’s *Dutch Landscape* series is a combination of publication-making and drawing exercises, each offering a different way of exploring the representation of landscape and space, often through a cultural lens. This specific project uses repetition as a method of illustration, as the same Dutch landscape is redrawn 20 times with a slight alteration in the rules in each iteration, eventually transforming into a Surinamese landscape. The nature of scanning the bats for my own project meant repetition was unavoidable — in total I scanned the bats over 200 times with slight variations in what fragments were being shown and what positions my hands were in. And ultimately, I’ve realised that the nature of repetition is somewhat fragmentary in itself; both *A Dutch Landscape III* and my bat archive rely on the piecing of very similar fragments together in order to create a larger image, both in a literal and figurative sense.

**2. Extended critical analyses of two of the references that you’ve found.**

I have chosen to write this analysis in the form of a short comparative piece, positioning Althea Green’s *Slide-writing as Site-writing* in dialogue with Lawrence Weiner’s *Statements*.

In her paper ‘Slide-writing as Site-writing’ curator and researcher Althea Green describes her practice of digitizing a collection of artists’ 35mm slides held by the Women’s Art Library (WAL) at Goldsmiths, as “an act of digitization that defamiliarized the slide and became an analytical tool to help me answer the question of what an artist’s slide might represent individually and collectively besides artwork” (Green, 2010, p. 346).

In my mind, this poses a number of questions, but let’s begin with: can one make art, without making art? Or, is the process of designing equivalent to the design itself?

Judging by the above quote, I’d argue that Green’s text embodies the latter, as the focus of her practice is seemingly at odds with the overarching goal of the WAL collection. Here, the art represented by the slides is given less importance than the intentions behind their creation, the artists that created them and the means by which they take their final form as slides. By engaging in the digitisation process, Green translates the slide collection into a new form, *Slide Walks*, that is both research tool and artwork itself; though if one were to apply her intention of defamiliarizing art into a tool onto her own practice, the two wouldn’t be discernable. (Maybe that’s the point.)

In a similar vein to Green’s work, conceptual artist’s book *Statements* by Lawrence Weiner (1968) could be argued as an act of creating art, without actually creating art. Perhaps the line distinguishing the two is admittedly blurry, but the publication occupies that liminal space through its form as an artist’s book while also upending conventional notions of what constitutes ‘art’, with the book’s lack of visual content or imagery. Instead, Weiner’s text-based practice is an invitation for readers to envision the form of said art through “General” or “Specific” statements that describe, and ultimately construct work in the mind (or eye) of the reader. An example of the former is “One sheet of plywood secured to the wall or floor” (Weiner, 1968, p.6) while the latter leaves less room for interpretation: “One 106” X 16” slab of “Dow HD 300” styrofoam sunk flush with the ground” (Weiner, 1968, p.28). This is very much in line with Weiner’s three-point manifesto for conceptual art, one of which states that “the work may need not to be built” (Meyer ed., 1972) and yet can still be art.

In this manner, both Green and Weiner’s texts and practices demonstrate not only the importance of materiality as a form of communication, but language as material. For both, text assumes the central role in being both medium and message. In *Slide Walks*, Green’s digitization process entails the removal of the actual photographed artwork from the slides and instead focuses on individual artists’ inscription on parts of the slides that aren’t visible when displayed through the projector or printed. When isolated from their respective artworks, these inscriptions provide an alternative reading of the WAL collection in that they emphasise the individuality of the women that the collection represents, beyond the final form of the art produced, something that Maria Tomboukou describes as the “narratable self”. Green describes how the slide mount becomes a hybrid space, a convergence of the public and private where the text is more than simply an image caption:

“The artists’ inscriptions emerged as a connective construct as well as framing device, as the autographic work of titling, dating and numbering produces a legible matrix holding the artwork images.” (Green, 2010, p. 348)

Unlike other writings, such as Barthes’ *Death of the Author*, it’s clear that authorship plays a key role here, especially considering the socio-political aims of the WAL to further the representation of women artists and their work. But individuality can easily be lost in a collection so large and thus Green’s is a restorative act that adds a new structure to the collection and emphasises its intention “as a project dedicated to ensuring women contribute to the scriptural spaces of knowledge-making resources” (Green, 2010, p. 348).

Within *Statements*, authorship functions differently. Weiner, being the artist and author behind the publication, is naturally the primary architect of the work but I believe that his practice relies on the active participation of its audience. There seems to be a mutual and self-aware yet unspoken contract between Weiner and the reader in ‘constructing’ the work. Comprehension is subjective, but Weiner’s texts are impersonal enough to serve as pure instruction or description. Still, within the “Specific Statements” section especially, there is certainly a sense of the author’s identity that comes through in the use of very particular industrial materials and quantities — one quart green enamel, one square limestone slab and a 2” wide by 1” deep trench, for example — in particular spaces, such as the side of Los Angeles Freeway or a well tended garden. One can begin to envision the context in which the work is being conceived of and the scale at which it is meant to be enacted, whereas Green’s slides are almost diary-like in their consistent 35mm formats but unique naming conventions, materials and handwriting.

Given the importance of materiality, there is a level of irony in engaging with these two references digitally and from a distance, an additional layer of translation that undoubtedly impacts the way I receive the work. *Slide Walks* is of course not a comprehensive view of the digitization project but rather the text acts as Green’s own inscription for her broader research and defamiliarizing of the slide collection. There are visual snippets on offer in the piece but the form of the text largely conveys Green’s process and intentions as an artist and curator. Weiner’s publication is a digital copy, not a scanned PDF but a version that has seemingly been transcribed by someone on a digital word processor. The PDF lacks hyphenation and some words run across two lines, splitting materials and instructions that alters the way that Weiner had originally written then. It’s difficult to say how accurate this digital reproduction is to the original artist’s book, whether fonts and text sizes are preserved (which would impact how the work is received by an audience). Still, its form offers an accessible means of engaging with Weiner’s art and constructing the statements, even if the nature of the reproduction means there is now an additional layer of authorship embedded in the work.