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PRETENDING THE WORLD IS FUNNY AND FOREVER: REFLECTION ON AESTHETICS OF HAUNTOLOGICAL LIMINALITY

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Figure 1. *Pretending the World is Funny and Forever*, installation view, 2024.
Multi-sensory installation. Photograph: Natalie Wardell.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This article draws upon a three-and-a-half-year research inquiry undertaken as part of my Master of Fine Arts at the Dunedin School of Art. The final exhibition, *Pretending the World is Funny and Forever*, presented as the culmination of this research, is discussed in the concluding section. Central to this paper is an exploration of how my research shaped my art practice, focusing on the conceptual strategies that informed its aesthetic, material, olfactory and auditory dimensions.

The structure of the article is deliberately referential, tracing the theoretical genealogy underpinning hauntological-liminal aesthetics. Within this framework, references are not simply citations but act as revenants – ghostly returns of prior intellectual gestures.

The structure reflects this methodological approach. It begins with a theoretical framing that guided the research, followed by three interwoven sections: the first explores the concept of the poor image and degraded visuality; the second examines liminal space; and the third investigates sound and moving image as affective technologies. The final section analyses my MFA installation as a culmination of the hauntological-liminal concerns developed throughout the paper.

CONCEPTUAL STRATEGIES

> "Capitalism is what is left when beliefs have collapsed at the level of ritual or symbolic elaboration, and all that is left is the consumer-spectator, trudging through the ruins and the relics."
>
> Mark Fisher[1]

The term 'millennial' refers to those (like me) born at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries – a generation shaped by the cultural and economic conditions of late capitalism. In much of the Western world, millennials have come of age under the influence of neoliberalism, an economic and political philosophy that has reshaped global policy since the 1980s. In the United Kingdom, this shift was led by Margaret Thatcher (Prime Minister from 1979 to 1990) and in the United States by Ronald Reagan (President from 1981 to 1989). In New Zealand, similar reforms were introduced between 1984 and 1988 under the label "Rogernomics," named after Labour finance minister Roger Douglas.[2]

Neoliberalism promotes free markets, deregulation and the minimisation of state involvement in economic and social affairs. Framed as a remedy for economic stagnation, it casts government control as a source of inefficiency. These policies gained global traction through institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, which advocated for neoliberal reforms in developing countries. Although this model promised revitalisation and growth, it ultimately exacerbated economic inequality and eroded community cohesion by prioritising corporate interests over public welfare.

It is this condition that arguably has drawn so many members of the millennial generation (but also people across all ages and locations) to the work of Mark Fisher. Fisher, also known under his blogging alias k-punk, was an influential English political and cultural theorist and a lecturer in the Department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London. His sudden death in 2017 had a lasting impact not only on his students and colleagues at Goldsmiths, but also on many people who felt seen and understood through his work, whether through his blog or the hours of lectures posted to *YouTube*.

Many young people are turning to the work of Mark Fisher to better understand the world we live in – a world that often feels unmoored. Time appears to accelerate, while cultural and political movements remain stagnant or regress. Fisher's writing resonates with the emotional and psychological effects of this condition, one shaped not by a new phenomenon but by the first generation to be fully immersed in – and affected by – communicative capitalism, where technological advancement sustains and intensifies capitalist logics of distraction, performance and affective capture.

I first encountered Mark Fisher through his book *Capitalist Realism* (2009), in which he critiques the ideological stagnation of contemporary life.[3] Fisher defines capitalist realism as a condition in which neoliberal capitalism is perceived as not only dominant but inescapable – permeating everything from our work-life boundaries, further blurred by smartphones and email, to the pressure to monetise every aspect of our lives. Hobbies become marketable skill sets; relationships become networks. Social interaction is increasingly measured in likes, followers and digital metrics, producing a transactional atmosphere that mirrors market logic.

Accompanying this is a pervasive cultural stasis: years blur together, while media endlessly recycles itself through reboots, remakes and remixes, making it increasingly difficult to imagine a future that does not merely repackage the past. This affective landscape resonates with the lived experience of many millennials and Gen Z – particularly

in the West – where younger generations are often projected to earn less than their parents, experiencing increased precarity and pressure. As Australian journalist Miles Herbert reflected in 2024, entering his thirties brought the realisation that "the life my parents had would never – no matter how hard I grafted – be mine."[4] He captures a common generational dissonance: the gap between inherited ideals and the harsh material conditions of the present. Within the neoliberal doctrine of personal responsibility, individuals are left to navigate rising education debt, inaccessible healthcare and impossible benchmarks of success. Fisher's theory of capitalist realism captures this foreclosure of the imagination – the loss of even the possibility of imagining a different future.

Within this environment, emotional energy is not merely suppressed, it is absorbed and redirected through a process often referred to as 'affective capture.' This term describes the way emotional expression, especially within digital and neoliberal systems, is co-opted and commodified rather than leading to real structural change. Social media platforms, for example, turn emotions like grief, outrage and hope into content streams and data points, generating engagement while neutralising their transformative potential. As Fisher notes, "affective disorders are forms of captured discontent." In this context, emotional life is circulated endlessly through likes, shares and metrics, but rarely results in collective action or material shifts.[5] The ecological consequences of consumer capitalism – pollution, climate collapse, and the rise of single-use culture – only intensify this affective saturation. As the global elite look towards Mars as a speculative refuge, many are left grappling with a future that feels increasingly fragmented, deferred and haunted.

Capitalist realism is not a specific set of positions that people hold. It is a state of affairs – an ingrained cultural logic, or what Fisher calls a "psychic infrastructure" – that clouds our ability to see the world differently and imagine alternative social futures. Put another way, we are living in a time characterised by a unique blend of highly popular ways of making sense of the world.[6] When combined as they are now, these ideological structures make this attitude not only possible to hold but also exceedingly difficult to escape. It is a perfect storm.

In *Ghosts of My Life* (2014), Fisher explored cultural responses to capitalist realism, reintroducing 'hauntology' to describe a pervasive sense of nostalgia for the unfulfilled potential of the past.[7] This term cleverly intertwines the metaphor of a ghost or spectre with the philosophical theory of ontology, evident, for instance, in German philosopher Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1927).[8] Heidegger highlighted the concept of 'the human' as integral to understanding the ontological dimension of time, examining the temporal relationship of human existence to being ('sein') through a phenomenological analysis of human existence ('dasein').[9]

Within the context of hauntology, ontology becomes paradoxical: it traditionally concerns the nature of being, yet haunting belongs to the realm of non-being or the absence of a return to being itself. In a sense, hauntology places essences back into non-existence and transcendental phantoms into phenomenology. Therefore, hauntology becomes a temporal question; while a ghost exists outside of time and place, its ontology creates a tangible presence. Heidegger's notion of 'being-toward-death' emphasises the intrinsic connection between our awareness of mortality and our experience of time, highlighting the importance of the present moment and encouraging a more authentic engagement with life.[10] This ontology brings beginnings and endings. But what happens when the dead keep returning?

Hauntology is deeply woven into critiques of capitalism, first appearing in French philosopher Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* (1993).[11] Derrida examined the haunting nature of Karl Marx's thought, particularly the influence of Marx and Friedrich Engels' *Communist Manifesto* (1848) on the political and cultural discourse of the time. Derrida's concept of hauntology examines how the past continues to influence the present and future. It suggests that, despite its seeming non-existence in the present, the past persists and exerts influence.

Following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the perceived triumph of neoliberalism, Derrida addressed the ghost of Marxism within the dichotomy between capitalism and Marxism; as with any binary opposition, the one cannot be free of the other. The refusal to recognise this is exemplified by Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), which argued that the collapse of communism marked the victory of capitalism and that

Western neoliberal democracy represented the pinnacle of human ideological evolution and the universalisation of governance.[12] During the Cold War – a period marked by intense anti-communism in the West and near-nuclear confrontations – neoliberalism was predicted to dominate globally. Fukuyama's vision of an 'end of history' proposed a utopian reality of Western democracy akin to Plato's *Republic*.[13] However, despite the Cold War's end, the fear of nuclear destruction persisted and communism was not eradicated, leaving the world to grapple with the challenges of this neoliberal 'Eden.'

Within the twenty-first century, we are now faced with a devastating avalanche of compounding crises known as the meta-crisis, far greater than that of the Cold War. The meta-crisis encapsulates the deep, complex nature of contemporary crises, including climate change, pollution, economic instability, housing shortages, nuclear threats and mental health issues, culminating in existential crises.[14] Derrida's hauntology helps us to understand the unfulfilled promises and latent conflicts of Fukuyama's neoliberal triumphalism, now manifesting in these pervasive and interlinked global crises.

These factors led me to examine the effects of what I have come to call 'hauntological liminality.' This evolved into an exploration of what occurs aesthetically when hauntology becomes a central focus – both in cultural production and through trends of expression that emerge via a phenomenological connection with being in the world. These trends reflect emotional landscapes aligned with Fisher's concept of hauntology, revealing a shared affective atmosphere shaped by nostalgia and anxiety, brought about by the unfulfilled promises of our past ideas of the future. Therefore, this article is a reflection on the affects and effects of hauntological liminality. The hauntological dimension emerges from the unfulfilled hopes for the future – what Fisher refers to as 'lost futures' – in which we are haunted by past visions of progress that never materialised. Liminality arises from a pervasive sense of stuckness and suspension, produced by the long-term impacts of neoliberal policies on both individuals and communities.[15]

The term 'liminality' originated in anthropology and sociology, notably through Arnold van Gennep's *The Rites of Passage* (1906) and Victor Turner's *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (1969).[16] Van Gennep outlined three stages in rites of passage: the rites of separation, where individuals are removed from their previous social roles; the transitional stage, where individuals undergo the middle phase of a ritual process; and the rites of incorporation, where individuals emerge into new roles within their social structure.[17]

Turner categorised these stages into pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal phases, particularly emphasising the significance of the liminal.[18] From the 1960s to the early 1980s, Turner expanded on van Gennep's work by developing his theory of 'communitas.'[19] Derived from Latin, communitas describes an unstructured community where individuals are considered equal and experience unity within liminality. Turner argued that rituals create liminal spaces that break down social norms and emphasise collective identity through symbolism. These rituals facilitate social change by temporarily suspending participants from their social roles, allowing both individuals and communities to engage in new developments.

Hauntological liminality, however, indefinitely extends the temporary suspension typically found in the liminal stage of a rite of passage, resulting in a breakdown – or loss – of communitas. Philosopher Byung-Chul Han, in his 2019 work *The Disappearance of Rituals*, links this condition to the effects of neoliberalism.[20] Han argues that rituals, through symbolic repetition, once provided a sense of being "at home in the world."[21] Yet, in the twenty-first century, we have become trapped in a loop of cultural and symbolic production devoid of depth, leaving many without the grounding, stability and communal belonging that traditional rites and rituals once offered. This echoes Mark Fisher's critique in *Capitalist Realism*, where he writes: "Capitalism is what is left when beliefs have collapsed at the level of ritual or symbolic elaboration, and all that is left is the consumer-spectator, trudging through the ruins and the relics."[22]

Together, Han and Fisher frame a cultural condition marked by symbolic exhaustion and emotional dislocation, where the loss of ritual not only disrupts collective meaning-making but leaves individuals in a state of suspended passage – with no resolution, no arrival, and no shared transformation.

AESTHETICS

To understand what constitutes an aesthetic experience as hauntological and liminal, one must consider its corresponding affects, which reflect conditions often driven by nostalgia. Cultural theorist Svetlana Boym, in *The Future of Nostalgia* (2011), describes nostalgia as not only a reaction to spatial displacement but also a profound shift in how we culturally perceive time – as a "historical emotion" that seeks grounding in an increasingly unstable present.[23] This temporal nostalgia manifests through a revival of aesthetic markers such as retro media, fashion and technology, including the resurgence of vinyl records, Polaroid cameras, cassette tapes and reboots of television shows and movies.

A sense of longing is particularly pronounced in millennial nostalgia, where those who came of age during the 1990s and early 2000s experience an emotional attachment to the aesthetics and media of that period. This yearning is often intensified by contemporary feelings of precarity, disconnection and uncertainty, producing cultural expressions steeped in retro aesthetics, digital melancholia and the recycling of the past. Aesthetic experience, in this context, stems from ideas of analogue technological innovation through digital repositioning, or through the aesthetics of early home computer systems and memories of childhood homes and public spaces such as swimming pools, shopping malls and playgrounds. One expression of this involves the use of technology that emerged around the late 1980s and '90s, such as first-generation home video (VHS) cameras and early digital cameras.

In his book *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to Its Own Past* (2010), British music journalist Simon Reynolds observes how contemporary culture has become increasingly obsessed with its own past, continuously remixing and repurposing historical artefacts to evoke a comforting sense of familiarity – even for times never personally experienced.[24] This phenomenon reflects a broader collapse of historical consciousness, which philosopher and cultural theorist Fredric Jameson theorised is produced by late-stage capitalism, creating a "glossy mirage" of history, where the past is no longer authentically retrieved but stylised into simulations and pastiches.[25] A nostalgic mode develops as a result of postmodernist cannibalisation and appropriation of past styles, creating an overstimulating imitation that dislocates history. As Jameson describes, "the history of aesthetic styles displaces 'real history,'" resulting in a paradoxical nostalgia for an imagined past.[26] This aestheticised unreality shapes the development of hauntological and liminal aesthetics, emerging through the nostalgic mode – an impulse reignited by an affective longing and a contemporary yearning for a generational idea of a lost future.

I argue that artists who engage with hauntological liminality do so in an attempt to aesthetically subvert the nostalgic impulse – present within Jameson's "glossy mirage" – by disrupting temporality through artistic methodologies that, like a ghost, are out of time and place, moving through the "ruins and relics" of postmodern nostalgia associated predominantly with the connective generation (millennials).

THE POOR IMAGE

In her 2009 essay, "In Defence of the Poor Image," filmmaker Hito Steyerl describes "a ghost of an image, a preview, a thumbnail, an itinerant image distributed for free, squeezed through slow digital connections, compressed, reproduced, ripped, remixed, as well as copied and pasted into other distributions."[27] Unlike the rich image – high-resolution, pristine, and emblematic of "capitalist studio production" – the poor image critiques the broken promises of digital technology, often showcasing glitches, pixelation and low fidelity. It often utilises late twentieth-century technologies, such as CDs, VHS tapes and low-resolution digital recordings, ripped, downloaded, burned, or compressed into MP3 files. Existing outside traditional capitalist production, the poor image is characterised by a lower quality often resulting from its possession as pirated content, emerging through acts of copying and sharing entertainment and images. Steyerl notes that the distinction between rich and poor image has become more pronounced due to neoliberal policies that distribute and fund many facets of pop culture, particularly in the film and music industries, reinforcing what Jameson earlier described as the commodification of historical memory through aestheticised nostalgia and the "glossy mirage."

LIMINAL SPACE

Technological nostalgia is particularly evident within certain representations of liminal spaces. Here, the poor image actively subverts the "glossy mirage" of polished nostalgia. Through its visible imperfections, it resists idealised reconstructions of the past. Instead, it participates in a hauntological aesthetic, intertwining with the affective textures of millennial nostalgia and reflecting the lost futures embedded within digital decay – an aesthetic that became prevalent during the early 2000s with the introduction of home computers and the emergence of the internet.

Internet-based liminal aesthetics synthesise elements of outdated technologies with contemporary digital recording and mixing techniques. Drawing upon nostalgia for earlier modes of recording, alongside the uncanny and dreamlike qualities of digital imagery, artists such as Liminal Dreamscape, Dreembloom and Liminalmoods integrate lo-fi textures, poor image quality, blurring, graininess and ambient noise as defining features of their representations of liminal spaces.

These virtual environments frequently evoke a sense of limbo or labyrinthine disorientation – spaces that feel stretched, emptied or off-centre, where temporal and spatial expectations dissolve. A notable example is *The Backrooms*, which originally emerged from a 2019 4chan thread and was later developed into a viral series by YouTuber Kane Parsons (Kane Pixels). Depicting endless, yellowish rooms lit by harsh fluorescent lights, *The Backrooms* evokes a powerful sense of entrapment, sameness, and existential unease.

Much like other internet-borne liminal aesthetics, *The Backrooms* constructs a space that is simultaneously familiar and strange – a labyrinth where architecture collapses into repetition and where the mundane becomes subtly menacing. This fusion of outdated technology, repetitive spatial structures and emotional unease underscores the affective power of digital liminal spaces. Parsons' aesthetic approach explores the slowing and stalling of time, whether through the repetitive depiction of architectural elements such as doorways and hallways, the collapse of boundaries between interior and exterior spaces or the distortion of time and place itself. These strategies generate eerie, unhomely effects, evoking past memories not only through compositional choices but also through an uncanny, nostalgic mode that emphasises lo-fi, grainy visual textures.

Parsons' adoption of such imperfect footage, reminiscent of 1990s camcorders, layers nostalgia with decay, mirroring themes of deferred futures and temporal dislocation central to hauntological aesthetics. The incorporation of handheld camcorder aesthetics recalls the era of home videos and early personal recording devices, before the advent of high-definition screens and streaming services. Present too is a sense of longing for the physical sites of entertainment culture – video rental stores, record shops, e-malls, and movie theatres – which have been slowly disappearing, if not entirely erased.

SOUND AND MOVING IMAGE

Particularly through sound and film documentation – oscillating between analogue and digital textures – hauntological-liminal aesthetics have developed an afterlife of their own, evolving into a predominantly electronic and ambient sonic language. A defining example is William Basinski's *The Disintegration Loops* (2001), composed of decaying tape recordings that were digitised as they physically deteriorated in real time. Created on the morning of the 2001 World Trade Centre attacks, the work has become an emblem of sonic mourning – an accidental elegy where entropy, memory and historical trauma converge. Basinski's project pushes the concept of the poor image and poor sound to a material limit; the disintegrating magnetic tape tracks serve not only as audio but as physical decay. While the accompanying VHS footage captures the smoke from the physical collapse of the towers drifting across the city, the work literalises loss – its sonic and visual textures collapsing as the medium itself fails. The experience of listening becomes durational and meditative, forcing the audience to dwell within temporal disintegration.

Building on these themes of memory, degradation and spectral recurrence, Leyland James Kirby – under the moniker The Caretaker – created a body of work that explores the emotional textures of lost time. Sampling from 1920s and 1930s ballroom recordings, his compositions stretch, slow down and distort sound, immersing listeners in atmospheres that feel suspended between presence and disappearance. Titles like *Sadly, the Future Is No Longer What It Was* (2009) echo the core hauntological motif described by Fisher: the loss of belief in a viable or imaginable future. Kirby himself frames the work as "an opus of loss, desire and bewilderment at current situations," asking "What happened to the future we were promised and promised ourselves? Is this the soundtrack of a world in decline?" This self-reflexive questioning anchors the project in a distinctly late-capitalist melancholia – one in which even the future arrives haunted.[28] Kirby's soundscapes invite listeners into a dreamlike drift: neither fully nostalgic nor entirely abstract, where the past flickers and disappears.

Contemporary artist Mark Leckey's *Fiorucci Made Me Hardcore* (1999) similarly traffics in temporal loops and degraded aesthetics. The work assembles found footage of British underground youth culture – northern soul, disco, rave – into a grainy, dreamlike video described by Leckey as both a "ghost film" and an "exorcism." It evokes a deep sense of nostalgia and temporal dislocation, capturing the shift from collective enchantment to what Leckey calls "disclosing a delusion."[29] Through his use of VHS textures, looping and repetition, Leckey stages a kind of cultural haunting in which euphoric memories of youth become trapped in a visual purgatory. Rather than invoking liberation, the work evokes a suspended state where past cultural moments endlessly repeat without resolution – joy rendered uncanny through its persistence.

Where Leckey renders this sense of cultural suspension visually, Fisher turns to sound and urban space to explore how melancholia persists in the everyday textures of neoliberal life. In *DOCH Lecture #1*, he plays a track by British music producer Burial to demonstrate how hauntological textures reflect the physical and emotional atmosphere of twenty-first-century London – marked by abandonment, precarity and post-rave exhaustion. He elaborated on this in a blog post, later republished in *Ghosts of My Life*, describing a walk through the city while listening to Burial's 2006 album *Untrue*. Fisher likens the album to "the faded ten-year-old tag of a kid whose Rave dreams have been crushed by a series of dead-end jobs," articulating a uniquely contemporary melancholia – residue without release, rhythm without future.[30]

Figure 2. Detail of champagne tower and red wine scent diffuser, 2024. Plastic champagne glasses, Velluto Rosso. Photograph: Natalie Wardell.

Figure 3. Speaker-coat sculpture, 2024. Mixed media. Photograph: Natalie Wardell.

Figure 4. Raining window installation, 2024. Mixed media. Photograph: Natalie Wardell.

In a similar spirit, I became attuned to the ambient atmospheres of my own urban environment during the COVID-19 lockdowns. While writing my dissertation, I took long walks through Dunedin, gravitating toward a particular site that seemed to condense the very tensions Fisher describes: a broken colonial house with tags on the walls, smashed-out windows and the lingering smell of Lynx in the air. Abandoned on a small hill by the railway tracks, it stood as a decaying monument. I visited it frequently until it was torn down, a few months after I finally worked up the courage to step inside. Now, in 2025, a new McDonald's is opening just down the road.

FINAL EXHIBITION

My 2024 exhibition, *Pretending the World is Funny and Forever*, sought to materialise the conceptual strategies explored throughout my MFA. Emerging from personal memory shaped by the cultural conditions of hauntological liminality, the work took the form of a multi-display, multi-sensory installation combining image, object, sound and scent.

With a digitised version of deteriorating VHS footage, filmed by my father Ian Wardell on New Year's Eve 2000, at its centre, the installation explored the tension between nostalgia and the loss of future possibility. That moment – when the world was expected to change – lingered as a question throughout the exhibition. The faint, ghostly scent of red wine infused the space via a plastic champagne tower, referencing 1990s domestic rituals – specifically my parents' dinner parties featuring Velluto Rosso box wine. The use of 'forever materials' such as plastic, objects like plastic wine glasses (masquerading as glass) and unstable VHS tapes (digitised in a futile attempt to preserve them) exposed the fragile illusions of time and materiality.

Other features of the installation included oversized rug-coats and speaker-figures haunted the gallery as spectral presences, drawing on memories of childhood dress-ups, auditory dissonance and the erosion of communal rituals. Keys, gathered from friends and strangers over two years, served as symbolic placeholders for unseen sites through time and space, each grouping suggesting a fragment of a hidden narrative. Two large seascape paintings submerged viewers within a psychological storm, reflecting the emotional volatility explored in my research.

Figure 5. Digitised VHS footage projection, 2024. Still from home video footage. Photograph: Natalie Wardell.

A fabricated 'raining window' installation recalled cinematic tropes of longing and introspection, while a slowed and distorted track of New Year's fireworks whispered through the gallery, its muffled voices acting like spectral observers – echoes of deferred futures and celebrations that never fully arrived.

Drawing on hauntological-liminal strategies, the exhibition did not seek to directly illustrate the research, but to embody its affective and conceptual concerns. Through atmosphere, scale and sensory tension, the installation

Figure 6. Still from New Year's Eve 1999–2000, from digitised VHS footage. Photograph: Natalie Wardell.

Figure 7. Still from New Year's morning sunrise over the ocean, welcoming the millennium, 2000. Photograph: Natalie Wardell.

aimed to evoke the emotional texture of a moment suspended between memory and anticipation – a future that feels irretrievably lost.

While the exhibition was not designed to provide resolution, the personal quality of the VHS footage became a key point of connection. Viewers frequently engaged in conversations around their own recollections of the millennium – where they were, what they felt – or, in some cases, reflected on not having been alive at that time. It was this affective anchoring in personal and cultural memory that allowed the other elements of the show to resonate more deeply. The melancholy that emerged was not solely projected by the work but co-produced through the viewer's own associations and felt responses; not represented through explicit narrative but brought forth through atmosphere and embodied experience. Affective engagement – rooted in time, loss and speculation – became the primary mode through which the installation invited reflection.

Figure 8. Image of abandoned house on the hill, 2023. Photograph: Natalie Wardell.

Natalie Wardell is an artist and researcher based in Ōtepoti Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand. She holds a Master of Fine Arts with Distinction from the Dunedin School of Art (2024). Her research explores aesthetics and affective responses to crisis, with a focus on memory, lost futures, hauntology, and liminality. She plans to pursue a PhD in interdisciplinary research in 2026.

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11 Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International* (London: Routledge, 2006).

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13 Fukuyama, *End of History*, xi.

14 Ernesto Peborgh, "What Is the Metacrisis?" *BLI Global*, 17 March 2023, accessed 28 April 2025, https://www.bliglobal.org/blog/what-is-the-metacrisis.

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