Chapter 16

America and the queer diaspora: the case of artist David McDiarmid

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[New York] felt like home as soon as I went there. It felt comfortable. It felt like a place you could grow. I felt that I'd done everything that I could in Sydney for the moment. It was like going to school on a very high level: on an art level, a sex level—the two most important things. It was like a playground. There was such a lot happening. It was not that frantic, it suited me, the pace. So why not live there? It was a really easy choice.¹

The life and work of Australian artist David McDiarmid were impacted on strongly by his long-term interest in North American literary, visual and popular culture—an interest that was consolidated during his period of travel and residence in the United States between 1977 and 1987. McDiarmid's art, produced between 1976 and 1995 and which he designated from the beginning 'gay art', might be seen as both 'mobile and located', to borrow a term from Marsha Meskimmon,² in the sense that it was neither 'Australian' nor 'American' but an eclectic, multivalent attempt at a gay male art of his time. McDiarmid's diverse art practice was inflected by his evident commitment to the idea of a mobile, 'becoming' sexual, political and creative subjectivity. It was this commitment that was the principal driver of McDiarmid's 1977 decision to live in New York. Before, during and after his American period, he created a body of work that existed across geographical and cultural boundaries and across the interstitial sexual and gender categories explored in recent decades by queer theory.³

Nomadic subjectivity and the city

This interstitial character of McDiarmid's art practice involved a play across geography, time and diverse realms of cultural experience. He had a postmodern lack of respect for modernist and Eurocentric hierarchies of culture and his art practice employed a 'maverick orientalism' of cultural appropriation.⁴

Listing books he might one day write, Roland Barthes suggested he might write 'The discourse of homosexuality' or 'The discourses of homosexuality' or, again, 'The discourse of homosexualities', referring to the instability of sexual identity.⁵ McDiarmid's art is an evocation of such a notion: of multiple, polysemous

discourses of sexuality and multiple possible homosexualities. In the course of his career, and in his pioneering enactment of 'gay artist', McDiarmid chose to place himself in liminal cultural zones relating to geography, sexuality, gender, race, culture, history and aesthetics. This gives his work a multivalent complexity and rewards a viewing of it as more than the simple politics of fixed gay identity. His placement of himself in New York, the then metropolitan centre of international gay male life, gave him the freedom and complexity he sought in order to explore a multifaceted identity in his art and his life, as evidenced in his own account:

Yeah. Felt very hemmed in by conservative art scene queens who didn't feel that politics was part of art and didn't feel that you can include any kind of confrontational aspect into your work and I never saw art as being a safe thing. I know that exists but that's not something that involves me. My references were always edgy feminist stuff, or whatever, and that was always seen as being marginal [but] I never thought of it in that way. I thought they [feminists] were actually right on the edge concerning my life, my sexual identity, the whole notion of how people are labelled, why we're marginalised.⁶

Art, sex, politics and America

It is not difficult to imagine the pull of American culture, particularly the space and time landscape of New York in the late 1970s, for an artist such as McDiarmid. His visual and sociopolitical sense was already attuned to American artistic, commercial and popular culture and, most importantly, to the gay identity politics that had emerged there, with the aftermath of the Stonewall events of 1969 building on the cultural politics of the civil rights and women's liberation movements. In addition to his engagement with dissenting American cultures, McDiarmid was interested in the big, bold and outrageous qualities offered by American wealth and cultural promiscuity.

From the point of view of more adventurous Australian artists, by the mid 1960s, the United States was beginning to supplant Europe as the mythical centre of the Western avant-garde culture. Australian contemporary art curator John Stringer, who spent several years in the United States, wrote:

Due to colonial legacies and cultural allegiances, most [Australian] artists up until [the] mid [twentieth] century were inclined to seek their artistic nemesis [sic] in Europe—which for most Australians meant London—but with the 1960s this monopoly was broken, and...adventurous souls [drifted] to the renowned centre of New York.⁷

Moreover, by the late 1970s, the Australia Council for the Arts was funding Australian artists to take up residencies in its supported studios at PSI in Long Island City and Greene Street in Soho.⁸ For McDiarmid, however, a few months

supported by an Australia Council grant, followed by return to Australia to exhibit the work produced and write up a grant acquittal report, was not what he was seeking. As a politically aware gay man, McDiarmid saw himself as an international or diasporic gay male subject rather than as an 'Australian' artist. He was, as evidenced in his recorded views and his personal and creative decisions, more interested in immersing himself in a sexually dissident American urban culture, which resonated with his embrace of a mobile 'becoming' subjectivity. He was convinced that his art, his life and his sexuality all needed to be developed in New York and he needed to make himself 'American' in some way for this to happen. The city provided an opportunity to release his subjectivity and his creative identity from 'fixed referents', to use Nigel Thrift's term, and to form and reform personal subjectivity in, as Thrift said, a 'hybrid and dialogic' context in which identity was being constantly 'copied, revised, enunciated and performed'.⁹ While McDiarmid continued to exhibit in Australia throughout his period of residence in New York, which ended in 1987, he was, in taking up what was intended to be permanent residence in New York, moving his centre from Australia to America. 'Why not live there?' he recalls in the 1992 interview quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

America as fantasy

No doubt it was the idea and the fantasy of New York that drew McDiarmid, like so many other artists and immigrants, to the city. 'A city named in certain ways also becomes that city through the practices of people in response to the labels', and they 'perform the labels', argue urban theorists Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift.¹⁰ Hal Foster also makes the observation in his catalogue essay for the 1982 exhibition *Brand New York*, at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London, that 'New York is a projection as well as a place'.¹¹ While that observation is true of many cities, New York holds a special place, especially for artists, as the ultimate modern city of the twentieth century. The idea of 'America', as I have said, was part of McDiarmid's mobile sexual and creative identity formation. America represented the new, the culturally and sexually radical, the artistically innovative and avant-garde, the profligate, excessive and rich, the hip and the cool.

Richard Sennett, in his essay 'Civic bodies: multi-cultural New York', writes that before he came to New York for the first time in the 1970s, he had, as he puts it, 'read his way into' Greenwich Village, in the pages of Jane Jacobs' influential book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.¹² McDiarmid also 'read his way into' New York but in his case it was through the *Village Voice*, Andy Warhol's *Interview*, gay periodicals such as *Christopher Street*, the work of the Beat writers William Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg and other gay male writers including James Baldwin, Edmund White, Gore Vidal and Samuel Delany.

McDiarmid's 'America' and gay liberation

In 1972, at the age of twenty, five years before his first visit to the United States, and before he identified himself publicly as an artist, McDiarmid wrote an essay for the *Sydney Gay Liberation Newsletter*, a journal that he, as an early member of Gay Liberation, had helped found, edit and illustrate. Entitled 'Memoirs of an oppressed teenager', the essay noted that it was the reading of American gay liberationist publications that had convinced him that embracing same-sex desire, rather than hiding it—regarded as a sensible self-protective option in early 1970s Melbourne—might help him open opportunities for personal and creative growth.¹³ His friend and co-resident of New York, the Australian artist Sam Schönbaum, later recalled the Melbourne in which both men had grown up as 'a closet of protestant mediocrity'.¹⁴ Instead of the repressive tolerance that McDiarmid's essay suggests he thought he might expect from his friends, family and the broader world, there was a world—and he saw it as America—in which a new kind of utopian gay male sociality, and the promise of an ecstatic sexuality, was there for exploration. In this, he was not alone. Mark Turner, writing about gay male street cruising in New York and London, states:

[T]here are many gay stories, but the story that touches my subject is the one about urban migration, the move of the marginalised from the country to the cities and capitals of America and Europe, many of which represented a New Gay Jerusalem or Mecca by the end of the twentieth century. San Francisco. New York. London. These cities had long established and thriving queer cultures and cultures of sexual dissidence, which have become the subject of academic and popular studies seeking to put gay urban history on the map.¹⁵

McDiarmid was part of this diasporic global movement of gay men into New York and other major American cities that accelerated from the late 1960s and early 1970s. These cities had their own gay male subcultural networks and underground maps of important locales that were a magnet for the oppressed and the daring until the beginning of the AIDS epidemic began to be felt in the early 1980s.

The imagined city

The materiality of McDiarmid's art, its content, ideas and technique, are all influenced by the experience and the idea of 'America'. *Alphabet City* (Figure 16.1), a work created in New York in 1983–84 and exhibited in *David McDiarmid: New work* at Roslyn Oxley Gallery, Sydney, in October 1984, refers not just to a geographical place—the zone around Avenues A, B, C and D east of First Avenue on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, close to where McDiarmid then lived—but to a condition of being in that space.

Figure 16.1: David McDiarmid, *Alphabet City*, 1983–84.

Acrylic on cotton bed sheet, 228 cm x 251 cm. Private Collection. Reproduced with permission of the McDiarmid Estate.

The making of this work coincided with the growth of the East Village and the Lower East Side generally as the radical edge of the New York art world, challenging Soho as the locale of the newest, most interesting and youthful art. The small shopfront galleries of the East Village showed work that, among other things, embraced the excitement and abjection of street life.

This painting forms part of a series of works by McDiarmid, known as the 'bed-sheet paintings' because they are executed on cotton sheets. The series adopts the style and iconography of subway graffiti of the 1970s and 1980s and the New York street memorials of the 1980s.¹⁶ The work intersects with that of

other artists working with graffiti-derived techniques at this time, such as Keith Haring and Jean Michel Basquiat.¹⁷ McDiarmid's work, however, is celebratory of the city in a way that the work of the American-born artists is not. McDiarmid's *Alphabet City* is a celebration, by an insider who is also an outsider, of the diversity and cultural promiscuity of New York, encompassing as it does the idea of an excessive 'everything' from A to Z. The employment of the visual trope of a familiar yet fictitious New York skyline—with the then iconic twin towers of the World Trade Centre, Philip Johnson's AT&T (now Sony) Building and the Empire State Building placed in a line—reveals a telescoped viewing position that is not in itself of New York. This work is a fictional postcard of a self-invented nomadic world located in downtown Manhattan and viewed from the vantage point of an insider-outsider member of a diasporic gay male community.

Art and sex

McDiarmid's attraction to New York was first and foremost to the homosocial and sexual possibilities in a city that had a high population density, broad racial and cultural diversity and was inscribed with a subcultural map of gay male places of significance, some of which had been gay meeting places for decades and others of which had sprung into prominence post Stonewall. As George Chauncey showed, New York, as one of the major port cities of the world, had been a magnet for thousands of homosexual men from the armed services who had declined to go home to their provincial towns and farms after World War II demobilisation.¹⁸ Stonewall—the events in and around the Stonewall Inn in Lower Manhattan in 1969—was subsequently a trigger for the burgeoning of an urban gay male scene that was reproduced and emulated by other large Western cities, including San Francisco, London and Sydney.

By the time McDiarmid finally moved to New York to take up settled residence there, in June of 1979, at the age of twenty-seven, he was a self-identified gay political artist. His first one-person show, *Secret Love*, had explored gay male sexuality and sociality inside and outside of the closet. The drawings and collage works of this exhibition asserted a centrality for homosexual desire and made political claims for social and legal equality. He also exhibited in, and designed the poster for, the first self-identified exhibition of Australian gay and lesbian artists at Watters Gallery, Sydney, in July 1978. Entitled *Homosexual and Lesbian Artists*, this exhibition was associated with the Fourth National Homosexual Conference held at Paddington Town Hall in August of that year. By the time of McDiarmid's first visit to the United States, three months after the *Secret Love* exhibition, the enduring interconnection between his art practice, his political consciousness and his sexuality was established.

The work for the 1976 *Secret Love* exhibition was already inflected by ideas of 'America'. McDiarmid used aspects of American popular culture, including

Hollywood films and literature, in works with titles such as *A Straight-Stud Named Desire* (a collaged image of Marlon Brando from *A Street Car Named Desire*), *Myra Lives* (referencing Gore Vidal's *Myra Breckinridge*) and *Plato's End* (with collaged images of film star Sal Mineo in his role as the closeted gay love interest in *Rebel Without A Cause*). The title of the exhibition, *Secret Love*, quoted the words of the song, famously sung by Doris Day in the film *Calamity Jane*, about a 'secret [in this case gay] love', which need be 'secret no more'. This camp appropriation of American popular culture was interspersed with other works that referenced more Australian concerns.

Influenced by America Pop Art collage in its content, method and politics, McDiarmid's 1976 work expressed a personal idiolect, which was neither wholly Australian nor wholly American. By this I mean that his visual language and artistic conceptual concerns were refracted through the embrace of American culture in such a way as to form the kind of 'hybrid' and 'dialogic'¹⁹ language that arises from a nomadic 'becoming' subjectivity. After his first trip to the United States in 1977, McDiarmid's work adopted an even more American visual and conceptual language in response to his intoxication with urban New York.

Firstly, every street is a beat!! If you walk around for an hour or so, just looking in shop windows, soon enough some number will look, and then look again, and then look again, and then say 'Hi! How ya doin'? Wanna get it on?' Honey it's unbelievable. I went to Bloomingdale's last week (the ultimate dept store...ultimate, ultimate) and was just wandering around, and sure enough, in 10 mins, there's 2 sets of eyes following!! Found out yesterday it *is* a notorious beat, but at the time I was stunned.²⁰

McDiarmid's one-person show *Trade Enquiries*, held at Hogarth Galleries, Sydney, in 1978, explored the visuality and coded communication of gay male bars and street cruising in New York and San Francisco. Exhibited the year after his first visit to the United States, this work references the performative dress and image typologies of gay men in urban America. Materials for this series of collaged and offset printed works included graphics and text from the American gay press and hyper-masculine images of gay male visual identity: 'clones', lumberjacks, studs and cowboys.²¹ The collaged appropriated fragments that made up the 1978 *Trade Enquiries* artworks included sexually coded ads from the 'personal' columns of gay newspapers, romantic popular song titles, published pornography and fetish imagery, portions of colour-coded bandanas denoting coded sexual practices and images of well-groomed moustached 'clones'—'juicy fruits', who look identical but are given by the artist interchangeable names: Ralph, Joe, Frank, Jack, Tom, Steve, Rick and Charlie (Figure 16.2). These works, produced out of the beats, bars, backrooms and clubs of San Francisco and New York, embody pleasurable engagement and ironic detachment.

Figure 16.2: David McDiarmid, *Juicy fruits: Ralph, Joe, Frank... , 1978.*

Offset lithograph from *Trade Enquiries*, series of nine prints with cover, 37.1 cm x 28.2 cm. Private Collection. Reproduced with permission of the McDiarmid Estate.

On his first visit to the United States from March to October of 1977, McDiarmid travelled extensively on the east and west coasts, focusing on the gay male urban communities of the Castro in San Francisco and the zones surrounding Christopher Street in Lower Manhattan. The America that McDiarmid was attracted to was not the world of official or dominant American culture but that of 'America's own rebellion', as Janet Wolff put it²² —not the world of what became known as Reaganomics, conservative family and religious values and what Wolff called America's 'institutionalised and pervasive racism', but the world of sexual permissiveness, interracial mingling and urban cultural innovation and daring.²³ For a young man from the geographical and cultural periphery, the bright lights and cultural complexities of New York, the metropolitan centre, along with its abjections, provided a compelling magnetism that animated McDiarmid's personal and creative life for the remainder of his career.

This city is breath-taking. I thought California was great but this is *it!* I never want to leave! The air is electric, the sidewalks are magic and the people are crazy crazy crazy.²⁴

McDiarmid's early interest in gay liberation politics and the idea of a potential 'gay art' were intensified by the experience of being in New York, the home of admired gay male artists Andy Warhol, Keith Haring, Robert Mapplethorpe and David Wojnоровicz. This gay male art of the 1970s and 1980s, which Emmanuel Cooper called 'virtually a new art', was based on a 'new homosexual eroticism'²⁵ that McDiarmid had explored since his earliest exhibited work, the *Secret Love* show in December 1976 just before his first trip to the United States.

Before Mayor Giuliani's 'zero-tolerance' New York

A poetics of sensuality through drugs, music and sex was uniquely available in New York in the late 1970s, before the inner boroughs underwent gentrification-related transformation from the mid 1980s.²⁶ It was still possible for artists and the culturally radical or marginal to afford to live in metropolitan New York, and McDiarmid was attuned to the relative cultural freedom that the streets of the city offered at this time, before 'zero-tolerance' policing of street misdemeanours changed the cultural character of inner city New York.²⁷ McDiarmid had been interested by the more dissident traditions in American intellectual and cultural life, as evidenced in his 1972 essay and in subsequent interviews.

In spite of conservative political regimes such as those of Ronald Reagan (US President from 1981–89) and Margaret Thatcher (British Prime Minister from 1979–90), the 1970s and early 1980s in the urban West were a period of paradoxical cultural and social radicalism. The idea of 'politics' had been extended beyond the traditional parameters of the liberal and Marxist left to include personal and private life, sexuality, gender and race and to incorporate

hitherto incompatible cultural themes and political methodologies. Andrew Ross describes this post-1960s politics, largely of the Western middle class, as generating 'a vocabulary of dissent and anti-authoritarianism', wielded against an establishment that was 'struggling to resolve, through consumerism, its long crisis of over production'. In this struggle,

[t]he discourses of hedonism began to outstrip the limits of the controlled structures of consumer society, and soon a wholesale ideology of disaffiliation from the institutions of establishment culture was in place, complete with its own structures (in the areas of the family, education, labour, media, taste, lifestyle, and morality), founded on utopian premises.²⁸

McDiarmid's personal and creative practice—the kind of art he made and the kind of sociality he engaged in—fell firmly on the hedonistic side of the hedonism–consumption tension mentioned by Ross. His oeuvre as a whole, while remaining intensely political, engages the hedonistic politics of pleasure and excess extending to the utopian and the ecstatic.

'America' and cultural excess

As an artist, McDiarmid was attracted to the popular, the glamorous and the commercial, as well as to the critical and political, and his work engaged the visually pleasurable, perverse, camp and ironic interfaces between commercial popular culture and the high-art world, which had also animated American Pop Art. America was perhaps an inevitable destination for an artist for whom the eroticism in advertising and commercial graphic design was an enduring trope of his own sexuality and his creative imagination, as he recounted in a 1992 interview:

I constructed sexual fantasies around advertising, which was around when I was a kid. I was 11 years old when I saw a newspaper ad for Jantzen swimwear. It was 1963, and the look was American collegiate and blonde. I can still remember the pattern of chest hair on the model's washboard and the shape of his thighs. The image stayed with me for days and weeks, until its power drove me to spend an afternoon searching through a stack of old newspapers in our garage, looking for that picture.²⁹

Ecstasy and utopia in McDiarmid's New York work

America was the exciting, 'excessive', 'overloaded' option for McDiarmid;³⁰ Europe was merely the redundantly authoritative and stuffy one. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, when McDiarmid was coming to political and cultural awareness in Melbourne and Sydney, and when it came to making cultural choices, he chose 'excessive' and 'overloaded' over authoritative. In

this context of pleasurable excess and utopian sensuality, African-American dance music and underground dance clubbing would also become an important influence on McDiarmid's life and art.³¹

All of the themes of cultural excess and sensuality to be found in 1970s New York came together in the 1979–81 suite of work to which McDiarmid gave the title *Disco Kwilts*—making reference to the black and Hispanic, gay underground dance club Paradise Garage. Located in a disused trucking garage at 84 King Street in Lower Manhattan, and operating between 1977 and 1987, Paradise Garage was known for its groundbreaking DJ Larry Levan, one of the originators of house music. The club's state-of-the-art lighting and sound systems were unsurpassed in the years of its operation, and the club's dedication to making each night a huge private party for its mixed-race clientele was legendary.³² Reflective shining surfaces and a camp glamour were hallmarks of disco music and dancing and the underground house-music club scene that grew out of disco. Gloss, glamour, glitz and an underground idea of 'celebrity'—gained by being a stunning dancer or dresser—were an implicit part of the experience and the imagined idea of the Paradise Garage. The house-music dance club is, as Brian Currid writes, 'a site in which the performance of "self", the spectacle of the "other", and one's reception as a spectacle of "otherness" provides a complex site for identity formation, and the fabrication of communal histories'.³³

McDiarmid's *Disco Kwilt* series of work was created as what could be thought of as a community artefact, to reflect and embody the affect of the dance floor and the community that participated in it. The series resonates with the 'explicit utopianism' contained in many house-music anthems, 'especially those with their roots in gay black America'.³⁴ McDiarmid employed in the fabrication of this work what was then an expensive commercial display material—holographic reflective Mylar sheeting—to evoke the sensations, seductions and illusions of the underground dance club. In a 1980 work, itself entitled *Disco Kwilt*, McDiarmid used American pioneer women's quilting patterns—in this case, the 'tumbling block' or 'baby block' pattern—to create a decorative, flashy and consciously 'shallow' work that frankly embraces the excitement of flashing lights, reflective surfaces and the visual, corporeal and spatial mobility of the dance floor (Figure 16.3).

The visual excess of the work evokes the ecstatic and utopian impulses integral to the lyrics and musicality of house music and the gay male identity politics and sociality of this heady time before the first cases of AIDS became public. Unlike the traditional familial quilt, the *Disco Kwilts* collectively proposed a 'beyond-blood' notion of kinship and community—a community that McDiarmid found in the multiracial gay male community of New York.³⁵ The night-time sociality of the dance club, with its intoxicating visual and aural excess and its

collective expression of hip and cool, was captured in these works, which represented quintessentially the New York that McDiarmid sought and found.³⁶

Figure 16.3: David McDiarmid, *Disco Kwilt*, c. 1980.

Reflective holographic Mylar foil on board, 120 cm x 160 cm. Private Collection. Reproduced with permission of the McDiarmid estate.

Conclusion

As gender theorist Elizabeth Grosz writes: 'The city is one of the crucial factors in the social production of sexed corporeality.'³⁷ David McDiarmid's location of himself in New York involved a commitment to the development of a mobile way of being a gay man, an artist and a cultural subject. His early interest in urban American gay culture, his extended presence in New York and his openness to allowing these to act on his performance of a 'hybrid and dialogic' subjectivity³⁸ engendered a personal idiolect in his art produced from 1976 until his death in 1995.

Notes

¹ David McDiarmid, interviewed by Carmela Baranowska, 1992. Transcript in McDiarmid Estate Papers, State Library of New South Wales.

- ² Meskimmon, Marsha 2004, 'Corporeal theory with/in practice: Christine Borland's *Winter Garden*', in G. Perry (ed.), *Difference and Excess in Contemporary Art: The visibility of women's practice*, Blackwell, Malden, Mass., Oxford, UK, and Carlton, Australia, p. 126.
- ³ Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky 1993, *Tendencies*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC, p. xii.
- ⁴ Ross, Andrew 1999, 'Uses of camp', in F. Cleto (ed.), *Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, p. 320.
- ⁵ Barthes, Roland 2000, 'Projets de livres—projected books', in S. Sontag (ed.), *A Roland Barthes Reader*, Vintage, London, p. 420.
- ⁶ David McDiarmid, interviewed by Paul Canning, March 1993. Transcript in McDiarmid Estate Papers, State Library of New South Wales.
- ⁷ Stringer, John 2002, 'Cultivating the field', in J. Smith (ed.), *Fieldwork: Australian art 1968–2002*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, p. 16.
- ⁸ I am grateful to Billy Crawford of the Australia Council for providing a complete list of all Australian artists who have taken up Australia Council-funded residencies at these studios.
- ⁹ Thrift, Nigel 1996, *Spatial Formations*, Sage, London, p. 295.
- ¹⁰ Amin, Ash and Thrift, Nigel 2002, *Cities: Re-imagining the urban*, Polity Press and Blackwell Publishers, Cambridge, p. 23.
- ¹¹ Foster, Hal 1982, 'New York: seven types of ambiguity', in L. Appignesi (ed.), *Brand New York*, Institute of Contemporary Art, London, p. 24.
- ¹² Sennett, Richard 1994, *Flesh and Stone: The body and the city in Western civilization*, Faber and Faber, London and Boston, p. 355.
- ¹³ McDiarmid, David 1972, 'Memoirs of an oppressed teenager', *Sydney Gay Liberation Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 4, Sydney, (no page numbers).
- ¹⁴ Sam Schönbaum, Typescript, in McDiarmid Estate Papers. State Library of New South Wales.
- ¹⁵ Turner, Mark W. 2003, *Backward Glances: Cruising the queer streets of New York and London*, Reaktion Books, London, p. 44.
- ¹⁶ Cooper, Martha and Sciorra, Joseph 1994, *RIP New York Spray Can Memorials*, Thames and Hudson, London.
- ¹⁷ McDiarmid recounted later that he had known Haring socially and he acknowledged that their work intersected; he did not mention Basquiat. David McDiarmid, interviewed by Carmela Baranowska.
- ¹⁸ Chauncey, George 1996, 'Privacy can only be had in public: gay uses of the streets', in J. Sanders (ed.), *Stud: Architectures of masculinity*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, p. 259.
- ¹⁹ Thrift, *Spatial Formations*, p. 295.
- ²⁰ Letter, David McDiarmid (in New York) to Peter Tully (in Sydney), 12–13 May 1977, McDiarmid Estate Papers, State Library of New South Wales.
- ²¹ Cole, Shaun 1997, 'Macho man: clones and the development of a masculine stereotype', *Fashion Theory. Volume 3*, Berg, Oxford, pp. 125–40.
- ²² Wolff, Janet 1995, *Resident Alien: Feminist cultural criticism*, Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, and London, p. 139.
- ²³ Ibid., p. 140.
- ²⁴ Letter, David McDiarmid (in New York) to Peter Tully (in Sydney), 4 May 1977, McDiarmid Estate Papers, State Library of New South Wales.
- ²⁵ Cooper, Emmanuel 1994, *The Sexual Perspective: Homosexuality and art in the last 100 years*, Routledge, London and New York, p. 303.
- ²⁶ Mele, Christopher 2000, *Selling the Lower East Side: Culture, real estate and resistance in New York City*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis and London, pp. 180–219.
- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Ross, 'Uses of camp', p. 314.
- ²⁹ David McDiarmid, interviewed by Carmela Baranowska.
- ³⁰ I borrow these terms from Jean Baudrillard (with Sans, Jerome) 1998, 'New York forever: interview by Jerome Sans with Jean Baudrillard', *Visual Arts and Culture: An international journal of contemporary art*, vol. 1, part 1, pp. 70–6).

³¹ Gray, Sally 2007, 'Reinterpreting a textile tradition: David McDiarmid's ecstatic and utopian *Klub Kwilt*', *Textile History*, vol. 38, no. 2, November, Pasold Research and Maney Publishing, London and Leeds.

³² Fikentscher, Kai 2000, *You Better Work! Underground dance music in New York City*, University Press of New England, Hanover and London, pp. 61–2.

³³ Currid, Brian 1995, 'We are family: house music and queer performativity', in S. Case et al. (eds), *Cruising the Performative: Interventions into the representation of ethnicity, nationality and sexuality*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, p. 178.

³⁴ Gilbert, Jeremy and Pearson, Ewan 1999, *Discographies: Dance music, culture and the politics of sound*, Routledge, New York and London, p. 168.

³⁵ For McDiarmid's idea of 'beyond-blood' kinship, see Gray, S. 2006, *There's always more; the art of David McDiarmid*, PhD thesis, University of New South Wales.

³⁶ Farris Thompson, Robert 1998, 'An aesthetic of cool', in B. Beckley (ed.), *Uncontrollable Beauty: Towards a new aesthetics*, Allworth Press and School of Visual Arts, New York, p. 372.

³⁷ Grosz, Elizabeth 1995, *Space Time and Perversion*, Routledge, London and New York, p. 104.

³⁸ Thrift, *Spatial Formations*, p. 295.