

This is the third chapter in Marian's MA thesis '*Women Murder Women: Case Studies in Theatre and Film*' (2007). Access to the full thesis is available online via the University of Canterbury Library. Or you can contact Marian directly for a copy: [marian@freetheatre.org.nz](mailto:marian@freetheatre.org.nz).

### **REMAKE: PARKER-HULME AND *THE MAIDS***

My coming to write a thesis about why women murder women and how these acts are represented in theatre and film was sparked by my work as an actor in Peter Falkenberg's film, *Remake*. When Peter invited me to work with him on a project based on the Parker-Hulme case, I said yes – not because I had any interest in the case, but because, like Pauline and Juliet, I wanted to be in a film. Like they did, I live in Christchurch and it dissatisfies me. Before I made the film I was as they were, planning to go overseas and star in theatre and films. In exploring the parallels between my life here now and Pauline and Juliet's lives here then, I came to explore my desire for escape through fantasy. Up until my experience of *Remake*, fantasy had worked me into passions which resulted in narcissistic paralysis - a passive waiting for life to happen. Through my exploration of fantasy in *Remake*, the process of looking at myself in a series of mirrors [see appendix H] remade me as an actor not only in a film but in my own life here in Christchurch. This chapter revisits my involvement in *Remake*, testing Peter's proposal that making a film could be like an act of murder, and that my acting a role in this film might be a way to reconsider the experience, actions and desires of Pauline and Juliet as they might be similar to my own.

In *Remake* the Papin and the Parker-Hulme murders were brought together explicitly, as they are in this chapter of my thesis, to see what might be revealed as a result. One of the central aspects of the Parker-Hulme case as revealed in the interest it inspired as subject for representation, is the meeting of fantasy and reality. This is also central to Genet's representation of the Papin sisters in *The Maids*. In bringing these cases together, *Remake* also brings together theatre and film. The play of *The Maids* is a theatrical world, positioned in *Remake* within a filmic exploration of the

relationship between Pauline and Juliet. This hybrid form enables an exploration of the coming together of fantasy and reality in the Parker-Hulme case, in an alternative to *Heavenly Creatures*. I will explore the possibilities of these mergings to present *Remake* as an alternative representation and study of the Parker-Hulme case. As a way of preparing my discussion of the film, I will discuss in detail the merging of fantasy and reality in the lives of Pauline and Juliet and in addition how these elements came together within the trial itself and beyond that into the life of Juliet in her new identity as the writer Anne Perry.

*Remake* is an exploration of the relationship between Pauline Parker and Juliet Hulme through two contemporary actors and a 'remake' of Peter Jackson's film *Heavenly Creatures*. Liz Sugrue, another actress, and I were encouraged by Peter to start researching the lives of Pauline and Juliet as material for a film that he had named *Remake*. He suggested that this was like a search for a Fourth World of our own and that instead of committing a murder we would make a film. Our search for Pauline and Juliet's Fourth World became, in the end, part of the narrative of the film itself.

Peter Falkenberg wanted the creation of the material for the film to be driven by us as actors. He provided us with the opportunity to create in the way Pauline and Juliet created together. He did not want to represent his own fantasy of our relationship but allow us to create a film which reflected our own. In order to attempt this he left us mostly alone for several months allowing us to do things Pauline and Juliet might have done had they lived in Christchurch now, fifty years later. We wrote in diaries over several months which we chose to give to Peter and he used as material. What scripts there are in the film were offered by Liz and me and scenes were developed by all three of us. In this way the material for the film was 'written' and created by Liz and I, in the way Cixous encourages women to write and create as a way of becoming embodied and emancipated. Peter's direction allowed us this freedom to work as actresses in a way that is at odds with the film industry's approach to filmmaking and the approach of Peter Jackson when he made his own film about Pauline and Juliet - he cast his actresses into roles he had already completely developed and

written himself. However, while Peter gave us freedom to research, invent and explore material and present ideas to him, they were ultimately used for his own conception of the film. We were still two women directed by a male and filmed by a cameraman (Shahin Yazdani, the cinematographer, participated in some of our discussions). We were also accompanied by various males in our exploits. This aspect is resolved in and central to the murder we enact at the end of the film.

While Jackson attempted to understand Pauline and Juliet through imitation, *Remake* is an attempt to understand the Parker-Hulme case through a recreation of the essential aspects of it in two different women. For example, the physical characteristics of Pauline and Juliet can be seen to be mirrored in Liz and Marian, where Pauline (the brunette) looks more like Liz and Juliet (the blonde) looks more like Marian. However, Peter did not cast actresses in order to imitate the real Pauline and Juliet and it can be read conversely within the film that Marian in fact takes on more of the tendencies of Pauline and Liz, Juliet.

Central to Pauline and Juliet's fantasies was their experience of the Fourth World that occurred at Port Levy. A trip to Port Levy where we stayed in a cottage by the sea, was central to the experience of Liz and myself, as we spent time together remaking the relationship between Pauline and Juliet. Unfortunately, we could not stay in the same cottage owned by the Hulmes that Pauline and Juliet stayed in. Theirs is privately owned, uninhabited and almost impenetrable with barbed wire and locked gates. We broke in and ate fruit from their garden; we swam in the sea; we read what is available of Pauline's diary; we wrote in our own diaries; we read the transcripts from the trial; we played music together; we played in the bath; we talked to 'Peter' [not our director] at the marae who told us more about Pauline and Juliet's apparent breaching of tapu; we walked in the hills around where they discovered the key to the Fourth World. The days I spent at Port Levy were among the most joyful I have ever experienced. At least I wrote about them that way. So did Pauline in her diary. My interest in making a film slowly developed a fascination with and desire for the relationship I imagined Pauline and Juliet had, and a developing curiosity as to how it led to murder.

Our search for the Fourth World propels the film between two different 'worlds'. The film itself moves between two different aesthetics – the world of the theatre and the world outside it - creating a doubling which is integral to its structure. First I will discuss the theatrical scenes in the film, adapted from *The Maids*. Theatre is a central Fourth World in the film. I had mentioned in my diary, which I gave to Peter occasionally and from which he drew material for the film, that my boyfriend had given me a copy of Genet's *The Maids* as a present a few years before, but that I didn't understand it. He brought this up and said it would be a relevant text to explore in the film as it was about two women who want to murder their Madame and that they play roles and games with each other. As I mentioned, while Peter did not cast Liz or me to play the roles of Pauline and Juliet, it happens that we almost perfectly fitted the characteristics and appearances of Solange and Claire: Solange being the elder, more aggressive brunette and Claire the younger, more passive blonde.

In the film these theatrical scenes are cut together and move between other scenes from Marian and Liz's 'real' lives as they film each other searching for Pauline and Juliet's Fourth World. Our search for the Fourth World in drugs didn't amount to much, but one of my most intoxicating and risk-taking experiences with Liz was going to several Evangelical churches, joining cell groups and trying to experience the 'Fourth World' of God. We also tried praying for each other; we had a séance with some other actors; we watched *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman*; we spent most of a summer in Old Queen's Theatre, an old building that was originally one of the first silent cinemas in Christchurch. Here we talked about our relationships with our parents and with boys, played around, and rehearsed sections of Genet's *The Maids* with Peter, who directed us. In this way, Claire and Solange (based on Christine and Lea), are explored by Liz and Marian who are exploring Pauline and Juliet. Fantasy and reality as explored in the two cases, reflect, mirror and converge upon each other within the structure of the film.

While the theatre scenes are filmed using conventional film techniques and within a film set,

heightening the artificial and constructed nature of the scenes, the 'reality' outside of it follows the approach of the *Dogme 95* filmmakers. This movement, led by Danish filmmaker Lars von Trier, emerged in the mid 90's and was a reaction against the overuse of 'cinematic tricks' to achieve illusion in the cinema. These filmmakers were themselves remaking the ideals of the French New Wave cinema in the 60's with directors such as Jean-Luc Godard and Jacques Rivette, who also vowed a return to a kind of truthfulness in the cinema through a documentary style. Both movements were reactions against the illusions created in the cinema of the Hollywood mainstream. The illusions enabled through the creation of new digital technology, such as that used to create the Fourth World in Jackson's film, was the type of film making that the Dogme95 movement was reacting against.

*Remake* is not the first time the Parker-Hulme and Papin cases have converged. They converged in the life of Melanie Lynskey who played Pauline in *Heavenly Creatures*. On her initial return to New Zealand from Hollywood after her failure to find roles as Kate Winslet had done, Lynskey went to Victoria University and played in a student production of *The Maids* at Bats Theatre. Lynskey does not specify which role she played but her description of it suggests it may have been Solange: "She's a schizophrenic character.... Normally she's very reserved, but she also has these intense moments where she goes a bit crazy and feels such extraordinary emotion.... It's quite intense" (*Wellington Evening Post* 10 March 1997). Perhaps Lynskey was chosen for the role given its similarities to the part of Pauline she played in *Heavenly Creatures*.

Pauline and Juliet have held a mythological status in Christchurch since the trial. This was perpetuated in Jackson's film. They have become gruesome artefacts of history, reproduced each year as a spectacle from the past in full page photo spreads in the Christchurch papers, which never miss an opportunity to republish photos of "one of the city's most infamous murders" that they took of Pauline and Juliet outside the court house in 1954. Genet discussed myth in theatre: "if it is a fact – that the theatre cannot compete with such excessive methods – those of TV and cinema –

writers for the theatre will discover the virtues unique to the theatre, which, perhaps, have to do only with myth" (*Fragments of the Artwork* 107). As with Genet and the Papin sisters, *Remake* can be viewed as examining the myth of Pauline and Juliet in both theatrical and cinematic ways.

Pauline and Juliet found a Fourth World here in Christchurch (or Port Levy) but central to it was a desire to leave. They wanted to go to Hollywood. I was twenty-one when we started making the film. I wanted to go to London after university, get a post-graduate acting diploma and become a character actress in a costume drama. This idea occupied my daydreams. Five years earlier, when I was Pauline and Juliet's age at the time of the murder, my fantasies were more directed towards Hollywood and America, like theirs. I wanted feverishly to be a tap-dancer on Broadway and dreamed of going there to audition. I watched the 1933 film *42<sup>nd</sup> St*, a backstage musical starring Ruby Keeler, as a way to dream of this. Going to Broadway was a very real fantasy that I was determined to carry out and I started going to tap dancing classes and studied singing. I was intoxicated by musicals and would writhe on the floor, ecstatic, singing along to the soundtrack of *Chess*. I wanted to sing like the Australian actress Marina Prior and listened to her cassette tapes religiously. I had a close friendship with a girl from school. We used to talk fervently for hours about our dreams and fantasies. One time at night we had the most glorious time running around outside the Basilica, the Catholic Cathedral. When she first made me listen to a recording of the famous duet from the Italian opera *The Pearl Fishers* I remember being painfully and rapturously in love with it, which coincided with a desire to be in Italy, like (15 year old) 'Alex' from Tessa Duder's New Zealand novel where she goes to Rome and falls in love with an Italian male opera singer and actor. I had a map of Italy on my wall and started learning speech particles out of a book. I wrote in a diary. In many of these ways, my passions can be seen as experienced either by myself or in a close relationship with a girl friend. They were also based strongly on a desire to be somewhere else.

What may have inspired Jackson to make *Heavenly Creatures* is his possible empathy with Pauline and Juliet's similar desire to leave. Jackson represents and packages an exploration of their

passions and fantasies into the form and genres of a Hollywood fantasy which reflects his own. *Heavenly Creatures* is a mirror to Jackson's own desires for the fantasies of Hollywood. In *Heavenly Creatures* we do not see Pauline and Juliet, we see Peter Jackson's fantasy of them and in such a way that we are not made aware that we are seeing this. We are blinded from imagining them in any other way. While Hollywood provided Pauline and Juliet with material for their fantasies, their lives did not necessarily reflect them. In claiming his film as an accurate representation of Pauline and Juliet's lives together, Jackson refuses any acknowledgment that the Fourth World as he created and understands it might not be the one they experienced. The mirror he provides is a delusional one if what he says about a 'truthful' and 'accurate' presentation of the interior lives of Pauline and Juliet is correct. In my view, he is blinded by a mirror of his own narcissism whereas *Remake* shatters this mirror and offers an alternative understanding of Pauline and Juliet and what led to murder. Not only do we 'remake' the case as it was represented by Jackson, but we also remake scenes from other films by the Marx Brothers and Jacques Rivette.

In trying to understand Pauline and Juliet and their desire to leave, which felt so identical to my own, is now the reason that I haven't left and that I now don't want to leave, at least for the reasons that I once did. Making a film about wanting to escape and exploring this desire to escape, made me feel present in a way I have never felt before. It transformed my conception about who I was, from a feeling of invisibility, dependence, lack of culture, obscurity and passivity - an absolute desire to be somewhere else, in my physical self and in my fantasies - to a feeling that all these things might actually contribute to an identity for myself. And that this might also reflect upon and mirror a very real and unique national identity as a New Zealander, based on values and desires attained from elsewhere such as those reflected in the form of Jackson's Hollywood film. *Remake* allowed me to be interested in Christchurch and myself in it - to see myself in it. It allowed me to feel like the world was here and not somewhere else. It acknowledged my dissatisfaction and allowed me a way to live with it - to act and write and create a way out of it, something I never conceived of or imagined before.

During the process of making the film, and through role-playing with Liz, I became more aware of my desire for the possibilities of the creative relationship that I imagined Pauline and Juliet had. I identified with the need to play roles in our theatre in order to understand the roles I play or don't play in my everyday life. We filmed the scenes from *The Maids*, at night on the top floor of an unheated warehouse in the middle of a freezing winter. I didn't think of Christine and Lea, upon whom Claire and Solange are based, alone in their similarly freezing attic, but of Pauline and Juliet who, within an enforced geographical and cultural isolation, isolated and excluded themselves further, and together within this isolation, found a kind of freedom. The theatre Genet creates is a confined space which reveals the world outside of it to be, conversely, in many ways itself a place of confinement. He uses his maids confinement on stage to a bedroom that is not their own to explore their fantasies and desires outside of it, as we did.

Our film felt full of possibility, like the planning of an act of murder perhaps, or the joy of writing as Cixous describes it. I was constantly full of anticipation, fear and excitement. Our film, as it substituted for murder, felt like a provocation. Genet similarly describes writing as a provocation, expressing what may have inspired Cixous' mention of his ability to identify with the feminine: "I wrote for the drunkenness, the ecstasy, and to cut ever more deeply the links that still attached me to a world that rejected me and that I rejected in turn" (White 213).

*Remake* is based on an acknowledgment that an authentic depiction of Pauline and Juliet's relationship and Fourth World is impossible. We attempted to understand their relationship by remaking one of our own. Making *Remake* became my life in a way, because the way Peter directed the film enabled so much of the material for it to come out of our own lives, ideas, passions and dissatisfactions. I wanted to be consumed and consume it. I was dissatisfied with my relationship with Liz because I felt she was not so interested in 'writing' or creating in this way that Cixous encourages. I felt the time and space and opportunity we had been given to explore what felt like so much freedom and excitement was something I wanted to devote myself to. Liz on the other hand

was more reticent and less willing to commit herself to something that promised no more reward than the experience itself. The time she needed to spend by herself 'to not go mad' as she put it, were precisely the times I wanted to be with her in order 'to go mad' - as mad as we might become staring at ourselves in the mirror or gossiping about people from church. Or as "MAD" as Pauline writes that she feels in her diary. Were there similar tensions in the relationship between Pauline and Juliet? This is not apparent from Jackson's film as it was perhaps not the fantasy he had of them.

In *Remake*, instead of being a voyeur into the imagined lives and fantasies of Liz and Marian, the spectator is invited in some scenes, to see from the perspective of Liz and Marian as we see each other and the world. We take up the camera ourselves, filming each other, our parents and our conversations with our boyfriends. When scenes are filmed from the perspective of the cameraman, Shahin's role as cinematographer is acknowledged within those scenes filmed from his perspective. When the scenes are filmed by Shahin, the Fourth World (with the exception of the dream scenes) is not a hallucinatory fantasy of digital effects but a view necessarily from the outside of what Liz and Marian experience. As Jonathon Romney commented in his review of Jackson's film: "A view from the outside might have been another view entirely" (Romney 2). The spectators to *Remake* look both from Liz and Marian's perspective and from the perspective of the cameraman or director. Yet from both perspectives they are on the outside. The spectator cannot see through the eyes of Liz and Marian but only through their own. The fundamental impossibility of filming the subjective experience of Liz and Marian is acknowledged. Similarly, there is no way of knowing for sure what Pauline and Juliet experienced and how it might have led to murder.

The relationship between Pauline and Juliet as depicted in *Heavenly Creatures* is unrecognisable to me when compared to my own experience of the relationship Liz and I created. Our relationship was not full of the melodrama of unrequited devotion and unified happiness abundant in Jackson's film. My fantasy however, of Pauline and Juliet's relationship and in extension Liz and my own within *Remake*, was constantly at odds with its reality, which was often

disappointing, painful and occasionally surprising. What felt, while making the film, like a failure to recreate a relationship like Pauline and Juliet's, revealed to me my own presumptions about what it was and the way my expectations were influenced by Jackson's film. There were pressures on both of us to be doing something else, suspicions and disapprovals about our film from others close to us, a desire for other things, a need to grow up and stop behaving like teenagers, to earn money, to pay rent and to have boyfriends. All these things were constantly affecting our relationship and consequently our film. And yet as these are acknowledged as part of the film, they became interesting and integral to our exploration of Pauline and Juliet within a society fifty years on from the one they inhabited, and not something to be denied or ignored. Some of these aspects were incorporated into the film, in the scenes where Liz and Marian place hidden cameras to film conversations with their parents and film each other on the phone with their boyfriends.

Pauline and Juliet had conflicts with their parents and so Liz and I explored our own. The scenes with Marian's mother tend to focus on the object - her mother's concern with cleanliness and purity, both moral and physical. In coming to choose material for these scenes these concerns must in some ways mirror my own, which means in many ways I am my mother or see myself reflected in my mother when I watch the film. Irigaray's discussion of the mirroring in the relationship between mother and daughter emerges in these scenes, where Marian and her mother both inhabit the same cinematic frame and yet are opposed and cannot communicate within it: "But we have never, never spoken to each other. And such an abyss now separates us that I never leave you whole, for I am always held back in your womb. Shrouded in shadow. Captives of our confinement" ("And the One Doesn't Stir without the Other" 67). This is emphasised in one scene where Marian and her mother (played by Helen Moran) are watching a scene from *Heavenly Creatures* when Pauline and Juliet are in the bath talking about murder. Marian has set the camera up on top of the television and provokes her mother into a conversation about Pauline and Juliet's relationship as depicted in *Heavenly Creatures*. Her mother comments: "I'm glad you're not a homosexual, I don't know what I would have done about that". Marian actively reveals her mothers' homophobia and perhaps

something of herself, for the spectator. This bath scene in *Heavenly Creatures* is suggestive of a lesbian relationship. In *Remake* we 'remake' this bath scene but instead of planning murder in it, Liz films Marian talking about her boyfriend.

If Liz and my exploration within *Remake* was a way of finding out what Pauline and Juliet experienced together, then I can say resolutely that they were not lesbians. But why do I feel the need to say that? My vehemence must be a reaction against the assumptions and insinuations made by most people about Pauline and Juliet's relationship and as I never realized when we were making the film, fears about Liz and my own. It is more than my puritan fear of the abject connotations. It is a fury that an intimacy, like any intimacy, so precious in its inability to be explained or understood especially by myself, and that at times provided so much joy and freedom because of this, could be judged and explained and understood by others in such reductive terms. What it revealed to me about this society is a perverse and unacknowledged obsession with sexuality, resulting in the voyeurism and titillation inherent in so many of the representations of both cases in this thesis, which can only emerge out of repression. I am sure my own vehement denial of lesbianism is a reflection of this and comes out of being a part of this culture myself. Medlicott describes Pauline and Juliet's playacting during the trial as proof of their insanity: "the choice of male partners in dreams and in play acting was simply a disguise" ("Paranoia of the Exalted Type..." 222). My fascination with Genet's play is in his acknowledgment that everything is a disguise, a role, sometimes chosen and sometimes imposed by others, and in his refusal to define any essential or constant sexuality or identity. This creates ambivalence for Claire and Solange where it is impossible to pin down a definitive reading of homosexuality or insanity such as Medlicott provides for Pauline and Juliet.

Another way of coming to remake Pauline and Juliet's relationship during the making of our film, was to sit in front of the mirror to their fantasies and desires – Hollywood. By watching the films they watched, by sitting in front of this mirror and looking into the reflection, our experience

might have things in common to their own. In a way we entered into Sartre's notion of the whirligig in his discussion of *The Maids*, where Liz and I were ourselves vicariously attempting to play the roles of Pauline and Juliet. Pauline and Juliet's plan to go to Hollywood reflects a desire to get to the source of these Hollywood fantasies and enter into them. It is ironic that they eventually did, in Jackson's representation. Angela Carter in her screenplay uses Nerissa and Lena's desires for Hollywood (as they stand in for Pauline and Juliet) to stand in for a Fourth World also.

Their desire for murder or 'moider', as Orson Welles in a film they watched coined it, can be seen as inextricably linked to these films that they saw. One of these was *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman*. Pauline describes watching the film in her diary: "It is the most perfect story I have ever known. The best picture (easily) that I have ever seen. Pandora is the most beautiful female imaginable and Him is far too wonderful to attempt to describe. I feel depressed and will probably cry tonight" ("Pauline Parker's personal diary" 14 December 1953). It is set in Spain, with flamenco, Spanish people and bullfighting – this evokes my own desire for the exotic as it might be experienced overseas and perhaps did for them as well. The film stars James Mason and Ava Gardner. James Mason was declared one of Pauline and Juliet's Saints. His character in the film, the Flying Dutchman, recalls in flashback, a murder he once committed and for which he received the punishment of immortality. He stands in court, in front of the judge and declares: "The evil is done and cannot be undone. The bloody death I still shall do and do again ten thousand times before I hang tomorrow". Then he blasphemes Christianity, crying out: "Faith is a lie and God himself is chaos!". Pauline and Juliet like any other person watching the film were exposed to blasphemy and murder in the form of their cinematic idol.

Pauline and Juliet were also presented with images in these films of women that they perhaps desired to be. Ava Gardner in this film plays Pandora: "the secret Goddess that all men in their hearts desire". Pandora is a glamorous and beautiful woman who many men would love to marry, but she is dissatisfied and dispassionate towards them. She travels the world, London, New

York and Spain, searching for something that inspires her passion, playing the piano and singing in nightclubs. The Flying Dutchman (James Mason) is the one for whom she has been fated and has been waiting for. She gives up her life for him to relieve him of his immortality, enacting the phrase echoed throughout the film: "The measure of love is what one is willing to give up for it". Murder and suicide are represented here as consummate acts of passion and are also central to Genet's play.

My own reaction to *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman* as a way of guessing at the reaction of Pauline or Juliet, was a fascination with Ava Gardner and not particularly with James Mason. It was a narcissistic fascination and a vicarious desire to be as free and reckless as her as reflected in the scene at night when she abandons her boring fiancé, sheds her clothes on the beach and dives into the sea swimming out to the mysterious yacht without any idea who is inside it. She seeks adventure, danger and abandon. She heads for the sea as Cixous does. Perhaps Pauline and Juliet felt a similar way. Pauline writes of midnight swims they had at New Brighton. The degree of risk involved in sneaking out at night and riding their bicycles perhaps increased the enjoyment. Liz and I had a wonderful time swimming at Port Levy.

As I discussed in my first chapter, films can be considered psychoanalytically as dreamlike experiences where unconscious desires are played out on the screen. Conversely, the films the girls watched may have influenced their unconscious fantasies. Seven days before the murder Pauline wrote about a dream she had in which That and Gay and Boinard (Saints and presumably characters from their novels) joined her and Juliet at Port Levy: "It was so heavenly that I am determined to make it come true" ("Pauline Parker's personal diary" 15 June 1954). She continues: "We came home late and we intend to sleep. It is a glorious night, very similar to the one at the island at Port Levy" (15 June 1954). Here she speaks of a dream that she intends to recreate in reality while describing reality as being similar to the place that inspired the dream. Fantasy, reality and dreams

are completely merged in her writing. It seems clear that they are becoming more and more infused or confused with each other.

I had a dream while we made *Remake* that I slipped down to the edge of the sea at dawn and the water was frightening but there were two girls swimming further out which reassured me. I got in just long enough to submerge myself and felt totally blissful and awakened. I had another dream during this time where I was standing on the edge of a wharf and wanting to jump into the sea but there was again something dangerous about the water. My mother was there enticing me to jump in by holding out a lolly. I was deeply suspicious of her. The water in my dreams and in many of my fantasies was a sensual desire kept at bay by fear of something unseen and lurking in the depths. Water is often associated with the feminine as Cixous shows in her essay "Aller a la mer". Irigaray in her discussion of divine women, describes how "Our passions are transformed or transform us into phenomena that can be watery or heavenly..." (*Sexes and Genealogies* 58). Pauline echoes this in her description of the Fourth World in her diary where the sea is a central feature.

We recorded our dreams in our diaries as Pauline did, to use as material for the film. Both Liz and I had a dream scene. Marian's dream scene is once again associated with water as a 'remake' of Waterhouse's painting of Ophelia floating on her back, surrendering herself to suicide. Her body is a life-sized doll – a double or fake of myself. We floated it in the stream by Juliet Hulme's old house at Ilam, which is now the University Staff Club. Peter Jackson used this stream in his film in one scene at night when Pauline and Juliet are having a ceremony for their Saints in the garden. In his film there is a close-up shot of a picture of Orson Welles being sucked ominously into the rapids. We remake this shot but instead Marian's fake body gets sucked into the waterfall. This dream scene is a foreshadowing of a possible death, suicide or murder within the film.

As revealed in Pauline's diary, she and Juliet shared their Fourth World with eight 'Saints'. Her list of these (all male) Saints included James Mason as I mentioned. In Pauline's description of their Fourth World she specifies that only ten people can go there. These eight Saints plus Pauline

and Juliet themselves equal the number of people that, twice a year, would be able to enter the Fourth World. Their list of Saints is made up of male actors and singers as well as fictional characters who appear in films. No preference or distinction therefore, is made between real life and fiction in their Fourth World. In an attempt to understand how they imagined this world, I will discuss these Saints in more detail.

In anticipation of seeing James Mason in *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman* Pauline wrote: "I was living in a daze waiting to see" ("Pauline Parker's personal diary" 14 December 1953) suggesting she was in some way in love with him. Another Saint is the villainous character Rupert of Hentzau (played by James Mason, already a Saint in his identity as an actor) from the 1952 *Prisoner of Zenda* also starring Deborah Kerr. 'Deborah' was a name Pauline used to refer to Juliet in her diary. Another Saint was Suie Bjuling who appears to be the misspelling of Swedish tenor Jussi Bjoerling. Mario Lanza was another Saint, an opera singer and actor who starred in several Hollywood films including the 1951 *The Great Caruso* where he played the role of the real life opera singer Enrico Caruso – in this film he was starring as himself in the role of another real-life singer, merging real life and fantasy within the film itself. Their Saints perhaps reflected their own passion as artists and imagined criminals.

The merging of reality and fantasy within the films they watched, as reflected in their choice of Saints is distinctive. Another of their eight Saints is Mel Ferrer, an American actor who starred with Ava in *Knights of the Round Table* in 1952. It is possible Pauline and Juliet saw him and Ava in this film, as it often took up to two years for films to come New Zealand after their initial release. They may also have seen Ferrer in the musical *Lili* released in 1953. Here he plays a puppeteer who conducts a relationship with a girl through her interactions with the puppets he manipulates. She naively engages with them as if they were real, becoming a part of his show. Mel Ferrer appeared in a third film a year earlier that it is also possible they saw. *Scaramouche* is about the back stage and front stage lives of a group of Commedia del arte actors. In both *Lili* and *Scaramouche*, reality and

fantasy, life and art, are merged and confused by the protagonists. Another of Pauline and Juliet's Saints is listed as Monsieur de la Tour d'Azyr. He does not appear in the film of *Scaramouche* but is a central character in the novel by Rafael Sabatini upon which it is based. It appears that Pauline and Juliet must have read this novel. Another Saint was Guy Rolfe a British actor known for playing villainous characters.

Their final Saint is the character Harry Lime whom they called 'It', played by Orson Welles in *The Third Man* in 1949. This film is used in *The Christchurch Murder* and *Heavenly Creatures* as a reference to Pauline and Juliet's adoration of Orson Welles. Pauline recorded in her diary that she and Juliet went to watch a film with 'It' in it on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June 1954. This was eleven days before the murder. Pauline's plan to murder her mother was first mentioned in her diary on April 28th so the murder had been planned at the time they saw this film, four weeks before. Both girls appear to have been in a heightened state of excitement. After they see the film Pauline reports:

"It was the first time I had ever seen It. Deborah had always told me how hideous he was, and I had believed her, though from his photos he did not look too bad. 'It' is appalling. He is dreadful. I have never in my life seen anything that, so... in the same category of hideousness, but I adore him (S'queer). We returned home and talked for some time about It, getting ourselves more and more excited. Eventually we enacted how each Saint would make love in bed, only doing the first seven as it was 7:30a.m. by then. We felt exhausted and very satisfied..." ("Pauline Parker's personal diary" 11 June 1954).

This film they saw with 'It' in it however, was not *The Third Man* as Carter and Jackson suggest, but another lesser known film *Trent's Last Case*. Orson Welles is in this film but plays a character called Sigsbee Manderson. While 'It' was one of their Saints, Pauline mentions above that *Trent's Last Case* was the first time she had ever seen 'It'. This reveals that she actually never saw *The Third Man* and the choice of the character Harry Lime from it as a Saint must have been Juliet's, as it appears she had seen it. The fact that Pauline refers to 'It' not only as the character that Orson Welles played in *The Third Man*, but as the actor himself in this other film, shows how within her own logic, she has mixed up fictional characters with real actors and fantasy with reality.

Both Pauline and Juliet, after their five years of imprisonment, were required to form new identities new names and new lives – to create new fictional selves in order to erase their former identities. Juliet’s new identity is as Anne Perry, the author of crime fiction. On her website she merges fact and fiction in a playful and mysterious way to account for the period of her life in New Zealand: “After the Bahamas they [her parents] moved to a private island off the coast of New Zealand, where I lived a Swiss Family Robinson style of independence. We did a lot of fishing, building, boating etc” (“Anne Perry Website”). She invokes fiction in order to present her life as biographical truth. She continued to play with fiction and fantasy perhaps, as she played with Pauline.

Juliet is mysterious to me in the sense that her diary was destroyed<sup>1</sup>. Her own thoughts have been obscured by the emphasis and fascination with Pauline’s words. And what was made available of these during the trial is limited to that which associated them with murder and insanity. One of the only passages available from their novels is: “I would like to kill someone sometime because I think it is an experience that is necessary to life” (“Fourth World – The Heavenly Creatures Website”). While Perry’s life is not a part of the film *Remake*, my fascination with her arose out of it and so I will examine further the fiction she created in her new identity, as a possible way to discover her voice.

A lot of attention has been paid to Perry’s *Inspector Pitt* series of novels set in Victorian times. Before her previous identity as Juliet was discovered upon the release of Jackson’s film, she wrote of her interest in writing these novels in a 1991 entry in *Twentieth-Century Crime and Mystery Writers*: “I see mysteries as stories of what happens to people and communities under the pressure of fear and suspicion, especially the violent changes in perceptions and relationships brought about by investigation.... There are so many understandable motives for crime, social ills, injustices, many of which are with us today” (Borck and DeCandido 842). Inspector Pitt’s wife Charlotte and her

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<sup>1</sup> Pauline’s diary is held at the National Archives and a recent act was passed to permanently prevent public access to it.

younger sister Emily work behind the scenes to solve his crimes often without his knowledge. They are sisters yet live within different classes, as Charlotte married beneath herself to marry Inspector Pitt and Emily conversely married upward in society. Helga Borck and GraceAnne A. DeCandido write about Perry's novels three years before the public revelation of Perry's former identity: "The relationship between Charlotte and Emily, with their vastly different lifestyles and shared interests, is wonderfully depicted" (842).

In her detective novels then, Perry has created a relationship between Charlotte and Emily that perhaps mirrors her own as Juliet with Pauline, in their different class positions but also one that reflects their desire to be sisters as mentioned in their poem and alluded to by Dr Bennett in the trial. Emily and Charlotte are of course allusions to the names of the real life sisters and writers Emily and Charlotte Bronte. Through fiction, perhaps Anne Perry began to explore and attempt to understand what had happened to her. She appears to have found a way to live vicariously as a writer, through the roles of the characters in her novels much like she did with Pauline in her earlier life: "Perry's interest lies in showing how individuals in a restrictive society with rigid notions of status and propriety may respond to pressures to conform, and how society in turn protects its interests in the face of deviation or rebellion" (843). Borck and DeCandido mention that in one novel, *Silence in Hanover Close*, Emily masquerades as a lady's maid. If Emily stands for Anne Perry or Juliet (as the sister who married upwards) then Juliet/Perry plays at 'playing' a maid in her novel just as Solange/Liz and Claire/I did in *Remake*.

*Trent's Last Case*, that I mentioned as possibly the last film they saw before the murder, has significant connections to the life of Juliet in her new identity as Anne Perry that are ignored by its dismissal in the screenplay and film of Carter and Jackson, due possibly, to its apparent insignificance. This film is based on a mystery/detective novel by E.C. Bentley. Philip Trent is a detective and he appears as the main protagonist in a series of novels by Bentley. The plot of *Trent's Last Case* involves a high society woman accused of murdering her husband (played by Orson

Welles). Trent thinks he has solved the case but gets it wrong and his errors are revealed to him by the real perpetrator of the crime. This film and its origin, as the first in a series of detective novels, parallels the detective murder mystery novels of Anne Perry. Her protagonists, Inspector Pitt and Detective Monk, are fallible and human like Philip Trent. In Perry's second series of crime fiction, Inspector Monk wakes up in the first novel *The Face of a Stranger* to find he has lost his memory. He goes back to work and in the process of solving a murder case discovers he has committed a murder himself that he had forgotten. This perhaps parallels the way Perry feels about her own experience of murder, as something she cannot understand and part of a life and identity that is separate from her new one.

The book on which *Trent's Last Case* is based is dedicated to a close friend of E.C. Bentley, writer G.K. Chesterton. Anne Perry in her entry in *Twentieth Century Crime and Mystery Writers* states that her favourite novel is by Chesterton, *The Man Who Was Thursday*. Chesterton's novel is classified as a thriller. The plot involves a meeting of anarchists who are all gradually revealed to be undercover detectives. It is about mistaken identity and the playing of roles. Orson Welles is also noted by one source to be a great admirer of Chesterton, who was very religious (as Anne Perry also became). Chesterton was fascinated by the occult and in this novel by nihilism and anarchy.

Perry published a story in 1988 in Alfred Hitchcock's *Mystery Magazine*, called *Digby's First Case*, what appears to be an allusion to *Trent's Last Case*, the film she watched 34 years earlier with Pauline. Digby's was the name of the secretarial college that Pauline's mother forced her to leave school for and enrol in. There is also a character in a novel Perry wrote the year before in her 1988 novel *Cardington Crescent*, a housekeeper called Mrs Digby ("Fourth World – The Heavenly Creatures Website"). What is most fascinating to me is that Perry still alludes to her old life with Pauline. She makes references to it which she possibly never imagined would be discovered or would be meaningful to anyone but herself. The fact that the film they watched and that propelled them on towards murder should so closely echo the fiction she created afterwards shows her

determination not to abandon the creative life she discovered for herself through her relationship with Pauline. It suggests that the murder didn't shatter any illusions she might have had or the 'madness' they shared, but in fact only propelled her even further to explore or understand the possibilities of what enabled her to commit the murder.

For Perry, fiction appears to have replaced murder as an act of writing herself, as Cixous might have conceived it. My exploration of these parallels has only uncovered more and more layers of mystery in the connections between Perry's own life and that of her fictional characters. Her life is a mystery not only to those trying to uncover it but also perhaps to herself. The more the truth is sought the further away it hides, as was revealed to Trent in the film they watched and to the protagonists in the novels Perry went on to write. Any truths that are uncovered are embedded in an ambivalence created by layers of fiction. In her mystery and fantasy writing, perhaps she tried to uncover truths both for herself and her characters. The merging and inextricability of fantasy and reality is still central to her life in the way it appears to have been before the murder in her relationship with Pauline.

While Perry's career has been largely built on crime fiction, in 1999 she published her first fantasy novel, *Tathea*. She expresses in it what appears to be a very genuine desire to understand what happened to her in her real life. This was the first novel she starting writing in her twenties but was never published. She went back to her manuscripts and completed it nearly fifty years later. She says of *Tathea* and its sequel *Come Armageddon*, that they, "reflect more than anything else I have written, my religious and philosophical beliefs, and therefore I care about them in a unique way" ("Anne Perry Website"). It also may provide some idea of the novels that she and Pauline wrote together and which have been made unavailable to the public and possibly destroyed.

*Tathea* is an oriental fantasy. Tathea's land is in the desert. Guy Rolfe, one of Pauline and Juliet's Saints, starred in the 1953 film *The Veils of Baghdad*. It is possible they saw this film which explored Western fantasies of the orient. In Perry's novel, Tathea is the Empress of Shinabar. In the

trial it was revealed that the 'Empress of Volumnia' was a title given to one of Pauline and Juliet's characters from their own novels. The novel begins as Tathea wakes in the night to discover her entire family have been murdered by usurpers to her reign of sovereignty. She escapes on horseback in the night and rides for days across deserts riding alone and with caravans, trying to escape the enemy. She heads towards the sea so she can sail back towards her mother's land to seek refuge. Here she has to renounce her old identity and come to terms with her grief and what she describes repeatedly as a deep loneliness: "'Everyone I loved is gone, everything I thought I knew,' she replied simply. 'I want to know if there is any meaning in life. Why do I exist? Who am I?'" (Perry 40).

If this is interpreted biographically, at the outset at least, Perry has reversed the murder onto the society that condemned her and Pauline and forced her eviction from everything she knew. She has positioned herself as if she was a reigning sovereign of a society which has usurped her reign unjustly. In this novel it is society who has committed murder – society who is the criminal. This echoes the surrealists' position in relation to the Papin case. Tathea's journey to her "mother's land" seems to represent England and possibly Perry's return there after her prison sentence, but is curiously described like New Zealand: "her mother was from the Lost Lands, those shores beyond the Maelstrom to the south of the Island at the Edge of the World, where not even the bravest Shinabari mariner dared sail" (20). Tathea's journey then is a reversal of Perry's escape in real life. Her mother's land is located geographically as Christchurch. It is here she seeks the truth and will encounter all kinds of evil in her journey to seek it.

It appears Pauline and Juliet's act of murder could have had very different implications for both of them. If this novel is seen as a mirroring to the feelings of Juliet's/Perry's feelings about the murder, she appears anxious to re-establish a bond with her mother that appears to have been broken. In this book it is her own mother who has been unjustly murdered (along with the rest of her family). Once in the new land Tathea seeks out a priest who counsels her and asks her what she loved most that is gone: "She began with her mother. This was her place. A hundred things came to

mind, both of joy and of sorrow" (35). She performs a ritual with the priest to deal with this loss: "The pain of grief did not go, but it became less sharp. She found companionship and much to learn. There was a deep comfort in growing close to the other half of her heritage. With every passing day she felt a deepening of the bond between her [murdered] mother and herself" (37). Perhaps the murder of Pauline's mother was a substitute for Juliet's own? Irigaray's discussion of the mirroring relationship between mother and daughter, the prison they find themselves in and the desire to break free, seems relevant here. If the murder was a break with the ties of 'Mother England', Perry is eager to reattach them. This could be interpreted two ways both psychoanalytically and politically: either she is remorseful and wishes to undo the splitting of herself from her mother or she wishes to form a new bond with her mother perhaps in the way Irigaray encourages.

The way Perry plays (in my reading of her fiction) with the exploration of truth within fantasy as a kind of game, seems to me on reflection, as similar to the construction of *Remake*, which plays games with the spectator in terms of the narrative and which can be seen as a series of games most obviously apparent in the scenes from *The Maids*. The games Juliet played with Pauline perhaps Perry plays now by herself in her fantasy world of fiction. With Pauline, she escaped the real world into the fantasies of Hollywood as she now escapes into her novels. In fantasy, it can be proposed; she finds desire for herself in the real world. In a significant sequence from the novel, Tathea defends the evil Cassiodorus in a trial which could be seen as a reversal of Juliet's position in her own trial, enabling Perry perhaps to regard her old self in a mirror. Perry describes these two novels as: "Still the most difficult things I have ever written. I delved very far into my own beliefs, stripped naked, for the journey. Maybe I could not have written it any earlier in my life" (Douglas). *Remake* is also an exploration of the truth that can be found in fantasy or in the theatre, as a way of exploring the illusions and fantasies that pervade real life.

Even within the real trial of Pauline and Juliet, fiction was invoked by both the defence and prosecution. Pauline and Juliet's poem *The Ones That I Worship* was used by Dr Bennett to prove

insanity. He read from the poem: "There are living among two beautiful [this is transcribed incorrectly and the actual word in the poem is 'dutiful'] daughters, of a man who possesses two beautiful daughters...[sic]". Bennett highlights its deviation from fact because they are not sisters, and states how "it illustrates the extraordinary mood of the authors" (*The Press* 27 August 1954). Pauline and Juliet's desire to be sisters of the same mother, parallels the Papin case where Christine and Lea were actually sisters whose murder has been interpreted by many as the murder of a substitute mother. As I discussed, Perry recreates fictional sisters in her novels, which reflects this desire and are derived from real life sisters and writers. Their fiction used in the trial revealed a truth that was used to prove insanity.

Their fiction was also used however, to prove their sanity. The Crown Prosecutor Alan Brown, whose role it was to prove Pauline and Juliet sane, responded to Bennett's use of the poem to prove them mad, by quoting some lines from Shakespeare: "'Not marble nor the gilded monuments/ Of princes shall outlive this powerful line' ....Shakespeare wrote a lot of tragedies full of murder. Would you call him a genius?" (*The Press* 27 August 1954). Dr Bennett acknowledged: "Yes". Mr Brown continued to use Shakespeare as an analogy to prove that Pauline and Juliet's writing was not so different to other writers who were not mad. He describes *The Rape of Lucrece* being like the girls' novels as it is also full of sex (*The Press* 27 August 1954). As I mentioned in Chapter Two, Bennett invoked Shakespeare in his reference to Lady Macbeth as an example of remorse, using it to compare to Pauline and Juliet. Brown argues this point: "Did not Lady Macbeth welcome Duncan to the castle on the evening before his death?" and "Was she not calm and calculated throughout?" (*Christchurch Star* 27 August 1954). Brown claims here that Pauline and Juliet were as sane and therefore 'bad' as Lady Macbeth who was an accessory to murder. The fact that Lady Macbeth goes mad and kills herself at the end of the play is ignored.

Bennett uses Biblical figures and fictional characters from Shakespeare to prove the insanity of Pauline and Juliet, and Brown likewise draws on the same fiction to prove them sane. Brown

brought up Bennett's description of the girls behaviour after the murder as an "act". Bennett had presumably tried to equate their fantasy world with acting to prove the delusional nature of the murder. Brown challenges him on this point asking him: "When Parker worked about the house and mother was charmed with her, was that an act?" Bennett replied: "Yes it was. It was deceit. It had an element of Judas Iscariot in it" (*The Press* 28 August 1954). Iscariot is one of the twelve Apostles who betrayed Jesus. Brown disputes this comparison arguing that Iscariot was sane and not mad in his act of deceit: "Was not Judas Iscariot cool and calm when he took bread and wine with our Lord?" (*The Press* 28 August 1954). How fantasy or fiction may be used to shed light on reality and the possible confluence of these aspects in the murder itself, is curiously reflected and disputed in the proceedings within the courtroom.

One of the most fascinating developments after the trial was the impact it had on the life of Crown Prosecutor Alan Brown himself. Glyn Strange, in his account of the lives of Barristers in Christchurch, describes the life of Brown in dramatic terms as a "tragedy" intricately attached to the Parker-Hulme case: "Although an experienced prosecutor, Alan Brown found it difficult to distance himself from this trial. As the father of two daughters whom he had successfully seen through the teenage years, he could scarcely believe what he was hearing. He was so shocked that tears were rolling down his face during cross-examination" (Strange 35). Strange notes that after the trial, Brown's "mental health collapsed" and he was forced to cease practice and died seven years later: "The tragedy of his illness was his complete lack of awareness of any problem. He could not accept that there was anything abnormal about his behaviour which, at its worst, severely embarrassed clients, colleagues and family" (Strange 35-36). The man in the position of proving the girls' sanity seems to have gone mad himself.

Whether he went mad or not it seems clear that he was profoundly affected by the case. Pauline and Juliet's amoral and antisocial behaviour was used by Medlicott to diagnose insanity, but in the end this did not prove it to the jury. Alan Brown, like Pauline and Juliet, also denied he was

mad. It can be seen that in his examination of witnesses and the defence, Brown revealed the illogic of the plea for insanity. In doing so he revealed the logic of the crime itself and its inability to be easily explained or comprehended. In his cross-examination of Dr Bennett, Brown pointed to a question that can be seen as one of the central fascinations with the case and which possibly so deeply perplexed him: "They read and wrote tragedy, play-acted, and enacted a real killing?" (*The Press* 27 August 1954).

If what Strange says is true and Brown was moved to tears, it would appear he didn't demonise the girls and didn't judge them initially, but instead was trying to rationalize and explain what had happened. If he identified as a father because he also had two daughters, then his cross-examination of Bennett's use of the poem I have already mentioned, may have profoundly affected him: "There are living among two beautiful [dutiful] daughters of a man who possesses two beautiful daughters...[sic]" (*The Press* 27 August 1954). The next line that Bennett doesn't include is: "the most glorious beings in creation" (*The Press* 27 August 1954). These lines suggest that under a façade of obedience and charm something lies hidden that the 'man' or father has no comprehension or understanding of. Perhaps Brown's breakdown came out of his attempt to identify and understand something, which came into conflict with the morals and values that he held not only in his personal life but in his very incarnation (or 'role' as Genet might describe it) as Prosecutor for the Crown - the man whose job it was to enforce these morals and values that govern society. Brown's "collapse" of mental health has the appearance of behaviour that is pronounced insane because of its anti-social and amoral nature, as Foucault understood madness. It is fascinating here the way in which the themes within the case had effect outside of it. The same can be said of *Remake* where our cameraman's refusal to see that he was playing a role had consequences that were reflected in the film.

Like Brown, Medlicott's involvement and fascination with the case also continued after the trial and his initial paper on it. In his 1970 paper "An examination of the necessity for a concept of

evil: some aspects of evil as a form of perversion”, he drew further comparisons of it to fiction which I discussed in the second chapter. In both additional examples the evil arises from the desire for, and evil use of, poison by the protagonists. In Louis Stevenson’s novel, Dr Jekyll drank poison to transform himself into the evil Mr Hyde and in Cocteau’s novel Paul receives fatal poison from the evil Dargelos. Medicott quotes from Cocteau: “Dargelos had not forgotten the abject slave who once hung on his lips; this gift of poison was the crowning stroke of his derision” (“An examination of evil...” 275). Poisoned tea is central to the final murder/suicide in Genet’s play. According to one source, Perry stated that Dostoevsky was a favourite writer, which is ironic given Medicott’s use of Dostoevsky’s characters to compare Pauline and Juliet to evil in his case study. The characters that Pauline and Juliet liked were generally the evil ones (as reflected in their choice of Saints).

Medicott also compares Pauline and Juliet to the writing of Marquis de Sade who “no doubt had positive qualities, but many of his characters pursued evil as a conscious choice” (275). He describes de Sade’s characters as “‘driven’ or insatiable in their desire for pleasure. Their intense hatred of mature femininity and of reproduction is a striking feature of their personalities” (275-6). His disapproval of this aspect of de Sade’s characters can be linked to Pauline and Juliet’s rejection of the mother figure in the act of murder.

As I discussed before, Angela Carter conversely evokes the libratory potential of de Sade’s characters and it is these qualities no doubt that influenced her own representation of Pauline and Juliet. It is possible to read Genet’s characters of Claire and Solange (and possibly as I mentioned earlier Marian and Liz) through Carter’s reinterpretation of de Sade’s Justine and Juliette. They are archetypes of femininity in a puritan world “whose identities have been defined exclusively by men” (*The Sadeian Woman* 77). Genet’s creation of Claire is almost identical to the way Carter describes Justine in de Sade’s writing: “narcissistically enamoured of the idea of herself as Blessed Virgin, she has no notion at all of who she is except in fantasy” (73). I felt, while playing the role of Claire that Claire’s playing of Madame was a way of rebelling against her passivity. She experienced this

passivity in a similar way to Justine as she is described by Carter in de Sade's novels: "repression is Justine's whole being – repression of sex, of anger and of her own violence; the repressions demanded of Christian virtue" (48-9). Carter describes Justine as a "stabbed dove" and suggests: "It is not rape but seduction she fears" (49). Solange describes Claire and simultaneously Madame as she is incarnated in Claire, in similar terms: "Madame has a lovely throat. The throat of a queen. Of a dove. Come, my turtle dove!" (*The Maids* 36). In Christianity the dove is a symbol of peace and of the Holy Spirit and so it is fitting that Genet wrings its throat when Solange intends to strangle Claire near the end of the play. Carter notes the real price Justine pays for her virtue: "solitary confinement in the prison of her own femininity" (*The Sadeian Woman* 50) which is similar to the prison Irigaray describes for women.

De Sade's Juliette is Justine's antithesis and can be seen as Genet's Solange – she is cruel and sexually active. Juliette was educated in the convent (like Christine Papin) and she also murders: "Her initiation is completed by a murder, for the convent is also a Sadeian place of privilege where everything is permissible" (82). Carter describes both Justine and Juliet and the way they "mutually reflect and complement one another, like a pair of mirrors" (78). It seems clear to me that Carter's exploration of these Sadeian characters infused her interest in the exploration of the femininities of Pauline and Juliet in her screenplay. Carter, as I mentioned in my introduction, speaks of the 'murder' necessary for free women within an unfree society. There are parallels between Perry's use of fantasy in her writing and Carter's interest in the case in her own use of it as a writer. Carter's writing could also be seen as her search for a Fourth World in fantasy.

In the light of the way fantasy emerged from the case to infiltrate reality and vice versa, I will now discuss how *Remake* explores this realm of fantasy that seems so central to the lives of Pauline and Juliet. Genet embraces fiction and the fake in order to seek out truths. Often a lot more is revealed in fiction or in the theatre, than can be expressed in everyday life. The Fourth World of theatre and *The Maids* within *Remake*, is a world of escape, separate and distinguished from the rest

of the film, which is set in 'reality'. It is a space differentiated by its acting style and cinematography. Everything is highly artificial and designed to show its construction. In this theatrical world Liz and Marian play the roles of 'Claire' and 'Solange' just as in *Heavenly Creatures* Pauline and Juliet play the roles of 'Gina' and 'Deborah'.

This role-playing and world of theatre, is cut into by scenes from the 'reality' of Liz and Marian outside of it. This provides a mirroring effect. The connections must be made by the spectator which gives them an active role of making sense of the film or the murder mystery; they must search for the 'truth' in the film similarly to the way Liz and Marian simultaneously search for the Fourth World within it. The blurring and spilling over of 'fantasy' and 'reality', which enabled a reading of schizophrenia and paranoid delusion in Jackson's film, does not occur in Falkenberg's. While the theatrical Fourth World in *Remake* does spill over into the 'real' world in the form of props and costumes, Liz and Marian never role-play Claire and Solange outside of this theatrical Fourth World. Unlike in Jackson's film, there is an established difference between both worlds. Paradoxically, it is this clear distinction between these worlds, which enables connections to be made.

Within the context of *Remake*, *The Maids* means it cannot be read as something on its own but only in the context of the other 'real life' scenes which cut in and out of it. This can be seen in some ways as similar to Christopher Miles' film version of Genet's play. While *The Maids* itself draws no distinction between the real world and the world of fantasy, in the context of *Remake*, it is in the 'real' world and within the conceit of the film, that Liz and Marian perform Claire and Solange in the theatre. This adds a layer of meaning to Genet's play that might not exist in other productions of it. It challenges the notion that the theatre is separate from the real world and somehow less revealing of 'truth' than the 'reality' outside of it. In turn this 'reality' can be seen conversely as constructed or fake – the 'reality' it projects being a potential illusion. This is where the use of *The Maids* in *Remake* deviates from its use in Christopher Miles' film, which used 'reality' as an illustrative back-story. The

fact that the role-playing and fantasy lives of Pauline and Juliet were intricately connected to their real lives opens up possibilities within *Remake* to explore such a connection.

The use of *The Maids* in particular, within the context of an exploration of the Parker-Hulme murder, provides an alternative to Medlicott's psychoanalytic interpretation of the case. *The Maids* and its ritual form connote the rituals and ceremonies performed by Pauline and Juliet in their real lives. Medlicott connected Pauline and Juliet's immoral behaviour to his diagnosis of insanity, giving as evidence their blasphemous use of Christian imagery, their creation of saints, and their "various ceremonies", where "their moral values became reversed and they embraced evil as good" ("Paranoia of the Exalted Type..." 219). These themes are central to Genet's play. Sartre's last words in his epic work on Genet, are specifically about *The Maids*: "Translated into the language of Evil: Good is only an illusion; Evil is a Nothingness which arises upon the ruins of Good" (*Saint Genet: Actor and Martyr* 625). Good and evil are revealed in the play as constructions, fantasies and illusions. Sartre's comments can be seen reflected in the theatrical scenes of *Remake*, which problematize Medlicott's moral binary of good and evil as he applied it to Pauline and Juliet.

Medlicott used psychoanalyst Emil Kraepelin's description of delusion in his attempt to prove Pauline and Juliet's insanity and this has echoes of Genet's use of transubstantiation in a religious sense: "this internal working up of the delusion which leads to its *becoming a component part of the psychic personality*, to its passing into the flesh and blood of the patients" (Kraepelin 221). However, where Kraepelin sees such a process as a sickness, and where Medlicott used it to diagnose insanity, Genet uses it instead as a transformative and liberating ritual experience.

Kristeva's notion of the abject recalls certain passages of *The Maids* that we performed in our film. I came to understanding her theory through the embodiment of it in Genet's text. Claire at one point demands to be insulted by Solange:

“I said the insults! Let them come, let them unfurl, let them drown me, for, as you well know, I loathe servants. A vile and odious breed, I loathe them. They’re not of the human race. Servants ooze. They’re a foul effluvium drifting through our rooms and hallways, seeping into us, entering our mouths, corrupting us. I vomit you!” (*The Maids* 34).

Here Claire is both demanding Solange insult her and insulting herself. The ‘you’ is simultaneously ‘I’.

This is reflected in Kristeva’s own writing on the abject:

“...I expel *myself*, I spit *myself* out, I abject *myself* within the same motion through which ‘I’ claim to establish *myself*.... ‘I’ am in the process of becoming an other at the expense of my own death. During that course in which ‘I’ become, I give birth to myself amid the violence of sobs, of vomit” (Kristeva 3).

Genet’s use of doubling and repetition and mirroring in his text is equally evident in Kristeva’s:

“Defilement will now be that which impinges on symbolic oneness, that is, sham, substitutions, doubles, idols” (104). The psychoanalytic interpretations and provocations that emerge within this theatrical world spill over thematically to influence the world outside of it.

In Lacan’s psychoanalytic exploration of the Papin sisters he describes their situation from which parallels can be drawn to the Parker-Hulme case: “With the only means available on their little island, they must resolve the enigma, the human enigma of sexuality” (Lacan, qtd by Ross 22). While he is referring to the Papin sisters, his metaphorical use of “little island” to describe their psychological isolation can also be applied to the literal isolation of Pauline and Juliet on the South Island of New Zealand. It can also help explain their experience at Port Levy where Pauline describes the island there in her description of the Fourth World: “The island looked beautiful” (“Pauline Parker’s personal diary” 3 April 1953). She describes a later dream as similar to the way she felt on the island at Port Levy (“Pauline Parker’s personal diary” 15 June 1954). The enigma Lacan recognises in this psychological ‘island’ on which Christine and Lea were confined, is as enigmatic to

me as the experience Pauline and Juliet had on the island at Port Levy. They wanted to escape their isolation but at the same time they found great freedom within it. Genet describes his maids' madness as akin to his own when he is alone in the woods. What was the madness Pauline and Juliet found alone on their little wooded island? What euphoric freedom did they find there and in their dreams of it? Their experience of the Fourth World can only ever exist in our own imaginations and within our own re-makings of it.

As I mentioned, within the context of *Remake* it is Liz and Marian who are trying on the identities of Claire and Solange who are trying on the identities of Madame and each other. Richard Schechner, who directed a production of *The Maids*, says: "In the play, Solange and Claire are always trying on identities and getting lost in them" (Finburgh et. al. 217). The play's exploration of the transience of identity is opened out into the film as a whole. Liz and Marian can be seen to be playing roles in their real lives, with their parents, their boyfriends and each other. Angela Carter hints at role-playing within the real lives of her characters in her screenplay: "*They are playing a game, playing roles, but their discontent gives the game a bitter edge.*" ("The Christchurch Murder" 362). Fantasy is inextricably a part of the real world in *Remake* and this opens up possibilities for the interpretation of Pauline and Juliet's relationship and the act of murder.

Peter [Falkenberg] used the essence of what Genet was exploring in his text and used it to explore the relationship between Liz and Marian in the context of this film. According to Finburgh, Lavery and Shevtsova: "the most successful productions of Genet's play have been achieved when directors have abandoned the author's words and instructions and treated the original as a score for performance rather than as a blueprint" (Finburgh et.al. 12). Peter structured the theatrical scenes as a series of short games using excerpts of the text. While he didn't change the text itself within the excerpts he chose, he left out the character of Madame and she only exists when Liz or Marian (as Claire and Solange) role-play her. Her exclusion from the theatrical Fourth World means her symbolic substitute as desired murder victim in the "real world" of the film is missing. As a 'remake'

of the Parker-Hulme case, a murder is presumed within the narrative. Peter left it intentionally ambiguous who the murder victim in the film is. He sets up possibilities without giving preference to anything in particular. A remake of the Parker-Hulme murder would suggest it was my mother, but she is given no preference over Liz's father, either of our boyfriends or Nick who we get to play music in our film.

Liz and Marian's search for the Fourth World throughout the making of the film continues in parallel to the scenes from *The Maids* within the film itself. One place we search for the Fourth World is at church which is a remake of an experience I had when I was 16. Liz and I and members of the Free Theatre created the service as a theatrical event. The 'key' to this Fourth World of God was explained to Liz and Marian by Pastor Flint who told us "to open yourself up and *allow* yourself to *become* vulnerable". Liz and I created the music and lyrics for the worship song, which we named after Pauline and Juliet's poem "The Ones That I Worship". Even though Medicott said of Pauline that "her church had never been able to involve her in its group activities" ("Paranoia of the Exalted Type..." 206), we felt that if the evangelical churches that have sprung up in Christchurch relatively recently had existed in the 1950's that Pauline and Juliet would have tried them out.

This search for God also runs parallel to the search for it by Pauline and Juliet in their new identities. Anne Perry in real life became a member of The Church of Jesus Christ and the Latter Day Saints in her 20's. *Tathea* was first written during this period of her life. Pauline in her new identity as Hilary Nathan similarly converted to the Christian religion, in her case Catholicism. The significance of Pauline's new name is noted by Patrick Wen: "Nathan is a prophet sent by God to make David, King of Israel, face up to a crime of murder" (Perry 251). This divinity that Tathea/Perry and Nathan find is a male one, which reflects Irigaray's comment: "The love of God has often become a haven for women" (*Sexes and Genealogies* 63). While she states: "Divinity is what we need to become free, autonomous, sovereign" (62) she seeks it in a female divine as an alternative to this traditional haven of 'God'. The fact that Pauline and Juliet's Saints were all male also directly

contradicts Irigaray's idea of the divine as a resistance to patriarchy. Both Pauline and Juliet and Nathan and Perry can be seen as politically conservative in this way.

Yet Liz and Marian's search for God within *Remake* is somewhat subversive in the context of their search for it as a Fourth World. Liz and Marian want to experience God but they don't necessarily want to become Christians. This has the possible effect of questioning the function of the church in society and people's desire for it. We had wanted initially to film at a church service at Elim New Life where Liz and I had been going regularly but decided not to as Pastor Clint would only approve this idea if he had the right to remove the footage from our final film if he considered we did not show the church in a good light. I am sure that he would have approved of the light reflected in the mirror we hold up to his church in this scene, however, in the context of *Remake* he may not have (in the following scene we search for the Fourth World in a séance).

The church scene links Liz and Marian's search for 'God' with Claire and Solange's ceremony in *The Maids*. As this church scene was a construction or 'fake' of a real church service it provided a theatrical form in which to 'lose' ourselves. This mirrors the way Genet's maids and Liz and Marian as actors playing them within the theatrical Fourth World, attempt to lose ourselves in a role or in the offering up of ourselves to Christ or to each other or ourselves in the mirror. In a scene from *The Maids* that follows this church scene, Madame's dresser is used as a symbolic altar to which Marian who plays Claire considers herself in the mirror as a 'more lovelier' version of the Virgin Mary.

Through the 'remaking' of this experience from my own life, I discovered that I only felt able to enter into this 'world' within the church when it was acknowledged as a theatrical experience. I felt overcome with euphoria and lost in a way that I had not been able to experience in a real church. If we had been at a real church I would have called it God. As we were in a theatre within a film I could call it an acting high. But as we were exploring the experiences of Pauline and Juliet I realize that it was the Fourth World. This experience made me yearn for more. Where else could we experience it?

Throughout the film, the ceremony in *The Maids* and the search for the Fourth World in reality, become more and more intertwined. The respective murder in each of these worlds within the film approaches; the ceremony of Claire and Solange is reaching its end and in 'reality' several possible murders are presented. Within *The Maids* itself, there is the murder of Claire as Madame, by Solange. Yet this murder is also a suicide by Claire herself. An interesting coinciding of the Papin and Parker-Hulme cases is that in *The Maids*, Claire and Solange's lover is named Mario. Within the context of *Remake* Mario can also be seen as Mario Lanza whom Pauline and Juliet idolized as one of their Saints, or potentially either of the unnamed boyfriends of Liz and Marian. Mario is positioned simultaneously and ambiguously as both a reality and a fantasy. Mario is also the name of Tosca's lover who is murdered in the opera of the same name by Verdi. Pauline, as I mentioned earlier, makes reference to listening to *Tosca* in her diary: "This afternoon I played *Tosca* and wrote before ringing Deborah" ("Pauline Parker's personal diary" 23 April 1954).

One murder occurs in the theatrical world - the 'murder' of Claire/Madame by Solange in the final scene from *The Maids*. We changed the murder from drinking poisoned tea to Solange strangling Claire in the kitchen sink which is mentioned by Solange earlier in the play. Here Liz as Solange sings a final aria over the top of the final aria from a recording of *Tosca*, bringing a detail from the Parker-Hulme case into the final minutes of the film.

Liz/Solange sings the part in which Tosca commits suicide because her lover Mario is dead. Within this opera, like within *The Maids* within *Remake*, and even within 'the ceremony' within *The Maids* - it remains ambiguous whether this suicide or murder is real or pretend, part of fantasy or part of reality. Mario's execution in the opera was meant to be pretend. In the final scene Mario plans with his lover Tosca to stage a pretend death. Tosca sings: "With my experience in the theatre/ I should know how to manage it" (Puccini 75). He promises to pretend to be shot dead. And then they will be free to escape together by sea. As he is 'shot', Tosca sings: "How handsome my Mario is! There! Die! Ah, what an actor!" (77). Then she discovers he really *was* shot dead. She throws herself

off the balcony and ends the opera. Reality punctured Tosca's fantasy, yet her reality was full of fantasies of love and sacrifice<sup>2</sup>.

When Liz as Solange in *Remake* throws herself out the window in a remaking of *Tosca*, it also ends the scenes from *The Maids*. Seria's film also ends with the suicide of the women on stage. In both *Remake* and *Don't Deliver us from Evil*, theatrical suicides are arguably more consummate acts than the murders in the real world. Hanging on the wall next to the window where Liz as Solange commits suicide, is a print of a Frida Kahlo self-portrait of Kahlo throwing herself off a tall building. Pauline wrote of suicide in her diary in a way which suggests that her depression was not without passion: "To-day I felt thoroughly, utterly and completely depressed. I was in one of those moods in which committing suicide sounds heavenly" ("Pauline Parker's personal diary" 2 November 1953).

Music especially inspired and impassioned Pauline and Juliet and their fantasies. Mario in *Tosca* sings of grand emotions (translated into English) which could indicate the passions of Pauline and Juliet who listened to it: "Only for you did death taste bitter for me / and only you invest this life with splendour / All joy and all desire, for my being / are held in you as heat within flame / I now shall see through your transfiguring eyes / The heavens blaze and the heavens darken" (Puccini 75). This kind of emotion and passion was evident in Pauline's diary and in the poem she wrote together with Juliet. Mario Lanza whom Pauline and Juliet idolized as a Saint, used the metaphor of theatre in one song, to sing of his similarly rapturous emotions: "The show has ended, I know that we're through / You just pretended that our love was true / You acted out the part, and I couldn't see, that deep within your heart you were laughing at me".

After the scene from *The Maids* where Liz as Solange playing Claire, murders Marian as Claire playing Madame, Liz sings *Gloomy Sunday* with Nick playing the piano. She is performing in the

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<sup>2</sup> The recording used in *Remake* is a 1965 production starring Maria Callas as Tosca whose life has been considered as tragic as the roles she played. Her career is described as having essentially ended with the role of Tosca. Callas is also to have spoken of her great admiration of Mario Lanza who died in his thirties of a sudden heart attack: "My biggest regret is not to have had the opportunity to sing with the greatest tenor voice I've ever heard" ("Mario Lanza").

manner of Billie Holiday in this song about suicide and loneliness. Liz in this 'real life' scene wears the same black dress she wears when she plays Solange in the theatrical *Fourth World*. It is intentionally ambiguous whether she is singing about the death of herself; herself as Solange; Marian; Claire; Madame; Billie Holiday herself; retrospectively Frida Kahlo in her painting; or Mario who has been killed in *Tosca*.

The spectator is not directed towards a clear narrative but instead presented with a film that, like a piece of music, has recurring themes and motifs. The music and sound within the film is all diegetic, with the exception of the dream scenes, and the songs at the beginning and at the end by Jolie Holland. Holland sings of herself and of another self, perhaps another person, perhaps a mirror of herself or an imagined self, a ghostly girl: "You are not real". Her songs are have a simplicity and fit into the form and content of *Remake*, as they sound like they were recorded in her living room (and apparently some of them were); the making of her music in this way has parallels to the making of this film. Her songs are like dreams in the way they kind of drift along and disappear. We use a song of hers at the end of the film to mirror a similar song of hers we use at the end. The last song includes the lines: "I'd rather be lost than found / I thought I would lose my mind / But through your eyes I see / Past the billboards to the trees" (Holland). Here the psychological is referred to in her feeling that she is going mad and her seeing through the eyes of another. Yet the political also emerges here in her desire to see past what society sells her and into the trees beyond them – the woods perhaps where Genet by himself experiences a madness and freedom which he refuses to define.

A possible murder or death is suggested at the end of the scene where Liz sings *Gloomy Sunday*. Liz and Marian kidnap Nick our pianist and take him to Lake Ellesmere where they strip him naked, tie him up and write 'rapist' and 'artist' in lipstick on his chest. This is a 'remake' of an incident that happened to playwright Mervyn Thompson in the early 1980's in Auckland when he was kidnapped by feminists and had 'rapist' spray-painted on his car. The scene is a kind of re-

making of and political comment on, the incident that happened to Thompson to suggest that he was scape-goated, as an artist and as a man, by a feminist movement that showed the kind of patriarchal brutality they claimed to be opposed to. The desire to film this was our male director's, possibly as a comment on his own role in the film as the 'director' of these women's fantasies.

The politics within *Remake* are ambivalent which brings me back to where I started. The structure of the film can be understood politically from a feminist perspective where two women subvert the conventions of the filmmaker by taking up the camera and the script to explore their own fantasies. One French New Wave film that Peter used as a *Remake* model is *Celine and Julie*, a 1974 film about the relationship between two young women, by Jacques Rivette. In this film Celine and Julie take drugs to experience hallucinations in which they enter a melodramatic film. Ruby Rich describes Celine and Julie as "laughing in the face of male fantasies" (*Chick Flicks* 77) as they revise and re-enact the role of women within a conventional narrative. She also describes the way the women "enter each other's lives by magic and books" (77). *Remake* is in part a homage to this film, 'remaking' the boating scene from the end of it, and using it for the first scene. Rich describes the film making process of *Celine and Julie*, which indicates parallels to the making of *Remake*: "production credits indicate a total collaboration with the four actresses and coscenarists" (77). This film can be seen to resist the traditional roles for women both in the making of the film and in the film itself.

In *Remake* Liz and Marian do not pose in front of the camera for the spectator but for each other. This resists the male gaze, as Laura Mulvey describes it in conventional film narratives, which place women as the passive and silent objects: "as a signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out his fantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer, not maker, of meaning" (Kaplan 35). Marian and Liz are both self and other, both the image itself and the makers of it. In the alley way of the scene where Marian and Liz take Nos, Marian poses as 'Ava' for the

camera, which is held by Liz posing as Marian posing as 'Rita'. A male spectator is required to identify with a feminine position that subverts the conventional male gaze.

While conventional film narratives "give the spectator an illusion of looking in on a private world" (37-8), *Remake* presents the impossibilities of this for the spectator and yet at the same time invites them into the private world of Liz and Marian with an acknowledgement of their place as necessarily outside of it. This is similar to Seria's film where he plays with the expectations of the spectator. Although in intimate scenes in Seria's film such as under Anne's bedcovers, the camera is still held by the invisible cameraman, whereas in *Remake* he is excluded from such intimate spaces. In *Remake* there is none of the factors that give a spectator what they usually pay money for. There is no definitive narrative; no money shot; no resolution; and no catharsis as in a conventional narrative. If this is the experience for the spectator, then it mirrors my own search for the Fourth World within the film as something I was constantly searching for and never satisfied with - an elusive moment or fantasy that could not be grasped.

Males feature in *Remake* and within *The Maids* within *Remake*, but feature as women might in a more conventional film narrative which revolves around the desires of the male gaze. Mulvey describes this gaze which "depends on the image of the castrated women to give order and meaning to its world" (Mulvey qtd by Kaplan 34). In a conventional film as Mulvey describes it, the voice belongs to the male and the women are relegated to the passive image. This is subverted in *Remake* where Mario, for example, is represented by a mannequin. Nick is a victim. Also, the voices of Liz and Marian's boyfriends on the phone both reflect and subvert the position of women within the conventional film narrative Mulvey describes. For example, Liz and Marian are the silent and passive bearers of the "linguistic commands" imposed on them through the telephone. However, as they are using these male voices to construct and film their own images, to "make their own meaning", they manage to subvert this filmic convention. These phone call scenes can be seen as remakes of the phone scenes in *Celine and Julie* which Rivette uses to similar effect.

At the same time as they subvert gender roles, Liz and Marian also play them with passion, as exemplified in the final scene of *Tosca* that Liz remakes, where Tosca kills herself for a man. This could be seen as conservative and evidence of Freud's positioning of women's desire in subordinate relation to men. Pauline and Juliet certainly had great passion for men and their fantasies and desires as expressed in their choice of Saints, as I mentioned, were exclusively for men. Liz and Marian's emancipatory explorations within the form and content of the film, are directed by a male and filmed by a camera man. Pauline and Juliet's fantasies, as they were inspired by and experienced in films they watched, were directed similarly. In this way the politics within *Remake* rest on ambivalence and interpretation.

Yet the most political aspect to the film, which has specific relevance to this thesis, is that the murder Liz and Marian commit is not of another woman but of a male – the cameraman himself. This final scene is a remake of the Parker-Hulme murder and its representation in *Heavenly Creatures*. In *Heavenly Creatures*, murder is the very thing that prevents Pauline and Juliet's freedom. It is the puncturing of a deluded illusion. For Genet, murder conversely promises freedom and is transformed into something liberating. *Remake* was constructed on the notion that instead of committing murder, Liz and Marian would make a film. The spectator is positioned along with the cameraman in the position of Pauline's mother. Liz and Marian murder the gaze of the spectator, the male divine that creates women in his image. Instead of murdering the mother who made them, Liz and Marian murder the cameraman who makes them in his image. We shatter the mirror that allows the spectator to remain invisible or voyeuristic. We refuse the gaze of the spectator that is implicated in the view of the camera. When we filmed the murder scene in Victoria Park we weren't quite at the end of the shoot. As we had murdered our cameraman we were at a loss, but thankfully another cameraman stepped into this role in order to finish the film.

In an essay *Theatre of Unease*, Peter [Falkenberg] writes about his direction of *Remake* as part of a discussion of how theatre in New Zealand reflects an image of itself that reassures its

audience – likening it to the narcissism inherent in Lacan’s Mirror Stage. Falkenberg proposes an alternative theatre that mirrors the very real uneasiness which he sees existing in this culture: “Isolation, the lack of an other, ultimately can lead to the loss of identity, and makes it even more urgent to create one, even if only in the imagination” (Falkenberg 11-12). While this unease can be seen reflected in New Zealand film, he notes that even *Heavenly Creatures* ultimately reassures its audience by distancing their identification with the girls in the act of murder – the ultimate expression of their ‘uneasiness’. Falkenberg’s choice of the Parker-Hulme case for a film was in its ability to provide such a mirror to the situation and experience of middle-class New Zealanders. My own experience of *Remake* has mirrored the intentions he expresses here.

In the last scenes in the film that I have described, life and art converge and produce numerous possible interpretations. Four days before Pauline and Juliet murdered Pauline’s mother, they appear to have been in a heightened, almost manic state of creativity: “We went to town and bought books to paste our characters in. We planned our various moiders and talked seriously as well” (“Pauline Parker’s personal diary” 18 June 1954). Here Pauline makes a distinction between fantasy and reality and yet she plans the reality of her mother’s murder in a diary, similar to the way she and Juliet wrote in books planning the various murders and adventures of the characters in their novels. The next day she records that they had nearly finished their books and reaffirm their plan to murder Honora. It seems this is when they decided on the details and the date and method of the “moider”. The night before, Pauline wrote about a conversation with her mother: “I have discussed various odd saints with her today as I thought it would be interesting to have her opinion. She loathes That and It” (21 June 1954). It is as if Pauline invites her mother to be an actor in their play with murder.

Through the making of our film as it substitutes for a murder, I understood my own desire for it. *Remake* began for me as curiosity and narcissism but my desire to ‘commit’ to the film ultimately was as an act of refusal. A refusal to allow anyone to project their own desires onto my

life and expect me to reflect them back. A refusal to be handed desires and fantasies that are not my own. A refusal to be cast in a role and directed towards a life that I don't desire and an identity that is not mine. Like Ava Gardner in *The Flying Dutchman*, or Irigaray who also refuses, on behalf of the mother within us: "We must refuse to let her desire be annihilated..." (*The Irigaray Reader* 43).

At the same time as planning and making our film was a refusal, it was also a reaching for and demand for something. Like Irigaray, who demands that the mother have her right "to pleasure, to *jouissance*, to passion" (43), I was consumed with wanting to be close to something. Wanting to emerge from something. To spill out of something. Like fulfilling a need to vomit, in order to avoid the madness that would come from containing the need to retch. A need to create an identity for myself. To dress up and become someone. I wanted to enter into something, a Fourth World, which I could only find with someone else who also wanted it. I needed Liz so I could look at her and see that it was real. A real thing as well as a fantasy.

Nearing the end of our film I felt that Liz was leaving, but not on a boat in the way Juliet left in *Heavenly Creatures*. I felt Liz drifting to a place where she would refuse to refuse any longer. Where she would gaze at me but past me, like other people. And I refused it in her because I refused to see it in myself when I looked at her. I felt she was slipping away from me when I demanded so much from her, from life and from this film. I wanted this Fourth World and I still want it.

Whatever this world is that Pauline and Juliet found on their own little island and within their own private world, can be seen as the world Genet was searching for in his use of the Papin case to explore the fantasies of his maids. In a foreword to the 1954 edition of *The Maids* Genet describes this world of theatre that he dreams of: "A clandestine theatre, to which one would go in secret, at night, and masked, a theatre in the catacombs, may still be possible" ("A Note on Theatre" 40). This clandestine theatre, that is a rite, a ceremonious game, play taken in full seriousness, an underground world where life meets death and nothing is certain but everything is possible - that Genet dreams of - is I believe, the world Pauline and Juliet created with each other.