



*Pictures and words* is in many ways a continuation of previous explorations where common items from different stages of my youth were presented as 'artworks'. These included a set of Hardy Boys books, a South African stamp collection and a pair of Doc Marten shoes - the context of these objects shifted to expose hidden meanings. The act of displacing these non-precious items allowed for an examination into the value of such cultural icons and the information encoded in these seemingly ordinary things. The vicarious nature of the adventures in the comics or detective stories, the implicit propagandistic intent of artefacts presenting a country's 'image of itself' in the stamp collection, or the recognition of the constructed identities embodied in the coveted brand name products were all explored through simple framing in a display box. In *pictures and words* I again used this device of the 'displayed artefact' to isolate and present the re-contextualized 'artefact', but in this case with a constructed object masquerading as a found object. Each 'specimen' was created with mass produced multiples, including a childhood comic collection, theory books, and newspapers, which had been physically cut up and recombined. The work owes much to poetry production strategies that employ the 'cutup' method to break open language. But the 'cutups' in his case were, for me less an effort to tap into the unconscious, than, in the spirit of detournement, a collision of seemingly incompatible texts - comic and the theoretical. In this way, I set out to expose the political in popular humour and the humour in theory. The central role of the tintin character was also significant, for not only was he a childhood favourite, but also in many ways a very particular kind of alter ego. Now regarded critically, he was an adventurous little colonial sliding unscathed from adventure to adventure the 'exotics', a backdrop for his story.

