

runway

an australian contemporary art magazine

ISSUE 18 EXPECTATION



AU \$10 NZ \$12 EU €9 UK £8 CAN \$12 US \$12 JPN ¥1000

runway

Autumn 2011

Managing Editor Jaki Middleton

Assistant Editor David Lawrey

Sub Editor Jai McKenzie

Editorial Board Ella Barclay, Michaela Gleave, Anneke Jaspers, David Lawrey, Jaki Middleton and Sean Rafferty

Design David Lawrey and Jaki Middleton

Design template Caper Creative www.capercreative.com.au

Founding Editors Matina Bourmas and Jaki Middleton

Publisher The Invisible Inc.

Contributors Brown Council, Vicky Browne, CoUNTess, Daniel Mudie Cunningham, Jared Davis, Bec Dean, Ann Finegan, Kelly Fliedner, Amelia Groom, David Homewood, Anneke Jaspers, Darren Jorgensen, Liang Luscombe, Tanya Peterson, Elvis Richardson, Megan Robson, Sarah Rodigari, S.E.R.I., Justin Shoulder, Thomasin Sleight, Elizabeth Stanton and Holly Williams.

Special thanks to Serial Space. Tanya Peterson thanks Michael Mesker for his correspondence and L.A. gum tree photograph.

Subscriptions and back issues

Individual: Three issues \$30

Institutional: Three issues \$38

Subscribe online: www.runway.org.au/buy

For postal subscriptions please make cheques payable to The Invisible Inc.

Submissions See www.runway.org.au for deadlines and guidelines or email: submissions@runway.org.au

Advertising Email advertising@runway.org.au

Donations

runway is published by registered not-for profit organisation The Invisible Inc. Our survival is dependent on the generous support of individuals, organisations and government funding bodies. Please consider supporting at whatever level possible.

runway is an independent, artist-run initiative published by The Invisible Inc.

© The authors and The Invisible Inc. All images copyright the artists. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without written authorisation from The Invisible Inc. The views and opinions expressed in *runway* are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors.

runway

The Invisible Inc. PO Box 2041 Strawberry Hills, NSW 2012 Australia

www.runway.org.au mail@runway.org.au

ISSN 1448-8000

Edition 1000

The Invisible Inc. is supported by



Australian Government

THE VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFT STRATEGY



New South Wales Government

The Invisible Inc. is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW



Communities arts nsw

caper

the invisible inc.

COMEDY



DANCING
MONKEY



Editorial

JAKI MIDDLETON

When *runway* began back in 2002, I don't remember having any long-term expectations. But as the years and issues have piled up, the magazine has grown to become something of a fixture in Sydney's contemporary art community. If we had anticipated the level of involvement and voluntary hard work it has been to continue and build the project, we may well never have made it beyond the first few issues. But the momentum generated by enthusiastic editors, contributors, readers and the community alike has allowed us to focus on the positive processes of thinking through ideas, commissioning texts and working with artists—rather than the inevitable pressures to meet expected aims and outcomes.

Despite its experimental beginnings, *runway* has now established a relatively stable model, with the kind of objectives, timelines and general order that often come with growth. Perhaps it is timely then, that at this juncture we are preparing to hand on the *runway* baton. We are happy to announce that from next issue, Julia Holderness, Jai McKenzie and Diana Smith will be joining the *runway* editorial board, and Amber McCulloch will take the reigns as Managing Editor. And as they wind up their engagement over the coming months, we farewell Ella Barclay, Michaela Gleave, David Lawrey and Sean Rafferty, and thank them for their fantastic contribution to the magazine.

Although *runway* is now at its 18th issue, there is still plenty of freedom for discovery, change and transformation. We are excited by the prospect of watching this new chapter unfold.





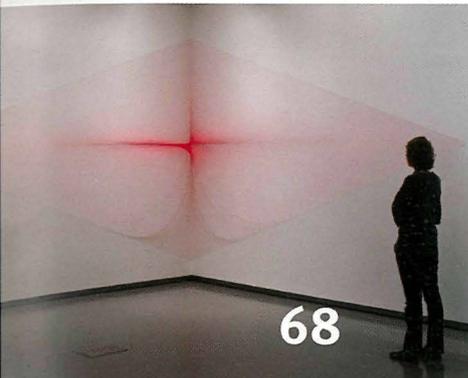
9



24



34



68



78



82

FEATURES

9 JUSTIN SHOULDER: UNDER THIS MASK, ANOTHER MASK
AMELIA GROOM

14 BROWN COUNCIL: CRITICAL COMEDY
ANNEKE JASPERS

18 BACKYARD MUSIC MACHINES AND OTHER DEVICES
HOLLY WILLIAMS interviews VICKY BROWNE

24 IMPOSSIBLE CONSUMMATIONS: ENCOUNTERS WITH DANIEL MUDIE CUNNINGHAM
ANN FINEGAN

30 WHERE DO ALL THE WOMEN GO?
SARAH RODIGARI interviews CoUNTess

34 ELSEWHERE THE CASTLES ARE PINK, THE MOUNTAINS GOLDEN
DARREN JORGENSEN

EXPECTATION

41 EXPERIMENT 01
S.E.R.I.

48 BACKLOT
TANYA PETERSON

56 HAVE YOU EVER?
ELVIS RICHARDSON

REVIEWS

65 SPOOKY, DARLINGS
BEC DEAN

68 NETWORKS (CELLS AND SILOS)
DAVID HOMEWOOD

70 DIRTY FINGERPRINTS
LIANG LUSCOMBE

72 WELCOME TO THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITIES
JARED DAVIS

74 TERRITORY TIME
MEGAN ROBSON

76 DEMOCRATA AUTOMATA
KELLY FLIEDNER

78 MATERIAL RELEASE
ELIZABETH STANTON

82 DRAIN LAKE PROJECT
THOMASIN SLEIGH

PREVIEWS

85 FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS
A LIST OF EXHIBITIONS FOR THE DIARY

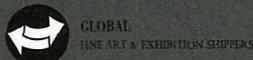
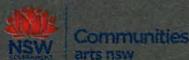
art ON PAPER

HAZELHURST ART AWARD 2011 CALL FOR ENTRIES

9 July – 14 August 2011
Entries close Monday 16 May 2011

Major prize of \$20,000
Friends of Hazelhurst Local Artist prize of \$5,000
People's Choice Award of \$1,000

For more information contact: artonpaper@ssc.nsw.gov.au
www.hazelhurst.com.au



Hazelhurst
REGIONAL GALLERY & ARTS CENTRE
A facility of Sutherland Shire Council

Sutherland Shire
COUNCIL



performance
space

APR^L 15 - MAY 14

AWFULLY WONDERFUL

SCIENCE FICTION IN CONTEMPORARY ART

PHILIP BROPHY, EUGENE CARCHESIO,
HAINES + HINTERDING, DEBORAH KELLY,
DAVID LAWREY + JAKI MIDDLETON,
MS+MR, HAYDEN FOWLER, IAN HAIG,
ADAM NORTON, SAM SMITH + SIMON YATES.

CURATED BY BEC DEAN + LIZZIE MULLER.

A full listing of the *Awfully Wonderful*
events and public program can be found
at performancespace.com.au

Performance Space
CarriageWorks
245 Wilson Street Eveleigh 2015

Open Mon - Sat, 10am-5pm
Excluding public holidays.

Image: Adam Norton *On Mars...* (2010)
Photo NASA & Craig Bender

 Australian Government
 NSW Government
THE VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFT STRATEGY

 Australian Government

 Australia Council
for the Arts

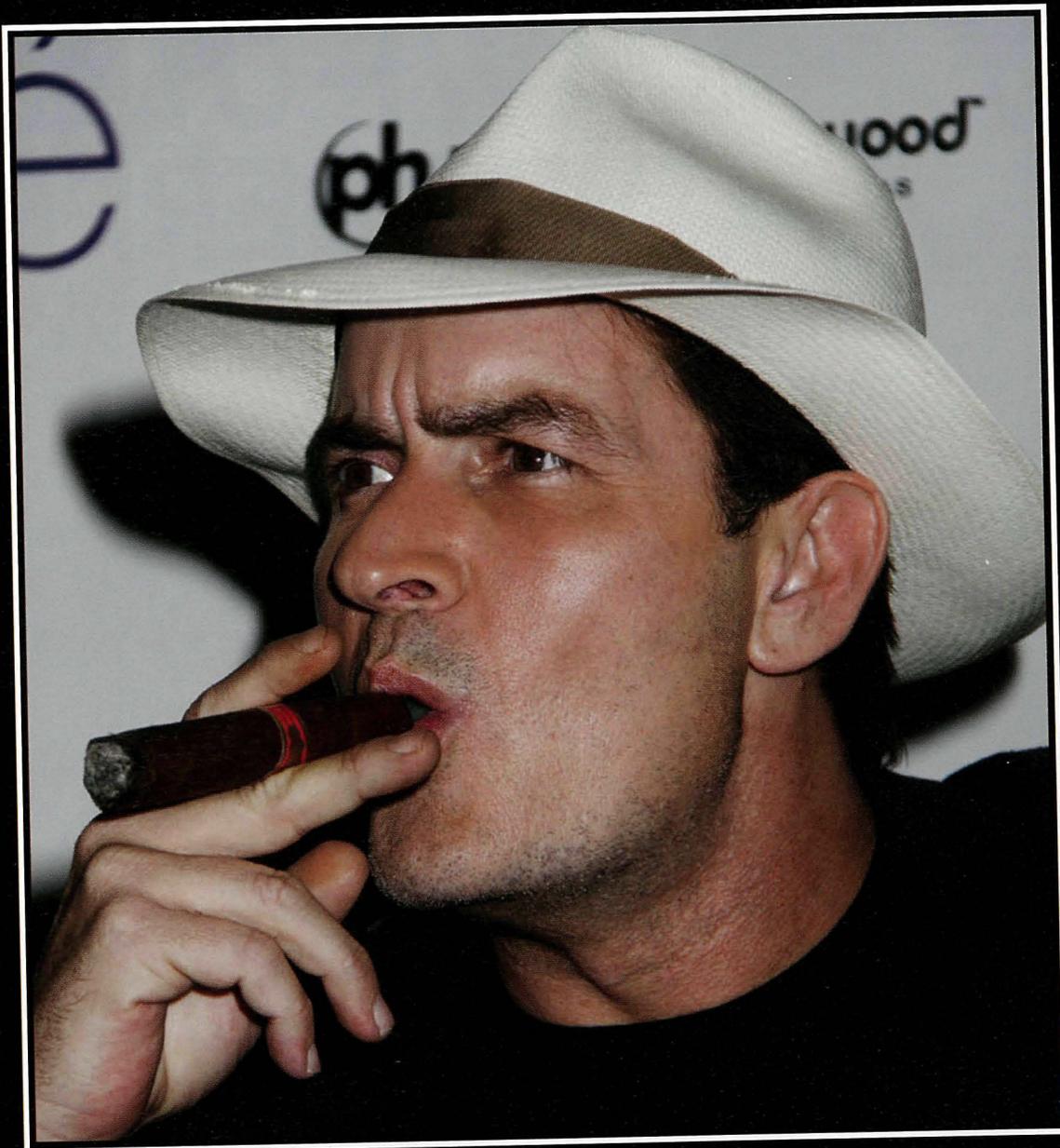
 NSW Government
Communities
arts nsw

POTENTIAL
F • I • L • M • S

Ri Aus

UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

I'm different. I have a different constitution,
I have a different brain, I have a different heart.



I GOT TIGER BLOOD, MAN

2 MARCH - 10 APRIL 2011

Eastern Seaboard

The Cosmic Battle for Your Heart, Foodcourt du Jour, du Jour, No Frills*

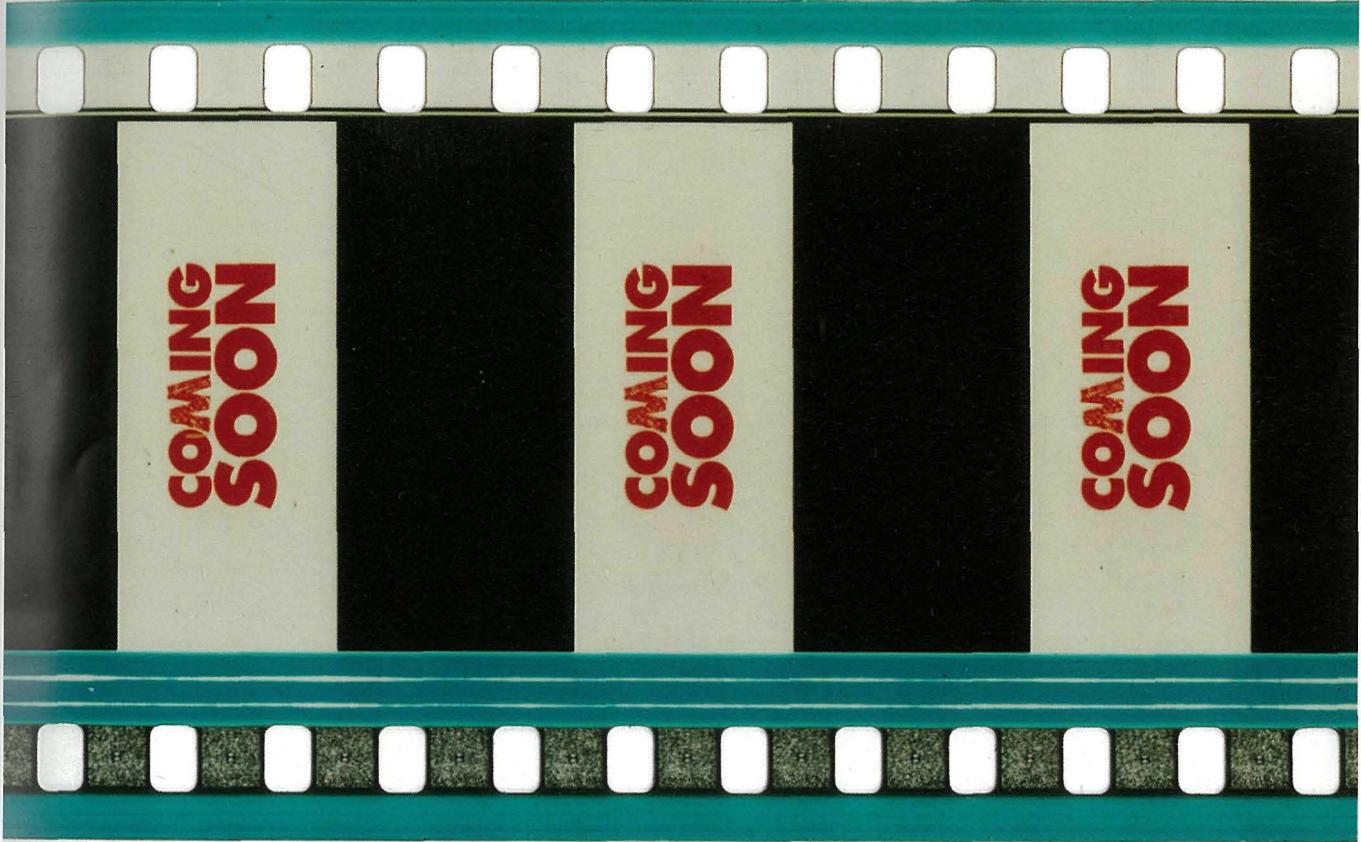
Curators: Reuben Keehan & Melanie Oliver

20 APRIL - 22 MAY 2011

Talking Pictures

Fitts & Holderness, Nicholas Mangan, Louise Menzies, Sean Rafferty

Curator: Melanie Oliver



Sean Rafferty, *Road Pictures (Coming Soon)*, 2010, film detail, inkjet print, 30 x 20cm

ARTSPACE

43-51 Cowper Wharf Road
Woolloomooloo NSW 2011
Sydney Australia
www.artspace.org.au

T +61 2 9356 0555
artspace@artspace.org.au
Office 10am-6pm, Mon-Fri
Gallery 11am-5pm, Tues-Sun

ARTSPACE is supported by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.



ARTSPACE is assisted by the New South Wales Government through Arts NSW and by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



ARTSPACE is a member of CAOs (Contemporary Art Organisations Australia) and Res Artis (International Association of Residential Art Centres).



FEATURES



Justin Shoulder: Under This Mask, Another Mask

AMELIA GROOM

From 1908-1929 the prolific English theatre designer/director/theorist/tyrant Edward Gordon Craig published his periodical *The Mask*, in which he systematically and dogmatically enumerated his visions for the dramatic art of the future. What he wanted was a more abstract and ritualistic theatre that would herald the return of masks on the western stage. Art comes from the planned and controlled use of materials, he argued, while the actor's unruly, unrefined and unpredictable biological face is slave to his ego, instinct and emotions — human baggage that, for Craig, impedes any possibility of creation.

He was not only the publisher, editor, illustrator and designer of *The Mask*: under some 65 pseudonyms, he also wrote virtually all the content, including the 'foreign correspondence' and 'letters to the editor'. In the midst of Modernist debates about authorship, the journal was thus elaborately structured so as to diffuse his status as individual author. But being built on multiple layers of disguise, *The Mask* was the mask Craig used to both hide and reveal himself—his stage for creating and enacting

multiple personas while perpetually evading all of them and communicating his agenda unequivocally.

According to Craigian doctrine, the performer as a psychological entity and embodiment of pretentious mimicry was to be banished from the stage and replaced by the 'übermarionette' who would remain outside his role and his body and who could, precisely by virtue of his self-conscious artifice, be a true artist. Mortal man is insufficient material for art, while he who breathes life into an inanimate mask (or puppet) takes on divine qualities. More than simply providing a pre-designated character or state, masks would work to de-personalise and de-humanise, turn all bodily expression into abstraction, and ensure we deal with representation rather than grotesque imitation.

Currently in the game of de-personalising and de-humanising himself in the name of universalised representation is the costume-performance artist Justin Shoulder. The title of his most recent exhibition, *I Am Raining* (Firstdraft Gallery, July 2010), was

Above: Justin Shoulder, V, 2009, performance still from 'The Glitter Militia presents Clown Cult' at The Red Ratter, Sydney. Photo: Mat Hornby.



taken from David Malouf's *An Imaginary Life* (1978). In the novella we meet a wild boy who was raised by wolves, and when he sees rain he thinks *he is raining*. "His self is outside him . . . He has no notion of the otherness of things." In the lead up to the show, Shoulder was mourning the recent loss of two friends and the body of work evolved partially from his thinking about material transience and the ways in which we leave the body. He had also started training in the school of dance known as Bodyweather, which developed partly out of the stylised-grotesque, hyper-controlled Japanese *butoh*, and he was looking at the discipline's ideas of emptying the self and dissolving the body, which as we know consists primarily of water.

Blurring the dualisms of self/other and self/world, the exhibition included a series of photographs by Mat Hornby depicting Shoulder under delicate sunlight in the bush, his body shrouded by a translucent, watery costume made from shredded plastic sheets. Also on show was *I Love You* (2010), a life-size composite portrait of Shoulder and his long-term partner and collaborator Matt Stegh, which continued the interrogation of the possible relationships between nature, culture, the body, the self, the other and the world. Here the artist's bare and elaborately tattooed torso was shown removed of all its usual costuming and excess, seamlessly melded with the bare and elaborately tattooed torso of

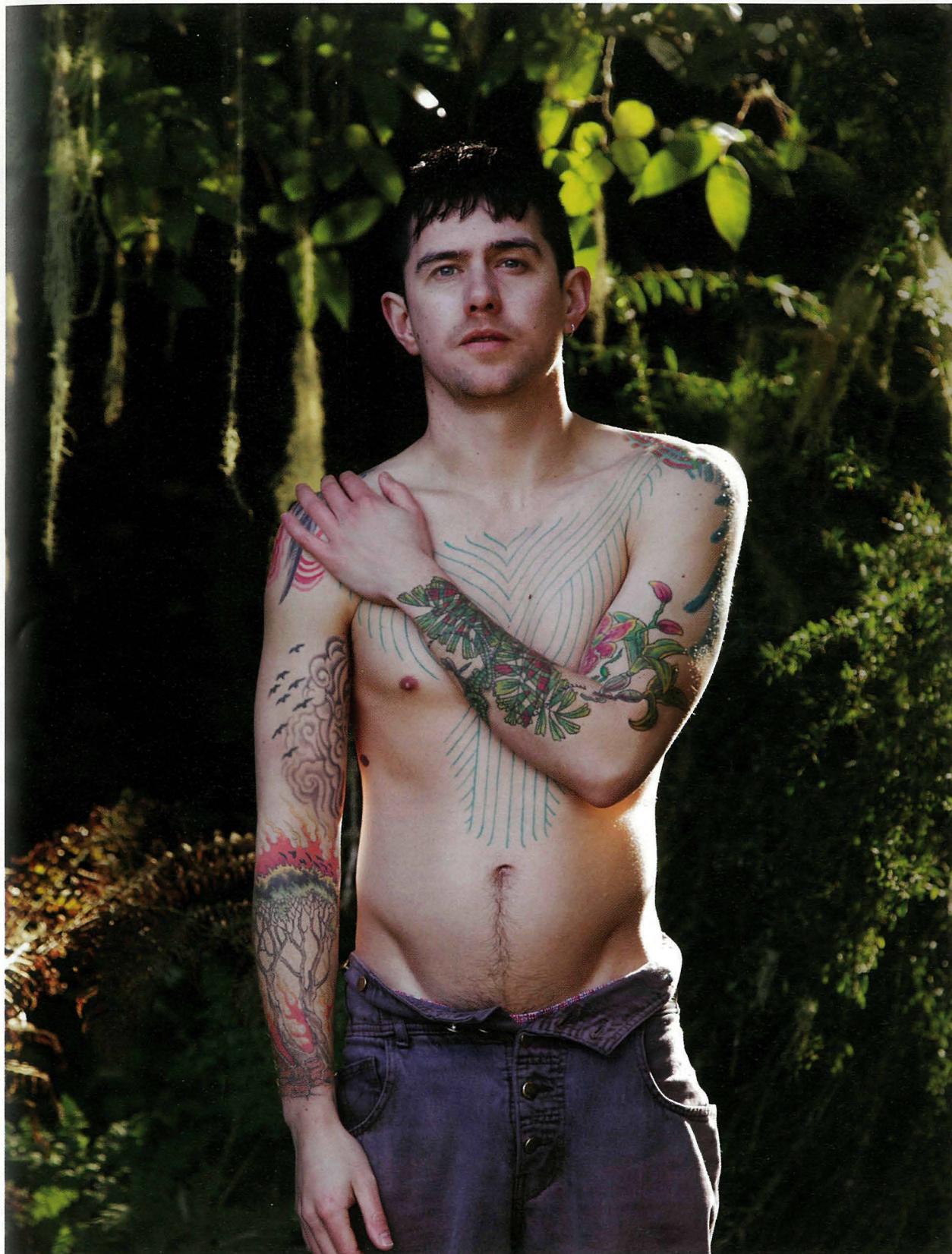
another (*his other*), so it was at once costumed and uncostumed, him and not him (is this the definition of love?).

Expressing his persistent fascination with the phenomenon of masquerade and the ancient mythology of chimeras (Ovid's *Metamorphosis* lives on his bedside table), Shoulder's work is also engaged with the (under-documented) history of queer costumed performance in Sydney, particularly that of the 1980s. His practice is firmly rooted in the communities of local nightclubs and underground live venues, especially the now defunct Lanfranchies and Club Kooky. Despite having recently taken several new directions he has never abandoned what he sees as the collective empathy and energy of these spaces, from where he begot each of the seven individual creatures that form the basis of his practice.

Based on the notion that the devil can spawn without copulation, Shoulder's most iconic creature is the belching, self-perpetuating Glut Glut (born in 2009). After many performances, Glut Glut's sickeningly synthetic cough-syrupy-red cloak of cheap wigs now reeks of sweat and dirty nightclubs, not to mention the sour old milk bottles that were arranged around it in a photo shoot by Mat Hornby. Its hair is tangled and matted and the black ink that started around its eyes continues to travel across its face. To my amusement, in a recent conversation I had with the performer

Above: Justin Shoulder, *I am raining* (iii), 2010, digital print. Photo: Mat Hornby.

Facing page: Justin Shoulder, *I love you*, 2010, digital print. Photo: Mat Hornby (digital composite by Justin Shoulder).





he spoke of the creature with contempt: 'Glut Glut is disgusting, insatiable, filthy, the embodiment of excess ... all it can say is "Glut Glut"; it speaks only through its own name and only perpetuates itself.'²² I was also delighted to detect uncensored paranoia in Shoulder about the perceived threat of identity theft: 'sometimes I wake up the next day with bits of pink hair on me and I get scared Glut Glut is taking over my existence.'²³

The mild-manners of the unmasked, diurnal Justin Shoulder initially seem incongruous with his ostentatious costumes and the extroverted personalities they induce. But his ever-evolving catalogue of escapist alter egos comes from an explicit drive to tap into something beyond the self. Masks give the wearer *psychological seclusion, a constructed outer appearance* that contains a private space of anonymity. Like the obscured tower in the centre of the panopticon, masks grant the power of seeing without being seen. They entail pre-designated and fixed fictional personae, but historically they have also been more complexly perceived as a means to move among divine pantheons and bridge separations between animal, human, natural and supernatural realms. Consumed beneath his voluminous structures, Shoulder can often only make out a hazy world of indistinct forms, but this partial blindness has the formal function of aiding concentration by eliminating external distraction—it prompts a turning inward on

the self in order to transcend the self, using the body as a means for getting beyond the body.

The earliest masks in world history, some of them up to 10,000 years old, are tied to shamanic shape-shifting. In Mircea Eliade's enduring *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (1951) we learn that shamans are always costumed when incarcerating the souls of the underworld. Even if they are naked, this is a marked break from their ordinary, profane dress and hence their nudity functions as a surrogate costume. In fact, it is through the very act of costuming that the shaman finally enters the spiritual world: the costume is donned after many preliminaries, right before the shamanic trance. Interestingly, one almost universal motif in accounts of shamanic masks and dress around the world is feathers. In the most literal sense ornithomorphic costume is said to facilitate flight to the underworld—and in Shoulder's urban shape shifting we find a similar appeal to the allure of weightlessness and flying: helium-filled balloons, for example, or his recurring shredded plastic bags that distinctly resemble plumage.

Echoing Nietzsche's doctrine of the endless layers of facade behind the mask, let us approach an ending here with the words of the French gender-ambiguous performative photographic artist

Above: Justin Shoulder, *Glut Glut*, 2008, digital print. Photo: Mat Hornby.
Facing page: Justin Shoulder, *Hubub*, 2008, digital print. Photo: Mat Hornby.



and writer of the early twentieth century, Claude Cahun: 'Under this mask, another mask—I will never be finished removing all these faces.' The etymological roots of the word 'mask' are appropriately shrouded in obscurity, though it is assumed to come from the Latin *masca* meaning 'nightmare', 'witch' or 'demon' and/or *massa* meaning 'paste' (as in 'mascara') with influence from the Arabic *maskara* meaning 'buffoon'. Its modern usage in everyday language would suggest that masks front a pre-existing essence that maintains itself regardless of the various personae adopted, for example 'to mask one's feelings' or 'to speak behind a mask'. But, as is made evident by Shoulder's work, selfhood is more elusive than that and the reality of masks is more complex: they have the dual functions of covering and expressing, concealing and revealing, withholding and presenting.

www.justinshoulder.com

-
1. David Malouf, *An Imaginary Life* (New York: Vintage, 1996), 95–96
 2. Justin Shoulder, conversation with the author, 2010.
 3. *Ibid.*



Brown Council: Critical Comedy

ANNEKE JASPERS

In his proposition for ‘the emancipated spectator’ philosopher Jacques Rancière argues for a rethinking of the relationship between performance and spectatorship.¹ For Rancière, considering these terms binary is problematic in that it is based on a paradox that frames spectators as necessary for performance, but entirely without agency. He characterises this lack of agency in the following terms: being a spectator means looking at spectacle; looking is the opposite of knowing and of acting, and so the spectator is by nature disempowered. As a counterpoint, he calls for an understanding of spectators as active interpreters—as such, able to bridge the divide between looking and acting.

This idea has gained significant traction among commentators on visual arts performance, particularly in relation to participatory practices, though some, such as Caroline A. Jones, have pointed to its utopian idealism. Jones, in turn, has argued that at a time when performative and participatory art practices are proliferating, the way in which agency is imagined and enacted by performers, presenters and spectators alike is by all means uneven terrain.²

Sydney-based collective Brown Council makes works that circulate within this matrix of ideas about the social experience of performance and its underlying dynamics of power. Since graduating from the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, in 2005, the collective’s four members—Frances Barrett, Kate Blackmore, Kelly Doley and Diana Smith—have pursued a video and performance art practice that straddles the contexts of gallery and stage, and draws on the historical lineages of both the visual and performing arts. Their work has consistently engaged with the concepts of spectacle and endurance, as well as the dialogue between live-ness and the performance document or trace. Recently, they have begun to fold participation into this mix.

In the past three years, Brown Council has developed a cluster of inter-related works that appropriate the genre of comedy and the figure of the dunce. Among their other projects, these particular works stand out for the way they explore performance as a form of entertainment

Above and facing page: Brown Council, *A Comedy*, 2010, performance still, Next Wave Festival, Melbourne. Photo: Devika Bilimoria.



and engage with the politics of spectatorship, audience expectation, and the ethics of participation. The first of these works were presented as part of the group's exhibition *Big Show* at Locksmith Project Space in Sydney, during December 2009. The exhibition comprised two videos, *One Hour Laugh* (2009) and *Big Show* (2009), as well as an installation component that responded to the shopfront architecture of the gallery.

One Hour Laugh (2009) is documentation of a performance staged for the camera over the course of exactly 60 minutes, presented as one unedited take played in real time on a single channel. All four members of the group stand in portrait view, dressed in simple, DIY costumes that feature brightly coloured approximations of a dunce's hat and collar. At first they look expectantly but silently at one another, before simultaneously bursting into exaggerated laughter. Barely a minute has passed before the challenge of laughing without reason begins to show and over the course of the hour, their antics become increasingly forced and absurd. By emptying out the authenticity of laughter as an expression of emotion and reflecting the object of comedy performance back to the audience as a subject, *One Hour Laugh* short circuits the logic of comic entertainment and undermines the possibility of innocuous pleasure.

The endurance aspect of *One Hour Laugh* also introduces the notion of *schadenfreude*—taking delight in the misfortune of others—to the performer-spectator exchange, a concept explored in greater depth in the companion piece *Big Show*. This video features the artists dressed in the same costumes performing for the camera in the same generic studio space. Extending on the references implicit in *One Hour Laugh*, they enact a series of sketches that recall variety routines and stand up comedy, collapsing the dunce's embrace of humiliation with the comedian's typical mode of debased parody. Doley wriggles about on the floor in an uncomfortable attempt to free herself from ropes binding her wrists and ankles; Blackmore performs a 'magic act', plucking bananas from her pants then making these 'disappear' by eating them in quick succession; and Smith and Barrett take turns slapping one another across the face. The work makes palpable their vulnerability, nausea and discomfort, and in so doing, probes the accountability of the audience as passive witness to a spectacle that is premised on cruelty. But it also points to the way this ethical conundrum plays out differently in relation to live and recorded performance.

Big Show is carefully edited in a way that inverts the documentary credibility of *One Hour Laugh*. The video cycles through short excerpts of each of the sketches, interspersed with frames that flash temporal milestones ("TWO HOURS & FIFTEEN MINUTES", "FOUR HOURS") suggesting the durations of the performances are far longer than what we see represented. The endurance element of the work as we experience it in the gallery is essentially speculative. So while the mythology of theatrical illusion is debunked, for instance, by the absurd notion that the bananas disappear through an act of magic, or the reality of Smith's and Barrett's bruised cheeks, the truthfulness of what the artists ask us to believe is called into question.



This emphasis on the mediating function of the camera is a key feature of Brown Council's practice. In *Big Show*, it works in conjunction with the interrogative but simple nature of the actions and pared back aesthetic of the studio-as-set to form a dialogue with the conventions of early performance art of the 1960s and seventies, exemplified by artists such as Vito Acconci, Chris Burden, and Marina Abramovic. In turn, this speaks to another of the group's ongoing interests—exploring points of intersection between performance art and theatre—which at Locksmith was brought further into focus by the juxtaposition of the two videos with a spangly metallic blue 'curtain' made of foil-like material. The curtain hung inside the gallery's bay window, obscuring the contents of the space. It framed the gallery as a theatrical stage, suggesting that the spectators of the exhibition were also performers—or at the very least, that their response to the work was an active element in its operation.

Significantly extending this idea and its implications, in May 2010 the artists presented a new work *A Comedy* at Next Wave Festival in Melbourne that reconfigured and expanded on the material presented in *Big Show* to become an hour-long live performance. Held in the modest and informal context of the Carlton Traders Hall, *A Comedy* literally situated the audience in the space of the stage, arranged in a semi-circle around the spot-lit area in which the action unfolded. Spectators were invited to wear dunce hats matching those of the performers and a large suspended black-and-white light box stating 'COMEDY' announced unequivocally that they could expect a laugh. The 'magic trick' and 'slap stick' sketches of *Big Show* featured once again, joined by some new acts: 'stand up', a comedy routine that began as crude and bombastic, then developed into an agonisingly self-conscious capitulation to the gaze of the audience; 'cream pie', where a spectator was invited to lodge said object into one of the artist's faces; and perhaps most brazen of all, 'dancing monkey', which involved Barrett imitating a monkey that in turn attempted to extract small change from the audience by banging a pie tin at people's feet.

The casting of Doley in the role of MC and inclusion of canned sound effects controlled by the artists from the stage rounded out the transformation from performance-for-video to fully-fledged stage production. But it was in the climactic final act that the possibilities presented by the live spectacle were wholly exploited. At the end of the performance, Doley kneeled centre front of the stage, bound and blindfolded, implying—but never specifying—an invitation to the audience to pelt her with tomatoes that were scattered at their feet, which had until now appeared simply as mute stage props. Many people obliged, with varying degrees of enthusiasm; some refrained. At this point the friction between viewing pleasure and discomfort, and between obedience and empowerment, took a more confronting turn. Even in refusing to act, viewers were complicit in Doley's degradation and in fulfilling the work's critique. After all, it anticipated both extremes of audience response.

Above and facing page: Brown Council, *A Comedy*, 2010, performance still, Liveworks Festival, Performance Space, Sydney. Photo: William Mansfield.



The group has subsequently continued to develop *A Comedy*, pushing the work further into the realm of 'live art' and away from the more contained, tightly scripted structure of theatre. In November 2010 they presented a second iteration at Performance Space in Sydney as part of the biennial Liveworks festival, for which they re-configured the work as a four-hour 'endurance spectacular'. Instead of acting out each of the sketches only once in a deliberate sequence, the sketches were treated as discrete units of content from which the audience could generate the performance action by popular demand. The artists switched their assignment to the different roles hourly. The set evolved to be less formal: beneath the light box sat a table holding props and equipment around which the performers gathered; against the table leaned a large blackboard 'advertising' the sketch options and keeping a tally of what had been nominated over the course of the show. There was no seating, and spectators could come and go as they pleased.

In its drawn out, destabilised format at Liveworks, *A Comedy's* interrogation of the politics of spectatorship reached its full potential. It tested the idealism of Rancière's notion of the 'emancipated spectator', creating a spectacle par excellence through its fusion of endurance and comedic conventions. It invited viewers to participate in the construction of the work's meaning while demanding self-awareness about the distribution of power in the room. It addressed spectators as both individuals and as part of a collective social body. It equated looking—looking only—with acting (as opposed to passivity) from an ethical perspective.

Ultimately, *A Comedy* at Liveworks also pointed, as Jones does, to the disparity in how spectators understand and exercise agency. Brown Council approaches this question and others about the nature of performance today, from an interdisciplinary perspective. They are among a generation of younger performance makers whose exploratory practices are reinvigorating the dialogue between visual art performance and theatre locally, and generating new energy around the hybrid genre of live art. As the evolution of material and ideas between *One Hour Laugh*, *Big Show* and *A Comedy* suggests, this is rich and complex territory.

www.browncouncil.com

1. See Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator* Initially delivered as a lecture at the Fifth International Summer Academy, Frankfurt, August 20, 2004, Unpaginated transcript <http://digital.mica.edu/departamental/gradphoto/public/Upload/200811/Ranciere%20%20spectator.pdf> (accessed February, 2011); later published in *Artforum*, March 2007, 271-280, and then as the first chapter of Rancière's book *The Emancipated Spectator*, (London: Verso, 2009)
2. Caroline A. Jones, 'Staged Presence', *Artforum*, May 2010, 216.

Backyard Music Machines and Other Devices

HOLLY WILLIAMS in conversation with VICKY BROWNE



Over the years Vicky Browne has made large psychedelic installations, co-hosted radio shows and pressed playable records out of unlikely materials. Now based in the Blue Mountains, her work fits neither the description of quirky, nor crafty, although at times it comes close to both. There is a critical rigour in her work that belies the ad-hoc materials she favours. Browne finished her Master of Visual Arts last year and I took the opportunity to discuss the impact of this on her practice as well as her ongoing fascination with the technologies of sound.

Holly Williams: The theme of this issue is *expectation* and I've been thinking of your work with this in mind—that it confounds expectations through ambiguity and humour.

Vicky Browne: I like making collections of objects that talk to each other in a room, I guess in this way I think of myself as an installation artist, but I don't necessarily know what the conversation will be. I use 'props' and 'methods', which can trigger or facilitate this conversation. These 'props' include theatrical devices such as backdrops, costumes, and the 'methods' include humour or jokes in the form of word play and double meanings. I try not to convey one meaning, but instead to leave a space for multiple meanings. Ambiguity and open conversation cause the work to eschew expectation; the familiar object is re-contextualised into something 'other' which can expose its use or history in an unexpected way.

HW: I also have a sense that you are interested in the impact of technology, how we interact with things and the way this changes as the technology changes—your work *Manual Teller Machine* (2010) from your exhibition *Come Down From The Mountain* at MOP last year is an good example of this.

VB: The outside of this work is a handmade, cardboard money machine, a familiar object rendered in a backyard way. The inside is made into a retro style office, where a transaction can be made. The work highlights the relationship between the self and everyday technology, our reliance on it and our relationship to it. It also explores how we embrace technology without giving it much thought; technology is digested by the masses. The history of technology is revealed by remaking the object in a shonky DIY fashion: that way it can remind us of its design, its place in history. The handmade replica is a parody of the object and can reveal what it means to us, it gives us space, a moment to pause and to think. Money machines and iPods are interesting because for all their ubiquity they hold our personal secrets. Personal play lists, records of finance—these are things that contribute to our sense of self and our identity.

HW: *Manual Teller Machine* is a nice extension of the giant *My Pod* (2008-2009) and *Indoor & Outdoor iPods* (2008-2009)—scale is something you've toyed with too ...

VB: I've played with both the miniature and the gigantic. When you miniaturise something transcendence occurs. When looking at a miniaturised object you gaze at a contained world, it is a cultural site to peer into. The gigantic, on the other hand, is heavy and

earth bound, it can only be known in parts or at a distance. Within the realm of pop culture the gigantic highlights consumption, mass production and abundance, it is spectacle. These attributes of the miniature and the gigantic are played out in my work.

HW: You also employ traditional handicrafts and use technology but you've resisted the urge to make handicrafts hi-tech, can you talk a bit about the dynamic between the personal or handmade and mass produced, user-driven devices?

VB: In a way my work talks about the hi-tech objects that we use every day. Hence it is domestic in its temperament, I'm not really interested in technology at a hi-tech level, I am interested in it at an amateur level, not quite luddite but pretty close. A few things happen when you remake a slick, mass-produced object in a backyard 'craft' way. It can highlight the object's history, origin and use in an unexpected way. For instance in the work *Dead Wood* (2006) I made a record out of a pile of sticks, it can mean different things to different people; those who are familiar with the object see a record, people who are too young see simply a circular pattern of sticks. It maps the change from analogue to digital, most of us no longer put needles on turning machines, now it is all mathematics, at a push of a button.

The re-making of sound devices in this backyard fashion, with sticks, glue, paper, wood, etc., casts the net wider than just music culture and sound technology. The art object mutates the device so it now operates in a different mode of communication, revealing such notions as fetish objects, political statements, coded mediums, desiring machines and abstract apparatus of capitalist production and expansion.

HW: You have a background in sculpture and you often work with sound. Do you think about sound in a sculptural way—with spatial considerations of sound at the forefront or in a more kinetic, performative sense, or in another way entirely?

VB: I use and think about sound in many different ways depending on what I am making. In this way sound is just another tool I employ. However, as a tool sound is a very important part of my practice. Sound is ubiquitous; it surrounds us in the natural world and it shapes our culture on many levels, which is why I often use it. I am interested in music culture and all that encompasses, but at the other end of the scale I may make field recordings of birds that form part of my sculptures. I don't see myself as a sound artist. However, I do like a lot of sound art and have exhibited in sound art exhibitions, but I don't want to be limited by the title 'sound artist'.

HW: Together, sound and technology raise notions of transmission and reception as well as more politically charged acts of surveillance and propaganda and the evocative process of capturing fleeting sounds in perpetuity.

VB: New sound devices are often greeted with suspicion as if the dark stain of surveillance and propaganda are present in the object; whether in an historical sense, a misunderstood sense



Vicky Browne, *Manual Teller Machine* (outside view), 2010, mixed media. Photo: Michael Myers.



Vicky Browne, *Manual Teller Machine* (inside view), 2010, mixed media. Photo: Michael Myers.



or, existing as an actual function of the device. For example, the dislocated radio voice from nowhere yet everywhere had, for some people in the past, an aura of black magic; they believed it was rocked by the devil's hand. This fear of radio was connected to the fear of new technology's effect on the body: an uncontrolled force, a Frankenstein moment.

HW: I suspect your work disrupts viewer's expectations at times because some objects don't always function (say by making sound) the way someone might presume. Indeed, I've been to shows where several of the pieces no longer work the way they did at the opening—you seem pretty comfortable with this, is it a strategic device?

VB: I used to intentionally make work that would break. In one show I had an old Apple computer, a se/30, the all-in-one kind, and on the screen it said 'help me' and on the back a sticker stated 'kick me', which several people did until it stopped functioning. This work highlighted the way we throw away technology and rapidly take up the next thing. Also, it was kind of sad seeing

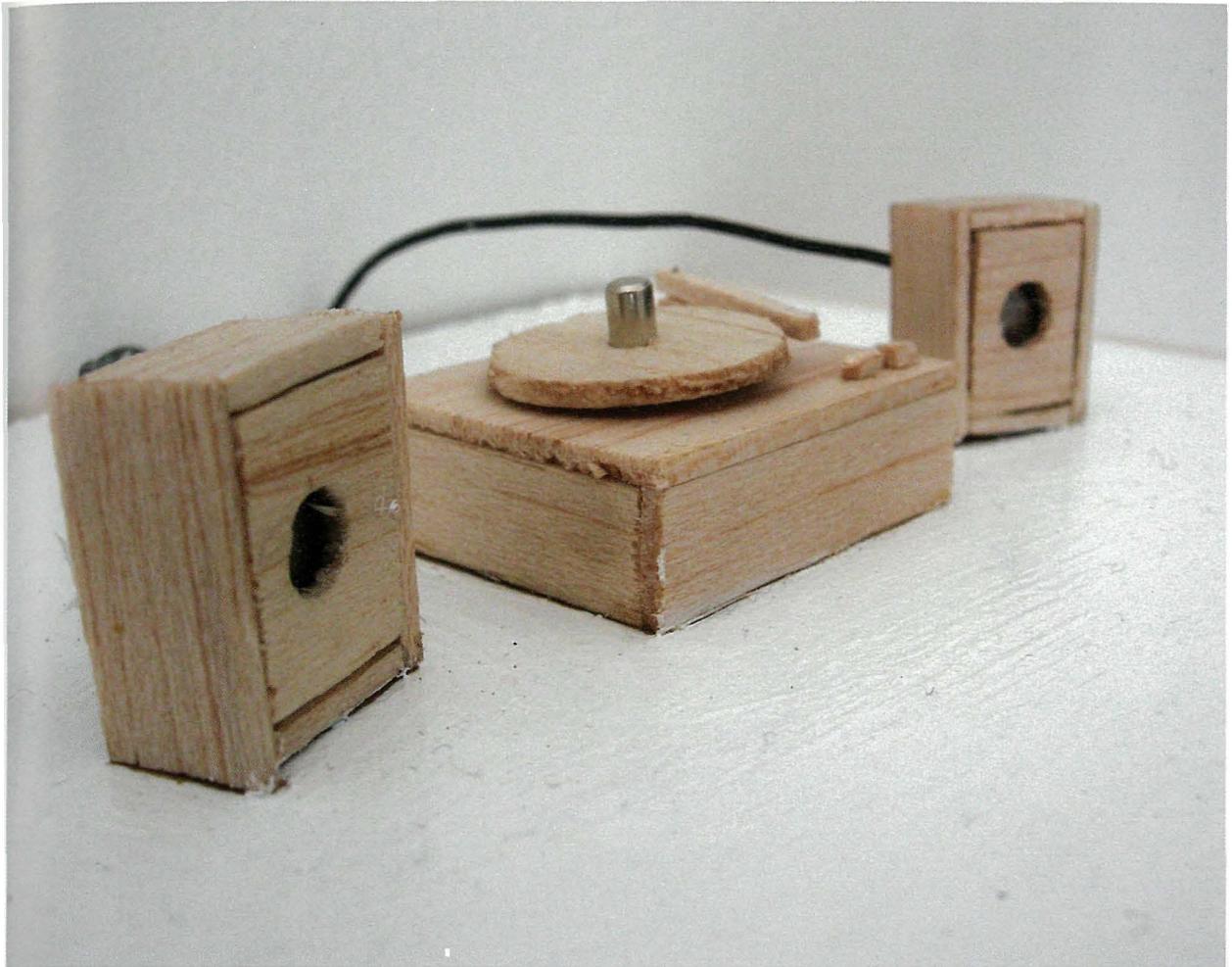
something 10 years old and from my past being destroyed. Other work that has broken down has just frustrated the hell out of me! Because my aesthetic is handcrafted at times the objects don't last, mostly I'm fine with it. However, I think my work is becoming more stable and better made, and less breakable—maybe it's me getting older.

HW: Your work draws on the aesthetic of handcrafts and nostalgia (for say the 1970s), it strikes me that you use this as a conceptual device rather than a stylistic one, would you agree?

VB: It's really weird but sometimes I try very hard not to have a 1970s aesthetic but my work seems to come out that way ... so maybe it is stylistic. However, the 1970s aesthetic for most people, even if they weren't born before then, conjures up nostalgia, which can be a powerful thing. It can be funny and sad at the same time, it can evoke a feeling of loss. It can make us think of the environment, of speed, of values and identity; even in its most cheesiest and tacky form.

Above: Vicky Browne, *Executive Stress Necklaces*, 2010, mixed media. Photo: the artist.

Facing page: Vicky Browne, *Untitled Tiny Turntable*, (with sound), 10 cm x 4 cm x 4 cm, balsa wood and electronics. Photo: the artist.



HW: Potentiality comes to mind across the spectrum of your works, both conceptually and physically. Some of the objects appear almost shamanistic, particularly in your show *The Orator vs. The Warrior* at ICAN in 2009. The work appeared energised by a kind of experimental or performative potentiality. Again, I saw this in *Family of Four* (2010), which featured four giant homemade iPods in front of a huge poster of Stonehenge, establishing a juxtaposition between ancient power objects and today's personal consumer goods.

VB: I think placing objects near each other sets up conversations; it generates potentiality within the works, not finality. Also that 'shamanistic' quality can add humour to the work. I don't believe you can look at that huge poster of Stonehenge with the pathetic homemade iPods in front of it and not think of that scene in the film *This Is Spinal Tap* (1984). They are really stupid ... I was once told that I made 'dumb art' by someone, I think I agree it is dumb in its humour and the term dumb is pushed further considering I make art with sound or music references. This dumbness, which sprouts from humour, reflects a kind of dumbness that has seeped into our society, it mimics the people who complain about the dumbing down of society, a dumbing down which is often attributed to our reliance on technology.

HW: You've said 'it is typical for artists to expand the boundaries and capabilities of technology. Artists deconstruct machines, they reinvent them, exposing their meanings via misuse of the technology's function or action it performs'.¹ I've noticed that your work focuses less on virtual technology such as software, the internet etc. and much more on physical objects of technology from recent history.

VB: It's kind of like I'm interested in the objects that make sound more than sound in itself. I like making physical objects and part of the way we form our identities is the way we use devices. I'm thinking here of the iPod; people put it on like a badge along with other paraphernalia and it becomes part of their sense of self. We live in a physical world and our interaction with the virtual is via objects. It is precisely this interaction or juncture that I'm interested in.

1. Vicky Browne, 'Images of Sound and the Sound of Images' (Master of Visual Art diss., University of Sydney, 2010), 16



Impossible Consummations: Encounters with Daniel Mudie Cunningham

ANN FINEGAN

Daniel Mudie Cunningham is atypically, in equal measures, artist, writer and curator. Across multiple encounters and modes of expression, his collective body of work pulls no punches in its interrogation of politics, history and being. Always grounded with respect to the local, his many projects have a tendency towards a grandeur of scale. He took on the topic of death through an unlikely partnering with *jouissance* by indexing what pop song people would like played at their funeral (*Funeral Songs*, 2007) —simple enough until you begin to think through the psychical compensations and trade-offs that are made in such a pact, and the psychoanalytical complexity of such an idea (condensing your passions, your likes, your life, your being, your representation of self into a song of three minutes duration). His knack for tapping into the bigger pictures is paradoxically styled through forays into camp and the tightly intertwined nexus of identity, celebrity and the spectacle. Some works ostensibly take their stand within queer politics, but are always staged with a view to revealing depths of the human condition.

Think Daniel Mudie Cunningham in Jodie Foster's revealing *Taxi Driver* shorts, straddling a pinball machine while being play-raped by the commanding hulk of Anastasia Zaravinos in mullet and dyke leathers, in a reenactment of Foster's pack rape from *The Accused* (*Jodie Foster Sex Montage*, 2008). In psychoanalytical terms, such classic displacements speak volumes about self and identity, cutting deeply into the core of subject formation,

and the resistance of the individual to the dominant hegemony —to the formative power of state and spectacle in respect of normative gender modes. In this way the work is a statement of queer political-cultural resistance, an inversion of gender roles to recreate the scene as described by Jose Da Silva as a 'slapstick lesbian romp'.¹

However, the work also drives home the point that celebrity identification is less about celebrity per se, less about Cunningham's Jodie Foster fetish, than about what celebrity identification can unlock about various 'me-states' of being in general. Such roleplays of the complex layers of violations and permissions, about who does what to whom and when, about the enjoyment of guilty pleasures (the fantasy of it wasn't me, I was done unto, in another place, in another's body) also have heteronormative appeal. We're all complex products of desire and its sociocultural repressions, and equally implicated in the spectacle and the various holds of its celebrity identifications.

Indeed, celebrity identification was one of the triggers that led Lacan from clinical psychology to study psychoanalysis. Lacan was fascinated by the case of Aimee,² a young woman who overidentified with a popular stage actress causing her to stab the actress in real life in order to claim the actress's identity more fully as her own. So intense was Aimee's identification that she had to dispose of her rival in order to fully exist. There, as exposed in this

Facing page: Daniel Mudie Cunningham, *Meeting Jodie Foster*, 2001/2009, snapshot taken on disposable Kodak camera at Madame Tussauds Wax Museum, New York, printed on PVC. Photo: some random tourist.

story, was the nexus of identity in its fusion of being and image —in her case, desire hooked to celebrity in a desperate attempt to fill out that void in being, more simply put, to ‘be someone’. It is as if Cunningham has picked up on this philosophical-psychoanalytical point of celebrity as a means of communication of ‘being for others’, celebrity as a shorthand of inhabitable character traits that can be temporarily deployed.

Certainly, there’s an economy in our libidinal and other investments in celebrity images, an economy of not having to name or spell out what, in particular, we are responding to. Celebrity worship becomes a kind of shorthand, a saving of mental labour for articulating what it is we like and desire, and in sharing these likes and desires, we bond with each other —in short delivering shared expectations.

In the photographic banner *Meeting Jodie Foster* (2001/2009) —also from Cunningham’s *The Jodie Foster Archive* —the artist poses next to Madame Tussaud’s wax replica of Foster, which sees her garbed in Academy Awards attire (gender ambivalence coded into a tight-fitting white siren gown split above the crotch to reveal masculine black trousers). This speaks more, as Da Silva has argued,³ about Cunningham’s queerness, not hers. Posing with her model, Cunningham and Foster effectively ‘come out’ together, in a gesture of borrowed support. Also from *The Jodie Foster Archive*, the note from Tracey Moffatt to ‘Darling Daniel’, transmitting her ‘almost met Jodie story!’, projects the fascination with celebrity as an expectation of shared values and enjoyment. Foster, the actor (rather than Foster in one of her roles), represents a complex and multifaceted character, a point of exchange, a public identikit of feminist/queer icon.

As such, rather than reaching inward, with all the risks of pained, nineteenth century Romantic narcissism, Cunningham’s strategy of relating to his audience through celebrity works precisely because the ‘real person’ of the celebrity has been evacuated to be occupied by images of collective fantasy and projection. (Do we really want to meet our celebrities? Isn’t meeting celebrities one of the myths of ‘changing your life’?) Don’t we rather enjoy swapping exchanges about celebrities because they’re not there, because in a sense they do not exist except as rallying points for shared expectations (Zizek’s point about the king as shit, as a zero point of empty but necessary symbolic function).⁴

Indeed, across a variety of exhibitions, curatorial projects, and essays, from group shows like *Multiple Personality* (MOP Projects, 2007) and *Reality Check: Watching Sylvania Waters* (Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, 2009) Cunningham explores the intermeshing of celebrity with life. In his catalogue essay for *Multiple Personality*, which he also curated, Cunningham wrote, ‘In an age where art and entertainment become as indistinguishable as the distinction between an artist and an artwork, the art persona persistently negotiates the performance of self.’⁵ In other words, engaging with the performance of celebrity is a mode of engaging with the self via the other (and others).

Reality Check: Watching Sylvania Waters extended the exploration of celebrity into the place of the real. Not only were artists invited to respond to the *Sylvania Waters* TV show from 1992 and its instant celebrity matriarch, Noeline Donaher —an engagement with what the (celebrity) other elicits in a multiple of me-responders —but Cunningham carefully situated the

exhibition in the context of histories of the local. The substantial catalogue included real estate developers’ promotions, and documentation of the dredging of Sylvania Waters’ upmarket waterfront development from the oyster beds of Gwawley Bay, the other side of Tom Ugly’s Bridge. He also included 1992 newspaper and magazine coverage, which documented local reactions to the TV show from politicians, neighbours and business people. These ranged from supportive real estate hopefuls to holders of ‘Cringe parties’ by locals horrified at the tacky representations of the televised ‘blue collar millionaires’ in their midst. Like his more recent curatorial project, *The Ghost Show*, also staged at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery (2010/11), *Sylvania Waters* deployed a ‘local hero’ model of celebrity as a wedge, an access point driven into the local culture. Curation for Cunningham is less about imposing a theme than realising collective cultural work.

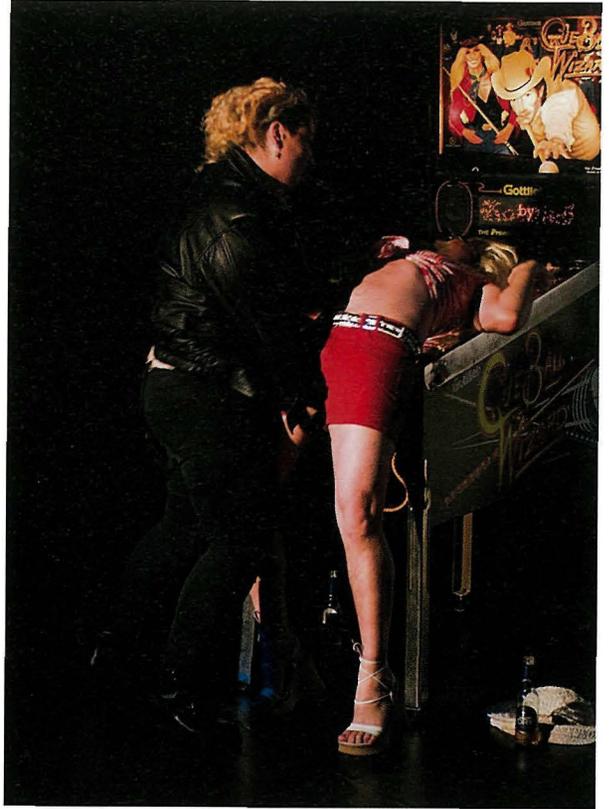
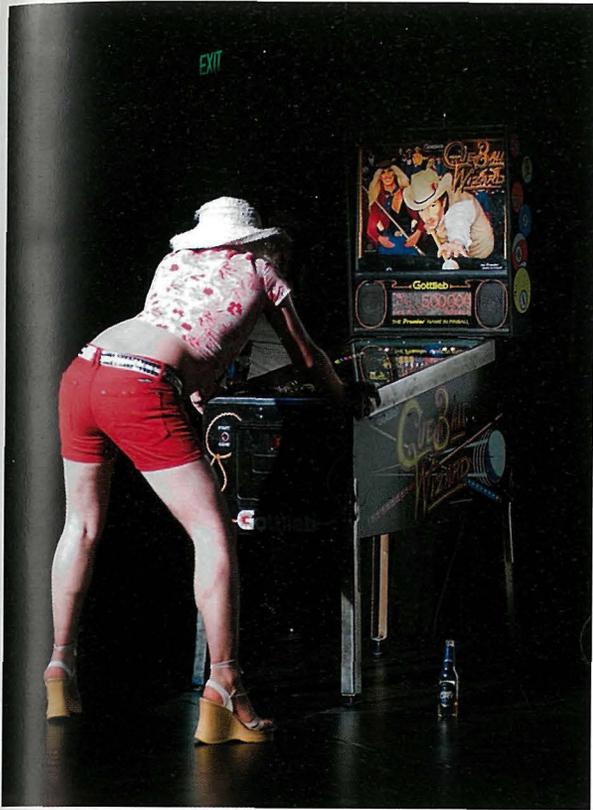
Cunningham’s recent video, *Oh Industry* (2009), consolidates this concern with history and place, if on a grander world-historical scale. The celebrity contact remains a constant, if more oblique factor, with Cunningham performing and re-visioning Bette Midler’s camp captain of industry as an equally camp naval commander in his version of Midler’s song and dance number ‘Oh Industry’ from the movie, *Beaches* (1988). Midler’s ahistorical stage is replaced by Newington Armory, an ex Australian Navy munitions deposit, where Cunningham had a residency, and Midler’s choreography of faceless workers is likewise replaced by faceless masked female sailors. But whereas Midler’s captain turns out to be as faceless as his workers, a mere cog in a machine that has clearly taken over, Cunningham’s captain is a feminised man in tights with Xmas tinsel rather than braid adorning his cap. He’s tied down on his deck in the mutiny of his female sailors —an allusion to sexual revolution and feminism. But, overall his ‘liberated’ female sailors continue on as before, performing without him as cogs in an absurd machine, a Fred Astaire dance number gone wrong in that the chorus line has forsaken the phallus in a revolution that leaves the capital-industrial complex in place as ever before. Cunningham’s captain simply wanders off leaving the chorus line to fruitlessly pit itself against the arsenal’s brick walls in perfect military formation. It’s as if the revolution has stranded itself, become absorbed into the military-industrial-capitalist complex currently dominating the world. Instead of the musical’s happy ending, questions go begging as to what went wrong.

In *Rhymes with Failure* (2010), Cunningham takes as his partner the unlikely historical celebrity of Mrs Macquarie, wife of the colonial NSW governor, in whose honour was carved her eponymous harbourside sandstone chair. Cunningham borrows her figure, or at least her head, and a cardboard facsimile of the torso of the cello she apparently owned but couldn’t play, to survey the realm through her gaze, in the manner of a ventriloquist’s doll. It is as if Cunningham claims her (like Jodie Foster, Bette Midler, Noeline Donaher and his other celebrity hosts) in order to see through her eyes. The title, *Rhymes with Failure*, recalls the parlour game of charades. Make a sign for ear —what sounds like failure? Australia?

The colonial legacy is summoned here as failure, compounded in the melancholy disconnect of the soundtrack of George Tillianakis’s distorted electric guitar. Andrew Frost’s catalogue essay notes the allusion to Man Ray’s famous photograph of Kiki’s torso as a violin, and Cunningham certainly plays

Facing page (above left and right): Daniel Mudie Cunningham, *Jodie Foster Sex Montage*, 2008, performance photograph. Photo: David Silva.

Facing page (below): Daniel Mudie Cunningham, *The Jodie Foster Archive*, 1996–2009, installation view. Photo: Silversalt Photography.





Mrs Macquarie's cello-body with rising frustration to a climax (she wakes, responds and sleeps again).⁶ However, Cunningham has unmistakably included a further allusion to English legend, the story of Arthur, who as a boy needed to pull the sword out of the stone in order to be king. There, framed against the massive natural sandstone block of Mrs Macquarie's Chair, the head of Cunningham's Mrs Macquarie is pierced by a cardboard cut-out sword which the cellist does not manage to dislodge in spite of the vigour of his playing. The sword stays firmly in her stone/head. There in the sexual metaphor of consummation is failure, which according to Lacan always fails,⁷ as in consummation we are always barred complete access to the other —there's never possession only the compensation of the *jouissance* of the word (our own pleasure and the presumed parallel pleasure of the other). No matter how many times consummation takes place (no matter how many times the video loops), the message is that possession is never complete. In this compounding of metaphor and allusion, and Cunningham's further queering of Lacan's impossible consummation with woman, we're left hanging, as if in a suspended game of charades, with a sequence that unmistakably conflates British colonisation of Australia with failure. In republican terms are we still in bed with that

Imperial Victorian body? Inside that melancholy colonial culture consummating again and again? Unable to withdraw the sword and be our own King?

Rhymes with Failure teases our expectations, depicting the fate of Australian statehood, metaphorically, in its current irresolution. Like *Oh Industry*, we're taken to the threshold of historical revisioning and left pondering, with some discontent, future expectations as a response to colonial meets capitalist-military-industrialist failure.

In Cunningham's forthcoming UTS Gallery exhibition *The Fall Before Fall*, scheduled to coincide with the ten-year anniversary of September 11, the phenomenology of expectation is coupled with a reflection on the falling/failing of the Twin Towers. The paradoxes of expectation, are the core of the work.

Worldwide, no-one with access to media escaped reliving, again and again, those spectacular hits of the moments of impact, and, perhaps more so, the silhouettes of bodies falling/jumping from the collapsing towers. However, reflection on the fate of the Twin Towers cannot but bring about a psychical re-experiencing, a 'fall

Above: Daniel Mudie Cunningham, *Oh Industry*, 2009, HD video, 16:9, 4 min 11 sec. Production still: Pete Volich.

Facing page: Daniel Mudie Cunningham, *Rhymes with Failure*, 2010, HD video with score composed by George Tillianakis, 16:9, 4 min 29 sec, installation view. Photo: Silversalt Photography



before falling' which the recalling of those images sets up. In our imaginations, we set ourselves up to re-fall.

Cunningham will take us deep into this phenomenological hardwiring of the body, into the paradoxical 'experience of experience', through which philosophers like Merleau-Ponty and Sobchak have argued we recall our own experiences in order to vicariously experience what the other is experiencing. This, they argue, is how cinema and television works, no matter how horrific. We inevitably, subconsciously, couple our own lived body experiences to what we see on screen in order to understand (even if what we bring must be amplified and extrapolated multiple times in our imaginations to approximate what we see). In other words, we must experience before we can experience, we must ourselves fall before we fall, before identification with what's on screen is even possible. In this re-experiencing, in which we fall before we fall, expectation is at work.

Cunningham will, paradoxically, have us relive the 'ur-moment' of phenomenology as cinematic flight, in a video of rising and falling from which the human figure has been erased. He will set us soaring into the vacant blue, however, in an uncomfortable conjunction with reawakened memories of September 11, a date that falls just before 'fall' (autumn) in a US calendar year. Effectively, in this separation of 'fall' from 'fall' the viewer will feel the leap of expectation in that bounce into the blue, but also, in

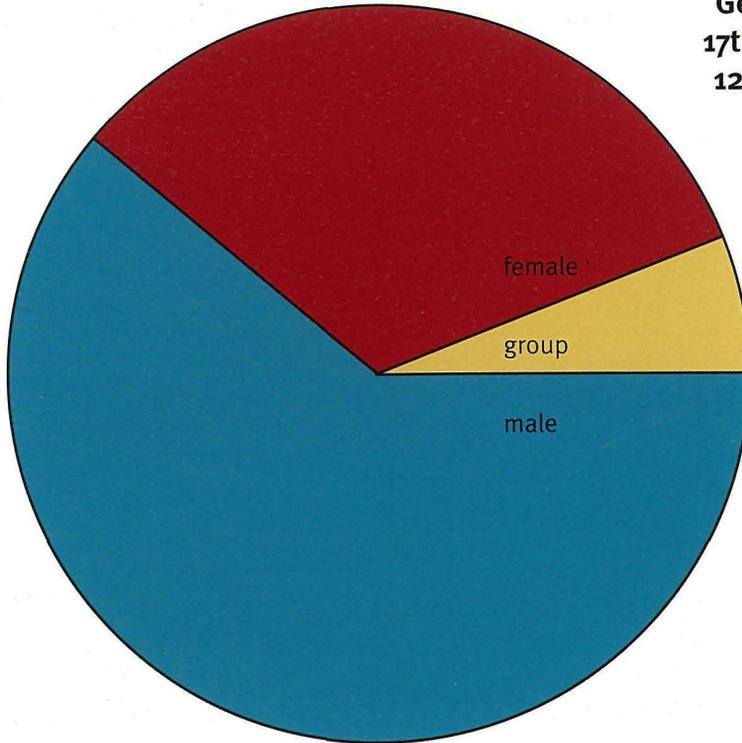
that instant, recall others who leapt in that tragic event. It's as if Cunningham has pulled a switch. For a tiny moment, there's exaltation. Then that blue re-signifies to represent departed souls.

Expectation, rarefied, is caught in that switch, a threshold event in which multiple aspects of humanity can be glimpsed.

www.danielmcunningham.com

1. Jose Da Silva, 'The Jodie Foster Archive', catalogue essay, *Oh Industry*, MOP Projects, 2009.
2. Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, *Lacan The Absolute Master* (Stanford University Press, California, 1991) 24-25.
3. Jose Da Silva, *ibid*.
4. Slavoj Zizek, *Tarrying With the Negative* (Duke University Press, Durham, 1993), 158-9. On the 'empty signifier'.
5. Daniel Mudie Cunningham, catalogue essay, *Multiple Personality*, MOP Projects, 2007.
6. Andrew Frost, catalogue essay, *Rhymes With Failure*, MOP Projects, 2010.
7. Jacques Lacan, *Encore* (Editions de Seuil, Paris, 1978).

**Gender of artists in the
17th Biennale of Sydney
12 May—1 August 2010**



Where Do All the Women Go?

SARAH RODIGARI in conversation with CoUNTess

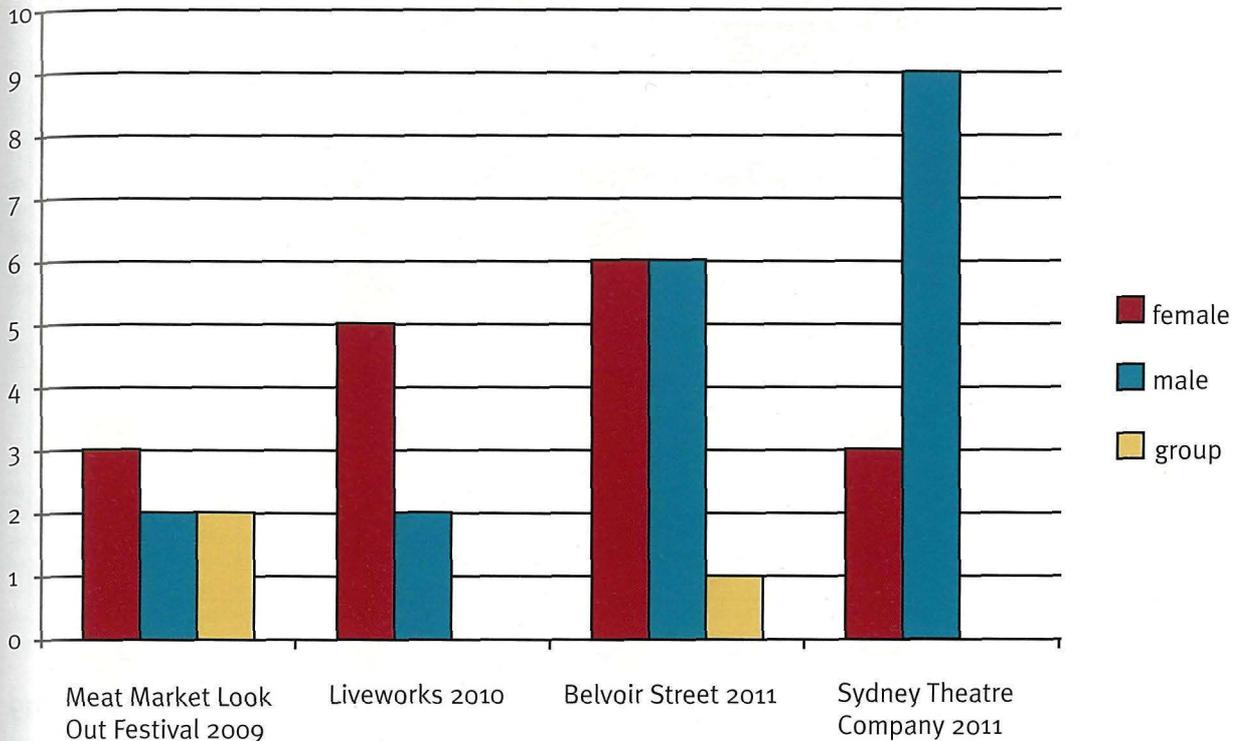
Sexism and gender inequality seems outdated and hard to reconcile in a privileged, Western, 21st century society. One imagines that feminism succeeded at some point, and it did, I certainly do not feel lesser because I'm a woman. Also, I do not feel alone in thinking that the once crippling social and economic binaries between men and women have merged into a fine blend of togetherness and joy that celebrates diversity and difference. Especially in the realm of contemporary art, which for the most part is populated with well educated, socially aware and politically correct feminists, regardless of gender. 'Yes, I'm a feminist, aren't we all?' I would once tusk.

runway asked me to interview CoUNTess, who are behind the CoUNTess blog, because of my 'experience and knowledge of a younger generation of women artists that use performance'. And, I have approached this interview from a somewhat personal perspective obviously because I am a woman. I would like to read this interview written from a male perspective, surely men can advocate feminism these days. I'm particularly interested in how the performance world is different to the art establishment that CoUNTess critiques, what are the parallels, and where do they vary?

Certainly, a large portion of women have had success in performance circles. Daniel Brine, Artistic Director of Performance Space has commented that he is amazed by the power of this charge being led by women (such as post, Brown Council and Parachutes for Ladies) noting that because of this push, performance in Australia differs from the UK scene. The visibility of these women could be attributed to the support of the previous director of Performance Space, Fiona Winning, and previous director of PACT, Regina Heilmann, who have nurtured creative opportunities for this generation of artists.

The inequality referred to by CoUNTess predominately looks at the representation of solo artists in major visual art organisations such as the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA). I doubt that Performance Space will ever be a destination for tourists like the MCA or other similar galleries. The very nature of performance is that the medium exists in the cracks and sub-cultures of larger organisations, which according to CoUNTess is where women statistically dwell. Until venues such as Belvoir Street and Malthouse Theatre, and major art festivals across the country develop performance and live art programs one cannot quantifiably compare the representation of women in performance to that of the visual arts.¹

Gender of directors/performers in recent Australian theatre and performance seasons



Preferring for issues to remain a prominent aspect of the discussion, those behind the CoUNTess blog will remain anonymous for this interview.

Sarah Rodigari: For those who haven't seen the CoUNTess blog, what is it about and what gave you the impetus to start it?

CoUNTess: I found myself noticing how exhibitions I was seeing in the leading museums and art spaces in Australia included just a few women artists. So, I began to swipe a highlighter through art magazines where I also noticed a small percentage of women artists work being shown. It seems old fashioned now and I don't know if you see it this way but it appeared to me that the great artist, the genius is still male. The premise of starting the blog was to consider the question: when a lot more women than men go to art school, why are they so poorly represented in these shows, galleries and magazines? By counting the numbers I confirmed my suspicions were, disappointingly, true. These numbers formed the first posts on CoUNTess.

But, what really turned a growing grievance into the energy to start the blog was the accessible way I could create a public platform for discussion of these issues by using the Internet. The purpose of the blog is that it is out there in the public, it is trying to be provocative, as well as saying there is somebody watching. It is not exactly whistle blowing but with the gender numbers CoUNTess has published on the blog, it's a bit like mentioning the elephant in the room. Besides I could easily see it as an Equal

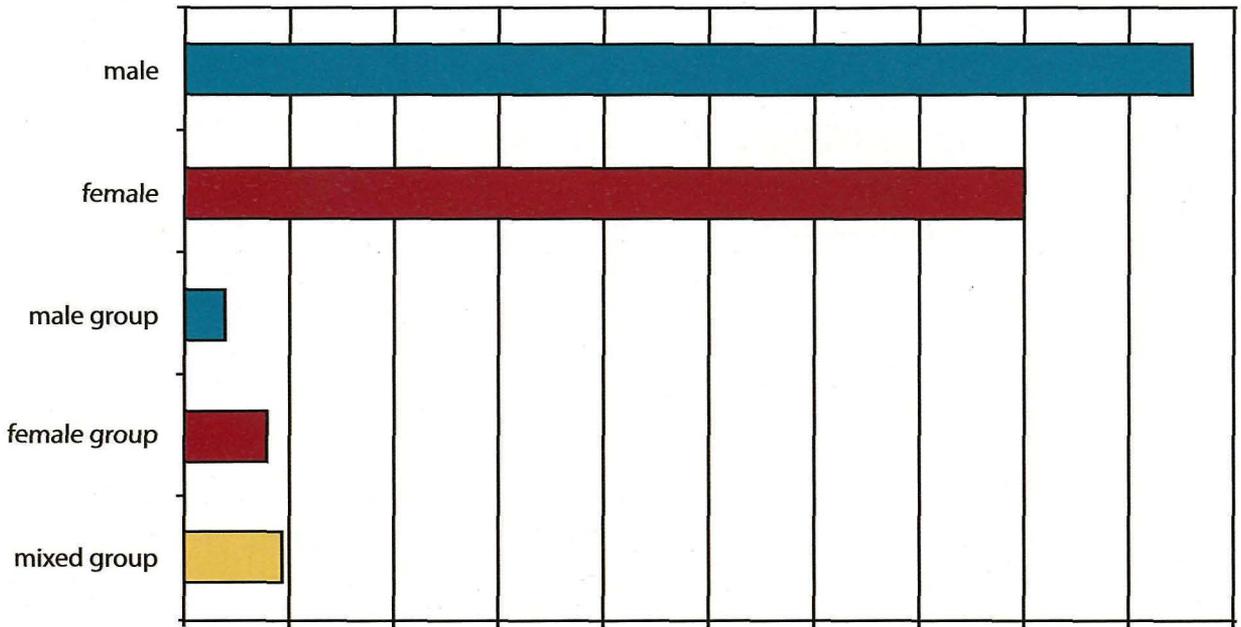
Employment Opportunity issue in terms of who is getting access to opportunities and how gender discrimination must play a part in women artists achieving highly within institutional contexts.

As I began to write I felt most comfortable keeping it to the point, by using graphics to convey the ideas. I was lucky to have two artist friends who have helped with counting, collating, discussion and writing.

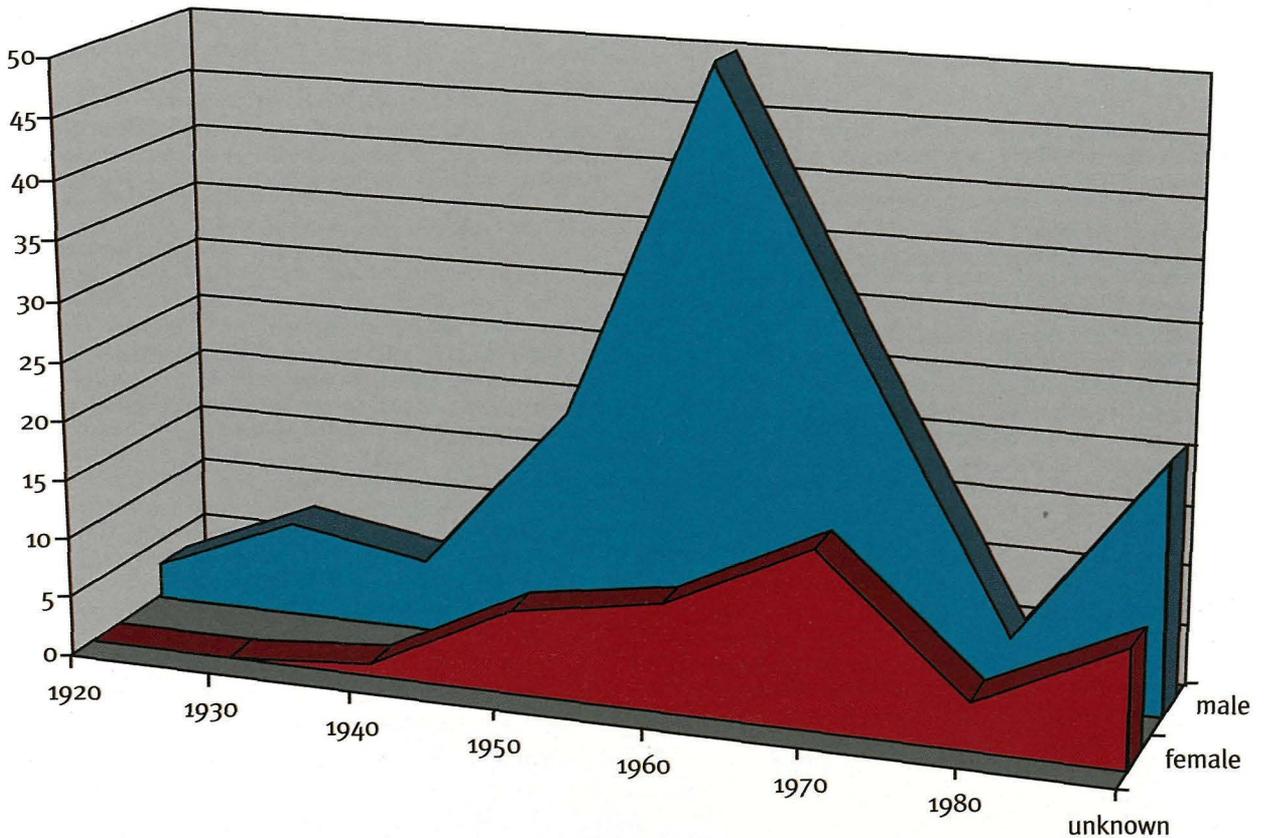
SR: In the context of this blog, why is the emphasis placed on prominent art institutions when referring to the idea of success? If you look outside commercial galleries and major art institutions women are successful in art.

C: We agreed that the art world has a very established hierarchy because it is institutional. It is this power structure that CoUNTess is interested in critiquing. Being artists ourselves we considered these ideas from our point of view. Most artists are constantly adjusting their expectations for their career based on the opportunities they are getting, while the institution prefers categories like emerging, established or mid-career. Artists, depending on these categories, show at artist-run galleries, commercial galleries and museums. The CoUNTess blog aims to dissect and count each level of the art world hierarchy and to create a public record of its gender balance. The reality is an economy that pays artists in exposure. It is the work that is recorded in catalogues, solo shows, books and magazines that

Gender of artists in the MCA's annual exhibition *Primavera*: 1992 – 2010



Gender versus date of birth of artists in national pavilions at the 53rd Venice Biennale 2009



capture and establish an historical place for each artist. And that takes me back to the blog's first post because the situation was a perfect example of that cycle. *Move* was an HSC education resource partly funded by Kaldor Public Art Projects to acquaint and inspire students with video art. A produced DVD featured the work of five emerging and now established male artists—no women artists at all. This made me angry because it just seems to deepen the assumption from the very beginning of an artist's education that 'real' artists are male.

SR: If women are now seen in positions of power in major art institutions, as administrators and curators, such as Juliana Engberg, Lisa Havilah and Elizabeth Ann Macgregor,² why isn't this change being reflected in male to women ratio in the exhibitions being presented?

C: Exactly, I mean this is one of the questions that the CoUNTess blog is asking. But we are all working within a system, we can't hold one individual responsible, all those women have showcased some really memorable shows by women artists.

SR: On your blog there are links to two international exhibitions, *WACK* at MOMA in New York and *Elles* at the Centre de Pompidou, Paris. While this is great, and in keeping with the above-mentioned inclusion of women in the canonised history of art, it also seems to continue and foster the weary divide between them and us? Do women still want to be seen as a minority? Are such exhibitions a solution to the questions posited in the blog?

C: I have noticed that when there are more women in a show, people actually notice and talk about it, probably because it is quite novel when it happens. Whereas women-only shows seem to marginalise the artists as being a woman before being an artist. There is not one solution. What was so great about the *Elles* show, for example, was that the Pompidou spent 70 percent of their acquisition budget over four years buying work by women. An exhibition at this scale in such a popular museum bravely acknowledges the significant contribution women artists generate with very little recognition. Such exhibitions acknowledge there are huge discrepancies between the proportion of practicing women to male artists and their representation within public art spaces, so yes I'm all for it. I don't want it to be just one exhibition and then 'OK let's get back to normal' but I do think that this show and others like it raise awareness while raising the bar.

SR: What are the responses you have had to CoUNTess?

C: The responses are pretty positive; Ashley Crawford in a Photofile editorial wrote that CoUNTess' statistics were impetus to take action on the gender balance of their own editorial board. There was also an article in *Art Monthly* by Dr Melissa Miles in which she interviews women in the art world addressing questions in this blog.³

SR: Is this blog shaming arts organisations into action?

C: Yes, I am morally outraged but I let the numbers tell the story. CoUNTess merely exposes how the odds are stacked against women artists, and our posts have encouraged women to propose their own shows, to do their bit to re-address the gender balance, and the blog directly asks that of institutions as well.

SR: How do you collect your data?

C: We have to be very methodical to make sure our numbers are credible; all of our statistics we have researched online or from catalogues. Most recently we counted the Melbourne Art Fair. We always establish a criteria because galleries and spaces that focus on projects and group shows operate differently. Each instance is not necessarily equal, this is why we have focused more on the solo artist.

In scanning the recent programs of Performance Space (*Live Works*, 2010) and Arts House (*Look Out*, 2009) my assumption that women are well represented in performance rings true.⁴ It also appears that a lot of these successful women are young, and perhaps decisions of marriage, children and other supposed statistically crippling choices for women artists still lie ahead of them. From this perspective and in light of CoUNTess, women in performance may also reach their 40's and find fewer opportunities. It remains to be seen if these women can 'have it all': marriage, children and a successful career, just like their male counterparts.

SR: What about talent, what if the artists who aren't getting opportunities, regardless of gender, just aren't as talented?

C: Well that's the inherent belief that underpins it all. CoUNTess is into debunking the myth that an artist operates in a meritocracy, and talent just rises to the top, as it doesn't make sense when the pointy peak of greatness has so few women. Women almost always outnumber male students in undergraduate art education, they also noticeably populate artist-run spaces, get a relatively equal look in for emerging museum survey shows before their numbers start to dwindle and on average there will be 35 percent women artists in Biennales and as few as 14 percent will have solo museum shows.

The economic reality of being an artist will drive the smart ones out of the game, especially if they are not succeeding. I think it is ultimately the artist's belief in their own talent that keeps them doing it, regardless of recognition.

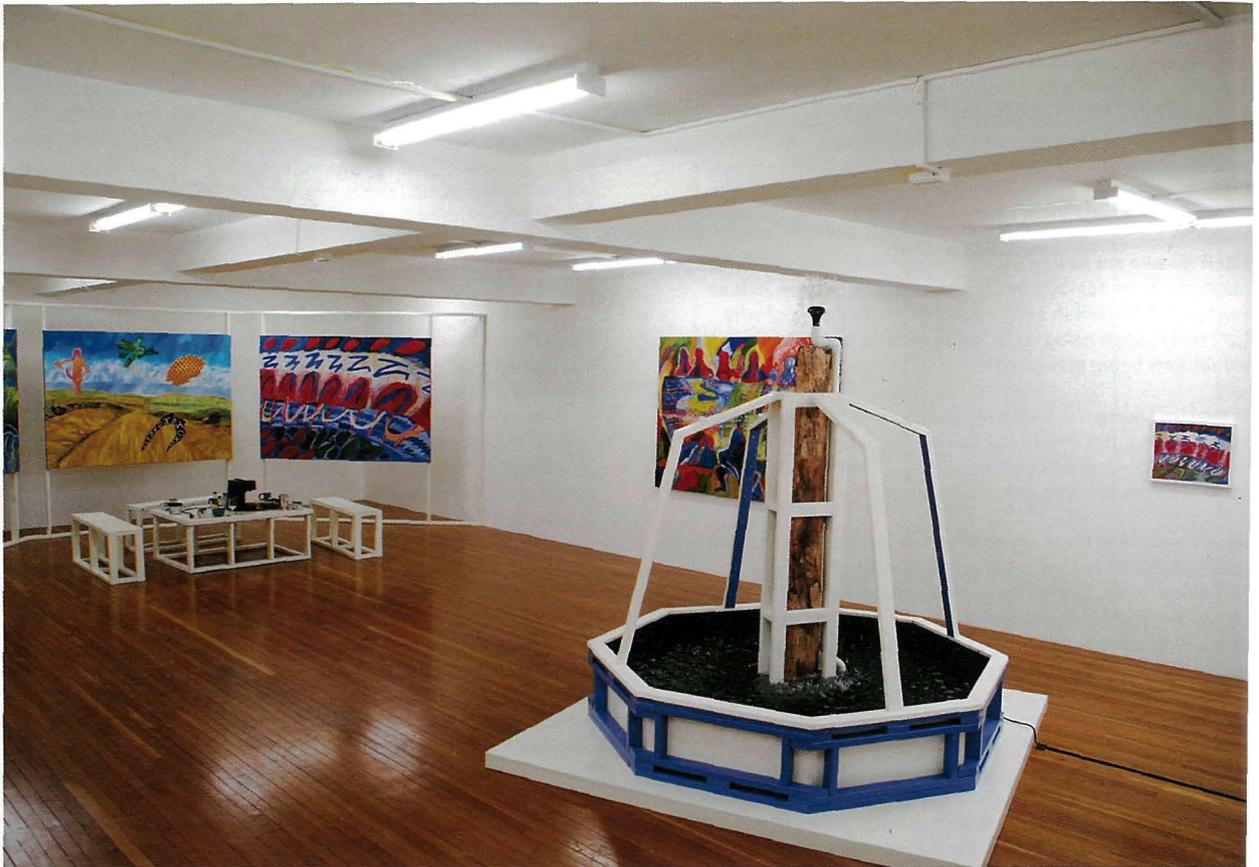
www.countesses.blogspot.com

1. For this article I have suggested a performance graph equivalent would need to be measured in relation to the theatre companies and major art festivals I have mentioned.

2. In all fairness there is a higher proportion of women being curated into shows at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Campbelltown Arts Centre and the Museum of Contemporary Art.

3. Melissa Miles, 'Whose Art Counts?' *Art Monthly Australia* 224 (October, 2009): 5-8.

4. My data collecting is general and does not take into account collaboration or that some programming is application based.



Elsewhere the Castles are Pink, the Mountains Golden

DARREN JORGENSEN

In 1972, reviewing an exhibition of art in LA, the American critic Harold Rosenberg asked whether art made outside New York really mattered. The large canvases of Ed Ruscha on show there were about the great spaces of Los Angeles, its service stations and drive-ins, freeways and billboards. But at the time nobody cared except the people living in LA. So Rosenberg argued that LA art represented a regionalism that was, 'the revolt of geography over history',¹ the local over the universal pretensions of the New York art scene. Art produced in Perth brings up similar questions. Is there such a thing as a Perth vision, a distinctive art that belongs only to Perth? Probably not, and instead it is possible to think of Perth's artists in terms of their relationship to other places.

So, when George Egerton-Warburton built an IKEA version of an Italian fountain at the Goddard de Fiddes gallery recently, he literalised this nostalgia. He sat beside the fountain every day for the duration of the show, waiting for people to talk with. All around him were paintings large and small, but one untitled canvas stood out not for its impressionistic depiction of a garden but for being priced in the tens of thousands of dollars. This painting was for sale with the proviso that Egerton-Warburton will buy a cave in Italy, which he will co-own with the buyer and that he will meet the buyer there in a year's time, to discuss the meaning of the painting itself. Only by being surrounded by the certainty of Italian stone will they be able to work out the meaning of this artwork that is made in Perth. Egerton-Warburton's fantasy of talking about his work somewhere else, not in Perth, represents the loneliness of the artist in a city dominated by mining and its support industries. He wants his fountain to be like an Italian piazza, where people come together to sit, smoke and discuss the latest affairs of the community. Egerton-Warburton's fountain cannot be the centre of Perth's community, however, since the centre is already occupied by the high-rise towers that run the great mines to the north.



1

Egerton-Warburton is perhaps the most sincere of the younger generation of Perth artists who make models of antiquated European architecture. The most successful of these model makers remains James Angus, whose journey from Perth to New York was made on the back of 3D computer print outs of doubled German castles and a twisted Italian renaissance palazzo. In their turn, Joshua Webb and Marcus Canning have made failed Euro-icons out of Styrofoam and silicone. Webb's *The Gift* (2006), a garish church altar, came apart while on show at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Art (PICA), while Canning's giant, blow-up castle did not blow up for *Primavera* 2008. Canning went on to celebrate the success of his failure, the symbolism of the deflated pink expense coinciding with the Global Financial Crisis. It is as if these artists unconsciously want to redress the hypermasculine industrial proficiency that drives Western Australia's endless mining boom with slack, outsourced monuments. Old Europe looms large in these returns of the colonial repressed, their ironies thinly concealing an anxiety spurred by the lack of anything in Perth to make art about.

Australia's version of Harold Rosenberg might be Rex Butler, whose theory of UnAustralian Art was based on the idea that most Australian art is not strictly Australian.² UnAustralian art has long been made by artists who think that the best art is taking place elsewhere, whether this be in Europe or the US, and who spend inordinate amounts of time there. If Australia is at one remove from the centres of art production, Perth is at a second remove, since it is always looking east to Sydney and Melbourne for its identity. While artists from Sydney and Melbourne move to Berlin, Perth's artists move to Sydney and Melbourne. Perth's is an Un-Un-Australian art that, as a double negative, returns to the positivity of garish, hyper-coloured castles and collapsing Styrofoam monstrosities. This logic of masculinity unable to find the proper place for its ironic seed instead spills out where all can see, among the toddling quasi-existentialism of a bored Australian art scene. The truth of these monuments that defer to European art lies instead in the might of the mining corporations who design whole cities, train lines and industrial complexes from their Perth towers. By comparison, Perth's art world appears puny, scaled and priced out of doing anything of significance, its collapsing Euro-sculptures are signs of both an impotence and unwillingness to tackle the everyday truth of life in the West.

Even the Aboriginal art of Perth's Nyoongar people has difficulty finding an appropriate content, an imagery to match the angst of the West. Shane Pickett used to paint psychedelic scenes from the Dreaming, great washes of colour over local landscapes, but found more commercial success doing giant abstractions of brownish white and whitish brown. Pickett was painting his country of the West Australian

Above: George Egerton-Warburton, *Piazza*, 2010 (installation view, Goddard de Fiddes gallery, Perth) Photo: the artist.

Facing page: George Egerton-Warburton, *untitled (long title)*, 2010, acrylic on canvas. Photo: the artist.



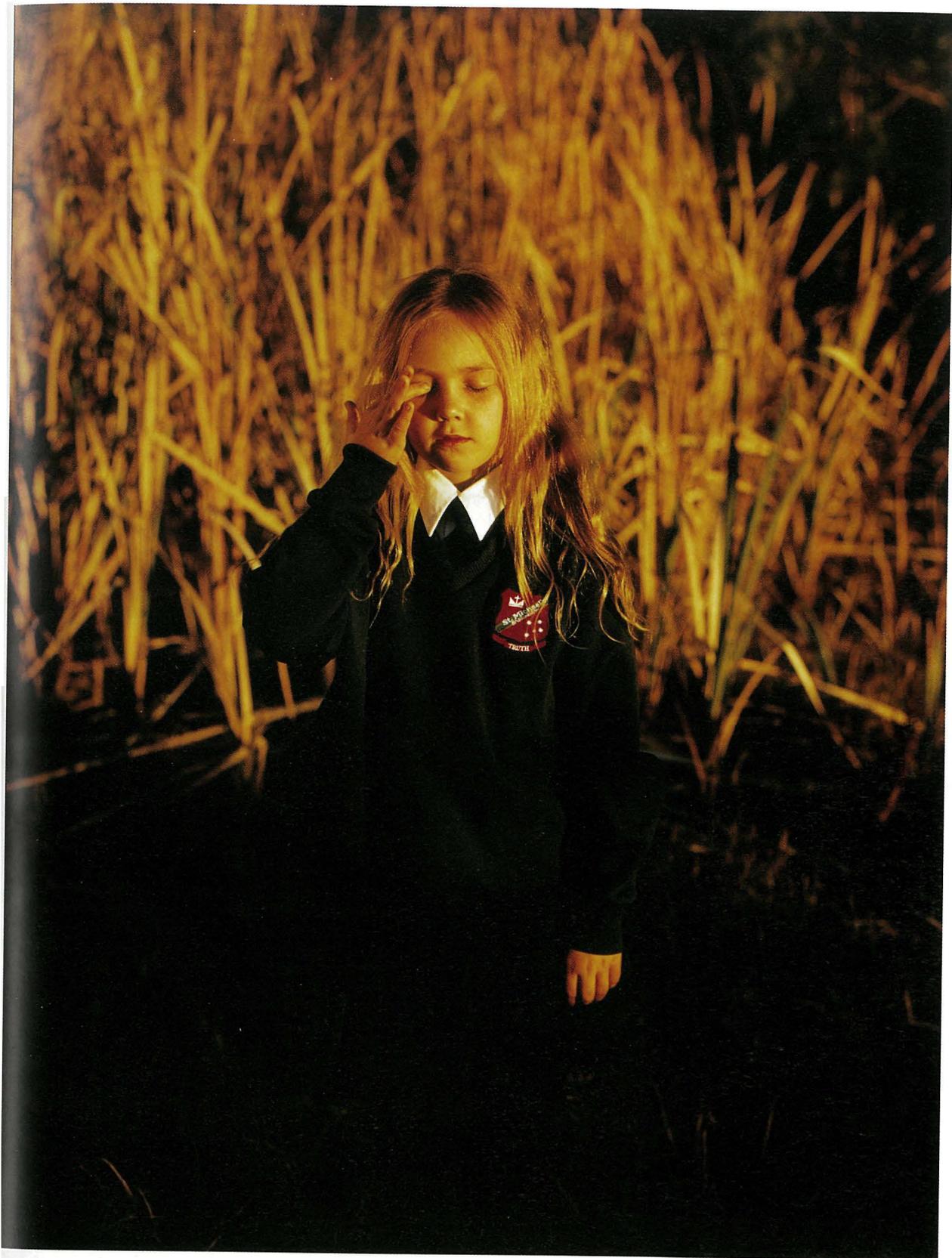
wheatbelt, and as Nick Tapper presciently points out, these works represent a land that has been destroyed.³ Yet these were immensely popular among the local mining literati, who anointed Pickett their favourite at the West Australian art awards two years running, while buying his paintings at tens of thousands of dollars a pop. The market for abstract painting certainly explains something of the late 20th century Aboriginal art boom and here the buyers were probably not aware of the fate of the country that these abstractions described.

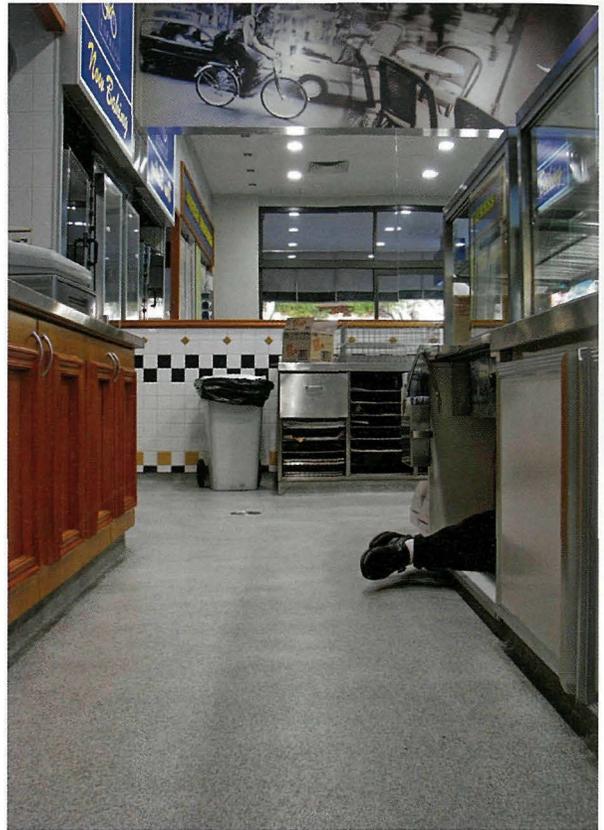
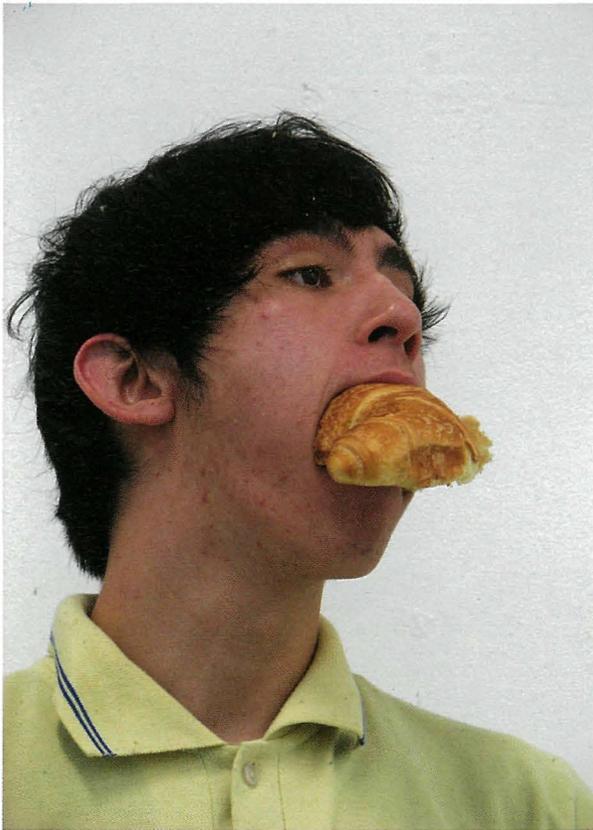
Another Nyoongar artist illuminating an aesthetic of displacement is Pauline Moran. Paintings of her life growing up on a mission at Roelands, now destined to become a part of Perth's ever expanding sprawl, show happy scenes of rural bliss. Children slide down hills and bathe in creeks, inventing games beneath a bright blue sky before retreating to oversized schoolhouses. The simple joy of a shared childhood, in greens, blues and sandy yellows, confuses the narratives of a suffering Stolen Generation. In *Going to Church* (2007) children are getting off a tractor and disappearing into the forest, as if nature itself is the site of worship. These paintings are nostalgic for a time before the present, for a displaced time that has already been displaced through forced adoption. These works are the Nyoongar equivalent of Canning's collapsed castle, as they celebrate that which we would otherwise understand to be a failure.

The key to understanding the conservatism of Perth's artists, their deferral to Europe, their retreat into abstraction and the depoliticisation of displacement, lies less in contemporary times than in the recent past. Perth thinks of itself as being at the beginnings of a third golden age, as new, multi-billion dollar gas projects work up to operations in the Pilbara and Kimberley. The end of the first golden age was marked by the stock market crash of the late 1980s, its depths symbolised by the imprisonment of Alan Bond and his turn to self-portrait painting. The end of the second golden age was the Global Financial Crisis that panicked Perth's new rich, tradesmen and engineers into selling their new V8 utes and third houses. While Paul Keating's liberal economics enabled the first age of wealth, John Howard ensured the second. It was also in Howard's era, in which this Prime Minister ruthlessly defined Australian-ness, that Butler conceived his idea of an UnAustralian art.

In the depths of this time, and at the peak of the second boom, Toni Wilkinson's 2005 *Prolepsis* show at PICA lined up large photographs of children wearing their school uniforms, peering back at us from the bright daytime. They recalled the children overboard incident that was engineered to ensure Howard's 2004 electoral victory, in which photographs of children being lowered into the ocean from a refugee boat were cut so that that the freighter ready to transport them to Perth was no longer visible. Howard claimed that refugees were not suitable Australians, as they could be seen throwing their children into the water. So in Wilkinson's photographs the children are at odds with their

Above: Marcus Canning, *Pink Wienie* (detail), 2010, installation. Photo: Jenni Carter.
Facing page: Toni Wilkinson, *Truth*, 2005, c-type photograph.





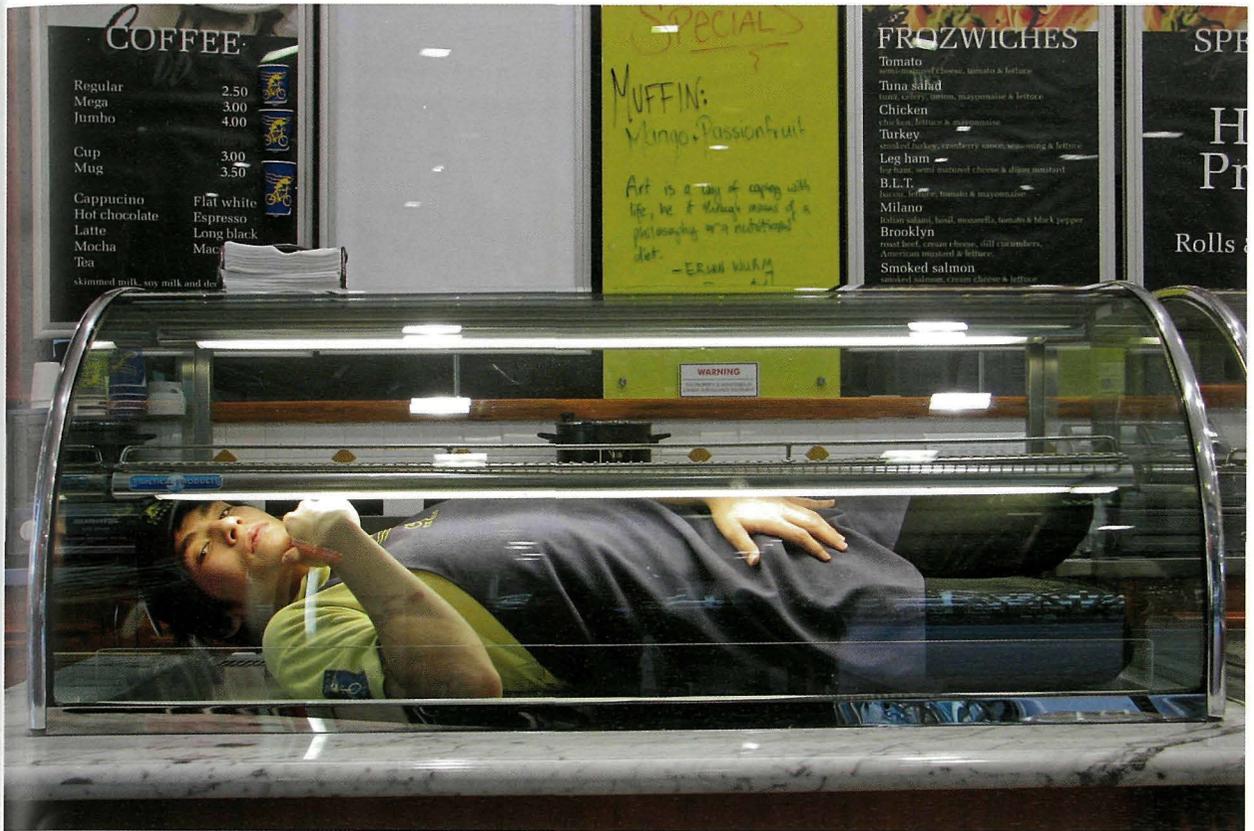
place in school uniforms emblazoned with ideological messages for their future: Truth; Courtesy; Caring and Sharing; Stepping Stone to the Future; Strive for the Highest; Go Forward; Loyalty and Service; Honour Before Honours; Aim High; With God for a Leader; and Serve God Serve One Another. These slogans set in place a conflict that expresses itself on the faces of these youth. Their attitudes are always their own, disjointed from the uniform and its assumptions. In the program catalogue, PICA curator Amy Barrett-Lennard finds these children straitjacketed by the nationalistic turn in school education. Yet it would be a mistake not to see this Australian regime as part of the identity of these children. The ideas of aiming high, having honour, being 'trustworthy' and so forth also act to define their own personalities and aspirations. In this sense Wilkinson's photographs play out the Australian and UnAustralian, the child's body that is both inside and outside national regimes of truth, courtesy, care and so on.

We can return to Egerton-Warburton's installation as one that engages with the processes of institutionalisation that informs art in the West, and by implication, in Australia. The artists' desperate plight to stage authentic communication remains bound by demands to be true to both their local milieu and the greater demands of a global art world. In Moran's case this is the contradiction of being a part of the Stolen Generation but having had a good childhood, while Wilkinson prizes open the space between the child and their enculturation. Nathan Beard, another young Perth artist, addresses the plight of the artist by documenting his working life at Croissant Express, a job that put him through art school. In the photograph *100 Croissant Applications (Mouth)* (2007), Beard absurdly holds an entire croissant in his mouth. In *Store Intervention (Counter)* (2007), he lies beneath the glass counter that he has just polished, displaying himself as the hyper-visible commodity that he has just slaved himself to. They are part of the *Factotum* series, and unlike the trend to upscale contemporary photography, are prints of only 15cm by 10cm. His photographs are hyper-banal, his attempts to produce art in these conditions near impossible. Beard installs these photographs beside copies of his communications with galleries, who demand he pay money and explain himself before exhibiting in the space. Even Beard's exhibition at the Kurb, perhaps the most radically inclined and least bureaucratized exhibition space in Perth, assumes the air of painstaking labour, the vitality of art exhausted by a seemingly endless correspondence and clarification of conditions.

Above (left): Nathan Beard, *100 Croissant Applications (Mouth)*, 2007, digital photographic print.

Above (right): Nathan Beard, *Store Intervention (Cabinet)*, 2007, digital photographic print.

Facing page: Nathan Beard, *Store Intervention (Counter)*, 2007, digital photographic print.



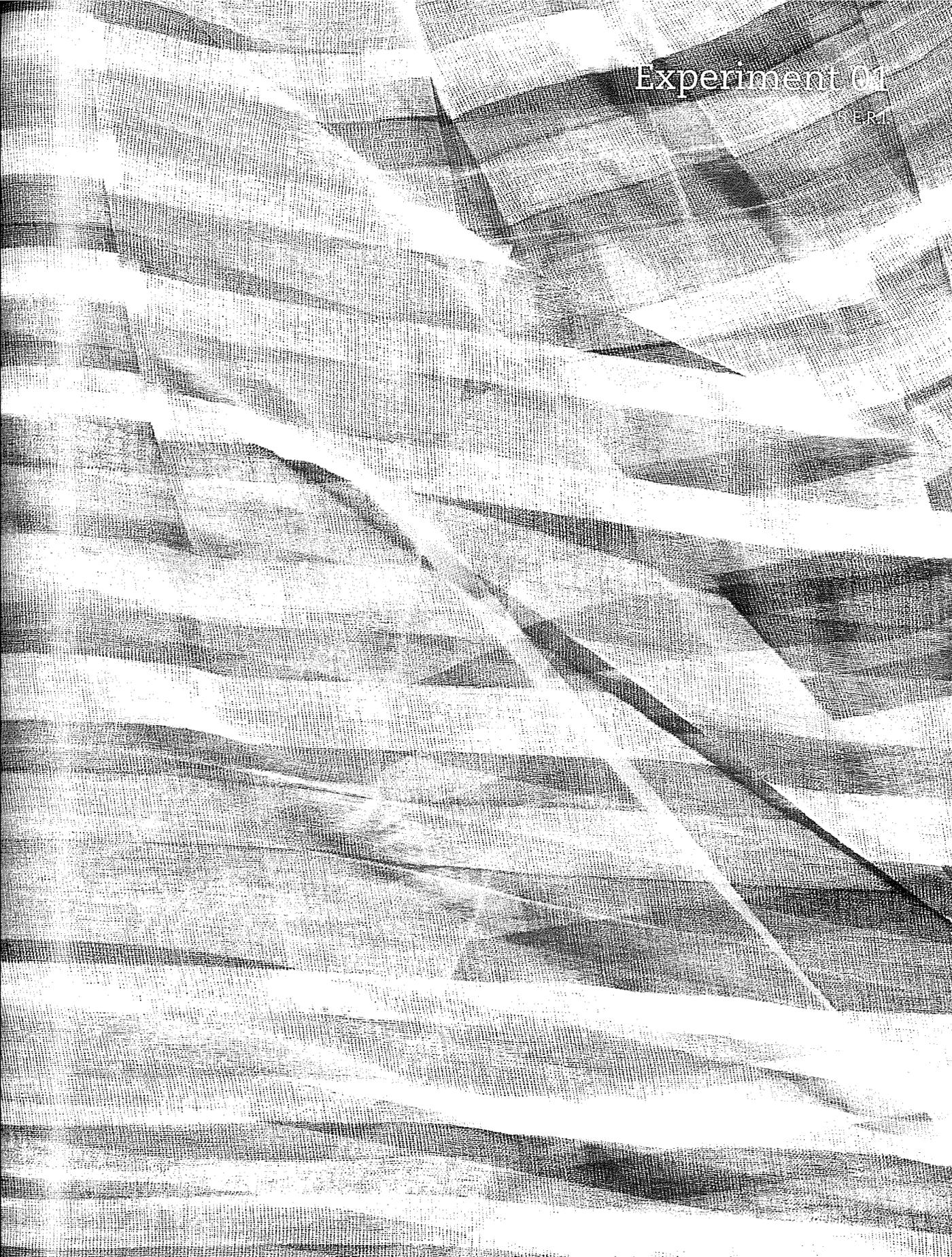
If Beard is pleading for autonomy, illuminating the impossibility of autonomy while working for a multinational chain, his art is contrary to the bombastic embrace of mining corporations who foster a working loyalty among their employees. If Perth's wealth and financial security lies in highly paid positions setting up drills, driving trucks, making meals, operating remote control excavators, building virtual mines and negotiating with Aboriginal communities, service industries still rely on casual labourers forced to struggle with the rent. The truth of the Euro-monuments that Angus, Canning and Webb build in Perth's name lies less in their irony than in a mining industry that has the ability to move mountains, conjure townships and lay electricity grids. In the shadow of these, the most fantastic artworks one could ever conceive, the tendency toward showy installation art, appears only facile. Instead, the more humble of artworks appear to simulate the situation of those who do not work for the companies. If Egerton-Warburton's fountain is also one of these monuments, his sincerity in sitting beside it every day appears as a tonic to their flippancy. If he is mostly alone, reading a magazine or staring at the white walls of the gallery, this is a monument to the displacement of the artist in a city that looks elsewhere for its meaning.

1. Harold Rosenberg, 'The Art World: Place, Patriotism, and the New York Mainstream,' *The New Yorker*, July 15 (1972): 52.
2. Rex Butler, 'A Short Introduction to UnAustralian Art,' *Broadsheet* 32.4 (2003) 17. This article is also available online through the University of Queensland's espace library.
3. Nick Tapper, 'A Little-Known Place: the Art of Shane Pickett,' *Art Monthly Australia* 220, June (2009) 6-8.

EXPECTATION

Experiment 01

ERT







WARNING:
If you turn this
page we may
feel increased
empathy



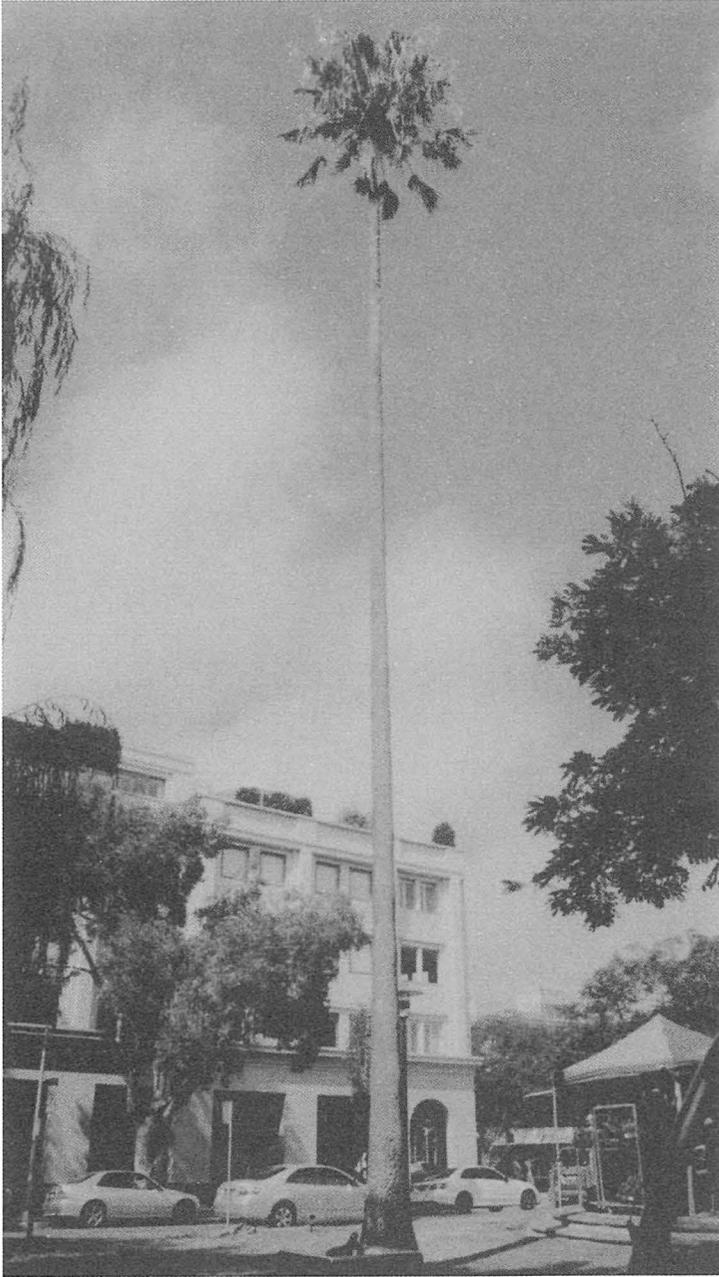


WARNING:
If you turn this
page we will
definetly feel
increased
empathy





WARNING:
If you turn this
page our empathy
will become
contagious



Tanya Peterson, *Palm (front)*, Sydney, 2011, pigment print.

Backlot

TANYA PETERSON

Begin with the beginning. And the middle and the end. Begin with the trees. They are always there, silent witnesses. They are there even when people are not, sharing the ground of memory and taking their place as improvised metaphors in history's retelling. In Beckett's landscape of before, during and after, a tree is forever waiting at the 'same time, same place'.¹

Sydney, winter. Late boarding, middle aisle seat, towards the back of the plane. Complimentary refreshments, meals, no smoking. 14 and a half hours later. Los Angeles, summer.

We take the 110 freeway out from LAX. After a while the roads give way to the distant palms on the South Central horizon, antecedents to the giant Hollywood billboards that will soon come into view. A brown haze loiters on the skyline and makes everything appear as if it were a half remembered dream. At first glance everything is already there, waiting, like Beckett's tree.

Los Angeles as a site of flawed remembrance is the primary subject of Norman M. Klein's book *The History of Forgetting*.² It explores how the gradual migration and displacement of people, alongside the continual redevelopment of neighbourhoods and the impact of screen and print media, has allowed the collective memory of urban legends to slowly erode and stand-in for the events that precede them. These unlocatable turning points, the cumulative effects of retellings and rewritings, are where the city's imagined past transforms into its future history. A friend once told me that he liked things big, simple and empty. That's how he made a lot of his art, cast facades and installations, resemblances of the world which announced their blankness and mysticism at the same time. Whenever we'd meet for coffee at the cafe near his studio, he'd always read our horoscopes aloud from the daily newspaper.



Tanya Peterson, *Backlot*, universal, 2011, pigment print.

I think about this on the way to North Canon Drive, where I end up shooting video of the palm trees that line both sides of the streets for nearly a mile. The camera sits tilted on the dashboard, shooting upwards towards the sky. Clusters of green fronds roll into view and then recede as the next ones emerge to take their place. Sometimes the only thing on the screen is an empty blue rectangle. And then the pull of the frame reveals the fringe of another tree. The video resembles others that have come before it, a familiar accident. A similar scene is currently playing as part of an online promotion for Bret Easton Ellis' latest book, *Imperial Bedrooms* (2010), which is a sequel to his earlier book *Less Than Zero* (1985). Same characters, plus time. The tracking shot is also present in David Lynch's film, *Mulholland Drive* (2001), as part an establishing montage of Hollywood signs. Regardless of the context, there is something in the way that the vertigo of the tree tops, shot from below, pan out against the flat blue sky, which isn't so dissimilar to the experience of the freeways. In a town of double negatives where copies proliferate, it seems to make sense.

In her critical biography of Eadweard Muybridge, Rebecca Solnit traces the prevalence of these types of replayed scenes to southern California's 'western heritage'.³ Looking back on the development of the early 20th century movie industry in the region, Solnit draws attention to the abundance of 'golden light' and 'proximity to Mexico and distance from the Motion Pictures Patent Company' as two of the three factors which established the industry's success out there. The third, and in my mind the key factor which she says underpins its legacy, is the diversity of its landscape. Solnit notes that 'within a few hours of the city of Los Angeles were deserts, grasslands, forests, mountains, seashores, orange groves, and farms, as well as architecture of every imaginable type: southern California looked like everywhere and anywhere for the movies'.⁴ Within films, it is this placelessness that has allowed so many imaginary landscapes to be effortlessly translated into expectant realities. Big, simple and empty.

We keep driving. On the way, we pass a 99¢ store. It reminds me of Andreas Gursky's famous photograph, *99 cent* (1999), a panoramic interior of one of its namesake's chain stores. The print sold at a 2007 auction for a record-breaking \$3.3million. MoMA sells poster reproductions of it on its webstore for \$24.95. The image depicts rows and rows of coloured confectionary boxes and other domestic goods stacked in almost symmetrical infinity. Like a 2.0 update of Ed Ruscha's *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (1966), Gursky's work swaps the city's real estate for a sampling of the thrift store bricks and mortar of its consumer economy.

Ruscha's images were captured by mounting a camera, equipped with a motor-drive, to the roof of his car, which allowed him to continuously photograph each building as he drove down on one side of the road and then the other. Comparable to a version of Muybridge's motion studies in reverse, the production of Ruscha's sequential photographs demonstrate the dependence of the subject's motion on the camera's velocity. In effect, the work couples the cinematic tracking shot with the photographic instant—a continuity of broken moments where the world cycles indeterminately between movement and stillness, all through the restless eye of the lens.

Whereas Ruscha's eight-metre wide accordion book exhausts the architecture of the street's façade through its mechanical serialisation, Gursky's three-metre wide print synthesises the store's interior vista into packets of readymade data, creating a digital assembly line of information. The tactics remain the same; it's just the way the signs are processed that has changed. Whether it's Ruscha's index of streets or Gursky's reduction of the world to homogenised data (right down to its alliterative title and date), in both instances the more facts you are given the less credible the idea of the 'real' or a location's materiality becomes.



Tanya Peterson, *Traffic, L.A.*, 2011, pigment print.

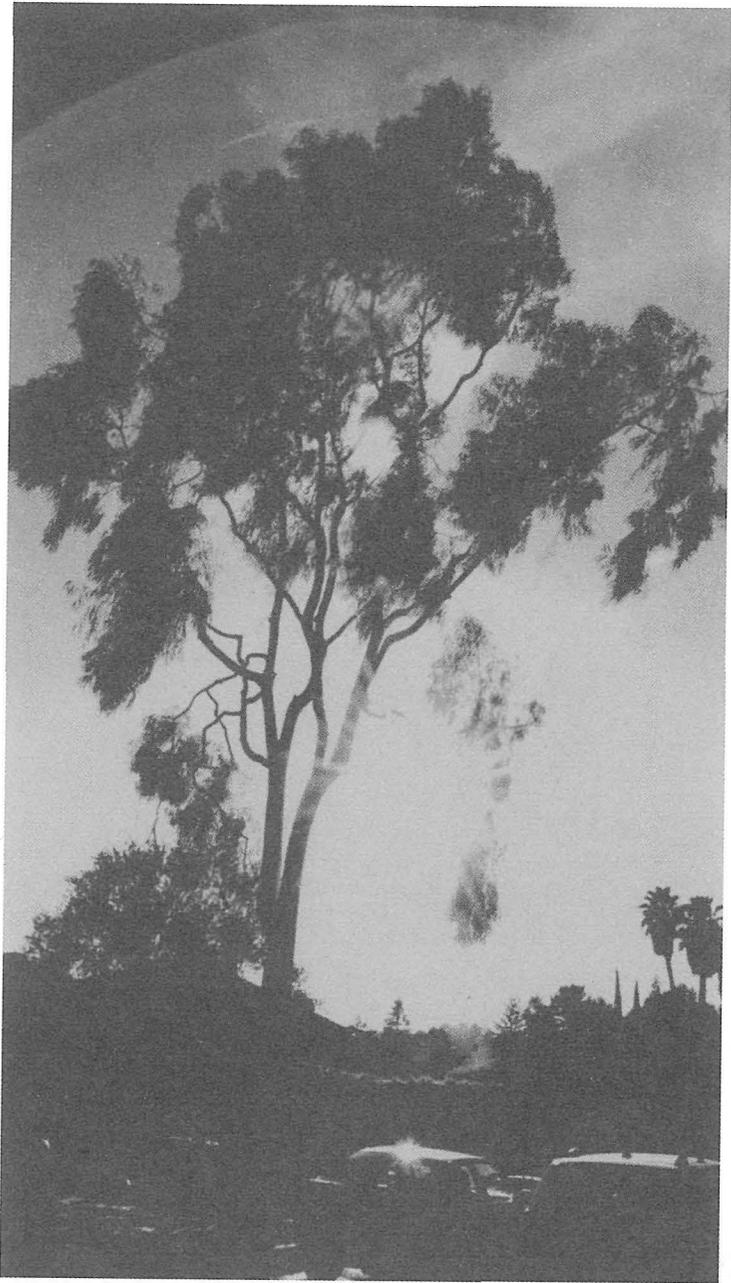
As we drive, he says, 'There is no official city named Hollywood. There's a West Hollywood and a North Hollywood, but the area we call Hollywood is technically Los Angeles—and that's how it would be if you mailed a letter to someone who lived in Hollywood'. I wonder if it is a geographical inconsistency that will soon become immaterial as online information continues to exponentially grow. But I could be missing the point. The paradox of the city being both on and off the map at the same time goes some way towards explaining the gap between Hollywood's existence as both myth and actuality, or at least the point at which they collide. Somewhere in the Hollywood Hills we see David Lynch's house, the same one filmed in *Lost Highway* (1997). We park the car and I get out to take a picture as if on cue. I am a fucking tourist.

Later we stop somewhere for a bite to eat. Jet lag begins to mute the scenery. We pull up and get out. Walking to the deli, we pass a gum tree, planted on the edge of the car park. Its appearance seems out of place, an untimely coincidence—home, but not home—a small pull of gravity at the centre of a floating world. It is more present than anything else there. I forget to photograph it. Later I realise that my camera's memory card is full anyway.

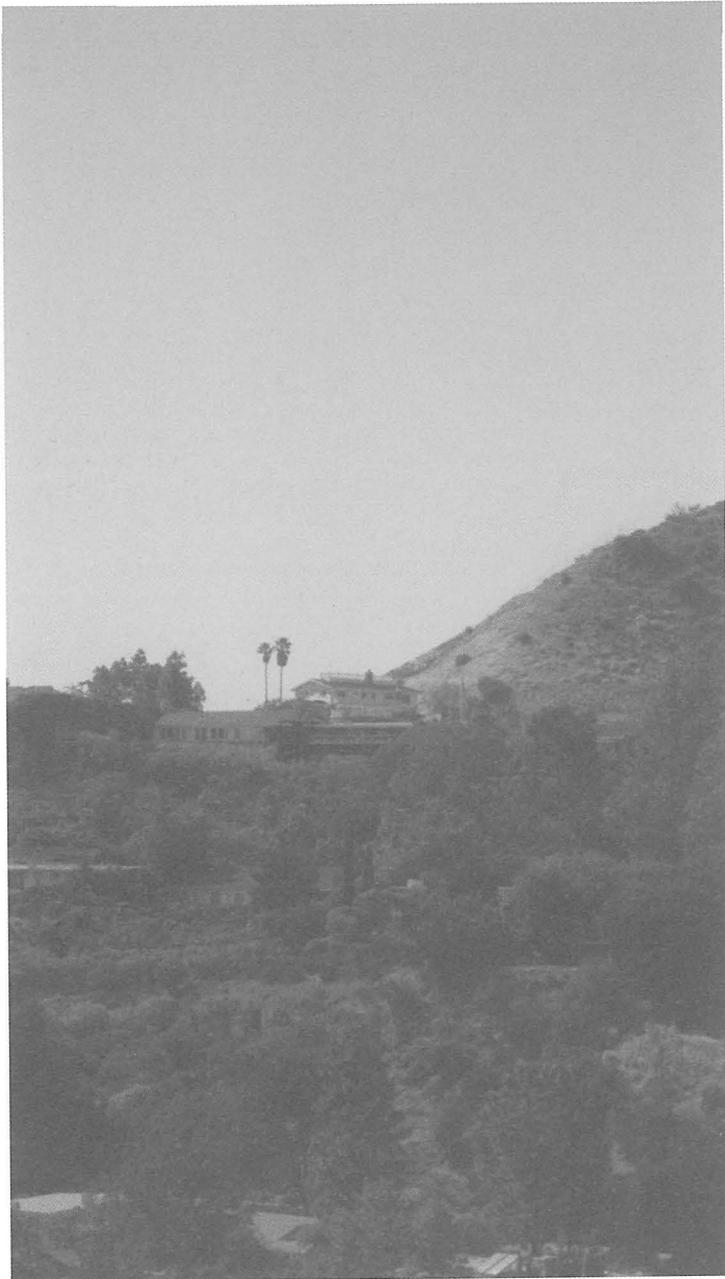
Sometime later, I write to him and ask him to photograph the tree. I say, 'If you can: mid-distance one of the whole tree in the parking lot; under the tree up at the leaves canopy—can be mid-day, with sun/lens flare if possible; the base of it; semi close-up of trunk at your eye level with good depth of field for the background (F16 if possible)'. He sends me variations on the four themes. When I look at them I think of him driving along the same roads we took from South Pasadena to Bel Air. I picture him in the car park taking photographs of trees that I forgot to take when I was there. And I think about what I've been using as a stand-in for the memory up until now. I ask him more questions about L.A.'s geography. He sends me screen shots of maps from Google, with both street and aerial views. The split screen image, with its parallel points of view, places you on the road and above it at the same time—there and not there—the differential between Ruscha and Gursky.



Tanya Peterson, *Hollywood Hills lookout*, 2011, pigment print.



Tanya Peterson, *Gum tree, carpark*, 2011, pigment print.



Tanya Peterson, *Distant palms, L.A.*, 2011, pigment print.

Back in Sydney, the hotel across the road from where I live is still vacant after more than a year. Community disputes over the impact of a new high-rise development on the suburb have stalled its traffic. The boutiques on the ground floor have black plastic bags taped across their windows. It blanks out the interiors and is somehow meant to hide the emptiness. The central showroom is the only shop that is not blacked out. It's built on an elevated platform in the middle of the space and is enclosed in a set of glass walls. It holds the remnants of the hotel's secondary merchandise: oversized white, laminated display mouldings and tables. Its presence is that of a modern day Stonehenge preserved in a scaled vitrine. The local kids skateboard around it, using the concourse as an indoor park until one day when gates are placed at both entry points. Now film crews rent the hotel out as a set location, where it becomes a twice-removed home away from home.

On a taxi-ride back from the city it is mid-afternoon and 30 degrees. The cab's front windows are rolled up and there's no air conditioning. The driver talks about the weather. It's a trap. He tells me he's allergic to the sun. The pleasantries segue into a long list of medications, specialist consultations and the benefits of window tinting. For a minute I confuse the allergy with photophobia, but he corrects me. It's not just a response to light that affects his vision; it's a total bodily reaction to the sun's rays. His skin is hypersensitive. I get it. To make his point he purposefully scratches the inside of his forearm to demonstrate his skin's vulnerability. He urges me to look. A red mark surfaces, but that's it. He keeps scratching at it, as if it'll help make the point stronger, but there's no discernable trace of difference. The skin as an index fails to register the extent of his affliction. It's too late anyway. We arrive at Ocean Avenue. I pay the fare and leave. Out of habit I look across the park to the tops of the two cabbage palms that always rise up just above the other trees. The sun's glare catches the corner of my eye. I start walking.

'Backlot' is an edited extract from the forthcoming photo novella, *Superadded Light*.

-
1. Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), 55.
 2. Norman M. Klein, *The History of Forgetting: Los Angeles and the Erasure of Memory* (London/New York: Verso, 1997).
 3. Rebecca Solnit, *Motion Studies: Time, Space and Eadweard Muybridge* (London: Bloomsbury, 2003), 248.
 4. *Ibid.*, 244.

Have You Ever?

ELVIS RICHARDSON

HAVE YOU EVER
MADE ART
UNTIL YOUR
LAST DOLLAR
IS GONE?

HAVE YOU EVER
TRIED TO STOP
MAKING ART
BUT FOUND
YOU WERE
UNABLE?

HAVE
FELT
OR IR
WHEN
COULD
MAKE

DO YOU EVER
FEEL ANXIOUS
OR IRRITATED
BY
YOURSELF
OR
DO YOU
MAKE ART?

DO YOU EVER
MAKE ART
TO ESCAPE
WORRY
TROUBLE OR
BOREDOM?

DO YOU EVER
USE MONEY
FOR NORMAL
EXPENDITURES
TO FINANCE
MAKING ART?

DOES
MAK
CARE
THE
OF Y
YOUR

RT EVER
YOU
SS OF
ELFARE
RSELF OR
FAMILY?

HAVE YOU EVER
COMMITTED OR
CONSIDERED
COMMITTING
AN ILLEGAL ACT
TO FINANCE
ART?

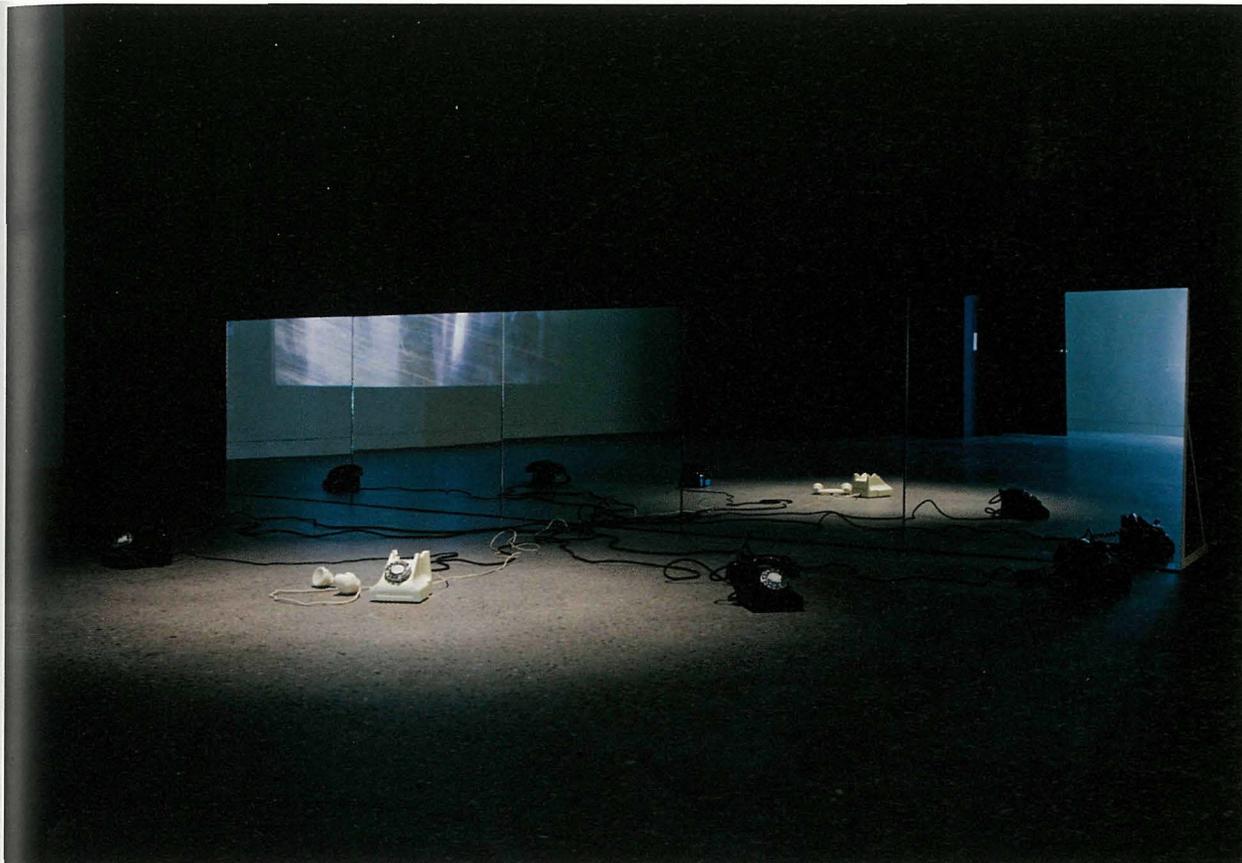
HAVE YOU EVER
SUFFERED
DEPRESSION
AS A RESULT
OF MAKING
ART?

HAVE YOU
MADE A
CLAIM
YOUR
ORDER
BOOST
ODDS

EVER
ELSE
ABOUT
ART IN
O
OUR

DO YOU MAKE
ART LONGER
THAN PLANNED
HOPING YOUR
LUCK WILL
CHANGE?

REVIEWS



Spooky, Darlings

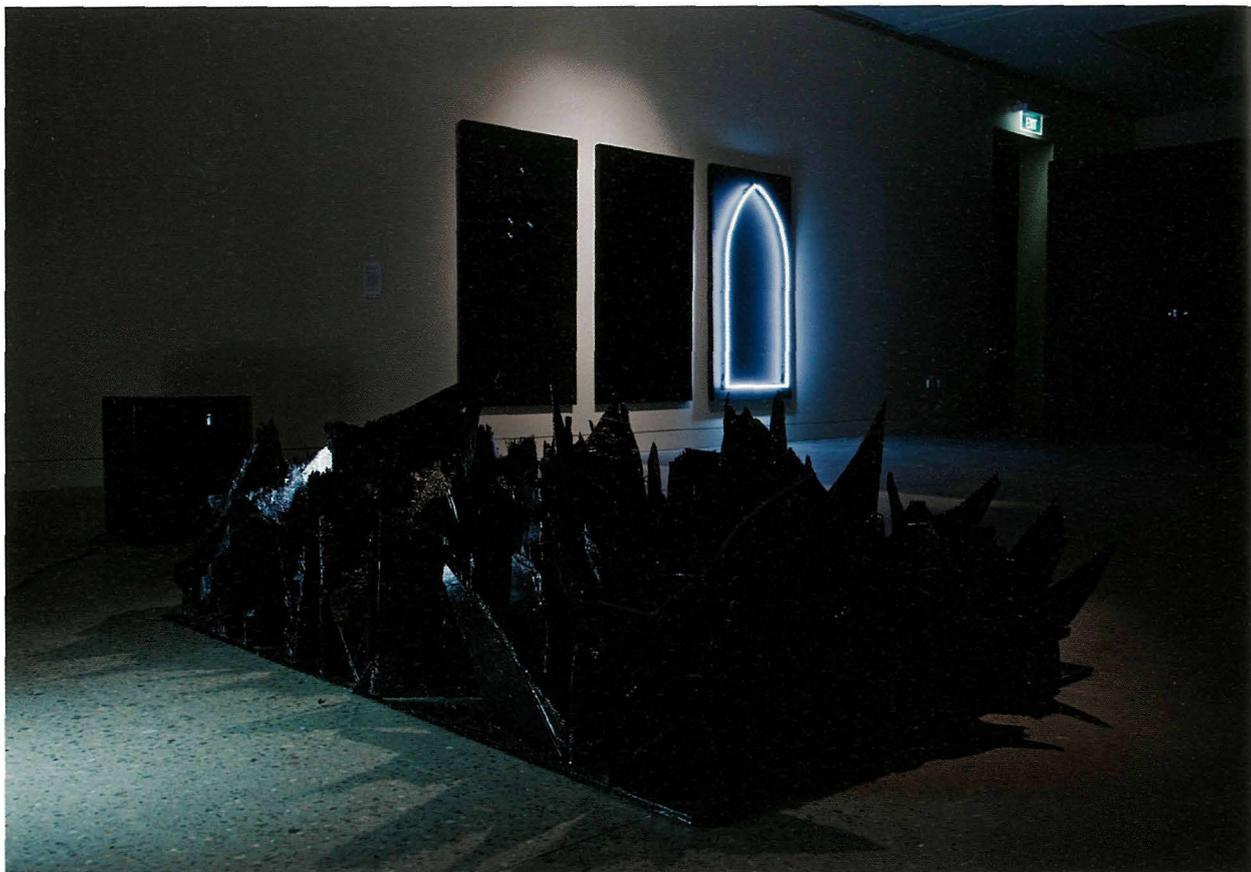
BEC DEAN

The Ghost Show. A show about ghosts. No spooky qualifiers or paranormal subheadings in this title. Just a straight-up, honest-to-goodness title, for a show about ghosts.

Daniel Mudie Cunningham's final curatorial project for Hazelhurst Regional Gallery was his second recent historically-located and site-related show, commissioning new work for the exhibition space by mostly Sydney-based artists. For *Reality Check* in late 2009, he resurrected the spectre of Australia's first reality TV program, the BBC/ABC docu-drama *Sylvania Waters*, which was shot in the eponymous lagoon suburb on the waters of the Sutherland Shire in the early nineties. While *Reality Check* cast its view outwards to the program's affects and resonances, and the notoriety that sudden fame brought to the area, *The Ghost Show* looked inwardly and intimately at a part of the Hazelhurst complex from which the gallery derives its name: the original homestead of Ben and Hazel Broadhurst, now used for artist studios and workshops adjacent to the main building.

The Ghost Show was a more restrained project than *Reality Check*, both in its commissioning scope and use of space. The gallery was host to two concurrent exhibitions: on the illuminated far side a group exhibition of contemporary textiles, and *The Ghost Show* with its walls painted in the particular shade of dark grey that neutralises light. In this visually dampened context, new works and installations by Kate Murphy, Wade Marynowsky, Robyn Backen, Eugenia Raskopoulos, Matt Glenn and Daniel Kojta were presented. The atmosphere of the exhibition, while obviously challenged by the collection of work a few meters away, was penetrated by repeated and reverberant sound, issuing from the works of Raskopoulos and Backen, of dogs barking and telephones ringing respectively. Their transformation of these quotidian and assuring noises—family pet, communication device—into menace through ghostly association, lent a wry humour to my viewing of the work.

Above: Robyn Backen, *End of the line*, 2010, Bakelite phones, mirror, wood, sound. Photo: Silversalt Photography.



Raskopoulos' video *Waiting for Lass* (2010) was a field study of the Broadhurst house with a nod to the story of Hazel's Alsatian dog, who was purported to possess psychic powers. In this short video loop shot at night and using 'ghosting' techniques, Raskopoulos' own dogs (two large, black poodles) wait impatiently in an illuminated room and gaze with fixed stares into the impenetrable darkness outside the glass windows of two opposing doors. Occasionally they bark on hearing a noise, and over time, the windows become besmirched with doggie ectoplasm, contributing to a sense of hokey phantasmagoria, like attending a séance in which all the props were visible but the dearly departed decided not to show. Adjacent to Raskopoulos' projection, Backen's floor-based installation with five black and one white Bakelite telephones, made a complete circle through the use of mirrors. This work *End of the Line* (2010) illustrated the idea of communicating with the 'other side', with the phones emitting occasional trilling outbursts. I didn't hear the 'dog talk' emanating from the phone, because at the time I visited, curious children were fascinated by the lost art of dialling, reanimating the corpses of technologies past.

Like Raskopoulos, Daniel Kojta worked with an empirical premise for his installation by bringing a medium to the Hazelhurst cottage in order to verify the presence of ghosts. Kojta's work embraced the notion of the 'ghost in the machine', a spectral afterimage/presence that is often contained by recording devices and television sets (see *Ringu* (1998) and *Poltergeist* (1982) for proof of this global phenomena). Kojta's work was presented within a small room built inside the gallery, and comprised an old-fashioned sixties television with static projected onto its curved screen. Kojta's intention—to engage viewers in a concentrated act of looking where their eyes may begin to deceive them—was somewhat diluted by the installation of the work, which was meticulously considered until the point of entering the space, where a clumsily arranged projector (propped on a plinth, gaffa tape, etc.) shifted attention away from the screen.

On the far wall, opposite the gallery entrance, Matt Glenn's *A Secret History (Self, Other, Passage)* (2010) presented a trinity of human-scale apertures and surfaces that emerged from the darkness of the gallery wall including a neon reduction of a church window, a dark canvas and a flexible mirror, penetrated by bullet holes. The work invited a physically engaged kind of contemplation with the space and the presence of unseen dimensions. Wade Marynowsky's *Phantom of the rock eisteddfod, the tri tone* (2010) was probably the least successful of the commissions in the exhibition, because of a lack of the theatrical dimension (such as over-the-top lighting) that the work's title implied. Marynowsky attempted a sculptural representation of a 'metal' sound through the placement of black speakers surrounding jagged, black glittery Styrofoam, which seemed a little understated in the presence of other noise-generating and larger-scaled work.



For my own experience, the highlight of the exhibition was Kate Murphy's *Dix* (2010), cleverly installed as an LCD screen with headphones so that it could be experienced without the aural distractions of the work surrounding it. The video, shot and edited in Murphy's well-known documentary style, went straight to the source of most of the ghostly information springing from the Hazelhurst cottage: the nurse Dix, who cared for the Broadhursts in their final years. Dix, as both a retired nurse and a palmist (from a long line of palmists), is construed by Murphy as a person who straddles the realms of Western sciences, logic and unexplained paranormal activity and has no trouble speaking her mind. Spending time with Dix in this way, I was moved by her philosophies and her belief in the equality of beings sharing time on earth and the importance of interspecies relationships. Murphy's short documentary lends enormous dignity to the representation of a person who, in this context, could have become an object of ridicule.

The Ghost Show may have utilised an unambiguous title, but the strategies employed by the artists to take on the subject matter were broad-ranging: from the humorous and the uncanny to the spatial, symbolic and documentary. *The Ghost Show*, as articulated in the exhibition catalogue by Mudie Cunningham extended Hazelhurst's program into enquiry about place and community specificity, by extrapolating stories from first-person accounts, documents, gossip and rumour, alluding to the myriad ways in which dominant histories are formed and perpetuated.

The Ghost Show, curated by Daniel Mudie Cunningham, was held at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre from 4 December 2010 to 29 January 2011 and featured the work of Robyn Backen, Matt Glenn, Daniel Kojta, Wade Marynowsky, Kate Murphy and Eugenia Raskopoulos.

Above: Kate Murphy, *Dix*, 2010, single channel HD video with sound, 16 min 4 sec, video still.

Facing page: *The Ghost Show*, installation view, Wade Marynowsky, *Phantom of the rock eisteddfod, the tritone*, 2010, plywood, high gloss enamel, glitter, modified lightbox, amplifier, speakers, sound (foreground); Matt Glenn, *A Secret History (Self, Other, Passage)*, 2010, mirrored stainless steel, .38 calibre bullet holes, photographic paper and neon lighting (background). Photo: Silversalt Photography.

Networks (cells and silos)

DAVID HOMEWOOD

Media theorists Lev Manovich and Anne Friedberg have, in recent times, argued that the computer, a device originally modelled in part on earlier cultural forms, has become engrained to the extent that it now structures cultural forms to which it bears no ostensible relation.¹ I am not going to suggest that the eclectic group exhibition *Networks (cells and silos)* focuses solely on a technological conception of the network, or more broadly, that a nuanced idea of the network didn't pre-date the internet age. Nevertheless, it seems important to note that the other contexts in which the model of the network is normally used—business, the social sciences and engineering among others—or the way it has captured the popular imagination (see *The Social Network*, 2010), lend the exhibition an expanded relevance that, in various ways, remains closely bound to an historically specific experience of technology. Interpreting *Networks* as a partial catalogue of the way in which art negotiates with, and is reflective of, the technological imaginary provides a means of understanding its emergence at this particular moment, as well as asserting its contemporary significance.

Two central modes of visual representation run throughout the exhibition. On one side, there are various examples of abstract networks; on the other are those that engage more explicitly with the condition of 'networked-ness'. The curatorial emphasis is clearly on the former camp: from the futuristic biomorphism of Sandra Selig's *heart of the air you can hear* (2011) to Koji Ryui's *Extended network towards the happy end of the universe* (2007-2011), a scrappy vision of pseudo-cellular structures constructed out of plastic straws and tape. In both these works, classical perspective is exchanged for the neo-baroque, wherein the spectator's focalisation of the work—deciding where to direct one's attention and body—is an integral element of the work itself. *Network (cells and silos)* is bolstered by a wild array of formalist abstract images: the robust geometric drawings of John Dunkley-Smith, Bryan Spier's re-modernist geometric expressionism, through to the garish Texta universes of Masato Takasaka.

Coupling Indigenous artworks with abstract painting that consciously aligns itself with the European tradition runs the risk of deterring an interpretation of the former that focuses on the land to which it in part refers. The dominant purple of Tjaduwa Woods's *Ilkurlika* (2010), for example, is made to rhyme unwittingly with the impossibly receding tessellations of Poliness' blue wall painting, thus arguably diminishing the narrative dimensions of Woods's work.

In this context, the Indigenous paintings function as a (slightly awkward) pivot between works of a formalist bent, and works in which the network is treated not only as a paradigm for a reality defined by interconnectivity, but is also used as a frame through which such a reality can be interrogated.

Further along the corridor, Justin Trendall's *Darlinghurst (small version)* (2010) bears the formal influence of some Indigenous painting, but deliberately harnesses a pseudo-cartographic aesthetic to signal a state of dislocation. In his representation of an inner Sydney suburb, Trendall weaves together elements as obscure as Semiotexte, protest slogans, a character from Dostoevsky's *The Idiot* (1868), the title of a Bob Dylan classic and a US city. In her catalogue essay, Barlow presents a similar idea of

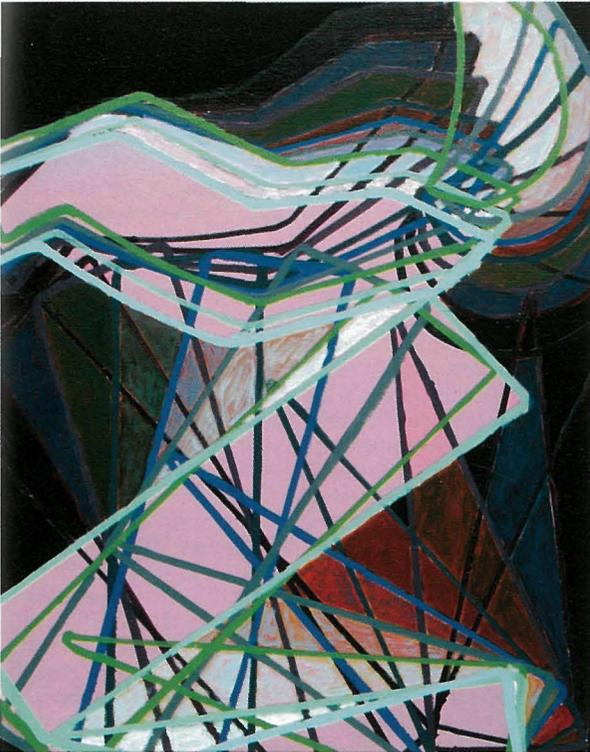
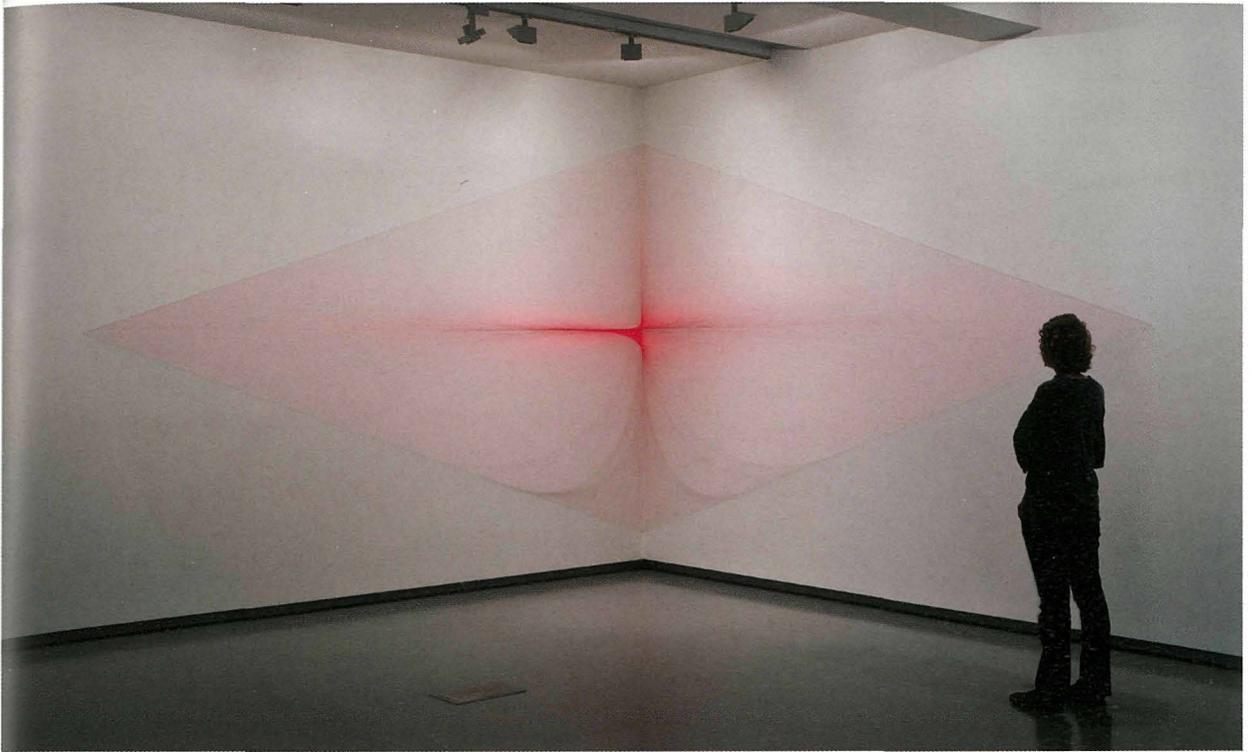
the network as a dynamic model of decentred-ness, dispersal and heterogeneity, arguing that the accelerated informational flows of present-day societies '[bring] us together in a myriad of ways.'² It is clear that the curator places great emphasis on the redemptive potential of mapping: the aim of the exhibition, she suggests, is to 'visualise a myriad of connective models' that might allow for the 'network society' to be 'navigated, appropriated, reshaped.'³ Despite good intentions, at times it feels as though these terms are too vague and inaccurately represent the actual work on display; the concept binding the exhibition sliding towards a kind of aphasic generality.

Two works stand out as critical interrogations of the conditions of the network society. In *Mass Ornament* (2009), Natalie Bookchin choreographs hundreds of Youtube clips against the soundtrack of two 1935 films: Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* and Busby Berkeley's *Gold Diggers*. By synching individual dancers' solo routines, Bookchin suggests that the kinetic expression of individual identity is unconsciously locked into formation. Played out in this work are the complexities of the division between private and public in an era of viewer uploaded content. Three Mutlu Çerkez text paintings from the 2004 series *Various Responses* negotiate similar terrain. In order to create the work the artist registered with a Melbourne-based dating agency. The texts presented in a white sans-serif font against a black wash background are transcripts of messages left by female suitors on his answering machine. Without the timbre and rhythm of the callers voice, the viewer is forced into a futile interpretative process: the document originally intended as a representation of personality drained of all distinguishing individual marks except for age, sex, interests—the most general categories of social classification. By remediating the contents of the phone message, Çerkez exposes the divisive social logic haunting this quintessentially contemporary form of social interaction.

Eschewing any techno-utopian notion of the network, these two blackly humorous works express an anxiety about the slippage between the homogenising and differentiating effects of media technologies, and the new social forms to which they give rise. They gesture towards a broader question raised by the exhibition: does a network society enable a more intimate mode of co-habitation—or does it bring about a situation of increased alienation?

Curated by Geraldine Barlow, *Network (cells and silos)* featured artists Chris Bond, Natalie Bookchin, Dorothy Braund, Heath Bunting, Mutlu Çerkez, John Dunkley-Smith, Mikala Dwyer, Gali Yalkarriwuy Gurruwiwi, Roger Kemp, Aaron Koblin, Hilarie Mais, Nick Mangan, Andrew McQualter, Jan Nelson, Kerrie Poliness, Koji Ryui, Sandra Selig, Bryan Spier, Masato Takasaka, Michelle Teran, Justin Trendall, Kit Wise and Tjaduwa Woods. The exhibition was held from 1 February to 16 April at Monash University Museum of Art.

1. Anne Friedberg, *The Virtual Window* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007), 233-35; Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 223
2. Geraldine Barlow, *Networks (cells and silos)* (exhibition catalogue, Caulfield: MUMA 2011), 6
3. Ibid

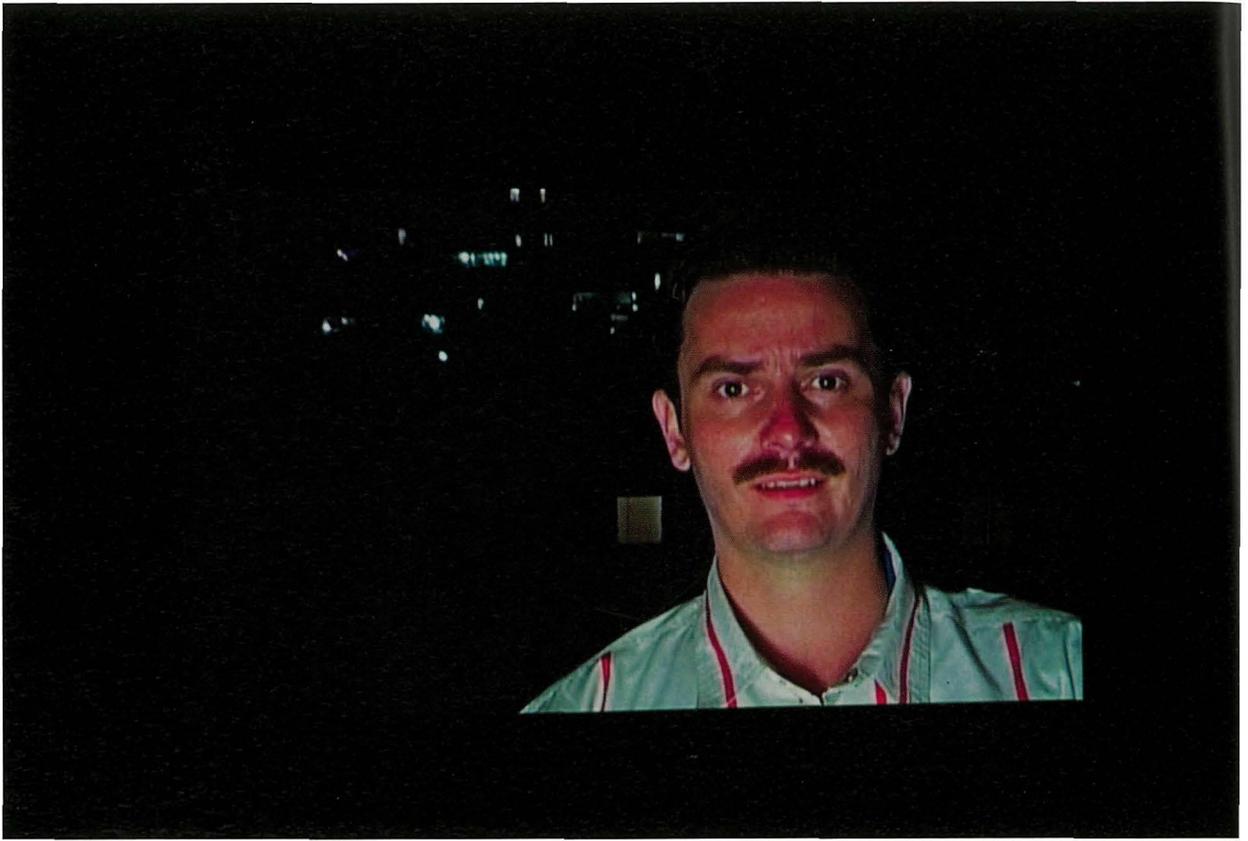


ah hi i'm curious to know who you might be i'm attracted to creative people um i definitely have an open mind um so i'm pretty creative in that sense um said to be attractive i have an excellent sense of humor and look for someone with the same um older than you we're in a different age group so than you but i like younger men and only ever go out with younger men usually younger than yourself um don't know what else to say here um i'm well i'm pretty down to earth and outgoing and easygoing um no hang ups no baggage i've never been married never had children nothing is wrong with me believe me but i would love to talk with you because i loved your voice and i'd like to talk to you and maybe find out a bit more about you you sound reasonably intelligent

Above: Sandra Selig, *heart of the air you can hear*, 2011, spun polyester, nails, paint. Photo: John Brash.

Below (left): Bryan Spier, *Shadowmath*, 2010, ynthetic polymer on linen.

Below (right): Mutlu Çerkez, *Various responses: Ah hi I'm (21 November 2021)*, 2004, synthetic polymer on paper.



Dirty Fingerprints

LIANG LUSCOMBE

Disconnected sounds of police sirens, coughing, spluttering, and flocks of birds confronted the viewer as they entered the darkened space of Pete Volich's exhibition *Dirty Fingerprints* at Canberra Contemporary Art Space. Videos projected on left and right walls stood either side of me as I walked into the gallery; behind me were a small number of collages, lit from above by fluorescent lights.

An ongoing concern in Volich's work is the social history of public space and vernacular photography, which he has recently explored through performance. The video work *Attempting to Say Cheese Whilst Remembering The Kellett Street Massacre* (2009) was filmed in Sydney's Kings Cross, where the infamous 1927 Razor Gangs riots occurred. The work shows the artist standing directly in front of the camera in his deadpan style. He stares and grimaces, his lips appear to be wrestling a half-formed smile.

This a reference to the history of the toothy grin found in snapshots. As Christina Kotchemidova discusses in *Why We Say 'Cheese': Producing the Smile in Snapshot Photography*, the

origins of the smile in photography are not solely due to speedier camera shutters or improved dental care in the early 20th century.¹ Kotchemidova suggests that it was, in fact, Kodak's monopoly over the photographic industry and pervasive advertising that shaped the cultural habits of the amateur photographer. We traded the solemn face for the grin and in doing so adopted signifiers for consumer happiness.² *Attempting to Say Cheese Whilst Remembering The Kellett Street Massacre* makes an effort to examine this cultural norm against the context of local histories. Through Volich's performance of the 'Kodak smile' this vacant cultural pose all but eclipses the significance of his chosen site.

Volich's deadpan performance incorporates a level of absurdity in his attempt to recall, or maybe more accurately play tourist to, events that occurred well before his lifetime. By returning to the site of the riots he uses the location to construct a kind of memory machine. In this regard, the work is similar to Mike Kelley's project *Educational Complex* (1995), in which Kelley drew on fragments of his memory to construct architectural models. These models sought to recreate spaces that Kelley had lived and worked in

Above: Pete Volich, *Attempting to say cheese whilst remembering the Kellett Street massacre*, 2009, single channel video with sound. Photo: the artist.

Facing page: Pete Volich, *Man with cold #1 (Monday)*, 2005/10, single channel video with sound. Photo: the artist.



since childhood—resulting in an architecture of impossibility as he focused on the gaps and disjuncture of his memory.³ Both Kelley and Volich use the interrogation of space as a vehicle for the recovery of repressed memory—be it social or personal. Yet as Volich stands with the lights of Kings Cross behind him, the effects of urban development on the city are evident; the place bears no evidence of the traumatic history that Volich half-heartedly seeks to evoke. By using space as the material for recollection, Volich touches on the inexorable mutation of city environments and the inevitable erasure of the past through change.

A spluttering sound echoed through the space and I turned to the second video piece *Man with a Cold* (2005/2010), where Volich's breathing labours under the weight of a nasty cold. His eyes are closed as mucus drips down from his nose. Using the close-up as a framing device allows a detailed examination of Volich's features as he struggles with his ailments, bringing the artist's own fragility to the fore. The work is a snappy reply to Bruce Nauman's *Self Portrait as a Fountain* (1966-67) which sees Nauman spout water from his mouth for the film's duration. While Nauman makes ironic reference to the artist as a source of social nourishment and refreshment, Volich alternatively shows the artist as harbouring the common cold and thus susceptible to human frailty.

Volich effectively highlights everyday actions to humorous effect in this film. The simple portrait composition and the silliness of his actions are akin to the work of New Zealand artist Campbell Patterson. Campbell's video *Chewing Brothers* (2005) shows the familiar action of chewing gum, yet rendered strange as the gum

is passed between the artist and two brothers in a potentially endless chain. Both Volich and Campbell play on the banality of everyday actions in their videos providing an economy of means and an immediacy that characterises their practice.

Disappointingly, the placement of the videos in *Dirty Fingerprints* did not negotiate the particular qualities of the gallery space. This, I believe, prevented a direct dialogue between the video works, and resulted in a somewhat disjointed exhibition. Central to the strength of both videos is the duration of Volich's actions. His performances are reminiscent of performance video of the 1970s, with the video camera used as the stage for his 'barely there' acting. Lynne Cooke's observation of Nauman's practice could equally be applied to Volich's work—'Time is experienced as repetition within a never-ending succession: no resolution can be expected, and closure remains deferred.'⁴

Pete Volich's exhibition *Dirty Fingerprints* was held at Canberra Contemporary Art Space from 15 October to 17 November 2010.

1. Christina Kotchemidova, 'Why We Say "Cheese": Producing the Smile in Snapshot Photography,' *Critical Studies in Media Communication* Vol. 22, No. 1, (March 2005)

2. *Ibid*, 2

3. Anthony Vidler, 'Mike Kelley's Educational Complex' in *Warped Space: art architecture and anxiety in modern culture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 159

4. Lynne Cooke, 'Bruce Nauman: a waiting' in *Bruce Nauman: International New Media Art* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2002), 40

Welcome to the Land of Opportunities

JARED DAVIS

I heard Piero Golia's first installation in Australia before I saw it. A steady whooshing sound that drew my attention to a section of Uplands Gallery near to the entrance. A toilet sat in the corner with its flusher taped down. After a while, it was noted that the toilet water was draining in a clockwise swirl, as opposed to the Southern Hemisphere's anti-clockwise motion. A common source of pop-cultural fascination for many, and in this case LA based Italian Piero Golia felt a desire to 'correct' this quirk of the upside-down world of Australia.

A humorous one-liner, to some Golia's quip might come across as cringe worthy. An Italian man living in the USA, seemingly so concerned by this difference to his cultural reference-point for how toilets should work that he decided to, through his own engineering, adjust the loo back to what he is familiar with. It's a simple work, but a big gesture. The effort no doubt required in order to execute this feat shows an almost stubborn level of commitment. Surely he is being tongue-in-cheek? It draws to mind the colonialists sailing down to what was to become Australia, who stubbornly yet with exhaustive effort, tried to adjust things to their own liking. Golia's biographies emphasise the artist's interest in myth making, seemingly the construction of myths around his own self by way of bold, ironic gestures. There is a sense of futility in them; in attempting to write his own mythology, Golia comes across as some sort of inconsiderate eccentric.

One of Golia's earlier works saw the artist convince a stranger to tattoo an image of him on her back, with the words 'PIERO MY IDOL' (*Tattoo*, 2001). Indeed a bizarre exploitation of her desire for 15 minutes of fame. Once again it is a humorous gag, until the repercussions on the other's life are considered. What would bring this stranger to permanently mark her body for this one man's art project? Was she in her right mind? Golia's reckless commentary on ego and identity here draws no line between lived experience and distanced critique, and it goes some way in explaining what his self-mythologising intentions may have been for his work at Uplands Gallery.

That Golia takes an interest in the idea of infinity is of no small note. In being fascinated with myth, Golia inevitably appears to wish for himself some sort of immortal, infinite status. Here at Uplands the infinite effect of a mythic gesture was at play, certainly hinted at in the title of the exhibited work: *Infinity Fountain or Prototype for a Clockwise Swirling Flush in the Southern Hemisphere*. Of course, the term 'fountain' cannot be applied to a toilet without an inevitable reference to Marcel Duchamp's own *Fountain* of 1917, so in this sense we get a little picture of where to place Golia's gestures: perhaps in the tradition of 20th century art's most prominent (mythologised) male trickster. Golia is reviving a Duchampian persona in the 21st century, however in an age in which the male myth is highly scrutinised, he might be met with a new reception; Golia's myths today can seem politically incorrect and certainly self-indulgent. Yet the fact that he undertakes them at all is futile, alarming and yet in some sense, poignant. As the subject of his own work, Golia treads the fine line between irony and seriousness. Without knowing his demeanour personally I am tempted to make the assumption that rather than keeping enough distance from the subjects of his art to be a critic himself, Golia seems to use the guise of art as a means to legitimate a somewhat socially destructive and megalomaniacal world view. In other words, he could just be a great big asshole.

Talking with curator Liv Barrett about the artist's work for Uplands, she guides me through the gallery to show me the piece's accompanying saleable edition. It is a print of the schematics for the Southern Hemisphere-adapted toilet, printed onto a tea towel of the famous 'Keep Calm and Carry On' World War II poster. I ask if Golia knows the difference between England and Australia. Liv laughs and explains that on an aside, Golia is rather interested in such wartime paraphernalia (perhaps the mythologies of war?). I begin to gauge that irrespective of whether separating Australia from England matters to Golia, it is more their cultural difference from himself that he grapples with, always tending to place himself as the orbital centre.

Piero Golia seems to embody a self-indulgent artist, yet his provocations are self-aware enough that he can grasp what he is able to get away with. He is perhaps that clever guy at a party who you laugh at before recounting his rude jokes to friends, only to receive scornful looks. His work, no less what was exhibited in *Welcome to the Land of Opportunities*, shows an intriguing artist-trickster toying with modern myth-making, perhaps more a part of our contemporary consciousness than we might be inclined to make out.

Piero Golia's *Welcome to the Land of Opportunities* was held at Uplands Gallery, Melbourne from 29 January to 30 January 2011.

infinity fountain (or perhaps
for a clockwise rotating
float in the southern
hemisphere)



KEEP
CALM



AND

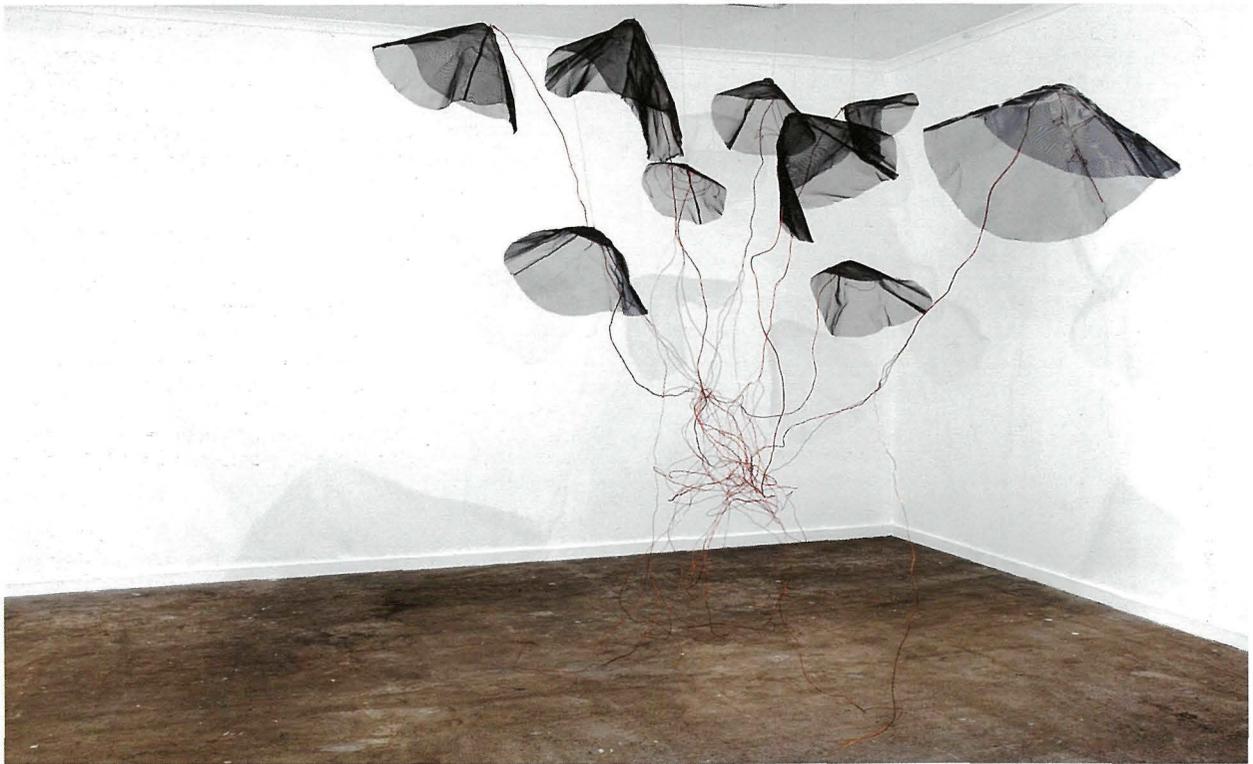
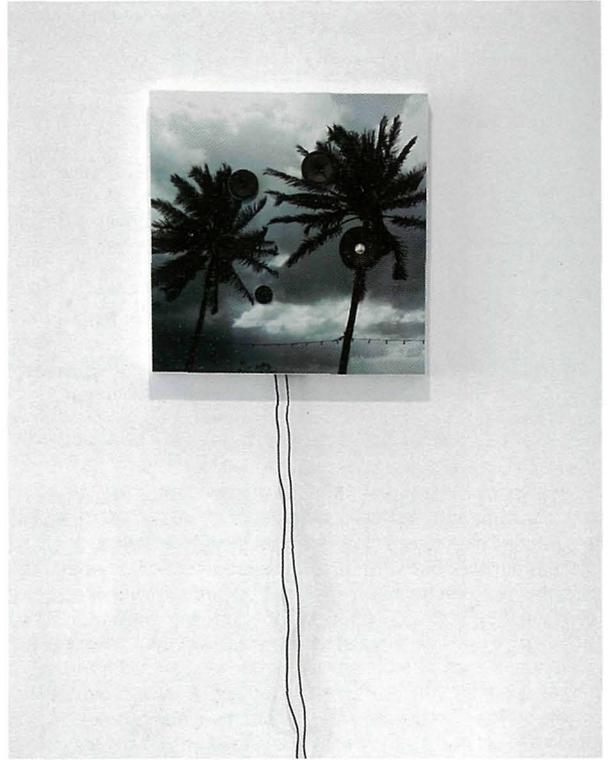
CARRY
ON

for float:
need to have float
in water to avoid the
float in the southern
hemisphere.



Ball floating
float in still water
in water in still water

For permanent water level
float in still water
float in still water



Above (left): Amina McConvell, *This is a sad place*(detail), 2010, installation. Photo: Silversalt Photography.

Above (right): Siying Zhou, *Who's There?*, 2010, digital prints on aluminium, speakers, audio. Photo: Silversalt Photography.

Below: Rebecca Arbon, *Peregrination*, 2010, fly screen and copper wire. Photo: Silversalt Photography.

Territory Time

MEGAN ROBSON

Territory Time brought together the work of five artists who live and work in Darwin: Amina McConvell, Catherine McAvoy, Rebecca Abon, Simon Cooper and Siying Zhou, who also curated the exhibition. 'Territory Time' is a concept that not only reflects the understanding of time in the Northern Territory but also attempts to acknowledge the specific characteristics that affect art making in the region. The collection of works presented within this framework incorporated drawing, installation, sculpture, sound and textiles, and explored a range of ideas including the environment, time, nostalgia, cultural difference and migration.

Territory Time was originally developed for the 2010 Next Wave Festival, *No Risk Too Great*, and has been reconfigured to tour to Cairns, Sydney, Perth and Alice Springs throughout 2010-11. In the curatorial brief for the exhibition, Zhou situates *Territory Time* within a particular socio-cultural context that exists in the Northern Territory. She writes that the stereotype of the region, and one which is predominantly circulated through tourism marketing, is one of a 'Dreaming Land'—a place in which the daily reality of life in a remote location surrounded by a beautiful but extreme environment is replaced with the idea of 'the easy going tropical lifestyle'.¹ For artists in the region, Zhou notes that an economy based primarily on tourism combined with the remote location of major urban centres such as Darwin and Alice Springs, has created an 'art market driven solely by the commercial aboriginal art market which generates a huge income to the NT economy and [receives] the bulk of support and national attention'.² With this in mind, *Territory Time* aimed to counteract the stereotypes of the Northern Territory by exhibiting different representations of life in the region.

Who's there? (2009-10) an audio sculpture by Zhou was the first work viewers encounter in the exhibition. The artist has noted that this work is a reflection of her experiences of time while living in Darwin. Installed along the wall at set intervals were three box-like structures, each featuring the same digital landscape print of a series of palm trees strung with coloured electrical lights, blowing in a heavy wind against a darkened sky. Inserted into each of the prints are five circular speakers of various sizes, which play the same audio track of the artist reading out a sequence of headlines from *The Northern Territory News*. Reflecting on the prominence of local and state based news in the region, the artist has noted that the sensationalist headlines of capital city's daily newspaper, *The Northern Territory News*, 'has recorded everyday of my past two and a half years' living in Darwin'.³ The monotone reading of the major news items undermined the intended drama of the headline and instead the audio became a listing of events, a recording of time.

McAvoy's soft pink textile sculpture *Reminiscence Act 11* (2009) dominated the central space of the gallery. In this work the artist cut-up and sewed back together dolls clothes to create a strange, almost abject curtain structure. Hung from the gallery roof, the reconfigured lace edged arms and legs of the garments create a disjointed mass that trails down onto the floor. The reinterpretation of familiar objects from childhood suggested a desire to reconstruct memories of the past. In this way the artist invites the viewer to reflect on the manner in which nostalgia informs our views of a particular time and place.

In *Peregrination* (2010), Abon explored the physical and emotional aspects of travel for contemporary artists through her own

experiences leaving and returning to Darwin. The installation consisted of a series of elevated flat circular objects, similar in shape to suburban television satellite dishes, which were connected by metallic wire that merged in a mass near the floor. The structure in its entirety was reminiscent of a water lily or a diagram of a series of planets in an unknown constellation. The artist created the installation from fly screen and copper wire—materials which 'the Territory is particularly dependent on'.⁴ This sculptural map not only recreates Abon's movements from Darwin to other locations but also mimicked the nature of travel for many other contemporary artists as they relocate to other cities and countries for education and work.

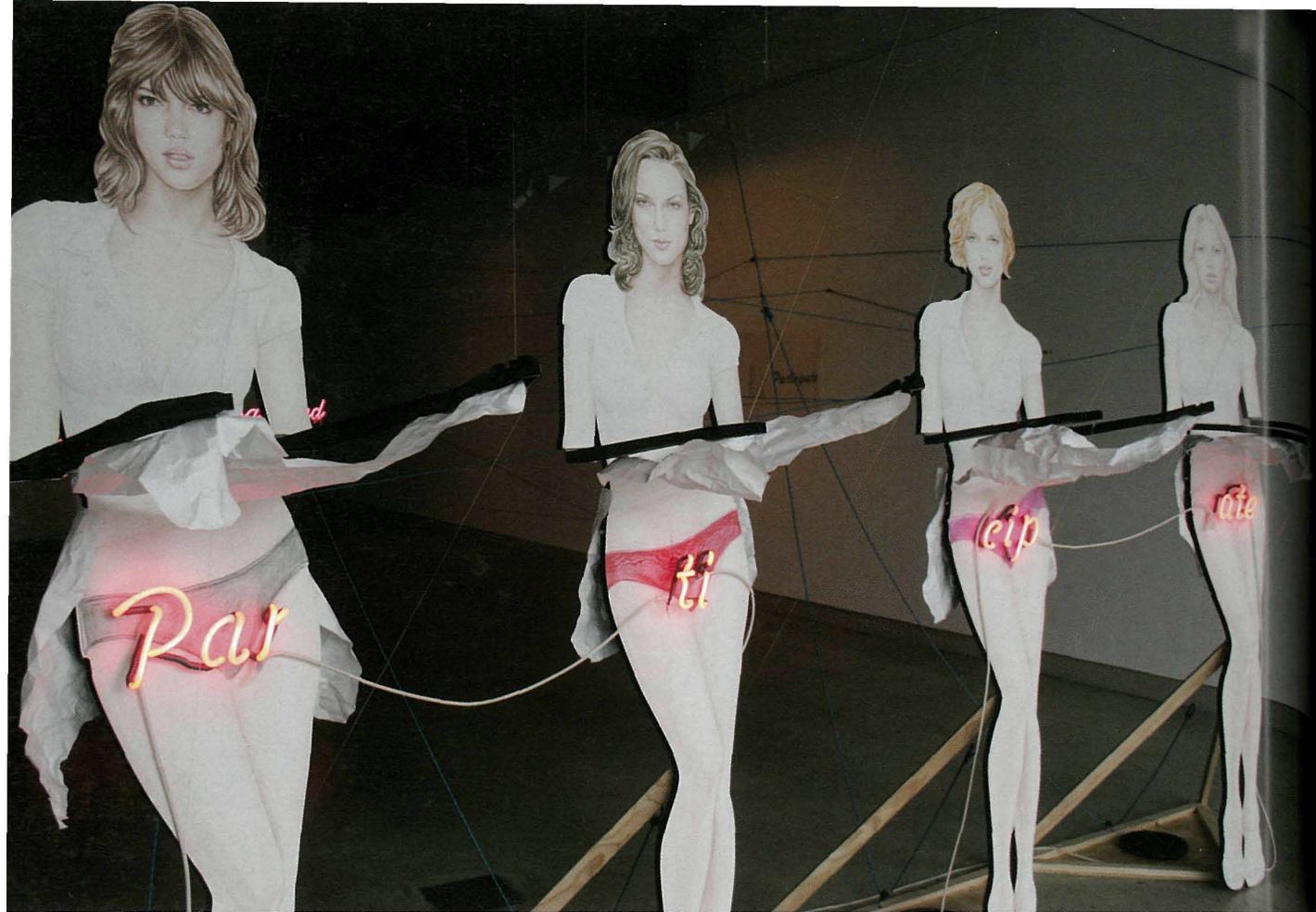
McConvell presented two sculptures installed on shelves alongside a grid of mixed-media works on paper in *This Is The Sad Place* (2010). One of the sculptures depicted a green plant, stripped of any foliage, which sits in a striped vessel on a mound of red dirt. In the other sculpture, an imploring pale face adorned with a feather headpiece stares out at the viewer. In these works the artist considers how her European heritage informs her relationship to the land. Exploring specifically the coastal region of Casurina in Darwin, McConvell's sculptures reflect the land as a living entity. Using an image drawn from the artist's childhood of a mournful figure, or what the artist described as a 'ghost', she illustrates the possibility of the environment as an emotional being.

Simon Cooper's intended contribution to the exhibition, figurative large scale sculptures made from the cheap checked plastic zip up bags which can be found in any multiuse discount store, unfortunately, did not arrive at the exhibition venue. His presence in the exhibition was instead marked with a wall drawing at the end of the exhibition space. The drawing spelt out the artist's name in block capital letters, and underneath this, 'Lost in transit' was written in a florid script.

While the premise of *Territory Time* was interesting, if not slightly problematic, the exhibition itself did not specifically explore the issues raised in the curatorial brief. The context created for the exhibition appeared more ambitious than the investigations of the individual artworks and did not, unfortunately, do justice to the exhibition or the works. The exhibition did not present alternative representations of the Northern Territory nor did it confront the structures which enforce a conservative art market in the region. Rather what *Territory Time* did do was present the work of a group of diverse Darwin-based artists whose practice is informed by their local environment.

Territory Time was curated by Siying Zhou and was held at MOP Projects from 20 January to 6 February 2011. The exhibition featured work by Amina McConvell, Catherine McAvoy, Rebecca Arbon, Simon Cooper and Siying Zhou.

1. Siying Zhou, *Curatorial Brief: Territory Time* (exhibition catalogue, MOP, Sydney 2011)
2. Ibid
3. Siying Zhou, *Artist Statement, Territory Time* (exhibition catalogue, MOP, Sydney 2011)
4. Rebecca Abon, *Artist Statement, Territory Time* (exhibition catalogue, MOP, Sydney 2011)



Democrata Automata

KELLY FLIEDNER

Money, cash, capital, funds, coin, currency, or whatever you want to call it, is usually traded for goods and services. It is the medium of exchange for which economic structures function and the prime method for citizens to participate within the society they inhabit. The more money you have, the more you get to participate, the more important you are and the greater your opinion. Jordana Maisie explored how communication affects economic acts of participation within broader social and political systems of governance by encouraging (and in a way forcing) her audience to actively participate within *Democrata Automata* at MARS Gallery, Melbourne.

The very function of entering the gallery activated *Democrata Automata* through a complicated rope and pulley system criss-crossing the gallery behind four drawn, larger than life-size, attractive, scantily clad, female figures. As the front door was opened the rope network was triggered, moving across the space to lift up the paper skirts of the gazing doe-eyed models, revealing glowing neon syllables on their underwear—*par, ti, cip, ate*. It may have been the seductive expressions on their faces, seen from outside that enticed the audience into the gallery, however it was the very act of *entering* that culminated in this lewd, yet comical, act of visual revelation. Piecing the syllables together, it was as if the exhibition posed a question, Participate? Well of course.

Venturing into the exhibition, bidding farewell to the four neon-pantied models, stepping and tripping through a maze of rope, I found three large transparent cylinders with neon labels above reading respectively, *Satisfied, Indifferent* and *Dissatisfied*—ostensibly there for the audience to voice their opinion of the exhibition itself. On the walls flanking the cylinders were works on paper, beautiful, graphite, illustrative images made in collaboration with Uli Knorz that acted as visual instructions and a step-by-step guide to experiencing the exhibition. The first, on the right, depicted a series of actions that had already taken place—two sets of eyes, a hand pushing a door open, a rope and pulley system, a skirt gradually being hitched up and then the word 'participate'. On the opposite side of the room, the second drawing listed further visual instructions—a hand reaching into a bag, withdrawing a wallet, opening that wallet, taking a coin, placing



that coin into a slotted cylinder and then followed by the word 'satisfaction'. Considering the first set of instructions had been so precisely attended to, and taking a glimpse into the clear slotted cylinders that stood before me, each filled with coins, I felt compelled to obey the second drawing, if not to communicate my own satisfaction, to at least communicate something. It appeared that Maisie was doing well as most of the audience appeared to be satisfied with perhaps a third contributing to the 'dissatisfied' pile while the 'indifferent' bucket lagged far behind (perhaps this was to be expected). Either way it looked as if Maisie had made a killing as it appeared that much of the audience had surrendered their cash and paid to have a say, albeit through the restricted choice of three.

The exhibition requires the audience's presence to materialise in two ways, the first being the kinetic sculptural aspect, which is triggered by the audience entering, whilst the second requires the audience to voice their opinion. The creation and success of the exhibition is dependent on the manipulated experience of the audience and relies on the audience blindly cohering with the systems in place already. Although the experience appears versatile and unique to individual audience members, it is indeed homogenous and incredibly limited. *Democrata Automata* focuses on these limitations of communication and encourages a broader conversation about political, social and economic structures that promote sameness, itemised decisions and directed acts of participation.

I originally thought the title of the exhibition was *Participation* as the term is used throughout, however the actual title cheekily and cleverly alludes to and mocks our system of predetermined instructions and governance. These programmed, automated responses are sustained by exchange of money and encourage participants to keep on giving their limited mechanical and unemotional opinions. The audience is urged to maintain participation! Maintain exchange! Communicate that automated position under the guise of choice! Although there was a slyly negative undertone of cynicism compounded by the sometimes-annoying expectations of interaction in *Democrata Automata*, there was a genuine humour and playfulness that came with engaging that I really enjoyed. It's not *Participate?*, question mark, it is *Participate*, statement, order ... do it.

Jordana Maisie's *Democrata Automata* was held at [MARS] Melbourne Art Rooms from 4 February to 27 February 2011.

Above and facing page: Jordana Maisie, *Democrata Automata* (installation view), 2011, mixed media. Photo: Jordana Maisie.





Material Release

ELIZABETH STANTON

The press release is almost universally considered the lowest form of art writing. It has shifted from its role as a promotional tool to become a short-attention-span substitute for the catalogue essay and (when copied verbatim in the media) for journalism. Often made available in the gallery space and downloadable from websites, press releases are written for an ambiguous audience that could include the public, media, students, collectors and funding bodies. They follow predictable formulae and are often laden with abstract rhetoric designed to present their subject (such as the exhibition, prize winner or work of art) as worthy of our attention and time.

With this in mind, reviewing an exhibition that takes a press release as its premise feels somewhat collusive. *Session_13_Press Release* was the second in a trilogy of exhibitions curated from a press release written by East London artist run initiative, Am Nuden Da, who then invited the curatorial collective, FormContent (Francesco Pedraglio, Caterina Riva and Pieternel Vermoortel)

to realise the exhibition implied in their text. While FormContent curated the first and third instalments (Sessions 11 and 15, numbered in order of Am Nuden Da's previous exhibitions), *Session_13_Press Release* was handed over to curator Joshua Simon, to diversify the possibilities contained within the 340-word release.

Am Nuden Da's press release flirts with the clichés and expectative language of its genre. It celebrates ambiguity and art speak, however it also plays with tantalizing intellectual seduction, almost to the point of poetry. At the risk of falling into the lazy writer category, for the sake of illustration their opening sentences are reproduced below, the short sentences reflecting an obligatory 'quote' or reference. They begin:

(Romantically)
Be my encourager.
Let me down for me to restore sense.

Facing page: Elisheva Levy, *White Falcon Stereo*, 2010, paper and White Falcon. Photo: UnveilArts.

Above: *Session_13_Press Release* Installation view (works from left to right): Asaf Koriat, *Promise*, 2008-2010, paper, MDF, markers and shredder; Francesco Finizio, *Postcards from Promise Park*, 2010, postcards and three channel video; Elisheva Levy, *White Falcon Stereo*, 2010, paper and White Falcon; Joe Scanlan, *Red Flags*, 2009, artist book; Harald Thys and Jos de Gruyter, *Das Loch (The Hole)*, video, 2010; Mike E. Smith, *Untitled*, 2010, wire sculpture. Photo: UnveilArts



*Be my denouncer, because all you need do is attempt for me to succumb.
Succumb to the unexpected, to that of delightful bliss, to that of intellectual pursuit, to that of consequence—a consequence that your being commands, one you are obliged to hold.*

A dry explanation follows, informing the reader ‘if anything this show is about matter in its entire register’ and outlining the exhibition’s key areas of investigation: Material, Subject and Question.

Given this prescribed though loose summary as a starting point, curator Joshua Simon seized the opportunity to explore his own existing area of interest: the commodity/object relationship and artists’ open negotiation of this relationship in their practice. Leaping from the text’s key buzzwords and treating the release with the same level of regard any curator might, he provided his own title for the exhibition, *The Unreadymade*, and scribed a considered curatorial statement. The exhibition itself—featuring the work of seven artists working in sculpture, video, works on paper and self-publishing—turned the audience’s attention away from the collaborative catalyst (Am Nuden Da), and toward the work of artists exploring the commodity as ‘the fundamental medium of all mediums’². Simon argues that negotiating the commodity is inescapable for the art object; the commodity becoming both source material and desired status. The diverse works in the exhibition illustrate this in both subtle and blatant ways.

During the opening night, an artist’s self-conscious negotiation commodity was placed centre stage by Francesco Finizio who positioned himself as artist-salesman, sitting amongst his work, *Postcards from Promise Park*, 2010 a three channel video accompanied by a series of postcards with a small sign informing viewers they could purchase packs of the cards from him for £10. His presence enhanced the theatricality of the video and cards that document an amusement park constructed by the artist on a roadside wasteland. The park is sparsely populated by constructed figures and billboards that deliver promises such as ‘Dubai Daydream’ and ‘Free Park Ing’.

Across the room a more sinister and absurd drama was played out in Belgian filmmakers, Harald Thys and Jos de Gruyter’s video *Das Loch (The Hole)* (2010). In this work seedy materialism and consumerist ideology is embodied by fluoro-faced mannequins speaking in robotic tones. A bright red figure in dark glasses tells of his love for fast cars and Grappa, while a tortured neon yellow painter sits at his easel flanked by his wife who wears a vulture on her shoulder and repeats, ‘Nothing will come of this painting Johannes, why don’t you make video films?’ Detached from her lament, poor Johannes tells himself: ‘The colours, it’s all about them.’

Colour becomes the commodity in Asaf Koriati’s *Promise* (2008-2010), a large paper rainbow created at one end by a series of branded markers that stain the strip of paper on its journey across

Above: Francesco Finizio, *Postcards from Promise Park*, 2010, installation view of three channel video. Photo: UnveilArts.
Facing page: Asaf Koriati, *Promise*, 2008-2010, paper, MDF, markers and shredder. Photo: UnveilArts.



a smooth wooden arch. The optimistic coloured lines find their end in a shredder secured to the down side, the paper and line dispersing into a sprawling mass of coloured strips that you feel you could jump into. Elsewhere Mike E. Smith turned an electrical coil into an imperfect white bowl, Elisheva Levy combined a dream guitar with a life-size paper tree in *White Falcon Stereo* (2010), and Joe Scanlan's artist book, *Red Flags* (2009) weaved together the artist's interpretation of prominent texts on ownership, the market, government and orientalism.

A tightly curated exhibition, *Session_13_Press Release* (aka *The Unreadymade*) engaged so subtly with Am Nuden Da's press release it could have easily been realised independently of the project. By providing a curatorial statement Simon put the press release back in its box (so to speak) as a secondary, lesser text, causing it to also become a secondary, lesser premise. Viewers were given a clearer understanding of Simon's interests and left to enjoy the works, the starting point of the show (the press release) a near total aside.

Had the starting point been a regular press release, treating it in this near-invisible way would have been more commendable, however the exhibition's relationship with this particular release could have been more critically and overtly teased out. By comparison, in the previous and subsequent *Session 11* and *Session 15* instalments the release was by no means the elephant in the room. FormContent responded to the implied challenge of the text with a challenge: placing the full release in

large vinyl lettering on the wall, causing viewers to confront it as a hybrid of didactic panel, curatorial premise and work of art. They accompanied the release with exhibitions that explored the circular references between text and exhibition, expectation and outcome. Gladly, the results of all three sessions revealed that the core objective of the project was neither to create a media stunt, nor to garner undeserved attention. Instead, what remains is a series of investigations into curatorial response and the role interpretative language plays in our understanding of artistic practice.

Session_13_Press Release (The Unreadymade) was held at FormContent, London from 3 December 2010 to 30 January 2011. Curated by Joshua Simon, the exhibition included the work of Francesco Finizio, Asaf Koriat, Elisheva Levy, Joe Scanlan, Mike E. Smith, Harald Thys and Jos de Gruyter.

1. Am Nuden Da, 'Press Release' (Session 11, 13 and 15 Press Release exhibitions, 2010)
2. Joshua Simon, *The Unreadymade*, accessed 29 January 2011 <http://formcontent.org/exhibitions/exhibition>

Drain Lake Project

THOMASIN SLEIGH

Amy Howden-Chapman is an excellent writer. She completed an MA in Creative Writing in Wellington before moving on to her current studies in Visual Arts at the California Institute of Arts. Her practice is diverse—employing performance, painting, sculpture and installation—but language is always there, ghosting the edges of her physical objects. Often the words are present, in the form of speech or writing, but even when they are not I get the sense that they are suggested, waiting to form themselves in the sidelines.

Howden-Chapman's recent work *Drain Lake Project* (2010), exhibited in the SQUARE² space at City Gallery Wellington, examines the public space of Los Angeles—Howden-Chapman's new home. In particular the work looks at Elysian Park, the oldest public park in Los Angeles. This park is a charged site; Los Angeles is identified as containing the least open space per capita of any major American city. Local artists have created the Elysian Park Museum of Art and use the park to stage performances, interventions and coordinated events. Each variously contends with the contingencies of art in public space and the particular pressures of Elysian Park as a site.

Howden-Chapman's video *Drain Lake Project* (2010) documents an 'audio picnic', a previous performance work the artist coordinated in Elysian Park where friends met to share a picnic next to one of the park's water drains, on which the artist placed a boom-box playing an elegantly spoken monologue. For the SQUARE² iteration of this work, two monitors screened a shakily filmed video of the picnic, and speakers amplified the monologue throughout City Gallery's entranceway.

Drain Lake Project is inflected with environmental concerns, a common thread across much of Howden-Chapman's practice.¹ The flyer for the work pointedly features signage for Elysian Park which advertises the park as a verdant aquatic landscape. The dry, concrete drain beside the picnickers speaks of another story—the pressing problems of water conservation and contamination, not only in relation to the upkeep of Elysian park itself, but equally in Los Angeles and its wider metropolitan area.

These ecological concerns are astutely amplified by the artist's play with the rhetorical devices of language and their inherent contradictions. I wasn't at the picnic, and only had access to the filmed documentation in Wellington, but I imagine the strange,





disembodied voice from the boom box demanded the attention of the picnickers. The monologue, read by a man went like this:

My voice was chosen because it sounds the most like a lake. Not a river, a lake. Not at all like a piñata, like a lake. You could say it sounds like a large pond, but really that's a lake. My voice doesn't sound like Jack Nicholson, not in China Town, like a lake.

It doesn't sound like the moon or anything like that, not like the ocean, nothing so big, but like a lake. Not stadiums, lakes. Not waterfalls, lakes. It doesn't sound like grass, but I suppose you could say it sounds something like a whole field of something swaying, which in its own way is something like a lake.

In *Drain Lake Project*, as in much of Howden-Chapman's practice, there is a productive twinning of art and language. In the artist's work, objects, circumstances and situations are constructed by words, as if words are the same as people, bricks, fabric or paint. There is a disavowal of the secondary position of language as simply describing an actual thing in real life. Howden-Chapman messes up the relationship of words and their meanings and highlights the politics of metaphor.

The monologue of the man creates a multivalent shuffling of metaphorical allusions. I'm thinking of these layers as something like this: the lake isn't here, but there is a boom box which plays the voice of a man whose voice sounds *like* a lake. His voice

cannot physically *be* a lake it can only sound *like* one. The man is himself not present, but his voice is. His voice is, in turn, mediated by the recording and the boom box. It's a complicated arrangement of presence and absence.

This is what metaphor contradictorily does: describe a thing by using something which is absent. The construction of a metaphorical lake through these components points to the lake's absence like a finger. It is also a reminder of the man's absence (we truly want to see this mysterious man with his watery voice), and a reminder of the failure of language to make these things present. This linguistic melancholy intertwines with the ecological concerns evident in *Drain Lake Project* to make the work a demand; a demand to make absent things available and ready—the contradictions of metaphor are ultimately productive here.

Amy Howden-Chapman's *Drain Lake Project* was exhibited at City Gallery Wellington's SQUARE² gallery from 16 January to 15 February 2011.

1. See for example Amy Howden-Chapman's works *Save the Whale/The Great Pacific Ocean Rubbish Patch Recreation*, Wellington, 2006, and *The Flood, My Chanting*, Wellington, 2008.

PREVIEWS



Forthcoming Exhibitions

NSW

YES I CAN/NO CAN DO | BEN NORRIS, GARRY TRINH, JODIE WHALEN and PROPHETIC INITIATIVES
curated by TOM POLO
18 February—14 May
Blacktown Arts Centre
Civic Plaza, Flushcombe Road, Blacktown
www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au

NO SNOW ON THE BROKEN BRIDGE | YANG FUDONG
18 March—4 June
Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation
16-20 Goodhope Street, Paddington
www.sherman-scaf.org.au

CONSTELLATION | SEUNG YUL OH, EUNHYE HWANG, KIJEONG SONG and SOO-JOO YOO
19 March—30 April
4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art
181-187 Hay St, Sydney
www.4a.com.au

MATTHEW HOPKINS
23 March—16 April
Gallery 9
9 Darley St, Darlinghurst
www.gallery9.com.au

ZERO EXPECTATIONS | JAMES R FORD
31 March—23 April
Peloton
19 & 25 Meagher Street, Chippendale
www.peloton.net.au

Above: Michaela Gleave, *I would bring you the stars*, 2010, documentation of event: Vatnajökull, Iceland, HDV still.

THE REHEARSAL OF REPETITION

ULLA VON BRANDENBURG, MARIE COOL & FABIO BALDUCCI, MEL O'CALLAGHAN, DORA GARCÍA, FRANCK LEIBOVICI and BENOÎT MAIRE

curated by ANJA ISABEL SCHNEIDER

31 March—7 May

GrantPirrie

86 George Street, Redfern

www.grantpirrie.com

SNO 69 | DANIEL GOTTIN and GERDA NAISE

2 April —1 May

SNO Contemporary Art Projects

Level 1, 175 Marrickville Road, Marrickville

www.sno.org.au

DAVID GRIGGS

7 April —30 April

Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery

8 Soudan Lane, Paddington

www.roslynoxley9.com.au

PATRICK HARTIGAN

9 April —7 May

Darren Knight Gallery

840 Elizabeth Street, Waterloo

darrenknightgallery.com

MICHAEL DAGOSTINO & MARIAN ABOUD

14 April—1 May

MOP

2/39 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale

www.mop.org.au

AWFULLY WONDERFUL | PHILIP BROPHY, EUGENE CARCHESIO, HAINES + HINTERDING, DEBORAH KELLY, DAVID LAWREY & JAKI MIDDLETON, MS & MR, HAYDEN FOWLER, IAN HAIG, ADAM NORTON, SAM SMITH and SIMON YATES

curated by BEC DEAN and LIZZIE MULLER

15 April—14 May

Performance Space

CarriageWorks, 245 Wilson Street, Eveleigh

www.performancespace.com.au

FAUX HARP | SARAH NEWALL

19 April —15 May

James Dorahy Project Space

Suite 4, 1st floor, 111 Macleay Street, Potts Point

www.jamesdorahy.com.au

TALKING PICTURES | FITTS & HOLDERNESS, NICHOLAS MANGAN, LOUISE MENZIES, SEAN RAFFERTY

curated by MELANIE OLIVER

20 April—22 May 2011

Artspace

43-51 Cowper Wharf Road, Woolloomooloo

www.artspace.org.au

SPECTACLE OBSTACLE | GRETA ALFARO, JUSTIN BALMAIN, REBECCA BAUMANN, MICHAELA GLEAVE and PIA VAN GELDER.

curated by SUPERKALEIDOSCOPE

27 April—15 May

Firstdraft

116-118 Chalmers St, Surry Hills

www.firstdraftgallery.com



UNGUIDED TOURS: ANNE LANDA AWARD FOR VIDEO AND NEW MEDIA ARTS 2011

IAN BURNS, DAVID HAINES & JOYCE HINTERDING, JAE HOON LEE, RACHEL KHEDOORI, ARLO MOUNTFORD and CHARLIE SOFO
curated by JUSTIN PATON
5 May—10 July
Art Gallery of NSW
Art Gallery Rd, The Domain, Sydney
www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au

ACT

BLAZE 5 | EMMA BEER, CHRIS CARMODY, TIM DWYER, DANIEL EDWARDS, NATALIE MATHER, SUZANNE MOSS and DANIEL VUKOVLJAK
curated by ALEXANDER BOYNES and ANNIKA HARDING
18 February—2 April
Canberra Contemporary Art Space
Gorman House Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon
www.ccas.com.au

WIDER THAN THE SKY | SARA FREEMAN and PETER JORDAN
31 March—17 April
M16
Blaxland Centre, 21 Blaxland Crescent, Griffith
www.m16artspace.com

QLD

RESURFACE | GUY L. WARREN
26 March—23 April
19 Karen Contemporary Artspace
19 Karen Avenue, Mermaid Beach
www.19karen.com.au

JOSEPH BREIKERS
30 March—23 April
Ryan Renshaw Gallery
137 Warry St, Fortitude Valley
www.ryanrenshaw.com.au

THERE IS NO ONE. WHAT WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU?
KURT SORENSON
2 April—1 May
Queensland Centre for Photography
Corner of Cordelia and Russell Streets, South Brisbane
www.qcp.org.au

TREE LINE | LINDA TEGG, LUCY GRIGGS, NICOLA PAGE, SASKIA PANDJI SAKTI, TRUDI BRINCKMAN and UTAKO SHINDO
8 April—29 April
LEVEL
Level 1, 11 Stratton Street, Newstead
www.levelari.org

NT

TROIKA | ANNIE AITKEN, SARAH NEWALL and ALI NOBLE
25 March—30 April
24HR Art
Vimy Lane, Parap Shopping Village, Darwin
www.24hrart.org.au

WA

)(| BENJAMIN FORSTER
26 March—15 May
Fremantle Arts Centre
1 Finnerty Street, Fremantle
www.fac.org.au

JOSHUA WEBB
10 April—8 May
Galerie Dusseldorf
9 Glyde Street, Mosman Park
www.galeriedusseldorf.com.au

LUCID DREAMING | NASSIMA ROTHACKER
14 April—8 May
Perth Centre for Photography
91 Brisbane Street, Perth
www.pcp.org.au

SA

STOP(THE)GAP/ MIND(THE)GAP: INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS ART IN MOTION | REBECCA BELMORE, DANA CLAXTON, ALAN MICHELSON, NOVA PAUL, LISA REIHANA and WARWICK THORNTON
curated by BRENDA L. CROFT
24 February—21 April
Samstag Museum of Art
55 North Terrace, Adelaide
www.unisa.edu.au/samstagmuseum

MARK SIEBERT
18 March—17 April
Greenaway Art Gallery
39 Rundle Street, Kent Town
www.greenaway.com.au

TOUR DE FORCE: IN CASE OF EMERGENCY BREAK GLASS
NICHOLAS FOLLAND, JACQUELINE GROPP, TIMOTHY HORN, DEB JONES, TOM MOORE, IAN MOWBRAY, TRISH ROAN and NEIL ROBERTS
26 March—8 May
JamFactory
19 Morphett Street, Adelaide
www.jamfactory.com.au

SOFT REBELLION
STUART BAILEY, CARLA CESCONE, JAMES DODD, PAUL SLOAN
5 April—6 May
University of South Australia School of Art (SASA) Gallery
Kaurna Building, Cnr Fenn Place and Hindley Street, Adelaide
www.unisa.edu.au/art/sasagallery

COLIN DUNCAN
7 April—30 April
Hugo Mitchell Gallery
260 Portrush Road, Beulah Park
www.hugomitchellgallery.com



THREE RIVERS | BONITA ELY

8 April—7 May
Experimental Art Foundation
The Lion Arts Centre, North Terrace (West End) Adelaide
www.eaf.asn.au

VIC

MODEL PICTURES

JAMES LYNCH, AMANDA MARBURG, ROB McHAFFIE and MOYA McKENNA
23 February—15 May
The Ian Potter Museum of Art
The University of Melbourne, Swanston Street, Parkville
www.art-museum.unimelb.edu.au

VIV MILLER

9 March—30 April
Neon Parc
1/53 Bourke Street, Melbourne
www.neonparc.com.au

NEW11 | FIONA ABICARE, REBECCA BAUMANN, TIM COSTER, GREATEST HITS, SHANE HASEMARD, MARK HILTON, DAN MOYNIHAN, BRENDAN VAN HEK, JUSTENE WILLIAMS and ANNIE WU

curated by HANNAH MATHEWS
12 March—15 May
ACCA
111 Sturt Street, Southbank
www.accaonline.org.au

IT'S NOT YOU, IT'S ME | WILL BOX, JESSICA McELHINNEY, CLARE RAE, DOMINIC REDFERN, CASSANDRA TYTLER

1 April—21 April
RMIT Project Space Gallery
Schools of Art & Creative Media
RMIT Building 94, 23-27 Cardigan Street, Carlton
www.rmit.edu.au/projectspace

MATTHEW HUNT

2 April—23 April
Dianne Tanzer Gallery
108-110 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy
www.diannetanzergallery.net.au

ISOLATION, INTEGRATION & ASSIMILATION IN A HETEROGENEOUS CITY | ELIZA NEWBOLD GREGORY

4—30 April
Kings ART
Level 1, 1/171 King Street, Melbourne
www.kingsartstrun.com.au

I WOULD BRING YOU THE STARS | MICHAELA GLEAVE

12 April—7 May
Anna Pappas Gallery
2-4 Carlton Street, Prahran
www.annapappasgallery.com

PRECIPICE | JONATHAN McBURNIE

13 April—7 May
Blindside
Level 7, Room 14, Nicholas Building, 37 Swanston St, Melbourne
www.blindside.org.au

BIANCA HESTER

14 April—7 May
Sarah Scout
Level 1, 1a Crossley Street, Melbourne
www.sarahscoutpresents.com

WAY OF CALLING | DANE MITCHELL, SHELIA & NICHOLAS PYE, ANNE SHELTON, COLLEEN AHERN and JASON HENDRIK-HANSMAN
curated by MELISSA KEYS

14 May—19 June
Linden
26 Acland Street, St Kilda
www.lindenarts.org

BOYS WITH GUNS | PRUDENCE MURPHY

1 June—17 July
Monash Gallery of Art
860 Ferntree Gully Road, Wheelers Hill
www.mga.org.au

Above left: Prudence Murphy, *Backyard #1*, from the series *Boys with Guns*, 2011, archival pigment print.

Above right: Raquel Ormella, *130 Davey Street*, 2005, whiteboards, temporary and permanent text markers. Photo: Christian Capurro.

TAS

STEREOSCOPIC | BILLY COWIE

11 March—10 April
Carnegie Gallery
16 Argyle Street, Hobart
www.hobartcity.com.au/hcc/standard/carnegie_gallery

SPACE ANTICS | PENNY MASON, SUE HENDERSON and DAVID MARSDEN

19 March—8 May
Burnie Regional Art Gallery
Civic Centre Precinct, Wilmot Street, Burnie
www.burnie.net

THE ARTS APPRECIATION SOCIETY | KARIN CHAN, ANNA COCKS, LAURA HINDMARSH, AMBER KOROLUK-STEPHENSON, CLAIRE KROUZECKY and LAURA PURCELL

curated by RHONDA VOO
9—30 April
Inflight ARI
100 Goulburn Street, Hobart
www.inflightart.com.au

130 DAVEY STREET & WALKING THROUGH CLEARFELLS

RAQUEL ORMELLA
6 May—5 June
CAST
27 Tasma Street, North Hobart
www.castgallery.org

NEW ZEALAND

THE UN-SITED | VICTOR BEREZOVSKY, BRONWYN HOLLOWAY-SMITH, SIMON MORRIS, RUTH THOMAS-EDMOND, MOLLY SAMSELL, SANDRA SCHMIDT and KATE WOODS

29 January—25 April
City Gallery Wellington
Civic Square, 101 Wakefield Street, Wellington
www.citygallery.org.nz

RADIANT MATTER PART 1 | DANE MITCHELL

5 March—29 May
Govett Brewster Art Gallery
Corner of Queen and King Streets, New Plymouth
www.govettbrewster.com

BRUCE DANCED IF VICTORIA SANG, AND VICTORIA SANG; SO BRUCE DANCED | SEAN KERR

19 March—29 May
The Dowse Art Museum
45 Laings Road, Lower Hutt
www.newdowse.org.nz

MOP

24th March - 10th April

MOP Projects

Thursday - Saturday 1 - 6 pm
Sunday & Monday 1 - 5 pm
2 / 39 Abercrombie St
Chippendale Sydney NSW 2008
Ph: 02 96993955
E-Mail: mop@mop.org.au
www.mop.org.au

Schultztown
TIM SCHULTZ
Bed-knobs and Broomsticks
MONIKA BEHRENS
AND ROCHELLE HALEY

Image: Monika Behrens & Rochelle Haley, Witch's Hammer, watercolour on paper, 38 x 57cm, 2011
Mop Projects is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.



Queen Street Studio



WELCOME:

Showcases the four honours graduates selected for the **Queen Street Studio** Residency Award. This exhibition will be featured during Sydney Art Month.

Madelaine Cruise
Daniel Hollier
Anna John
Jaqueline Larcombe

WHEN: March 19 – 27, 2011

OPENING: Saturday 19 March, 2-5pm
in conjunction with Art Month Tour

ARCHIVE:

Runway is a Sydney-based contemporary art magazine that provides a platform for early-career artists and writers, and promotes critical dialogue within the local art community. Many of the artists who have had a residency at FraserStudio Projects over the last three years have also appeared in Runway and this exhibition celebrates this connection.

WHEN: July 16 – 24, 2011

OPENING: Saturday 16 July, 2-5pm

THE END:

Artists who were awarded six-month residencies and have gone on to work on major projects will respond to the idea of THE END. How does the end of this building change the immediate landscape – what will happen next?

Agatha Gothe-Snape
Brown Council
Mitch Cairns

WHEN: November 2011 – stay tuned!

Visual Arts Program 2011

Current Queen Street Studio Roller Door Commission 2011
Nick Boerma

Call for FINAL round of FREE studio space at the FraserStudio Project:

» queenstreetstudio.com/vis-arts-residency.html

APPLICATIONS OPEN: 21 February, 2011

APPLICATIONS CLOSE: 11 April, 2011

NOTIFIED: 22 April, 2011

First residency program start date:

20 May, 2011 – 15 August, 2011

Second residency program start date:

19 August, 2011 – 14 November, 2011

Emerging artist 6-month residency start date:

20 May, 2011 – 14 November, 2011

Studio 12 — Exhibition space:

For further information about submitting an exhibition proposal

» queenstreetstudio.com/studio12.html

Media enquiries:

» julia@queenstreetstudio.com

queenstreetstudio.com

2012 samstag

applications close
30 June 2011

www.unisa.edu.au/samstag

08 8302 0865



samstag

New @ **NAVA** ARTIST INSURANCE

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP \$230
PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

CERTIFIED MEMBERSHIP \$100
JUMP THE QUEUE AT MAJOR INTERNATIONAL MUSEUMS

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP \$60
MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

for more information visit www.visualarts.net.au

NAVA
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR THE VISUAL ARTS LTD

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
NSW Visual Artist International Residency Opportunity
Darling Foundry, Montréal

Closing Date: Thursday 12 May, 5pm



View from Darling Foundry Studio. Courtesy Mark Brown, 2010 recipient.

Artspace in partnership with the New South Wales Government through Arts NSW and Canada Council for the Arts is delighted to invite applications from New South Wales visual artists for a fully funded three-month residency at the Darling Foundry, Montréal, Canada.

The Darling Foundry is an alternative visual arts complex. Comprising artist workspaces, residency studios, technical workshops, gallery spaces, a restaurant and offices it provides various opportunities for research, creation, production, and exhibition. The successful applicant will be provided with a return airfare to Montréal, residential studio accommodation within the Darling Foundry, a living allowance and support towards production costs. The residency will take place October – December 2011.

Applications are invited from professional visual artists resident in New South Wales and working in any medium.

Application form and guidelines: www.artspace.org.au/residency_international



ARTSPACE

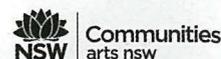
43-51 Cowper Wharf Road
Woolloomooloo NSW 2011
Sydney Australia
www.artspace.org.au

T +61 2 9356 0555
artspace@artspace.org.au
Office 10am-6pm, Mon-Fri
Gallery 11am-5pm, Tues-Sun

ARTSPACE is supported by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

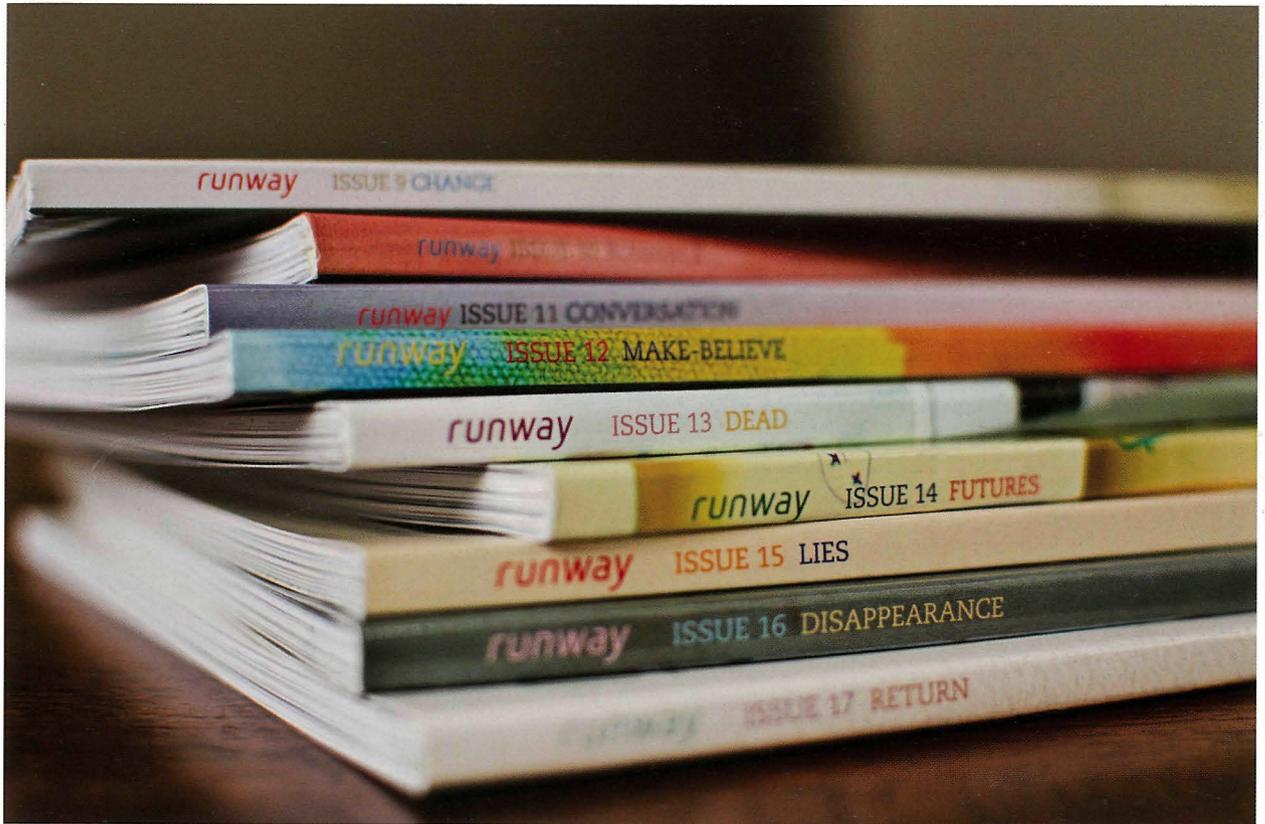


ARTSPACE is assisted by the New South Wales Government through Arts NSW and by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



ARTSPACE is a member of CAOs (Contemporary Art Organisations Australia) and Res Artis (International Association of Residential Art Centres).





www.runway.org.au

COMEDY

J2
15

12
6



ISSN 14488000



18

9 771448 800002