

THIS CONTENT

PORTRAYING RACIST

IMAGERY HAS BEEN

REDACTED BY REQUEST OF

THE ARTIST ON

13 JULY 2020.

runway

Winter 2010

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Cover (front): Liam Benson, *Glitterface* (detail), 2010, digital print. Assisted by Naomi Oliver.

Cover (back): Liam Benson, *Jail Mate*, 2010, digital print. Assisted by Naomi Oliver.

Facing page: Liam Benson, *Lady Southern Cross*, 2010, digital print. Assisted by Naomi Oliver.

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Editorial

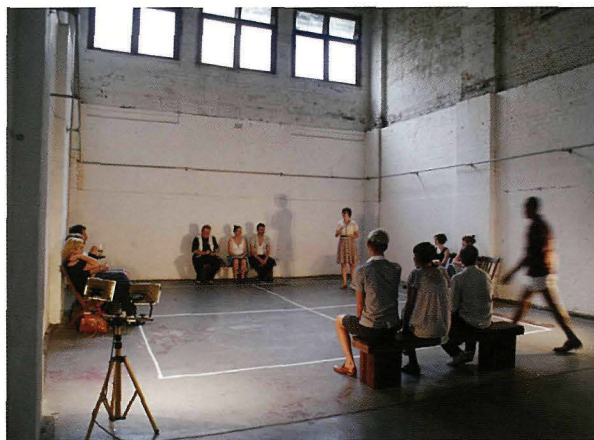
ANNEKE JASPERS

As we were preparing this issue, the MoMA in New York was staging a major solo retrospective of the practice of Marina Abramović, *The Artist Is Present*, which brought performance documentation together with a new commission and live re-enactments of historical works by other performers within the gallery. This exhibition seems the ultimate testament to the re-emergence of performance as a medium with particular currency for our time, and equally, to the continuing relevance of dialogues addressing the different registers of experience pertaining to ephemeral work: work that appears, and disappears, and reappears in various guises.

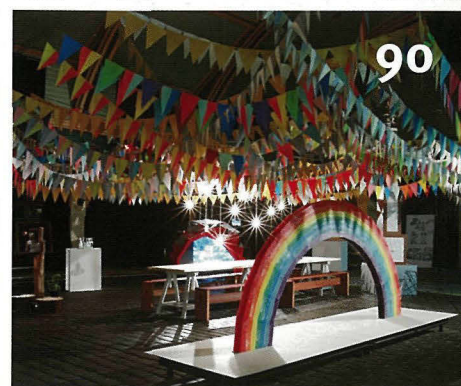
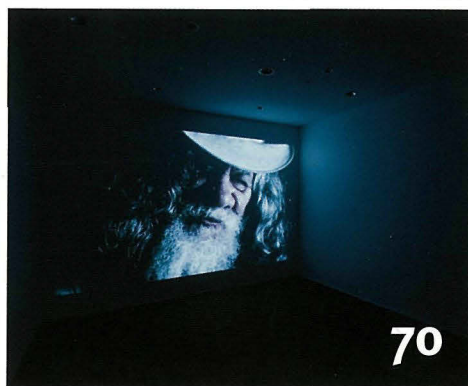
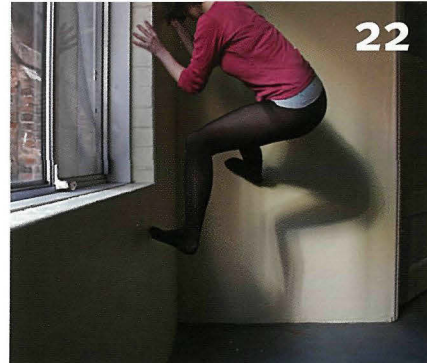
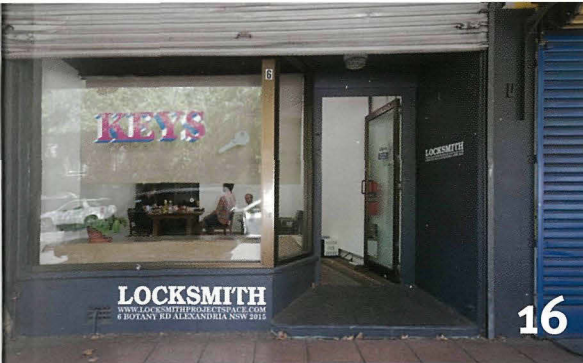
It's perhaps not surprising, then, that work of a performative nature features so heavily in this issue, themed Disappearance. In itself this highlights the particular relationship of temporal, embodied practices to the printed document—image or text—that Eleanor Weber points to in her interview with artist Brian Fuata. Such tangible residues counter the disappearance of works from the realm of discourse. Of course, in the act of translation, essential information will always be lost, and *runway* has certainly grappled over time with questions of how to represent ephemeral practices in fitting ways.

Perhaps it's also a sign, though, of how embedded these acts of translation have become in contemporary practice, that much of the performative work addressed in these pages is not concerned with 'disappearance' in relation to its own material presence. A range of other themes come into focus. Daniel Mudie Cunningham addresses the identity politics underpinning Liam Benson's work, which features on our cover. Talia Linz's essay picks up this thread, considering a feminist agenda in the work of a number of young female artists. Tanya Peterson analyses the gesture of mimicry and the logic of production in Emma White's practice.

In our artist page-works section, the collaboration between photographer Gary Trinh and writers Tom Melick and Ivan Ruhle is informed by experiential research of urban space. Likewise, in her review of a participatory project by Jess Olivieri and Hayley Forward, Sarah Rodigari considers the relationship of individual behaviour to broader public contexts. As is apt for a magazine dedicated to the practices of early-career and experimental artists, we also bring you several perspectives on this year's Next Wave Festival in Melbourne. The Festival has long been known for its support of progressive performance practices, but in its 2010 program, live and participatory projects were especially prominent. Notwithstanding Next Wave's commitment to providing a platform for innovative and challenging work, this undoubtedly reflects a broader trend towards engaging with these forms of expression, by artists and institutions alike.



Above: Brian Fuata with Sarah Rodigari, *WRONG SOLO*, 2010, performance.
Photo: Jess Olivieri.



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Image: John A Douglas, *Strange Land: The Miner*, 2010, single channel HD video, production still.

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Liam Benson: Drag Race Riot

DANIEL MUDIE CUNNINGHAM

In the hilarious short story *Suitmation*, Australian-Chinese author Tom Cho describes Godzilla as an example of ‘suitmation’ – ‘a special effects technique that involves the use of an actor in a costumed suit’.¹ Cho describes with bizarre matter-of-factness how in recent times, suitmation evolved beyond the film industry to the everyday consumer with the invention of sophisticated suits depicting humans rather than monsters. Written as a fictional ‘memoir’, Cho chose a Suzi Quatro suit to wear when he was young, while his Uncle Wang’s favourite suit resembled Tony Danza. ‘In fact, Uncle Wang once confided to me that he likes to look at himself in the bathroom mirror and say to his reflection: “Hey! Aren’t you that guy who was in that show *Who’s the Boss?*”’ Even Cho’s grandmother is a suitmation fan, opting for an Olivia Newton-John suit because the singer has ‘timeless appeal’.²

Liam Benson is a master of suitmation. Through artworks that incorporate performance, video and photography, Benson morphs between personas and characters, with his own likeable self disappearing, replaced by a galaxy of other likeable selves. Like Cho, whose writings critique the over-identification of western pop/celebrity culture figures through rampant fandom, Benson’s images mish-mash contemporary Australian attitudes towards gender, race and nationality with great affection and pride. Cho writes: ‘As much as I like suitmation, I have come to realise that I have mixed feelings about its popularity. These days, everyone wears suits; everyone is a celebrity’.³

A key point of difference between the kinds of suitmation deployed by both Cho and Benson is how ‘difference’ is done, or ‘undone’ as the case may be. Cho’s thematically linked

Above: Liam Benson, *At Last*, 2010, video still.



stories—collected in the book *Look Who's Morphing* (2009) and partially adapted into the documentary *Mind* (2010) by Melbourne filmmaker Emma Crimmings—insert his real Chinese family members and friends into a universe populated by celebrities and familiar Hollywood plot lines, most of them white. Cho's Chineseness however, is no barrier to becoming Suzi Quatro. Similarly, Benson's whiteness is no barrier to becoming Beyoncé: if you can imagine a suitmation Beyoncé, costumed in a suitmation Nicole Kidman as colonial Lady Sarah Ashley in Baz Luhrmann's *Australia* (2008), costumed in suitmation *Hey Hey it's Saturday* blackface ... live on a stage somewhere in Newcastle, NSW.

During an artist residency at Newcastle's Lock-Up Cultural Centre in March 2010, Benson devised a new video work called *At Last* (2010) and related photo works *Glitterface* and *Lady Southern Cross*. Garbed in colonial drag, Southern Cross hairpiece and glitter-caked blackface, his overstated performance of colonial Australian-meets-African American femininity wages a taut power

struggle with the brute colonial prison architecture (the Lock-Up was Newcastle Police Station from 1861 until its closure in 1982). It's almost a cliché to fetishise these spaces; Cockatoo Island, Newington Armory, Carriageworks, Casula Powerhouse and others are all examples of relics from an Australian past repurposed for cultural activity in a postcolonial present. For Benson, the jail cell is a site of redemption, a metaphor for change despite the fact that criminality in colonial times was often defined unjustly. Benson's character is imprisoned and we don't know why—surely this classy dame didn't steal a loaf of white bread? It's more likely her prison is cultural difference itself, or its inability to be defined or fixed in concrete terms.

Benson's character sings Mack Gordon and Harry Warren's classic 1941 song *At Last*, made famous when African American chanteuse Etta James covered it in 1960 (for the 7 inch single James wore a fetching blonde wig). More recently, Beyoncé—with whom Benson shares an affinity based on unabashed fandom—performed

Above: Liam Benson, *True Blue*, 2009, video still.

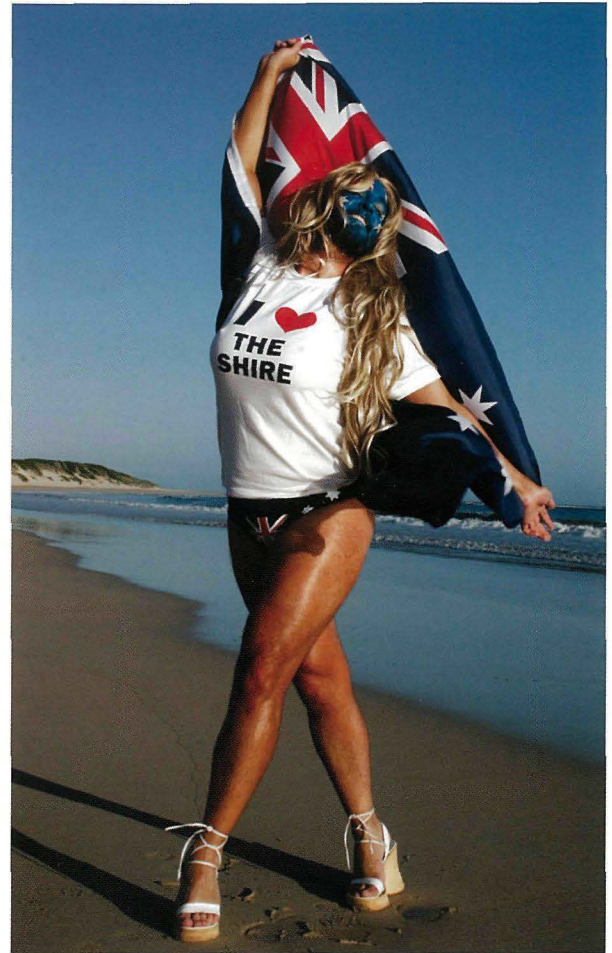
Facing page (above left): Liam Benson, *I BELIEVE IN YOU*, 2007, video still.

Facing page (below left): Pitt Bull and 50 Centsia (George Tillianakis and Liam Benson) performed at the opening of *Satellite of Love*, 2005 Phatspace Sydney.

Facing page (right): Liam Benson, *I LOVE THE SHIRE*, 2007, postcard. Assisted by Anastasia Zaravinos.



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At Last while Barack Obama and wife Michelle danced their first dance after his inauguration as President of the United States. In Benson's performance of the song, cross-cultural symbols of racial and class based oppression are remixed via popular culture: he becomes a white colonial woman wearing a black mask, which in itself references an oppressive representational history of 'blackface'. Cultural critic Eric Lott writes, 'The black mask offered a way to play with the collective fears of a degraded and threatening—and male—Other while at the same time maintaining some symbolic control over them'.⁴ If, as Lott points out, blackface has a particularly male-dominated history, it's interesting that Benson's performance of gender intersects with a form of minstrelsy where race becomes a crass type of drag. Benson circuitously performs as a white Australian man becoming a black African American woman in Australian colonial drag and compulsory glitter.

Benson utilises blackface to critique its embedded history of unconscious racism. What his work reveals is how the aesthetic technologies of race and gender help shape certain ideological blindspots regarding how we see and don't see race and gender. In Benson's *At Last*, the scene is lit in a way that deliberately recalls the 'problem' of lighting in relation to race. In his book

White, Richard Dyer analyses the racial character of aesthetic technologies 'to argue that photography and cinema, as media of light, at the very least lend themselves to privileging white people'.⁵ Light absorbs and reflects differently for white people than it does for black people, points out Dyer, giving racial whiteness a special affinity with light. What happens in *At Last* is that the 'blackness' of Benson's face loses definition, however illusory, monstrous and unreal his darkened 'skin colour' may be. Interestingly, the song lyrics of *At Last* mix metaphors of light and dark, day and night: 'Skies above are blue ... The night I looked at you ...'

Benson's practice also calls to mind that recent sensational example of blackface in Australia, when in October 2009, a group called the Jackson Jive performed on TV show *Hey Hey it's Saturday*. In the sketch, a Michael Jackson clone performs in exaggerated 'whiteface' while an imitation Jackson Five in blackface perform as backup dancers. Exactly 20 years earlier the same group performed on the program, the key difference being the 'Michael Jackson' character was darker to reflect how his African American racial identity, at that time, was uncontested, seemingly unconstructed. *Hey Hey's* American guest judge Harry Connick Jr. criticised the sketch and a media furore erupted soon

thereafter with local performers like Kamahl—who has endured similar racial taunts on the show over time—echoing Connick's refrain.

While no overt Indigenous references appear alongside the colonial and African American signifiers in Benson's version of blackface, one can't help be reminded how Australians have a similarly appalling way of treating Aboriginals. Joy Behar and Whoopi Goldberg, two panelists on American talk show *The View*, when discussing the *Hey Hey* sketch, highlighted the parallels between the mistreatment/misrepresentation of African Americans and Australian Aboriginals. Behar pointed out that such performances of blackface are taboo because America is a 'post-racial' society that 'is trying to grow as a country' now that Obama is in office. Interestingly, Benson performed African American blackface in an Indigenous context five years before making *At Last*. For his exhibition at Stills Gallery in 2005, Aboriginal artist Brook Andrew invited Benson and George Tillianakis to perform their collaborative blackface performance duo Pitt Bull and 50 Centsia at the opening party of his solo show *Hope & Peace*. The media release for Andrew's exhibition describes his work as 'using a mix of traditional Wiradjuri designs, consumer icons and a portrait of Anthony Mundine' to suggest 'the complexity of issues surrounding propaganda, racism, addiction and celebrity'. Benson and Tillianakis's ironic performance bears no resemblance to Wiradjuri culture, but certainly relates to the broader themes Andrew's work addresses.

In their performance at Stills Gallery, Benson and Tillianakis were seen pumping and grinding a dance routine to Missy Elliott's *Let Me Fix My Weave* in high heels and black tights with hyperbolically extenuated butt, groin, wig and blackface. Missy Elliott's sexed up gangsta lyrics were lip-synced with fury, as their 'tribal' dance moves parodied the kind of 'bootylicious' body combat seen in, say, Aphex Twin's *Windowlicker* music video or countless Beyoncé video clips. Their hilarious performance served up African American racist stereotypes at a celebrated Aboriginal artist's gallery opening, effectively undermining cross-cultural identity politics through celebrity and pop. As I'm sure Andrew might have anticipated, their performance offended some Aboriginal folks present, with Benson and Tillianakis later receiving a stern letter of complaint from a representative of the Australia Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts board, even though their performance only referenced Indigenous culture by implication (being hosted by Andrew and staged in front of his work). In their reply to the Australia Council rep, the artists defended their performance as one that engaged with a form of 'cultural envy' that is transacted when pop culture inspires whites to 'do' black.

Benson's other recent works also engage with race, gender and national identity though, for the most part, his pop culture fuelled responses to these tropes are played out in the context of Australian suburbia. *True Blue* (2009) is a video portrait of the artist at home in the suburbs, singing the titular John Williamson song to camera. Benson begins the performance partially shrouded by a hood, which is ceremoniously removed as he ties his long hair up with an Australian coat of arms. Like a YouTube video or reality TV confessional, the experience of watching Benson sing to camera in a broad Australian accent feels voyeuristic and uncomfortable, yet oddly compelling as we witness the artist laying bare his soul to conspicuous patriotism. The heartfelt and emotionally charged manner in which he

performs the song undermines the machismo that typically accompanies public displays of rampant nationalism.

True Blue recalls Benson's earlier work *I Believe in You* (2007) that responded to the Cronulla riots of December 2005. Benson sings the Kylie Minogue song of the same name to camera with the words 'I believe in you' painted in green glitter across his chest to mimic the tattooed 'My Brother's Keeper' mantra of the Bra Boys. By drawing on celebrated icons of gay culture in the context of straight male tribalism, Benson counters the violent territorialism often associated with Australian national pride. Such affection and sincerity is expressed during the song that it becomes devoid of the kind of camp posturing often associated with gay culture. *I Believe in You* aptly sums up Benson's practice, in that irony is used along with empathy and compassion to buck, or gently genderfuck, cultural systems and identity categorisations inherently based on marginalisation and exclusion. As he croons Kylie's song, Benson becomes an endearing suitmation Christ-like figure, telling us no matter how far his detractors transgress, he loves and believes in them no matter what.

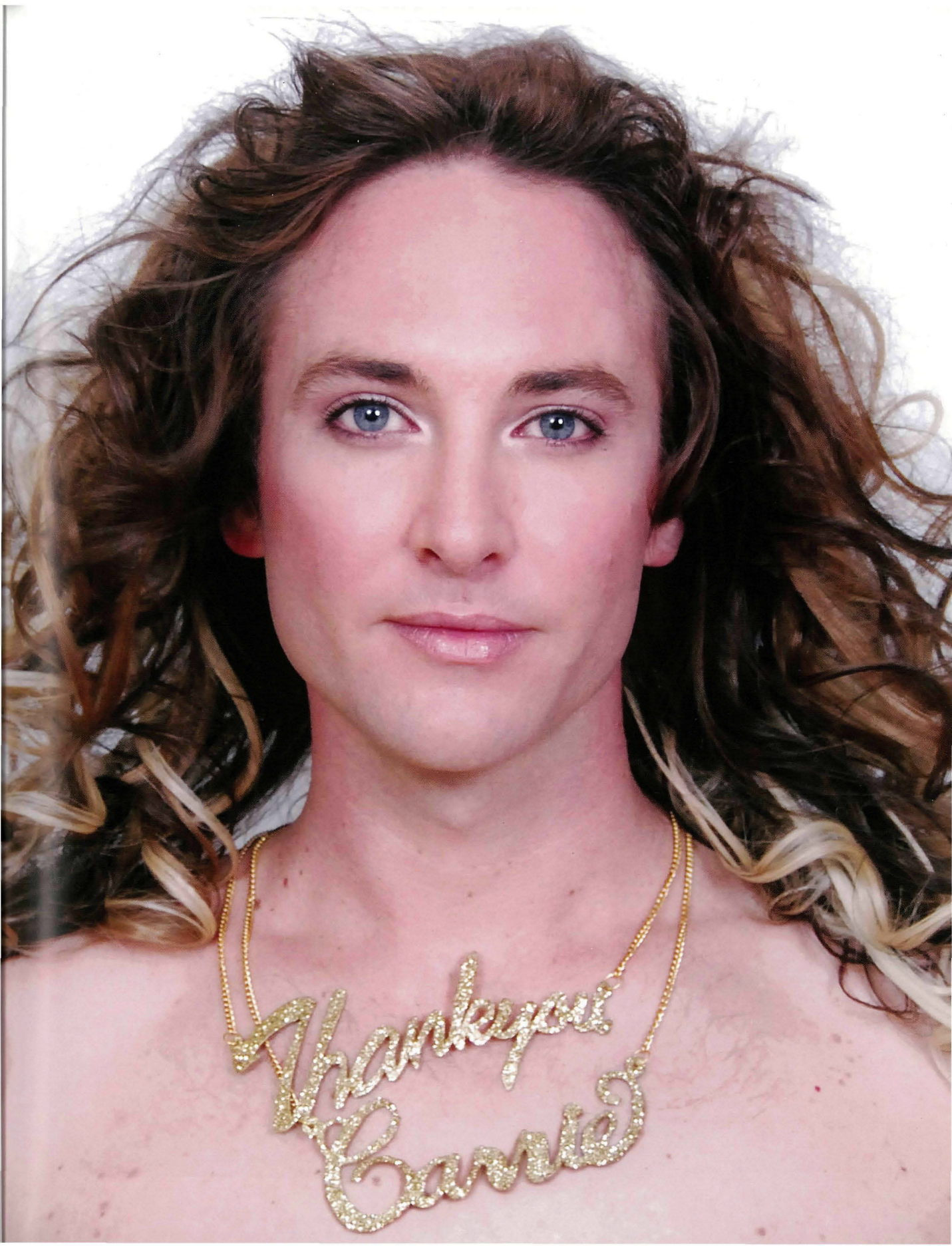
1. Tom Cho, 'Suitmation' in *Look Who's Morphing* (Sydney: Giramondo Publishing, 2009) 11.

2. *ibid*, p.13.

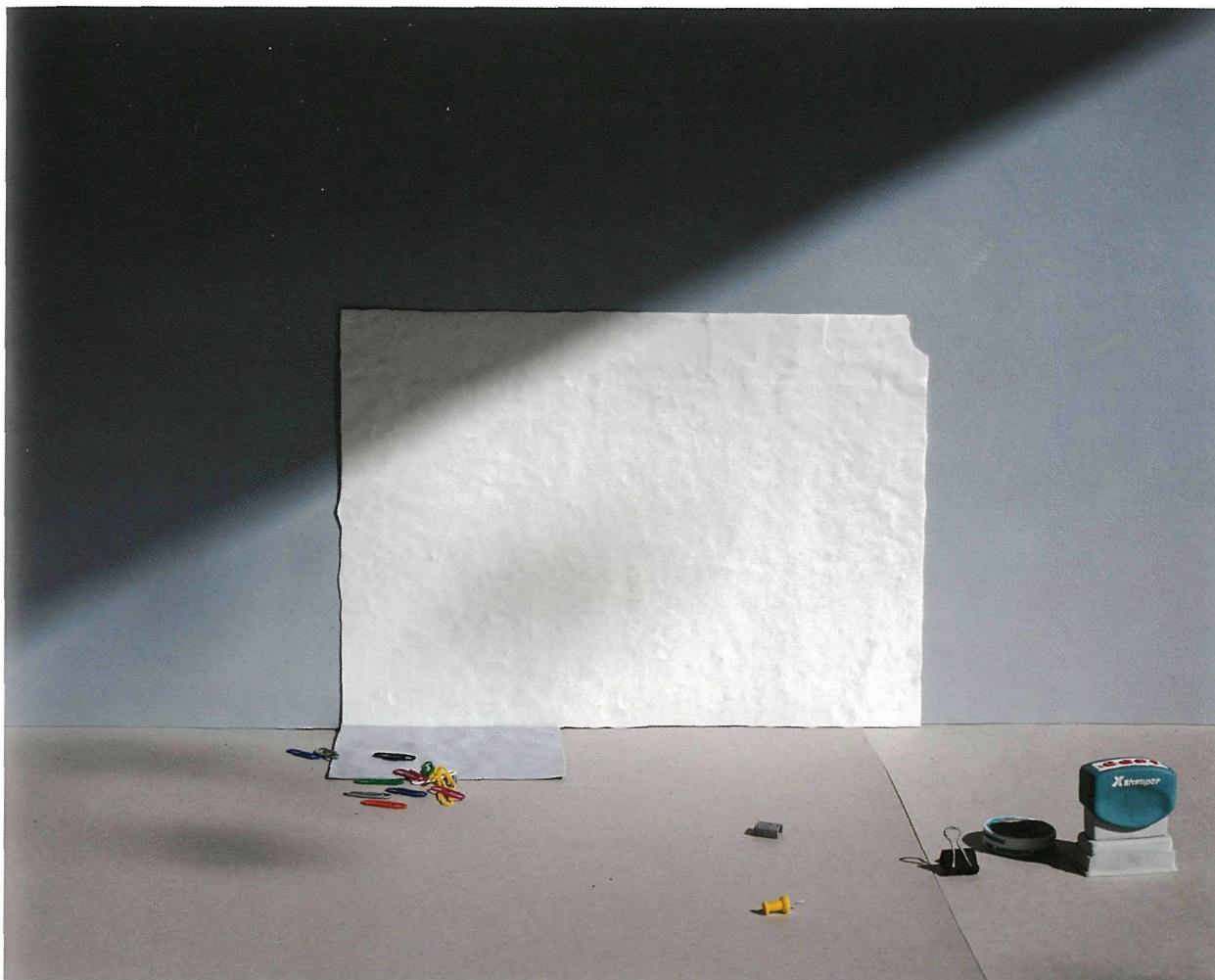
3. *ibid*, p.13.

4. Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) 25.

5. Richard Dyer, *White*. (London and New York: Routledge, 1997) 83.







Studies in (Dis)appearance

TANYA PETERSON

VANISHING ACTS

Standing in the electrical/disinfectant/pet food aisle at the supermarket, I try to figure out which lightbulb to buy. There are new model globes next to an assortment of semi-new types, which have replaced the old incandescents. Some are eco-savers, some are energy savers with a dimmer option, and some are leftover miniature versions of the old ones that no one really buys. The boxes show wattage conversions that describe the new energy-to-illumination ratios in comparison with the old standards: 8w = 40w, 11w = 60w, and 53w = 75w. The word 'classic' is featured a lot. And everything is marketed as value-added.

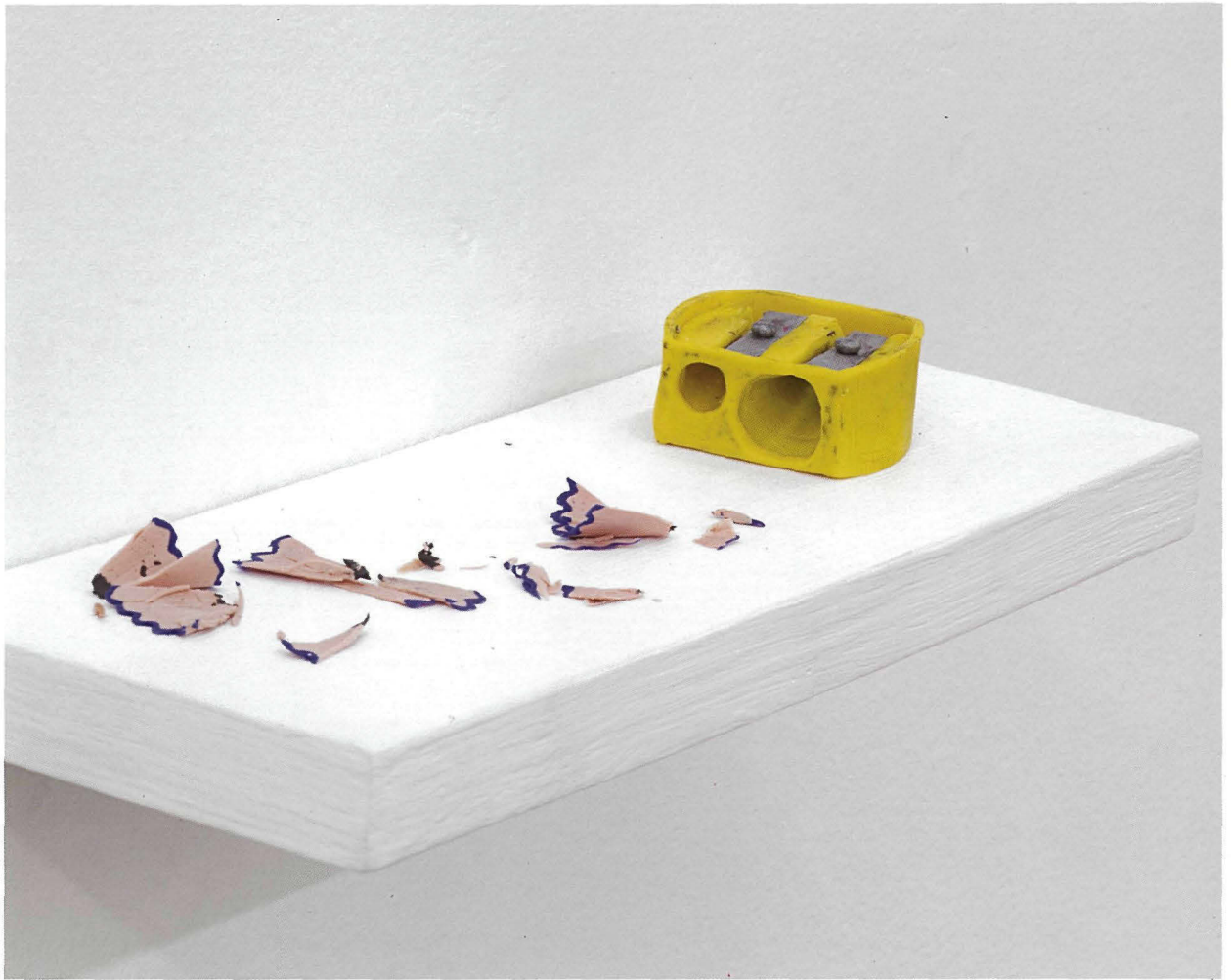
A man stands next to me, equally absorbed in the task of deliberation. As we each silently weigh up our options, a woman, perhaps his wife, walks up to the man with a box of toothpaste and presents it to him. He takes the box and looks at it. He's confused, 'Is it normal? I just want normal'. She's annoyed at the question, as if he should have already figured it out. 'There is no more normal', she says. I know what she means.

...

Emma White makes everyday objects that play on this type of confusion. Primarily modelled in polymer clay, she creates one-to-one sculptures of ordinary office objects and associated

Facing page: Emma White, *Epiphany (burnt out)* (detail), 2009, polymer clay, venetian blind cord. Photo: the artist.

Above: Emma White, *Study (white rectangle)*, 2009, c-type photograph.



ephemera, such as pencil sharpeners, marker pens, Post-it notes, take-away coffee cups and Blu-tak. Her objects reflect the normality of the world back to us in a heightened state of existence. They are fragile yet enduring. Their 'soft' camouflage and near verisimilitude to stationery items normally found in offices, means they are often mistaken for their 'real world' counterparts. Upon first glance, their administrative likeness defines them as either utilitarian objects—reminders of jobs that are incomplete and in need of further attention (*Installation*, 2008)—or remnants of artistic labour recently undertaken (*Pin and construction of a maquette for a pin*, 2009).

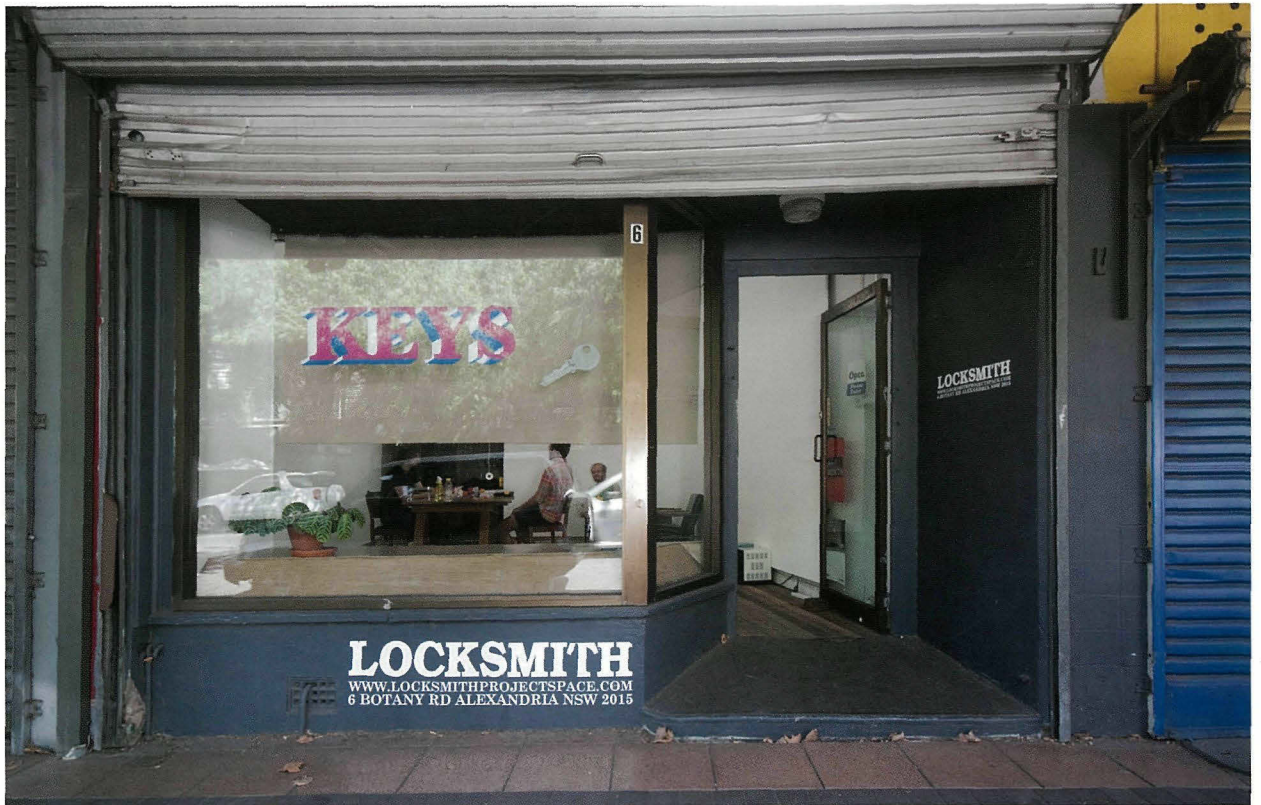
Soliciting double-takes from their spectators, White's uncanny objects occupy an odd place in time. Their near perfect mimicry gives them an eerie prototypical presence. However, this suggestion of preliminary design is played off against a host of simulated scuff marks, creases and rips in the works' surfaces, with deliberate attention to the fatalities of time and aged usage. It makes the objects appear simultaneously new and old, at once useful and useless.

In a group show at Breenspace in 2010, one of White's works, *Artefact* (2009), highlighted these concerns. Shown on a small, free-standing shelf, it was an inconspicuous sculpture of a worn, yellow pencil sharpener. Modelled pencil shavings sat next to it, implying a contradictory logic in terms of its status as an archeological remnant (a relic in relation to the often prophesied 'paperless' office) and a working object of recent use. Overall, it made for a deliberately imprecise still-life, where mortality lurked amongst the minutiae of an ordinary existence, like a distant threat.

In a strange looping of time, White also showed photographic 'studies' of some of her polymer clay sculptures. The warped logic of this action, where the sculptural copy was copied again as a sketch or draft, created a sense of time folding back upon itself. With their analogous relationship to the everyday, the photographs took on the 'soft' characteristics of her objects, creating an ambiguous causal tension between the two forms of work. Together they simultaneously confirmed the world's appearance and disappearance. By omitting the 'original' object

Above: Emma White, *Artefact*, 209, polymer clay. Photo: Jamie North.
Facing page: Emma White, *Installation* (detail), 2008, polymer clay. Photo: the artist.





from the semiotic equation, they staged reality as an elegant tautology, but with the feeling that there was something missing. The sum of the parts didn't quite make a whole and we were purposely left with something resembling a beginning and an end, cycling around an indefinite absence.

THE CREATIVE ACT

*To begin... To begin... How to start? I'm hungry. I should get coffee. Coffee would help me think. Maybe I should write something first, then reward myself with coffee. Coffee and a muffin. Okay, so I need to establish the themes. Maybe a banana-nut. That's a good muffin.*¹

Epiphany (burnt out) (2009), from White's show, *Blank Media* at MOP gallery, showed the spark of inspiration literally at the point of exhaustion. The work consisted of a scale model of a burnt out lightbulb made from polymer clay. When installed, it was designed to dangle from the ceiling above the viewer's head like the cartoon sign of a bright idea gone cold. However, the symbolic endpoint also functioned as the moment of inspiration and the trigger for the work's conceptual proposition. It recalled a possible riff on the 'lightbulb' joke, as in: 'How many artists does it take to change a lightbulb?' Google's most popular answer says, 'Two. One to change it and one to say they had the idea first'. Boom boom. It's an old joke with contemporary resonances, since the myth of originality and techné are still enduring modernist tropes used to determine the aesthetic criteria and market value of contemporary art.²

White's work contemplates this myth and the act of creativity as a dialectical exchange between productive and redundant gestures, while also moving beyond this logic. It holds the pathetic fallacy of objects up as mirrors to the life and fate of our own existence within the global economic market. The result is work that appears to inhabit both ends of the production line in a manufacturing cycle of before and after. From concept to commodity and back again, works such as *Epiphany* quote the paradox of consumption—the enduring permanence of expiration.

At Locksmith Project Space, in her most recent exhibition to date, White shifted the emphasis of the 'creative act' (apropos Duchamp) from product to production more explicitly.³ Taking her cue from the gallery's moniker, she literally set up shop offering to make, bake and gift copies of keys to gallery visitors who had time to wait for polymer clay duplicates to be made. Titled *While You Wait* (2010), the show consisted of: a waiting-room styled area with chairs and a stack of magazines on a table, where visitors were invited to make themselves comfortable; a large work bench with a stock of coloured polymer clay, where White worked in-situ; and a number of White's trompe l'oeil sculptures, discreetly integrated into the gallery-cum-shopfront.

The performative aspect of the work primarily began when the gallery visitor gave White the key they wanted copied. From this point onwards the production of the work unfolded as a collaborative endurance event, with the process of producing a single key taking anywhere from one to three hours. For those who elected to wait for a copy of their key, the extended duration of the activity gave rise to three main outcomes: the intimacy of a conversational dialogue, the production of art as a shared form

of labour, and its reception as a collective experience. The range of chit-chat, conversational pauses, moments of distraction and fascination, and awkward silences exchanged during the period of making and waiting, served to draw attention to the work of art as something that develops *through* time. By making the artwork's construction visible in real-time and positioning it as a mode of dialogical exchange, White drew attention to the creative act as part of a larger network of socio-political and economic interactions connected to the public sphere.

The self-reflexive nature of White's overarching premise and her use of the exhibition as a place of artistic and ideological exposure links her practice to the historical legacy of Institutional Critique. It also aligns it with a contemporary re-reading of this polemic in relation to Nicholas Bourriaud's concept of the gallery as a 'post-production' site. However, White's work does not sit too comfortably within Bourriaud's conceptual framework, which explores the notion of exhibitions as 'no longer the end of a process' and instead places of active participation 'imbricated within a global mechanism' of exchange.⁴

The proliferational mode of collaboration did not come across as open-ended in *While You Wait*. The blurring of art and life in White's work concluded when the portable oven magically 'pinged', signalling the work was finished, and the performance over, with the separation between artist/author and audience once again reinstated. The visitor's original key was given back, they received their copy and the transaction was complete, or so it seemed. However, what the visitor acquired was less a new copy of key or artwork than a byproduct of time. Placed back alongside its referent, each sculpted key stood as testament to time spent and a memento mori of the inevitable failure of the original's utility.

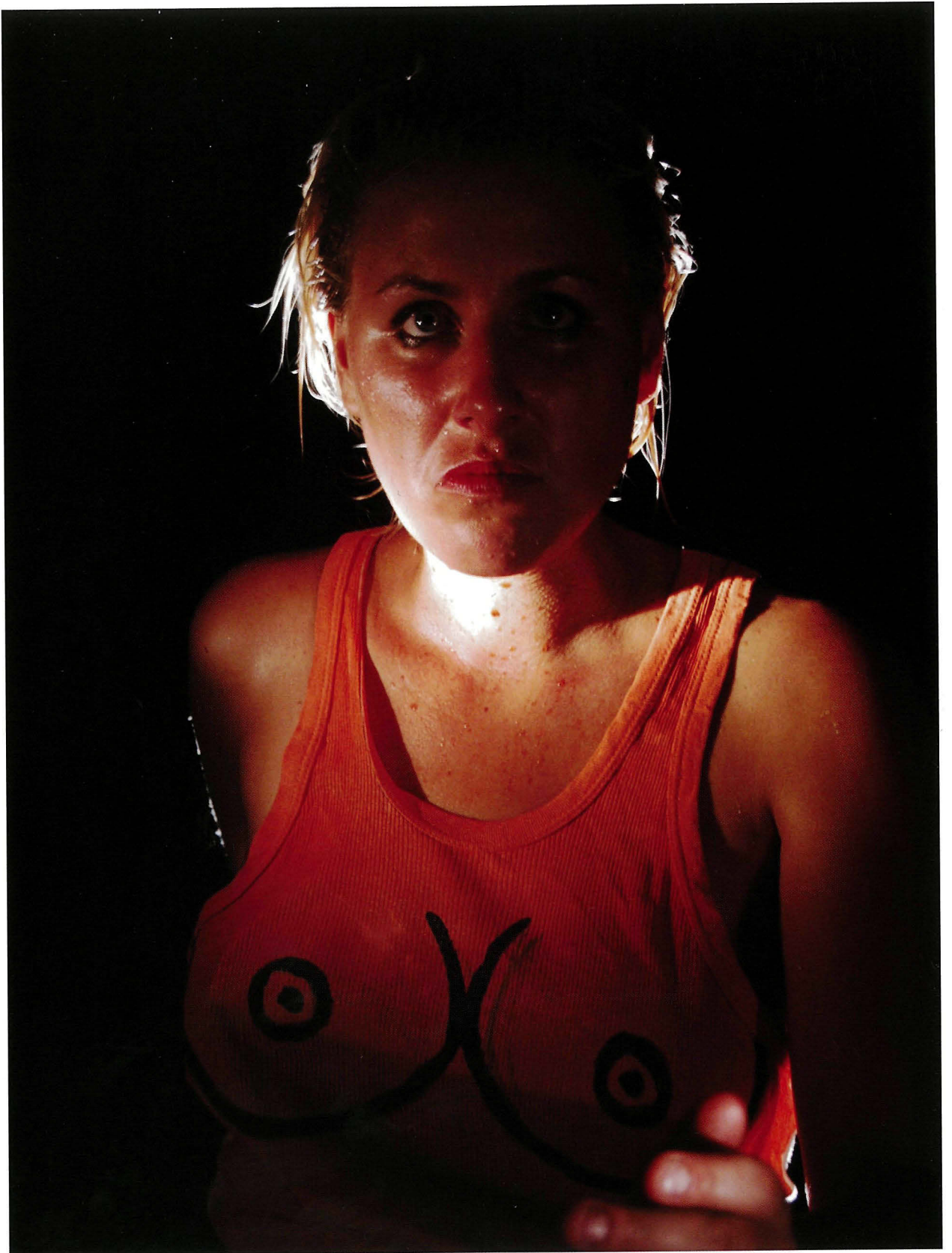
As both the remnant of an event and a reminder of things to come, the alchemy of White's work produces a fleeting eternity. Her copies of copies are things you want to touch to confirm the reality of their likeness. And yet like all good illusions, we know the minute we get too close the magic will vanish and everything will become normal again.

1. Charlie Kaufman (Nicholas Cage) voiceover from *Adaptation*, directed by Spike Jonze, 2002.

2. For a local example of this discourse, *Broadsheet's* recent commentaries on contemporary art journals and their relationship to the art market offer an interesting take on the current conceptual economies of Australian art and the role of the artist as genius. See: Richard Grayson, Eva McGovern, Charles Green (et al), 'Critical or Congratulatory', *Broadsheet*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 2010, 18–23.

3. Marcel Duchamp, 'The Creative Act', *Salt Seller: The Essential Writings of Marcel Duchamp* (ed. Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson, London: Thames & Hudson, 1975) 138–40.

4. Nicholas Bourriaud, *Postproduction* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2005) 69–71.



Ways of Doing: T&A and the F-ing Gaze

TALIA LINZ

Cunt: A Declaration of Independence; A Bust Guide; Perilous Chastity; Beyond Burning Bra; It's Time for Action (There's No Option); Wet ... I'm scanning literary options for an entry point into contemporary feminist art. Like feminism itself – the word, the concept, the movement/s—there is no defining authority, no clear way forward.

With its layered past and fractured future, feminism seems to expand at an exponential rate, and yet one of history's ironic cruelties has been its mainstream absorption and subsequent dilution. The feminism formulated in the 1960s and 1970s was a political force appealing to the masses for dissent and change. Today it is a niche product commodified and marketed, or a dirty word met with eye rolls that say, *here we go again ...* The success of feminism is cited as the burden of proof for why women can disavow the movement or be apathetic towards (dare I say, even repulsed by) the claim of being a feminist. Feminist and post-feminist theory along with gender studies have been thoroughly institutionalised; now presiding in the realms of academia they are devoid of militancy, stripped of any real political force. We may talk Irigaray and De Beauvoir in our lecture halls but we come home to Desperate Housewives and Girls Gone Wild: no wonder there is ongoing debate as to whether the aims of the women's movement and later waves of feminism have been achieved.

Needless to say, trying to define or grasp a sense of what feminism means in the contemporary western world is an infinitely problematic task. Depending on who you ask, feminist proponents can include Hilary Clinton and Lindsay Lohan, and with all this chatter about cougars and pole-dancing ten-year-olds who would dare suggest their definition is *the* definition. Feminism these days is non-prescriptive, and that is really the only common ground we can agree on. And the same can be said about feminist art. The very label is problematic. Of course, not all female artists produce feminist art just by virtue of their biology, and many male artists deal with issues that could come under a feminist umbrella. For some, feminist art is another label that marginalises women or groups them together in dangerous essentialist categories. All this without even starting on the notion of femininity.

So let's narrow the field somewhat and look collectively at the work of a group of young female artists in Australia working with similar media and across analogous thematic lines. On the tailcoats of the third-wave feminist movement these artists are engulfed in a world of options, multiple viewpoints and precarious identity and gender constructions. Their work is a curious mix of honesty, audacity, inquisitiveness and vulnerability as they explore the possibilities of a feminist agenda.

In their 2008 video work *Runaway*, Brown Council—a four-artist collective working in video and performance—explores the stereotypical female victim depicted in various mainstream film narratives and music videos. Members of the group take turns playing the fleeing victim (or is she the perpetrator?) running through the darkness in a slow-motion chase sequence complete with evocative soundtrack, simulated police lights and violently spurting artificial blood. As the music builds, the viewer wills her to push forward at increasing speed away from unseen danger. But her credibility soon dissipates when she rips off her t-shirt mid-run to reveal an orange singlet with the outline of breasts drawn on in thick black marker. No longer a brave and strong-willed escapee, 'she' (after all, this is no particular woman but rather every woman) is rendered comic-like, a clearly constructed character performing the role of 'scared woman with bouncing breasts'. Film theorist Laura Mulvey quotes director Budd Boetticher in her influential 1975 essay 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema':

What counts is what the heroine provokes, or rather what she represents. She is the one, or rather the love or fear she inspires in the hero, or else the concern he feels for her, who makes him act the way he does. In herself the woman has not the slightest importance.¹

Without being didactic Brown Council illuminates the semiotics of visual culture and performativity, inviting the viewer to share its in-jokes. In the eponymous *Milkshake* (2007), the collective dances to Kelis's infamous song, grinding and shimmying while they each drink a litre of milk. The work becomes increasingly silly and grotesque as the artists (wearing skeleton suits to boot) try to keep up with the fast-paced routine while trying to keep down the liquid. As the lyrics blast—I know you want it, *the thing that makes me, what the guys go crazy for ...*—any sexy or provocative intentions evoked by the hip-hop dance moves are undermined by burps and gag reflexes.

Various feminist artists have addressed the politics of representation and the construction of gender roles through social systems, especially through language. In works such as Barbara Kruger's (*Untitled*) *We have received orders not to move* (1982), and (*Untitled*) *Your body is a battleground* (1989), the female body is framed as the site of power struggles inherent to oppressive patriarchy. Male/masculine is the privileged centre to which female/feminine will always be the peripheral, the Other. However, it is clear in the work of Hannah Raisin and others such as Keira Brew Kurec and Jessie Angwin that 'The binaries—oppressor/victim, good woman/bad man, pure/impure, beautiful/ugly, active/passive—are not the point of feminist art today'.² The body is a kind of battleground for these artists, yet one with fluid opponents where many roles are there for the taking and the playing. Raisin extrapolates beautifully on this theme, becoming both victim and perpetrator in her often extreme video works. In *Green Grass* (2008), the artist lies on the ground in an astroturf bikini as an unknown man enters the shot, pulls down his underpants, urinates on her and then leaves. It's uncomfortable to watch (and no doubt to perform) but Raisin's giggling throughout sets her subjugation at bay. In *Body Theatre Mask* (2010), a baby octopus swims in Raisin's mouth, crawling in and slipping out in a slimy struggle that renders both artist and creature simultaneously powerful and powerless. In *Rose Garden* (2009), the artist—with an 'updo' and pearl earrings—proceeds to munch through a bouquet of red roses (that iconic image of the feminine, the beautiful, the desired), causing her to vomit and spew forth their blackened half-digested debris. Raisin highlights the sticking points of normative gender roles with creativity, humour and play.

Facing page: Brown Council, *Runaway*, 2008, video still.



Like Raisin's, Kiera Brew Kurec's work engenders visceral and emotional responses—revulsion, shock, laughter, disbelief. Her work addresses John Berger's (via Lacan) pivotal theorising of the gaze, of men looking and women watching themselves being looked at, which has been at the heart of feminist debate and art production since the 1970s. Brew Kurec's art involves very deliberate and controlled performative aspects that resist, challenge or play into the passivity inherent in traditional representations of femininity. Performing for video as well as enacting live durational performance, the artist undertakes simple body actions, continuing the tradition of feminist artists such as VALIE EXPORT, Carolee Schneeman, Marina Abramović and Hannah Wilke. In her words, she 'enforces' these actions on herself. For *Even Though It Hurt I Couldn't Cry* (2008), the artist chops a large pile of onions as tears stream and make-up drips, all the while addressing the camera with a blunt this-is-me stare. 'I have found it interesting that often my work would be labelled feminist' Brew Kurec says, '... and I would wonder why and answers I got varied from "because you're so aggressive in your work" to "because you're the victim in your work", to "because you're a female and you're working in performance and video". None of these answers seemed to answer anything, they just created more questions'.³ This sense of questioning is central to her practice and reinforces the interesting idea of *doing* rather than *being* feminist.⁴ Brew Kurec has termed her explorations 'a child-like meandering through the symbolic domain'.

Video (especially lo-fi) and performance art are immediately associated with feminist art because feminist artists pioneered these methods in a deliberate attempt to distance their work from the male-centred art world and its favoured materials. Working with these same techniques provides a direct link for and from these contemporary practitioners to their predecessors, which in turn highlights the ongoing currency of the genre. In our culture of obsessive self-documentation these artists speak the most relevant language by employing contemporary methods of representation; most of the works discussed here are freely available on artist blogs and YouTube. There is a curious element of personal ritual involved, yet certainly not the endless litany of grooming ceremonies prescribed to women in magazines, film and television. There is no fear of the unmade body, but instead a refreshing sense of discovery and a bare-all attitude as these artists test their physical and ideological limits, seemingly as much for their own curiosity, pleasure and disgust as that of the viewers'. And wonderfully, these works can be vulnerable and beautiful too without reinforcing essentialist notions of what it means to be a woman.

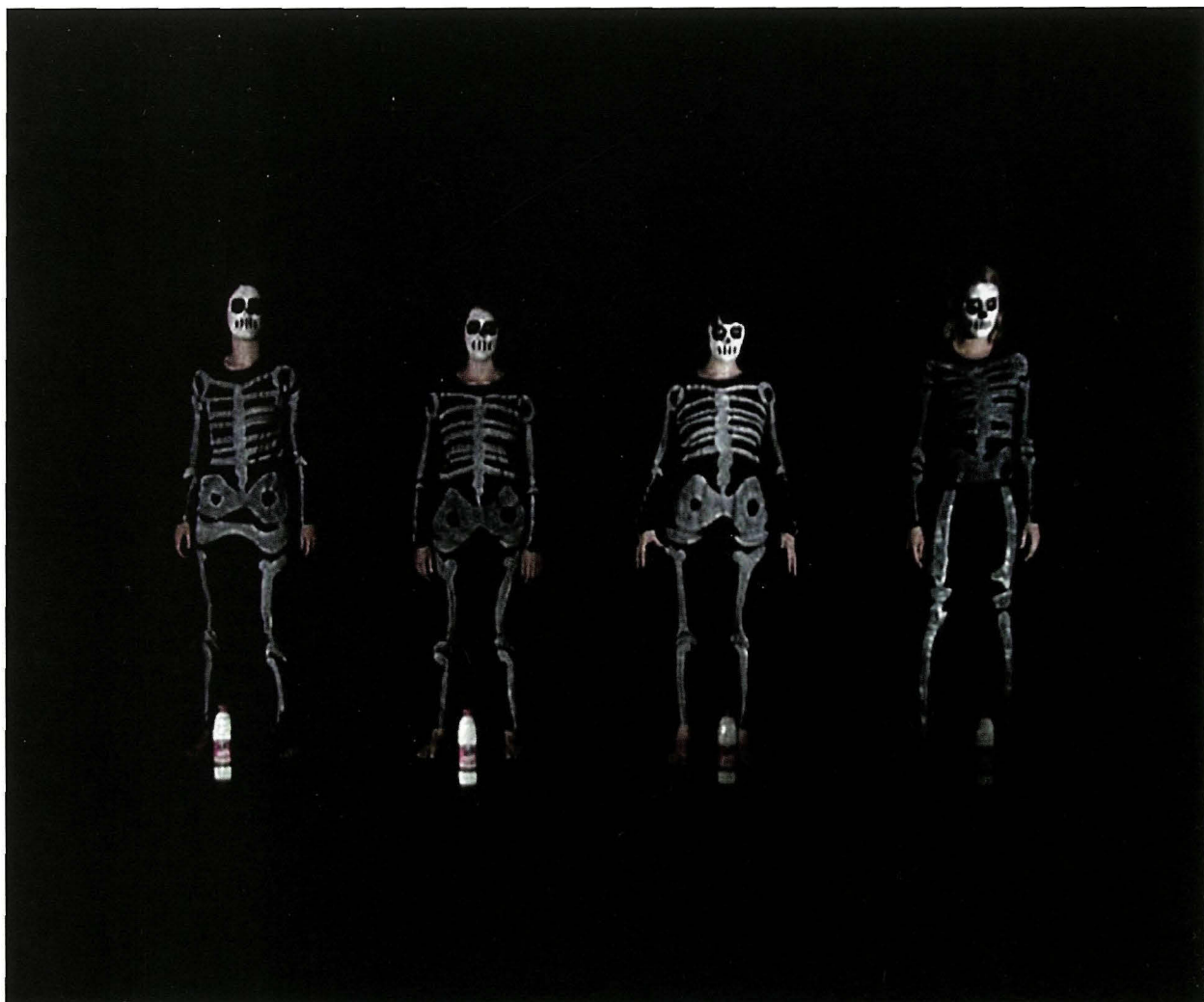
The female body has been a central artistic motif for many feminist artists, utilised in various ways to explore notions of power and gender stereotyping. One approach has been to adopt the modes of today's mainstream sexualised culture, whether it be advertising or pornography, in order to expose the normalisations of particular representations of women. This is not by any means a new phenomenon; sex worker, artist and self-proclaimed 'feminist porn activist' Annie Sprinkle was onto it more than thirty years ago. The rise of sex-positivity in the 1980s and raunch culture in the following decades has added more fuel to the fire, and while too involved a debate to go into here, equating the use and abuse of the body with empowerment obviously has its pros and cons. In Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces' 2007 forum *Feminism Never Happened* curator Emily Cormack commented: 'Women have reverted to using their bodies and not their brains to obtain their objectives. Can someone please tell me how the emblem for liberation shifted from hairy legs to waxed vaginas?'



Above (top): Hannah Raisin, *Body Theatre Mask*, 2010, video still.

Above (below): Jessie Angwin, *Female Chauvinist Pig*, 2006, video stills.

Facing page: Kiera Brew Kurec, *Even Though It Hurt I Couldn't Cry*, 2008, video still.



Jessie Angwin's work comments playfully on these ideas, showing the artist masturbating with Ariel Levy's oft-quoted 2005 text *Female Chauvinist Pigs*, or documenting (to the soundtrack of the Scissor Sisters' *I don't feel like dancing*) the shaving rash Angwin suffered after being asked by a younger female lover to shave off her pubic hair. Angwin's latest work *Freedom*, 2009-10, exhibited recently at Next Waves Festival's *The View From Here: 19 Perspectives on Feminism*, utilises a range of media including video, embroidery and an artist book. Here the artist juxtaposes two real-life events: a bad cycling accident and an affair she had with an involved man. Dedicated to 'a guilty conscience' the work recounts in honest and graphic detail their sexual exploits in the public toilet at a service station, alongside the bicycle accident, with the humble vehicle as a kind of metaphor for the suffrage movement and the liberation it promised women. For Angwin, documenting her experiences of sex, guilt and body-hatred is a way of exploring what these concepts may mean to other women, and between them. She expands on the often assumed phenomenon of 'sisterhood' (another feminist and feminist art polemic), seeing where, if anywhere, it may resonate.

One of the binding facets between these contemporary practitioners is the fact that the artist/s always figures large. At once author/subject/performer/filmmaker/photographer, they assert their agency and employ the(ir) body as the site of power negotiations. As Raisin states: 'Being in the work is really important. I always make work about things that challenge and confront me. I try to be honest and frank in a playful way'.⁵ There exists in these works a strong sense of the self-confessional, which can be at once satirical and earnest, honest yet transparently performative.

Although it is crucial that the artists themselves are their own subjects, these works are not self-portraits in any traditional sense. Stephen Palmer writes of photographer Clare Rae's work: 'The camera is not made to reveal some truth which lies in the features of the face, or the

Above: Brown Council, *Milkshake*, 2007, video still.

Facing page: Clare Rae, *Untitled* from *Climbing the Walls and Other Actions*, 2009, photograph.



surface of the skin ... her image is employed to construct a character; a kind of meta-person, not entirely dissolved from her “self”, but certainly a protagonist she plays.’ Rae photographs herself in non-descript domestic settings: gripping a window frame as she climbs up a wall or delicately balances on a small glass. Her work is finely staged and beautifully sparse, evoking a sense of tension as if at any moment the artist might come crashing to the ground. ‘I am utilising the body to promote ideas of discomfort and awkwardness, generating an approach to femininity that is borne out of frustration ... The outcomes of my practice endeavour to offer a positive creation of subjectivity, one that proposes a new understanding of femininity as non-determined’.⁶

In the last few years there have been a number of major survey exhibitions of feminist art such as *WACK! Art and the Feminist* in Los Angeles, *Global Feminisms* in New York and most recently *Feminism Never Happened* at Brisbane’s Institute of Modern Art. The question has been posed: ‘Are these an effort to eulogise the event, as if it is something that has passed, or we are actually gathering momentum for the next push forward?’⁷ Part of the answer lies in this movement taking place in smaller galleries and infiltrating the online world, contributing in a clever and contemporary way to the continuum of feminist art.

1. Laura Mulvey, ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’ in *Visual and other pleasures* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, UK, 1989).

2. Maura Reilly and Linda Nochlin (eds.), *Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art* (London: Merrell; Brooklyn Museum: New York, 2007) 11.

3. Email correspondence with the artist, May 2010.

4. Artist Alex Martinis Roe discussed this idea in the forum ‘Feminism Never Happened’ coordinated by Director Alexie Glass and Assistant Curator Emily Cormack at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne, 2007.

5. Email correspondence with the artist, May 2010.

6. Clare Rae, Artist Statement, ‘Climbing the Walls and Other Actions’, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2009.

7. Emily Cormack, ‘Feminism Never Happened’ forum, op.cit.

Meaning and Coincidence: Artist-Run Initiatives in Brisbane

KATE WOODCROFT

In his famous essay from 1974, *The Provincialism Problem* Terry Smith states, 'Provincialism appears primarily as an attitude of subservience to an externally imposed hierarchy of cultural values ... [art is] a thoroughly context-dependent activity, in which most of the contexts are socially specific and resonate throughout the cultural settings in which they occur and to which they travel'.¹

At the time he wrote this, Smith was reacting to what he regarded as the widespread submission of Australian art to American formalist trends, and lamenting the geographical chain of command that this preserved. Not long before he made these statements and with a similar attitude, Smith had written a number of texts supporting the activities of Inhibodress,² the artist-run project led by Mike Parr, Peter Kennedy and Tim Johnson in Sydney in the early 1970s. Inhibodress is recognised as a touchstone for current Australian ARIs because it asserted two concepts that persist in their importance to ARIs today. First, it provided the opportunity for artists to control the processes of promotion, dissemination and presentation of their work. Secondly, it presented the potential for engaging with the gallery as a studio site—to both produce and present work. These central concepts are still widely considered as important strategies for many young artists working today because they emphasise the production rather than maintenance of meaning. A number of recently established artist-run initiatives in Brisbane have adopted these strategies and act as catalysts for further experimentation. They do this in order to address the peripheral status of most young and emerging artists that results from the relatively meager public and commercial opportunities available to them.

Facing page: Luke Jaaniste, T. P. Kerr, Alice Lang, Ross Manning, Ruth McConchie, Ernesto Love, Claire Robertson, Stephen Russell, David Spooner, Elizabeth Willing and Danielle Clej, *afterourworkisneverover*, 2009, continually evolving tag-team 72 hour multi-media installation. inbetweenspaces for *Recession Art + Other Strategies*.
Photo: inbetweenspaces.



Since 2006, Brisbane has been home to the Gallery of Modern Art, an addition to the Queensland Art Gallery. GoMA boasts blockbuster international shows, glacial temperatures and general over-professionalism. Another public gallery, the Institute of Modern Art (IMA), has been running for 35 years and over the last 15 has transformed itself from an allegedly flood-prone gallery supporting daring local projects alongside national and international artists³ to a space hosting mostly solo exhibitions by high profile international artists and publishing a critical scholarly journal.

At this time, three commercial galleries stand out: Milani Gallery (formerly Bellas Milani), Jan Manton Gallery and Ryan Renshaw Gallery (formerly Blacklab). Another space, David Pestorius Gallery, ran from the early to late 1990s and has since become David Pestorius Projects, a low key but energetic enterprise that initiates visits from international artists (recently Dan Graham) and local projects. Pestorius tends to address the post-punk scene in Brisbane (of which he was a part) or the history of modernist avant-garde art practices in Australia.

Lastly, Metro Arts in the CBD has supported independent performing and visual arts practices over the last 30 years, and is home to two small theatres, a gallery space and 35 studio spaces, one of which is dedicated to the ARI in Residence Program. This program provides professional advice, a small budget and a studio in the Metro Arts building, free of charge for 12 months. Although Metro has played host to a fair majority of Brisbane's most innovative artists over the years it struggles to gain serious recognition, particularly in the visual arts, due to the financial necessities that require the space to remain open for events hire. Unfortunately, the relatively small number of contexts available for the visual arts (above the ARI bracket) in Brisbane amplifies the responsibilities of each space to their particular segment of the scene and sometimes attenuates the possibility of radical programming.

The four ARIs I will discuss here are Boxcopy, No Frills*, Accidentally Annie St Space, and inbetweenspaces.⁴ All have been initiated by graduates of the Queensland University of Technology Bachelor of Fine Arts program (I am also a graduate of this program). These ARIs have grown over the last four years following what was a significant drought after the dissolution of ARIs such as The Farm (also a QUT graduate venture), Soapbox Gallery and more recently Moreton St Spare Room Project. These new ARIs mostly support emerging practices that exhibit a conceptual and/or critical approach, particularly those concerned with post-medium practices. These tendencies serve to distinguish these organisations from a number of other ARIs whose activities align more closely with popular design, social justice, street art and commercial painting (these initiatives have built a thriving community that now culminates in the annual BARIfest—Brisbane Artist



Run Initiatives Festival). Another ARI deserving of attention is LEVEL. Initiated in May of this year, LEVEL is a studio and exhibition project designed to support women artists and encourage discussion around contemporary feminism.

Boxcopy Contemporary Art Space, the oldest of the four, began in 2007 underneath a Queenslander in New Farm before being accepted into the Metro Arts ARI in Residence Program in 2008-09. In mid-2009, Boxcopy moved to a small CBD lease, received significant funding from local and state governments, and began supporting artists in the development and financial sponsorship of solo exhibitions specifically for the site. Similarly, No Frills*, a recipient of the Metro residency in mid-2009, encourages an investigation of its space as a project site for new work. In both these spaces this approach is supported by an extended installation period, critical and physical assistance from the directors, and a modest, state-funded artist fee. These projects have transformed spaces into mushroom farms (Matt Dabrowski), black caves for stroboscopic video (Sarah Byrne), government offices (Dirk Yates), and Japanese bars (Sebastian Moody). These activities have all worked toward an exhibition format that ambitiously reconfigures the gallery as a viewing space.

Other initiatives, rather than enacting transformations or interrogations of the gallery space, attempt to dispose of the white cube altogether. Late in 2008, Accidentally Annie St Space was established in a Queenslander in the inner western suburb of Auchenflower. At Annie St, works are installed directly into the living spaces, sometimes cleared of personal belongings, sometimes not. Laptops playing video works sit on beds strewn with clothes (Channon Goodwin) and sock puppets are projected onto soiled mattresses (Joseph Breikers). This approach generates methods that appeal to the particularities and textures that are apparent in the local context.

Another space adopting this approach is inbetweenspaces, which began in 2008 with the now annual exhibition *Fresher Cunts*, a large survey of emerging art from Brisbane to coincide with *Fresh Cut*, the somewhat more moderately titled emerging art show at the IMA. *Fresher Cunts* is approaching its third installment and was last year extended to include a large project involving collaboration between local ARIs cheekily titled: *Recession Art + Other Strategies*. At this show, ARIs set up office as stockbrokers, projected live footage of their own spaces, hung lewd neon signs and initiated an evolving installation featuring inclusions from a large group of emerging artists. inbetweenspaces also holds exhibitions in transitory sites including hallways, cupboards and vacant commercial spaces in an attempt to capitalise on disused space, re-imagine sites of display and advocate for site-specificity as a major concern of contemporary practice.

Above: Stephen Russell, *Love*, 2009; Cait Foran *Slushie*, 2009 at the exhibition *Renovare*. Accidentally Annie St Space. Photo: Erika Scott.
Facing page: Rachael Parsons *At the end of...*, 2009. No Frills*. Photo: Kate Woodcroft.



The majority of artists involved in these initiatives have been, or are involved in post-graduate research, and some see these projects as fundamental to their formal research and wider arts practice. Considering ARIs in this way allows for a more informed understanding and manipulation of the concepts, forms and contexts that generate work. In these instances and more broadly, the organisation of shows and events becomes a natural extension of an artistic practice and reflects the vitality of integrated administrative, creative and social activities.

All of the Brisbane ARIs mentioned here are either free of charge or are able to pay artist fees. This is partly due to a less competitive funding environment, but also because of approaches to exhibiting that negate the necessity of empty rooms as contexts for art. Like *Inhibodress*, their growth out of a relatively sparse landscape has bred idiosyncrasies that readily propagate enthusiasm for the future of the scene. Consistent with the established tradition of ARIs, Brisbane artists have taken responsibility for the treatment of their work and have cultivated a thriving field of critical and aesthetic activity that continues to proliferate and engage new ideas and practices.

For further information about the ARIs discussed visit www.boxcopy.org, www.nofrillsari.org, www.accidentallyanniesspace.wordpress.com, www.inbetweenspaces.org; or for a full listing see www.crawl.net.au.

1. Terry Smith, 'The Provincialism Problem' in *Artforum*, Sept. 1974. 54–59.
2. Sue Cramer, *inhibodress 1970-1972*, (Brisbane: Institute of Modern Art, 1989) 68.
3. David Broker, 1994-2004: *The Snelling Years*. www.ima.org.au/pages/history/1994E280932004-the-snelling-years.php (2005).
4. This sketch is limited but hopefully reflective of the wider position of the ARIs currently active in Brisbane.



Kind of, sort of, it. Maybe.

ELEANOR WEBER in conversation with BRIAN FUATA

Every day from 22 February through 7 March 2010 at Fraser Studios, Chippendale, or his house in Rozelle, Brian Fuata collaborated with a different artist to create a performance. Each was performed at 4:30 in the afternoon, ran no longer than 30 minutes and was open to the public. This was WRONG SOLO PRESENTS THE FRASER STUDIO PERFORMANCES.

Brian Fuata: I had been given a two-week skills and development residency at Fraser Studios, where I was to generate performance material by investigating processes of text and movement gathered from my recent time in London. I decided, because of the finite time, that the research would be simply to make a new show with a different artist from a different discipline every day I was there, and learn from this situation. The title *WRONG SOLO* is the duo of Agatha Gothe-Snape and myself, which came out of a collaboration commissioned by Campbelltown Arts Centre as part of their interdisciplinary programme. When the Fraser Studios residency came about, I decided that *WRONG SOLO* would present the Fraser Studio performances. I used the title because it simplifies an idea of collaboration as a solo practice gone skewiff.

Eleanor Weber: Do you see each ‘wrong solo’ that made up *WRONG SOLO PRESENTS THE FRASER STUDIO PERFORMANCES* [from now simply *WRONG SOLO*] as one big collaboration, then?

BF: One collaboration in which I was the constant. I was collaborating with these variables that would form and shape,

and the practice would change. Interdisciplinary collaboration can be weird – like two solo entities converging on each other and sometimes gelling and sometimes not; it’s about the ups and downs.

EW: A lot of the people you were working with in *WRONG SOLO* are visual artists. Are you trying to explore ways different disciplines come together and that this *can* be wrong—that it’s *OK* for it to be wrong? You can meet, and maybe mesh or maybe not, but the point is the *meeting*.

BF: It’s this idea of how sometimes interdisciplinary practice just doesn’t work. Because there’s always compromise. There’s a concern when two different disciplines or practices meet with each other. Is it going to be an equal playing field? Or does one always take over the other? What happens when you just stick two *things* together in a room for an entire day—what comes out of that?

EW: How did you choose the artists you worked with?

BF: I chose artists whose work had a performative quality that I like, or whose practice differed from mine so vastly that it intrigued me to see what their take might be, how they would negotiate a live performance imperative. In this way, I feel the artists came supplied with the persona of their practice, and this persona became a prop. I am interested by the curiousness of the theatrical gaze, which characterises an artist by their work,

Above and facing page: Brian Fuata with Sarah Goffman, *WRONG SOLO*, 2010, performance. Video still: Agatha Gothe-Snape.



and I think the audience (most of whom were fellow artists) were intrigued to watch that persona exist in a live performance context. It was also interesting to observe the way artists saw themselves performatively—we all became spectators. There was also an interest in a sort of skills exchange; I wanted to see how I could learn from the objectivity of the persona. The challenge was to stave off the desire to entertain with a sensible narrative construction. But, that said, to control it was to ultimately let go of control and allow the collaborator's naivety in performance-making to come out; for a pure gesture to emerge.

EW: How do you view your practice in broader terms?

BF: I don't know. Sometimes I see myself in live-art, at other times contemporary theatre. I'm also interested where my work intersects with contemporary art and where text can be perceived in all these fields. I feel all these disciplines are mutable and it's an exciting place and time to be making this kind of work.

EW: You have collaborated directly with other artists for performance projects in the past, for example with Agatha Gothe-Snape, Anastasia Freygang and Michael Moran. How are these sorts of collaborations different to those of *WRONG SOLO*, in which the other artist has been chosen by you, for your program—a work 'by' Brian Fuata?

BF: For the first time I took initiative of the project. I invited artists to engage with me. I set the framework. For me as an artist this is significant and exciting. For the first time it gave me a meta-critique of my practice.

EW: I want to talk about this 1/14 structure, which I see as unique to *WRONG SOLO*. You've got fourteen days—fourteen

artist-combinations—and for each individual day you can say 'this is a work', but then, because of this quite definite temporal structure, you can also say the whole fortnight is *one* work. On each day you've got players, and different roles—you (the 'constant'), the participating artist, the audience. In some way, everyone performed every day. It is interesting to consider all these 'roles' as one, seeing as they seem mutually dependent and somewhat interchangeable. For example, many of the artists you worked with were audience members on other days, and some of the audience 'performed' in a sense, like in the handball performance with Sarah Rodigari. Someone said that on the days they couldn't make it, wherever they were, they knew at 4:30 *WRONG SOLO* was happening; I felt the same. Once you've gone along even one time, in whatever capacity, you're very much part of the whole. I wondered how you conceptualised these ideas, if there was any conscious thinking beforehand of how you would conceive each day in the context of the whole?

BF: Well, let's just say it was one body that had like 14 different limbs! You know, they all belong to the same person or same *thing*. I don't know if this makes any sense. On the day Wade Marynowsky couldn't make it—*because* there was the body of the program (a date, and the artist associated with that date), *because* the framework was so established—his live presence was almost incidental. Even though Wade wasn't there, the work was flavoured with his presence, or absence in this case. And it was amazing. It just so happened that this body naturally formed—a possible perception of what that day could have been.

EW: It's so interesting to think how much the program sets up what you expect in performance. That actually, in the case of *WRONG SOLO*, one person not turning up doesn't gravely affect



the work as a whole. In fact, it becomes a performance in itself, of absence. Ironically, of the disappearing or of the not-turning-up!

BF: Totally, totally. I took notes of each day; Wade's day was called *Wade In Absentia*. But there was still the imperative of the performance so I asked him to text me five instructions for a performance to compensate for his absence. He sent me these instructions about trying to get myself into a trance-like state, so I did this kind of whirling-dervish thing, spun around—quite literal interpretations of how to get myself into a trance! Basically make myself dizzy. And then at 4:30 the performance was to call Wade wherever he was. He'd just finished work and happened to be on the train. And so the performance was this *absent* Wade.

EW: But then he's also present, if you think about the telephone and that kind of 'absent presence', or whatever you want to say.

BF: Like this mediated body.

EW: Was there an audience?

BF: Yeah, there were three audience members.

EW: So they were spectators to you being a whirling-dervish?

BF: Pretty much. I had kind of theatrically set up the stage and used this moody lighting. One person in particular came to see Wade's day. She was saying she thought the whirling-dervish thing was connected to Wade's thing.

EW: Like his work *The Hosts* at CarriageWorks last year—those spinning automatons, they were kind of hypnotic.

BF: What a great connection. But also, because the 'performance time' was so liberal and loose, the audience could have thought that Wade was going to pop up at any second. It wasn't until I made the phone call that they realised, 'Oh, Wade's actually not here,' and there was just this laugh. But the performance, and the collaboration, still occurred.

EW: I think often a set framework or structure actually permits great fluidity. It is because you've got this quite concrete program, that *within* it—within each day, each comprised of all these variables—you can go crazy! And if someone doesn't turn up, well then that just becomes another variable in *what could happen*.

BF: Exactly.

EW: What do you see as the results or outcomes of *WRONG SOLO*? Do we need results?

BF: The word 'results' implies a rationale focused on a completed performance product—one achieved through a capitalist dramaturgical resolution. This implication negates the non-hierarchical, liminal space these shows were created in. These performances didn't need results as such; rather they were resultant of what had naturally transpired earlier in the day.

EW: I enjoyed Kate Murphy's day a lot. It was at the house in Rozelle and the audience watched from the street, looking through the big front window at you and Kate melting in the heat. Effectively performing in a glasshouse. The handstand competition against the inside of that very window was a great way to play with that performer-space/audience-space barrier.

Above: Brian Fuata with Emma Ramsay and Anna John, *WRONG SOLO*, 2010, performance. Video still: Agatha Gothe-Snape.



We think: ‘Why are we out here boiling in the sun? What are we looking at? Oh, Kate and Brian’s bums against glass!’ But to a certain extent, the audience also became part of the spectacle—passers by wondered what we were looking at and some people actually stopped their cars to see what was going on. I’m very interested in the way different levels of spectatorship take effect; especially through the way we describe performance to others, the secondary or tertiary experiences of performance. Could you describe how one day of *WRONG SOLO* played out, maybe the day you worked with Sarah Goffman, which I missed?

BF: Meet Goffman at midday a couple hours later than expected. We drink tea and chat about her recent residency in Japan. Agatha Gothe-Snape visits and we chat about the highs and lows of making art in Sydney. Throughout the day we compulsively smoke rollies, which clearly becomes the common denominator of the day. We speak about Goffman’s collaboration with contemporary avant-garde dancers in Japan, and Warhol’s Screen Tests, eat Korean for lunch, and then decide that the performance will be us seated on a theatrically lit stage, with a bell to signal the beginning. We light a cigarette, smoke.

EW: What happens to *WRONG SOLO* now that the performances are over? This is a literal disappearance—both temporal and spatial—as the performances are ‘gone’. But something is left. You spoke of the idea of ‘residue’. This article is one such residue, but it is also a meta-residue of sorts.

BF: I think what happens now is that, like all performances, they become recorded by memory. Which is for some people incredibly annoying but for others a fertile place to think about the nature of performance—related to its being ephemeral, to the retelling

of what happened, to receiving an account, retelling that account. The imagined performance is often as potent as the actual thing. It somehow becomes this tangible thing, if that makes sense?

EW: Yes, the memory, description or retelling itself becomes tangible.

BF: But it is hard to describe the feeling of a work—and performance is all about feeling. It’s hard not to fall into the trap of embellished poetics, but the description of performance lends itself to that. The language of performance can be so wifty-wafty, but that’s what I find so beautiful in it.

EW: And, of course, you can’t just *not* talk about it (or not write about it) in the fear of doing that feeling injustice. I think we’re *compelled* to recount, rethink, reread and rewrite performance. Maybe because, in some way, these things are performances in themselves—the only ways we can reconcile that inexplicable feeling? For me, the challenge with *WRONG SOLO* is where to start! There are so many questions to be asked about the ontology of performance, and many layers of critiques and analyses that are fascinating. But I also just want to be able to say that you being on Kate Mitchell’s shoulders draped in an old blanket and yelling ‘Oh my God!’ out to the audience was really powerful and amazing, just because, in Sydney on 2 March 2010 at 4:30pm, I felt it was.

BF: It’s related to the never-ending discussion of performance as this fleeting moment, which is constantly disappearing. I think the idea of ‘the live’ is essential. It’s about liveness, and describing, retelling, recounting are live experiences. Do you know what I mean? You can only explain the live in and through the live. And I think that’s—that’s kind of, sort of, *it*. Maybe.

Above: Brian Fuata with Kate Mitchell, *WRONG SOLO*, 2010, performance. Video still: Agatha Gothe-Snape.

DISAPPEARANCE

Antarctica

RACHEL FEERY & LISA STEWART















Matters of Necessity in the Endless City: Gary Trinh, Artist/Photographer Extraordinaire

TOM MELICK and IVAN RUHLE



It was once true that you could get away. In this now impossible age there was an outside: unpopulated and undeveloped spaces that existed untouched by the unremitting hands of industry. People claimed that these places afforded us a glimpse of the world as it should be, authentic and undistorted by the wrongness of human society. Unfortunately, from today's standpoint, this nostalgic view can no longer be verified. Seeing that urbanisation is now complete there is no longer any outside that we can coherently refer to. As everybody today knows, the last and only city is Planet Earth.

With the disappearance of the un-man-made world, all the old debates about the relationship between the natural and the built environment, as well as the moral postulations they fuelled, have shifted and distended. Subsequently, debates about the good life and where it can be found have been forcefully narrowed. The environments in which we imagine human flourishing are now politely split between the local market and the shopping mall, with nothing in between. Divorced from its original signifier, there is a great deal of confusion surrounding the term 'natural'. It has been used in reference to almost anything and everything, and in this way is simply a method for distinguishing between types of artificiality. If nature is now a question of taste, then clearly we are confused.



One artist/photographer who has successfully triumphed over this muddled set of divisions is Garry Trinh. He works prodigiously, equipped only with a camera, a good pair of shoes and a peculiar attention to the detritus and detail of this endless environment. Walking for his medium, Trinh treads the ceaseless boundaries of the city. His photographs exist as a consequence of the disciplined yet amenable walks he conducts within the undulating suburban tissue of this city-planet.

Images of water coolers, people eating corn, mutilated signage, interestingly weather beaten cars, and the eye-catching oddness of a lived-in-world, seem to portray an innate interest and respect for those parts of the city (reality) that others dismiss as banal, suburban and boring. For Trinh this attention to detail is driven by a sense of awe and delight in the ability of the human mind to make something new of the world. Trinh's photography highlights the character of this always-possible transformation; a tenuous alliance between honesty and ingenuity in the documentation and interpretation of an independent world. This is the planetary tapestry of signage, commercial inertia, three-bedroom two-bathroom housing, and the grimy remainders of human enthusiasm. As Charlie Sofo, another functioning artist and friend of Trinh has said on two occasions, 'he's a good looker'. Through this well-adjusted humour Trinh produces images worth looking at. An attribute, we might suggest, which should be demanded from all images that someone has seen fit to display.



Trinh provides us with a simple formula—if you walk for long enough you are sure to discover something. Yet this simplicity is complicated by a whole range of questions, the most apparent being, what is it that we are walking towards? And then from this hazy destination, what does a discovery actually look like? Keen for some answers, we sought out Trinh and asked to accompany him on one of his walks. In this way he subjected us to a live test for the feet, eyes and the upper limits of inquisitiveness.

What follows is our account of this test, which we offer honestly in the belief that there is something fundamental about walking beyond the distance between A and B. And that perhaps the best way to grapple with the city in its absurd wholeness is to take on a proactive disposition, seeking out the points where you can exercise agency. This is the faculty that is most dear to thinking and doing beings, and that we would suggest drives Trinh to walk and work.

This account is inextricably bound up with the fruit of its labour; the images Trinh took as we traversed space and time. Their form, content and framing leaves the first and best testament to the city perceived with Trinh as our lens. There's no need to cloak these photographs in



interpretation, as Trinh himself says they are a form of interpretation, and thus speak for themselves. However, we might mix in a spot of our personal agency by turning over some conclusions about walking and some lessons learned at the heel of Trinh's sneakers.

The first lesson is to wear good shoes. In the endless city, interest cannot be designated and confined to particular routes, areas or patterns of development. This is not to say there is no value in walking recommended or popularly traversed routes; the tourist is a sympathetic and relatable figure. Rather, Trinh reminds us that walking out of bounds across the whole of the city takes time. Time, in the context of walking, requires stamina and reliable footwear.

The second lesson is to start early and to keep to a routine. Trinh favours the nine to five schedule. Teaching us that purposeful purposelessness needs to be treated with a kind of discipline if it is to move us beyond the romanticism of the café hopping urban ideal.

The third lesson is to experience as much as possible. Under Trinh's *modus operandi*—to take humorous observation seriously—we found ourselves imbued with a wonderful kind of cognitive availability. With your faculties shifted into a different gear, you simply begin

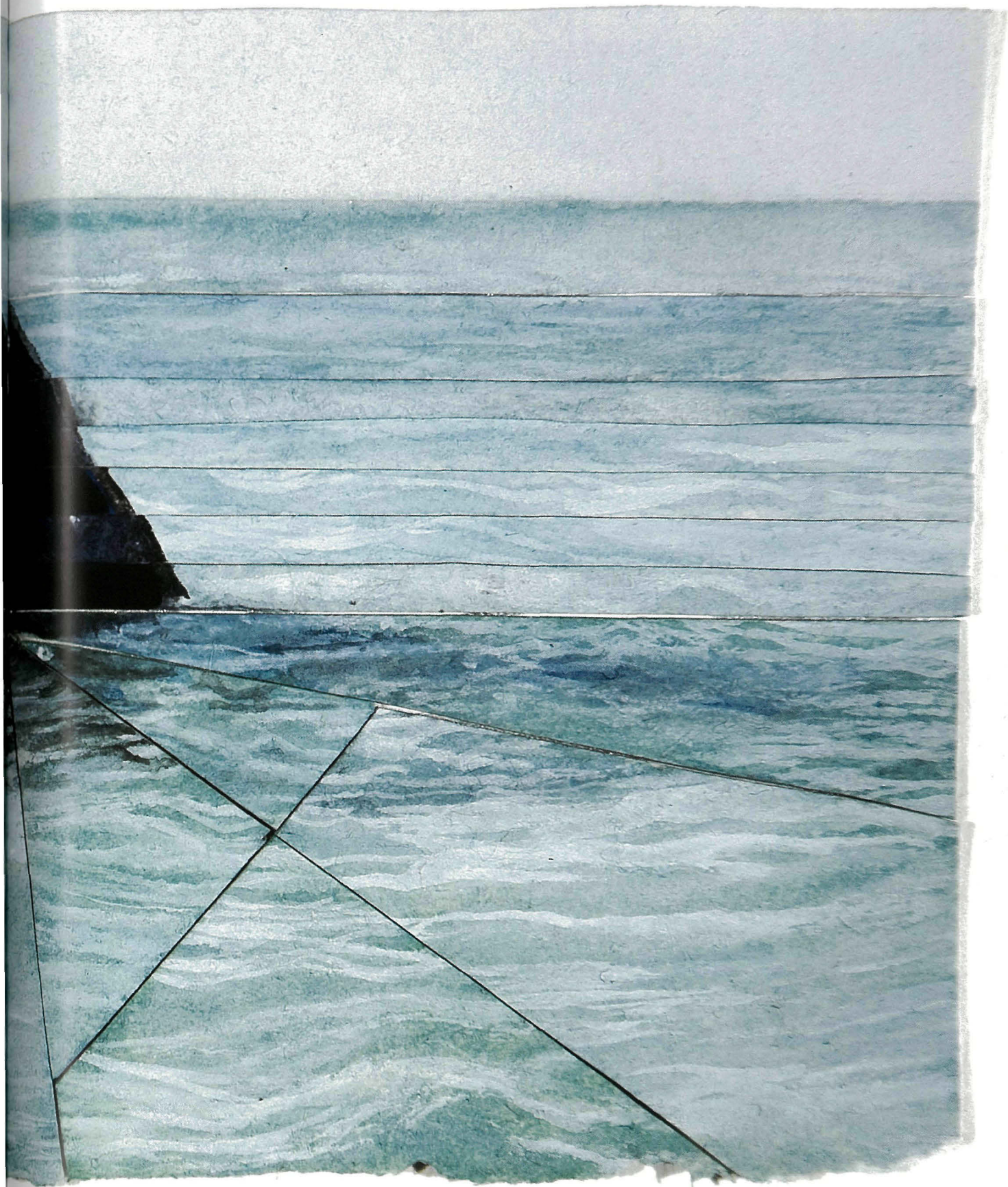


noticing more. A world of minutiae previously lost, while present, is brought into view with clarity and a strange kind of relevance. All of which is strongly suggested by Trinh's photography. One point of connection we might briefly suggest can be found in the Japanese Zen concept of *Shōshin*, meaning the mind of the beginner. An intentional state constituted by a lack of preconception, avidity, and a love of knowledge. Coincidentally the Ancient Greek roots of the word philosophy mean precisely that, *philosophia: love of knowledge*. Perhaps it's no coincidence that there was a whole school of Ancient Greek philosophy founded on its feet. (See The Peripatetic School).

Watch out for walled highways and golf courses. These have been designed for movement of another kind, to the exclusion and frustration of walkers, and will form a boundary against any perambulatory trajectory.

It's fine to end where you started (A to B which ends up being A). For, as Trinh teaches us, in the never-ending city the only way to really arrive somewhere is to look at it, to see and revel in its misfired arrangements, and thereby witness the city again for the very first time.





When I was a child floating above a reef I encountered a shark.
I had swum out there to assure myself I would never see one.
I don't think I ever went back to a reef and gradually I stopped swimming. Now I don't have baths either and I think about sharks everyday.

When I shower I'm in an underwater cage with them swimming about behind the tiles. When I walk to work in the morning it is still night. I walk in the middle of the road and imagine I'm walking underwater through a channel dividing a reef and they're all about me.

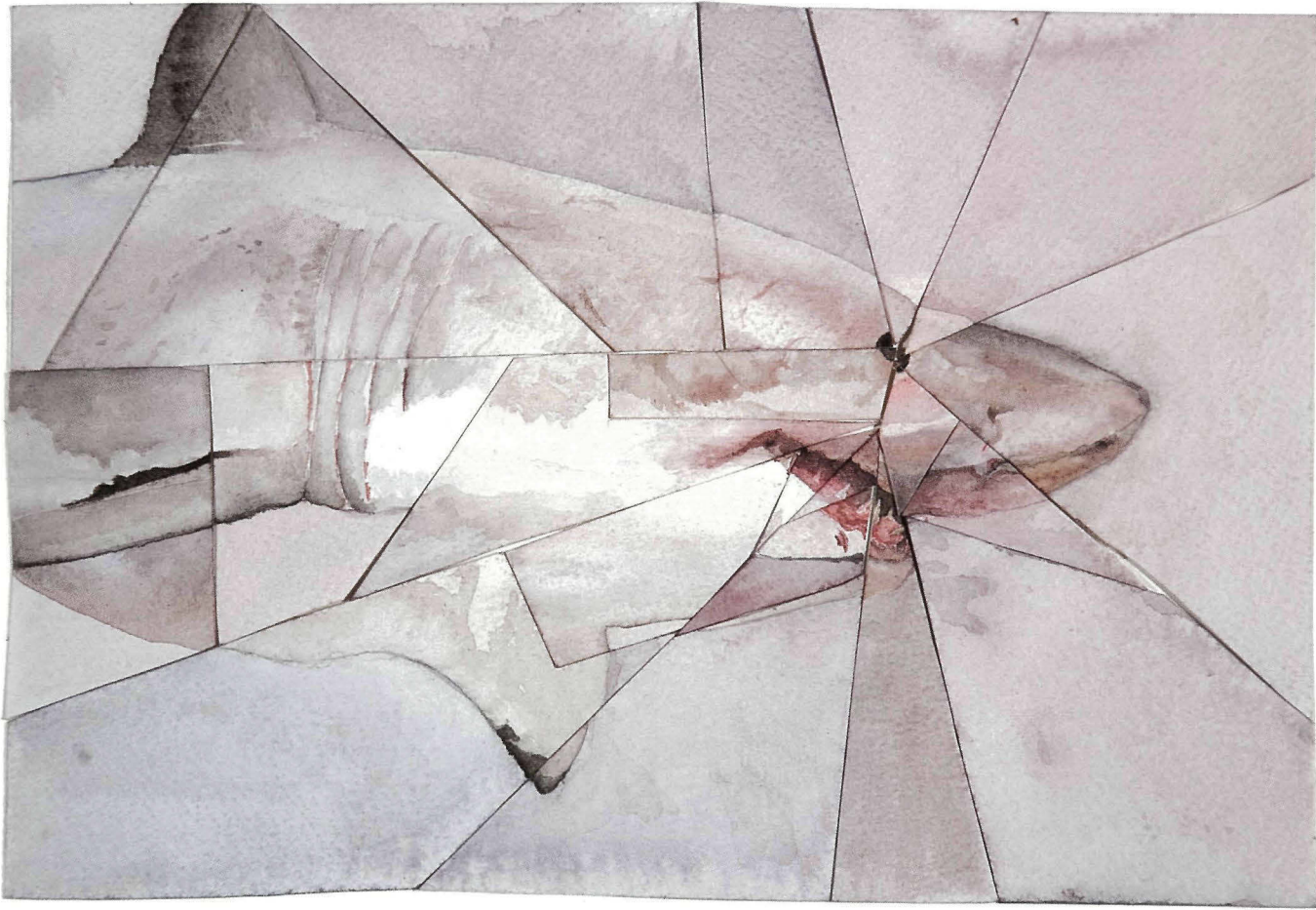
I turn all sorts of things into them. The ironing board, the kitchen table and parked cars hover above the ground with the same presence. I've seen gills in the radiator and a mouth in the toilet.

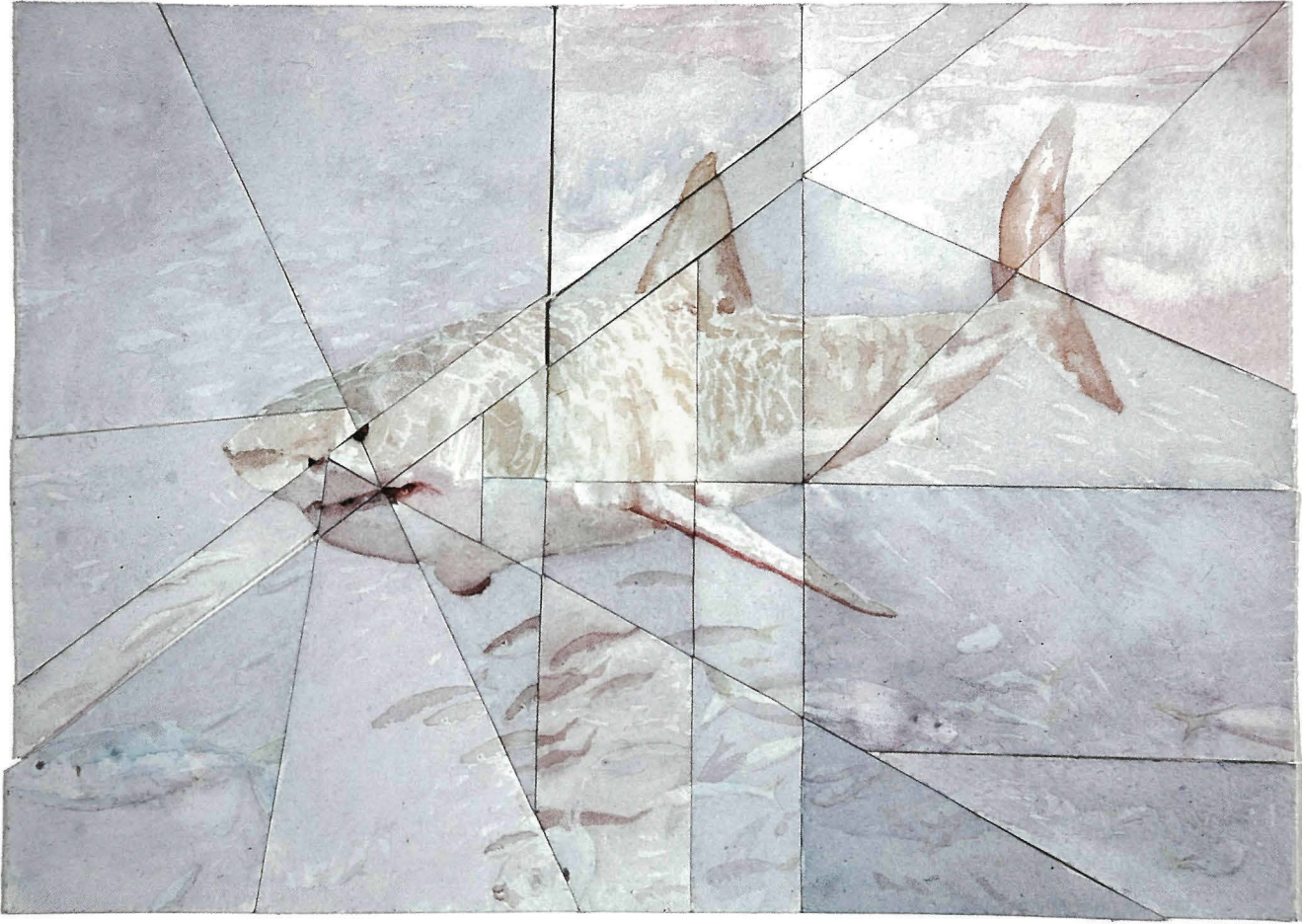
Last year they started approaching me in front of other people.

I've become afraid of hallucinating. Everytime I open the door to our hall I expect to find something more tangible than my imagination. And then I don't, and I wonder how much further all this has to go.

My partner helped me dismantle digital images of sharks by hand and reassemble them as paintings. I never saw the image I was working on, just the abstract shards, each in turn as I transferred the information onto paper.

I don't want to see a shark but I would like to see my paintings.

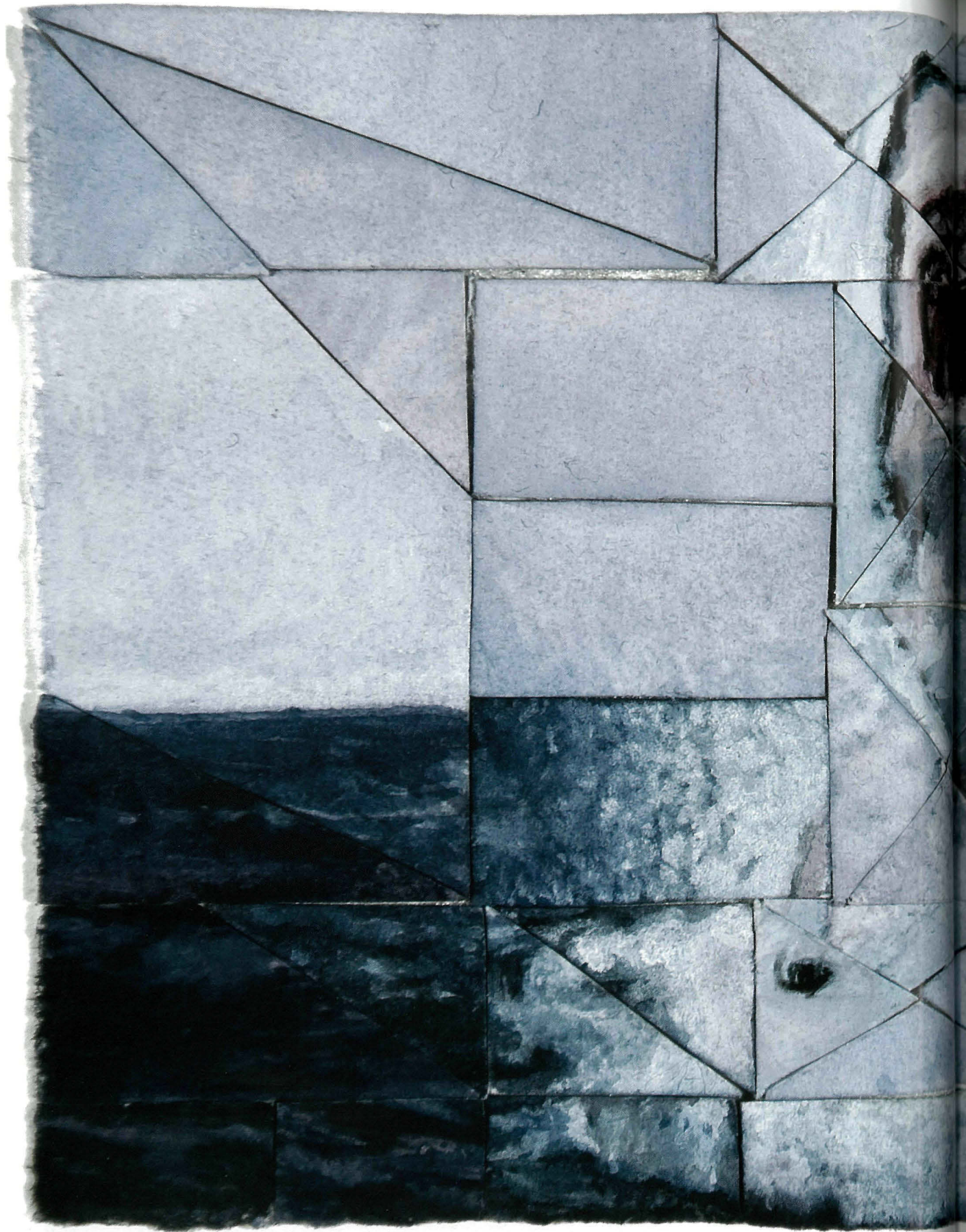


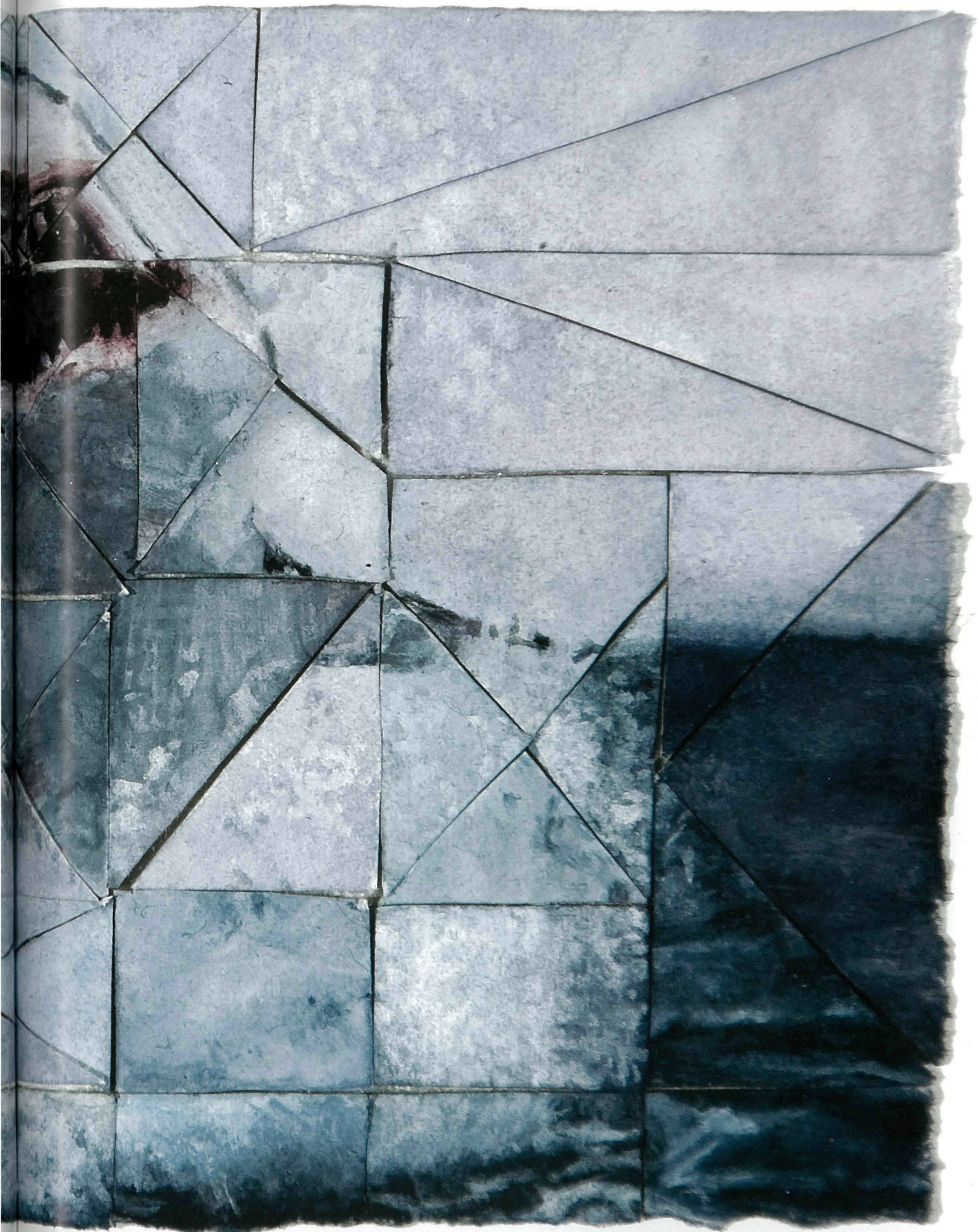


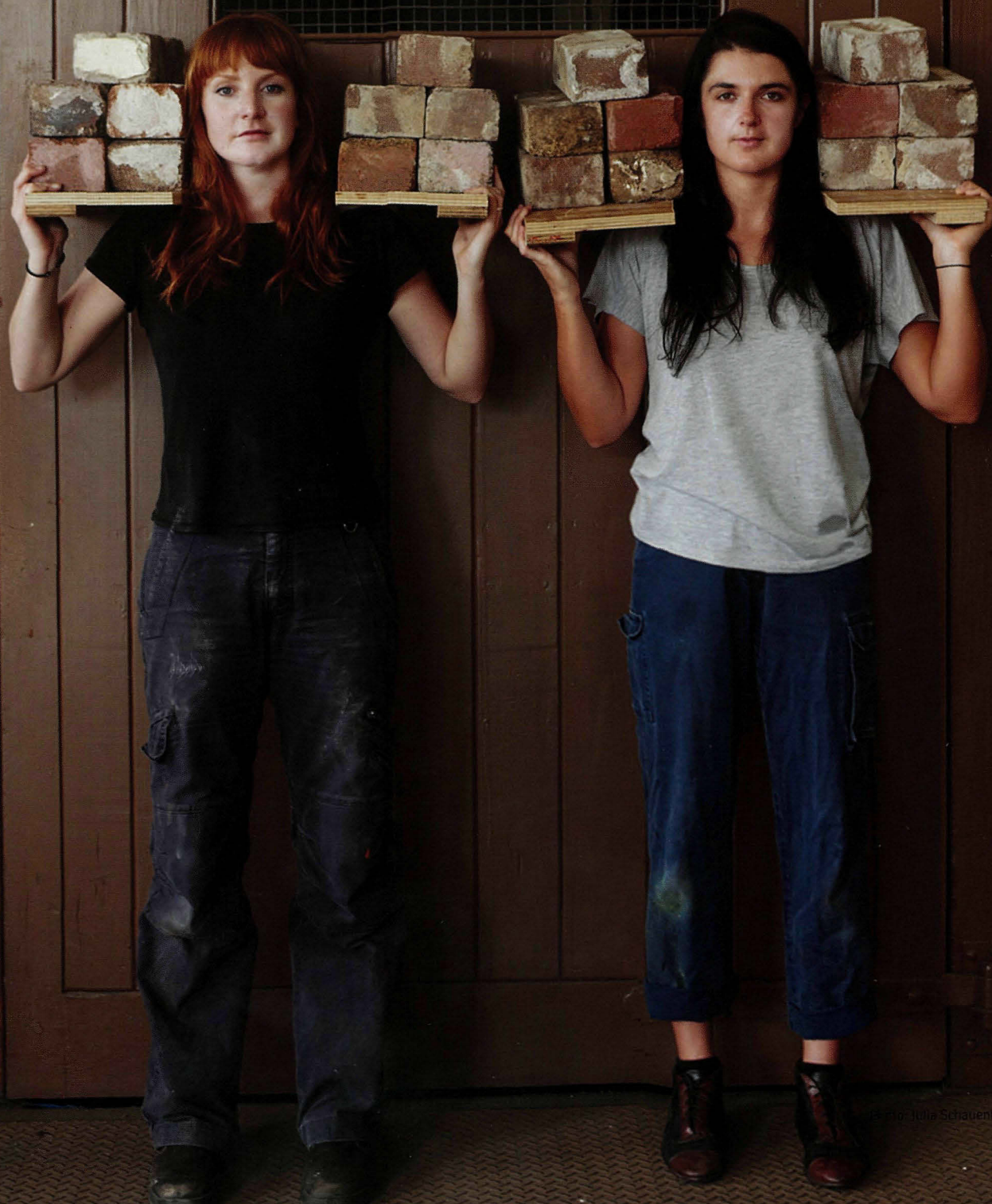


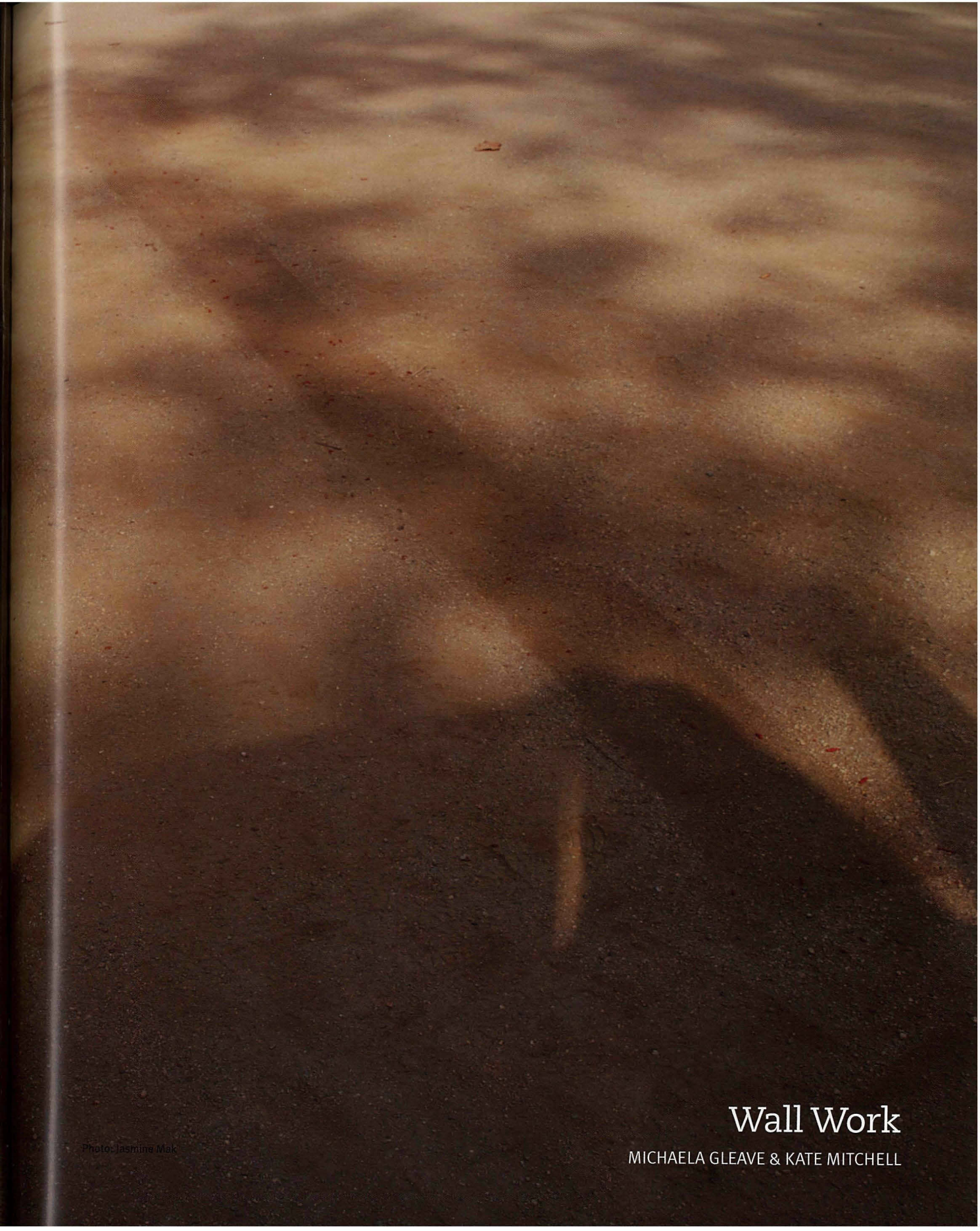












Wall Work

MICHAELA GLEAVE & KATE MITCHELL

Photo: Jasmine Mak

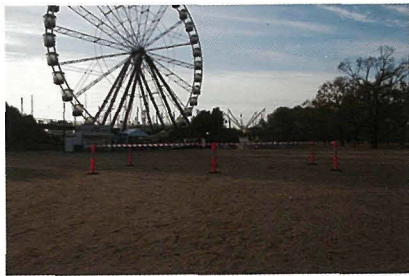


Photo: Claudia Gleave.

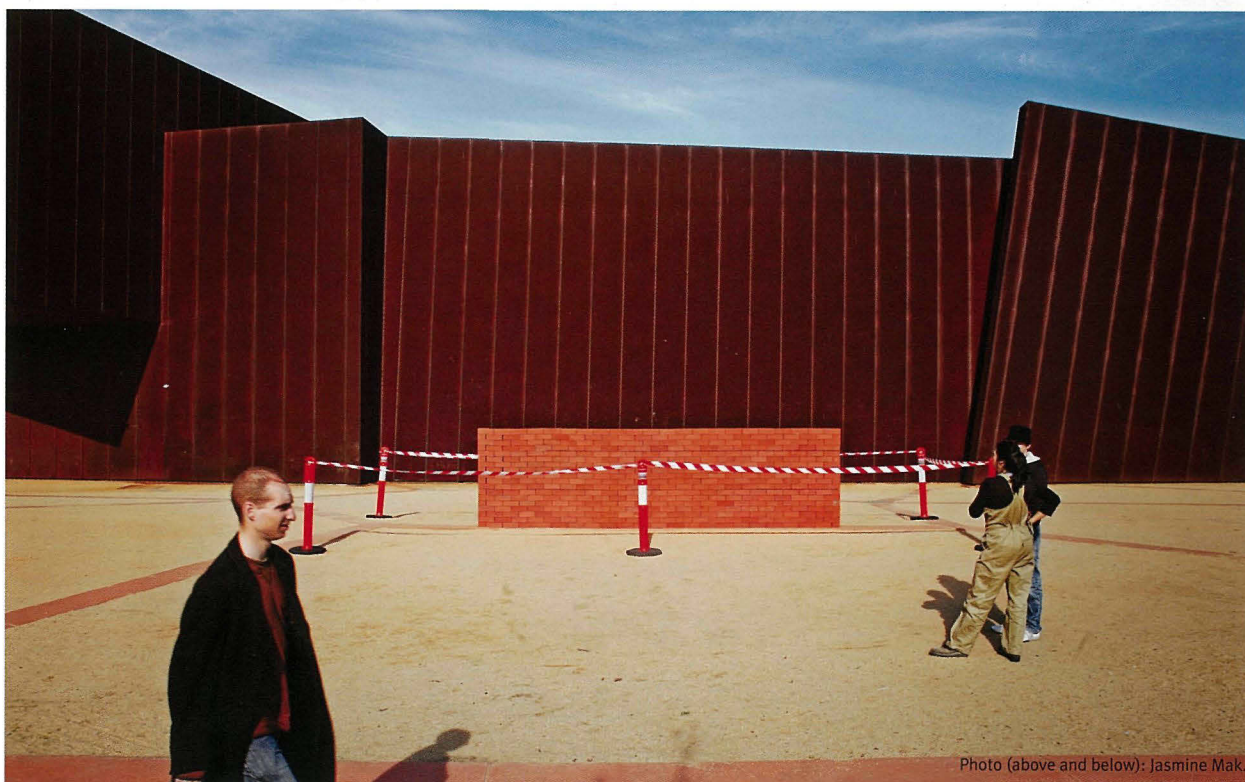
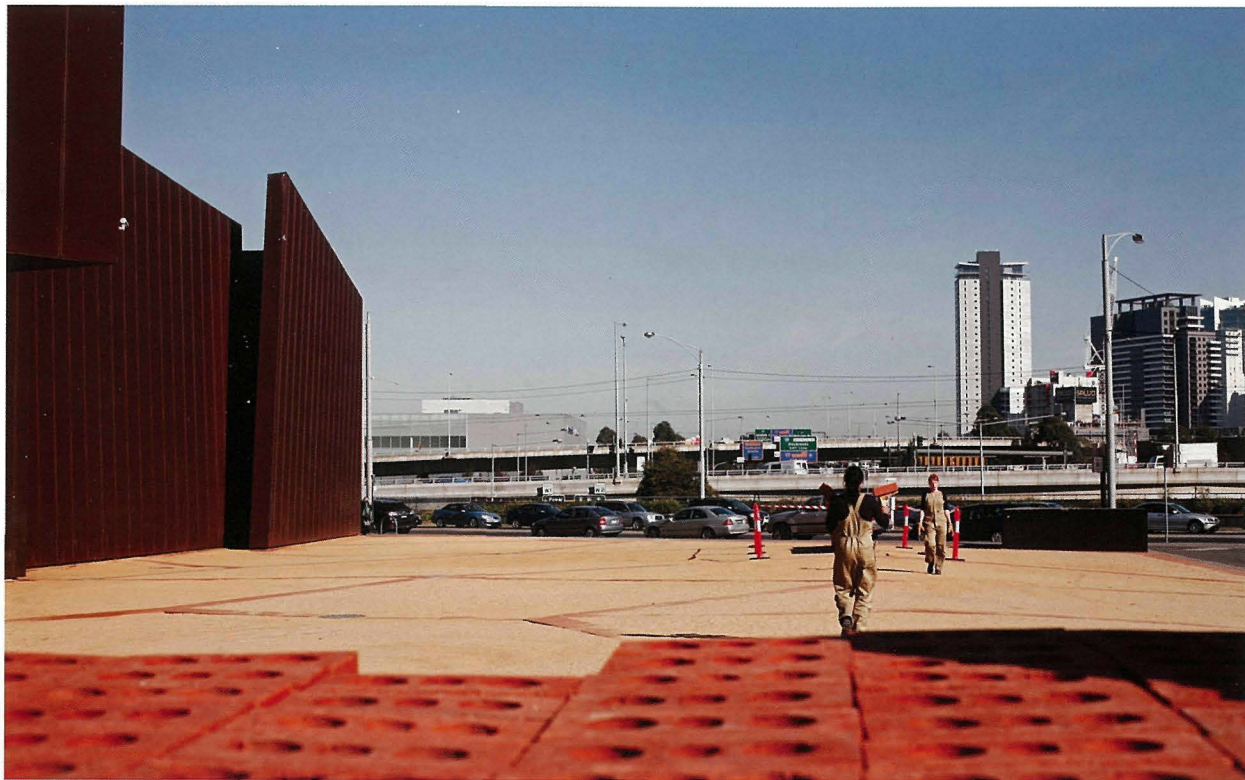


Photo (above and below): Jasmine Mak.



Photo (this and facing page): Danielle Bonjovanni.



REVIEWS



Alterbeast

MEGAN ROBSON

In *Alterbeast*, a group exhibition at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Carla Cescon, Mikala Dwyer, Grzegorz Gawronski, Rachel Scott and Tina Havelock Stevens explored the manifestation of horror in the everyday. From the faux terror of Cescon's crafted werewolf and zombie, to Scott's unnerving video of a completely exposed woman, the exhibition encompassed the broad spectrum of contemporary horror, from the real to the fictitious.

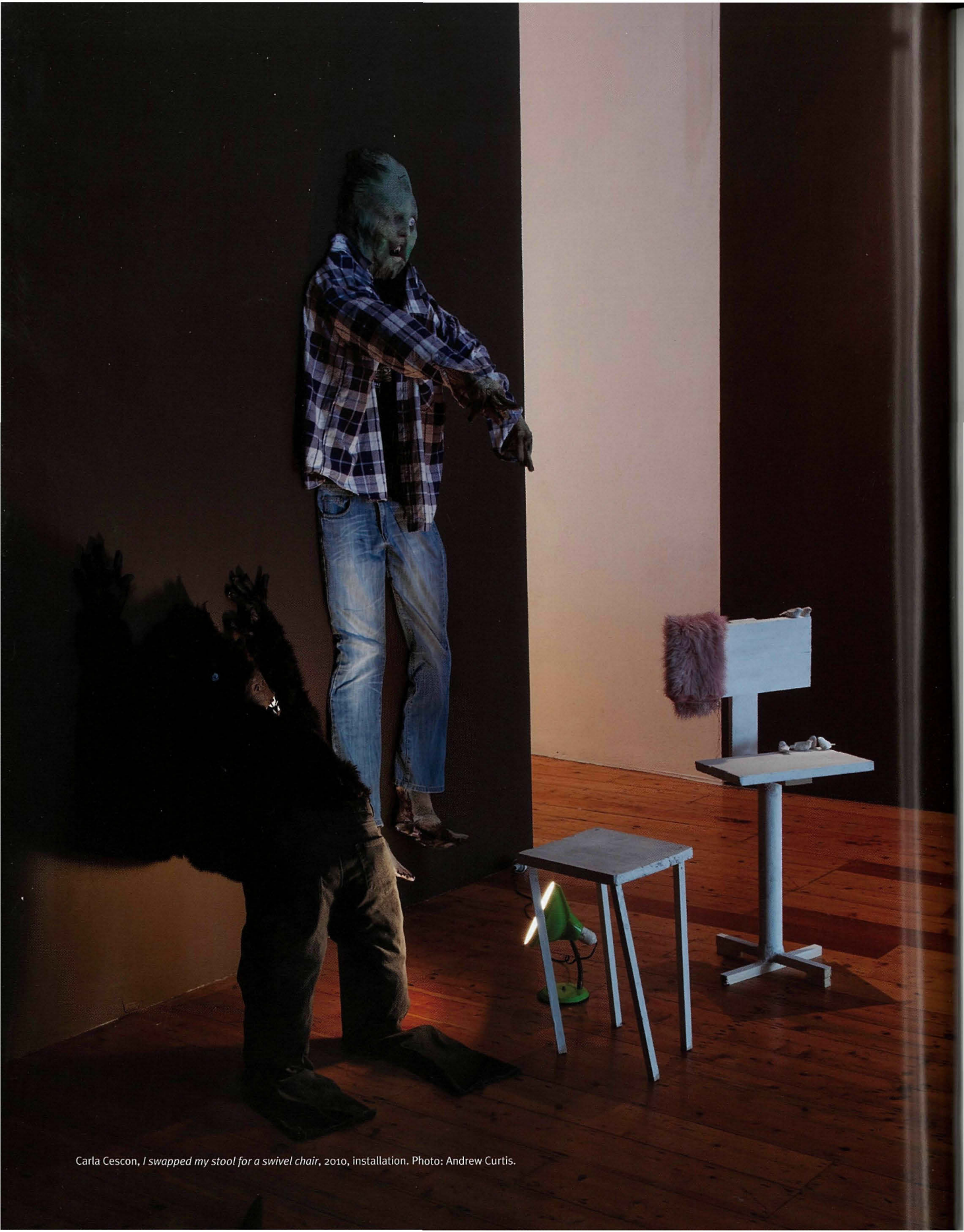
Alterbeast also experimented with the processes of exploration, exchange and exhibition. The participating artists were brought together by Dwyer for a project described as partway between a 'group show and a messy collaboration'.¹ In this regard, the exhibition acted as an informal forum, a space designed for discussion and comparison.

The first work encountered upon entering the space was Gawronski's *Untitled* (2010), a work that allowed the viewer to watch the reaction of a mix of chemicals—potassium bromate, sulfuric acid, potassium bromide and malonic acid—in a wall-

mounted holding tank. Behind the glass panel, substances bubbled and coagulated in a process that the artist referred to as an 'order for free'.² *Untitled* was at once beautiful and disquieting, as the chemicals actively moved behind the pane to form organic abstract patterns independent of both the artist and the viewer. The work evoked a chemical Frankenstein scenario, in which the creation has developed its own free will and sovereignty. *Untitled* also drew visual parallels with the satellite photographs of large-scale environmental disasters like the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, that are becoming frightening commonplace and seem impervious to any outside intervention.

Dwyer's installation *Alterbeast Objects* (2010) consisted of five 'anti-objects' of various sizes and heights that congregated in a semi-circular shape on the floor of the gallery. The objects were covered in black fabric held down by misshapen donut-like clay weights tied to the corners. The weights featured decorative tassel tails in bright colours protruding from the indented surface. *Alterbeast Objects* took on a quality somewhere between the

Above: *Alterbeast*, installation view, (works from left to right): Mikala Dwyer, *Alterbeast Objects*, 2010, installation; Rachel Scott, *Untitled*, 2010, video projection; Havelock Stevens, Mikala Dwyer and Carla Cescon, *Poo Zombies*, 2010, video projection. Photo: Andrew Curtis.



Carla Cescon, *I swapped my stool for a swivel chair*, 2010, installation. Photo: Andrew Curtis.

ridiculous and the frightening. The work played with the fear of the unknown, provoking the viewer with the idea that beneath the black shrouds, hideous and deformed forms could be uncovered at any moment.

Scott's eerie video *Untitled* (2010) featured a young woman (the artist), naked and alone, in the clearing of a forest at what appeared to be the very early hours of the morning. Standing completely still, the woman makes neither a sound nor any movement, and her reflection in the pond in the foreground of the frame barely ripples. Eventually a dog moves through the clearing, but it is oblivious to the presence of the artist. The video uses the absence of an event to build up a sense of anticipation and foreboding: the tension is finally broken by the artist screaming into the silent surroundings. Described as a 'digital video performance', the physical release of sound by Scott is an act that encompasses her whole body. The concept of isolation that underpins the idea of horror in literature or film is magnified to great effect in *Untitled*. The creepy, unnerving atmosphere that is created when one is *all alone* and the dearth of urban sounds give rise to imaginings of the most terrible kind. The scream that ruptures the stillness of the clearing, also serves to shock the viewer out of his or her own hysterical imaginings.

Wylwood (2009), a visceral painting by Scott, was also included in the exhibition. A mix of browns, orange, yellow, green and black paint applied with heavy, extended brush strokes formed the background of the work. Spurred across the top of the painting was lurid, neon pink paint; the gestural forms reminiscent of an action painting or the blood splatter of a brutal murder in a CSI-style television crime show.

Cescon's installation *I swapped my stool for a swivel chair* (2010) included two archetypal protagonists of the horror genre, the zombie and the werewolf. Set amongst an assemblage of domestic props, including a desk lamp that served as a makeshift spotlight, the zombie and the werewolf had a deliberate homemade craft quality that evoked a low budget horror film. The craft aesthetic also extended to the stool and swivel chair of the title, which had the slightly awkward form of a DIY project. The chair was also embellished by a strip of pink fake fur and a congregation of small birds perched on the back of the seat, which lent a dreamlike quality to the assemblage of objects.

Poo Zombies (2010) by Havelock Stevens, Dwyer and Cescon, records a search through the Sydney suburbs of Coogee and Kings Cross for the Pumpkin Buses, a special late night bus service. Accompanied by an instrumental drumming soundtrack, composed and played by Havelock Stevens (the artist also played a live version at the exhibition opening), the video edits together footage of revelers crowded together on city footpaths, queuing for entry into nightclubs, splayed in the gutter or playing up to the camera. Whilst the voyeuristic pleasure in watching the inebriated holds its own repulsive attraction, *Poo Zombies* is also an exploration of ephebiphobia, or the fear of youths. The current incarnation of urban fear, particularly in the form of roaming gangs of drunken youths, has been fed by populist politicians and commercial television current affairs programs making grandiose statements based on documentation similar to the footage in *Poo Zombies*. While there are a number of very serious social problems that have been collated under the umbrella of binge and underage drinking, there is little representation of these issues in the mainstream media. Instead, the coverage focuses on the sensational, embellishing reality for the sake of entertainment and encouraging urban fears.

Positioned in front of the *Poo Zombies* projection, was a human-size cockroach complete with a pair of dirty white platform sandals. Lying face down, the insect looked as though it had crawled, intoxicated, out of the video and passed out on the gallery floor. Dwyer also wore this costume during the opening of *Alterbeast*, in a performance inspired by Kafka's use of 'flatness' in his novels.

As part of *Alterbeast*, a CD catalogue has been produced, which features Havelock Stevens' piece *Nude Drumming*, as well as a foldout double-sided poster. The extension of the project through the CD catalogue illustrates an intention to depart from the traditional exhibition structure and the accompanying ephemera. However, the presentation of *Alterbeast* at Gertrude adhered to a formal presentation, which in many ways undermined the experimental premise of the exhibition.

The premise of *Alterbeast* was not adequately acknowledged in the presentation of the works or alluded to in the exhibition ephemera available at the gallery (although, the exhibition press release did reference the collaborative element of the exhibition). The number of artists and the scale of the works created a full, almost claustrophobic exhibition, in which it was difficult to explore the themes of the individual artworks in relation to each other and the exhibition as a whole, outside of a literal, aesthetic comparison. However messy or unofficial this exchange was intended to be, the experience of viewing the exhibition, as the public presentation of this exploration, would have benefited from a more developed framework in which to approach the project.

Alterbeast was a promising exhibition in the wrong location. If the exhibition was presented in a larger space or a non-gallery space, this may have allowed the viewer to better reflect on the project's investigation of the unknown and the frightening. Most gallery spaces encourage a traditional reading of an exhibition, including the idea that the works presented are complete and finished objects. For projects that are based on alternative models of presentation, or are initiated from experimental methods of development, such expectations are extremely problematic. The difficulty for such projects is in creating situations that can facilitate a different visitor experience.

Alterbeast at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces was held from 5 to 27 March, 2010. The exhibition included artists Carla Cescon, Mikala Dwyer, Grzegorz Gawronski, Rachel Scott and Tina Havelock Stevens.

1. Email correspondence with Mikala Dwyer, 18 May 2010.
2. *Alterbeast*, press release, Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, 2010.

Megan Robson was an inaugural participant in the Firstdraft Emerging Arts Writers Program, a joint initiative between Firstdraft Gallery and runway. Robson was mentored by Reuben Keehan, Curator at Artspace, Sydney. The Firstdraft Emerging Arts Writers Program is supported by Arts NSW.



Dance of Death

SARAH RODIGARI

No matter one's station in life, the dance of death unites all—La Danse Macabre

Outside the Erskineville town hall, I exchange my driver's license for a set of headphones, sign a disclaimer and take a seat in one of twelve black plastic chairs, set up in a waiting room formation along the footpath. I look around; it's one of those days where the weight of the humidity drags you down in cohesion with its smiling accomplice, the midday sun. There is no respite, death by spontaneous combustion seems immanent and dancing, I imagine, might be the best way to go.

I synchronise my start time on the mp3 player alongside a group of relative strangers, it is a slightly awkward beginning and takes a while to get right; nevertheless we laugh, our spirits are lifted, audio relief is here. This is the first of many moments in which I experience a humorous series of anxious connections between myself, my group and our surrounding environment in *Dance of Death*.

Smooth and slightly sinister ambient music accompanies the dulcet, reassuring tones of Jess Olivieri's voice creating the ebb and flow of this tour. We are instructed to take a deep breath, relax, shake out our bodies, our minds, our negative energies and to feel good, to 'feel the fear and do it anyway'.

Dance of Death combines audio tour with performance, directing 12 participants directed through a series of peculiar and charming instructions. Participants are invited to act out a set of subtle choreography: skipping, clicking fingers, walking confidently, crouching and creating pattern formations with the group. The performance runs for 20 minutes and takes you along Erskineville Road, through a park and back to the beginning again.

Above and facing page: Jess Olivieri and Hayley Forward with the Parachutes for Ladies, *Dance of Death*, 2010, audio guide. Photo: the artists.



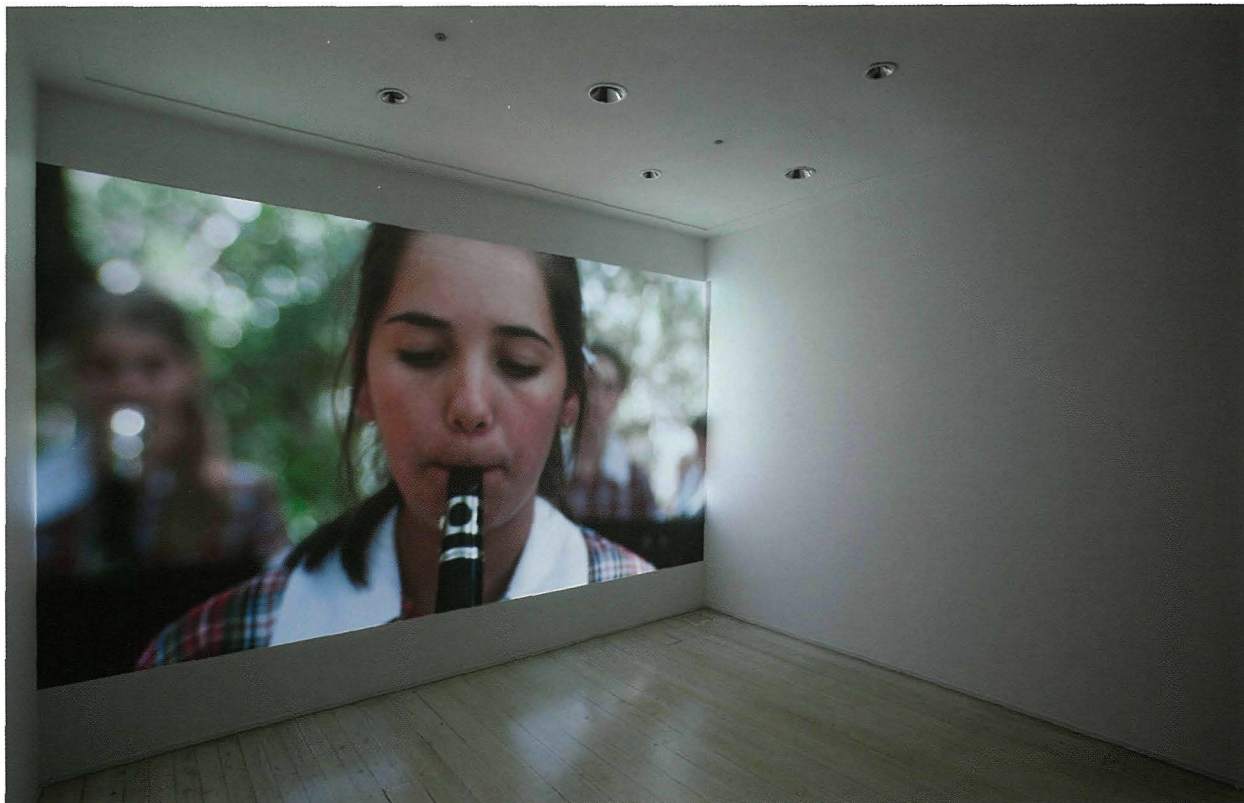
The audio tour is beautifully crafted; it is clear that Olivieri and Forward have gone to great lengths in mapping out the chosen route, perfecting the timing of the choreography and instructions to take us there. The text combines elements of self-help, yoga and beat poetry. The delivery is wry, seductive and most importantly contains a hint of cynicism about the obtuse dogmatic tone that can sometimes be found in self-help books. This cynicism creates a much-needed tension in the audio tour that questions our complicity in following such didactic instruction. It plays on our vulnerability as participants with questions such as: Are we doing it right? Are the others doing it right? Have I been as kind as I could have been today?

There are recurring themes in Jess Olivieri and Hayley Forward with the Parachutes for Ladies' practice, such as the relationship between the individual and group, the territorialisation of space and social behaviour in crowds. Throughout this tour there is an underlying subtext that invites me to question my role in the performance, my willingness to participate and my complicity (or lack of) within the group. In the final statement on the tour we are invited to reflect on our performance: to applaud or not, depending on whether we feel the performance warrants such an accolade.

There exists a beautiful and delicate subtlety that I sometimes miss in the moment of experiencing the work. Should I applaud myself or the artists? I had followed the instructions as best I could. I was relaxed, I felt lighter, kinder towards the world and the people around me, and the audio tour offered a memorable and unique experience specific to the environment that is Erskineville Road. It was uplifting, and a wholly enjoyable experience with just enough space for humour and self-reflection. However where was my dance of death, as the title implied and as I had hoped would save me from the tortuous heat? I didn't really want to clap, it somehow felt inappropriate—I hadn't really done anything, had I? Then I see the rest of my group applauding and I join in, highlighting once again the fine line between separation and connection in collective identities.

Afterwards, as I watch others participate, I see a procession of dancing figures, from all walks of life. I realise the participants in the audio tour are in fact performing a dance of death: but not for themselves, as I imagined and hoped for when I performed it: but rather, for the people on the street. Like the late-medieval allegory, *La Danse Macabre*, it is a reminder for people like myself of how fragile and how vain the glories of earthly life can be.

Dance of Death by Jess Olivieri and Hayley Forward with the Parachutes for Ladies, was an audio guide presented on 6 and 7 March as part of the Tiny Stadiums Festival 2010. The festival, held within the local Erskineville area, was curated by Quarterbred and produced by PACT.



Natural History

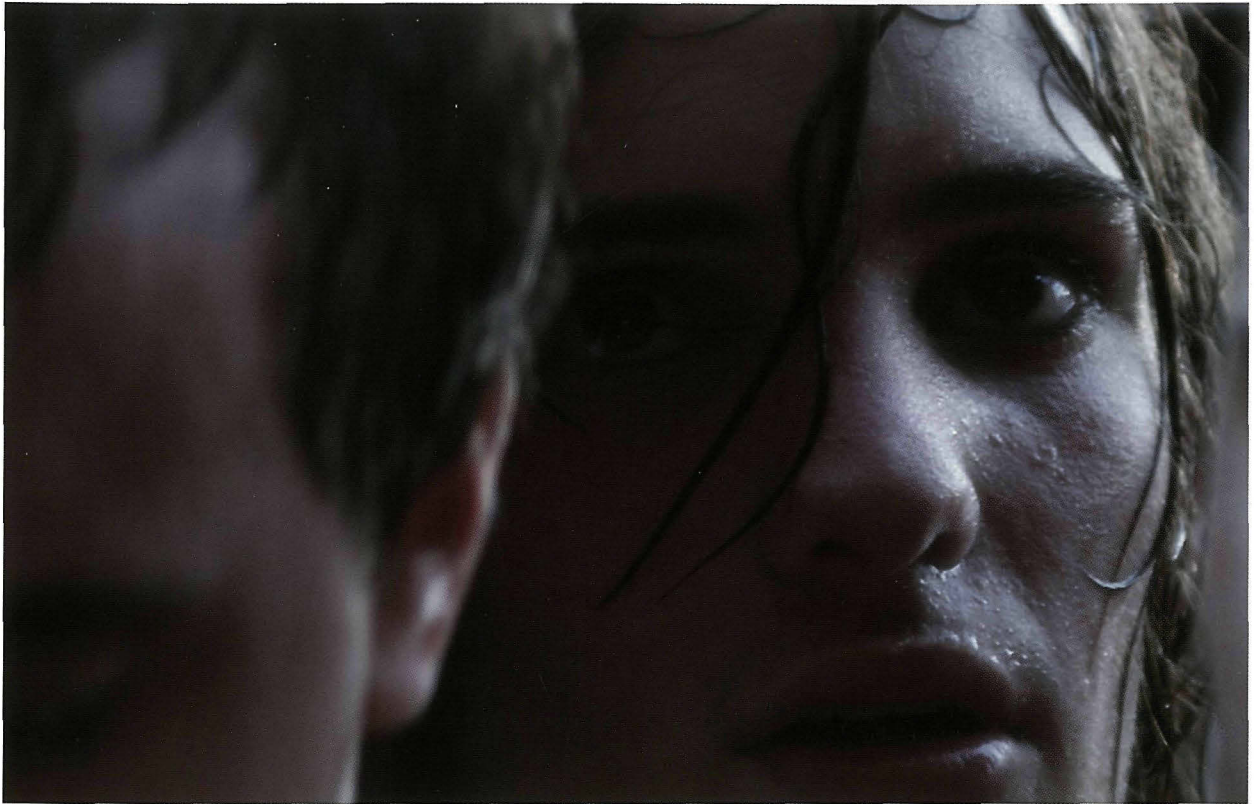
ANGELA BENNETTS

Operating somewhere between the moist fullness of youth and the heaviness of history, the spectator and the spectated, representation and representer, locality and memory; Angelica Mesiti's video works in *Natural History* are alive with double-meanings and ambiguous tensions.

Rapture (silent anthem) (2009) won the Blake Prize for Religious Art (the first video piece to do so) and captures the frantic ecstasy of communal worship; in this case, an off-screen rock show. Bodies jostle, braced teeth grin, moisture droplets mist over bare and occasionally blemished skin. Interestingly the etymology of rapture is the 'act of carrying off': to be seized, kidnapped, even raped. The connotations of spiritual transport were an addendum of the latter centuries. Both definitions suggest being bodily overwhelmed; says Mesiti of her shoot, 'Because it was such an extreme environment with everyone in such close proximity to each, and pushing on each other, and the heat, it's almost like the emotional state is heightened through the physical.'¹ The piece raised some eyebrows when it won the prestigious prize, with *The Australian's* art critic Christopher Allen snarking, 'Ecstasy is cheap.'² And perhaps it is. It feels as if he is actually criticising the form, not the theme—video is accessible and democratised, it has the comfortable pull of porn and family VHS alike. 'I am more interested in using a language that is a real one,' says Mesiti of her medium, 'that is fluent to a broad amount of people, and also to make images that don't necessarily follow a narrative but can be understood.'

The filmwork in *Rapture (silent anthem)* sits plainly and squarely, there is no depth of field, only a shifting wall of flesh. While we feel uneasily close to the anonymous faces—as if the lens was a prodding giant eye of intrusion—Mesiti tells me the cameras were actually about eight metres away. The spectators were initially aware they were being filmed (or spectated) but assimilated the gaze as an ever-

Above: Angelica Mesiti, *Heritage Park*, 2010, digital video projection, installation view, *Natural History*, installation view, Gallery 9, Sydney. Photo: Simon Hewson.



present aspect of our highly visual, recorded culture. Indeed, their rapture can be a stand in for any rapture. Decontextualised, this scene could have taken place almost anywhere; a Hillsong convention, a sports match, a rally. It becomes both highly specific and loose with ambiguity.

Heritage Park (2010) similarly enacts an anywhere/somewhere duality, as it roves over a group of schoolchildren's discordant attempts to master a piece of music thrice removed: a recasting of a Lincolnshire folk ditty by an Australian composer and collector of birdsong, Percy Grainger, originally played by beer factory workers in Milwaukee, Wisconsin decades ago. Commissioned by the Campbelltown Arts Centre for Heritage Week, in *Heritage Park* Mesiti seems to be asking, 'What is heritage?' Is it perceived, actual, or imagined? Is it really just latent futures—the faces of our children (*that which may be inherited*)? The landscape is once again ambiguous; an introduced pine alongside a eucalyptus tree, the sluggish parade of generic cars, trucks, bricks. In the exhibition notes the artist comments that the trees act as markers, and 'reminds us of a continuity that links the past to the present.'³ Importantly, this is a performed past and present; this time we observe the performers. Mesiti continues, 'I wanted to embrace the intersections in performance. I choreographed the filming like it was part of the performance, or how I think about the relationship between the performers and the filming.' In turn, Mesiti, as our 'eye', becomes a part of the dialogue.

Rapture (*silent anthem*) and *Heritage Park* operate in natural visual partnership. *Line of Lode and Death of Charlie Day* (2008) and *Old Time* (2010) are similar in scope and aesthetic. *Old Time* came after *Line of Lode* ... but feels as if it could be a preamble—a denser abbreviation of its longer, larger sibling. Both borrow from cinematic convention; gone is the deliberate handheld clunkiness of *Heritage Park*, or the mute 'unchangingness' of *Rapture*. *Old Time* features an anonymous bush ballad (*How the Sailor Rode the Brumby*), retold by the performer Campbell Irving. His face is a landscape and a history in itself; as a cipher for the Australian mythology of the land, its parochial language its staccato rhythms. Between his gasps and wheezes, we fade in and out of a floodlit, naive painting of a pioneer's cottage (Mesiti tells me this was set in a community hall, 'It's quite interesting the things people choose to represent them') and the gaudy neon phrase 'HOW CAN THE DEAD REPLY' set against a darkened, bruise-black countryside. Again, it is this, a representation of space and memory, within a representation of space and memory. The dead cannot reply but we, the living, can still ask the questions: of the land, of the memories left behind.

Above: Angelica Mesiti, *Rapture* (*silent anthem*) video still, 2009.





Line of Lode ... is the longest of all the works; at just over 17 minutes it was originally conceived of as a multi-channel work that became single channel. Filmed in Broken Hill, the 'line of lode' refers to the waste heap (now entrenched hills) surrounding the town after centuries of mining. Similarly, memories and myths become edifices for creating 'place'. In preparation for *Line of Lode ...* Mesiti spoke to a Paakantji storyteller about the dreaming story of a bronze-winged pigeon, responsible for the area's rich mineral deposits. On screen, pigeons wheel through the smoky sky, while down below young boys wearing silver-flinted capes wheel through the urban streets on bikes. Inside the iconic Mario's Palace Hotel (built by Italian immigrant Mario Celotto), again we are confronted by an amateurish, painted idealism of landscape: walls covered by murals by local Aboriginal artist Gordon Wayne (or 'Charlie Day'). A regal goat paws quietly in front of garden idylls daubed in gouache, as if to highlight how out of place we sometimes are in stories of our own construction, in a land not really owned by us.

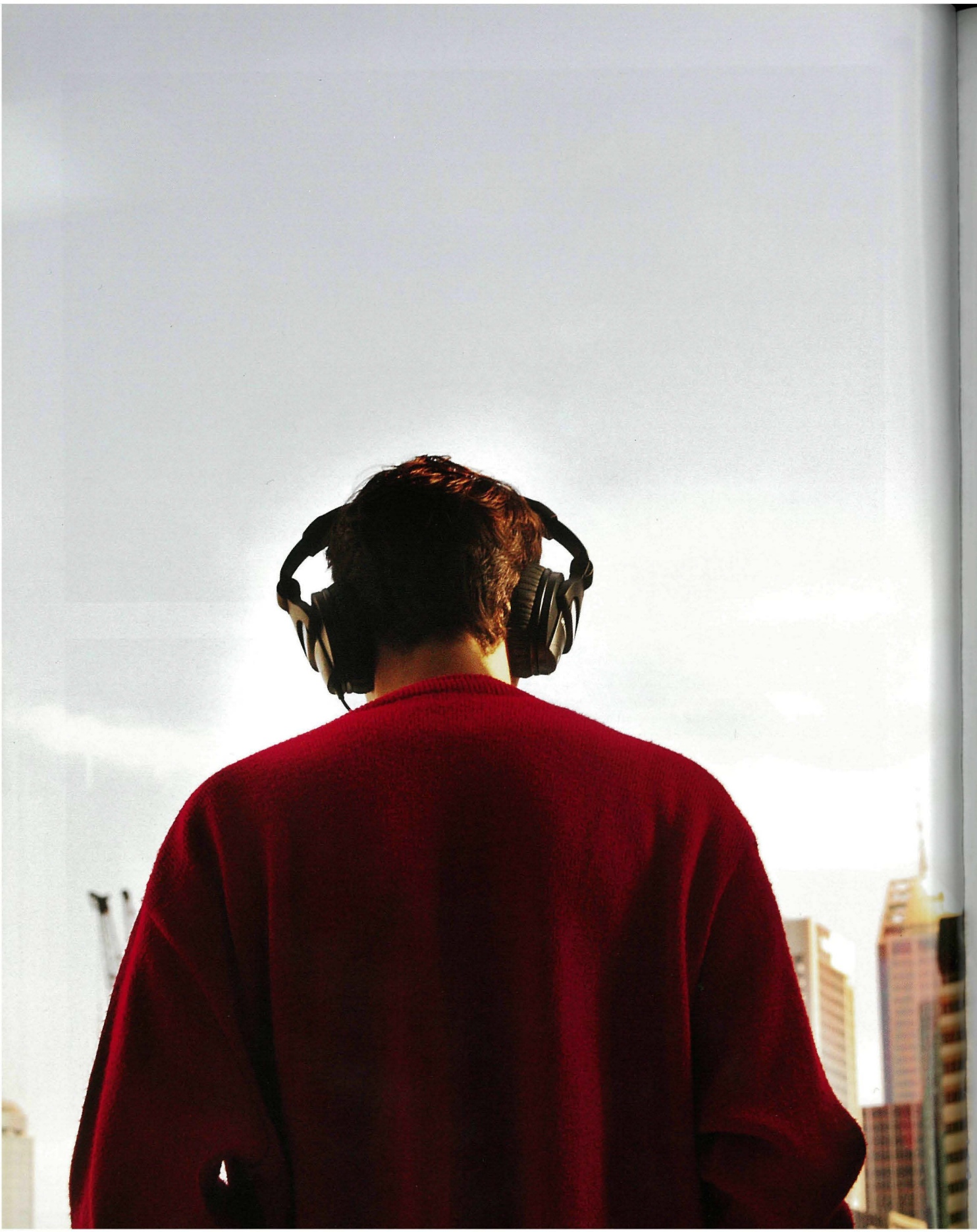
Says Mesiti, 'What I find interesting is locations that seem for one reason or another to have some kind of hidden history to them. I like being an amateur sleuth to find it, or make up my own.' And like mysterious landscapes, we too could approach *Natural History* as holding anachronistic secrets and double-meanings, buried within, for us to uncover.

Angelica Mesiti's exhibition *Natural History* was held at Gallery 9, Sydney from 12 to 29 May, 2010.

1. From a conversation between Angelica Mesiti and the author, 3 June 2010 (all quotes unless indicated otherwise from this conversation).
2. Christopher Allen as quoted in Ashleigh Wilson, 'For winner Angelica Mesiti, the Blake Prize rocks', *The Australian*, Sept 4, 2009.
3. Angelica Mesiti as quoted in Melody Willis, statement accompanying exhibition, 2010.

Facing page (above and below): Angelica Mesiti, *Line of Lode and Death of Charlie Day* (video still), 2008.

Above: Angelica Mesiti, *Old Time*, 2010, digital video projection, installation view, *Natural History*, Gallery 9, Sydney. Photo: Simon Hewson.



Activation and Agency: Two Performances at the 2010 Next Wave Festival

ANNEKE JASPERS

In the introduction to her edited anthology *Participation*, critic and art historian Claire Bishop proposes there are three main agendas driving socially collaborative models of art making today. Of these, two might be described as overtly political: a desire to generate active, empowered subjects; and a desire to engage with notions of community and collective responsibility. Bishop frames the third agenda—critical engagement with authorship—as motivated, at least in part, by the aesthetic potential of chance.¹ Each of these concerns bears relevance to the theme of this year's Next Wave Festival, *No Risk Too Great*, with its allusions to both civic values and the productive realm of uncertainty. So, it was not surprising that the Festival featured a range of works that utilised participatory models of engagement. Among a strong performance program, two such projects stood out for their critical interrogation of the act of spectatorship.

Jess Olivieri and Hayley Forward's site-specific intervention into Melbourne's streetscape, *I thought a musical was being made* (2010), continued their practice of collaborating with an ever changing group of non-performers, the Parachutes for Ladies. The work invited audiences to venture in groups to an upper storey of a city building where they received a set of headphones before taking their place by a window to observe the busy intersection below.² The collectivised structure of the occasion was countered by the socially isolating effect of the headphones, a friction that was further explored through the spatial and audio components of the work.

The soundtrack combined a catchy, cinematic score with an instructional voiceover skilfully delivered by Olivieri, which drew on the phrasing and modulation typically encountered during guided 'new age' activities like yoga and meditation. Olivieri's measured, wry commentary did not explicitly reference the performance being enacted on the street by the Parachutes. This revealed itself through a sequence of modest choreographed gestures and formations amid the flow of peak hour activity: fingers being clicked, feet sweeping in wide arches across the pavement, small groups loitering in poses on corners, heads bobbing as people skipped rhythmically along crossings. Instead, the voiceover focused on drawing the audience into states of observation, self-awareness and introspection. Pragmatic injunctions to perform certain actions or take note of other audience members, ('roll your shoulders', 'look around you'), were melded with more absurd calls to action ('feel all that sadness and put your fingers up into your eyes'), positive assurances ('you are safe, you are secure'), and didactic proclamations ('on your way here today, you saw people who you could have helped, but chose not to'). There was an irreverent, almost disingenuous edge to the tone of delivery, however, which drew attention to the work's conceit of addressing participants' moderation of their own behaviour in response to Olivieri's prompts.

Facing page: Jess Olivieri and Hayley Forward with the Parachutes for Ladies, *I thought a musical was being made*, 2010, performance with audio guide.
Photo: Shea Bresnehan.



Where *I thought a musical was being made* filtered its reflection on how individuals assimilate into collective social contexts through the lens of urban (dis)engagement, *The Short Message Service* took up this critique in explicit relation to theatrical performance. Hosted in a more conventional setting at the Arts Centre, the work unfolded as a series of improvised actions in response to directions given by the audience via text message. The structure and set for the piece were judiciously pared-back. Performers Mish Grigor and Jackson Castiglione were joined onstage by collaborators Leah Shelton and Lachlan Tetlow-Stuart, who acted as unobtrusive mediators from the back of the room, receiving the messages on laptops and then relaying these verbally to the performers using a microphone-to-earpiece setup. There were virtually no props; the audience's attention was emphatically directed to the dimension of interpersonal engagement, which they were actively shaping.

Part of the cleverness of this real-time feedback loop was the interplay it created between transparent and ambiguous elements in the process of exchange. The audience interaction was guided by a series of instructions projected onto a screen. Participants were asked to send messages that would create moments of tenderness between the performers, followed by tension, and finally discomfort. But the texts sent in response, which formed the basis for the performers' improvised actions, were not communicated to the audience. Without this point of reference, it was impossible to interpret the logic of the performers' behaviour, or even consider the skilfulness of their theatrical interpretation. The 'action' of the performance was completely nonsensical and impenetrable. But this was largely the point. The substance of the work was not so much drawn from the nature of the performers' engagement, as that of the audience.

On the night I attended, the instructions from the audience were mostly facile and tedious. There were some attempts to make thoughtful interventions into the construct of the work, but for the most part, people seemed to take sadistic pleasure in exploiting the vulnerability of the performers. They sent absurd exclamations ('I will dance in my undies to any song by Elton John', 'I will happily vote for Tony Abbott'), instructions for crass actions (licking of toes and underarms) and requests verging on the abusive.³ At one point, Grigor—virtually naked, visibly distressed and physically exhausted—broke out of the role-play and confronted the audience as to why no one had instructed for her clothes to be given back. A handful of people with guilty consciences quickly fumbled for their phones; others sat frozen by the uncertainty of whether this was simply part of the fiction.

Above and facing page: Jackson Castiglione and Mish Grigor in *The Short Message Service*, 2010, interactive performance. Photo: Kathryn Feldmaier.



In making clear the implicit accountability of all audience members within the work's structure, this moment neatly reflected the incisiveness of *The Short Message Service's* commentary. The work turned the 'space of exception' created by performance in on itself, and in so doing, revealed how deeply its conventions are ingrained in the spectator psyche. As with *I thought a musical was being made*, it mobilised spectator engagement (or lack thereof) as a mechanism for interrogating the notions of empowerment, complicity and collective responsibility. But where Olivieri and Forward achieved this by heightening a sense of alienation and detachment, *The Short Message Service* generated its impact from an almost suffocating sense of proximity. There was no escaping implication, and no escape from the cycle of cause and effect. In taking the element of chance—and risk—to the extreme, the work was startlingly effective in articulating an ethics of participation.

Jess Olivieri and Hayley Forward with the Parachutes for Ladies *I thought a musical was being made*; and *The Short Message Service*, a collaboration between Jackson Castiglione, Mish Grigor (performers), Leah Shelton and Lachlan Tetlow-Stuart (with Teresa Crea: Dramaturgy), were part of the Next Wave Festival 2010 which ran from 14 to 30 May, 2010.

1. Claire Bishop, 'Introduction: Viewers as Producers' in *Participation* (London: Whitechapel and MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2006) 12.
2. There were actually three separate venues, all clustered around the same intersection, but this was not revealed to the audience until the end of the performance. There were audio tracks tailored to the specifics of each location. The description here relates to the audience experience at the Greek Community Centre.
3. While it was not possible to conclusively determine the prompts during the performance, to mark its end, all of the text messages that had been enacted flashed in sequence on the screen as an accelerated slideshow, giving the audience an opportunity to retrospectively reconcile the performers' actions with the instructions to which they were responding.

Open for Inspection

ELIZABETH STANTON

The cathedral-like central hall of Sydney's CarriageWorks (a former-rail-yard-turned-cultural-precinct in the city's inner west) is an unusual place to find a typical Australian farmhouse. The photographic installation, *Habits and Habitat* by NSW-based artists, Patrick Ronald and Shannon McDonell made this juxtaposition of space and place possible, transporting the domestic interior of a rural home to the heart of the post-industrial site in two dimensions. The work not only acquainted inner city viewers with an overlooked rural reality but also explored the documentary possibilities of the photograph in the digital age.

Across eight large-scale inkjet prints, installed as a series of almost theatrical backdrops through which visitors could wander—a working NSW farmhouse is reproduced on a 1:1 scale. Walking onto the 'set' of someone's bedroom, kitchen and living room, I felt like a virtual trespasser curiously perusing the private spaces, traces and belongings of an absent family. The very lived-in rooms are shown in immaculate detail: Ronald takes thousands of equidistant images of every inch of the home, and McDonell digitally pieces them back together. The effect renders visible the dust settling on the furniture, the patterns in the bedspread, the texture of the papers on the shelves, the views into other rooms and the contrast of the sun-drenched landscape beyond the windows.

This work follows previous collaborations by Ronald and McDonell including, *MICROCOSM—Launceston Heritage Study* (2005) and *Disappearing Tasmania: An Image of the West* (commenced 2006), as well as their own individual practices that have seen the artists use photography to document evolving social histories in regional areas. Throughout Ronald and McDonell's work there is echoes of Walker Evans' and Dorothea Lange's famed documentation of agrarian poverty (for the US Farm Security Administration's photography program, 1935–1944) mixed with what Charlotte Cotton described as the 'deadpan aesthetic' of the masters of architectural detail, Andreas Gursky and Candida Höfer. Against the history of the medium, Ronald and McDonell use digital post-production to explore the possibilities new technologies offer in freezing time and space for closer scrutiny.¹

While providing an impressive amount of visual information, the painstaking level of detail that Ronald and McDonell achieve curiously does not grip the viewer in an empathetic closeness to this particular family's home. In the micro-observation and exactness there is a sense of emotional detachment. This is perhaps heightened by the flattening of perspective created by the digital manipulation. There is no immediately readable 'point of view', as the viewer, I see everything at once, finding myself also positioned 1:1 with the image. The contents of the home become the guide to a trace of the human—the marks on the kitchen wall measuring the height of family members, the photographs within the photographs providing a sense of history.

In describing the artists' process, curator Bec Dean notes, 'Though pseudo-scientific in nature, borrowing from archaeological photography, I view *Habits and Habitat* as an attempt to take a measure and a resonance of domestic spaces that have held the lifetimes of their occupants, but are yet fragile and will in time, disappear'.²

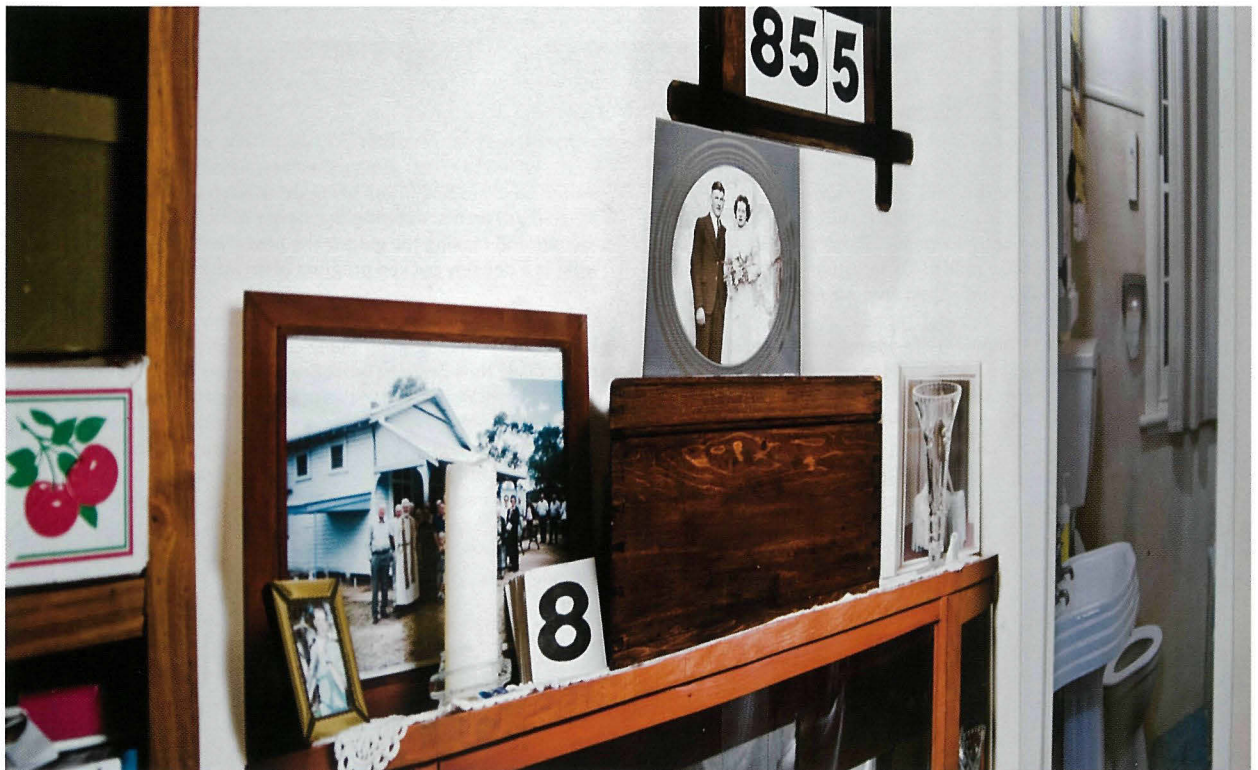
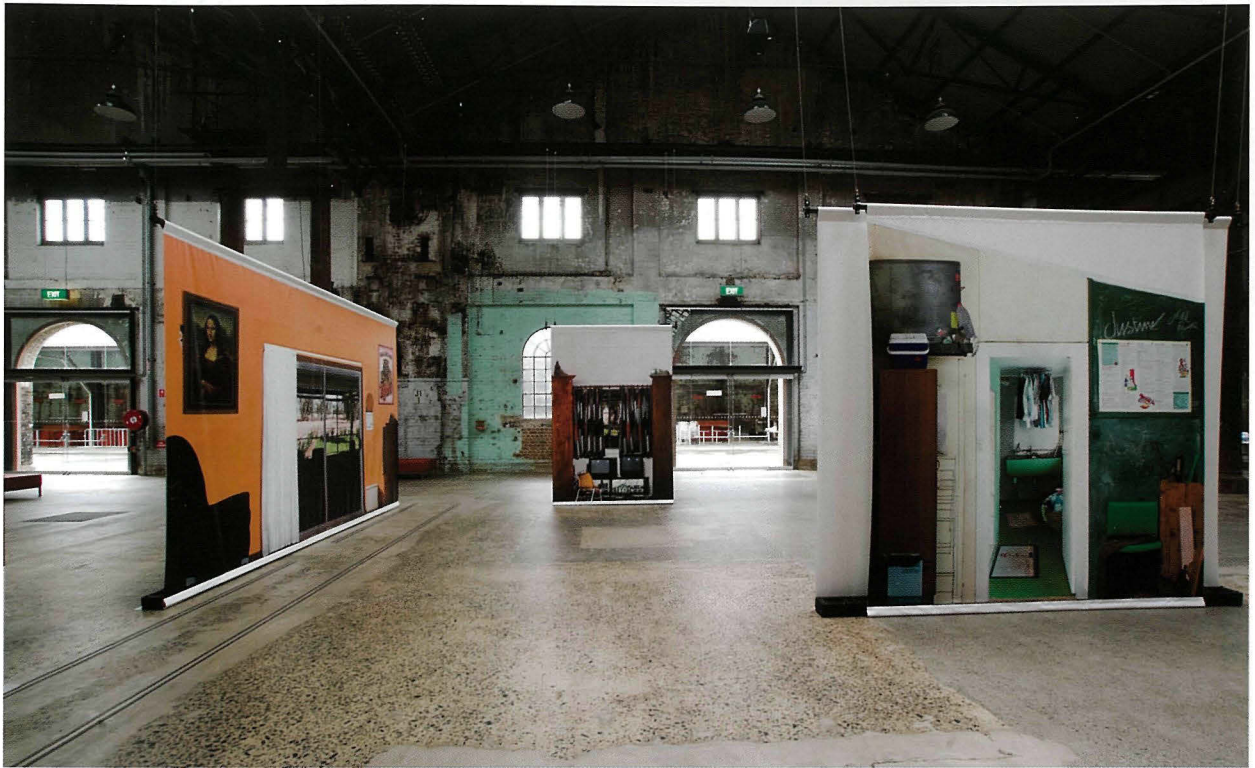
In this way the work investigates our awareness of rural habitats on the verge of change, and perhaps even extinction. The Federal Government's Australia 2020 Summit report on rural Australia (May 2008) painted a picture of an aging, diminishing population with significantly less access to physical and social infrastructure than their urban counterparts. The report noted a 'deep concern that urban Australia mostly holds a negative perception that is thought to be inhibiting remote, rural and regional Australia'.³ *Habits and Habitat* opens a door for us to see a side of rural NSW that contrasts how we've come to know it from media reports laden with youth suicide and drought. The artists reveal a realm not too dissimilar on the inside to our own urban domestic cocoons. While the lighting is bright, the mood is not overwhelmingly optimistic, and as I follow the growth of this family in the height chart on the kitchen wall I wonder what the future holds.

Patrick Ronald and Shannon McDonell's *Habits and Habitat*, curated by Bec Dean, was held at the Performance Space at CarriageWorks, Sydney from 11 February to 17 March 2010.

1. Charlotte Cotton *The Photograph as Contemporary Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004) 81.

2. Bec Dean *Habits and Habitat*, catalogue published by Performance Space, Sydney, 2010.

3. 'Future directions for rural industries and rural communities' in *Australia 2020 Summit: The Final Report* (Published by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, ACT, 2008) 91.



Above: Patrick Ronald and Shannon McDonell, *Habits and Habitat*, 2010, photo-based installation. Photo: Patrick Ronald.

Below: Patrick Ronald and Shannon McDonell, *Habits and Habitat* (detail), 2010, photo-based installation. Photo: Patrick Ronald.

17th Biennale of Sydney

The Beauty of Distance: Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age

ELLA MUDIE

Indulge for a moment in a little mental gymnastics and imagine this: an art world, where all distinctions between high and low, centre and periphery, contemporary and traditional have been obliterated. For a nation that has long felt the pangs of both geographic isolation and of the insecurity resultant in occupying rungs pretty low down the ladder when it comes to international cultural swagger, the premise reads like a Utopian fantasy. Good in theory, that is, but not likely to happen anytime soon.

Yet for his take on the 17th Biennale of Sydney, British Artistic Director David Elliot has done his ambitious best to realise such a world in microcosm across the city's galleries and disused industrial-shells-turned-art-spaces. As with most visionary programs, the questions and issues raised along the way often prove more valuable than any flawless gem at the end and this is true, too, of this year's Biennale. Yes, the message might outweigh aesthetics in a small number of the breathtakingly broad 440 works from over 150 artists on display but, overall, the rewards of delving into this plethora of works—mining the politics of place, language, and identity—are many.

Bringing together all these themes under one rubric is Elliot's provocative title, *The Beauty of Distance: Songs of Survival in a*

Precarious Age. Across the several venues hosting artworks and events, it is at the Museum of Contemporary Art that these ideas are threaded together most cohesively. This is largely thanks to all four of its exhibition floors being devoted to showing Biennale (or associated) works, allowing the viewer to feel the full impact of its themes and making the gallery the best starting point for tackling what is a densely packed program of artworks.

Grounded on the floor in the first room an elegantly streamlined Nighthawk stealth bomber plane carved with traditional Maori patterns by New Zealand artist Brett Graham, titled *Te Hokioi* (2008), is a well-placed precursor to themes to come. Progressing through the gallery, common concerns of cultural resistance, indigenous survival and the need to confront colonisation's pillage and plunder ethos soon emerge, along with a keen sensitivity to the creative transformation artists enact when reclaiming the past from more personal, revisionist perspectives.

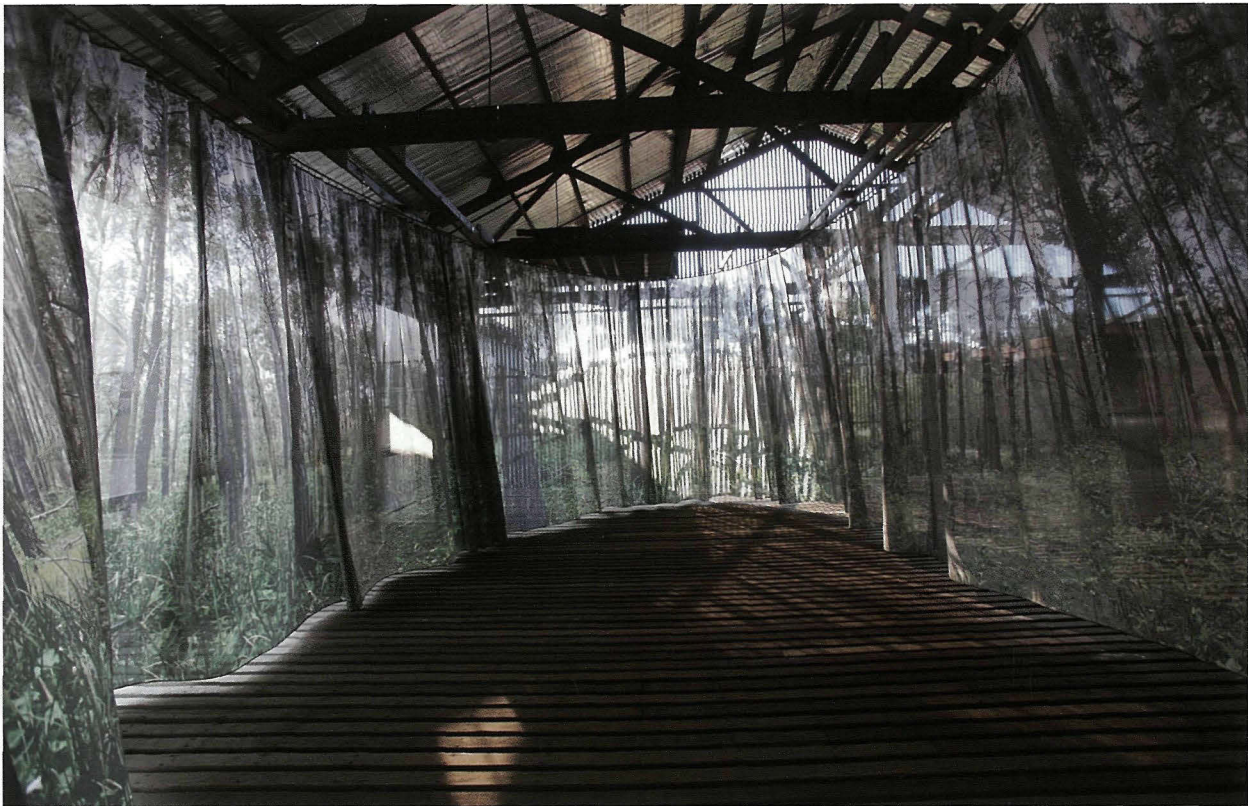
While this idea of countering the ascendancy of the West does at times feel a little over-repeated, it also characterises some of the strongest works on display in the gallery. In Dutch artist Folkert de Jong's deliciously excessive sculptural installation *The Balance* (2010), for example, the viewer meets head-on the greedy delight

Facing page (above left): Brett Graham, *Mihaia*, 2010, sculpture, installation view, 17th Biennale of Sydney at the Museum of Contemporary Art. Photo: Sebastian Kriete.

Facing page (above right): Cai Guo-Qiang, 2004, *Inopportune: Stage One*, nine cars and sequenced multi-channel light tubes, installation view, 17th Biennale of Sydney, Cockatoo Island. Photo: Biennale of Sydney.

Facing page (below): Folkert de Jong, *The Balance*, 2010, sculpture. Photo: Aatjan Renders.





of a group of lavishly dressed conquerors cavorting on barrels of oil and admiring their beaded spoils. John Bock's video featuring a phantasmagorical theatre of the absurd mocking the arrogance of the Enlightenment is by turns absorbing and confronting. New Zealander Fiona Pardington's luminescent series of photographs depicting casts of human heads, *Ahua: A Beautiful Hesitation* (2010), also stands out for its more intimate and elegiac tone.

When it comes to local representation at the MCA, the biggest presence belongs to a collection of 110 memorial poles clad in sacred designs by Indigenous Yolngu artists. Placed in close proximity to a series of erotic totem-style castings by French-American artist Louise Bourgeois, the viewer is further challenged to release any mental barriers between 'traditional' and 'contemporary'. A handful of paintings, sculptures and mixed media works by Australian artists David Noonan, Lorraine Connelly-Northey and Christopher Pease are also included, strategically placed among larger conceptual dialogues. For work by relatively younger local artists, however, Elliot has focused on the Biennale's other major venue, Cockatoo Island, where the open-ended architecture of this former convict prison and defunct naval construction site proves fitting for experimental work.

Dispersed among some of the more hidden (although very interesting) spots, it would be a shame if these works were overlooked, as each proves impressive in its own way. For one, a highly poetic video and sculptural treatment of a rare solar eclipse in Japan by Brodie Ellis, *Umbra: Penumbra: Antumbra* (2010), offers a mesmerising sensory experience that lingers in the mind long after viewing. In a disused timber drying shed Kate McMillan

has printed a forest landscape onto a large semi-transparent curtain for *Islands of incarceration* (2010), creating a still and contemplative environment that turns haunting when you realise it depicts the site of a particularly bloody nineteenth century massacre. Video also emerges as an apt medium for testing the permutations of identity in Jemima Wyman's *Combat Drag* (2008) and Christian Thompson's *Gamu Mambu (Blood Song)* (2010), while a new video and photographic suite by Tarryn Gill and Pilar Mata Dupont takes Dupont's Argentinian ancestry as its point of departure.

Where these works exude a quiet sophistication, others shout more loudly for audience attention. In fact, one term that has cropped up in a few media discussions is spectacle, especially in relation to Brook Andrew's controversial *Jumping Castle War Memorial* (2010) and Cai Guo-Qiang's air-borne exploding car installation *Inopportune: Stage One* (2004), the latter being housed in the soaring Turbine Hall. On a practical level, the huge scale of the space demands high impact works, yet today many artists are creating spectacular works as a means of critiquing the spectacle, suggesting the time is ripe for a re-assessment of the term. At Cockatoo Island some of the most engaging works, like Cai's paradoxically unsettling and awe-inspiring installation, Kader Attia's epic scrap shantytown *Kasbah* (2010), and Isaac Julien's immersive multi-channel video installation *Ten Thousand Waves* (2010), are all indeed spectacular while also being conceptually complex.



The conundrum of spectacle is just one of the many questions the Biennale provokes over the course of its program. Singling out a mere couple of dozen artworks from a selection of hundreds is so subjective it almost feels criminal and it's important to note work is also being shown at Pier 2/3, the Opera House, The Royal Botanic Gardens and at Artspace, where the gallery's transformation into experimental performance space SuperDeluxe alone warrants its own review. The Art Gallery of New South Wales is also showing work under the banner *Focus on Asia*, however renovations have restricted the number of artists being exhibited to just seven. From paintings of modern day militia deities to Minimalist style porcelain vessels finished with ancient glazes, the works are effective all the same in entering into an intriguing conversation with the nearby Asian wing.

Some of the common criticisms levelled at biennales today revolve around assertions of over-hype and the turning of the act of viewing art into a 'theme-park' experience. Applied to this year's Biennale of Sydney, such complaints seem shallow and a little unfair. Certainly Cockatoo Island has assumed something of a 'playground' feel, still for this viewer the Biennale of Sydney remains highly relevant for its curatorial rigour and commitment to delivering progressive ideas in a global context, much needed in a city where Government sanctioned large-scale events too often lean toward style over substance.

The 17th installment sets out to be something of a people's biennale, with its democratising principle 'all art is folk art': and without compromising on quality, it largely achieves this aim. A world without hierarchies still remains a faraway Utopia, but after having been offered a taste of how one might work, it's hard not to want to make it a reality today.

17th Biennale of Sydney, *The Beauty of Distance: Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age*, various venues, 12 May to 1 August 2010.

Facing page: Kate McMillan, *Islands of incarceration*, 2010, solvent based inks on polysynthetic fabric, metal tracking, multi-channel sound by Cat Hope, installation view, the 17th Biennale of Sydney at Cockatoo Island. Photo: Ben Symons.

Above: Brook Andrew, *Jumping Castle War Memorial*, 2010, outdoor sculpture, installation view, the 17th Biennale of Sydney at Cockatoo Island. Photo: Ben Symons.



SafARI 2010: Drop Your Weapons

LYNNE BARWICK

SafARI runs alongside the Biennale of Sydney, declaring in a modest voice its intention to drum up some traffic for the local Artist-Run Initiatives (ARIs) while the big wigs are in town. First seen in 2006, this is the third season of the project. The program echoes that of the Biennale: exhibitions in multiple venues, artist talks, a forum, a website, a performance, an opening and closing party.

The curators of *SafARI* do not impose a theme. Artists without gallery representation submit proposals and those deemed the best of the crop are invited to exhibit. In the tradition of ARIs, the artists then choose what they will show without further direction from the curators. The audience is challenged to make their own connections between the artworks, to take on an aspect of the curatorial role.

The works were spread out over three galleries, a building facade and a performance venue. Walking the route between the sites, I took a rough tour of the gentrified, the neglected and the evolving territory of inner city Sydney. It's a hub of transport, large-scale redevelopment, failed enterprise and the small interventions of individuals. It was a fitting setting for the art on show in *SafARI 2010*, and the themes that emerged between the works as I travelled from one to the next.

Biljana Jancic's *Reaching Green* (2010) filled the single, darkened room of Locksmith Project Space with five green laser beams,

slightly blurred by the fog of a hand-operated smoke machine. Like a forgotten security device it monitored emptied out terrain. It was a minimal, resonant work that suggested surveillance is its own end. Vincent and Vaughan O'Connor exhibited collaborative works at Serial Space that stemmed from their interest in post-industrial landscapes. *Observer* (2010), was made up of chunks of debris souvenired from an abandoned factory. These were laser-etched with geometric forms and diagrammatic sound waves; inset with Polaroids of thriving weeds. Fluorescent sensor lights flickered on and off. It was a silent work that was enhanced by the O'Connors' site-specific sound performance. This made use of sampled, sparking electrical noise that threaded back and forth between the artists—feedback that swelled to an ambient crescendo. This was art as field research, drawing correlations between the physical and auditory markers of space and time.

A number of other artists in *SafARI* used processes like feedback to generate work. Rolande Souliere's sculptural installation *Platform B* (2010) consisted of reflective structures and barriers, both found and made. The forms appropriated and extended the coded language of traffic and pedestrian control. But this was a closed system. The warning signs, lights and mirrors pointed back and forth to themselves, creating a coherent world of extraneous information and heightened threat in carnival colours. Similarly operating within a loop of references were Caroline Phillips' wall and floor sculptures *Portrait* (2010), *Untitled* (2010) and *Spineless* (2010). Phillips applied minimal craft processes to semi-

Above: Biljana Janic, *Reaching Green*, 2010, installation view, *SafARI*, Locksmith Project, Sydney. Photo: the artist.

Facing page: Leahlani Johnson, *How do you lengthen so far that high wind suspends and stretched air envelopes beneath?*, 2010, installation with video, MOP Projects, Sydney. Photo: the artist.



industrial materials like rubber, foam and plastic. Resembling the documentation of a performance, the sculptures drew attention to the types of repetitive acts that created them: cut, tie, twist, bind and respond.

Like Phillips' and Souliere's installations, Leahlani Johnson's, *How do you lengthen so far that high wind suspends and stretched air envelopes beneath?* (2010) made use of an internal referring system that brought the artist's decision-making processes to the foreground. The installation was constructed with leftovers: packaging, broken plastic and laundry baskets. Shapes of light were projected onto paper, string and small canvases on the walls. Digital projectors were placed inside lampshades and handmade shelters. It was an attempt to humanise technology but also to rattle its authority, a refusal to use it as prescribed.

A further example of self-enclosed worlds, Jason Sims' mirror and light boxes *Contract / Expand* (2010), *Reflections of Another* (2010) and *Coalesce* (2010) gave the illusion of dimensions beyond physical boundaries. The reflected light opened up geometric space until it faded out into a black void. Also connecting illumination and abstraction was Marius Jastkowiak, who exhibited a suite of small paintings of neon lights derived from out-of-focus photographs. In contrast to Sims', Jastkowiak's works were concerned with the collapsing space of peripheral vision.

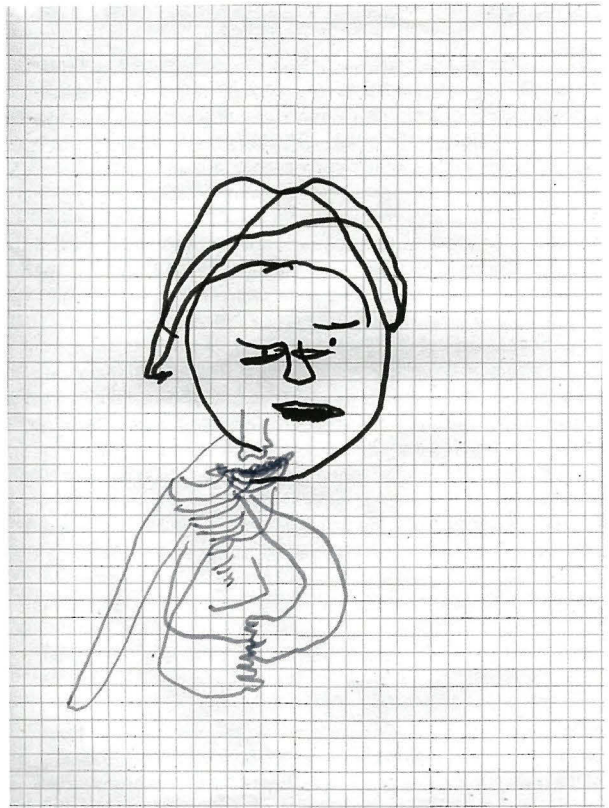
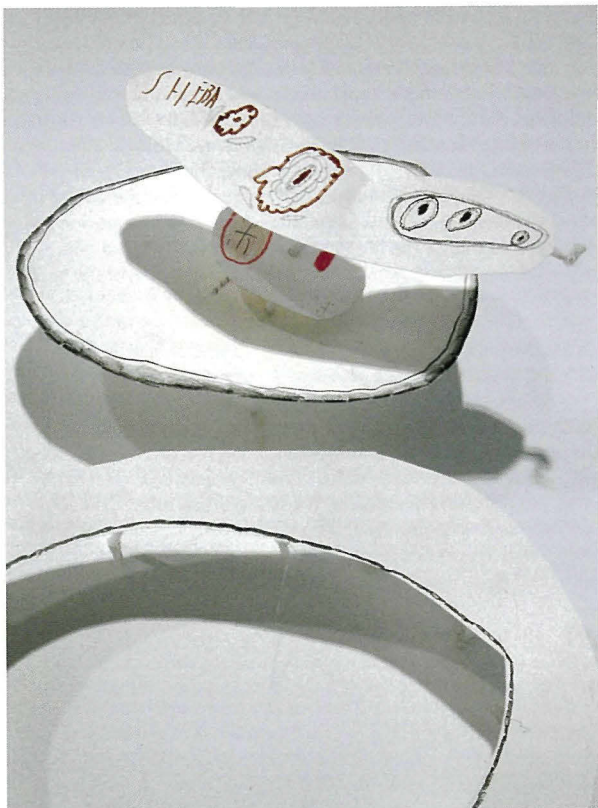
Many of the artworks in *SafARI* exuded a sense of disillusionment. Chris Town's prints of collaged refuse could be used to sum up the overall aesthetic of the exhibition. Both *Staring Into The Corner Of A Blackened Room: 12AM – 3AM* (2010) and *Staring Into The Corner Of A Blackened Room: 3AM–6AM* (2010) had a forlorn, wasted glamour. While Will French's *In a Different Light* (2010), an Australian flag mounted behind tobacco coloured perspex, had a melancholic clarity. His was the least internal of the work

on display and it was the work of an artist who is deservedly confident.

Tom Polo employed serious humour with a series of casually painted text pieces, *Continuous One Liners (Keep Going)* (2009–10). Polo trumpeted the clichéd language of success and failure, revelling in the pathetic superstitions and humiliations of ego and ambition. Another work that suggested with mournful wit the gap between intention and ability was Sue-Ching Lascelles' *Silhouette Sightseers* (2010). An array of wall-mounted plinths supported stuffed felt hands and forearms that demonstrated the old art of hand shadows. Black vinyl silhouettes on the wall shadowed the outline of each, but the felt fingers and hands sagged in gentle dejection contrasting with the implausibly fine detail of the shadows.

Of a different order to the other works included were Karla Dickens' exuberant Black Madonna mixed media paintings. Dickens merges references and visual styles: Aboriginity, motherhood, religion, colonial history, dot painting, domestic decoration, folk art and a hint of camp. Big themes were wielded with conviction. However, mostly *SafARI* consisted of art that wasn't designed to overpower. These are urban artists, quietly tuning in to the frequency of their surroundings, taking readings from the rubble of our morphing and collapsing environments, with the full knowledge that they in turn are being monitored.

SafARI 2010 curated by Lisa Corsi and Danielle Hairs was held at MOP Projects, Firstdraft Gallery, Locksmith Project Space, Serial Space and FBI Radio (Facade) from 5 to 23 May 2010. The artists involved were Nils Crompton, Biljana Jancic, Karla Dickens, Will French, Chris Town, Sue-Ching Lascelles, Leahlani Johnson, Vincent and Vaughan O'Connor, Rolande Souliere, Caroline Phillips, Marius Jastkowiak, Linda Wilken, Tom Polo and Jason Sims.



Great Western Drawing

ELIZABETH STANTON

The philosophers of the Enlightenment considered drawing to be the 'grammar of art'.¹ With this in mind, the exhibition *No Right Turn—Drawing from Western Sydney*, at the Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest, could be described as a concise but loosely defined visual essay on the recent drawing practice of artists who share a connection to the medium (in its 'traditional' guise of ink, pencil, charcoal, graphite, pastel or pen on paper) and to Western Sydney.

Recognising the ongoing chorus of critical debate surrounding definitions of drawing, curator Dr Shirley Daborn placed viewers directly in the hands of 14 artists and it is through their works that a tale of the diverse possibilities of contemporary drawing emerges. Drawing, as we come to know it through *No Right Turn*, has shaken off its distant academic ancestors to go its own way; proving to be more than a tool for preparatory studies or recordings, but a direct and complete medium covering observational, conceptual, political, psychological, intuitive, performative and even sonic ground.

The exhibition began with works by Catherine O'Donnell and Regina Walter that immediately impressed. O'Donnell's charcoal renderings of urban buildings, isolated on crisp white paper, lured me in with their masterful illusion and the mesmerising geometric patterns of the architecture and its decoration. The photorealism of her works is more akin to those of German photographers Bernard and Hiller Becher than the mere replication of a snap shot. Opposite, Regina Walter's celestial moonscapes revealed a brilliant white moon emerging from the darkest ebony of the black paper. Walter appears to have landed on the lunar surface, mapping her findings with scientific accuracy, though she admits to taking 'some artistic license'.²

Moving away from immediately recognisable subjects was Joyce Hinterding's *Aura C* (2010), an interactive installation that energises drawing by literally hooking it up to an electromagnetic field. The graphite works on paper appear like aerial maps of sonic mazes; their creator (hand or machine) is ambiguous. Their purpose becomes clear when following instructions to touch a cable linked to four works on a table: the graphite acts as antennae, conducting the surrounding energy, turning the viewer into a kind of DJ, where touch injects a loud basso sound into the gallery.

The performative nature of drawing was more subtly but powerfully present in Kenzee Patterson's *The Coal Sack* (2008). Isolated on the page, a gritty, circular formation refers to the astrological phenomenon of the 'Coalsack dark nebula' near the Southern Cross. This subject comes pre-infused with connotations of a dark cloud at the centre of our symbol of national 'pride'. What is interesting is Patterson's method of mark making—this work was not drawn from observation but was created after the artist inadvertently inhaled coal dust and spat onto a piece of paper. The resulting 'drawing' removes the hand entirely from the gesture, focusing on the concept and the 'action'.

Tom Polo's *Night Drawings* (2009-10) also employs performative gestures that deny what one might assume to be essential to any drawing: sight. In the throngs of insomnia, Polo sits in the dark (at times with eyes closed) and draws to court drowsiness. *Night Drawings* are a mix of portraits and interior landscapes that fully express the role of memory in drawing—not only the artist's memory of the subjects, but also the memory of the previous gesture that the hand must follow in the dark. In his essay, *Memoirs of the Blind*, Jacques Derrida noted that 'one draws only on the condition of *not* seeing'³ [italics added], suggesting that drawing is connected more to memory and anticipation. In removing sight, Polo directly communicates his interior vision.

Drew Bickford depicts demons of a different kind in *FRENZY* (2008), a triptych of exquisitely drawn, intricately coded pen 'portraits' of serial killers that lie some where between Hieronymus Bosch's vision of the underworld (think *The Garden of Earthly Delights*) and the unfortunate souls of Michelangelo's *The Last Judgment*. In *Cunanan* (one drawing of the triptych), an undead corpse forms the foundation for a snarling, rotting, twisting tower of hairy, decaying ghouls. This is clearly the most challenging subject matter in the exhibition and Bickford's near-baroque treatment of forms captivate the eye, working with the intimate scale to draw us closer to these abject subjects.

Eliminating detail but also using coded references, David Capra's *Drinking it in* (2010) takes the drawn line literally into the third dimension. His series of small, mushroom cloud-like cut-out paper forms are scattered across the wall and over a ground-level plinth. The viewer is forced to approach these works as if floating above them. Is this an imagined city of clouds? Or a series of small

Facing page (above): *No Right Turn*, installation view, (works from left to right): David Capra, *Drinking It In*, 2010, paper, graphite, felt tip, straws; Charles Dennington, *Worms Head*, 2009, graphite on paper; and Locust Jones, *Mountain of Dawn*, 2010, graphite and ink on paper. Photo: Silversalt Photography.

Facing page (left): David Capra, *Drinking It In* (detail), 2010, paper, graphite, felt tip, straws. Photo: the artist.

Facing page (right): Tom Polo, from the series *Night Drawings*, 2009-10, graphite and texta on paper. Photo: the artist.



controlled paper explosions? The presentation was reminiscent of Congolese artist Kimbembe Ihunga's fantasy metropolises and a similar sense of complete freedom in the creative process is present in Capra's unbridled forms. While the work is playful, subtle text inscriptions refer to the ecstatic religious state of 'speaking in tongues'.

While presenting a wide variety of work, *No Right Turn* wanted for a tighter contextual framework. For an exhibition so devoted to works on paper the noticeable absence of a printed catalogue (or room sheet) was a little ironic. Daborn's curatorial essay is available online and while it provides an adequate introduction, it missed an opportunity to elaborate on the curatorial decisions made in selecting this group of artists, the connection of their work to Western Sydney and more importantly, the complex issues relating to drawing today.

All the drawn lines in the gallery couldn't answer some key questions: How are these artists—some of whom are emerging and others established—positioned within the direction of drawing practice locally and nationally? Is drawing their primary practice or part of a multidisciplinary oeuvre? How have art schools shaped the direction of their drawing practice? What are the implications of the closure of the art school at the University of Western Sydney for future exhibitions of this kind? Was the selection criteria purely geographical and is this a comprehensive group? If so, why were some notable artists working in the region—Joan Ross, Adam Cullen and Michael Butler among them—absent? Is the recent attention being paid to the medium by museums and galleries linked to a need to increase its



market value? Or is there a mini-trend for drawing exhibitions as the public is comfortable and familiar with the medium and exhibitions are 'a numbers game'? To these questions there are *no right answers*, but it is hoped a discussion continues along with the intriguing practice of these artists.

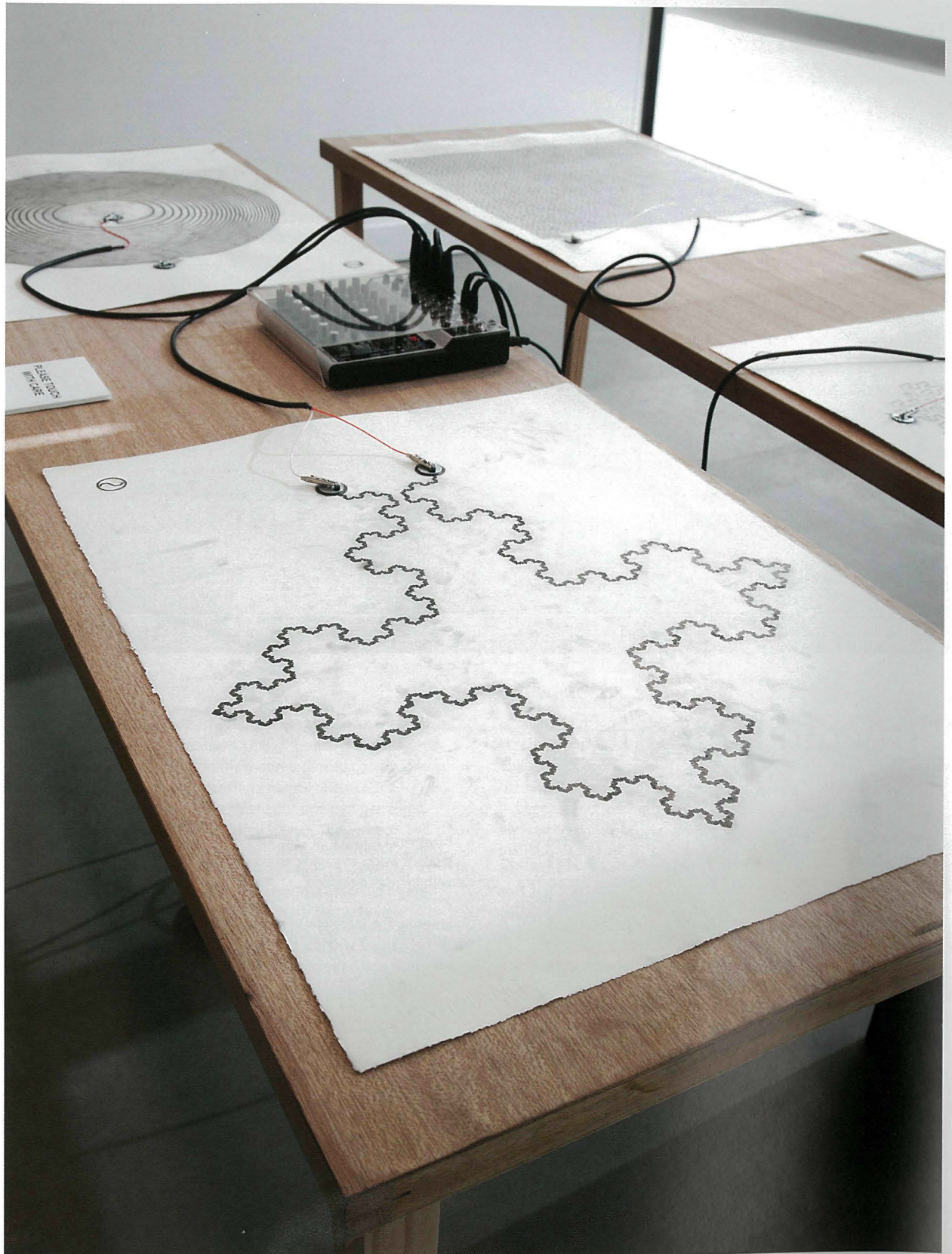
No Right Turn—Drawing from Western Sydney, curated by Dr Shirley Daborn, was held at Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest from 10 April to 27 June 2010. The exhibition featured Drew Bickford, David Capra, Charles Dennington, Dr Anne Edmonds, Joyce Hinterding, Matthew Hopkins, Locust Jones, Luis Martinez, Catherine O'Donnell, Kenzee Patterson, Tom Polo, Kurt Schranzer, Regina Walter and Carla Wherby.

1. Deanna Petherbridge, 'Nailing the Liminal: The Difficulties of Defining Drawing' in *Writing on Drawing: Essays on Drawing Practice and Research*, ed. S.W. Garner (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2006) 29.
2. Regina Walter, artist statement, 2010.
3. Jacques Derrida *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self Portrait and Other Ruins* Translated by Pascale-Anne Brault & Michael Naas. (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1993) p.49.

Above (left): Kenzee Petterson, *The Coal Sack* (detail), 2008, ingested coal dust and saliva on paper. Photo: Alex Reznick.

Above (right): Catherine O'Donnell, *Civic Centre* (detail), 2010, charcoal on paper. Photo: the artist.

Facing page: Joyce Hinterding, *Aura C*, 2010, interactive drawing installation, installation view, *No Right Turn*, Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest. Photo: Silversalt Photography





Structural Integrity

LEON GOH

Spread out across Melbourne and occupying spaces that ranged from the cavernous to the uncanny, from iconic sports stadiums to disused back laneways, the 2010 Next Wave Festival once again infiltrated, subverted and critiqued our social and cultural fabric. The Next Wave Festival has consistently provided invaluable avenues for emerging artists, writers and curators to engage with the world around them and this year's *raison d'être* 'No Risk Too Great' took this one step further as it sought to examine and breakdown the structures that inform and control the risk-averse society we inhabit. One of the most ambitious and large-scale exhibitions of the festival, *Structural Integrity* brought together six Australian and five Asian artist-run spaces at the Arts House, Meat Market in North Melbourne. Envisaged to reference world fairs of times past—with demarcated pavilion style spaces for each ARI—there was a real risk that the collating of such disparate voices would create an exhibition that felt disjointed to the viewer. Inevitably, thematic inconsistency was always a risk as multiple conceptual voices were intertwined with varied artistic mediums,

however, I found that I became increasingly swept up in each space's work: engaging and disengaging with each ARI's project with increasing speed.

Entering the Meat Market I was confronted with a cacophony of mechanical sounds: the whirring of electrical motors and the crash and bang of metallic destruction. Six_a_INC's work *Supercharger* (2010) sat in the centre of the cavernous space recalling barren landscapes of an interstellar world. Here the spectator's relationship with the work became challenged, as outcomes and ways of engagement were cleverly left unanswered. Visitors were encouraged to take the reins of these individually conceptualised remote controlled 'super-mobile-art-devices'. It was an engagement that was entirely mesmeric, as these remote controlled devices meandered and maneuvered over strategically placed obstacles and crashed into each other rendering their fate delightfully unknown.

Above: Six_a_INC (Astrid Joyce, Alicia King, Amanda Shone, Mish Meijers, Peter A. Robinson and Tricky Walsh), *Supercharger*, 2010, installation. Photo: Shea Bresnehan.
Facing page: Masahiro Wada, *Welcome Stranger*, 2010, mixed media installation. Photo: Shea Bresnehan.



Amid the colour and noise of the main Meat Market space—where Locksmith Project Space created a kind of mobile home made up of unfinished scraps of floral fabric that referenced parade ground contraptions or perhaps the transitory nature of circus life—I was drawn to spaces that sought to explore our sense of place and identity from entirely different cultural frames of reference. The Asian ARIs that formed an integral part of this exhibition brought an extra conceptual layer, as a number of them, in particular Art Centre Ongoing from Tokyo, Japan and Post Museum from Singapore, adopted an outsider view of Australia. This view cleverly positioned Australia as a kind of ‘other’ inverting the us and them dichotomy that is frequently adopted by the mainstream to frame issues of nationhood. Masahiro Wada’s faux campsite living room installation acted as an archive of time that he spent in country Victoria. Wada erected a makeshift temporary shelter in the centre of the space, using scraps of wood for the roof and the supporting walls. On the wall, haphazardly installed shelves displayed a photo archive made up of shots of scrubby bush, gold rush imagery and found detritus. Witnessing our interior and constructed mythologies presented through the lens of someone else positions our cultural identity front and centre, and prompted me to question its modes of construction.

The specificity of cultural identity and the social contexts that consequently inform its construction were also explored throughout Zhou Tao’s work *1,2,3,4* (2010), which formed part

of Vitamin Creative Spaces’ mini pavilion. Shown on a small LCD monitor, Tao’s video work captured the morning routines of Chinese workers in various industries. With uniforms ranging from the brightly coloured to the navy blue of industrial workers, the workers yelled ‘1,2,3,4’ as they participated in morning marches and roll calls that appeared entirely militaristic in their intent; an instilling of discipline through regimentation. At its root, this work examines the conceptualisation of the individual as insignificant and acted as a profound visual account of the strength of the collective concept in China even as it concurrently embraces a *laissez-faire* western economic model.

Dichotomies of collective action versus individual pursuit, social justice versus government inactivity also featured prominently in the Post Museum’s public action work. During its residency in Melbourne, this ARI gathered together a number of social justice groups that included Green Renters and Project Respect. Documented as part video work, part installation, *All Together Now* (2010) brought together representatives from these disparate groups in the city of Melbourne. Forming a single circular mass through an interlinked t-shirt, they meandered slowly down Bourke St amid a sea of curious onlookers. The object of the interlinked t-shirt became a strong visual metaphor for the importance of social justice groups supporting and influencing our everyday for the better. Adopting the approach of an outsider looking inwards, Post Museum created a work that subtly critiques



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and I Support
NATIVE TITLE

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the social apathy that so often is embedded in societies such as Australia and Singapore.

Devoid of this social edge, but no less impressive in its scope, House of Natural Fibre's new media installation *S.A.T.U (Saturn Analogy of Trans-Urgency)* (2010) explored hexagonal geometric theory and ruptured the relative calm at the rear of the Meat Market space as experimental computer bleeps and noises created a distinct soundscape. The work repeated the form of the hexagon, both in structural elements and in video; the viewer was immersed within a field of geometry as a dazzling interplay of light and sound enveloped the space.

As I walked in and among the pavilions, aesthetic links began to emerge from the diverse cultural and conceptual works of the ARI's. Geometric forms also made up the structural elements of Boxcopy's process driven mixed-media installation *Simple Pleasures* (2010), which recalled imagery of the humble shed as paraphernalia of a suburban existence: stubbie holders, bikes and sporting equipment, were strategically littered throughout. Strategies of documentation were also embedded in Y3K's space, which used large sheets of flaccid fabric to demarcate a sort of 'anti-pavilion'. These aesthetic interplays and the intermingling

of distinct artistic identities imbued the exhibition with a sense of dynamism and occasion. No doubt due to the considered curatorial hand of Jeff Kahn and Ulanda Blair, as a spectator the visual over-stimulation left me in a continual state of unrest as I was continually drawn into each space only to be spat out the other end. Before leaving, I sat down and took a quiet moment to view Safari Team's video work *Dig to China—part III* (2009). Housed in its own mini-viewing amphitheatre as part of Westspace's pavilion, this work is ultimately a process of discovery, as each protagonist dives, digs and journeys closer to the centre of the earth. Throwing caution to the wind, Safari Team's wonderfully stylized exploratory account of what lies beneath the surface eloquently and humourously reminded me that risks are always worth taking no matter what the cost.

Structural Integrity, curated by Jeff Kahn and Ulanda Blair, was part of the Next Wave Festival 2010, which ran from 14 to 30 May, 2010. The participating ARIs were Art Center Ongoing (Tokyo, Japan), Boxcopy Contemporary Art Space (Brisbane), FELTspace (Adelaide), House of Natural Fiber, (Yogyakarta, Indonesia), Locksmith Project Space (Sydney), Post-Museum (Singapore), Six_a Artist Run Initiative (Hobart), Tutok (Manila, Philippines), Vitamin Creative Space (Guangzhou, China), West Space (Melbourne) and Y3K, (Melbourne).

Above: Westspace's pavillion featuring works by Greatest Hits, Veronica Kent, Alanna Lorenzon, Rowan McNaught, Scott Mitchell + the Brunswick Secondary College Science-Art Club, Safari Team, Ben Sheppard, Nick Waddell, Jordan Wood, Nicki Wynnychuk, Kelly Fliedner and Phip Murray. Photo: Shea Bresnehan. Facing page: Post Museum *All Together Now*, 2010, video, performance and installation. Photo: Shea Bresnehan.

PREVIEWS



Forthcoming Exhibitions

NSW

DAN IF I DO, DAN IF I DONT | DAN MOYNIHAN

24 June – 24 July
GrantPirrie Window
86 George Street, Redfern
www.grantpirrie.com

PROLIFERATION | KATH FRIES

1 July – 13 July
Gaffa
281 Clarence Street, Sydney
www.gaffa.com.au

THE STRANGER'S EYE | YVONNE BOAG, RICHARD GLOVER, THOMAS LOVEDAY and ANNE ZAHALKA curated by DONNA WEST BRETT

1 July – 24 July
Peloton
25 Meager Street, Chippendale
www.peloton.net.au

HARDBODIES | GARY CARSLY, ALEX GAWRONSKI, ANGELICA MESITI and PETER VOLICH curated by SHANE HASEMAN

3 July – 10 October
Hazelhurst Regional Gallery & Arts Centre
Garden Billboard Project
782 Kingsway, Gympie
www.hazelhurst.com.au

BIG IN JAPAN | SARAH GOFFMAN

8 July – 25 July
MOP
2/39 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale
www.mop.org.au

THE CELL | BROOK ANDREW

9 July – 18 September
Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation
16–20 Goodhope Street, Paddington
www.sherman-scaf.org.au

THE MESSAGE | DAVID LAWREY & JAKI MIDDLETON

23 July – 8 August
Institute of Contemporary Art Newtown
191 Wilson Street, Newtown
www.icanart.wordpress.com

MADE IN THE CROSS | NELL

12 August – 4 September
Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery
8 Soudan Lane (off Hampden Street), Paddington
www.roslynoxley9.com.au

GRANDE FARTHER PARA DOCS | MS&MR

13 August – 10 September
Artspace
43–51 Cowper Wharf Road, Woolloomooloo
www.artspace.org.au

PRIMAVERA 2010 | AKIRA AKIRA, JULIE FRAGAR, AGATHA GOTHE-SNAPE, ALISDAIR McLUCKIE, JAMES NEWITT, JACKSON SLATTERY and EMMA WHITE

20 August – 18 September
MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART
140 George Street, The Rocks
www.mca.com.au

MITCH CAIRNS

20 August – 18 September
BRENSPACE
289 Young Street, Waterloo
www.breenspace.com

FRANCES BARRETT

16 September – 25 September
Locksmith Project Space
6 Botany Rd, Alexandria
www.locksmithprojectspace.com

Above: Benedict Ernst, *Golden World (the Wall and the Door)* (detail), 2010, installation. Photo: the artist.



CHRISTIAN THOMPSON

23 September – 8 October
Chalk Horse
56 Cooper Street, Surry Hills
www.chalkhorse.com.au

QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE AIRPORT FRESH CUT | SALLY GOLDING, KELLY HUSSEY-SMITH, FIONA MAIL and ELIZABETH WILLING

7 August – 18 September
Institute of Modern Art
420 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley
www.ima.org.au

STEPHEN RUSSELL

11 August – 28 August
Metro Arts Galleries
Level 1/109 Edward Street, Brisbane
www.metroarts.com.au

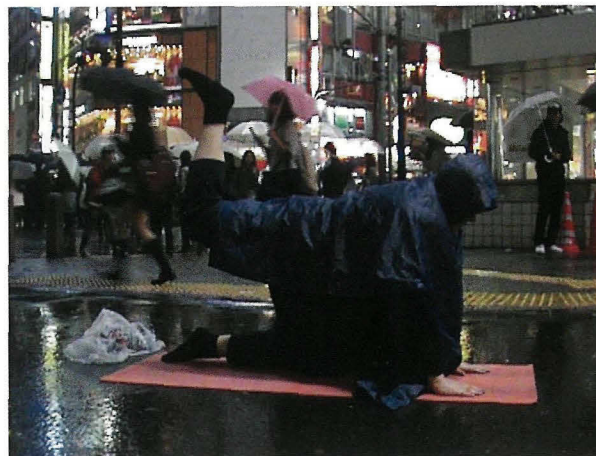
NATHAN GRAY

27 October – 20 November
Ryan Renshaw
137 Warry Street, Fortitude Valley
www.ryanrenshaw.com.au

TASMANIA

PERFORMING THE DIGITAL | JAI MCKENZIE, VICTORIA LAWSON and AMANDA WILLIAMS

2 July – 24 July
Inflight Art
237 Elizabeth Street, Hobart
www.inflightart.com.au



LAUGHTER | MISH MEIJERS, TRICKY WALSH, ANDREW HARPER, BENJAMIN BOOTH, RAOOM AND LOBA, STEPHEN BIRD and NICOLE ROBSON

curated by VICTOR MEDRANO
14 August – 12 September
CAST
27 Tasma Street, North Hobart
www.castgallery.org

VICTORIA

BEAM | BOE-LIN BASTION, LUCY FAHEY, JAMES RICHES and CHLOE VALLANCE

25 June – 17 July
The Library Artspace
100 Barkly St, North Fitzroy
www.thelibraryartspace.blogspot.com

TO CONVERT OPTIMISM TO DANGER | RACHEL ANG

30 June – 17 July
TCB art inc.
Level 1/12 Waratah Place, Melbourne
www.tcbartinc.org.au

INNOVATORS II | CHRIS BENNIE, DANE LOVETT, GEORGIE ROXBY SMITH, SIRI HAYES & EVE DUNCAN, SARAH CROWEST and DEVON ATKINS

3 July – 1 August
Linden
26 Acland Street, St Kilda
www.lindenarts.org

GOLDEN WORLD | BENEDICT ERNST

9 July – 31 July
Kings ARI
Level 11/171 King Street, Melbourne
www.kingsartistrun.com.au

Above (left): Dan Moynihan, *Still Sitting Still* (installation view, Utopian Slumps), 2009, installation. Photo: Louis Porter.

Above (right): Sarah Goffman, *Big in Japan*, 2009, video. Video still: Morita Yasuaki.

Facing page: Brook Andrew, *The Cell*, 2010 (3D rendered image), PVC vinyl and fan.

A HISTORY OF MANNERS | KAIN PICKEN & ROB MCKENZIE

15 July – 7 August 2010
Uplands Gallery
247 High Street, Prahran
www.uplandsgallery.com

SEEING IS NOT UNDERSTANDING | PONCH HAWKES

9 September – 24 October
Monash Gallery of Art
860 Ferntree Gully Road, Wheelers Hill
www.mga.org.au

WA

ROUNDS | NEIL ALDUM, REBECCA BAUMANN, TIM CARTER,
ELISE/JURGEN, SHANNON LYONS, BENNETT MILLER, SARAH
ROWBOTTAM and GEORGE EGERTON-WARBURTON

26 June – 25 August
curated by SARAH ROWBOTTAM
Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts
Perth Cultural Centre, James Street, Northbridge
www.pica.org.au

THE GLOMESH PROJECT | NAIRN SCOTT

24 July – 19 September
Fremantle Arts Centre
1 Finnerty Street, Fremantle
www.fac.org.au

SA

I THOUGHT I WAS WRONG, BUT IT TURNED OUT I WAS WRONG ...

| ANASTASIA KLOSE
9 July – 7 August
Experimental Art Foundation
The Lion Arts Centre, North Terrace (West End), Adelaide
www.eaf.asn.au

MATTHEW BRADLEY

30 July – 29 August
CACSA
14 Porter Street, Parkside
www.cacsa.org.au

ABSTRACT NATURE | NYUKANA (DAISY) BAKER/ROBIN BEST,
GILES BETTISON, JULIE BLYFIELD, GW BOT, TIM BURNS, PIPPIN
DRYSDALE, PHILIP HUNTER, JESSICA LOUGHLIN, DJAMBAWA
MARAWILLI, WANYUBI MARIKA, LESLIE MATTHEWS, JULIE RYDER,
JENNY SAGES, CATHERINE TRUMAN, ANGELA VALAMANESH,
REGINA WILSON, SHONA WILSON, RICHARD WOLDENDORP and
CATHERINE WOO

curated by MARGOT OSBORNE
30 July – 8 October
Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art
Hawke Building, City West campus, University of South Australia
55 North Terrace, Adelaide
www.unisa.edu.au/samstagmuseum

BRIDGET CURRIE

8 September – 25 September
Artroom5
5 Kent Street, Henley Beach
www.artroom5.com.au

NEW ZEALAND

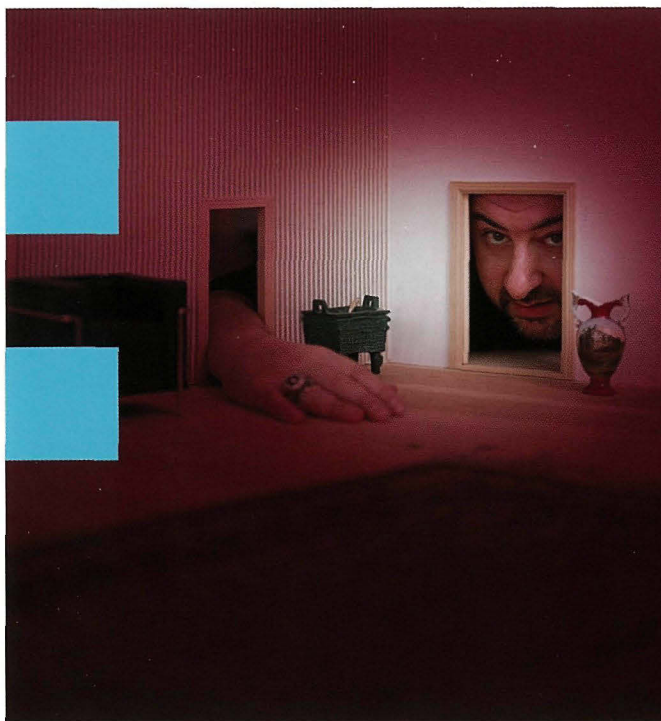
FRENCH DRESSING | GEOFF NEWTON

14 July – 15 August
The Physics Room
Second Floor, Old Central Post Office Building
209 Tuam Street, Christchurch
www.physicsroom.org.nz

SEAN KERR

11 September – 5 October
ARTSPACE
Level 1, 300 Karangahape Road Newton, Auckland
www.artspace.org.nz





Fremantle Arts Centre presents

Pierre Bismuth

Exhibition 26 May–18 July

The All Seeing Eye (The Easy Teenage Version)
with Michel Gondry
The Jungle Book Project



**Fremantle
ArtsCentre:**

1 Finnerty Street
Fremantle WA
+61 8 9432 9555
fac.org.au



PIERRE BISMUTH AND
THE ALL SEEING EYE
IMAGE © ALBRECHT KUNKEL

MOP

The Jay Balbi/Elizabeth Pulie Collection

8th July – 25th July 2010



MOP Projects

Thursday – Saturday 1 – 6 pm Sunday & Monday 1 – 5 pm
2 / 39 Abercrombie Street Chippendale Sydney NSW 2008
Ph: 02 9699 3955 email: mop@mop.org.au www.mop.org.au



**Communities
arts nsw**

MOP Projects is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.



Samuel James, Video still from *Amygdala*, 2010
Samuel James with performer Lizzie Thomson

13.08 – 10.09.2010

SAMUEL JAMES MS & MR

ARTSPACE

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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.

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Emma White, *While You Wait*, 2010, installation and performance (detail). Photo: the artist.

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