

# runway

an australian contemporary art magazine

ISSUE 21 RIPE



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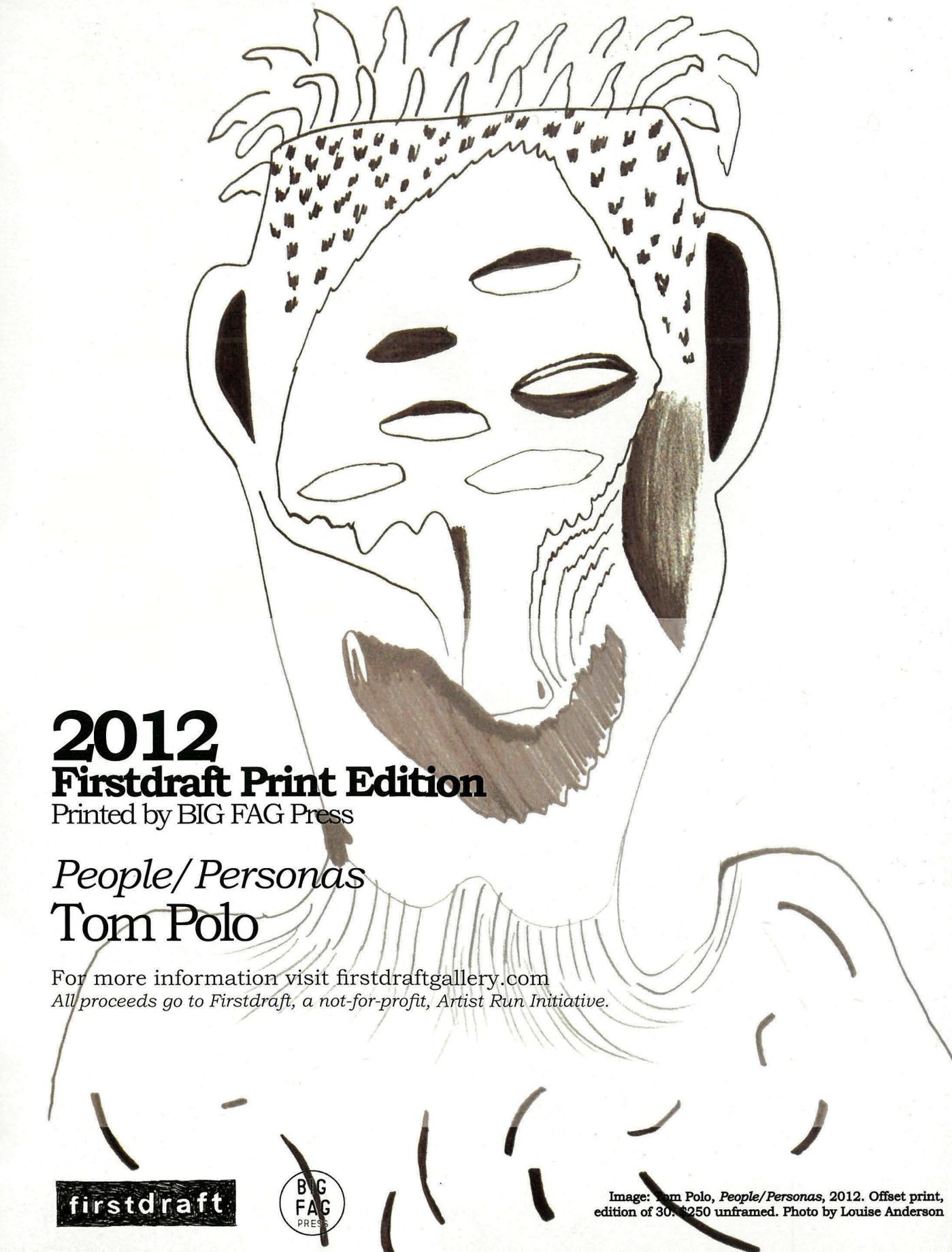
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**Arc One Gallery** Melbourne  
**Arndt** Berlin  
**Art House Gallery** Sydney  
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**Ausin Tung Gallery** Melbourne  
**Australian Galleries** Melbourne/Sydney  
**Australian Tapestry Workshop** Melbourne  
**Bartley + Company Art** Wellington  
**Beaver Galleries** Canberra  
**Bett Gallery Hobart** Hobart  
**Breenspace** Sydney  
**Brett McDowell Gallery** Dunedin  
**Chalk Horse** Sydney  
**Charles Nodrum Gallery** Melbourne  
**Damien Minton Gallery** Sydney  
**Darren Knight Gallery** Sydney  
**Dominik Mersch Gallery** Sydney  
**Edwina Corlette Gallery** Brisbane  
**Fehily Contemporary** Melbourne  
**Fireworks Gallery** Brisbane  
**Fox/Jensen** Auckland  
**Gallery 9** Sydney  
**Gallery Barry Keldoulis** Sydney  
**Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi** Melbourne  
**Galleriesmith** Melbourne  
**Gould Galleries** Melbourne  
**Gow Langsford Gallery** Auckland  
**Greenaway Art Gallery** Adelaide  
**Greenhill Galleries** Perth  
**Heiser Gallery** Brisbane  
**Helen Gory Galerie** Melbourne  
**Hill Smith Gallery** Adelaide  
**Hugo Michell Gallery** Adelaide  
**James Dorahy Project Space** Sydney  
**James Makin Gallery** Melbourne  
**Jan Murphy Gallery** Brisbane  
**Karen Woodbury Gallery** Melbourne  
**Liverpool Street Gallery** Sydney  
**MARS - Melbourne Art Rooms** Melbourne  
**Martin Browne Contemporary** Sydney  
**Mossenson Galleries** Perth/Melbourne  
**Mossgreen Gallery** Melbourne  
**Niagara Galleries** Melbourne  
**Rex Irwin Art Dealer** Sydney  
**RH Gallery** Nelson  
**Richard Martin Art** Sydney  
**Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery** Sydney  
**Ryan Renshaw Gallery** Brisbane  
**Sarah Cottier Gallery** Sydney  
**Scott Livesey Galleries** Melbourne  
**Sophie Gannon Gallery** Melbourne  
**Starkwhite** Auckland  
**Stella Downer Fine Art** Sydney  
**Stills Gallery** Sydney  
**Sullivan+Strumpf Fine Art** Sydney  
**Suzanne O'Connell Gallery** Brisbane  
**Tim Melville Gallery** Auckland  
**Tim Olsen Gallery** Sydney  
**Tolarno Galleries** Melbourne  
**Turner Galleries** Perth  
**Two Rooms** Auckland  
**Utopia Art Sydney** Sydney  
**Utopian Slumps** Melbourne  
**Watters Gallery** Sydney  
**William Mora Galleries** Melbourne  
**Yamaki Art Gallery** Osaka





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**Tom Polo**

For more information visit [firstdraftgallery.com](http://firstdraftgallery.com)  
*All proceeds go to Firstdraft, a not-for-profit, Artist Run Initiative.*

**firstdraft**



Image: Tom Polo, *People/Personas*, 2012. Offset print, edition of 30. \$250 unframed. Photo by Louise Anderson



**Melbourne Art Fair 2012 Project Room**  
August 1-5  
*GIVE OR TAKE*  
Catherine or Kate  
Tully Arnott & Charles Dennington

*Sponsored by Melbourne Art Foundation  
Presented by Firstdraft  
Curated by Firstdraft directors Amy Griffiths and Amelia Wallin*

GIVE OR TAKE explores the nature of collaboration, cooperation and exchange integral to ARI culture. The exhibition examines the collaborative workings of two creative partnerships working across video, photography, sculpture and installation, whose work engages with the competition, tension and synchronization of collaboration.

# TRANSMISSION

## CAMPBELLTOWN ARTS CENTRE

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presents a range of  
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some of Australia's  
most interesting  
contemporary artists  
and musicians

Co-curated by Carrie Miller  
and Dr Matthew Hindson

### VISUAL ARTISTS

HEATH FRANCO \_\_\_\_\_  
TODD MCMILLAN \_\_\_\_\_  
VICKY BROWNE \_\_\_\_\_  
RACHEL SCOTT \_\_\_\_\_  
RENNY KODGERS \_\_\_\_\_  
DANIEL MUDIE CUNNINGHAM \_\_\_\_\_  
NELL \_\_\_\_\_  
PARACHUTES FOR LADIES \_\_\_\_\_  
JUSTENE WILLIAMS \_\_\_\_\_  
REBECCA BAUMANN \_\_\_\_\_  
WHAT \_\_\_\_\_  
ARCHIE MOORE \_\_\_\_\_  
CARLA CESCONE \_\_\_\_\_

### MUSICIANS

ANDY RANTZEN  
PETER MCNAMARA  
DARREN SELTMANN  
MICK HARVEY  
SWEET TONIC CHOIR  
STEPHEN ALLKINS  
BABY MACHINE  
SYDNEY CHAMBER CHOIR  
TINA HAVELOCK STEVENS  
IVAN ZAVADA & BENEDICT CAREY  
JULIAN DAY  
STIFF GINS  
KUSUM NORMOYLE

LAUNCH FRIDAY 8 JUNE, 6PM | EXHIBITION DATES 9 JUNE - 5 AUGUST



Campbelltown Arts Centre is a cultural facility of Campbelltown City Council and is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW. This exhibition has also been supported by the Federal Government through Australia Council for the Arts, its Arts Funding and Advisory Board. Production shot - Nell and Babymachine project collaboration. Produced by Campbelltown Arts Centre for Transmission. Photographer Susannah Wimberley.

**Kylie Banyard**

**Vicky Browne**

**Leo Coyte**

**Charles Dennington**

**Heath Franco**

**Rochelle Haley**

**Michael Moran**

**Sarah Mosca**

**Jamie North**

**Nana Ohnesorge**

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Image: Heath Franco, PARK LAND, (video still) 2010  
multi-channel digital video and sound installation, 4:3

# Editorial

AMBER MCCULLOCH

A friend of mine had his first solo show a couple of months ago, at a commercial gallery in Sydney's east. As the Saturday afternoon opening crowd milled about, and the walls filled up with red dots, the artist posed for press shots and negotiated an upcoming commission for Good Charlotte member – and art patron, evidently – Joel Madden. Relishing the sudden attention (and the impending bank-account inflation), the hitherto unknown artist spoke about his practice in terms of a progressive process of experimentation and growth. He spoke of the 'fun' he has playing with different mediums, and the challenge of creating a coherent body of work, which has its edges clearly defined in an exhibition 'suite'.

Oh, did I mention he's 11 years old?

The buzz surrounding my mate's show, be that celebration of novelty or some kind of Mozart-ian prodigy worship, lead me to consider the issue of 'emergence' as it pertains to contemporary art. One is surrounded by various interpretations of 'emerging', all slightly different (download a selection of grant applications from arts organisations if you need proof of the term's slipperiness), similar only in a sense of development: an emerging artist is on a path to somewhere.

Which implies rites of passage. And they are, ostensibly: years at university, group shows, solo shows and ultimately commercial interest and/or institutional recognition. Seems simple, right? And it should only take ten years? Sure.

For this issue, our proud 21st, we've chosen RIPE as our thematic springboard. What's ensued is a number of investigations into the idea of emergence, development and maturation, and how and when an artist – or, indeed, an artwork – is 'ripe'. Andrew Frost, in his feature story, tackles the subject with particular focus on those years post-art school, when one's emergence should well and truly be in force (not forgetting to ear-mark the ever-present art world 'cult of the new'). Accompanying Frost's piece are anonymous questionnaires, completed by local artists who would tick the 'emerging' box in a bid for funding. If you compare and contrast their answers, you can see the great discrepancies in achievement and attitude among those huddling under the umbrella, but there's greater interest – I think – in the questions posed to the subjects, which read as crib notes to success, or at very least, a shopping list of actions towards becoming a working artist.

And we must not forget the 'other' interpretation of RIPE. In slang terms, the word gestures towards all that is 'a bit off', in morality or taste or reasoning. To that end, Megan Robson looks at the practice of Rob McLeish, a Melbourne-based sculptor, whose output is, at its core, suggestive, seamy and a little bit sleazy. Our Pageworks section takes this idea further, with Heath Franco's frankly unseemly DREAM HOUSE stills and Tully Arnot's stiff underpants, presented for all to see.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue of Runway as much as we have enjoyed making it – maybe even a little more! Thanks again to all our great contributors and supporters.

Amber

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**Managing Editor** Amber McCulloch  
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## CONTRIBUTORS

Tully Arnot, Erik Jensen, Charles Dennington, Sarah Contos, Heath Franco, Andrew Frost, Megan Garrett-Jones, Jack Jeweller, Lisa Lerkenfeldt, Jai McKenzie, Ella Mudie, Tanya Peterson, Megan Robson, Nicola Smith

## SPECIAL THANKS TO

FirstDraft Depot for hosting our launch party, and Fran Barrett for all her wonderful help in organising things.

## ERRATA

In issue 20, we wrongly attributed a poem by Jack Jeweller (published with his review of Marian Tubbs' work) to Martin Heidegger. We apologise for the misdirection.



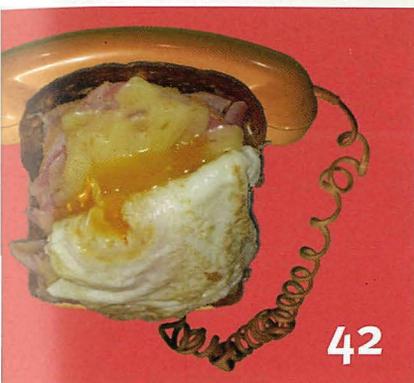
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# TIME MACHINE

18<sup>TH</sup> - 29<sup>TH</sup> JULY

A FESTIVAL OF TIME BASED  
EXPERIMENTAL ARTS

FEATURES

# Young Folks

ANDREW FROST

*The young ones, darlin' we're the young ones – and the young ones shouldn't be afraid. To live, love, while the flame is strong. . . For we may not be the young ones very long.* – Cliff Richard, *The Young Ones*.

The secret to being a successful artist is simple: never grow old. As an emerging artist you can enter all sorts of exclusive competitions and prizes, apply for special scholarships and awards, be eligible for travel grants and career assistance packages. And what's even better is that if you have a bit of talent older people will actually go out of their way to help you. They will curate your work into exhibitions, write flattering articles about you and your work in art magazines, and maybe even put you on TV.

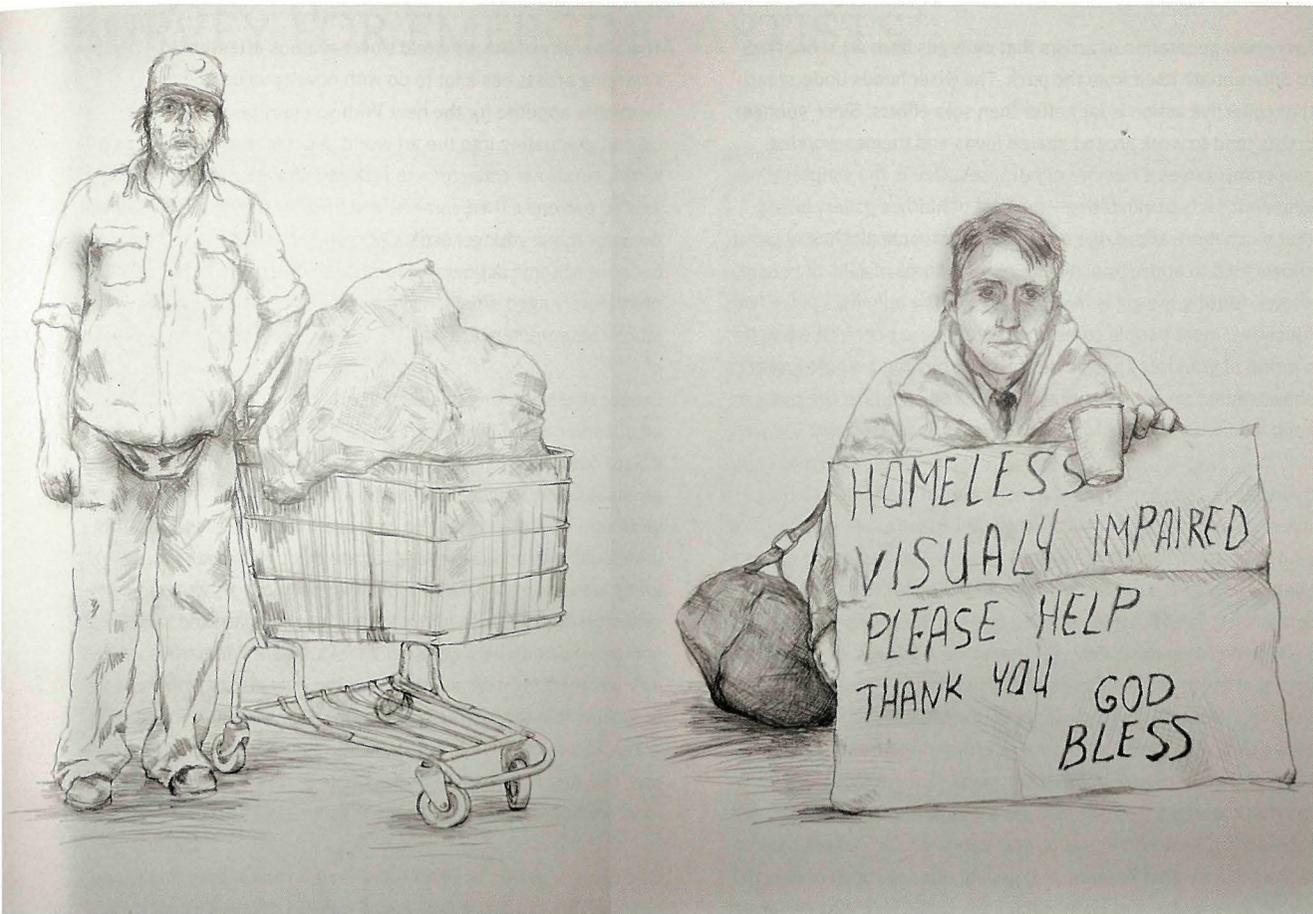
And all this is because the ideal age to be an artist is 27. If you've followed the usual artist's career path by going directly to art school from high school, and perhaps did an honours year, or even have a Masters tucked away in your back pocket, then the world can be your oyster bar. If you're one of those go-getter types and regularly exhibit your work in artist-run initiatives in solo or group shows by the time you're 27, you should also have a decent back catalogue that will fill up your CV. Hard work is an option, but you don't have to knock yourself out – anyone who has been around the ARI scene knows that some people make it on what appears to be no effort, while others, who have been slaving away for years, get nowhere.

The art world is run along generational lines and careers are typically broken up into three age-aligned categories: emerging (up to 35 years old), mid-career (36-59 years old) and senior (60-100+ years old). It's this first category that is the most lucrative, but the problem is that you can't stop aging. You inevitably start slipping towards 30, then 35, and before you know it you're officially an old person 'celebrating' being 50 or 60. Careers shouldn't be age dependent, but they are.

When you start to interrogate what is actually meant by 'emerging' it soon becomes apparent that as a category it's pretty illogical. Before 'emerging' there was 'new and emerging'. This suggested that artists could either be new to making art or exhibiting, or they

were *emerging* from art school and bursting butterfly-like into the world of art and exhibitions. The term 'new and emerging' more or less meant the same thing and was of no consequence, because in practice the phrase simply meant 'young whipper-snappers with promise and talent' and 'old people who missed out on an art career when they were young but have now begun to make art and exhibit it'. The term fell out of usage for two reasons – one was that it made no logical sense to differentiate new from emerging and two, old people are *embarrassing*. Today the term '*young and emerging*' is generally used to clear up confusion but actually complicates things further when you ask, 'Can I be emerging but not young?' Yes. 'Can I be young but *not* emerging?' Err...

On its website The National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) offers a variety of definitions for 'emerging' that are applied across the visual arts community. The only constant among these various definitions seems to be that an 'emerging' artist is someone in the first five years of their career. Everything else is up for grabs. While some grants, competitions and prizes specify that an emerging artist might be someone who has exhibited professionally during that five years, there is a significant difference of opinion as to how many times an artist can exhibit, in what context and where. For example, could someone exhibit professionally in a major show in an art museum and still be considered eligible for a scholarship for emerging artists to travel overseas? Yes. Could you be represented by a commercial gallery and still be considered emerging? Of course. Could you have already won an award for emerging artists and be in the running for another award for emerging artists? Again, yes. It's all in the fine print. Various organisations, businesses and groups run competitions, scholarships and prizes on their own terms and conditions, and while many might agree on the broad definition of 'emerging', there are plenty of inconsistencies when it comes to the finer points of who is eligible for what.



Most people would say that, regardless of age, someone who had, at most, a few shows at an ARI, but hasn't won any significant awards, isn't represented by a commercial gallery and hasn't been featured in a group show at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) is a *real* emerging artist. But the fact that someone who has been having exhibitions in a commercial gallery for half a decade, has had their work collected by institutions and galleries and can still be considered as *emerging* is crazy.

The bigger problem, however, is that the Australian art scene is so obsessed with 'emerging artists'. Take the MCA's yearly *Primavera* exhibition. This is the museum's annual celebration of emerging talent for artists under 35. That could conceivably include artists up to, and including, those who are 35, but in practice the exhibition has invariably featured artists in their early twenties. The reason for this is obvious, if a curator were to choose only artists who were 35, they would effectively be selecting artists who are already *mid-career* and that's a very generous description when you consider just how many artists are still actually working into their seventies.

Consider the following statistics. There are approximately 500+ commercial art galleries in Australia, about 120 in Sydney, plus 50 ARIs of all kinds such as pop-ups, hire-spaces and traditional artist-run galleries.<sup>1</sup> So let's say there are 170 art galleries in Sydney alone (and that's being generous). Now consider this: there are about 35 universities in Australia (so says Wikipedia) and approximately 100 art schools nationwide, from universities to TAFEs to private tuition art schools and artist studios. If the average number of annual graduates per art school was just 50 per year (and it's probably more like 75 or 100), you're looking at something like 5,000 graduates per year, every year, around the country. The number of people graduating from art schools far outstrips the opportunities that exist to exhibit their work. Most commercial galleries have about 11 shows a year, so that's about 5,500 shows nationally every year. When you take out the exhibitions by established gallery artists, group shows etc, the ability of galleries to accommodate each new wave of graduating artists is practically zero.

Above: Padraig Swann, *HOBOPHOBIA* (2008), graphite on board. Photo: Christopher Hanrahan

Every new generation of artists that emerges from art school has to differentiate itself from the pack. The wise heads understand that collective action is far better than solo efforts. Since younger artists tend to work around shared ideas and themes working as a group serves a number of purposes. One is the simple economic facts of exhibiting – the cost of hiring a gallery is just that much more affordable and besides, thematically linked group shows tend to appeal much more to the boards of ARIs than solo shows. Getting the gig is much easier and the openings serve two functions: more people come and there's more beer at the bar. If a group of graduates has some cohesion beyond a single group show, shared resources, moral support and shouts at the pub can keep a bunch of friends together for years, even decades.

Sydney has seen a number of generations of graduates coming out of its art schools but surprisingly few identifiable groups who have stuck together over the long run. The beginning of the 1990s saw a group of artists that included Adam Cullen, Hany Armanious, Tony Schwensen, Nike Savvas, Mikala Dwyer and Justene Williams exhibiting together at various ARIs, in groups shows at commercial galleries and slowly being chosen for bigger exhibition such as the Biennale of Sydney. Named and shamed by art critic Jeff Gibson as sharing a 'grunge' aesthetic, the name stuck and an anti-movement of sorts was formed. Most kids in art school right now would know these names—Armanious represented Australia at the Venice Biennale in 2011, Cullen is tabloid fodder after firearms and driving offences and winning the Archibald Prize back in 2000, while the others, with equally robust career accomplishments of their own, are teaching in art schools.

A more recent example from the mid-2000s is the tight knit group of friends and graduates of the UNSW College of Fine Arts (COFA) who established themselves with self-curated group shows and publications. These guys are so hot right now – Dominique and Dan Angeloro aka Soda\_Jerk, Sam Smith, Richard and Stephanie Nova Milne aka Ms&Mr, Todd McMillan and Chris Hanrahan are now firmly established artists – and that's just the core group of a widely connected set of friends that extends out to include Nigel Milsom, What, Marley Dawson, Rachel Scott, Mark Shorter and many others. You might know that the Jerks won both the Helen Lempriere Travelling Art Scholarship and the British Council's Realise Your Dream award in 2011. Smith and Ms&Mr were featured artists at the Art Gallery of NSW's *Contemporary* exhibition space while McMillan went out to sea on a fishing boat last year to make a film about an Albatross while Hanrahan and Dawson set up a dirt bike track atop the roof of the Museum of Old and New Art in Hobart. Oh, and Milsom won the Sulman Prize last week. Not too shabby considering less than a decade ago these guys were propping up bars and smoking themselves into oblivion at openings.

The absurdity of the art world's over-zealous attention to emerging artists has a lot to do with novelty value and an insatiable appetite for the new. With so many people coming up and graduating into the art world, it's remarkably easy – as a writer, curator or collector – to pick and choose a few promising artists, patronise their careers, and then, as they broach 30, drop them for those younger artists who've just arrived. And it's not because of some deliberate cruelty or indifference to the plight of prematurely aged artists, it's about the sheer level of vacuity in much contemporary art.

I know, this is starting to sound like an old person's rant, but as an observer of the Sydney art scene for more than 30 years I find it hard not to see patterns repeating again and again. Groups of artists, like the Grunge crew of the early '90s, or the more recent generations, attract attention because of their idiosyncratic and individual take on ideas that circulate through the art world. Ideas are fashion too. The problem is that most art writers and collectors actually lose touch with what's going on and soon someone making derivative work looks, to outside parties, to be doing something new and unusual. The only artists with a chance of making it in the long term are those with genuinely interesting things to say. That's the big shake out that happens after that precious first five years of professional practice; derivative ideas look, well, derivative.

Could this situation be fixed somehow? A radical proposal would be to ignore artists until they're at least 30. It takes a good ten years for most people to get over what they learned in art school and establish their own ways of thinking and working. And by then the good ones will still be there and the rest will have faded away. More funding and prizes could be directed toward mid-career artists who really need the cash and the life-support of a career boost. Of course, it would never happen. Can you imagine a slew of art prizes that excluded people under 40? Bah!

Every artist needs their salon period, that time when collective action and support is key for artists to develop their work, their careers and understanding of how to be an artist. The next crucial step is about leaving the group to do things on your own.

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1. These figures are based on a count of all the galleries listed in the *Art Guide* in a typical month. There are probably about a dozen galleries or so in either category who don't advertise which I've factored in. If anything, this is a conservative estimate of galleries, schools etc and the number of graduating students per year will be much higher.

# SURVEY FOR EMERGING ARTISTS

## ARTIST # 1

### DESCRIBE YOUR PRACTICE IN 5 WORDS OR LESS

Mundane, spectacular, ritualistic, endurance performance

### STUDIED AT

COFA

### GRADUATION YEAR

2005 undergraduate, 2011 post-graduate

### YEARS SPENT AT ART SCHOOL

Ten years on and off

### NUMBER OF GROUP EXHIBITIONS SINCE GRADUATING

Seven

### NUMBER OF SOLO SHOWS SINCE GRADUATING

Six

### ESTIMATED INCOME FROM ARTWORKS SOLD SINCE GRADUATING

\$0

### NUMBER OF AWARDS RECEIVED

Two

### ESTIMATED MONETARY VALUE OF GRANTS & AWARDS RECEIVED

\$45,000

### DEFINE 'EMERGING ARTIST'

An artist who has been in the business less than 20 yrs who doesn't have a strong commercial or collector base and isn't shown in all of the institutions. There are always exceptions... and it's a hard thing to pigeonhole or define. I guess we refer to emerging artists as such when they are still 'proving' themselves.

### WHEN DOES ONE STOP EMERGING?

Reverse the above statement and add the exceptions.

## ARTIST # 2

### DESCRIBE YOUR PRACTICE IN 5 WORDS OR LESS

Obsessive, considered, labour intensive, volatile

### STUDIED AT

COFA, UNSW and SCA

### GRADUATION YEAR

2007 undergraduate, due to finish postgraduate in 2013.

### YEARS SPENT AT ART SCHOOL

Six years, with one year to go.

### NUMBER OF GROUP EXHIBITIONS SINCE GRADUATING

Ten

### NUMBER OF SOLO SHOWS SINCE GRADUATING

Four

### ESTIMATED INCOME FROM ARTWORKS SOLD SINCE GRADUATING

\$12,000

### NUMBER OF AWARDS RECEIVED

Six

### ESTIMATED MONETARY VALUE OF GRANTS & AWARDS RECEIVED

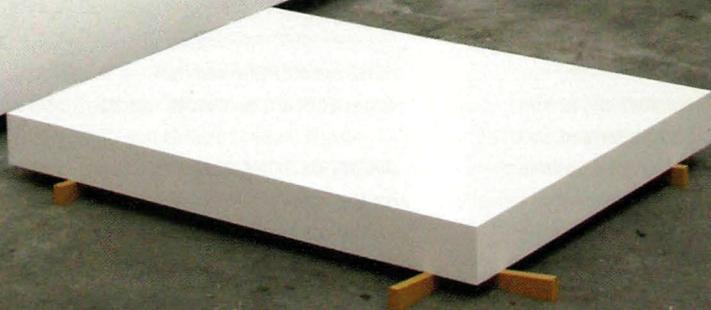
\$15,000

### DEFINE 'EMERGING ARTIST'

Young at heart, quick with words.

### WHEN DOES ONE STOP EMERGING?

For the funding bodies: after 5-8 years of professional practice.  
For the commercial dealers: once you have done your rounds on the ARI circuit (and if they can remember your name).  
For the artist: probably never, if the work keeps posing questions.



# Innuendo

MEGAN ROBSON

*in-nu-en-do: Insinuation, Ambiguity, Inference, Intimation, Suggestion, Allusion, Implication, Mystery*

Innuendo is primarily the revealing of a secret. It is a device which alludes to ideas or readings that are not readily noticed or understood. In this way there is always something slightly mischievous or downright naughty about innuendo and the secrets it reveals. Innuendo can then be seen as a form of profanation.<sup>1</sup> It is a tool that allows us to digress and consider possibilities which are normally suppressed. Innuendo encourages us to challenge a static and rigid interpretation of the world.

In the work of Melbourne-based artist Rob McLeish innuendo becomes the means through which the certainties of the world are disrupted and social conventions and relationships are given different meanings. In his sculptures, drawings and installation works, identifiable symbols of privileged or elite worlds are merged and meshed with functional and base materials. In the artist's work highly charged symbols of desire, constraint and

consumption, such as swimming pools or gymnasts, appear across various mediums, often worked into abject sculptural forms or sullied by the artist's own hand in collaged drawings. Recognisable and domestic objects are transformed into crafted sculptures, which draw upon various references from broader social and political events to popular culture. McLeish undermines these symbols of power through the creation and arrangement of objects that reveal to the viewer particular relationships or clandestine thoughts, which are often distasteful or digressive to the status quo.

Swimming pools are a recurring theme for McLeish, acting as a metaphor for both luxury and deprivation. In *Pissing in the Infinity Pool* (2009), a one-day exhibition at Ocular Lab, the swimming pool is represented by particular symbol – the handrail and the pool platform. Arranged around these potent icons are cast sculptures of miscellaneous consumer products and facsimiles of collages that feature images of Vaudeville characters, cosmetic operations and religious figures. The expressive nature of the

<sup>1</sup> Rob McLeish, *Pissing in the Infinity Pool* (installation view), 2009



objects and their arrangement provide a strange narrative and imbue the work with a sense of interrupted activity. There is a mystery to McLeish's work which derives from the relationship between the objects. Their careful creation and placement is reminiscent of the presentation of images in advertising, a seductive combination which provokes our curiosity. However, instead of conveying a single message, each item divulges a variety of possibilities which move back and forth between different pop cultural references, political events and social or personal histories.

The swimming pool is generally represented as a pristine sexually charged symbol of luxury and wealth, however in McLeish's work it takes on a more sordid reading than David Hockney's paintings or Ed Ruscha's photographs of them. In *Bung Eye* (2010), an installation presented at Gertrude Contemporary (where McLeish was a studio resident in 2010-11), the artist exhibited a collection of objects including plumbing plungers and facsimiles of collaged images, around a miniature swimming pool and an elongated rail, which protruded from the wall. Although on first inspection the plethora of objects appears arbitrary and insipid, like *Pissing in the Infinity Pool*, closer inspection reveals the precision that underpins the artist's work. Each individual piece is a painstaking recreation of a low-value item. By transforming a useful object into an art object, the object's normal role is made obsolete and its symbolic characteristics are emphasised. In this way, McLeish changes the function of the item, as he notes; 'a plunger purges, cleans out the pipes... slammed into a wall it's pretty irreverent and tragicomic. Holding up a picture, it becomes parasitic... and again they're all cast so any suction/collapse tension is hollow.'<sup>2</sup>

A key element in McLeish's work is the idea that the viewer is a witness to something that they are not supposed to see. The strange and familiar items in *Bung Eye* lend themselves to a whole range of readings and imagined relationships – white sheets of aluminium resemble soft tissues or gym towels, the plunger's phallic nature is suddenly revealed – which undermine supposed social convention. In McLeish's work we are presented with scenarios that reflect the perverse, banal and/or sordid reality of the world in which we live.

The idea of human presence is an important element in these works, as it allows the work to be grounded in the viewer's world. In the sculpture *Have a Good Time* (2011), a large bell is placed on its side exposing the mouth and clapper. The bell sits on top of what appears to be a sheet of Bubble Wrap packaging material – a shabby, accidental stand for this symbol of occasion. The Bubble Wrap is a cast sculpture of epoxy resin and like many of

McLeish's works, the process of creating a crafted sculpture from this common, everyday item fetishises the object. In placing the bell in a position which renders it functionless (the cast object can not ring even if it was required), McLeish draws our attention to the formal qualities of the entity. Any authority the bell may have had as a marker of time has been unceremoniously removed. The bell then becomes an object that not only appears archaic but also ridiculous and excessive. Once a symbol of power, the bell has now been remade into an object of derision. By illustrating that the bell can be a debased object, McLeish insinuates that its role as a symbol of power can be undermined.

Innuendo is more than simply revealing a secret; it undermines the concept of a fixed or stable reading of the world and its perceived social conventions. Through innuendo we are able to deviate from the norm and partake in ideas or thoughts, which in our everyday existence, are censored. In this regard, innuendo can be seen as a form of profanation. In McLeish's work innuendo becomes a form of destabilisation; familiar objects assume new meanings that undermine previously rigid definitions. McLeish's work is almost blasphemous in the way it illustrates the base nature of the vehicles of authority through suggestion. His use of allusion, in the sculptures of common, everyday items for example, reveals to the viewer the secrets behind the construction of power in all its forms. As Jan Verwoert notes 'to share the profane actuality of one's secret is to destroy the illusion of its rare value – and waste the capital to be gained from seeming special.'<sup>3</sup>

In his recent works McLeish uses images of gymnasts as a means to explore broader social constructs relating to perfection, control, sexuality and duality. An elite world of codes and symbols, gymnastics both enthralls and repels those of us who are outsiders. For most, our experience of these insular worlds is in the form of televised tournaments in which young men and women in shiny lycra costumes perform strange contortions that represent feats of human strength and endurance. These scantily clad individuals are isolated from the everyday through their training requirements and their desire to defy the natural limitations of the body.

*Gravity Stole My Eyelid* (2011-12) features six cut-out images of gymnasts with flayed legs and arms. The life-size figures are propped up by crude assemblages of clay, resin, epoxy clay and steel. The cut-out figures, UV digitally printed, emit an eerie glow that is at once seductive in its otherworldliness, and in the same instant unsightly, a challenge to the restrained notion of beauty that is inherent in popular associations of the sport.



The abject nature of the materials in the individual pieces, hints at a sordidness or vulgarity underlying the assemblages. Additionally, key objects featured in previous works, such as the bell and the cast Bubble Wrap are also included in these amorphous forms and lend themselves to particular suggestive visual readings. The inclusion of these symbolic objects links *Gravity Stole My Eyelid* to the artist's previous investigations and provides a key or a clue to the nature of what we are viewing, a particular substructure brought into scrutiny, challenged and reconsidered. In this work, McLeish is not simply challenging our assumptions of, and reverence for, this particular sporting subculture, but rather draws our attention to the restraints and exclusions that a stratified culture more broadly imposes.

The structures themselves appear to be stuck somewhere between becoming and dissolving, neither solid nor liquid, neither moving nor still. The figures are poised in a constant state of frozen movement, contained and constricted for the present but on the verge of paroxysm at any given moment. Gymnasts represent a kind of tension between the natural, messy and dependent, and the artificial, controlled and self-contained. As the artist notes, 'With gymnasts there's this action – literally this aspirational leap against gravity – that is purported as being expressive and innate, as being effortless and edging towards the awe-inspiring/divine, and yet it's an action that is born of severe regimentation and bound within a crushingly rigid, formal structure.'<sup>4</sup>

In McLeish's works the collision of opposing materials lends an antagonism to the works, a tension that one feels could erupt at any moment, which infers the position or role of the gymnast within the broader world. This is a world in which beauty is not simply artificial, but is guided by a set of rules and is measured and scored. A culture in which perfection comes from 'relentless conditioning, repression and containment'.<sup>5</sup>

In the accompanying series of paper-based works, *Untitled (Gravity Stole My Eyelid)* (2011), the artist has drawn over collaged colour magazine pictures of gymnasts. While some images include various luxury items, from swatches of brightly coloured fabric through to designer jewellery, most of the series, which is extensive, concentrates on an image of a single gymnast. However, rather than highlighting the individual the series illustrates the generic nature of the figures, each wears a tight leotard, hair pulled back and bright shiny make-up. In this way, the gymnasts become symbols within the works, representative of particular ideas and structures, rather than representations of unique individuals.

As drawings, *Untitled (Gravity Stole My Eyelid)* are more suggestive of three-dimensional forms than two-dimensional works, the heavy lead markings providing support structures for the contorting gymnasts. McLeish has noted that the drawing works have a direct relationship to the sculptural pieces, noting that, 'most of my drawing work is grounded in trying to destroy or aggravate an existing image – so it's satisfying when something additional starts to emerge, through repetition, out of destruction.'<sup>6</sup>

However, rather than simply acting as a precursor to the sculptural works, the drawings reveal the artist's formal exploration of form and space. In this regard, the artist's mark making not only assists in keeping the figures aloft on the page but also reveals the apparatus which maintains and constrains their place outside of the composition.

In McLeish's work insinuation does not lead to a simple clarification or recognition rather, it reveals multiple meanings which both illuminate and confuse. By constantly challenging the viewer's reading of the work, and thereby their relationship with it, McLeish awakens the subversive, strange and alarming nature of ourselves and the wider world.

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1 Jan Verwoert, 'Secret Society', *Frieze*, Issue 124, (June-August 2009), 134-137.

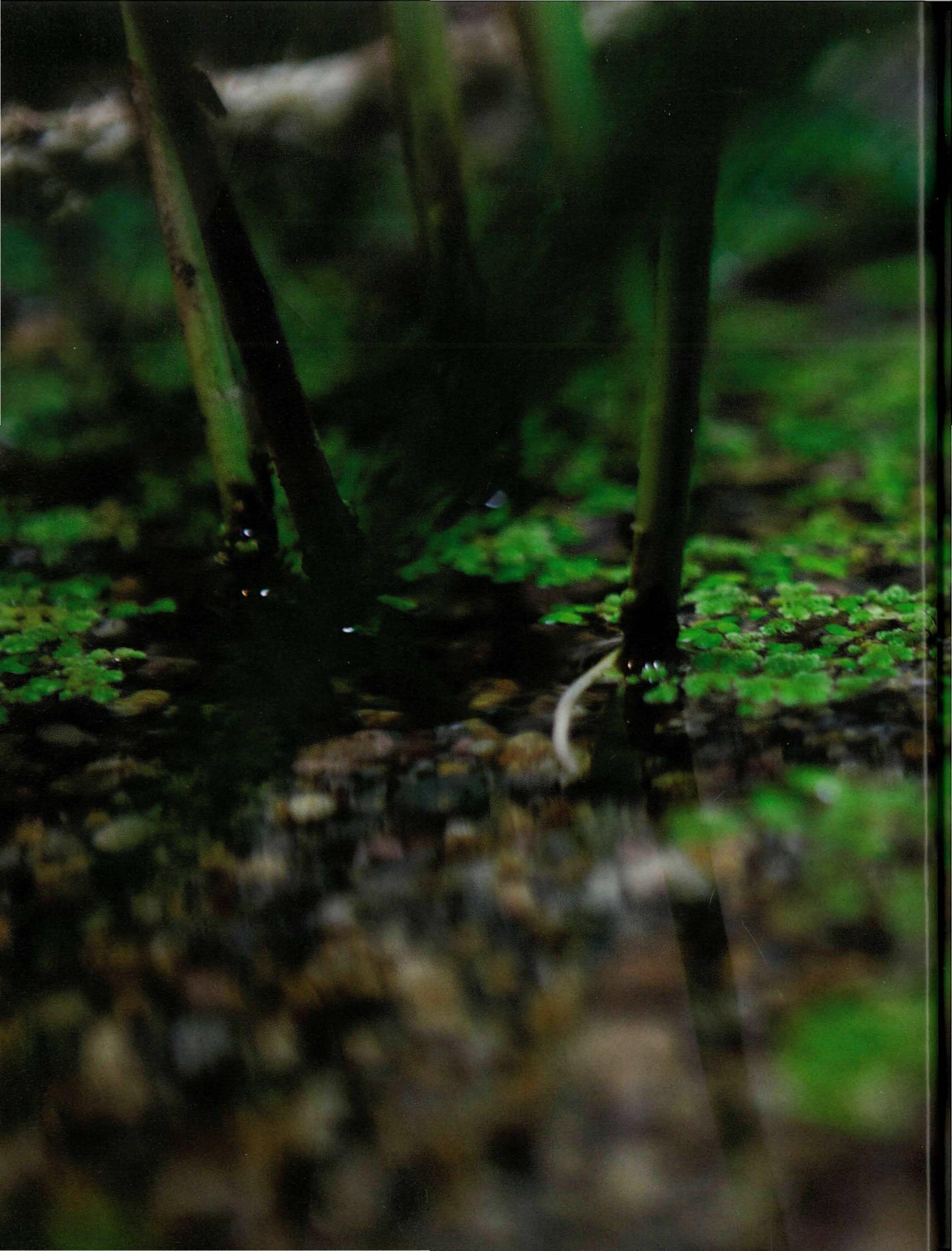
2 Melissa Loughnan, 'Off the Chain', *Blackmail*, Issue 014, (September 2010) <http://www.theblackmail.com.au/issue/art/off-the-chain/>, accessed 27 March 2012.

3 Jan Verwoert, 'Secret Society', 137.

4 'Rob McLeish', *PARALLEL COLLISIONS: 2012 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art* (Art Gallery of South Australia: Adelaide), 2012.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.





Slow Cycle:  
The Evolution of a Coin Operated Wetland

MEGAN GARRETT-JONES



A show at Firstdraft Gallery is, for most artists, part of a process of experimentation and development, and not an arrival at concluded work. I recall Paul Williams playfully experimenting with his growing stockpile of painted canvases, cutting them up and hanging them from the roof in piñata-like vessels, or Connie Anthes' foray into 'inflatable drawings' as part of her larger interrogation of painting's frameworks. It's not that these works are lacking in polish or consideration, but rather that they are evidently contributing to a larger artistic process.

The way in which Firstdraft supports the development of artists is perhaps most apparent in its Studio Residency Program. Upon application, artists propose a process of working, with view to staging an exhibition at the end of their ten-week stint in the gallery's off-site studio complex, the Depot in Woolloomooloo.

As a participant in Firstdraft's Emerging Writers Program, I wanted to reflect upon the trajectory implied by this process – from ideas, to experimentation and the fruition of a project in a gallery context. With this in mind, I contacted upcoming artist-in-residence Tega Brain to ask if she would mind me 'hanging

Previous Page: Tega Brain, *Coin Operated Wetland* (2011), installation view,  
Above: Tega Brain, *Coin Operated Wetland* (2011), installation view

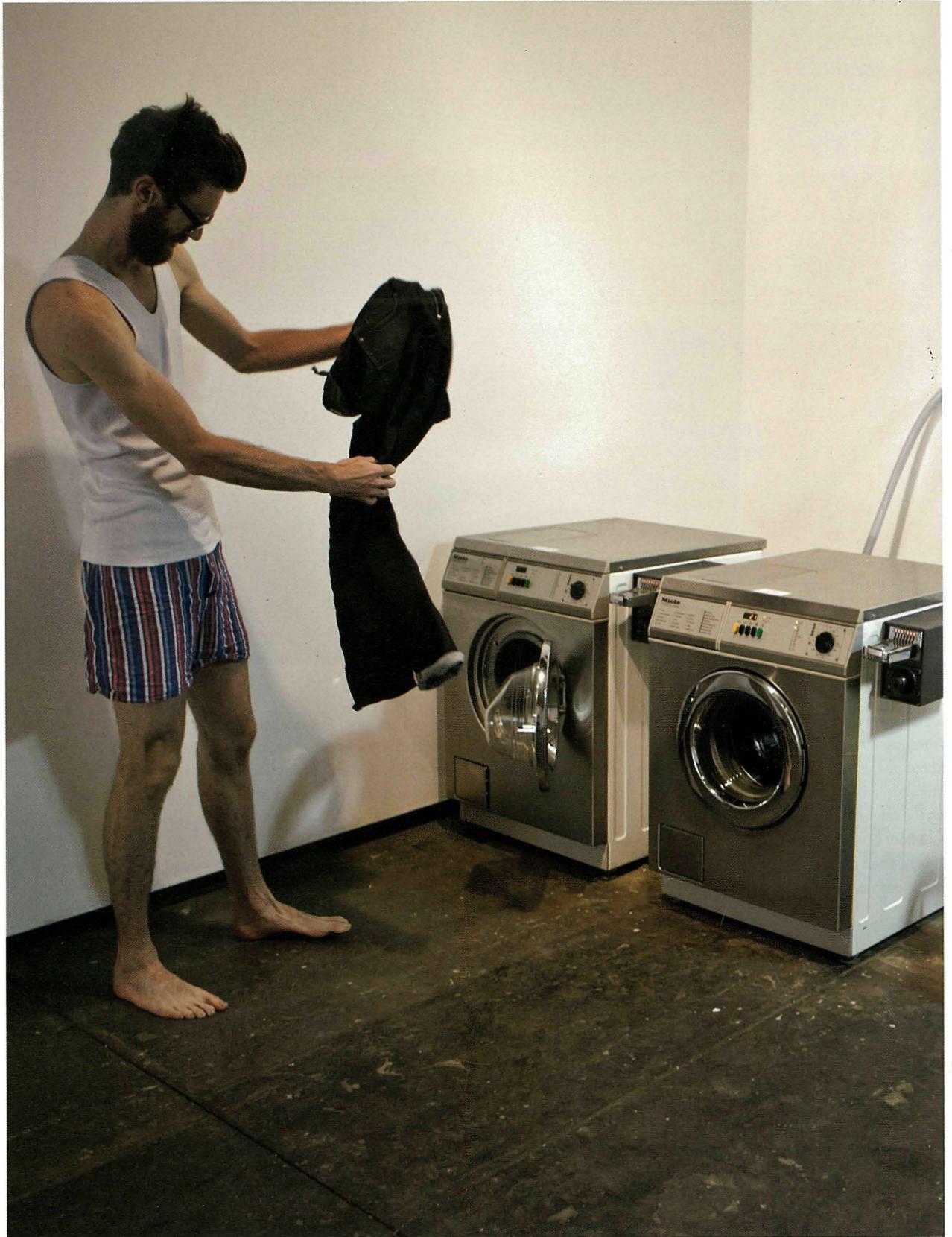


around' while she worked. In a series of studio visits, Brain and I discussed her evolving ideas on alternative ways of thinking about and using water systems and I was able to observe her – literally – growing wetland-project. There was also my 'assistance' on the fateful day before opening-night, in which a very wet face and floor was a prelude to a spectacularly disastrous trial run. Finally, I had the chance to engage as an audience member in her participatory work.

During our initial contact, Brain sent me an article – 'What the Cassowary Does Not Need to Know' by Stephen Muecke – which proved useful as a basis to approach her project. Muecke creates a fictional meeting 'not just with the scientists, but also with the cassowary, with a motor car, with some Aboriginal people and with an artist or two'.<sup>1</sup> I met Brain for the first time in the second week of her residency, and she told me she had mostly been reading. Piles of books on her table were testament to this. The other clue to what she was up to was some pondweed growing in a bucket of water. She used to work as a wetland engineer, she told me, and as an artist usually works with video and new media. From these beginnings, Brain could be described as a conceptual artist,

with an interdisciplinary approach to responding to concepts and research. This time, she said, she is trying to not 'over-engineer' the work, nor revert to her usual uses of technology, but create a viable and playful way that wetland systems might function within everyday life.

Over the course of our next couple of meetings, the bucket-plant collection increased. The practicality of keeping the plants alive indoors was of paramount concern. 'This one's doing alright,' Brain mused, running her hand through long green stems. 'This one never recovered from being moved,' she rued over a sick-looking one. A big Perspex tray turned up one week, procured from Reverse Garbage. Cheap and just the right size, I was told. With pumps bubbling away, hoses leading out windows, and the variety of specimens, the studio had the feeling of a science laboratory. Though Brain had explained to me, at this stage, the functional aspect of wetlands to purify water, she had yet to reveal what was doubtless an already formulating plan of how to bring this process into the gallery.



Studio artists meet with Firstdraft directors around halfway through their residency. I imagine, for many artists, that this is the impetus to begin steering their process clearly towards exhibition. Brain had made many decisions since I'd seen her the week before. She explained extensive diagrams, now on the wall, to directors Dara Gill and Catherine Connelly and other studio artists. The wetland feeds water into two washing machines, and the used water feeds back into the wetland to be purified. The washing machines would be coin-operated to replicate the public realm of a laundrette and to place the audience as a consumer in a commercial exchange. The directors prompted Brain with questions, ranging from her conceptual rationale to the work's technical requirements.

Although working solo, Brain's process involved a good deal of consultation with other artists who work with plants, such as Diego Boneto who – Brain tells me – wanted to see some weeds in the weed instead of the 'idealised situation' of natives only. They agreed to disagree. Brain also conferred with engineering contactors while designing the system, one who joyfully informed her that, if the machines were used to capacity, the wetland would die from the pollution. This he loved, because it replicated grim reality.

The day before the exhibition opening, I was with Brain in the gallery for the delivery of the hired washing machines. Procuring these had been a challenge. They are expensive and usually restricted to longer-term loans. 'You'll make your money back easily,' Brain recalled being told. As I admired the ready-installed lush-looking mini-wetland, two blokes in overalls – master and apprentice washing machine installers – wheeled in the beasts. The 'master' had been in the business 25 years, and informed us they *do* work with recycled water systems sometimes, though nothing like Brain's. He listed common problems people have with their machines (over-loading, too much soap) and, with that, left us in the gallery with two shiny commercial machines.

Brain surveyed the machines and her stockpile of valves, pipes, etc and declared, 'one last trip to Bunnings'. We trawled the irrigation and plumbing sections looking for the final pieces, some of which Brain hadn't thought of yet. There were t-joints and corner joints to channel water from machines to the wetland, and then there was the question of the join from the main pump into the machine, regarding which Bunnings staff were unhelpful. We agreed on a plausible solution and headed to the checkout.

Back at the gallery, Brain and I were wrapping pipes in plumbing tape, shoving them into rubber joins and tightening them with metal rings. On the first run, something burst almost straight away. Water sprayed the floor, and us, as Brain hurriedly shut down the pump and distanced electrical cords from puddles. 'The joins aren't secure enough,' she observed. Brain's mum arrived and I had to leave, a successful trial yet to be conducted.

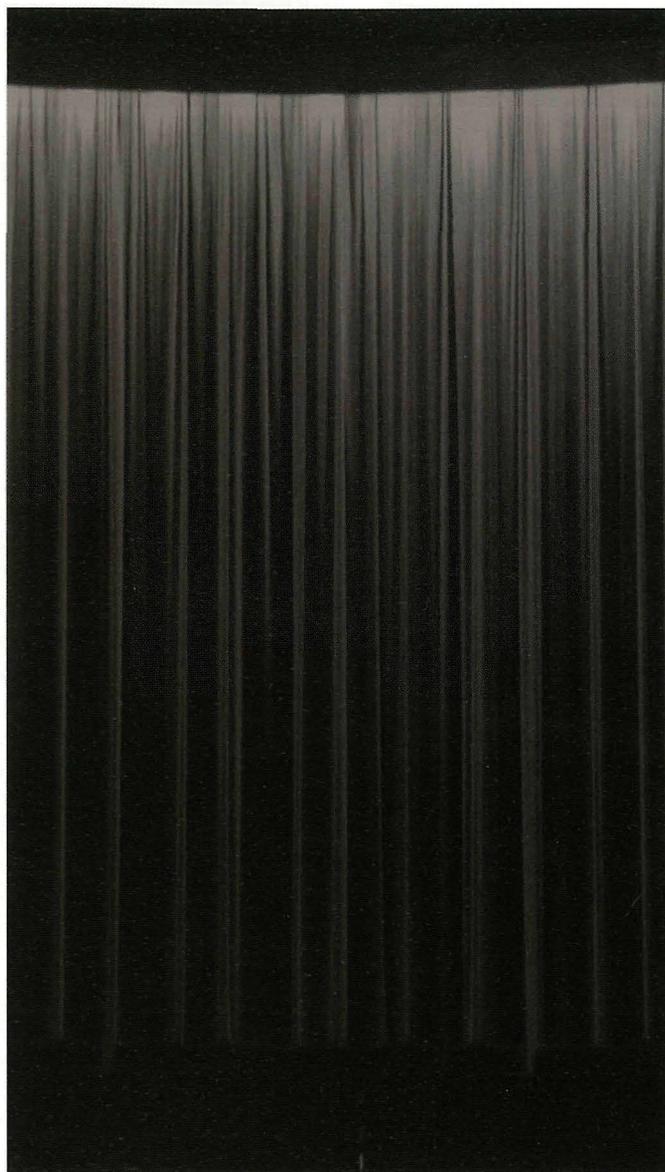
It was a delight to walk into the gallery and see the washing machines whirring cooperatively for the opening-night punters. I saw Brain, and she filled me in on what I'd missed. The night before, she had tightened everything again and turned on the pump and washing machine to soaking results. That's when she called the technicians, who had come in that morning. Peering over the back of the machines, I noted some very serious-looking pipes and connections. Seems domestic plumbing was the missing element between wetland engineering and art to make this a functioning system.

I packed up a bag of dirty laundry and headed, on my bike, down to Firstdraft. While I waited for my 100 per cent water-efficient washing to be done, Brain arrived to put a load through. She popped in regularly to check on the *Coin Operated Wetland*. The coin deposit revealed limited paid use, but otherwise all was in working order. I marvelled (and was a little horrified) as my grimy, soapy washing water travelled along clear tubes and landed in the little aquatic garden. But sure enough, the water that had passed through the wetland was clear. Pulling out my washing, I gave it a sniff-test, there were no pondy overtones to report. We talked about the future of the project, and Brain told me she hopes to revisit the work in future, preferably with some funding. Certainly the chance to develop a working prototype at Firstdraft made a future genesis of the work a real possibility.

I walked to the park across the street and strung my washing between two palm trees. I knew this is a little strange, but I wanted to see this thing through to its logical conclusion, which for me didn't involve riding 20 minutes home with wet laundry. As I lay in the sun, I thought back to Muecke's meeting between human, nature and machine, or as he puts it, 'humans and non-humans in it together'. From the humble beginnings of a bucket of pondweed, Brain had created one version of this meeting. In an age of didactic environmental imperatives, *Coin Operated Wetland* is playful, perceptive and surprisingly practical.

*Coin Operated Wetland* was exhibited at Firstdraft Gallery, Surry Hills

12-31 October, 2011



# Gravity

TANYA PETERSON

He is someone else. He describes a technique where he tries to think his way out of pain. His affliction is organised according to a sliding scale of intensity and imminence according to the patterns of pain that migrate along his spine. It comes down to perceptual differences between repetition and change – the sense of a feeling felt before or the possibility that things could be getting worse. Most days it's the former. There's a process of recognition, followed by an attempt of focused detachment. He calls it meditation. Perceive the impulse, register the pain as ongoing, then relocate it. Localise and forget. Lose the connection, lose gravity. He looks tired. We're between performances.

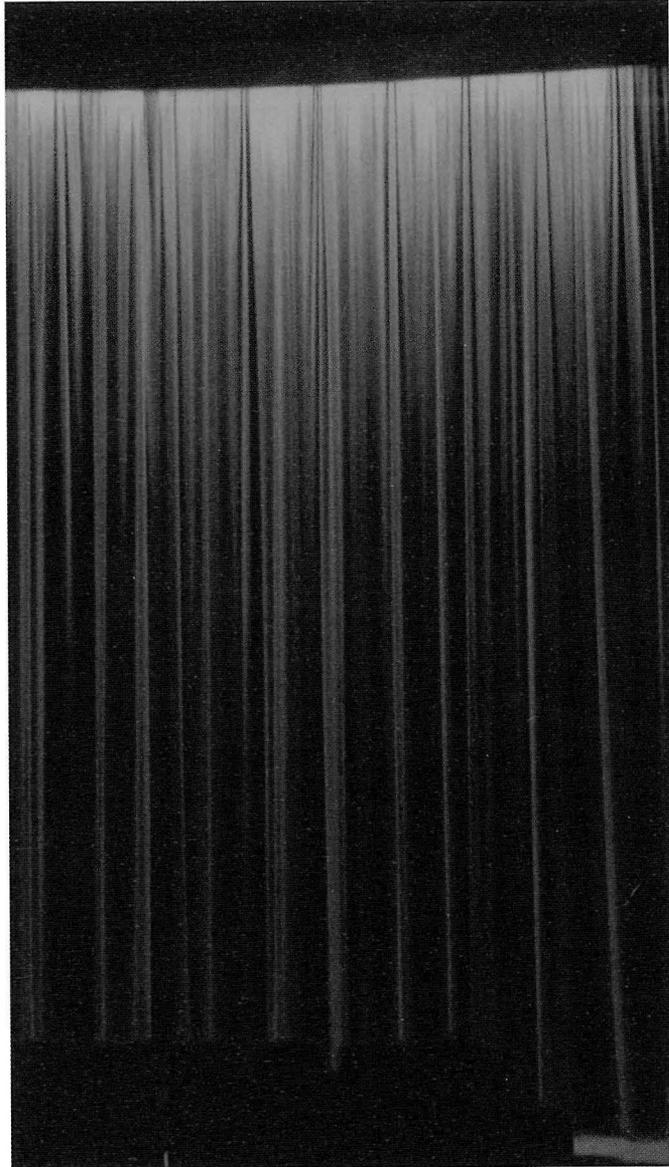
On stage, he responds to a question from the audience about gender and recognition. To make his point he changes character. A wild sweep of his hand improvises me momentarily out of the scene. With a magician's conceit he demonstrates my invisibility, only bringing me back from obscurity when his gesture unfolds as parody. It all happens in a matter seconds.

That night I follow a series of random links online and come across an old clip on YouTube of Radiohead. They're performing *Bones* on the now-defunct U.S. variety show, *Saturday Night Special*. The song's lyrics describe the breakdown of limbs and a desire for weightlessness. The band's singer, Thom Yorke, moves in contradistinction to the beat of the song's lyrics, which means that sometimes he doesn't move at all, and other times his arms and hands stutter erratically against the chorus climaxes. His eyes remain half-closed for the majority of the performance, a slurred expression of intensity, perhaps in resistance or indifference to the largely immobile studio audience. Or maybe that's just how he performs live – looking through a keyhole of awareness and inattention, looking out looking in. It's the disconnect between Yorke and the audience that also draws them together. It generates an exchange that's both singular and shared. But there's also a lag in the feedback, and the crowd slide in and out of moments, entranced and yet equally distracted, as they double-check their intent against the breath of each note.

Like 'two stars orbiting around each other' is the analogy architect and theorist Lars Spuybroek uses to describe how feelings of sympathy are enacted.<sup>1</sup> In his book, *The Sympathy of Things*, he characterises it as a pattern of influence, an 'interiorised form of motion... [which] does not map the other as an image or as a form, but as a rhythm of behaviour over time'.<sup>2</sup> In this model, sympathy is understood as an encounter that's acted upon internally and exteriorised through a series of practised and improvised correspondences. It occurs through moments in time, what Spuybroek calls 'points of duration'.<sup>3</sup> As a form of dynamism, it blurs the perceived boundaries of the self as differentiated from another—like a proliferating resonance, moving within and across the (in)distinct planes of another's body, which is always already in motion.

He draws on Bergson's reading of Étienne Jules Marey's 19th-Century time-lapse images ('chronophotographs') as way to explore the interplay between duration and sympathy further. In Marey's images, he sees the simultaneous collapse and extension of movements, worlds accelerating in slow motion, and the speed of things taking shape through the disarticulation of time in constant flight. In short, he sees patterns of change that underwrite and animate our (sympathetic) relationship to the world. For him, Marey's images show the diagrammatic iterations of the body's movement as the 'floating and modulating of attention, a specific effort of gradation'.<sup>4</sup> And it is the lived recognition and 'pull' of these qualities, understood as rhythmic and open to change, which he sees as the key to how we're able to act in sympathy, in sync, with one another.

It makes me wonder if a 21st-Century complement to the example of Marey might be found in a video like *Defenestration* – a seven-and-a-half-minute time and motion sampler on Vimeo, made entirely from movie clips of people jumping or falling through windows. Body after body travels through the air, shattering sheets of glass and reiterating the moment of flight and impact. Thresholds are continually broken and remade in the aftermath of every new beginning. And even though we know the stuntmen and women in each scene will keep on jumping until the director says 'Cut!', we still feel for the actor they're standing in for.



\* \* \*

Someone else is him. The first performance was a 100-dollar screen test at a drug store; the second was a walk-on cameo for 5K. At least, that's what it looks like on his bank statement after talking to the branch manager.

*Somewhere in Illinois, it's 15 hours earlier the day before. A young man in his early twenties places a credit card on a laminated wooden counter and tries to look average. He's got 11 other dupes in his wallet if this one doesn't work. The hotel receptionist affects a smile. The transaction is put on hold until the amount is cross-referenced and the funds are verified.*

*After checking in and finding his room, he sits on the edge of the bed and eats the take-out burger he bought earlier. Then he gets comfortable and flicks through the in-house movies. He calls down to room service to order more food. While he's on the phone, he notices an old candy wrapper is stuck to the base of his boot. He kicks at it with his other foot. It drifts onto the carpet, and settles near the edge of the bed.*

*Later in the day, a call from reception, which he doesn't answer, wakes him. He gets up, stretches, and looks around the room. Before leaving, he opens his bag and cleans out the rest of the mini-bar, collecting the guest pen on his way out.*

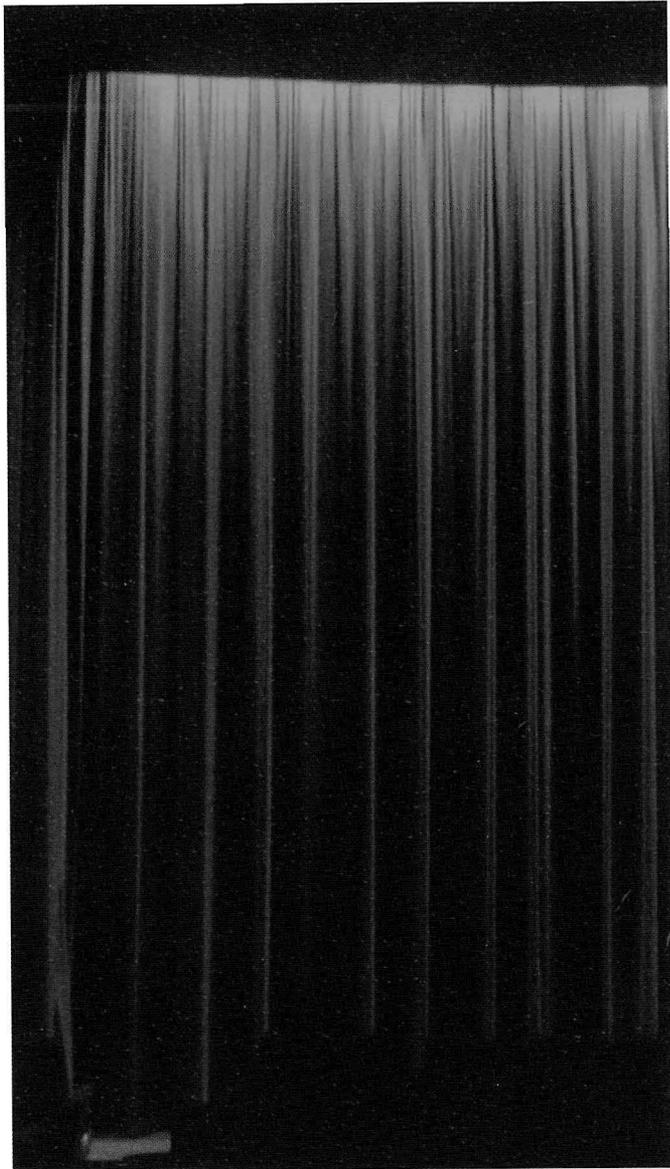
*That afternoon he walks into the old science building through the wrong entrance and ends up in the Aviation department upstairs, instead of downstairs in the Physics Theatre. The place looks like a decommissioned hospital ward. Old name boards, with moveable letters pinned to felt, are framed behind glass and dust. A black-and-white reproduction of a 19th-Century aerial map of Chicago hangs near them. The word 'Aviation' is engraved on a painted metal placard, suspended over the threshold of the corridor. Through the adjacent windows there's a view of the roof and a rusted air-conditioning duct outside. Further along, there's a sign at the top of the stairwell across from the offices: 'Foucault's Pendulum. The path of this pendulum appears to rotate slowly anti-clockwise. This apparent motion is explained by the Earth's clockwise rotation.' The sign goes on describe how*

*'the pendulum's motion precesses', and the way the gravitational pull of one axis changes the other.*

*He follows the pendulum's hanging wire from the ceiling, down three flights, to the bottom of the stairwell's spiral. When he gets to the ground floor there's nothing there except dead space at the end of the line. A small round frame encircles the missing pendulum, an empty representation of Earth with nothing moving. Its scale reminds him of an indoor mini-trampoline he had as a child. He used to jump to his mum's records. Katrina and the Waves was his favourite.*

*He read somewhere that the very outer reaches of space were almost inert. At the time it had seemed significant. Now what strikes him more is the futility of knowing fate at a distance. And besides, wasn't it all conjecture in one form or another anyway. He knows they'll eventually find the funds for another pendulum and the rotations will be visible again. Pretty soon, he thinks, we'll see ourselves again, moving in and against the universe in small circles of insignificance. He can still remember the New York Times obituary for a leading astronomer, Allan Sandage. They quoted an old interview where he said, 'So the universe will continue to expand forever and the galaxies will get farther and farther apart, and things will just die. That's the way it is. It doesn't matter whether I feel lonely about it or not'.<sup>5</sup> It had made him think about the speed of feelings and how they moved through time.*

*He finally makes it to the Physics Theatre. The professor is talking about gravitational lensing. He's looked at this topic before. He listens to the lecture anyhow, 'In certain areas of space the density of mass/energy from something like a massive galaxy can have such a strong gravitational field that it causes the curving of space-time, distorting a path of light passing through it. This effect, known as gravitational lensing, is when the light from a distant object is bent, sometimes creating a double image of it when seen from Earth.'<sup>6</sup> Most of the visual examples in the lecture are of images taken from telescopes like the Hubble, and only show small arcs of light haloed around an area of space. You never really see two identical objects sitting side by side. Still, he'd always liked the idea that the universe could somehow mirror itself with light so remote it often no longer existed.*

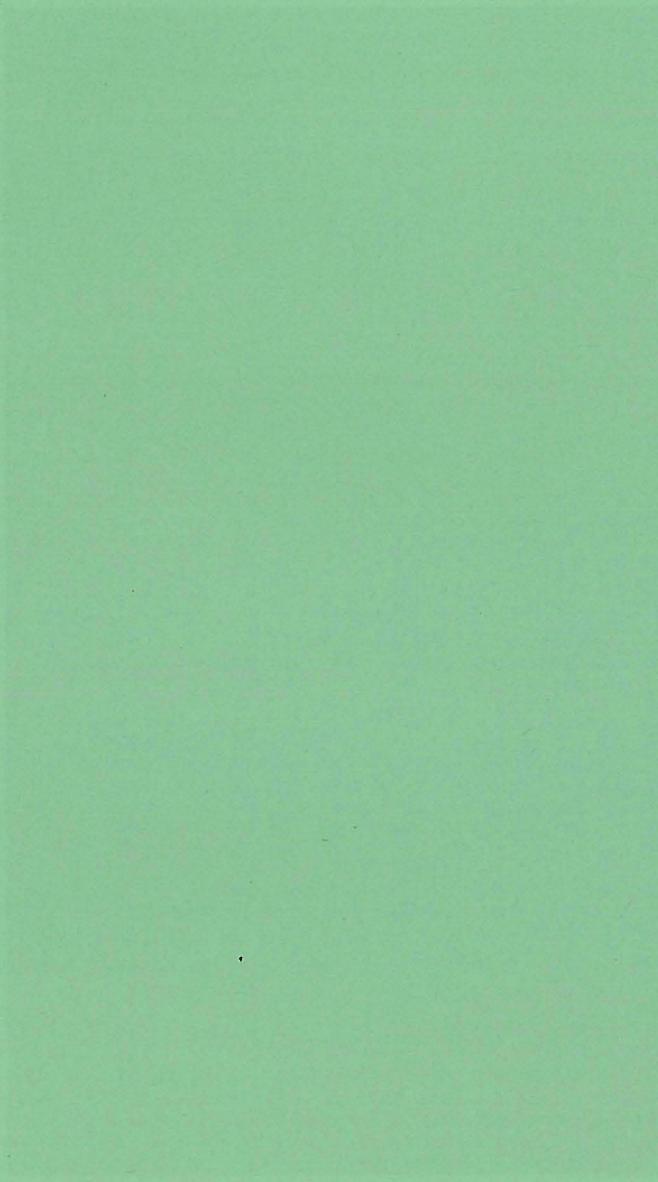


\* \* \*

After two days, they take the freeze off his account and confirm his credit card's been cancelled. It'll be another three weeks until he receives a new card. That night he goes online and checks his account for any more 'errant activity', as the manager called it. It's 11:50pm. He can hear the computer humming. He navigates to his bank statement and stares at the date and location of his last real purchase. The overseas transactions have been deleted and no longer appear on his statement. He's looking at old data. The brightness of the screen makes him squint. He takes the cancelled credit card from his wallet and cuts it in half. Then he turns out the light.

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1. Lars Spuybroek, *The Sympathy of Things: Ruskin and the Ecology of Design* (Rotterdam: V2\_/NAi Publishers, 2011), 164.
  2. *Ibid.*, 165.
  3. *Ibid.*, 169. In relation to these ideas on affect and aesthetics, see also: Steven Shaviro, *Without Criteria: Kant, Whitehead, Deleuze, and Aesthetics* (Cambridge, Massachusetts/London: MIT Press, 2009), especially "Chapter 4: Pulses of Emotion", 47–70.
  5. *Ibid.*, 166.
  6. Dennis Overbye, 'Allan Sandage, Astronomer, Dies at 84; Charted Cosmos's Age and Expansion', *The New York Times* (17 November, 2010), [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/17/science/space/17sandage.html?pagewanted=2&ref=dark\\_matter](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/17/science/space/17sandage.html?pagewanted=2&ref=dark_matter)

Tanya Peterson, *Verona Cinema – I*, 2012, pigment print.  
Tanya Peterson, *Verona Cinema – II*, 2012, pigment print.  
Tanya Peterson, *Verona Cinema – III*, 2012, pigment print.

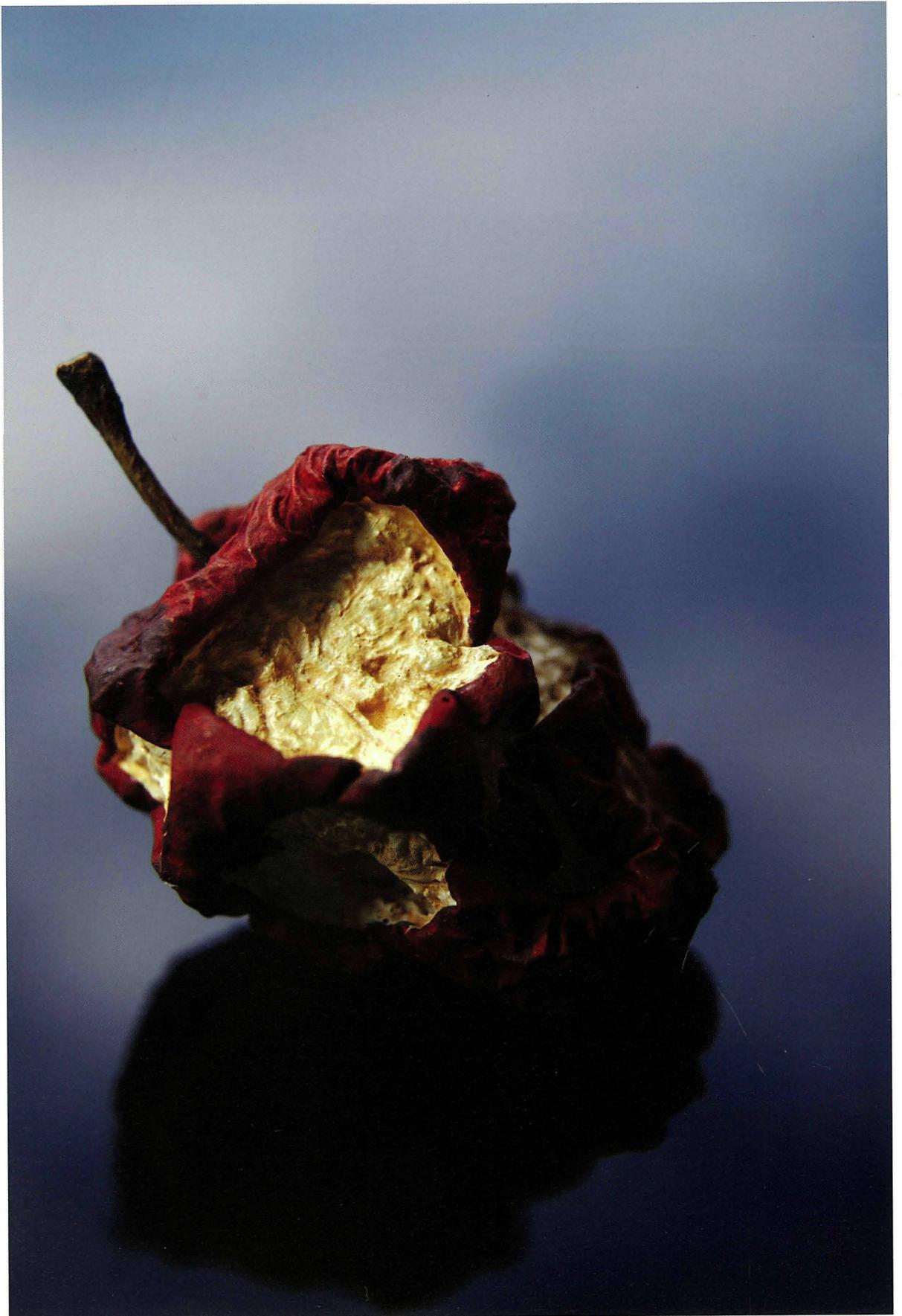


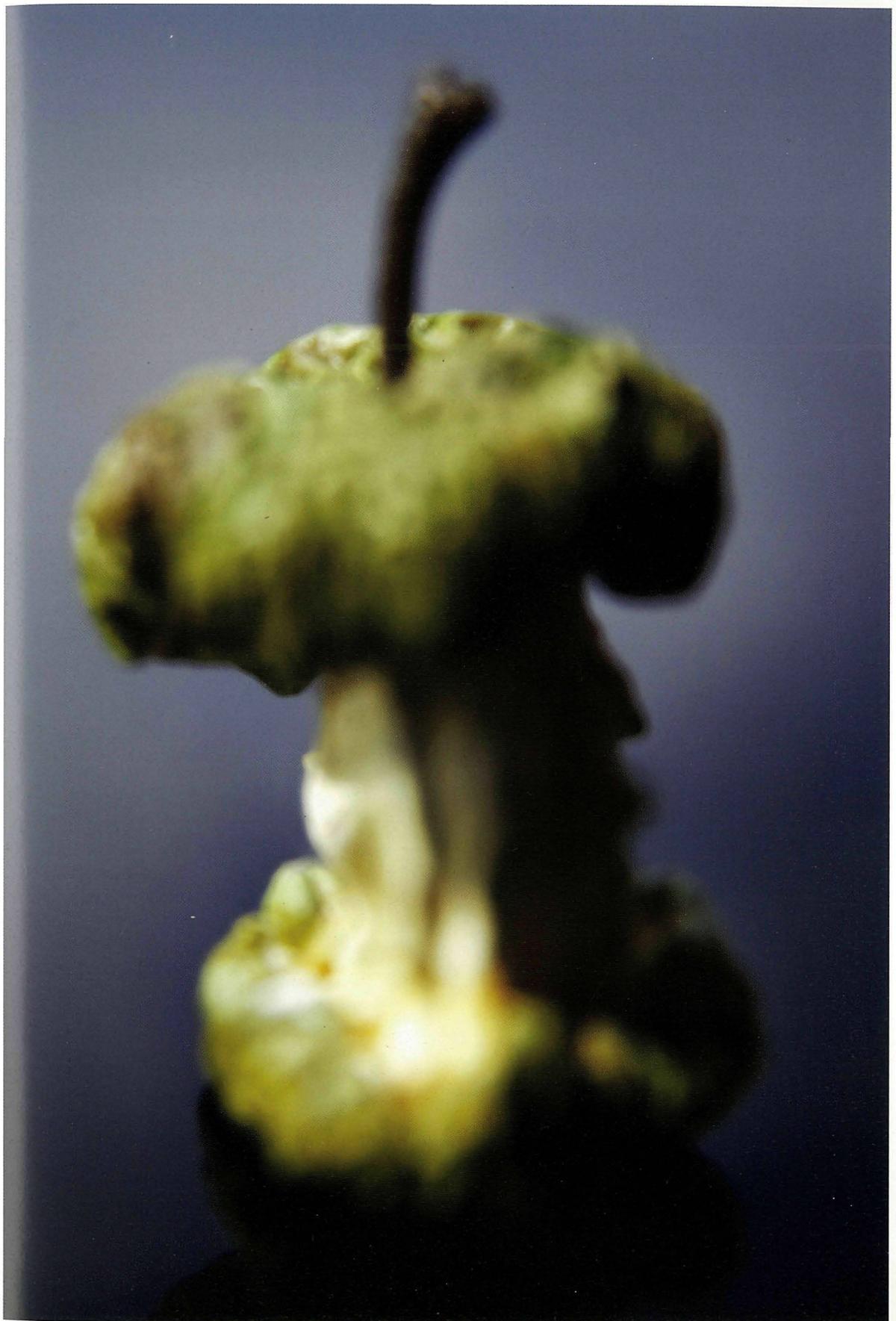
RIPE

# In-stink-dually Loose Changed

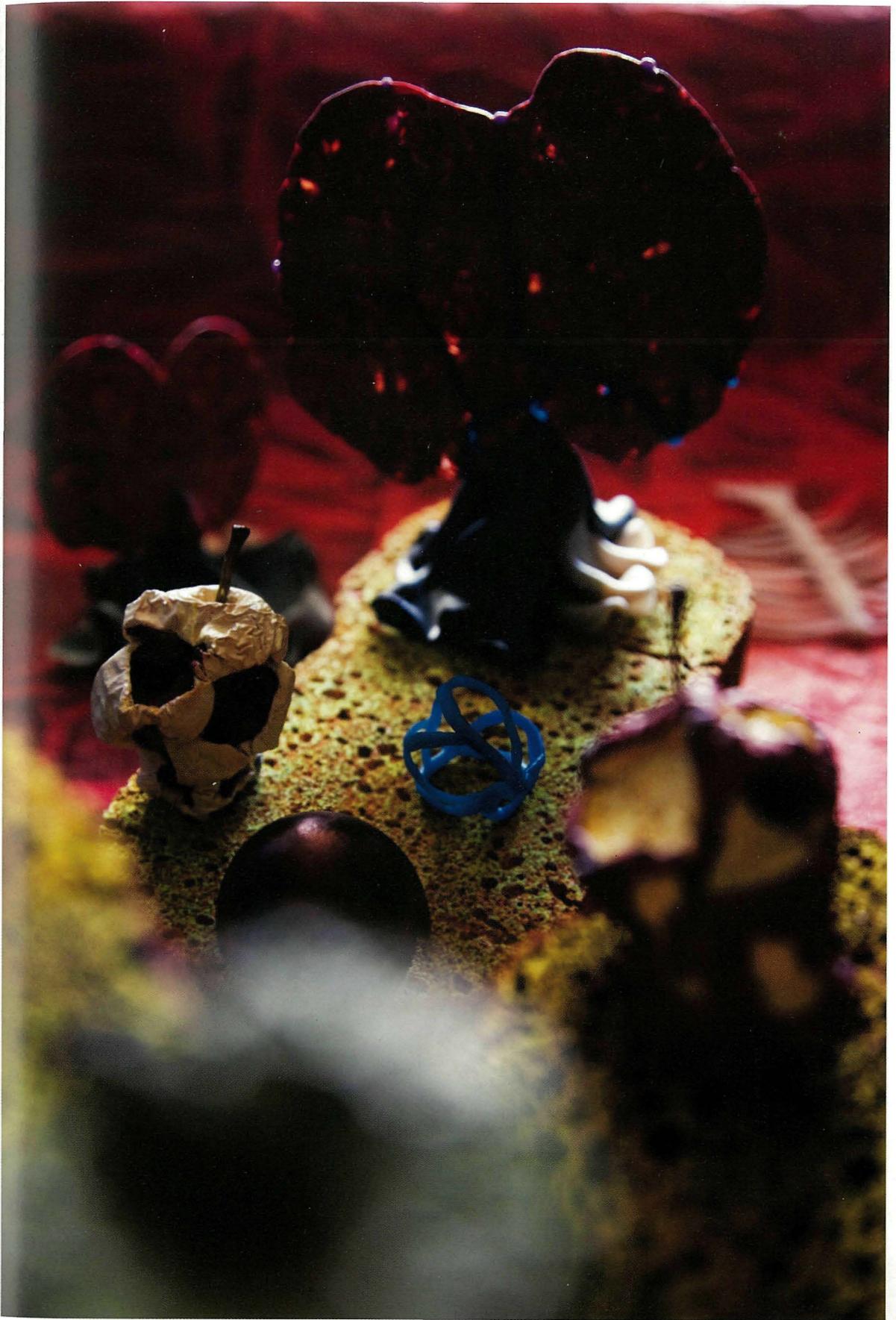
CHARLES DENNINGTON











# 3 Works About Inescapable Humanness

TULLY ARNOT







### 3 Works About Inescapable Humanness.

Proposition for a cheerful toilet paper dispenser.  
Without gravity this would not be possible

My bellybutton embedded in the gallery wall.  
The show ends and it is puttied over.

Old undies upside down, a stiff face-like form.  
"I can see myself in those undies"

- Tully Arnot 2012

# DREAM HOME Centrefolds

HEATH FRANCO







# *The Doctor's busy*







**Toastie?**  
**Toastie-Toastie?**  
**Can I get a Toastie-Toastie?**





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All I Have To Offer You (Is Me)  
Wh  
Softly As  
Is  
They C  
Climb

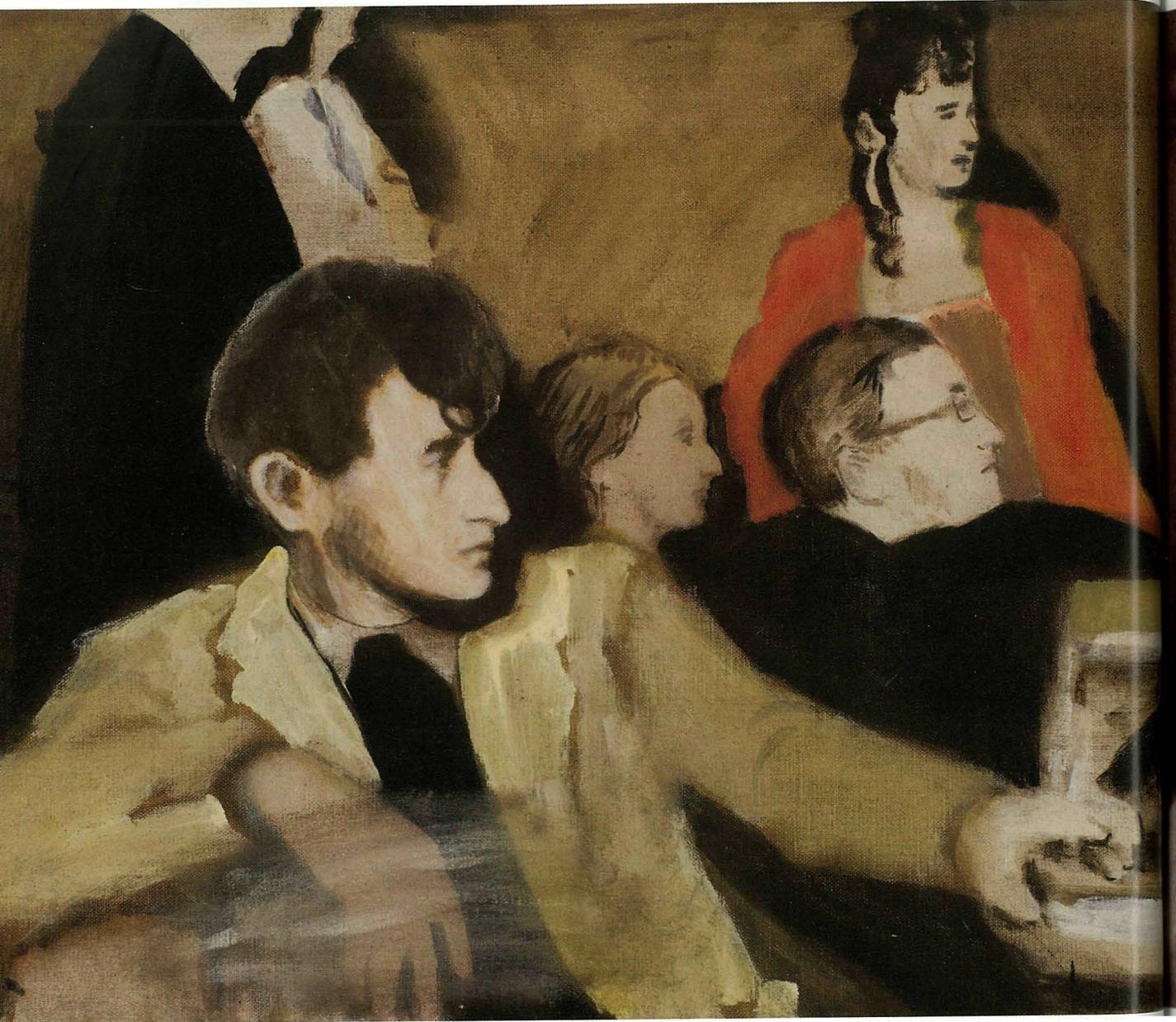
PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES VAN DER BRUG

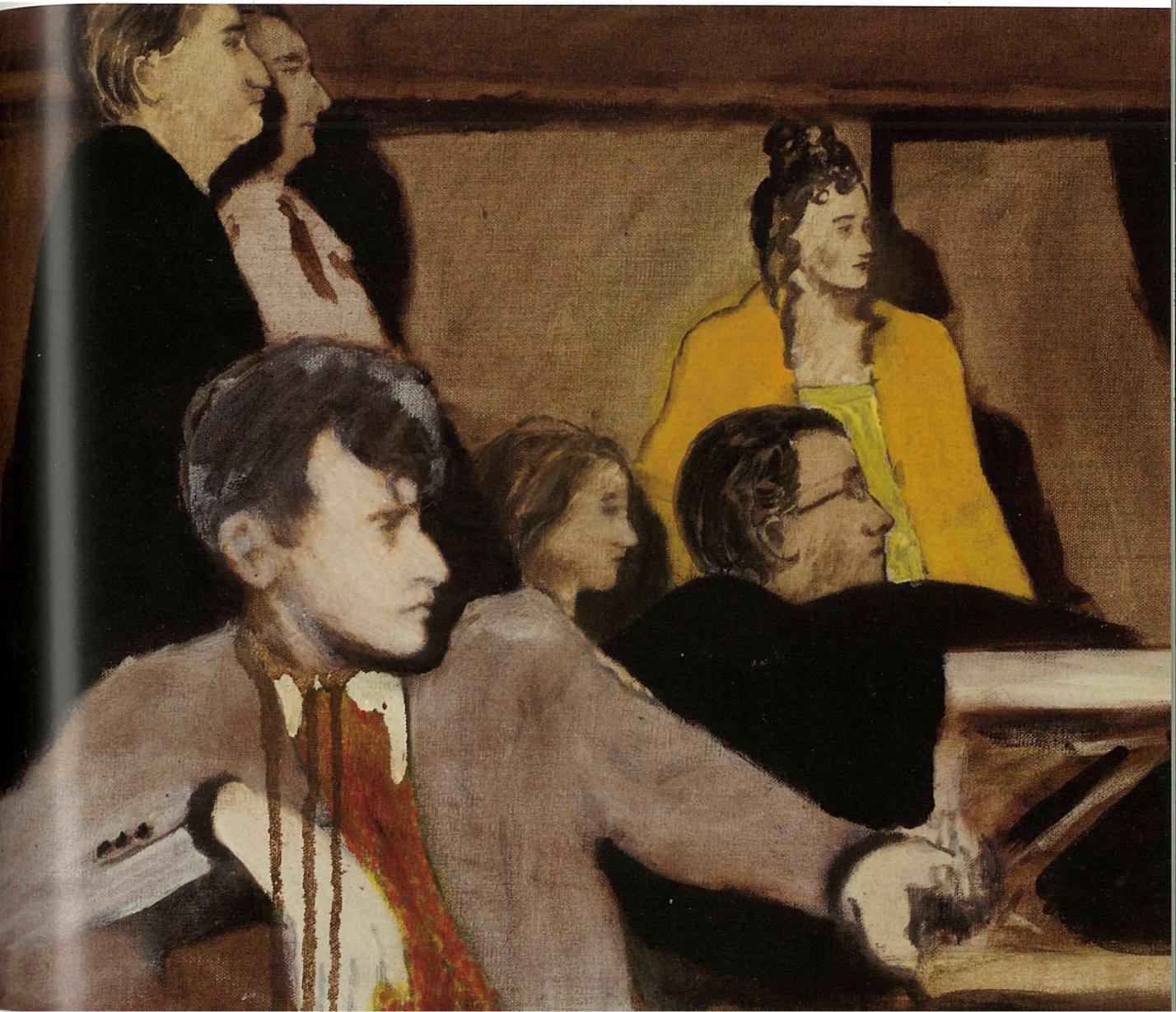
COLLECTIONS  
OF  
**Denis Walter**



# Jean-Louis Barrault

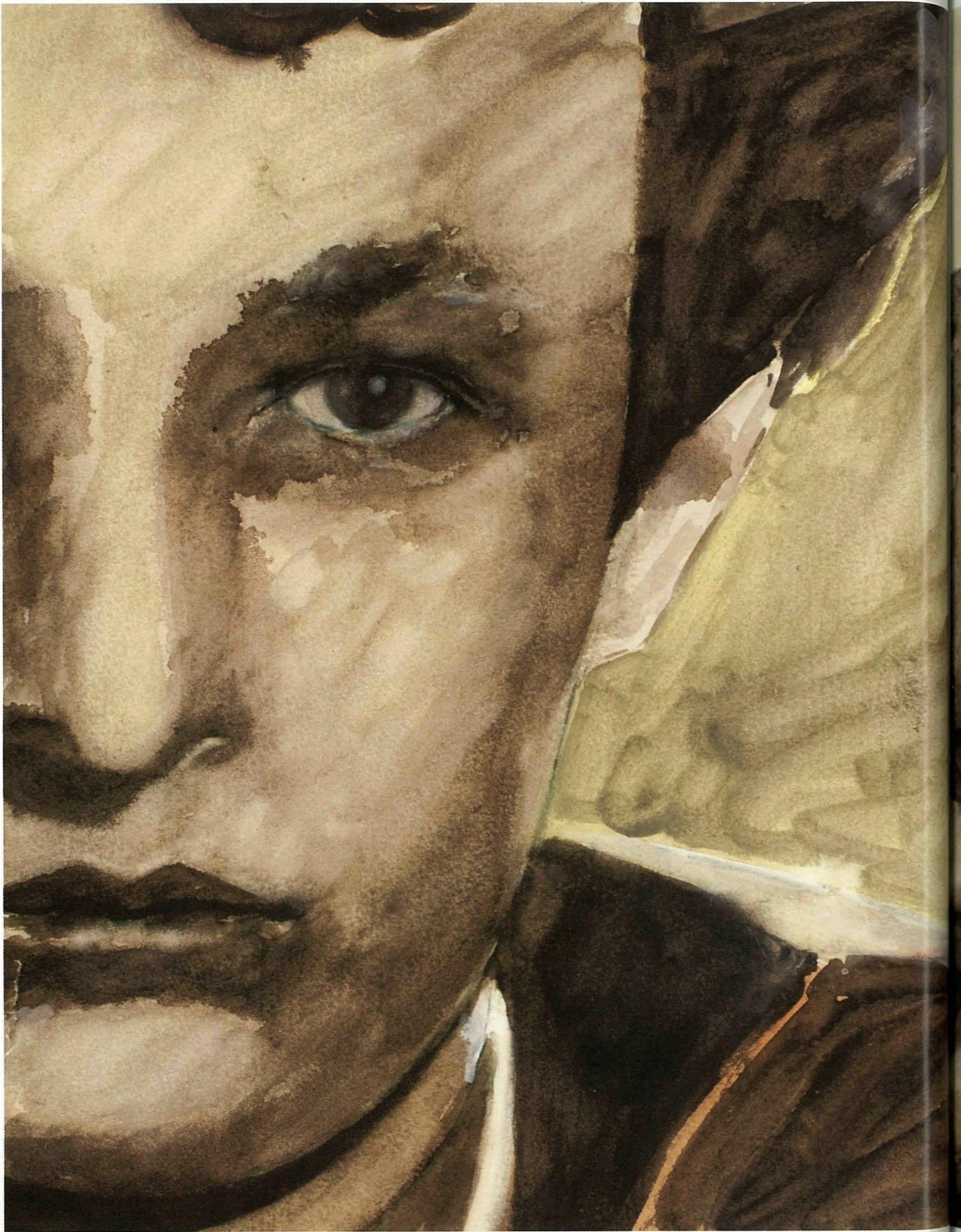
NICOLA SMITH

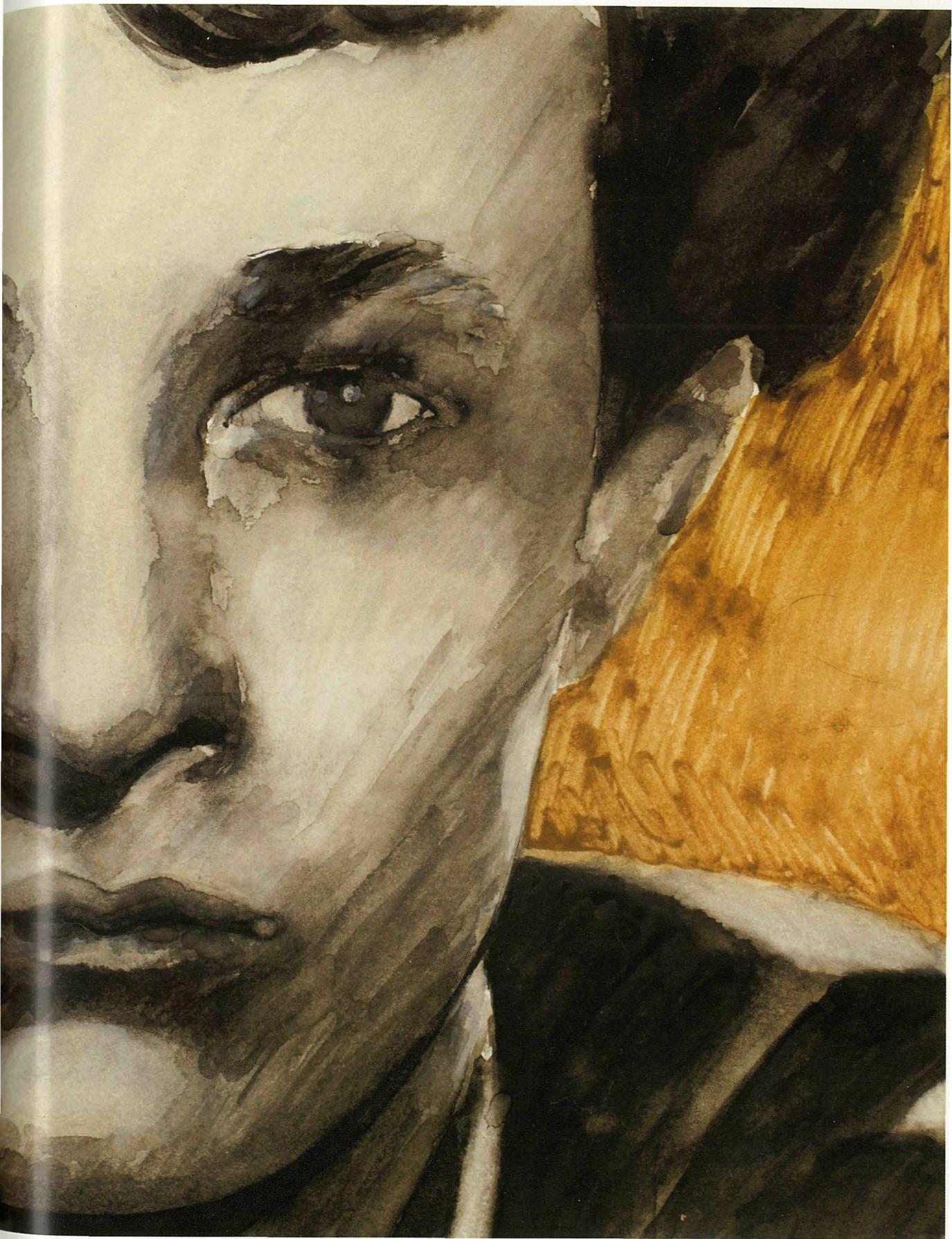












REVIEWS



## Galerie pompom group show

ELLA MUDIE

Next to Heath Franco's wall-mounted video *DREAM HOME Rainbow* (2012) at Galerie pompom, a set of headphones pinned to the wall sits idly unplugged, while the work's trippy drone soundtrack fills this newly opened, hole-in-the-wall space. Even without sound, it would be hard not to be drawn to Franco's hellish send-up of the contemporary fallacy of home as a stable psychic anchor. Inhabiting an uncanny, emptied-out shell of a suburban house, a cast of costumed characters or alter-egos of the artist perform bizarre repetitive actions. From a fluoro clothing clad raver aggressively punching a stuffed toy, to a pant-less man campily swinging an inflatable hammer, in typical Franco fashion the digital space is hijacked to create a carnivalesque counter-reality where latent desires and energies are released into a realm of virtual psychedelic havoc.

It's fitting that my first introduction to Franco's work was in this same room when it belonged to the artist-run-initiative MOP (which remains next door, minus one gallery) as it's a similar story for many of the artists represented here. Galerie pompom is a new initiative from the founders of MOP, who have adopted a stable of early career Sydney artists to nurture and develop in what aims to be a more commercial venture. As a 'taster' show representing a sample of work from each of the gallery's 14 artists, there is no specific theme for this group show. There are discernible threads among the works though, and a sense of adventure, conceptual engagement, self-reflexivity and irreverence appear as some of the shared attributes among the eclectic array of works comprising the space's inaugural exhibition.

Above: Jamie North, *Strata (Illawarra Plum)*, (2013). lambda print on photographic paper, 57 x 90 cm. Courtesy the artist and Galerie pompom, Sydney.

A less cynical take on modes of living emerges in Kylie Banyard's modest oil painting *Village Entrance* (2011), a retro-futuristic landscape painted in a muted '70s aesthetic depicting a gateway or portal into an alternate future. Banyard takes inspiration from alternative architectures, such as the recycled housing of the Earthship movement, and her accompanying miniature low-fi sculptural model, which replicates the painted gateway and embellishes it with crystals, appears to intimate a longing to transition into the next dimension by building. Yet this gesture is underscored by a subtle irony and ambivalence, as it's unclear whether the artist endorses such utopic movements or gently mocks them.

The quest continues in Vicky Browne's pair of small-scale found material installations, *Finding Yoko Ono* (2012) and *Searching for Sigourney Weaver* (2012). With the latter placed on the ground, the viewer was invited to squat and peer down into this miniature cluster of tipi-like structures obsessively crafted from tightly glued together sticks and embalmed in spider web veins of threads of glue – the title alluding perhaps to the extent to which contemporary notions of the talismanic and mystical are mediated by popular culture. By contrast, Emma Thomson's photographic portrait *Adele* (2011) operates in the domestic space. Here, the performative posing of a young woman in her living room, clutching a cat to her chest and standing side-on to reveal white furry wings strapped to her back, likewise suggests a desire to transform the mundane into something more heroic.

In a world increasingly saturated with visual imagery, what is consistently striking as a mark of differentiation between images made by artists, as opposed to those created within the realms of advertising, fashion, graphic design and the like, is the degree to which artistic images engage knowingly with the complexities of seeing and the politics of the gaze and visual representation. This arguably lends contemporary art much of its vitality, but can also result in work that is more clever than it is compelling. It is refreshing to discover this common pitfall largely avoided here. If somewhat light on arresting imagery, any shortfall in this respect is compensated for by the subtle nuances and quiet sophistication exuded by much of the work.

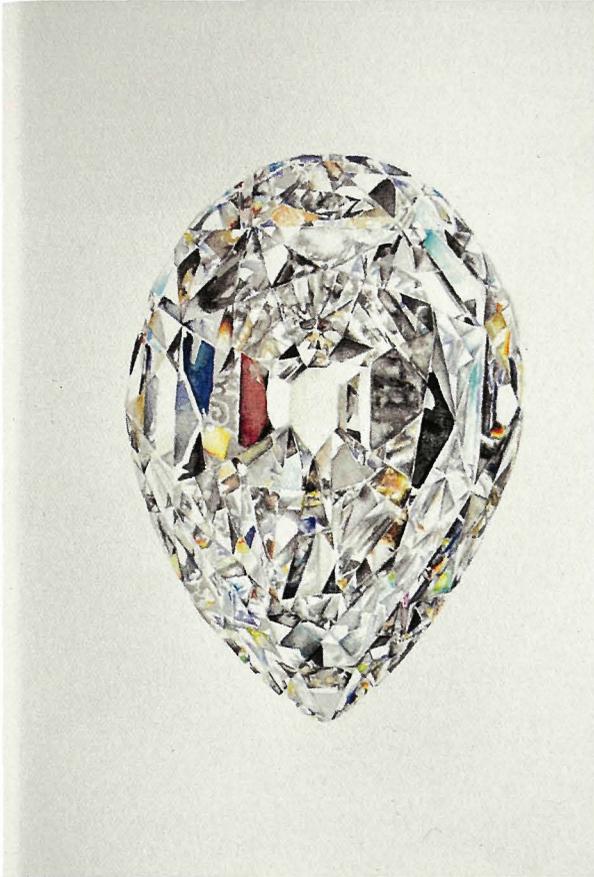
A highlight in this respect is Sarah Mosca's intriguing *Double Vision* (2012), a photograph of a rocky mountain landscape that at first glance appears naturalistic until closer inspection reveals perfect symmetry, a mirror image whose bifurcation is emphasised by the overlay of a pair of round eye holes which suggest a binocular view. The light-reflecting surface properties of the diamond proves a choice vehicle for exploring a translucent, fragmentary and soft-edged style of geometric painting in Rochelle Haley's intricate suite of watercolours on paper. Nicola Smith's quasi-historical painting of the famous French actor and mime

Jean-Louis Barrault surrounded by a cast of onlookers, all watching a rehearsal not visible to the viewer, presents a de-centred pictorial space in which the focus of the action lies outside the frame.

In his provocative 1953 Situationist essay, *Formulary for a New Urbanism*, Ivan Chitchevlov proclaims that 'all cities are geological,' a statement that comes to mind while considering the photomedia contributions of Izabela Pluta and Jamie North. Pluta's application of pale and ethereal shades of acrylic paint to photographic prints of rural and urban environments in her sham ruin series has a voiding effect which heightens the palimpsest quality of these landscapes – portals of absence clear a space where what has been previously erased over time might hauntingly return. North's *Strata (Illawarra plum)* (2011), meanwhile, is more literally geological – his photograph captures the delicate beauty of this native plant from the tiny droplets of dew clinging to its purple-blue fruit to its sprawling underground root network. The detail is so extraordinarily fine as to appear almost hyper-real, drawing attention to the complex biological systems at work around us which we fail to comprehend or appreciate via ordinary perception.

The sample of works also reveal a surprisingly strong presence of the artists' hand as well as the growing predilection artists exhibit for freely traversing mediums and historical trajectories. Leo Coyte gets his hands dirty making the surreal, tragi-comic and anthropomorphic figurines of his *Welcome Party* series in 3D which he then paints in a suite of acrylic portraits suggestive of an act of commemoration. Suspended in an in-between space, the figurines are at once animated by the uninhibited, imaginative possibilities of childhood yet, with their startled expressions, also convey an unsettling sense of psychological discomfort. In Nana Ohnesorge's *Blinkers* (2011), the iconic figure of Australian childhood, Blinky Bill, is hybridised with the bearded face of Ned Kelly, morphing into a witness of disturbing scenes of colonial violence that, rendered in a lurid neon orange, appear so aestheticised as to desensitise the viewer to their impact.

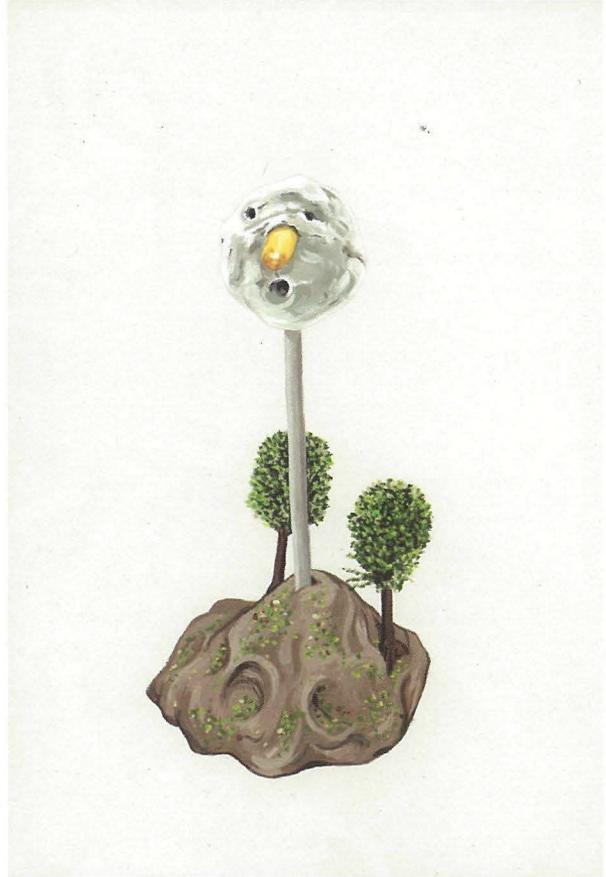
Other works riff off a sense of surprise, dissonance and playful contradictions in materials and perception. A close inspection of Charles Dennington's polymer clay model of a severed and impaled red thumb brings a shock of recognition in the stunning lifelike detail of the thumbnail, an unexpected assertion of the real amidst the apparently grotesque and fantastic. Todd Robinson's dynamic *Peripeteia* (2012) is a gravity-defying assemblage of cylindrical blocks with a clean, minimalistic machine-like aesthetic that is offset by its construction from radiata pine. For sculptural works that deploy the space around the work the tight confines of the space appear more constraining – Michael Moran's Giacometti inspired *BUST (upright, nose and mouth)* (2011) proves difficult to appreciate on the floor and might have benefited from some elevation.



Galerie pompom's inaugural exhibition opts out of curatorial texts or artist statements, but what continues to resonate in my mind is the gallery's own statement of its *raison d'être*: 'to nurture [artists in] their creative enterprise in a dedicated commercial venture.'<sup>2</sup> This really does represent a bold gesture to break down the dichotomy between not-for-profit and commercial spaces and to reposition the business side of art as another area in which artists can exercise their creativity. The biggest test for a commercial gallery, though, is whether they can support artists not only in making sales, but also in taking risks and sometimes even failing. Straddling both worlds is difficult indeed, but Galerie pompom with its ARI roots and keen eye for talent appears well-poised to make that leap.

Above left: Rochelle Haley, *Cullinan I*, (2011). Watercolour on paper. Courtesy the artist and Galerie pompom, Sydney.

Above right: Leo Coyte, *Welcome Party (Recent Sculpture) - 2*, (2010-2011). Acrylic on grey stonehenge paper. Courtesy the artist and Galerie pompom, Sydney.



*Galerie pompom group show, 7 March—1 April 2012 in Chippendale, Sydney.*  
*Exhibiting artists: Kylie Banyard, Vicky Browne, Leo Coyte, Charles Dennington, Heath Franco, Rochelle Haley, Michael Moran, Sarah Mosca, Jamie North, Nana Ohnesorge, Izabela Pluta, Todd Robinson, Nicola Smith and Emma Thomson.*

1. Chtcheglov, Ivan (Gilles Ivain), "Formulary for a new urbanism," *Theory of the Derive and other situationist writings on the city*. edited by Libero Andreotti and Xavier Costa. Barcelona, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 1996, 14.

2. Gallery statement, [www.galeriepompom.com/GPP/Galerie\\_pompom\\_News.html](http://www.galeriepompom.com/GPP/Galerie_pompom_News.html) (accessed April 13, 2012).

- the  
wave



# Blue Period

ERIK JENSEN

Somewhere in Matthew Tumbers' late adolescence, his father developed a trademarked product called 'Footy Food' – snack packs with Rugby League-themed packaging. Tumbers and a friend made a short promotional video and jingle, with characters loosely based on those from television's *The Footy Show*. Rugby League star Paul 'Fatty' Vautin was approached to act as brand ambassador, but the deal fell through. Tumbers recalls showing 'Fatty' the caricatures in his animation, 'he ['Fatty'] giggled, but also saw a resemblance and wanted a bigger cut... I wouldn't have owned that I resembled that drawing.'

The story seems a perfect introduction to Matthew Tumbers' and Mitch Cairns' *Blue Period*, an exhibition which had as its basis a nostalgic view of 1980s Australia – a time of relentless optimism, a time of prosperity and possibility, when the dollar was about to be floated and the America's Cup had just been won, when Alan Bond was yet to be disgraced and Keith Williams had only recently bought Hamilton Island. As such, it was only fitting that at the exhibition's opening, curator Susan Gibb served smoked mussels with gin and tonics.

The show's pivot is a video by Tumbers. *Blue Lonely Holiday II* (2012) is a nirvana of planes and bain-maries, a paradise packaged up and sold back to us. There is hypnotic footage of planes, human stop-motion, empty spaces across which float half-formed ideas and broken-down aphorisms. Tumbers

loves language – he gargles vowels. His work is built around a vocabulary of the meaningless and the absurd, the sort of snake-oil aspiration found in tourist brochures and middle-Australia.

In *Blue Lonely Holiday II*, phrases such 'buffet seductions' and 'broken alchemies' glide across the projection, forming the precise intersection where Tumbers' work meets that of Cairns. But while the former's text seems lifted from a 1980s time-share holiday home infomercial, the latter's could have been picked from Spike Milligan's comic novel *Puckoon*.

It is evident in their practice that both Tumbers and Cairns are comfortable with affectionately mocking the culture of their birth country. After all, these are boys from suburbs located on the outskirts of Sydney and Wollongong, respectively. In one drawing, Tumbers depicts what might be a bingo caller, or perhaps an RSL club stand-up, reinforcing a culture that so many of us know, but so many of us choose to leave behind. In this show, both artists celebrate what would, in many Australians, invoke 'cultural cringe'.

'Blue has these working-class connotations,' says Gibb of the show's title. Working-class or no, the culture celebrated in this exhibition is one of blank optimism, one which spends holidays at beachside caravan parks and organises footy weekends on Great Keppel Island. Gibb says, 'Mitch's work has often this tension



between classes and genders,' says Gibb. 'And Matt looks at class in a similar way.' Even the scale of Cairns' work connects with this notion – his paintings are deliberately domestic in size and their text references milk-bar sign-writing or the painted windows of old-fashioned pubs. *Collector with 'Bass Principles'* (2011) captures the deliberate tension in this, depicting a smoking figure as he surveys smaller renditions of his own corpulence, a man who doesn't quite understand the irony of his affected connoisseurship.

Cairns' tightly painted oils recall Eric Thake's linocuts and he includes – although perhaps not the show's strongest moment – a portrait of the Australian Modernist crossed with a young George Gittoes. Reviewing a Thake retrospective in 2005, Penny Webb wrote of his 'acute social and cultural observations, invariably expressed with laconic good humour'. Such a description would not be all that remiss if applied to Cairns. Webb goes on, 'The glare of the outback is succinctly conveyed by the whiteness of the un-inked areas of paper in images of views to the outside through pub doors and windows... Australian-ness in this fabulous retrospective is in the old style: laidback, but watchful.'

Cairns' set of four pictures, *Drawings from 'Bass Principles'* (2011), presented in a row at the back of the gallery, show him doodling with a pencil to re-imagine the set-up for a silkscreened punch-line repeated in each frame. There is even a knock-knock joke. Cairns' touch-points here are British, as were Thake's. He jokes like Milligan, trapped again in Woy Woy. Or Stanwell Tops, to be more accurate.

At times in this show, Cairns is a painter aping a cartoonist. Tumbers, on some levels, is a cartoonist trying to be serious about painting. Tumbers uses the expression 'medium bothering' to describe his practice, and it is probably an apt one. A vitrine in the middle of the show houses a small retrospective of Tumbers' medium bothering, dating back to 2000. There are old drawings and found objects, such as a blue penis, which sits off to one side. It's a nice touch from curator, Gibb. For more than a decade, video has been a central plank of Tumbers' practice. As such, time is always an aspect of his work and it is good to see how it affects his paintings, in this case, a series of mainly blue boxboard works leant like drunks against one wall.



On the installation of the show Gibb states that, ‘Mitch has a very formal approach to picture making and to hangs. Matt has this salon approach which is so loose... you could remove either artist’s work and the hang would still work, but they tease these things out of each other’s practice. They each have their own vernacular.’

The impression from Tumbers’ work is of a man struck by impulse, a man constantly forming narrative and storing away shards of language. But in his boxboard paintings – a relatively new development – there is a sense he is struggling towards the final image. Tumbers is muddling away until something happens, and not all of his pictures work. But when one does, he realises a sort of unexpected brilliance. At times, his paint evokes the style of Indigenous Australian women, the result like a less grand Emily Kame Ngwarreye. In some of the pictures there is also a hint of Ian Fairweather’s China paintings, made on the cusp of his surrender to abstraction. The sense of femininity is strong.

For a time, the suite of Cairns’ paintings shown here had the working title *Sensitive Art*. Set beside the looseness of Tumbers’ painting, Cairns’ exacting style sheds some of its masculinity and begins to look almost feminine. The tight lines fall into neck napes and back smalls.

In this show, Gibb coaxes underlying themes from both painters. From Cairns she produces a sometimes hidden mirth; from Tumbers, a seriousness he has been edging towards for several years. There is the sense of two friends challenging each other in the studio, making works as provocations, egging each other on to new forms. As she did in an earlier show by exhibiting a video by Agatha Gothe-Snape alongside another by Campbell Patterson, Gibb created a larger narrative for the work a kind of smart suburbia, a punch line hewn from the city’s fringes.

*Blue Period by Mitch Cairns and Matthew Tumbers was shown at Society, Redfern from 24-26, February 2012.*

# House Work

LISA LERKENFELDT





Shelf 1: Various food items including jars, bags, and boxes.

Shelf 2: More food items, including a large bag of flour and other packaged goods.

Magnetic knife rack with four knives: a cleaver, a large chef's knife, and two smaller utility knives.

Refrigerator magnets and stickers:  
- Taamiya (with a picture of a dog)  
- Life's better with a Siberian Husky (with a picture of a husky)  
- REDFERN (in a semi-circle)  
- PLUMBING 1300 722 745  
- SKATE (with a picture of a skateboard)

Refrigerator magnets and stickers (continued):  
- Jack Lives (with a picture of a dog)  
- Lake Louise (with a Canadian flag)  
- DEATH (with a picture of a skull)  
- Other various small magnets and stickers.



I recorded 3 minutes of *House Work* (2011) while in the living room of the artists Lucas Abela and Keg de Souza. I was brought there by *House Work*, the curatorial project of Diana Smith, which constituted part of Performance Space's WALK program in and around Sydney. The project extended on Smith's interest in 'art-as-life', beyond her involvement with performance and video collaboration Brown Council.

On a Saturday in December 2011, six households of performers, artists and writers in Sydney's Redfern and Waterloo area were open to visitors. An A2 map designed by Blood & Thunder detailed a self-guided walk and led me from the Meeting Point at the curator's house to Elizabeth Street, Waterloo, where Abela and de Souza live.

Abela performs as Justice Yeldham with a glass instrument, and de Souza is an anarchist and visual artist. In response to Smith's curatorial brief to develop a participatory, durational action that takes place in the artists' lived environment and revolves around everyday rituals and routines Abela and de Souza's living room was re-contextualised as an installation, and their being within that space, a performance.

In the kitchen de Souza served long necks of home brew from her fridge to guests; an enterprise she mentions in her interdisciplinary professional bio. In the adjoining living room an arrangement of experimental releases by Abela's dualPlover record label was for sale by donation, a direct invitation to contribute to the income stream of a practising artist? Nearby, contact microphones were fixed to a black plinth. The magnetic tape of broken cassettes dangled from the lips of helium balloons.



In the absence of Abela himself or formal instruction, I was guided by strangers to take a broken cassette (*Hits for Truck Drivers*, released by Rainbow Records), rip out its insides and shred it over the contact mics. I recorded three minutes of my action, the length of a typical pop song.

*House Work* engaged with associations of 'work', life as art and the value of ritual within autonomy. By planning key elements, Abela's installation was an invitation to simultaneously honour, destroy and create tradition and possibility. It discussed the onus of the artist to engage, and that of the audience to participate, while eliminating boundaries between the roles.

My abstract song, *3 minutes of House Work*, is part of the ripple-effect of the curator's invitation to participate. What you'll hear is the improvisation of my being. It's a performance inspired by a situation and employs an everyday ritual of the journalist and the voice memo.

Download MP3 at [www.runway.org.au](http://www.runway.org.au)

*A Performance Space WALK was staged in Sydney, 10 December 2011. Curated by Diana Smith.*

Previous spread: Lucas Abela and Keg de Souza (pictured), *House Work* (2011). Photo: Alex Wisser.  
Facing page: Lucas Abela and Keg de Souza, *House Work* (2011). Photo: Alex Wisser.  
Above: *House Work* (2011). Photo: Alex Wisser.



# Concept Fatigue

JACK JEWELLER

Philosophy and Art both render the invisible visible by imagination.

– Marian Evans, pseudonym ‘George Elliot’<sup>1</sup>

The title of Rob McLeish’s exhibition *Concept Fatigue* alludes to the artist’s problematic relationship with conceptual art. Simply put, Conceptual Art is where art collides with philosophy and radically destabilises the traditional notions of art and spectatorship. On my first encounter with the installation at db, I imagine an image of two men being anally penetrated while drinking from the stainless steel bubbler installed a foot off the ground of the gallery. This image was motored by the confronting title of his work: *Automatic Faggot for the People* (2012).

The formal qualities of the ‘dubler’<sup>2</sup> allude to the aesthetics of minimalism more than the syntactic paradigm of conceptual art. The reductive forms shape the contours of the double-ended drinking trough. Symmetry negates any notion of ornament and it appears at first as an aesthetic object, crafted for the spectator’s pleasure. It is through the installation of the work – low to the ground – and the activation of the conceptual image through the grammar of the work’s title, that the installation surpasses the minimalist form of the object. At this juncture we can see how it is calibrated to communicate more than just an aesthetic idea, and that it evolves into the political and ethical realm effected by conceptual art.

By placing the 'dubbler' a foot from the floor the original meaning of this familiar amenity was loosened from its associations in my memory. As reality shrunk from reality the mental image of *Automatic Faggot for the People* grew erect. The reason behind the peculiar shin-high drinking trough quickly revealed itself to me. The meaning intended by McLeish was mutated under my mental processes as I hurled forth a mental impression of the said 'faggots' in the title. They appeared on all fours, lapping up water like dogs, taking it in the ass from men behind them who ecstatically doused their ardours in the drinking twinks.

A bit ripe perhaps, I don't imagine these were the thoughts that inspired Rob's own imagination before he set to work on the original work. Nonetheless, as Duchamp acutely observed:

*The creative act takes another aspect when the spectator experiences the phenomenon of transmutation: through the change from inert matter into a work of art, an actual transubstantiation has taken place, and the role of the spectator is to determine the weight of the work on the esthetic scale.*<sup>3</sup>

Through this concept we can see that the artist cannot and does not control the creative process entirely, even when he changes the name of the work, the act of transubstantiation is what completes the work of art. It is we, the spectator, who fulfils Duchamp's prophecy, and in doing so realise the animating power of the spectator in the communicative process.

After drawing a mental image from the installation, the sentence from the show's title, *Concept Fatigue*, and the title of the work, *Automatic Faggot for the People*, copulated with one and other as I conjured up a meaning for the installation I was immersed in. The semantic content of the installation was communicated in the realm of syntactic space; that of the sentence; the same realm that the two competing titles exist in. Boris Groys believes that 'one can say that objects and events are organised by an installation space like individual words and verbs are organised by a sentence.'<sup>4</sup> Through Groys' acute observation we can see how the artist's intended meaning is developed through material

articulations within the installation, which themselves are paradigmatic of the sentence. The 'dubbler' not only engages with the syntagmatic space of db it also accrues significance between the syntax of both the titles.

It is untenable to ignore the obvious political and ethical questions that are raised by the two titles. The show's title, *Concept Fatigue*, suggests that the whole idea of conceptual art is exhausted, from here we can assume that McLeish is alluding to the fact that Art and Language, Marcel Broodthaers and Joseph Beuys, in fact all the Conceptualist's ambitions for art, have had their comeuppance. That the self-reflexive virtues once promulgated to be restorative and healing is not really anything more than a load of bull-dust. Groys brings our attention to the fact that, 'Conceptual art can be also characterised as an art that repeatedly asked the question what is art?'<sup>5</sup> This is affirmed in McLeish's gesture, which begs the question, is conceptual art pooped?

The title, *Automatic Faggot for the People*, is both politically and ethically loaded. Even without examining the word 'faggot' in the socio-historical context of the Australian imagination, we can feel an element of bigotry. If we simply reflect upon it on a purely phonemic level, the harsh cadence of the word is caustic: 'FAG-GOT'. It even has within it a second cockney insult if you spell it phonetically: 'GIT'. However, it is through the claim, 'for the people', that we are led to believe that McLeish isn't using 'faggot' in a pejorative sense. Its meaning is dependent on the syntax of the title's whole sentence, not just the contentious word that jumps out at us. Herein it can be said that, despite the harsh cadence of the word 'faggot', the composition of the phrase in its totality is softened by the satirical and auto-critical questions that it asks about conceptual art. One might wonder how it is critical about conceptual art. If we read his reformulated drinking trough as something 'for the people' viz the original title, in the same way the Volkswagen (which translates to 'people's car') was envisioned as an egalitarian utility vehicle, then we can see how the work formerly known as *Automatic Faggot for the People* is a 'people's bubbler', and furthermore that McLeish is being witty, not bigoted,

by critiquing the social utopianism that motivated the conceptual project of artists like Beuys et al. In doing so, he swims through these murky waters of habit and self-deception that surround our responses to confronting topics. He urges spectators to rouse themselves from the ethical torpor of conformism. His work implicitly engages the discourses of art as the principle issue, and the politics of sexuality as an auxiliary topic. It is up to spectators to discover the ethical and political excesses of art's role in society and see that McLeish is not denigrating homosexuals, rather he is laying into the history of German political and philosophical idealism, which culminated in the Third Reich. In this move he discretely suggests that it seeps through into the social-utopianism that lies beneath the conceptual art of artists like Beuys.

Having undergone Duchamp's lauded act of transubstantiation I am resolved that in the dubbler's design lies the virtue of being 'for the people', whereby 'automatic faggots' are compelled to get down on all fours and drink the elixir of life while being bumjacked. In this proverbial reaming their buttocks are just as exposed as McLeish's public persona is when he engages in the artist's game of self-presentation and reveals himself to be on the precipice between two complicated discourses of sexual politics and Modern Art history. To his credit he engages in a dangerous polemic with the spectator and the public at large, implicating us by engaging our ethical conduct in the act of reading the artwork. It is in doing so that McLeish re-asserts the artists value in society and the merit of *Automatic Faggot for the People*.

*Concept Fatigue was held at db project, 22 March-14 April.*

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1. Evans, M. "The Natural History of German Life." *Westminster Review* July (1856). Evans, editor of the *Westminster Review*, wrote under the pseudonym George Elliot, producing a prolific amount of literature including a translation of Feuerbach's 'The Essence of Christianity' from Latin into English. All while passing-as-male in order to avoid the blight of gender prejudice in the Victorian epoch.
  2. On the db projects Facebook page Johnny Niesche coined the term 'dubbler' as a pun on bubbler for McLeish's work, March 22, 2012.
  3. Excerpt from Marcel Duchamp's speech titled: *The Creative Act –session on the Creative Act* given at the convention of the American Federation of Arts, Houston, Texas, April, 1957 in Lebel, R. *Marcel Duchamp*. (New York: Grove Press, 1959) 78.
  4. Groys, B. "Introduction: Global Conceptualism Revisited" *e-flux* 29, November (2011): 1
  5. Groys, B. "Introduction: Global Conceptualism Revisited" *e-flux* 29, November (2011): 1

# ARI-WORLD

JAI MCKENZIE



## PARIS

Historically, Paris has been 'home' to many important artists and intellectuals. So, during a recent studio residency, at the Cité internationale des arts, I was expecting to discover the new generation making work and discussing ideas within the confines of an established artist-run scene. But, beneath the over-the-top opulence and grandeur that is uniquely Paris, I found little to suggest a heaving emerging art scene. Perhaps these emerging artist, curators and writers have been driven out by the expense of the city and the correlative lack of space to make and present work?

The closest I came to the scene I expected to find was a small cluster of galleries located beyond the center of the city in Belleville, a neighbourhood which is spread across the 10th, 11th, 19th & 20th arrondissements. Here, galleries represent emerging artist's work, exhibitions occur in small spaces with rough walls and, disappointingly, the work itself is rough and poorly articulated. Perhaps I was unlucky in my search and didn't get to see the kind of work I was seeking, but what I saw lacked the quality that might be found in other international ARI scenes, Australia included. It is worth a look regardless and hopefully you'll find something more interesting than I did along Rue Ramponeau, Rue Julien and Rue Jouye-Rouve. On a more recent

visit I discovered castillo/corrales on rue Julien Lacroix, a space which normally functions as an office and collectively run gallery. During April, the space gave way to planned and spontaneous readings, concerts, exhibitions and parties at their newly initiated MACHU PICCHU bar. Think small local bar meets artist run space and you have a good impression of the intimate and lively vibe that castillo/corrales successfully created; unfortunately in Paris it was also extremely rare.

But, perhaps my general dismay came from a (not unusual) misaligned perspective to that of the French. This shift in perspective I discovered when visiting the exhibition *WYS/WYG: What You(ngs) See Is What You Get* at the Rosenblum Collection & Friends gallery. On show was young artists from the collection and young in this case was defined as between 30-40 years old, not the 25-35 years that commonly forms the definition of 'emerging' and thus youthful art practices in Australia. In this collection the work, which included artists such as Wade Guyton, Sterling Ruby and Amanda Ross-Ho, was housed in a slick, smart and super fashionable architecturally designed space. Their work was indicative of the refined and defined practices that sit well with the many large and outstanding commercial, public or privately funded institutions and galleries that can be found in Paris.



## BERLIN

Attracted by relatively cheap rents and its central location to much of Europe, artists have been moving to Berlin since reunification. Today, Berlin maintains a 'live and let live' attitude that is conducive to ongoing experimentation and continued commitment to creating an interesting and vibrant art scene.

Two relatively new spaces that are part of the overwhelmingly large ARI and emerging art community are Node Centre for Curatorial Study and REH Kunst.

Node, located in Kreuzberg, is a small but perfectly formed space which offers courses in curatorial studies while providing a broader engagement and support for emerging creative activity in curatorial and contemporary art practices. They regularly host interesting events, workshops and studio visits by their curators in residence. At Node I made it to the launch screening of *Burn Hollywood Burn*, a new feature length video by Australian artists Soda\_Jerk with Sam Smith. Their work screened to a large and highly supportive group of locals who demonstratively appreciated the artists' piratical and humorous disregard for corporate copyright laws.

REH Kunst in Presnzlauer Berg is a gallery housed in a relocated Raumerweiterungshalle, a GDR mid-'60s shop which is made up of segments that can be retracted or telescoped to modify the space into varying lengths. It is the broader theoretical nature of the telescope and its relationship to space and perception that Australian curator Lauren Reid connected with while working with the gallery for the exhibition *Out of the Black* which featuring the work of Regina de Miguel, Sam Smith and Kim Westerström.

The unique nature of the space demands that each artist work with it, as it is impossible to ignore. I made it to Australian artist Carly Fischer's exhibition *I want to love you but I'm getting blown away* which featured 1:1 scale replicas of found discarded items such as cigarette butts, Coke cans or Lidl shopping bags (a German chain store of supermarkets). Fischer's objects, unlike Andy Warhol's soup cans, are clearly in a state of post-consumption. Fischer's efforts to meticulously reconstruct these objects and carefully position them on the gallery floor revealed otherwise unobserved beauty in what is normally used and forgotten.

Facing page: Installation view, Carly Fischer. *I want to love you but I'm getting blown away*, REH Kunst, 2012. Photo: Bernhard Volkwein.  
Above: *Out of the black* (Sam Smith, install view) 2012 REH Kunst, Berlin

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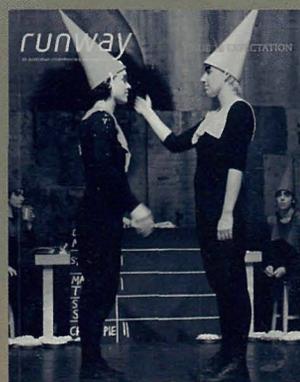
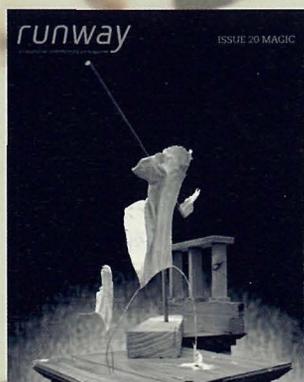
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# SURVEY FOR EMERGING ARTISTS

## ARTIST #3

### DESCRIBE YOUR PRACTICE IN 5 WORDS OR LESS

Experimental painter and what ever.

### STUDIED AT

COFA and Wollongong University and Wollongong TAFE

### GRADUATION YEAR

Undergrad - 2000; MFA 2004; PhD in the works.

### YEARS SPENT AT ART SCHOOL

Seems like most of my adult life. 13 and counting!

### NUMBER OF GROUP EXHIBITIONS SINCE GRADUATING

About 12

### NUMBER OF SOLO SHOWS SINCE GRADUATING

Six

### ESTIMATED INCOME FROM ARTWORKS SOLD SINCE GRADUATING

\$20,000

### NUMBER OF AWARDS RECEIVED

About 7

### ESTIMATED MONETARY VALUE OF GRANTS & AWARDS RECEIVED

About \$150,000 (mostly APA)

### DEFINE 'EMERGING ARTIST'

The first ten to 15 years out of art school and if you do an MFA then it gets blurred.

### WHEN DOES ONE STOP EMERGING?

When does one stop emerging? I don't know. Some never emerge and others emerge too quickly.

## ARTIST #4

### DESCRIBE YOUR PRACTICE IN 5 WORDS OR LESS

Visual Arts

### STUDIED AT

Mainly SCA

### GRADUATION YEAR

2003

### YEARS SPENT AT ART SCHOOL

Five

### NUMBER OF GROUP EXHIBITIONS SINCE GRADUATING

40ish

### NUMBER OF SOLO SHOWS SINCE GRADUATING

10ish

### ESTIMATED INCOME FROM ARTWORKS SOLD SINCE GRADUATING

Including commissioned projects? No idea.

### NUMBER OF AWARDS RECEIVED

Define 'award'

### ESTIMATED MONETARY VALUE OF GRANTS & AWARDS RECEIVED

Define 'value'

### DEFINE 'EMERGING ARTIST'

Seven years post-graduation from undergraduate degree.

### WHEN DOES ONE STOP EMERGING?

After seven years since graduation from undergraduate degree. This means if I am to be referred to as late emerging then I can be quantifiably understood as being two years late emerging. In said situation I would recommend a Caesarian. This action then as in birth, enacts the separation from the womb and alike the universe, the constant expansion from the 'mother' is perpetuated until like all things we collapse and die in the dust. Bless.

PREVIEWS



## Forthcoming Exhibitions

### NSW

**THE OTHER'S OTHER** | NEWELL HARRY, RAAFAT ISHAK, DINH Q LÊ, SANGEETA SANDRASEGAR, JUN YANG Curated by Mark Feary  
9 May - 17 June 2012  
Artspace  
43-51 Cowper Wharf Road, Woolloomooloo Sydney 2011  
[www.artspace.org.au](http://www.artspace.org.au)

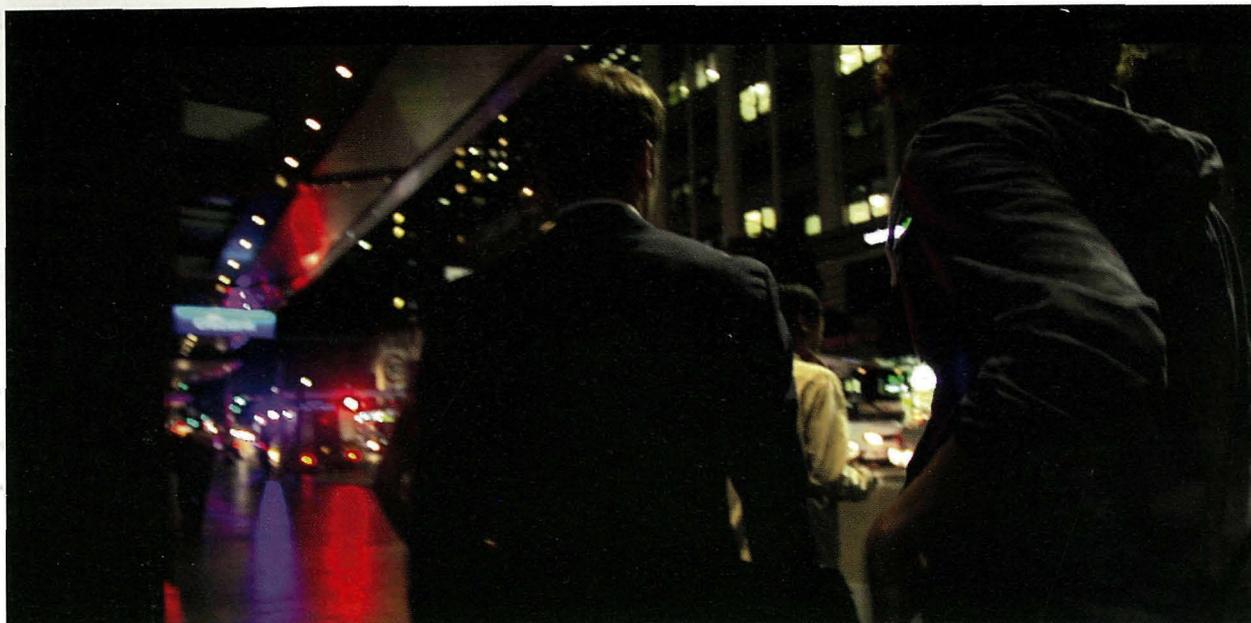
**EVERYTHING FALLS APART (PART I)** | JEM COHEN, SARAH GOFFMAN, SARAH MORRIS, ALESSANDRO BALTEO YAZBECK & MEDIA FARZIN Curated by Mark Feary & Blair French  
27 June - 5 August 2012  
Artspace  
43-51 Cowper Wharf Road, Woolloomooloo Sydney 2011  
[www.artspace.org.au](http://www.artspace.org.au)

**MOTHERLAND** | LIAM BENSON  
Arterial Gallery  
2 May - 2 June 2012  
747 Darling Street Rozelle Sydney  
[www.artereal.com.au](http://www.artereal.com.au)

**SNO CONTEMPORARY ART PROJECTS 2012 FUNDRAISER**  
3 May - 5 May  
SNO Contemporary Art Projects  
Level 1, 175 Marrickville Road, Marrickville NSW 2204  
[www.sno.org.au](http://www.sno.org.au)

**JAMES KERR**  
31 May - 3 June  
Chalk Horse  
8 Lacey Street, Surry Hills  
[www.chalkhorse.com.au](http://www.chalkhorse.com.au)

Above: Jun Yang, *Paris Syndrome*, (2008). Still from HD video. Photo: courtesy of the artist.



**A ROOM FOR EMMA GOLDMAN** | JUSTIN BALMAIN

19 April – 6 May  
MOP  
39 Abercrombie Street Chippendale Sydney NSW 2008  
[www.mop.org.au](http://www.mop.org.au)

**KYLIE BANYARD**

15th May - 10th June 2012  
Galerie pompom  
2 / 39 Abercrombie Street Chippendale 2008 Sydney NSW  
[www.galeriepompom.com](http://www.galeriepompom.com)

**UNIVERSAL REMOTE** | WADE MARYNOWSKY

24 April - 1 June  
UTS Gallery  
Level 4, 702 Harris Street, Ultimo, NSW 2007  
[www.utsgallery.uts.edu.au/gallery](http://www.utsgallery.uts.edu.au/gallery)

**MELODY WILLIS**

16 May – 9 June  
Gallery 9  
9 Darley Street Darlinghurst NSW 2010  
[www.gallery9.com.au](http://www.gallery9.com.au)

**DORKBOT**

Tuesday 29 May, 7pm  
Serial Space  
33 Wellington Street, Chippendale NSW 2008  
[www.serialspace.org](http://www.serialspace.org)

**PSYCHO SUBTROPICS 2012**

11 June - 17 June  
Serial Space  
33 Wellington Street, Chippendale NSW 2008  
[www.serialspace.org](http://www.serialspace.org)

Above: Justin Balmain, *A Room for Emma Goldman* (2010). Digital projection, laptop, iTunes application visualizer, audio, headphones, beanbags, framed inkjet print, books, plinth, glass of water. Image courtesy of the artist.

**TIME MACHINE** | A 10 DAY FESTIVAL OF EXPERIMENTAL TIME-BASED ART

16 July - 29 July  
Serial Space & various locations  
33 Wellington Street, Chippendale NSW 2008  
[www.serialspace.org](http://www.serialspace.org)

**VARIABLE TRUTH** | BROOK ANDREW, MELISSA HOWE, ISE, MICHAEL LEE, TONY TWIGG AND GINA FAIRLEY, TIM SILVER

25 May - 14 July  
4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art  
181-187 Hay St, Sydney NSW 2000  
[www.4a.com.au](http://www.4a.com.au)

**MOSTLY AGREE** | DAVID THOMAS, LOUIS PORTER AND LACHLAN ANTHONY AND MORE

20 June – 21 July  
Stills Gallery  
36 Gosbell St, Paddington, NSW 2012  
[www.stillsgallery.com.au](http://www.stillsgallery.com.au)

**RETINAL DISPLACEMENT: METAPHORIC GAPS AND VIRTUALITIES**

| KENT FONN SKÅRE & SANAZ HOSSEINABADI  
Curated by William Seeto  
20 July - 29 July  
Articulate project space  
497 Parramatta Rd Leichhardt NSW 2040  
<http://articulate497.blogspot.com.au>

**BASS PRINCIPLES** | MITCH CAIRNS

10 May - 2 June 2012  
Breenspace  
Level 3, 17-19 Alberta St, Sydney 2000  
[www.breenspace.com](http://www.breenspace.com)

**OUR FROZEN MOMENT** | MICHAELA GLEAVE

20 April – 19 May  
Performance Space  
Carriageworks, 245 Wilson St Eveleigh  
<http://www.performancespace.com.au>



## VIC

### ANASTASIA KLOSE

A Nextwave project curated by Bronwyn Bailey-Charteris and Marcel Cooper.  
20 April to - 26 May  
Gertrude Contemporary  
200 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy Vic 3065 Australia  
[www.gertrude.org.au](http://www.gertrude.org.au)

### BENJAMIN ARMSTRONG

28 April to 26 May 2012  
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne  
Level 4, 104 Exhibition Street Melbourne VIC 3000  
[www.tolarnogalleries.com](http://www.tolarnogalleries.com)

### PANTA REI | PAUL YORE

19 April – 26 May 2012  
Anna Pappas Gallery  
2–4 Carlton Street Prahran Victoria 3181 Australia  
[www.annapappasgallery.com](http://www.annapappasgallery.com)

### MICHAEL COOK

5 May - 9 June  
dianne tanzer gallery + projects  
108 - 110 Gertrude St Fitzroy VIC 3065  
[www.diannetanzergallery.net.au](http://www.diannetanzergallery.net.au)

### WILLIAM KENTRIDGE: FIVE THEMES

8 March – 27 May  
Australian Centre for the Moving Image  
Federation Square, Melbourne  
[www.acmi.net.au](http://www.acmi.net.au)

### THE CONSCIOUS SCREEN | TRISTAN JALLEH

13 April - 6 May  
Platform Contemporary Art Spaces  
Degraes Street Subway, Melbourne  
[www.platform.org.au](http://www.platform.org.au)

## CO - RESPOND, A COLLABORATION BETWEEN ARTISTS AND WRITERS AT SEVENTH

Curated by Victoria Bennett  
Wednesday 2nd May  
The Workers Club  
Cnr Brunswick and Gertrude Street, Fitzroy 3065  
<http://seventhgallery.org/>

## ACT

### WORD OF MOUTH: ENCOUNTERS WITH ABSTRACT ART

23 June – 19 August 2012.  
Canberra Museum and Gallery  
Cnr London Circuit and Civic Square, Canberra City  
[www.museumsandgalleries.act.gov.au](http://www.museumsandgalleries.act.gov.au)

### INTERPLAY II | ANDREA MCCUAIG

10 – 27 May  
M16 Artspace Exhibitions  
21 Blaxland Crescent Griffith ACT 2603  
[www.m16artspace.com](http://www.m16artspace.com)

Above: William Kentridge, *A Lifetime of Enthusiasm* (still), from the installation *I am not me, the horse is not mine* (2008). Eight-channel video projection, DVCAM and HDV transferred to video, 6:01 min.; Collection of the artist, courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York, and Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg; © 2010 William Kentridge; photo: John Hodgkiss, courtesy the artist



## TAS

### **WDOING LINES** | SONJA BROUGH

27 April - 19 May  
Sawtooth ARI  
Level 2, 160 Cimitiere St Launceston 7250  
[sawtooth.org.au](http://sawtooth.org.au)

## SA

### **HNEW ACQUISITIONS: AUSTRALIAN ART** | NARELLE AUTIO, ED DOUGLAS, GEMMA SMITH, ALEXANDER SETON, JULIA ROBINSON, LOUISE HASELTON AND MORE

Curated by Tracey Lock-Weir  
21 April - 22 July  
Art Gallery of South Australia  
North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000  
[www.artgallery.sa.gov.au](http://www.artgallery.sa.gov.au)

### **TRIUMPH** | RICHARD GRAYSON AND STEVEN WIGG

20 April - 1 June 2012  
Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art  
University of South Australia, 55 North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000  
[www.unisa.edu.au/samstagemuseum](http://www.unisa.edu.au/samstagemuseum)

## WA

### **SAN EXCURSION** | NATHAN BARNETT

11 May 2012  
The Museum of Natural Mystery  
268 Charles St (entrance on View St) North Perth, Western  
Australia, 6006  
[www.naturalmystery.org](http://www.naturalmystery.org)

### **...IT SHINED SO BRIGHT IT ALMOST MELTED MY HEART** | PETER CARLINO

15 June 2012  
The Museum of Natural Mystery  
268 Charles St (entrance on View St) North Perth, Western  
Australia, 6006  
[www.naturalmystery.org](http://www.naturalmystery.org)

### **JEFF WALL PHOTOGRAPHS**

26 May - 10 September  
Art Gallery of Western Australia  
Perth Cultural Centre, Roe Street Perth WA 6000  
<http://www.artgallery.wa.gov.au/>

Above: Alexander Seton, *My concerns will outlive yours* (2011). Wombeyan marble, stainless eyelets, halyard, 28.0 x 155.0 x 75.0 cm, Gift of the Art Gallery of South Australia Foundation 2011.

## QLD

### RICKY MAYNARD: PORTRAIT OF A DISTANT LAND

Curated by Keith Munro

2 April - 7 May 2012

Brisbane Powerhouse

119 Lamington Street, New Farm, Queensland

<http://www.brisbanepowerhouse.org>

### FLOTSAM AND JETSAM | FIONA FOLEY

4 April - 5 May 2012

Andrew Baker Art Dealer

26 Brookes Street, Bowen Hills, Qld 4006

[www.andrew-baker.com](http://www.andrew-baker.com)

### DAYDREAM BELIEVERS | JASON GREIG, DAVID NOONAN, JOHN SPITERI, AND FRANCIS UPRITCHARD

21 April - 9 June

INSTITUTE OF MODERN ART (IMA)

420 Brunswick St (cnr Berwick St) Fortitude Valley QLD 4006

[www.ima.org.au](http://www.ima.org.au)

### GREATEST HITS VOLUME 3 | CHRIS BENNIE, CATHERINE OR KATE, ALEX CUFFE, DANIEL MCKEWEN, DAVID NIXON, LIAM O'BRIEN, SANDRA SELIG, AND GRANT STEVENS

curated by Anna Zammit.

21 April - 9 June

INSTITUTE OF MODERN ART (IMA)

420 Brunswick St (cnr Berwick St) Fortitude Valley QLD 4006

[www.ima.org.au](http://www.ima.org.au)

### LOGAN MACDONALD, MATTHEW HUPPATZ, RAY HARRIS, JAMES MARSHALL, POLLY DANCE AND RILEY O'KEEFFE

Exhibition Dates: 5 May - 26th May

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[www.boxcopy.org](http://www.boxcopy.org)

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## runway

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

[www.runway.org.au](http://www.runway.org.au) [mail@runway.org.au](mailto:mail@runway.org.au)

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