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Richard Flanagan on Tasmanian wilderness photography

John Barrett-Lennard on Imants Tillers

Elina Spilia on Gulumbu Yunupingu

The 17th Biennale of Sydney: Two views

Interviews with Janet Laurence and Julie Mehretu

In the Balance: Art for a Changing World' at the Museum of Contemporary Art





IN THE BALANCE: ART FOR A CHANGING WORLD 21 AUGUST – 31 OCTOBER

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Janet Laurence *Cellular Gardens (where breathing begins)* 2005 Museum of Contemporary Art, purchased 2005 Image courtesy and © the artist

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

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Peter Dombrovskis, Morning mist, Rock Island Bend, Franklin River, Southwest Tasmania, 1979, detail, type-C print, courtesy and © Liz Dombrovskis.

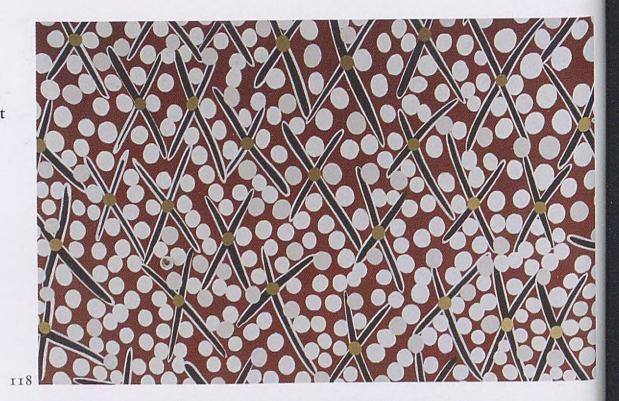
top Gulumbu Yunupingu, Garak, the universe, 2005, detail, Musée du quai Branly (MQB), Paris, courtesy MQB. © The artist and MQB. Photograph Nicolas Borel.

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John Pule, Arrival, 2009, detail, varnish, oil, enamel, ink and resin on canvas, 200 x 200 cm, private collection, Auckland, courtesy Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland.

bottom

Charwei Tsai, Sky mantra (Taiwan), 2009, detail, video, 24 mins duration, post-production by Todd McMillan and Andrew Liversidge, commissioned by Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney, courtesy the artist.







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From the Editors

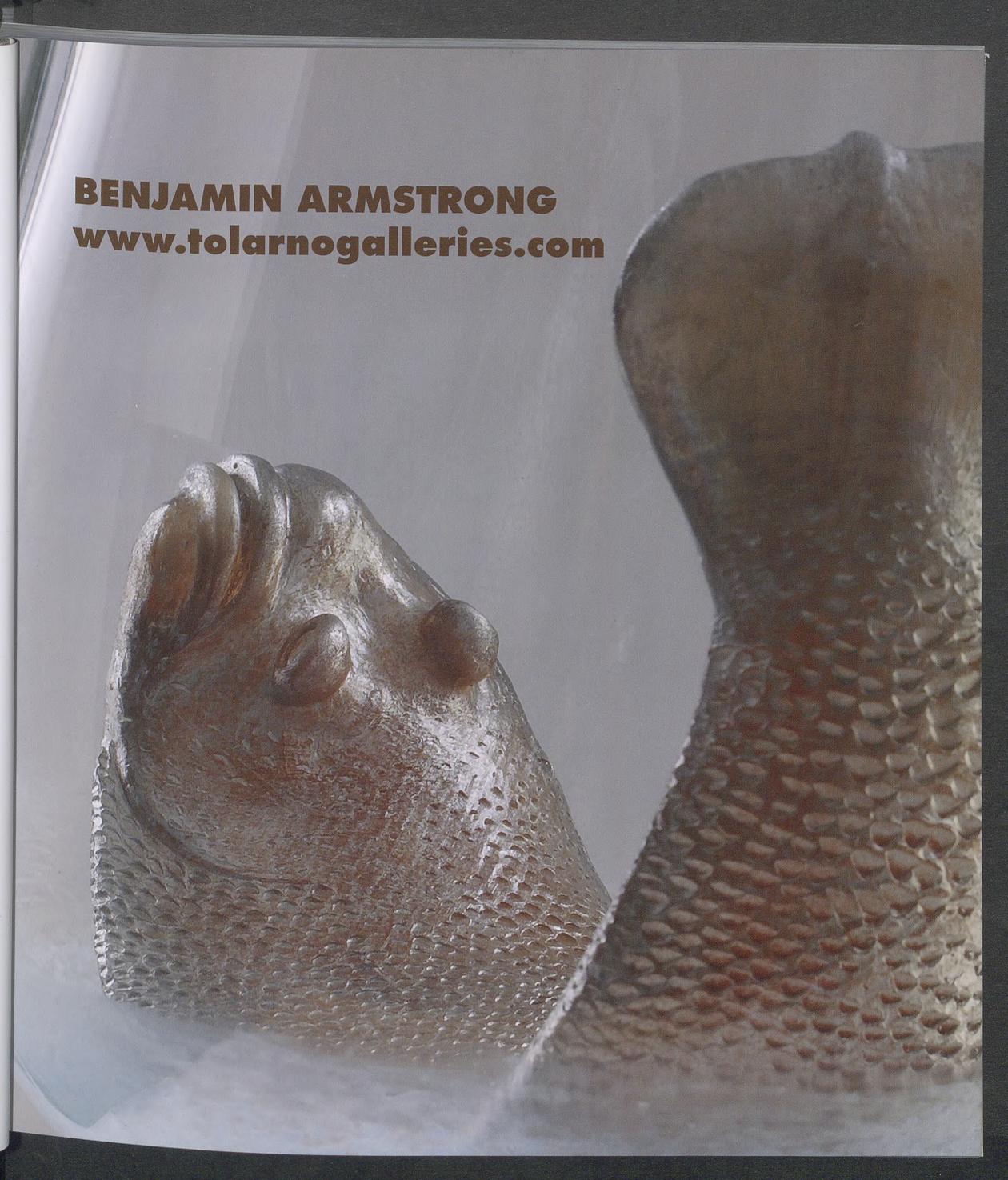
When has the natural landscape not been rendered, idealised, romanticised? From the ancient rock art of Arnhem Land to Cézanne's beloved Mont Saint-Victoire, which ushered modernism outdoors in search of form, nature's backdrop has been the prime subject of art's search for sublimity, symbolism and subjectivity. Its beauty has never been in doubt, but as the developing world lurches into a new century, as oceans rise or become coated in sludge, its existence has never seemed more precarious.

'Historically, landscape painting sought to record the beauty of nature', notes artist Janet Laurence, 'but also its destruction by industry. The difference now is that we have the scientific proof of our adverse impact on the environment.' And so we begin this Spring 2010 issue of *Art & Australia* with a note of some urgency. In a timely collaboration with Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art on the occasion of their survey exhibition 'In the Balance: Art for a Changing World', we give over our Forum section and cover story to artists who sound the environmental alarm.

In the case of our cover artist, the late Peter Dombrovskis, the message is as clear as the waters of his beloved Franklin River. In Dombrovskis's iconic photographs, as in the work of his mentor Olegas Truchanas, Tasmania's threatened wilderness transcends notions of mere beauty or locality. 'His images are, finally, an idea of humanity', writes novelist Richard Flanagan. 'But it is a particular and haunting idea of who we are and what we might be'.

Even under threat, the environment's artistic gifts spring eternal, and elsewhere in this issue the reader is reminded (in the words of Ian Burn) that 'a landscape is not something you look at but something you look through'. Thus, looking through this issue we see Gulumbu Yunupingu's night-time landscapes dematerialise into a shimmering tableau of Yolngu cosmology. With the gossamer cloudscapes of Niuean-New Zealand artist John Pule, we witness Pacific poetry in vaporous motion, while Taiwanese artist Charwei Tsai literally inks the universe with the Chinese characters of the Heart Sutra. Landscape is also a fictive realm, and Jarrod Rawlins and Lisa Radford question the myth of the outback as a site of ongoing cultural repression.

Perhaps more than any other Australian artist, Imants Tillers has followed Burn's mantra to the letter, rewriting our ideas of landscape through the 'pages' of his ongoing canvas-board project, the 'book of power'. Following a forty-year career which began on the rocks of Sydney's Little Bay (where as a young architecture student Tillers assisted Christo and Jeanne-Claude's wrapping of the coast), Art & Australia pays tribute to this great shapeshifter of Australian landscape and its language. Surveying this issue of Art & Australia, readers might also notice some reader-friendly changes to our pages (designed by John Warwicker of design company 'tomato' fame) – all the better, we hope, for framing our shifting view of landscape.



Contributors



From top, left to right:

SUSAN COHN has been Director of Melbourne's Workshop 3000 since 1980. Trained in gold and silversmithing, she works across the art-craft-design divide and is represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne and Sydney. She also has a Doctor of Philosophy in Fine Art Theory.

Martin Edmond is a Sydney-based writer, the author of a dozen books, including *The Supply Party: Ludwig Becker on the Burke and Wills Expedition* (East Street, 2009) and the forthcoming *Dark Night: Endless Yet Never*, about the disappearance of artist Colin McCahon in Sydney during the 1984 Biennale.

RICHARD FLANAGAN was born in Tasmania in 1961. His most recent novel is Wanting (Knopf, 2008).

RACHEL KENT is Senior Curator at Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA). She has worked with leading Australian and international artists and was the curator of the MCA survey exhibition 'Yinka Shonibare MBE', which toured to New York and Washington D.C. in 2009–10. She writes extensively on contemporary practice and speaks at diverse public events.

NGAHIRAKA MASON was born and raised in Te Urewera where her formative experiences shaped her life interests. A trained fine artist and art historian, since 1999 she has been a curator at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, where her first exhibition was 'Urewera Mural: Colin McCahon'. Her curatorial interests relate strongly to old knowledge and new understandings within Indigenous sites of knowledge to generate awareness of the value of culture.

NOEL McKenna was born in Brisbane in 1956 and says: 'It is now too late to change my habits so I will keep on contributing to the art

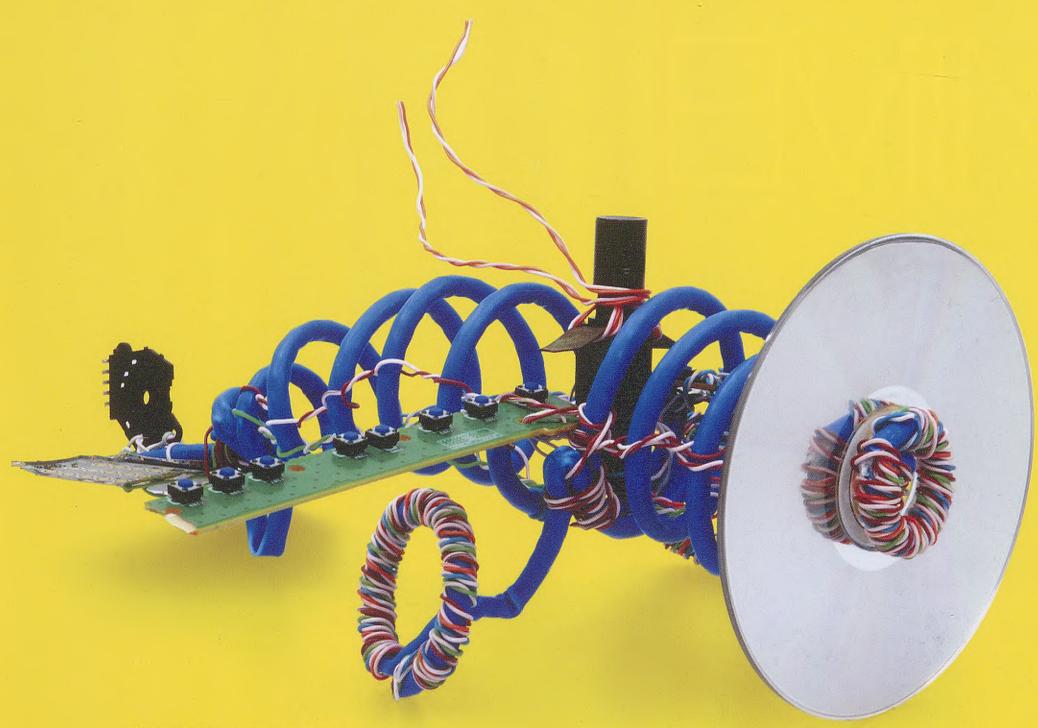
world.' He is represented by Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney; Greenaway Art Gallery, Adelaide; Heiser Gallery, Brisbane; and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne.

LAURA MURRAY CREE is an independent writer and editor. She has extensive experience in contemporary visual art and has held senior editorial positions at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, formerly Sherman Galleries (2003–08); Art & Australia (1997–2003; 1983–85); State of the Arts, Limelight (2003–04); and the (then) Australian National Gallery, Canberra (1980–82).

LISA RADFORD is an artist and writer who teaches in the School of Art at the Victorian College of the Arts and Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne. She has exhibited in Australia and overseas, is a member of TCB art inc. and has contributed texts most recently to the catalogue for the 2010 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art. She also recently co-authored with Jarrod Rawlins a book on Jon Campbell.

JARROD RAWLINS is Sessional Lecturer in the Department of Critical and Theoretical Studies at the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne. He has recently co-authored (with Lisa Radford) a monograph on Australian artist Jon Campbell and is now working on a book of interviews and critical essays on various social, political and aesthetic concerns. In his other life he is the owner and Director of Uplands Gallery in Melbourne.

ELINA SPILIA is an arts writer and art historian specialising in Indigenous art. She has lectured in Art History and Australian Indigenous Studies at the University of Melbourne, undertaken international fellowships and conducted numerous research, writing and film projects with Indigenous communities.



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Image: In-flight (Project: Another Country) (detail), 2009 Commissioned for 'The Sixth Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art', 2009. Courtesy the artists. Photograph: Natasha Harth

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Contributors

TESS ALLAS has worked in the field of Aboriginal visual arts and community cultural development since the early 1990s and has a Master of Arts Curatorship and Modern Art from the University of Sydney. From 2006 until 2009 Allas worked as the Storylines research officer at the University of New South Wales's College of Fine Arts (COFA), where she is currently employed as an Associate Lecturer in the School of Art History and Art Education.

JOHN BARRETT-LENNARD is Director of the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery at The University of Western Australia, Perth, for which he curated the exhibition 'Imants Tillers: The Long Poem' in 2009. He has worked as a contemporary art curator, writer and gallery director for twenty-five years.

GENEVIEVE CARSON is an arts consultant and freelance curator responsible for the recent Tom Bass touring retrospective and publication.

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ABBY CUNNANE is Assistant Curator at City Gallery Wellington Te Whare Toi. She has previously tutored in the Art History Department at Victoria University of Wellington, and co-published a textbook on writing about visual art, Saying What You See (Pearsons, 2009). She continues to write and review for a range of publications and media alongside curatorial projects.

BEC DEAN is an Associate Director of Performance Space in Sydney. Between 2005 and 2007 she was curator of the Australian Centre for Photography in Sydney and between 2002 and 2005 was exhibitions manager at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts. Dean trained as an artist, and as a writer she has contributed to various arts publications and broadsheets nationally for over ten years.

MAURA EDMOND is a Melbourne arts writer currently completing her PhD at the University of Melbourne's School of Culture and Communication.

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MICHAEL FITZGERALD is Managing Editor of Art & Australia. From 1997 until 2007 he was arts editor of the South Pacific edition of Time magazine.

ADAM GECZY is Senior Lecturer in Sculpture, Performance and Installation at Sydney College of the Arts. His most recent performance and installation was 'Remember to Forget the Congo' at Croxhapox Gallery, Ghent, in May 2010.

Anneke Jaspers is an independent curator, writer and organiser based in Sydney. Her work has been published in Australian and international publications, among them *Column*, *Eyeline* and *RealTime*. She is currently Project Manager of 'LiveWorks 2010' at Performance Space and sits on the Editorial Board of *Runway* magazine.

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SHERIDAN PALMER of the Australian Centre at the University of Melbourne is presently completing a Harold White Fellowship at Canberra's National Library of Australia. She is recipient of a Sidney Myer Fund Grant for the biography of Professor Bernard Smith. Upcoming curatorial exhibitions include 'The Lake Hindmarsh Project', which will consider the impact of drought and climate change in North-west Victoria.

INGRID PERIZ lives outside Princeton, New Jersey, and writes regularly for a number of Australian art publications. She qualified as a Master Gardener in 2008.

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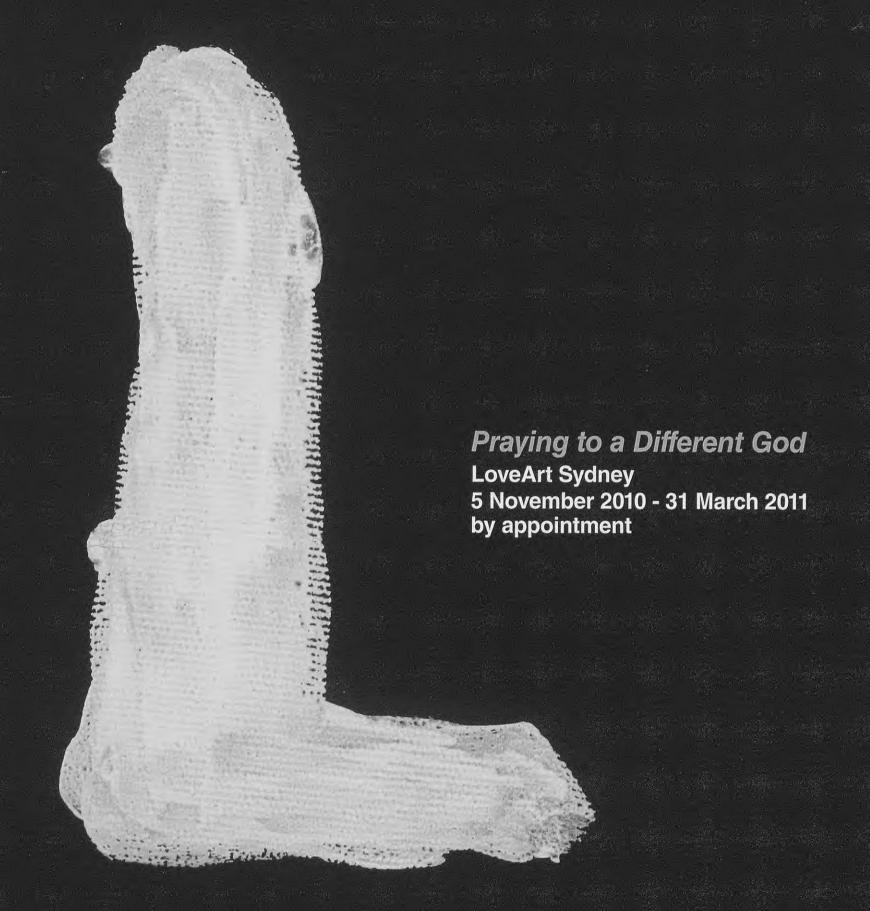
Wendy Walker is an author, curator and the Adelaide art critic for *The Australian*. She is currently completing a biography of Anne and Gordon Samstag.

MARNI WILLIAMS is Publication Manager and Assistant Editor of Art & Australia.

WILLIAM WRIGHT AM was awarded the Australia Council Emeritus Medal for services to art, curatorship and education in 2002 and was appointed the following year as a Member of the Order of Australia.

Souchou Yao is an anthropologist based at the Transforming Cultures Research Centre, University of Technology, Sydney. His books include Confucian Capitalism (2002) and Singapore: The State and the Culture of Excess (2007). He has written extensively on Chinese contemporary art, notably the work of Xu Bing. In November 2009 he gave the Distinguished Asia-Pacific Lecture at Peking University.

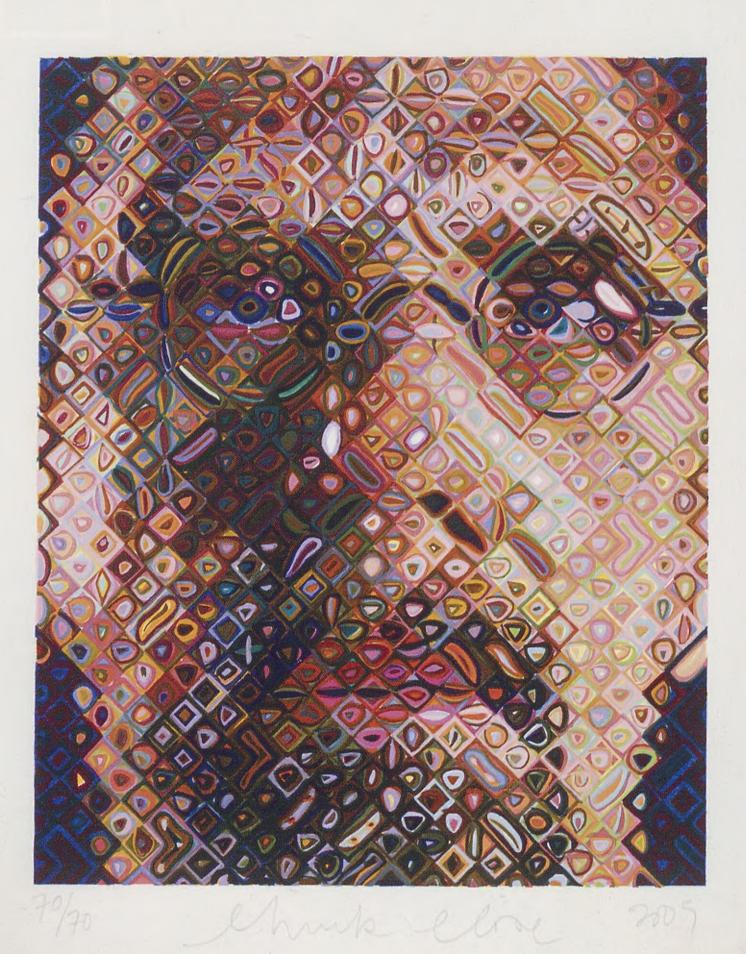
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Self-Portrait Woodcut, 2009, woodcut in 47 colours

Image courtesy of Pace Editions, Inc

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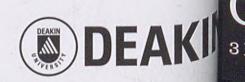
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Ewen Coates, *Disgrace* (detail), 2010 bronze 17 x 12 x 9 cm Image courtesy the artist







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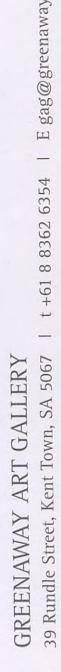






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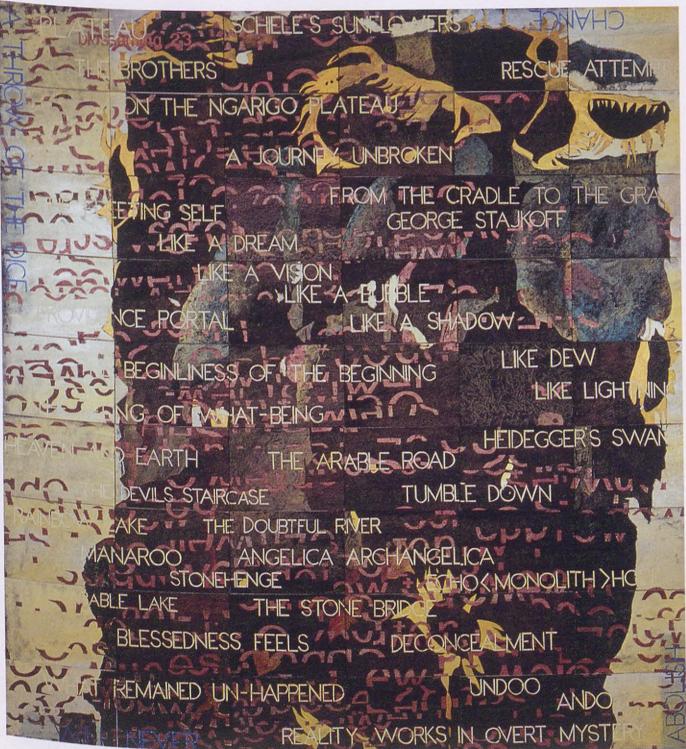
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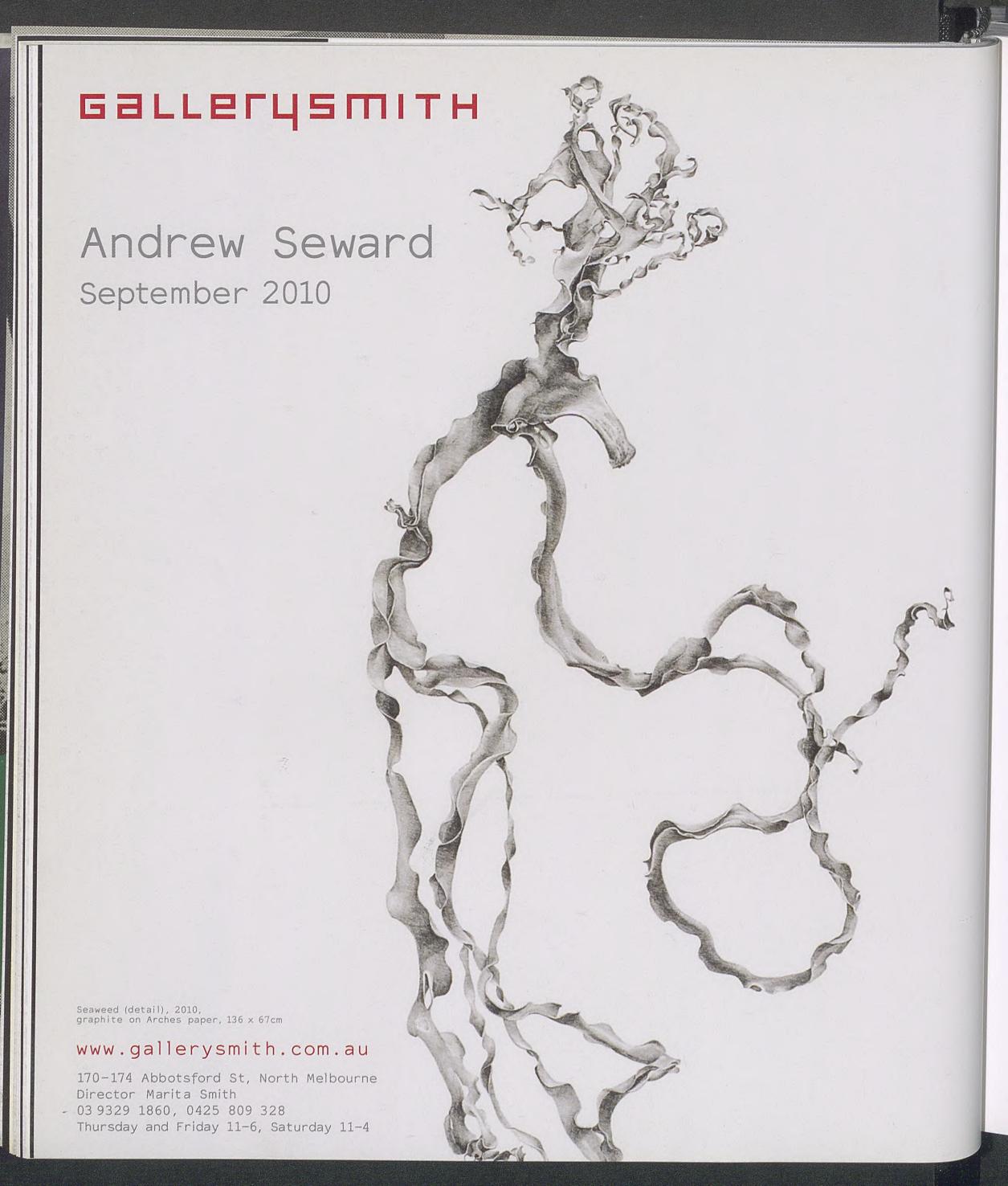
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Forum, Spring 2010

'In the Balance: Art for a Changing World' roundtable Rachel Kent

> Raquel Ormella and Andrea Bowers Bec Dean

> > Bonita Ely Nicholas Croggon

Indigenous river artists
Tess Allas

Janet Laurence Felicity Fenner

Albert Namatjira Michael Fitzgerald

> Julie Mehretu Sarah Tutton

In conversation: Art and activism in a changing world

Rachel Kent

'In the Balance: Art for a Changing World' is a major survey exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Sydney, that grapples with current environmental concerns and how they are expressed through the work of some thirty Australian and international artists and collectives. MCA Senior Curator and exhibition co-curator Rachel Kent (with Glenn Barkley, Anna Davis and Keith Munro) speaks with artists James Newitt, Emily Floyd, Andrea Bowers and Diego Bonetto about the role artists play in bringing attention to global issues through their practice.

Rachel Kent: A key exhibition theme is the history of art and activism from the 1970s onwards in Tasmania, in particular relating to the history of logging and damming in the region.

James, you are Tasmanian born and based, and your video and photographic work has sought to address some of the complexities faced on either side of the timber industry today. Can you speak a little about your work in this regard?

James Newitt: To begin with I think it's important to clarify that I don't see my work as activism. I'm not an activist and although my personal political interests have led me to look closely at the issue of forestry practices in Tasmania, I'm not trying to assert a particular political message through this work. I'm aware that this is potentially dangerous ground but I'm more interested in delving into the complexities of the forestry industry from a social and cultural perspective, looking at all the parties involved. The work included in the exhibition is quite deliberately detached and objective; it documents a series of actions and community 'walk-ins' to an area of wilderness that has recently been 'harvested'.

My video *Passive aggressive*, 2009, is a sort of research document which creates a sense of impending conflict. I was trying to understand the push and pull between industry and activism – it was a starting point for an ongoing body of work. During the making of this work I had little contact with forestry contractors so it focuses more on the work of activists and their relationship

to the environment but, once again, I was not creating an activist video – so, for example, I intentionally filmed banners and placards from behind. Since making this work I have made contact and worked with a number of forestry contractors, as well as working more closely with activists based at Camp Florentine. It's an interesting process jumping back and forth over an ideological and political fence, but throughout the process I've been honest about my intentions and motivations.

RK: Art historian Tim Bonyhady's essay in the exhibition publication contextualises this history of art and activism in Tasmania. It establishes a lineage through the landscape photography of Olegas Truchanas and Peter Dombrovskis to the work of a new generation of artists. How do you perceive your own work in relation to this history, and is there a role for art today in relation to environmental advocacy?

JN: Having said that I don't see myself as an activist, that doesn't mean I don't believe in the potential for art to influence opinion and create change. Though, as Tim writes in his essay, it's important to recognise that art proper is not the only platform for social and environmental change to happen. The activists (and in many ways the contractors) I have worked with over the last eighteen months are incredibly media savvy. I absolutely agree with him that many of the activists' 'actions' and creative interventions could easily be interpreted as artworks – but they are not concerned with this. I guess it comes down to intention. What is the intention of the work you make: is it to help a political campaign, or is it to explore and connect polarised ideologies in order to understand more about the world and the nature of environmental conflict? Maybe these two approaches are not so dissimilar.

RK: Might I expand on this theme, Emily, and ask you to speak a little about your *Garden sculpture*, 2009, with its engraved activist website links. How do you see the position or role of the





opposite
Emily Floyd, Organic practice, 2009
Wooden sculptures (kota wood, huon pine, beechwood, ancient New Zealand kauri), cardboard presentation box, 60 x 61 x 40 cm
Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne and Sydney

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James Newitt, Landscape (detail), 2009

Type-C photographs, 30 photographs, 20 x 30 cm (each)

Courtesy Criterion Gallery, Hobart

© The artist

artist today, and what about critical commentary and the question of satire?

Emily Floyd: My work *Garden sculpture* is essentially a research map presented in sculptural form. It was made by engraving wooden blocks with the URLs of websites dedicated to online collectivism and environmentalism. I tried to make a work that expresses the aspirations of our time as fluid, organic, connected. I am interested in making objects that could be used to explain complex philosophical ideas. I see cultural studies as a form of play in itself and believe that research and open-ended learning are important political strategies. In the case of *Garden sculpture*, it could be used as a learning aid to explore some of the ideas currently being put forward by the European Marxists which critique capitalism's embrace of the discourses of ecology and liberal communism.

It's important to acknowledge that radical strategies are ever more quickly subsumed into the market. This doesn't mean to say that there is no point in working to prevent ecological catastrophe, or trying to invent new forms of organisation. There are incredible models for activism and critical commentary that can be found online. My two most recommended and for very different reasons are www.bhopal.org and www.aaaaarg.org/.

RK: I can't help but think also of some of the potential ironies of environmental activism and the so-called 'greening' of everyday life. An irony that struck me about your recent 'market garden' works is our desire, in a middle-class urban society, to return to nature through farmers' markets and to sources of production – although the markets end up being fashionable and highly costly, and we remain as removed from nature as ever.

EF: Yes, and that irony in the work very much comes from a position of self-deprecation. For instance, I feel reassured when I'm at a farmers' market buying my organic turmeric; and I feel the safety of distance when I engage with environmental issues from

the protection of the blogosphere. I think it is important to be self-aware in these matters.

This idea that ecology is the new opium of the masses is very real. I was at Aldi supermarket the other day buying cleaning products, and I realised that everything I had chosen had a kind of green, organic, see-through packaging. Obviously I am unconsciously attracted to this aesthetic because of my fears about global warming. This is the future; as we hurtle towards oblivion, everything will seem more natural. I read a style forecast recently that predicted that in the future everything will be like water. It will be see-through, organic, flexible and connected; it will appear artisanal and natural even if made by machine.

RK: Andrea, you have built a substantial career as an artist and educator in the United States working with individuals and activist organisations in your art. Can you speak about your current body of work, and the question of 'sustainability' in a changing world?

Andrea Bowers: I feel a bit melancholic about 'Mercy Mercy Me', the project I am showing at the MCA, because I finished the collection of work in December 2009 and at the time I had no idea how prophetic the subject matter would be in relation to the catastrophe of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Last year was the twentieth anniversary of the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska and I was trying to use the project as a vehicle to bring this history to the forefront. The impetus for the work came from a trip to the Arctic Village, the northernmost Indian Nation in the United States, for events organised around the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. During this trip I realised that a motley crew of global environmentalists in a strained alliance with an Indigenous population were no match against big oil. I met community members from Prince William Sound who told stories about how the land and economy still had not recovered from the Valdez spill.

This body of work struggles with the uncomfortable





Diego Bonetto, The hanging gardens and other tales, 2008 Installation of pot plants with handwritten notes from owners, dimensions variable Courtesy and © The artist Photograph Diego Bonetto

relationship of predominantly Eurocentric environmentalists travelling the globe in attempts to collaborate with locals to fight against climate change. Almost without exception the most endangered places are filled with poor people of colour. Human rights, corporate sponsorship and the green movement struggle with compatibility.

RK: And what of the role of the artist? I note that your work often contains a strong element of self-reflexivity or critical awareness of the role of the artist-as-activist. I am thinking in particular of your instructional tree-climbing video with the renowned environmental educator John Quigley.

AB: Art and activism have always been intricately tied throughout history, it's just the market of commodification that encourages us to believe they are at odds. I'm always looking for the commonalities between them, as well as thinking through how each might serve the other. My work is always very opinionated in its political stance.

RK: Our relationship to the environment is inevitably complex, from rising concerns associated with industrial practices and their potentially devastating impact, to our increased estrangement from nature. Diego, you have closely examined ideas about this disengagement through your art, particularly through your Weedyconnection project (www.weedyconnection.com). How can art redress this sense of distance?

Diego Bonetto: Weedyconnection is an ongoing project of mine. It started in an abandoned drive-in cinema in Western Sydney in 2002 as an audio tour and has eventuated in virtual databases, blogs, performances, videos, cooking shows and sculptural works in the form of self-contained gardens. I think my work acts as a double take. It leverages heavily on the environmental guilt we experience, both honestly looking at our role as an uber-consumerist species and as victims of targeted commercial expedients, as Emily noted. At the same time it opens up

possibilities, focusing on practices that have been with us forever, which have accompanied us throughout this long evolutional journey. All the cultural practices we inherited from our various ancestries are great starting points for me to reason for a sustainable co-existence. With this in mind, I practise or use art as a media outlet – a way to keep the questions rolling – reassessing our role and our footprints.

RK: Lastly, Diego, I'm particularly interested in the idea of hierarchy and the fact that you tend to deal with the overlooked and the everyday in our environment – for example, the focus on 'spontaneous flora' (or weeds) as opposed to other more appreciated plants. How might art re-orient our vision of the world about us and help to put things back into balance?

DB: Weeds are great examples through which we can reason on the complexity of our relationship with the environment. As we all know, a weed is a plant that grows where we humans would rather not have it. As such, it symbolises how we see the biosphere we live in. As a species we would like to create the best environment for our own flourishing; but in doing so, we forget how dependent we are on wider environmental complexities. Weeds are nature's answer to our destruction, stubbornly reappearing to contrast and mitigate our view of what the environment should look like. They have followed us on our journey; in many ways they have adapted to us and we to them - as most 'unwanted' plants also double up as important natural remedies, sources of food, and as cultural signifiers, with different weedy plants inhabiting special places in various human-ecology relationships around the globe. I present weeds as a starting point to ruminate on what we have forgotten that there are no good or bad plants, just under-utilised resources left dangerously aside in our monoculture-dependent modern living.

In the Balance: Art for a Changing World, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 21 August – 31 October 2010.



Raquel Ormella and Andrea Bowers: Life in the balance

Bec Dean

'LIFE IN THE BALANCE' is a phrase spoken by John Quigley, the tree-sitting subject of Los Angeles-based artist Andrea Bowers's 50-minute documentary Vieja Gloria (2003). At a point of exhaustion towards the end of the film, Quigley contemplates the cynicism and intransigence of developers while watching a million-dollar operation to move a 400-year-old oak tree half a kilometre away from its original site in Valencia, California. From the perspective of this activist and his seventy-one-day protest, the film details how patriotic verve served to symbolically transform the tree into 'Old Glory', and so create a rallying point for local residents' resistance to the continuing expansion of their suburb and the eradication of its remaining wildlife and historical sites. Bowers documents the ability of an individual action to catalyse the support of a suburban community and stir a kind of political awakening through an act of conservation, revealing what it means to find a voice as a citizen within a democracy.

As the artist has elsewhere observed of her practice:

In the art world of the last ten or fifteen years, there seems to be an ideological break between aesthetics and politics, which are represented in polemical terms as opposites. My aim ... was to show a way in which aesthetics and politics can serve each other.¹

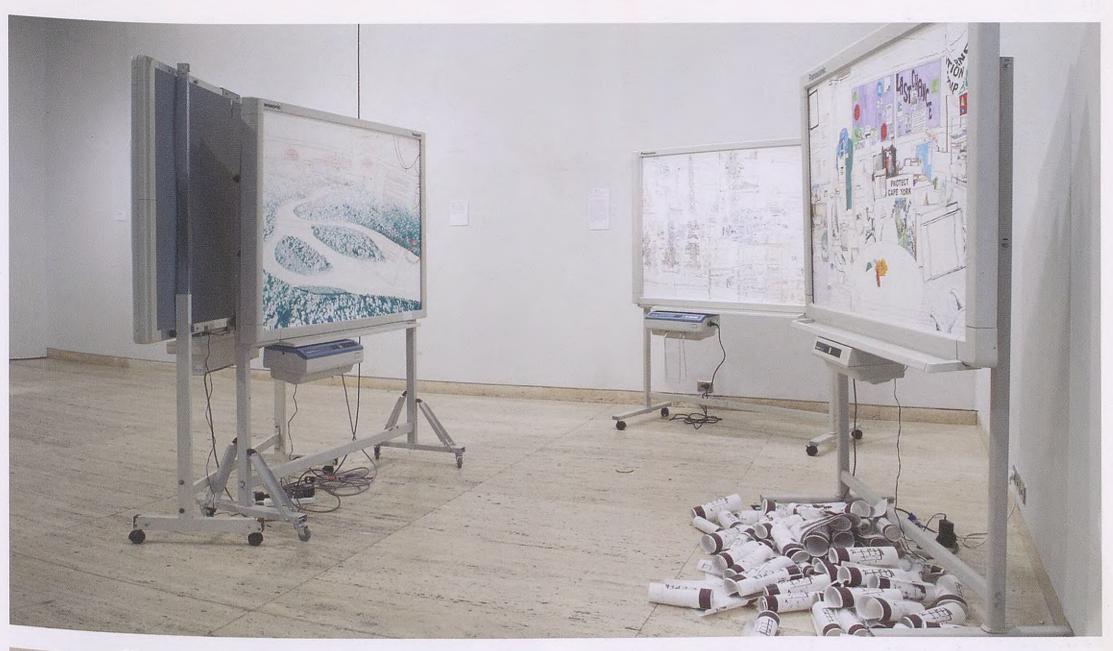
There is no question of the utility of imagery by artists and photographers in environmental political campaigning and activism. Over the last few months international media sources have issued a deluge of imagery from the Gulf of Mexico showing crude oil spewing into the ocean and, as a consequence, its wildlife and natural reserves overwhelmed by poisonous sludge. In mid-June, a beleaguered Barack Obama announced the disaster as the worst in North America's history, utilising the severity of the oil spill to begin to leverage public support for green energy alternatives. In the Australian context, the emotive efficacy of

photographs of clear-felled and fire-bombed old-growth forest and, conversely, the representation of pristine wilderness, has served to crystallise public opinion since the 1970s to the current moment. Artist images have played a key role in campaigns by the Wilderness Society and the Australian Greens, among others, to save local forests, rivers and their ecologies from becoming an expendable and collateral part of state-held natural resources.

Bowers and Australian Raquel Ormella are two such artists who operate in these simultaneously local and global contexts at a time when the environment is momentarily taking centrestage after the failure of both federal and international politicians to implement climate change policies in 2009. They are also among the twenty-nine artists and groups selected for the Museum of Contemporary Art's (MCA) 'In the Balance: Art for a Changing World', a timely discourse-based exhibition which promises to generate wildly discursive conversation, feedback and outcomes.

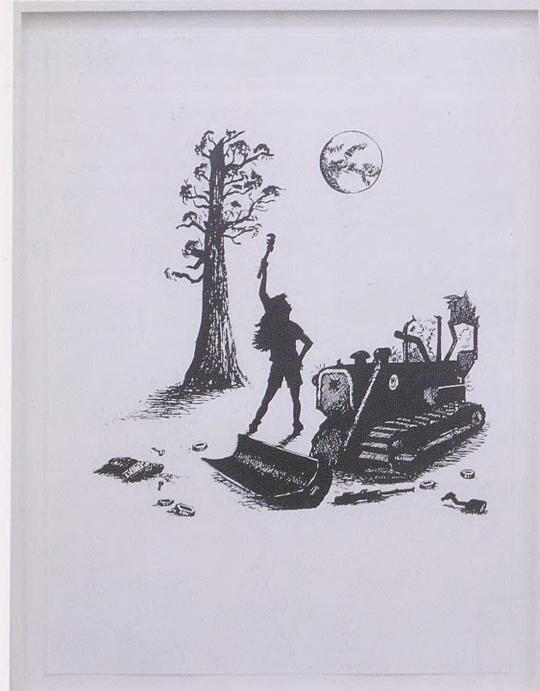
Bowers and Ormella share a desire to make the histories, methodologies and spaces of activism accessible and legible to other audiences through forms of representation, documentation and storytelling. Where Bowers has made many of her videos available for free online, Sydney-based Ormella has created inexpensive publications and multiples for the distribution of her work. The last twelve months have witnessed an especially energised period of activity in the latter's practice: a 2009 solo exhibition curated by Reuben Keehan, She Went That Way', occupied all of Artspace's galleries, with Ormella then completing a four-month residency at Tokyo Wonder Site. During this time she accomplished a series of new handmade publications, sound and video works addressing the spectacle of wilderness in birdwatching and simulations of the natural world in Tokyo.

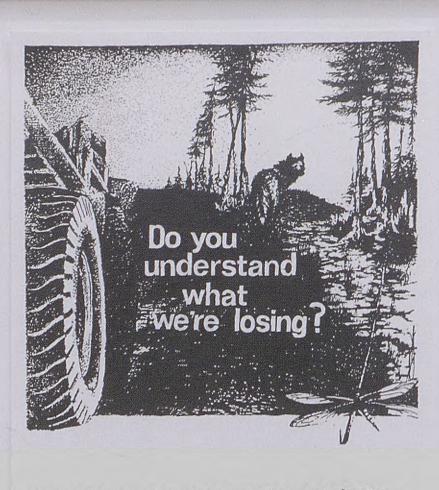
While the urgency of environmental issues may be a contingent factor in Ormella's current popularity, it is not one of her recent projects that has been selected for 'In the Balance', but rather an











At some point we must draw a line across the ground of our home and our being, drive a spear into the land, and say to the bulldozers, earthmovers, government and corporations, "thus far and no farther." If we do not, we shall later feel, instead of pride, the regret of Thoreau, that good but overly-bookish man, who wrote, near the end of his life, "If I repent of anything it is likely to be my good behavior."

— Ed Abbey

- Ed Abbey

opposite, clockwise from top

Andrea Bowers, Nonviolent Civil Disobedience Training – Tree Sitting Forest Defense, 2009, single-channel video with colour and sound, Apple TV, climbing rope, carabiners and wooden platform, 33 mins 50 secs duration (looped). Photograph Thomas Mueller; Earth first! Direct action manual, first page, 2009, graphite on paper, 38.1 x 27.94 cm; Eco defense; field guide to monkey-wrenching, 2009, graphite on paper, 76.2 x 56.52 cm, all images courtesy the artist, Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York, and Susanne Vielmetter, Los Angeles Projects. © The artist.

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Raquel Ormella, Wild rivers: Cairns, Brisbane, Sydney, 2008, texta, electronic whiteboards, thermal prints, dimensions variable, collection Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne; Poster reduction, 2005, electronic whiteboard, temporary and permanent texta markers, thermal paper printouts, photocopied enlargements, collection Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, purchased with funds provided by the Coe and Mordant families, 2008, all images courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane.

installation from the MCA collection. Originally commissioned by curator Blair French for 'Who's Afraid of the Avant-Garde?' at Sydney's Performance Space in 2005, Poster reduction comprises an electronic whiteboard with two scaled-up monochrome facsimiles of the permanent marker drawings printed from both sides of the whiteboard's revolving screen. This installation, which marked a significant shift in Ormella's practice at the time, is a key work in the reframing of some of the wilderness photography and historical activist practices also included in the MCA show.

Ormella's whiteboard drawings were reproduced from a photograph the artist took at the Wilderness Society headquarters in Hobart. The room represented on one side of *Poster reduction* contains desks stacked with old computers and printers, a used whiteboard and a large map. The reverse side holds a monochrome green drawing by Ormella from an original photograph by Catherine Rogers of a giant swamp gum within a remnant forest on the edge of clearfell in the Styx Valley. Even with its vertical axis forced into a horizontal plane, the tree seems unable to be contained by such a rigid and formal structure. And what was reduced and flattened through permanent marker and shiny plastic in *Poster reduction*, has been extrapolated back into three-dimensional form through the inclusion of Rogers's images within the MCA exhibition.

In earlier and successive whiteboard works, notably 130 Davey Street, 2005, Ormella also rendered in marker the Tasmanian wilderness photographs of Peter Dombrovskis, whose ghostly image of Rock Island Bend famously formed part of the successful Tasmanian Wilderness Society campaign to save the Franklin River in the early 1980s.⁴ And so the relationship of Ormella's work to that of Rogers, Dombrovskis and, by association, to Dombrovskis's friend and mentor, Olegas Truchanas, has been expanded within 'In the Balance' to reveal a lineage of activist photography from the specificity of Tasmania. Interested in the use of other artists' work,

both historical and contemporary, for the purposes of activism and politics, Ormella's installations have not arrived in the public sphere of the gallery without their share of controversy. Questions have been raised to do with intellectual property, while resurrecting longer-term discontents about the instrumentalisation of artworks for political purposes in the first place.⁵

An exciting proposition of 'In the Balance' lies in its engagement with the dedicated, passionate, sometimes fractious voices and spaces of environmental activism in Australia and beyond. Following on from her experience with *Vieja Gloria*, Bowers subsequently filmed the story of her relationship with an Indigenous Gwich'in bead artist from Alaska – *Interview with Betty Ann* (2009) – as well as completing a *Vieja Gloria* sequel of sorts with *Nonviolent Civil Disobedience* – *Tree Sitting Forest Defense* (2009), in which the artist is orientated within the practicalities and pragmatics of tree-sitting by Quigley. At the beginning of this film, which almost serves as an instructional video, her tutor clearly states: 'The tree-sit is a holding action, to stall things ... the tree-sit brings public awareness and elicits the public will.'

Bowers and Ormella are similarly committed in their artistic and personal actions, and with their contrasting but sympathetic practices brought together so instructively at the MCA, 'In the Balance' creates a platform for the confluence and complexity of their concerns: politics, aesthetics and eliciting the public will.

Catrin Lorch (trans. Nicholas Grindell), 'Andrea Bowers', frieze, no. 94, October 2005.

www.guidedvd.com/video_andrea_bowers.html

Ormella's work will be presented as part of the Aichi Triennale, 21 August – 31 October 2010.

4 For further details see pages 124-27 of this issue of Art & Australia.

Copyright law within Australia states that: 'If an image is recognisably quoting another artist then the work is in breach of copyright law.' In subsequent works by Ormella images by Dombrovskis do not appear.

Bonita Ely's art of ecology

Nicholas Croggon

AT THE BIRTH OF THE MODERN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT in the 1960s, the truly destructive aspect of humankind's engagement with nature was difficult to imagine. In her 1962 book Silent Spring, biologist Rachel Carson warned against the threat of environmental disaster in the following terms: 'A grim spectre has crept upon us almost unnoticed, and this imagined tragedy may easily become a stark reality we all shall know.' Today the 'imagined tragedy' appears to have crystallised as we find ourselves in a state of crisis whose most recent harbinger is that of the spectre-like oil slick creeping its way across the Gulf of Mexico. Science tells us with increasing certainty that we are indeed destroying our planet, and this realisation throws us into a paralysing dialectic of action and inaction - we accept that we must act and yet we do not. From the 'imagined tragedy' of 1962 to the crushing contemporary reality, the history of the environmental movement reveals a troubled lurching between the imagined and the real. How can we achieve a more harmonious balance?

Bonita Ely is an artist whose work over the past forty years has carefully traced a series of answers to precisely this question. Through her work as an installation and performance artist, a feminist and a teacher, Ely has had a decisive influence on the history of Australian art. Indeed, her influence continues to spread through her role as Head of Sculpture, Performance and Installation at the University of New South Wales's College of Fine Arts in Sydney. But it is through her engagement with the ecological, starting with her earliest works and continuing today, that Ely's importance can be most keenly understood.

Ely's ecology project began in the 1970s as part of the rising dominance of installation art. C20th mythological beasts: at home with the Locust family, 1975, was an assemblage of three marionette-like figures lolling in a suburban lounge room. The work recalled the disturbing installations of American Edward Kienholz, but with an organic inflection: the sculpted carpet was

grass-green, the sofa swelled bulbously around the figures, and the walls were pasted with blue floral wallpaper. The family sat facing a television showing slides of beautiful New York sunsets – aglow with the cocktail of pollutants lacing the Manhattan air. Viewed as a whole, the work presented an ironic critique of decadent modern living, something the artist had experienced during a stay in booming post-industrial New York in the early 1970s. More pointedly, however, the grotesquery of modern life was intrinsically linked here to a corrupt cooption and emulation of nature – the grass-like carpet, the banal repetition of the floral wallpaper and the hybrid insect—human forms of the figures themselves. For Ely the emergence of modern life coincided with the decay of the romantic vision of nature. She staged this moment of decay as a grotesque farce in which it was no longer possible to distinguish between the human and the non-human, the beautiful and the obscene.

Ely's other key work from the period was Mt Feathertop project, 1979. Focusing on this mountain peak in the Victorian Alps, the installation comprised watercolour views in different seasons, a papier-mâché scale model and a collection of documents describing the mountain's ecological destruction by humans. Mt Feathertop marked Australian installation art's centring on the environmental and the local, with the piece comparable to contemporary works by artists such as Kevin Mortensen, Ross Grounds and John Davis. All exhibited during the 1970s at the Mildura Sculpture Triennial, where parts of Mt Feathertop were first shown in 1975. As Ely later noted, the work represented an attempt to know the mountain, to understand its seasonal changes, its topological structure and its environmental decay, with the artist's dedication to the work over a number of years rendering the project a tender 'homage' to place. As with Locust family, the work was also tempered by a subtle irony, for in presenting the mountain as a series of interlocking rational systems of knowledge, Ely also pointed to what was ultimately missing from the work: an

encounter with the mountain itself. Where Locust family critiqued the decay of the romantic ideal of nature, Mt Feathertop revealed the flaws in its scientific rationalisation.

Ely's early environmental art was intertwined with the concurrent rise of feminist theory in Australia. The 1970s saw the establishment of the Women's Art Forum, the Lip Collective and, following a visit from the feminist art historian Lucy Lippard in 1975, the Women's Art Register - all of which involved Ely to some degree. Ely's most important impact at this time was her work on the register with Anna Sande, collecting records of female artists from around Australia and advocating strongly for the inclusion of women's art practices in educational institutions. This push for an increased agency for women in the 1970s demanded new forms of artistic expression. For artists such as Ely, Jill Orr and Joan Grounds, these new forms were to be found through an immersion in the primeval materials and symbolics of nature and their activation through ritual and performance. This immersion allowed engagement with nature not as a distant sacred object but as a deeply personal - and thus deeply feminine - encounter. Furthermore, this strong empathy with the earth rendered its destruction a terrible and personal violence. In her performance Jabiluka U02, 1979, Ely employed spiral forms and simple materials - sand, fire and straw - to ritualise the great violation that uranium mining in the Northern Territory was having on both the land and its Indigenous people.

The 1980s, however, brought a more sceptical attitude towards gender and ecology, and the conflation of woman and nature in performances such as these began to be seen as naive. The guilty party, it was argued, was surely the act of representation itself. Ely captured this moment of radical scepticism in what is perhaps her most influential and incisive piece, *Murray River punch*, 1980. In this work the artist, elegantly dressed as a kitchen hostess, demonstrated her special recipe for replicating the 'renowned

flavour' of the Murray. The ingredients that were mixed together before increasingly incredulous crowds at Adelaide's Rundle Mall and the University of Melbourne included water, urine, human faeces, fertiliser, agricultural chemicals and a finishing garnish of rabbit dung. With delicious dry humour, Ely's performance gracefully wove together critiques of female stereotyping, human exploitation of the environment and the colonialist–pastoralist appropriation of land. Yet the work's subversive intelligence lay in the substance of the punch itself. Underneath her ironic critique of dominant representational structures, Ely smuggled in an unexpected encounter with the real – the acrid smell of phosphate, the stench of human faeces. *Murray River punch* forced viewers to confront both the imaginary and the reality of nature: the ideological structures that frame its exploitation and the undeniable physical degradation this exploitation brings about.

Ely's concern for the ecology of the local, and of the Murray in particular, has not lessened over the years. In two recent bodies of work, 'Murray River Series' (2008) and 'Drought: The Murray's Estuary' (2009), she presented a series of photographs taken along the Murray from the headwaters of the river near Mount Kosciuszko to the river's mouth at Lake Alexandrina. The artist's documentation of the river was extensive and systematic. At certain locations she created 'sample grids' by winding string around pieces of wood and then photographing the contents of each square along the grid. This observational process referred back to 'Murray Rivers Edge', a 1977 series of photographs of the same locations. Where the earlier sample grids bore witness to a river plagued by high salinity and the depletion of the river red gum stands, in the 2008-09 work we additionally see bluegreen algae, acid sulphate contamination and drought. One sample grid, taken near the Barmah Forest in northern Victoria, frames a receding shoreline: in one section a beer bottle lies encased in the mud, in another the artist's boot protrudes into the shot.













left top and bottom

Murray River punch, 1980

80 x 120 cm, edition of 5

Documentation of *Murray River punch* performance, Melbourne University, 1980 Inkjet print on Epson semi-gloss paper, 29 x 40 cm each, printed 2008 Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

top right

Lake Boga: European carp with seagull feather, 2008 Inkjet print on archival paper 80 x 120 cm, edition of 5

Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

Raukkan: sunken boat with forest fossils, 2009
Inkjet print on archival paper

Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

Read together, the 1977 and 2008–09 works paint a clear picture of environmental decline. They gesture towards the current environmental crisis, not as a sudden moment of grand and epic disaster, but as a series of small accruing material realities. But more importantly, and as the intruding boot signifies, these works provide a framework through which the human can approach and confront these consequences. Within this framework, nature is not a distant space of auratic beauty, but a realm of personal encounter in which, looking down at the foot, viewers see themselves as but one material being among many.²

It may well be that the current state of ecological crisis will soon replace globalisation as the dominant cultural condition. In contrast to globalisation, which emphasises the invisible and the infinite, the state of environmental crisis drags us back to earth to contemplate the material and finite. It demands that artists and non-artists alike reassess the way in which they engage with the natural world – both at a real and an imaginary level. Over the course of her career, Ely has discovered such a mode of engagement. It is not to be found, she suggests, in the romantic visions of nature as a sacred object, nor as an imbrication of rational data. Rather, it is to be sought in a state of personal encounter with the materiality of the earth itself. Ely's work suggests that by holding this type of encounter in a state of suspension, either through the use of irony or self-reflection, the unthinking paralysis we currently face can be transformed into its much more positive other – a moment of thoughtful connection.

Janine Burke, Field of Vision: A Decade of Change – Women's Art in the Seventies, Viking, Melbourne, 1990, p. 93.

This idea is derived from the work of the contemporary theorist Timothy Morton in his book *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2007. See also Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2010.

Documenting a river

Tess Allas

As Research Officer for the Storylines project I spent three years travelling around Australia, interviewing Indigenous artists and compiling their entries for the *Dictionary of Australian Artists* Online (www.daao.org.au). My travels took me as far north and south as Cairns and Hobart and across the Nullarbor to the West Australian coast. During this period of research (2006–09) it became evident that where there was a major water source there was also cultural activity, and in some places this activity was part of an ongoing cross-generational transfer of knowledge of the kind that is generally assumed to occur in the north of the country, particularly in Arnhem Land. However, my research shows that those who live along the Murray–Darling river system also have a history of unbroken cultural practice when it comes to artistic production, especially that of weaving and carving.

In the Museum of Contemporary Art's exhibition 'In the Balance: Art for a Changing World', three individual Aboriginal artists and one Aboriginal arts group have submitted works that provide dynamic examples of a continuing cultural belonging to the Murray and Darling rivers and their headwaters, documenting traditions and suggesting new pathways. When viewed collectively these artists map a continental current of creativity, connecting Boggabilla in the cotton-farming hub of north-west New South Wales to the parched riverbeds of the Barkindji in South Australia.

In the mid-1990s I visited the women's art class at Boggabilla TAFE, which was under the tutelage of Paul West. About half the women were from Boggabilla and the rest were living at nearby Toomelah Mission along the banks of the Macintyre, which is one of the headwaters that run into the Darling. Some of the women took to weaving the grasses of the river as had their elders and ancestors before them, and others began using cotton rag from the nearby clothing manufacturers. Taught the basic techniques of papermaking by West, the artists soon established a business, the Euraba Paper Company, and began taking orders for handmade

paper products. Through this business they further developed a formidable arts practice – one that today sees the creation of such work as *Bagaay (river)*, 1999–2000.¹ Employing once-discarded and now highly prized industry by-products such as cotton rag, *Bagaay (river)* reveals the women's traditional knowledge of the Macintyre:

Each artist worked their own individual stories into the piece, with the large central fish tying them all together. There are animals such as echidna, yabbies and grubs as well as Goomeroi symbols and impressions of fishing nets all cast into the piece to talk about the importance of the river to everyone.²

As Auntie May Hinch further explains:

The knowledge comes through our ancestors that used to walk many miles for waterholes and who finally came to our resting place on the Macintyre River. Today we still use it for fishing and hunting. The river is significant to us as a place where we can go and sit and bring out our stories. We tell these stories though our artwork.³

Downstream on the banks of the Darling in far-western New South Wales is the township of Wilcannia. Here Badger Bates was born and has spent his life working towards the protection and maintenance of his surrounding country. As well as helping safeguard significant sites from spoilage by mining and agriculture, Bates was involved in a fifteen-year campaign which saw the Mutawintji National Park handed over to the local Aboriginal Land Council in 1998.⁴

Bates works across a variety of mediums, including linocut printing, sculpture and carving, and the inspiration for his practice comes from his 'grandmother and from the ancestors, who guide his hands when he works and send him ideas'. Evidenced in much of his work is his strong attachment to the Darling. His linocuts

document particular aspects of river life – be that the traditional Paakantji constellation stories of the skies above Bates's country in *Emu sky*, 2008, or in *Mission mob and bend mob 1950s*, 2009, where the artist gives a glimpse into the regimented daily life of mid-twentieth-century mission times.

Heading south is the township of Wentworth, which is on the Victorian border where the Darling meets the Murray. From the park alongside the junction of these rivers you can look down at the very muddy-brown waters of the Darling gently merging with the comparatively clear Murray. It is one of nature's magical sights.

Further west the Murray enters South Australia and the small township of Berri. Here we find the acclaimed Ngarrindjeri/Ramindjeri weaver Yvonne Koolmatrie, whose work has graced exhibitions both near (the 2000 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, 'Beyond The Pale') and far ('Fluent' in the Australian Pavilion at the 1997 Venice Biennale). 'In the Balance' includes Koolmatrie's most recognisable forms: woven sedge-grass yabbie and eel traps as well as a pandanus and rush duck-egg scoop. These works employ techniques handed down to Koolmatrie by Point McLeay elder and weaver Aunty Dorothy Kartinyeri in an important 1982 workshop. Participants were taught coiling techniques and which plant fibres to weave – in a timely lesson as Kartinyeri passed away soon after. 6

In addition to the eel and yabbie traps which have particular cultural significance for Aboriginal people along the Murray, Koolmatrie has created works of great whimsy, including a sedge-woven bi-plane now in the National Gallery of Australia collection, and a hot-air balloon complete with attached basket, acquired by the Queensland Art Gallery in Brisbane. These two pieces help document contemporary life along the Murray – a life that also embraces non-Aboriginal activity and local tourism.

Downstream the river reaches Adelaide, home of Barkindji photographer Nici Cumpston. It was as a student at the North Adelaide School of Art in 1987 that Cumpston learned the

technique of hand-colouring photographs with transparent oil paints at a workshop overseen by Kate Breakey. Following her graduation Cumpston was employed as a darkroom technician for the South Australian Police and it is here she suspects she developed her style of photographic investigation. As Cumpston has previously said:

I feel like I am an investigator when I go out into the bush as I am always photographing everything I see, like I am gathering evidence.⁸

And what beautiful evidence it is. Cumpston's large-format hand-coloured photographs illustrate a majestic Murray River that even in its dying days refuses to leave an ugly carcass. These images that capture a river may at first glance appear gloomy. Yet through Cumpston's eyes, the eyes of a Barkindji woman, they also reveal a river in elegant decay with a glimmer of hope that it will once again overflow with life.

- This piece was made by Euraba Paper Company founding members Auntie May Hinch, Auntie Joy Duncan, Marlene Hinch, Adrianne Duncan, Gloria Woodbridge, Jenny McIntosh, Margaret Duncan, Stella O'Halloran and the late Isobel Karkoe; and artist members Margaret Dennison, Leonie Binge, Elenore Binge and Marlena Hinch.
- 2 Kate Ford, teacher at Boggabilla, in email correspondence with the writer, 25 May 2010.
- Auntie May Hinch in email correspondence with the writer, 26 May 2010.
- See Janis Lander, 'William Brian "Badger" Bates', www.daao.org.au/main/read/7558.
- 6 See Tess Allas, 'Yvonne Koolmatrie', www.daao.org.au/main/read/7722.
- 7 See Tess Allas, 'Nici Cumpston', www.daao.org.au/main/read/7455.
- 8 ibid.





Antonia Radich
7 September – 3 October 2010
Matt Glenn
5 October – 31 October 2010
Stephanie Monteith
2 November – 28 November 2010

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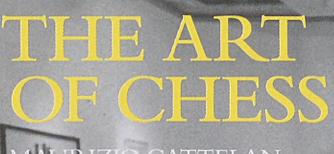
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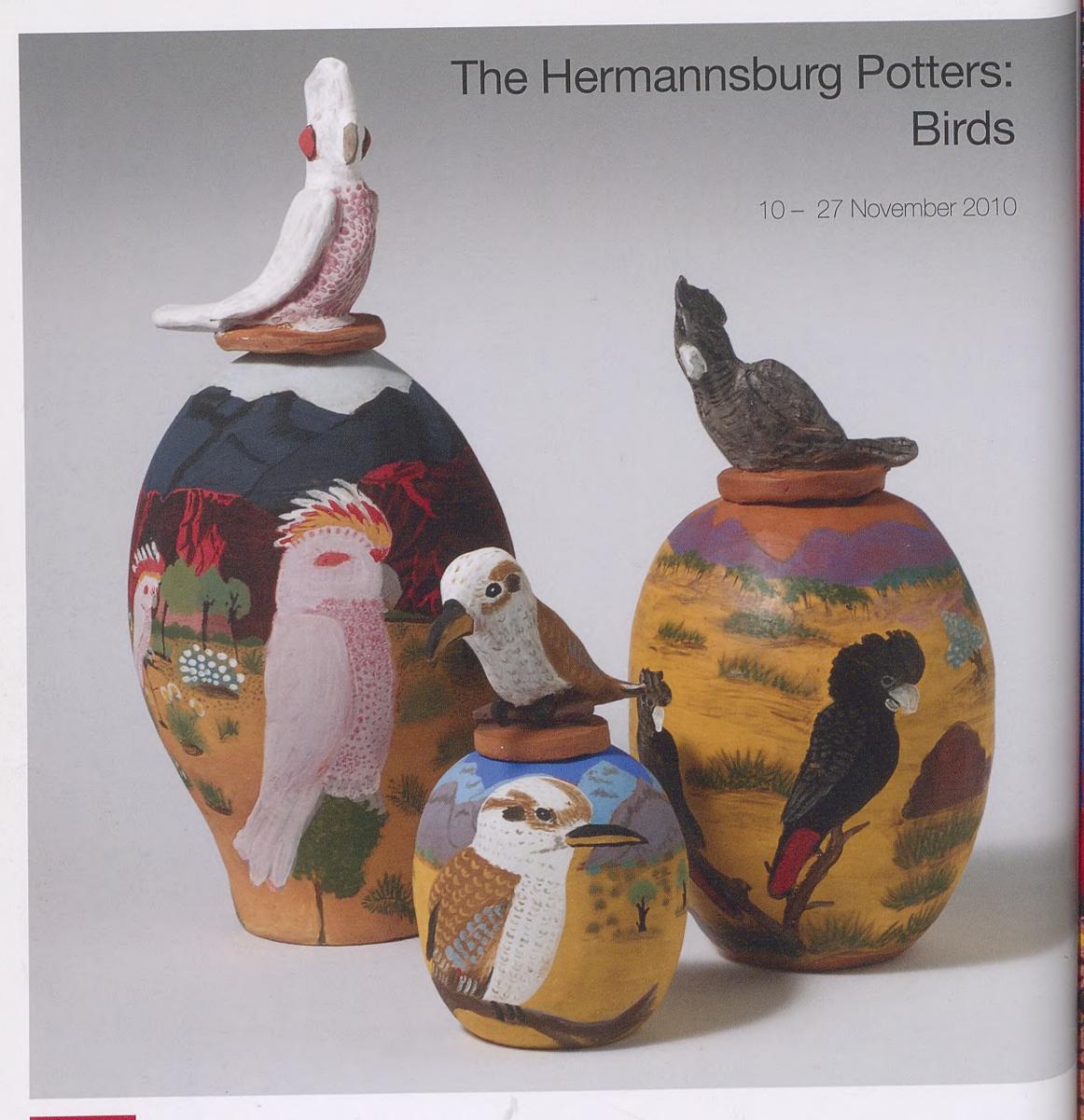


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A hospital for plants: The healing art of Janet Laurence

Felicity Fenner

Renowned as one of Australia's leading site-specific artists, Janet Laurence's most recent practice has involved the creation of environments that act as sanctuaries for the contemplation and regeneration of natural environments and plant life. During the recent 17th Biennale of Sydney (BoS), where the artist's latest work graced the Royal Botanic Gardens, Laurence spoke with Felicity Fenner about the artistic idea of the greenhouse, and the fragility and fecundity of plants.

Felicity Fenner: Your work in the public arena over the last decade eschews traditional perceptions of public art as inanimate and sculpturesque. I'm particularly interested in your work with plants. From *In the shadow*, 2000, at Sydney Olympic Park to Waiting: A medicinal garden for ailing plants, 2010, at the BoS, there is an imperative to create a space not simply for viewers to ponder site-specific and broader environmental issues, but that functions as a place where plants themselves can regenerate and flourish. In these and other recent works plants are the focus both sculpturally and symbolically.

Janet Laurence: The future of many plants is in danger, yet they are central to the earth and existence of all animal life. We are dependent on them for everything from the air we breathe to the food we eat. Plants are organic, not static, objects. They have life and movement. They will change and grow with time. Working with living plants you become very aware of their being, their needs and internal processes.

FF: In the shadow was made in response to the remediation of the Homebush Bay site. The native water plants and forest you planted have over the years created an area of dense vegetation that oxygenates an otherwise quite sterile precinct. When I first saw the work in 2000, it was dominated by the wands that you inserted into the water, emulating the scientific measuring of water chemical levels. The wands are still there as a residual reminder of the detoxification of that site, but it's the plants that are now

visually dominant. So, starting as one thing, the work has evolved into something else. Presumably it will continue to evolve.

JL: That's the challenge and pleasure of working with plants. In the shadow was intended to evolve with the growth of the trees and water plants. They brought bird and insect life to the area and enabled a sheltered space to enclose the fog component of the work. This created a living green space that contrasts from the surrounding built-up, open site of Olympic Park. Ironically, the artwork will be preserved as the site evolves. Unlike the work of a landscape architect that is removed or altered as the built environment changes, this planting cannot be removed by park authorities because it's an artwork.

FF: It's not only permanent but is fully integrated into its environment – the epitome of site-specific art.

JL: Yes, and art can bring into public view some confronting environmental issues that without the imprimatur of it being a creative work wouldn't ordinarily be presented, because so often scientific information is not permitted public access. So, as an artist, the Olympic Park commission was a major opportunity for me – not just to install a work, but to *heal* an environment.

FF: Knowing that they will have a life beyond the exhibition, how did you choose which plants to include in *Waiting*?

JL: The decision was for natives, which were sourced from the Forestry Commission of New South Wales. I selected plants with the help of a horticulturalist from Eden Gardens (who supported the biennale project), and a range of both healthy and sick plants hopefully to nurse back to health. I also consulted with Edward Liew, the plant pathologist at the Botanic Gardens. All the plants and soil brought in had to be tested. Those that posed a potential problem were wrapped in the veil-like tulle that plants are covered in to protect them from frost. Fortunately the wrapped plants have a sculptural as well as quarantining purpose. They suggest bandaged limbs, which is appropriate for the 'plant hospital'.

FF: That theme is also echoed in the architectural structure of Waiting. From the outside it resembles a military field hospital, but it also has an ephemeral mirage-like quality.

JL: The whiteness of the 'hospital' is minimal and clinical in contrast to the leafy green surrounds of the Botanic Gardens. I did have in mind those emergency tent hospitals, knowing it had to be a temporary structure. The structure lies somewhere between translucency and transparency, with the changes in light echoing those of a glasshouse or greenhouse.

I've long had an interest in glasshouses and their history, and also in the scientific and architectural history of glass as a medium that enables visibility. The biennale work also has a historical resonance in its location in the Botanic Gardens – it is installed on the site of the Garden Palace built in 1879 by the New South Wales colonial architect James Barnet, which was a reworking of the Crystal Palace in London.

FF: The plants look very fragile, each one being nursed back to health in a ward of the 'hospital'.

JL: The fragility is a metaphor for the environment. Like a hospital, the installation is structured as wards, with different sections that parallel the physiological processes of plants. There is a 'maternity/fertility' ward for seeds and a green area of chlorophyll production, which is where the healthy plants are housed. Then there is a 'carbon ward' near the 'intensive care' and subsequent 'morgue' areas. In the morgue you just see the skeletal and ash remains of expired plants fused into glass.

The structure has medical, botanical and museological allusions – it resembles a laboratory and glasshouse, but also a vitrine such as those used in traditional museum displays of natural history. Yet unlike a museum display, this work is living. The entire installation is linked with tubes and vials through which water flows aided by a solar pump. It could be interpreted as the various elements of nature being inextricably bound and the entire system on life

support. When you look carefully, you can see that each glass vial in the work is its own glasshouse with a living plant inside. Some might see a reference to Joseph Beuys's vitrines with their alchemical transformations in the process of healing. I regard Beuys as a father-figure of the green movement in art.

FF: Waiting cannot be viewed passively. You have to enter an intimate world of plant life and death, recuperation and regeneration.

JL: My real desire has always been to make spaces for audiences to enter and be enmeshed within. I am interested in the experiential and perceptual response that transforms into a memory experience. Moving through space is very different from looking at something, and the experience embeds itself very differently in our memory. You need time in the space, which hopefully enables reflection of the concerns in the work. I want the layers of meaning to unfold slowly.

FF: What are the plants 'waiting' for?

JL: The title comes from an article in a scientific journal about the physiology of plants, 'Plants, Physics and the Silent Waiting of Plants', which discusses the chemistry of how plants wait for the conditions to be right before they grow. This sense of patience, its interconnection with nature's cycles and awareness of the species' place within it, is something the human species has totally bypassed, no doubt at our peril.

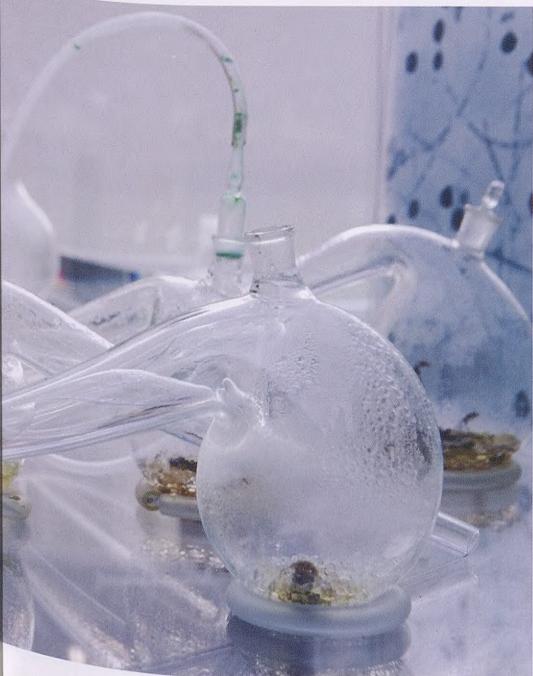
FF: Do humans have the capacity for plant-like patience?

JL: I agree with Bill Kibble that 'all things are possible when enough human beings realise that everything is at stake'. I use art to imagine ways of transforming and healing, even if as fictions within the work.

My installation for 'In the Balance: Art for a Changing World' at Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) is about endangered species and attempts to draw the symbiosis between us, plants and other animals in the natural world. *Vanishing*, 2009, comprises footage of large mammals threatened with extinction.







far left and bottom right

Janet Laurence, Waiting: A medicinal garden for ailing plants, 2010, detail
Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney

17th Biennale of Sydney, 2010

Courtesy the artist and Breenspace, Sydney
Photograph Pardalote.com

opposite

Janet Laurence working on location in the logged Styx Forest, Tasmania, 2008 Courtesy the artist

Opposite, made more poignant by the sound of the animals' breathing, is a work already in the MCA collection, *Cellular gardens:* Where breathing begins, 2005, in which glass vials interconnected by tubes grow tiny new plants. There is a deliberate juxtaposition between the large animals and the tiny plants, as they're interdependent in the natural world but also endangered.

FF: Your environmental installations, with layered references to place, plants, animals and sustainability, very successfully provide a meditative space for the viewer to ruminate on possible meanings.

JL: I try to create a space somewhere between evidence and imagination. While my practice is based on deeply held convictions about the environment and our relationship to it – and I want the work to have a politically environmental voice – I think it's important that viewers make their own journey and experience it as a space of reflection and interpretation. Art, if it engages, can linger in the mind the way that pure information can't.

As artists make work addressing environmental issues it finds a place in the culture. So while artists might not have the capacity to directly effect change, they can certainly contribute to the political sphere by reaching people in more inviting and imaginative ways than scientists or politicians can. This is nothing new. Historically, landscape painting sought to record the beauty of nature, but also its destruction by industry. There's an element of critique in much of that work. The difference now is that we have the scientific proof of our adverse impact on the environment. We know what's going to happen in the future if we don't change course.

Janet Laurence, Breenspace, Sydney, 24 September – 6 November 2010; In the Balance: Art for a Changing World, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 21 August – 31 October 2010; The 17th Biennale of Sydney, Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, 12 May – 1 August 2010.

In search of Namatjira

Michael Fitzgerald

As a figure in the landscape of Australian art, Albert Namatjira (1902–1959) has often appeared blurred or lost. Look up his name in McCulloch's *Encyclopedia of Australian Art*, for instance, and the reader is directed to another section: 'See ABORIGINAL ART.' He belongs simultaneously to two worlds and to neither, appearing and disappearing from view. While producing individual masterpieces, as well as inspiring an entire western-style watercolour tradition known as the Hermannsburg School, Namatjira struggled to find a wider context for his art. As Australia's first Indigenous art 'star', his luminous depictions of Western Arrernte country were embraced by mainstream audiences yet criticised by the art world for not being 'Aboriginal' enough.

Namatjira's life was similarly fraught with contradiction. While granted citizenship a full decade ahead of other Indigenous Australians, he was also made a scapegoat when imprisoned a year later for allowing alcohol into his desert camp. A dispirited Namatjira died of complications from pneumonia in Alice Springs not long after his release from jail. Now, just over half a century since his death, the artist's life is being celebrated on stage - in all its dramatic complexity. The arts and social change theatre company Big hART has worked closely with Alice Springs-based Ngurratjuta Iltja Ntjarra 'Many Hands' Art Centre, the keepers of the Hermannsburg watercolour tradition, and Company B Belvoir to present Namatjira at Sydney's Belvoir St Theatre. This follows an exhibition at Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, exploring Namatjira's artistic legacy. On the eve of the play's premiere and national tour, playwright and director Scott Rankin spoke with Michael Fitzgerald about an artist who helped Australians to glimpse the spiritual and geographical 'centre' of their country.1

Michael Fitzgerald: In 1999 Big hART conceived Ngapartji Ngapartji, a bilingual show and social program which toured the country raising awareness about the Pitjantjatjara language. How did this lead to Namatjira?

Scott Rankin: For that production we invited the young Western Arrernte artist Elton Wirri to draw his country on stage during the show. At the end, when actor Trevor Jamieson introduced Elton as Namatjira's grandson, the audience would make this heartfelt exclamation and that made us think there was something in the Namatjira story that everybody knows but nobody talks about.

MF: Namatjira's life was full of paradoxes, embracing traditional and non-traditional pathways and values to do with culture, spirituality and art. Now, more than a century after his birth, what lessons can we gain from his life?

SR: Here was the story of this man in the middle of the twentieth century, first generation out of the bush, living on the outskirts of the Hermannsburg Lutheran Mission west of Alice Springs. He was a natural artist in his own world but somebody who knew the world had changed and that he had to transform his life in order to feed his family. Namatjira became entrepreneurial and tried a whole range of things, from cattle stations to making brooms. He absorbed everything he came across, and then he met an artist, Rex Battarbee.

Battarbee was a watercolourist with no formal training who showed his work to the people living at Hermannsburg. They just couldn't believe that here were these pictures of places of great cultural significance to them. They'd never seen anything like that way of representing their land, and they would look behind the pictures to see how they had been done. They were amazed that in his pictures there was the colour blue. They embraced Battarbee because he brought them the colour blue. And at that point Namatjira said: 'I want to do that.'

MF: Namatjira held his first solo exhibition in Melbourne in 1938 and then, after a steady succession of sold-out shows around the country, gradually gained the attention of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, who awarded him her Coronation Medal in 1953.



Sir William Dargie's *Portrait of Albert Namatjira* won the Archibald Prize in 1956, by which time the Aboriginal watercolourist from Hermannsburg was a household name.

SR: In suburban lounge rooms around Australia, Namatjira's paintings and prints were like these portholes to the heart of a country that nobody knew existed. It's been said that Namatjira sped up the 1967 referendum process with the power of his art because for the first time people were able to visualise the interior of their country, and they became much more open to seeing the injustice that was going on.

At the height of his fame Namatjira was supporting more than 600 people from the earnings of his paintings. Essentially he would just get up early – he was very disciplined – and make the kids go and get him water for his brushes and paint. He was a man of few words. In 1944 he was the first Indigenous person to be listed in Who's Who in Australia. In the list of 200 eminent Australians for the 1988 Bicentenary there was only one Indigenous person and that was Albert Namatjira.

MF: And yet during his lifetime Namatjira was largely ignored by the art world, with the then Art Gallery of New South Wales Director Hal Missingham reportedly declaring: 'We'll consider his work when it comes up to scratch.'

SR: The art establishment at the time wanted blackfellas in the cage of primitivism. They seemed to say: You have your own cultural world and we don't want to see you drifting into ours and trying your hand in the same way. We want to put you in museum cases. It was essentially intellectualised racism.

MF: Perhaps Namatjira's chosen medium also worked against his proper recognition.

SR: People look at Namatjira watercolours now that were perhaps sitting in a sunroom and they've lost some of their capacity to glow. That's the thing with watercolours – if you treat them well their tones can deepen over time, but if you don't treat

them well the yellows fade and they can be quite unstable. So there are all sorts of reasons why people judged him harshly.

MF: The National Gallery of Australia's 2002–03 touring show, 'Seeing the Centre: The Art of Albert Namatjira 1902–1959' helped reverse those judgments, bringing about a fresh appreciation of his work.

SR: The thing that people don't talk about with Namatjira, and it would be different if he wasn't an Aboriginal man, is his technical ability and capacity to see light. It's a complex thing because he painted over 2000 pictures, and towards the end of his life he taught his sons to paint. It might sound strange to us but he wouldn't necessarily finish every picture, and like any artist he produced good pictures and not-so-good pictures.

The other day I was talking about Namatjira with the artist Robert Hannaford who said he was bowled over by the finesse and nuance that Namatjira brought to watercolour. Hannaford is a very pure person and he approaches painting in an unadorned sort of way. He looks and he paints light. There are similarities between the two artists.

Namatjira's legacy is a complex thing. Yes, he entrepreneured himself in a way that no other blackfella had. He was a pop star and women would literally faint in his presence. But we also have this incredible talent – forget what culture he's from – in his capacity to see and understand light and form. His work stood alone but he was a Western Arrernte man so that story went along with him too.

MF: Some of Namatjira's finest works were of Palm Valley, his mother's country, while from his father he inherited the Flying Ant Dreaming story. So while his paintings might appear straightforward, they also fulfil complex cultural obligations.

SR: The way that [Namatjira cast member] Derek Lynch explains it is that your father's side brings a kind of managing role of your country, and on your mother's side it's an ownership role.

Those two terms, ownership and management, are such western words but conceptually they are as close as we can get.

MF: How sacred, then, are some of his images?

SR: When it came to landscapes such as Simpson's Gap, there were certain things Namatjira wasn't allowed to paint, that weren't in his totemic world. And so he'd leave things in or out of the landscape. He was wrestling with those notions in every one of his pictures. If you start to look, you can read totemic motifs in his ghost gums. That intense relationship to artmaking informs the whole Namatjira tradition.

MF: What has it been like for *Namatjira*'s creative team to spend time with the artist's direct descendents, who continue painting at Ngurratjuta Iltja Ntjarra in Alice Springs?

SR: It was very interesting to start each day of our creative development by sitting down with [grandson] Kevin Namatjira, [granddaugher] Gloria Pannka and others. We sat there and watched them paint and then started painting ourselves. That was a fantastic life experience. Theatre people tend to be noisy and want to talk and artists tend to have a much more silent practice, so that set the energy for the show. A couple of hours of painting and being quiet and watching and learning became the way we would start the day. That crossover between forms – theatre and quite traditional painting – was magic.

MF: Indigenous curator Brenda L. Croft has described the current generation of Ngurratjuta watercolourists as 'Albert's gift ... a message of shared compassion, understanding and knowledge of what can be achieved collectively'. What developments and innovations have they brought to the Hermannsburg tradition?

SR: It has expanded out beautifully. Gloria's work is an exquisitely gentle interpretation of the landscape. Within that tradition there is a lot of abstraction going on that's been taken out further and further. So Elton, who has this amazing eye and could do works of scale at fourteen, is painting these incredibly vibrant

works. It's not about mimicking the Namatijira tradition; it's about expanding out.

Namatjira, Belvoir St Theatre, Sydney, 25 September – 7 November 2010; Namatjira: The Next Generation, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, 30 July – 29 August 2010.

This conversation took place at The Wharf Theatre, Sydney, 7 May 2010.

page 69 Albert Namatjira, Ghost gum, c. 1945–53 Watercolour, sheet 41 X 31 cm National Gallery of Australia, Canberra Gift of Gordon and Marilyn Darling 2008

Chasing the dragon with Julie Mehretu

Sarah Tutton

Julie Mehretu's Giant Mural, 2009, stretches over 24 metres along the lobby wall of Goldman Sachs's new Lower Manhattan headquarters. Visible not only to employees and clients but also to the thousands of pedestrians and cyclists that pass through this busy thoroughfare each day, Mural is an oddity in the arena of public art: a large-scale abstract painting, the kind of work that is usually reserved for a museum audience. Commissioned in 2007 and completed in late 2009, this dense multilayered canvas draws on an individualistic language of abstraction - of gestural marks, fragmented motifs, architectural remnants, movements and layers that swarm across the canvas and cumulate in a symphony of forms. Conceived before the global financial crisis, yet painstakingly worked on throughout the height of the calamity, the largesse of Mural sits at odds with the times, so much so that Goldman Sachs decided not to publicise its installation in October last year for fear of appearing ostentatious. Yet, as always with Mehretu's work, this painting is deeply political and engaged with its environment.

Mehretu produced *Mural* in Berlin, taking advantage of cheap rent and an artistic community that both she and her partner, the Australian artist Jessica Rankin, found stimulating and nurturing. There Mehretu set up a much larger studio, which at the height of its productivity employed thirty people, working not only on *Mural* but also a suite of seven paintings for a solo exhibition at the Deutsche Guggenheim. Mehretu took time out of her recent holiday in Australia to talk about this period of intense activity, as well as her love of good eating and productive time sitting by the pond at Denniston Hill, home to her residency program in upstate New York.

Sarah Tutton: Your most recent project was a departure in many ways from your usual way of working. Can you talk about how *Mural* came about and evolved?

Julie Mehretu: I was approached in 2006 by Jeffrey Deitch,

who told me Goldman Sachs were building new headquarters and commissioning artists to do projects. I was heading to Berlin for a six-month residency and while I was there the plans of the building arrived. It felt like it could be an interesting idea but it took me a long time to get to that. The doubt was why I would make a commission specifically for this context; the invitation itself was not reason enough and I had no financial imperative. But when I really started to think about it, the idea of working with a white wall of that scale that could be seen from outside the building, of creating a painting that could be a public work, began to interest me.

West Street is pretty busy, with a bike path and highway converging in front of it and the World Trade Center site across the street. It's always been an important historic site in that it's Lower Manhattan and the source of the city in a way. You can see the painting from the street but it's not publically accessible, so it plays this weird role between public and private space and has an audience that most paintings don't. There is the Chagall mural in Chicago, but mostly the work that has that kind of privilege is sculpture. Rarely does painting access this kind of audience, and if it does it tends to be grounded in the muralist tradition, which operates very differently.

ST: Such as the work of Diego Rivera. Yet your painting explores the language of abstraction.

JM: Right, an entire language and history that's usually reserved for a very specific audience and displayed in a museum or gallery context. That's one reason I was drawn to the commission. Another is my interest in the site, as well as social, political and geographical systems and our collective history that has been heavily informed and impacted by the global capitalist financial world, it's history and evolution. The commission would allow something to exist that would be impossible otherwise.

ST: Mural was commissioned just prior to the financial crisis. JM: It was a very strange time. Just as we were deeply







immersed in the work Lehman Brothers disappeared, AIG was on the verge, the entire global economic system fell apart and many people suffered. We were in Berlin working on the painting while the financial world was in freefall. One of the people from Goldman came to meet us and I thought he was coming to tell us the project was over.

Most of the research for the painting was done prior to the crisis. It's informed by the history and architecture of global economic systems. However, it's important to me for the piece to be understood as an abstract painting; it's a part of the architecture, it's informed by something but it's not a representation of that. Sometimes there is a misunderstanding about what can inform a painting as opposed to what a painting tries to be.

ST: What informed the painting?

JM: The painting was actually conceptualised and the source material compiled with two friends of mine: Beth Stryker, an artist and architect, and Lawrence Chua, an architectural historian and novelist. We were interested in the machinations of the global economy before this project began. Beth had been dealing with the history of maps and capitalism; Lawrence with that same aspect in architecture, especially within colonialism. We used Fernand Braudel's Civilization and Capitalism as a point of departure for the proposal. We tried to be comprehensive with the research by gathering many historic trade maps, charts, photos and architectural plans of importance that are crucial to the evolution of this narrative.

ST: The practicalities of making a painting on this scale must have been very different from how you usually approach your work.

JM: Before I accepted the commission, I sat down with Sarah Rentz, my studio manager, Damien Young, who's also been with me a long time and oversees all the drawing and painting aspects, and Erika Fortner, my surfacer, and asked them: 'Can you guys commit for two years to do this with me? I can't have you stop in the middle. I can't do this without you.' And they agreed and were excited to take it on. Then I hired Harmony Murphy as our project manager. I had to really compartmentalise my creative process and juggle so much different work without feeling overwhelmed. These four people were instrumental in helping me do that and in making the work.

I arrived in Berlin with this plan I had drawn, and when I projected it I realised it wouldn't work at that scale. So I took another week – tearing drawings apart, playing with them and making new drawings, working on the computer – until I came up with an initial plan of just lines: orange, black, yellow and blue.

ST: So what came after these initial lines?

JM: Shapes, geometric and otherwise. I'd been in Michigan for a long time thinking about it and had all this information from looking at the maps and making a lot of drawings. Ten years of work came into this piece. I started to use shapes from many of my previous paintings and then added other shapes that were informed by these new maps and research. The shapes found their place within the whole cosmos of the eighty-foot-long painting and it just evolved and developed, little by little. I would add more and more shapes as we worked on it and it became a lot more intense or compact or numerous than we expected. I thought it would be very basic and simple, that first layer, but it wasn't at all. It was almost as if I needed there to be a complete painting by itself in the first layer, and in a way that's what it was. So, only then could we start with the next layers because I knew there was a dynamic, breathing, cognisant skeleton beneath.

After we put down the first layer each panel was brought down and sprayed with this acrylic silica mixture. We had shipped containers of materials from New York to Berlin and we used three times as much as expected so the company had to remake the material. We had put aside some money for a crisis and used that

to bring people back and forth between the cities carrying buckets of paint. We couldn't fall behind on production so Harmony offered friends airfares for carrying paint. Several of Damien's friends came to Berlin from New York with five-gallon buckets. We then sanded the surface, a process that took about a month, and then began the architectural drawing.

ST: You have talked about Mural as a symphonic work.

JM: Working on this scale allowed me to draw on the history of my own painting, and in a broader sense the histories of painting, and painting as part of architecture, and the role of art as a part of space. Mural was a symphonic coming together of all these elements of this language that I've been working with the last ten to fifteen years. And this language comes into another being in this painting. More than ever before I understood abstraction in painting, and making space and the potency of that, and being able to work really poetically with shapes, colour and lines in a way that I couldn't have done without doing it on this scale.

ST: Was there a particular situation or convergence of situations that enabled you to come to this?

JM: Yes, without the politically oriented work of the 1990s I wouldn't be able to do what I'm doing with such freedom now. Without Alma Thomas, Howardena Pindell, Agnes Martin, Pat Steir, Helen Frankenthaler or Joan Mitchell, without Melvin Edwards, Sam Gilliam, Al Loving, Frank Bowling, William T. Williams and Joe Overstreet there wouldn't be a space for me – so there are definitely people who made it possible for an artist like me to make a painting like that. Participating with the language of artists like Malevich or Warhol or Albers, Rothko, Stella or Calder is part of the interest as well.

ST: While you were working on *Mural* you were also working on a suite of paintings for your exhibition 'Grey Area' at the Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin.

JM: There were two practices happening in the studio: one

was a lot of erasure, grey, dust, ruin; then there was the other side of that which is growth, colour, evolution. Erasure was something I have been slowly working with since about 2005. The Guggenheim work focused on developing that newer language and *Mural* looked at the past colour and geometric side of my practice, allowing it to be all these different and new things at the same time. In a way the Guggenheim paintings were going in a totally different direction.

ST: I remember we were talking about the Guggenheim show in New York in 2006. At that stage you were researching a show that was to be about cities all over the world.

JM: Yeah, but it quickly changed. In 2007 I went to Berlin and made a painting that was really beautiful and warm and poignant. In that painting a poltergeist slipped in. Then it was about chasing dragons.

ST: You wanted to get back to that?

JM: Well, I made this work and getting back to that seemed more important than what I was trying to plan. Making paintings about those cities became so uninteresting compared to that picture. That painting just had it; started something new in me.

ST: You did seven paintings in the Guggenheim series.

JM: All of them were chasing the first painting.

ST: So did you catch the dragon?

JM: You never catch the dragon. It constantly evolves, flickers and then disappears, like fog or steam or a mirage. Each painting was in a way dealing with the issues that were most interesting to me: the contemporary idea of a ruin; context, responsibility, erasure, smoke, haze; grey. I wanted to make a group of paintings that all made sense in how they reacted to one another – a perfect little suite of paintings.

ST: Why was grey so important to you?

JM: Grey because of that place of indeterminate space, erased space, space that disappears, space that is in-between, what could



be and what couldn't be. I draw in black on white usually; grey is that middle space and the show is titled 'Grey Area' because of that. These works live in that middle space, not on the surface with the drawing, and not inside the surface in the ground, but right in-between that space where the erased marks and the surface coalesce – the space in-between where painting happens.

ST: There is this thread to your way of working that ties together food and community that really interests me – this idea of nourishing people, artists, seems so important.

JM: I like it when I'm working and can smell the garlic and the chillies cooking. My first studio assistant in New York was an Australian named Peter. He, Jessica and I took turns to make lunch every day. Then in Berlin, with so many giving to the painting, I wanted a good meal to be part of the process. We all focused in this vast cold space, working very independently and in our own worlds, then for lunch we all sat down and ate together, talked and connected. We had a great cook named Ciska Jansen who is Dutch-Indonesian. The food was fantastic, nourishing and warm.

ST: And Denniston Hill has a kitchen garden.

JM: Denniston Hill is a laboratory, residency program and workshop that we set up with some friends in the Catskills several years ago. It's a large house, barn, garden and some land in Sullivan County, New York. As a place it's very valuable and meaningful to all of us personally involved in its founding. We even have land nearby. It's a creative space for artists, architects, writers, farmers – a space where there's a lot of opportunity for making work, experimenting with ideas, with the land, the garden, the greenhouse, food and eating well. It's very close – only an hour and a half from New York City, and now there's a space for exhibitions in the city as well, in Harlem, which is fantastic. We are developing it slowly with intention and purpose, but also allowing it to grow organically, much like making a painting.

Denniston Hill is a very different type of social collaborative

project. We were talking about it in terms of social living and creating an environment where you can eat well, sleep well, rest well, talk or get drunk well – be able to feel nourished and taken care of. As you get older you realise that time and space to think is so necessary. In a highly professionalised world it's sometimes really hard to appreciate that in practice you need that idle time of sitting by the pond and hanging out near the river or going for a walk as part of the creative process, not outside of it. Slowing things down. It's really essential and fundamental. With my practice I have to do that. I have to be able to feel a balance.

Julie Mehretu: Grey Area, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 14 May – 6 October 2010; Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin, 28 October 2009 – 6 January 2010.

Æ.

opposite

Middle grey, 2007–09

Ink and acrylic on canvas, 304.8 x 426.7 cm

Commissioned by Deutsche Bank AG in consultation with the Solomon R.

Guggenheim Foundation for the Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin

Courtesy Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

© The artist

page 73
Julie Mehretu, 2009
Courtesy the artist
© Jim Rakete

pages 74–75 Mural, 2009 Installation view, Goldman Sachs, New York Courtesy Goldman Sachs, New York © The artist. Photograph Jason Schmidt



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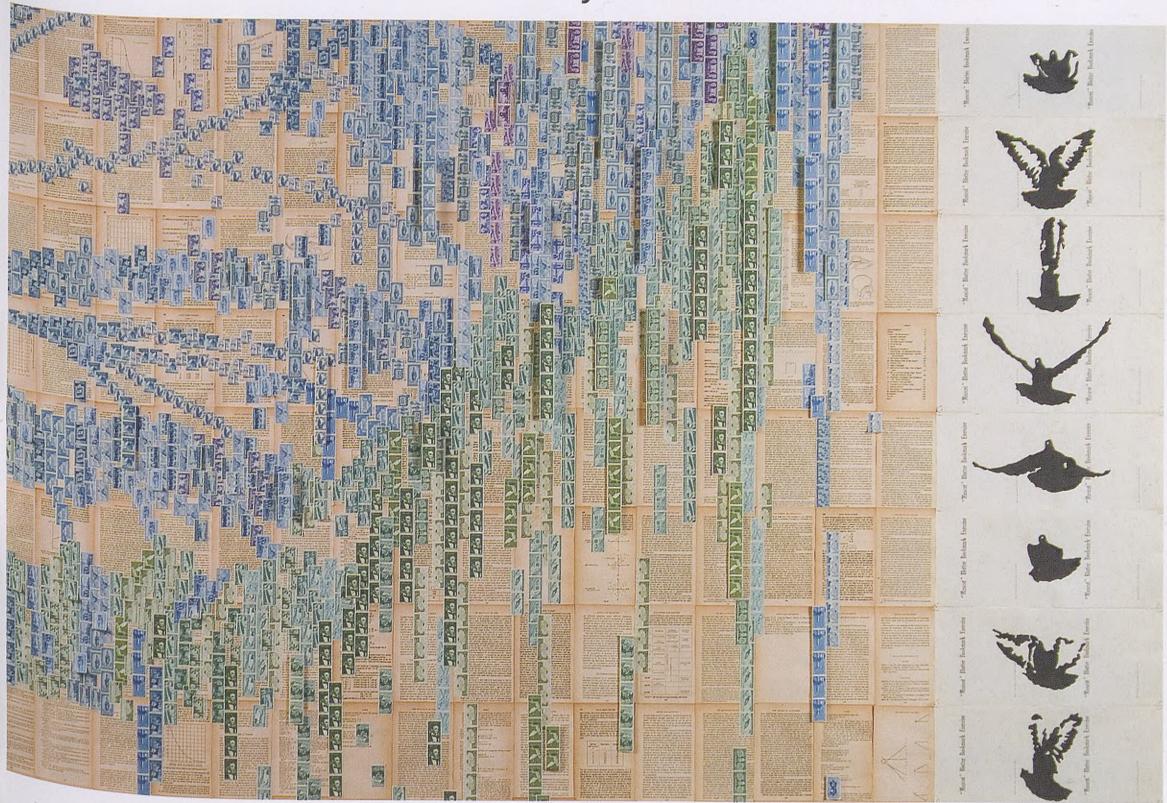
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NEWELL BARRETT



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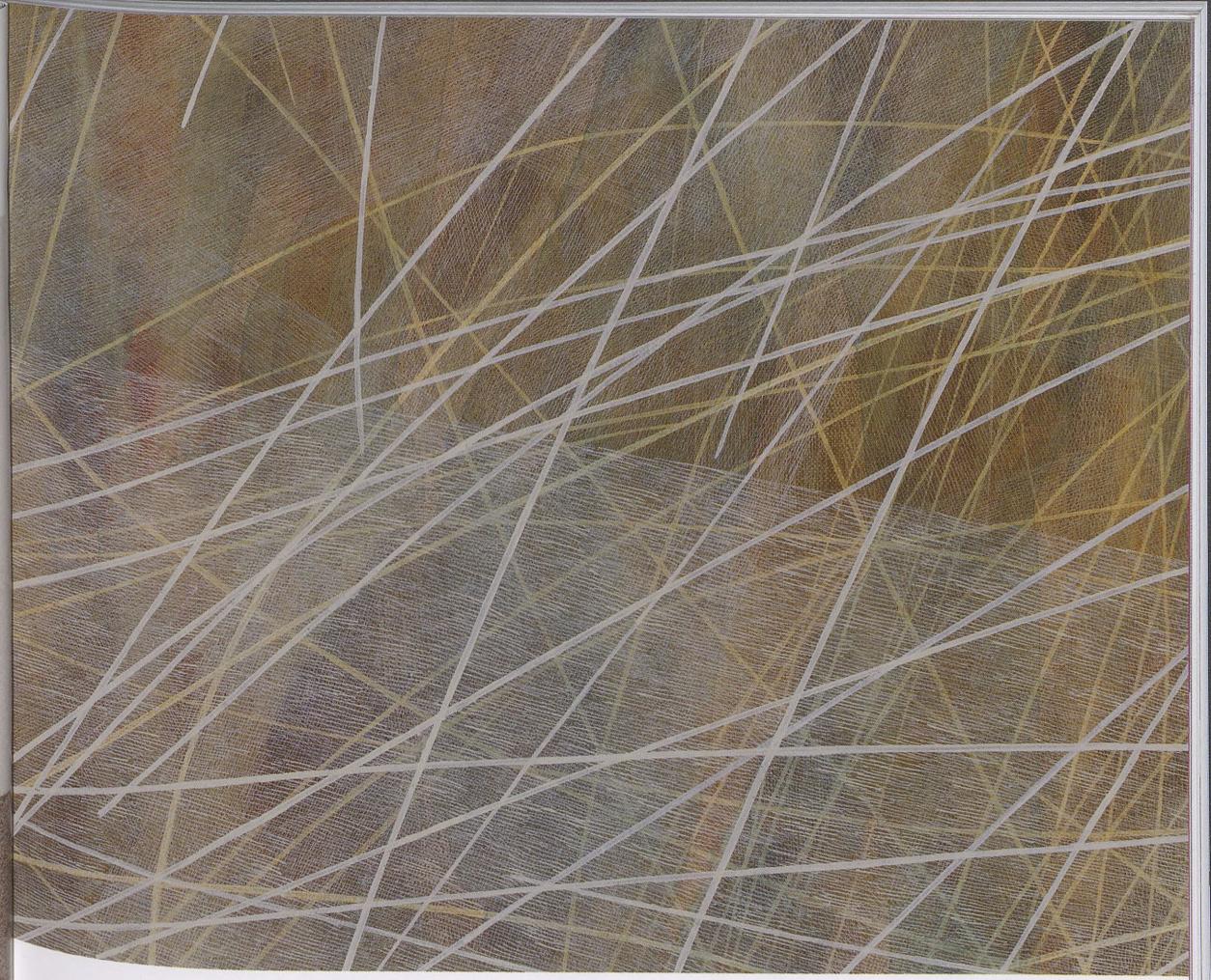
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still light no.465 (detail), acrylic & gouache on linen, 45 x 60cm

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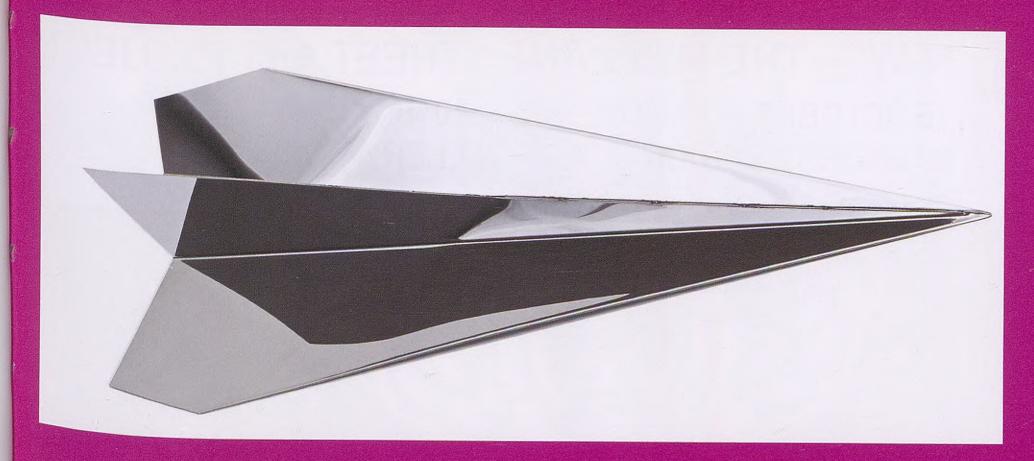
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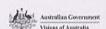








Image: Phibs Temple (detail), 2005, stencil and aerosol, 360 x 276 cm. Photo: Sharon Hickey



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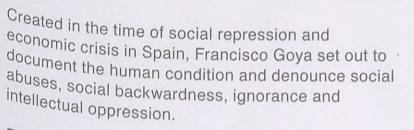
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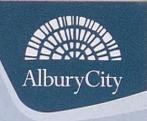
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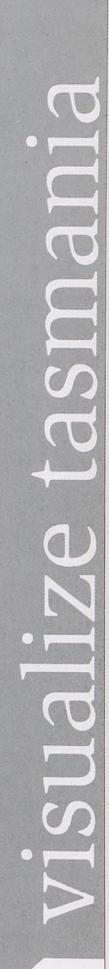


(The sleep of reason brings forth monsters) Francisco de Goya
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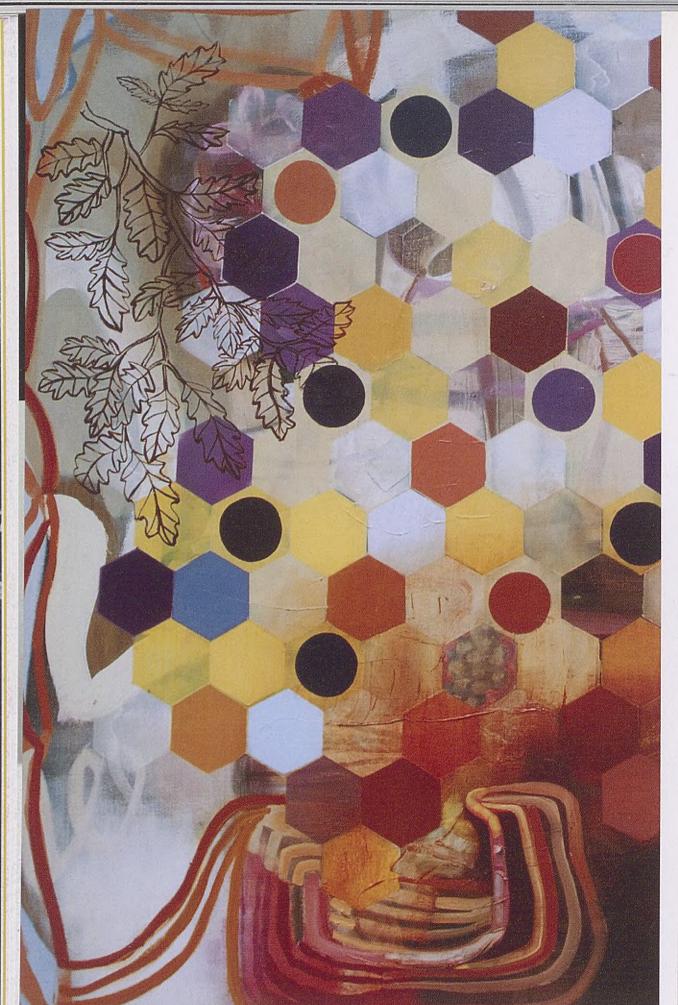
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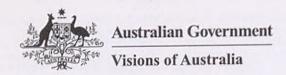
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Detail: Tjungkara KEN, Australia, born 1969, Pitjantjatjara people, South Australia, *Ngayuku ngura My country*, 2010, Amata, South Australia, synthetic polymer paint on linen, 151.2 x 101.5 cm; d'Auvergne Boxall Bequest Fund 2010, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, © Tjungkara Ken, Courtesy of Tjala Arts

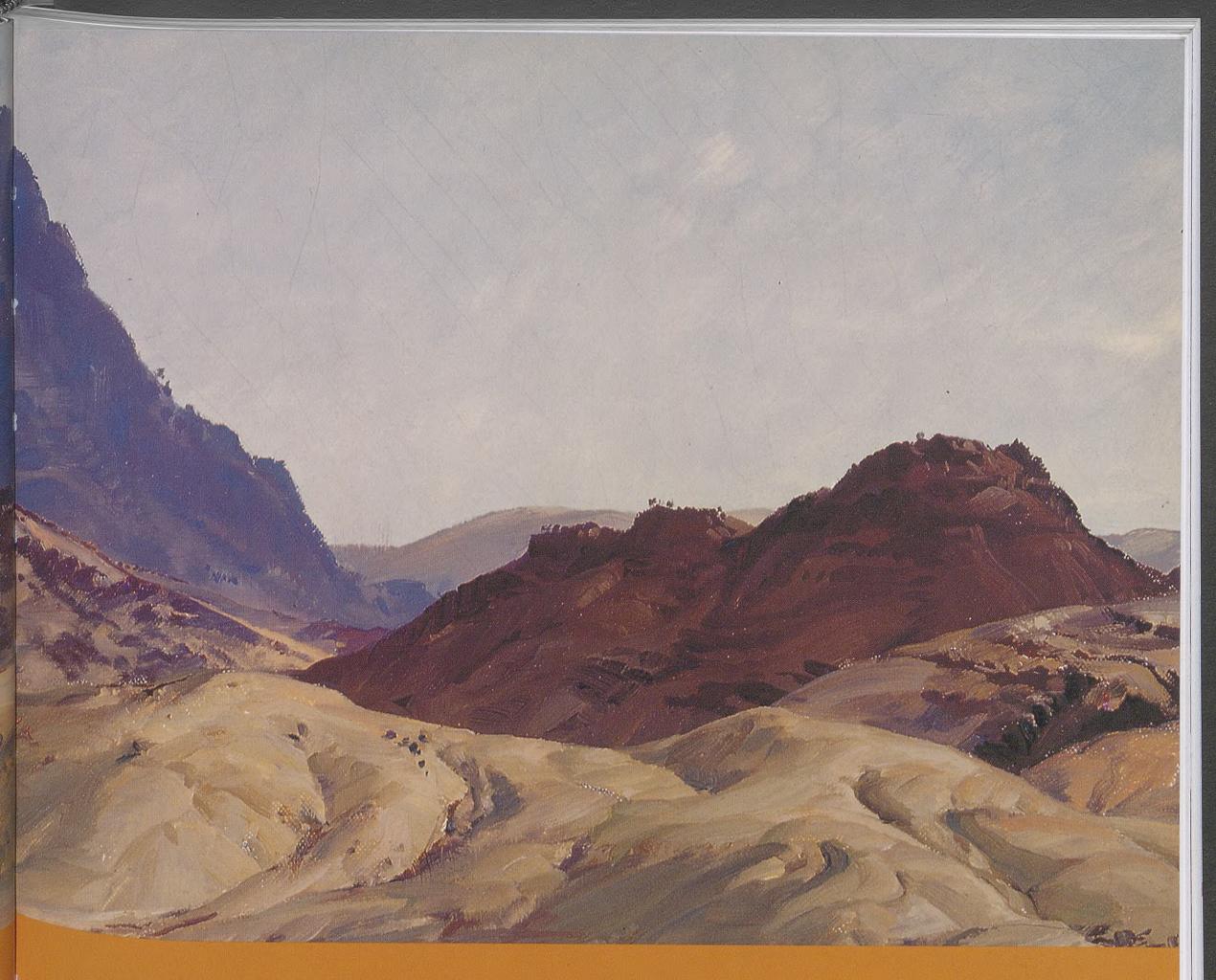


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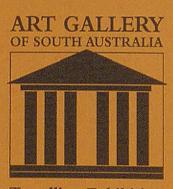
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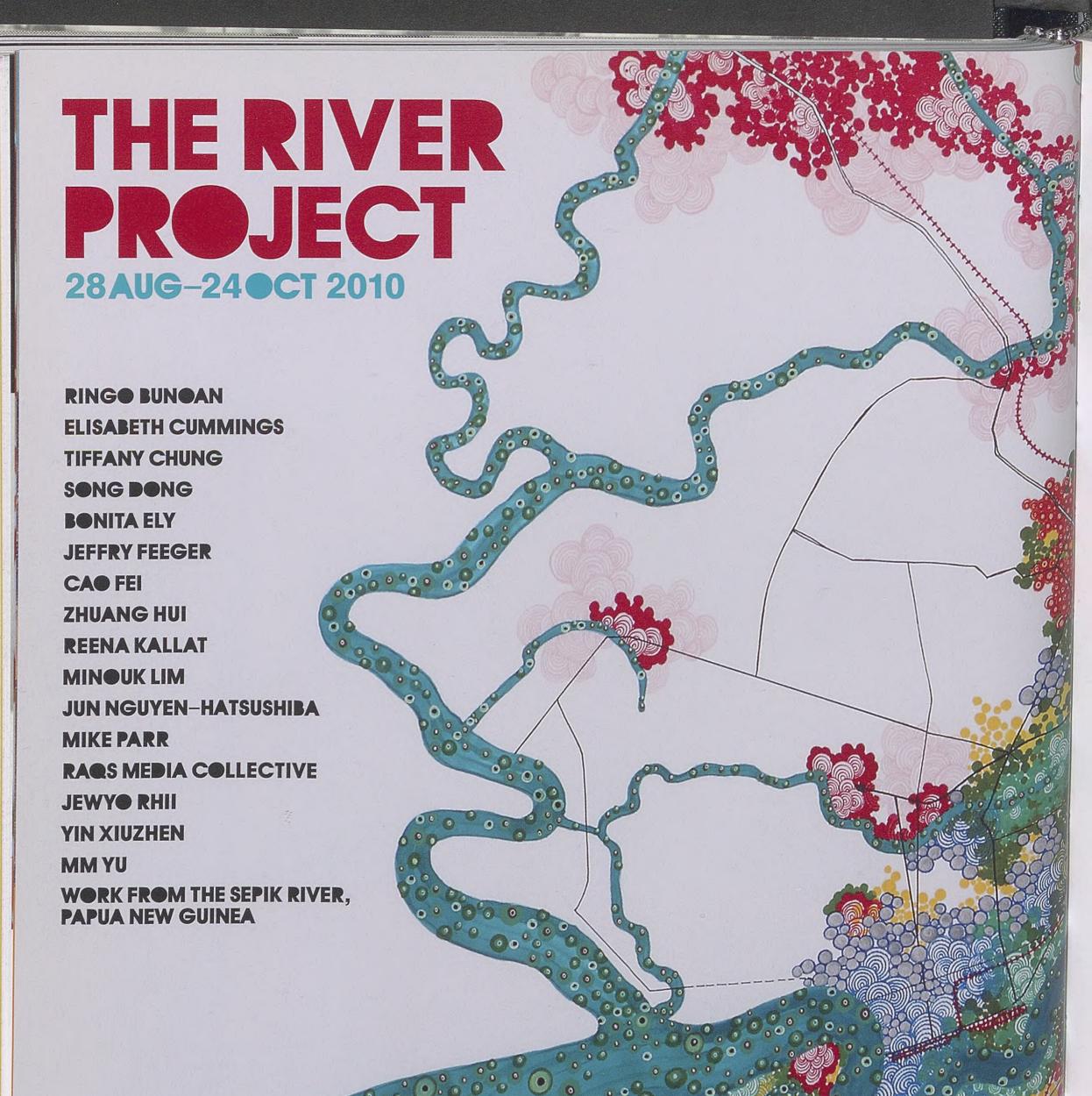
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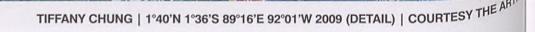


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Essay, Spring 2010

Imants Tillers
John Barrett-Lennard

The outback denier
Jarrod Rawlins and Lisa Radford

Gulumbu Yunupingu Elina Spilia

Olegas Truchanas and Peter Dombrovskis Richard Flanagan

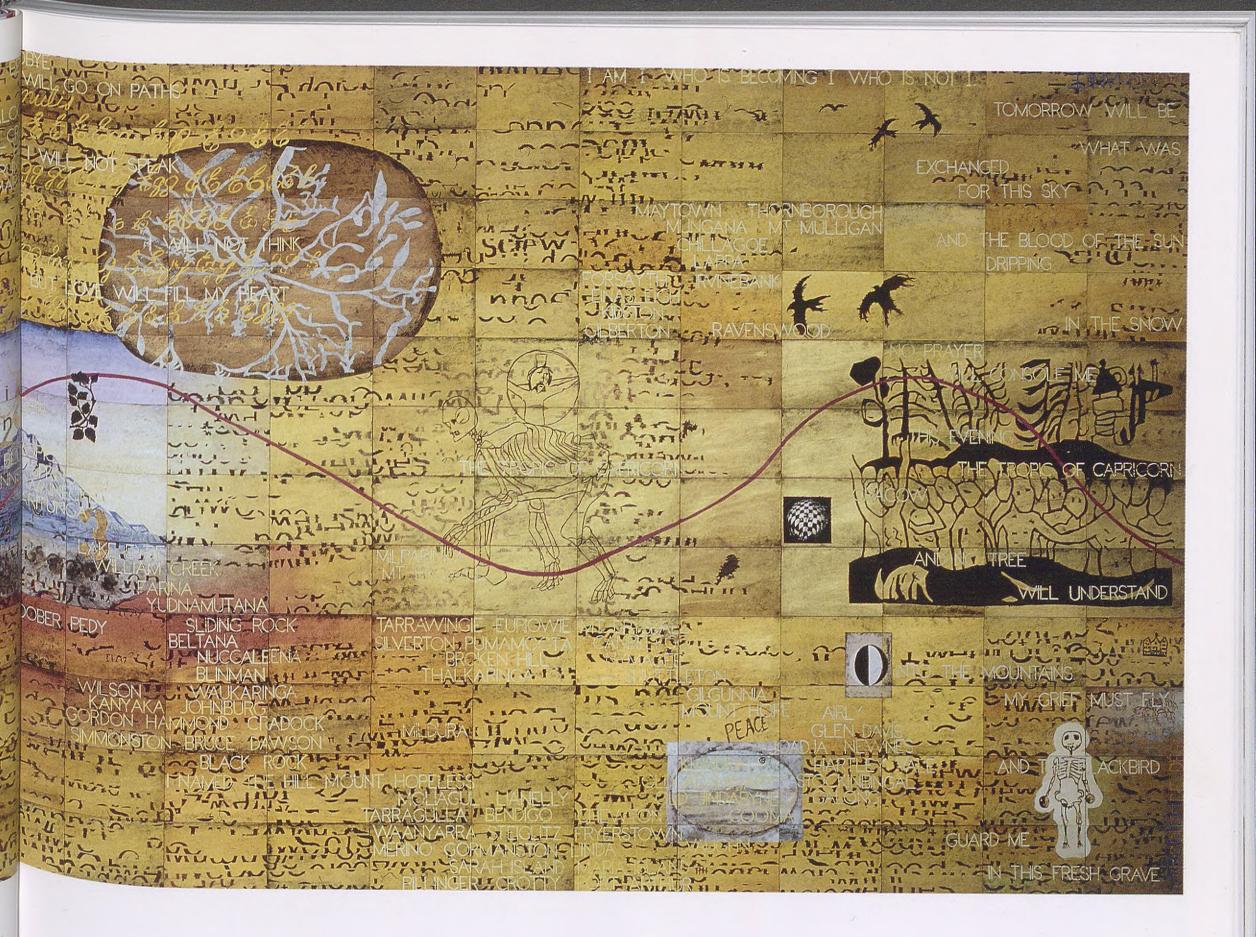
> John Pule Martin Edmond

Charwei Tsai Laura Murray Cree



Imants Tillers: Written on the le

John Barrett-Lennard



ed

Before it can be a repose for the senses, landscape is the work of the mind. Its scenery is built up as much from strata of memory as from layers of rock.

Simon Schama¹

LANDSCAPE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A CREATION OF THE DREAMS, stories and memories of its inhabitants. In Australia, national myths are told through visions of the land, as revealed in great national pictures such as Arthur Streeton's bucolic Golden summer, Eaglemont, 1889, or Sidney Nolan's bleached Central Desert paintings, which include Inland Australia, 1950.2 Australian landscape painting has of late traversed controversial territory with the revelation that Sam Leach's winning entry for the 2010 Wynne Prize was not based on an Australian scene. Leach took inspiration from the work of a Dutch artist who in turn had painted an imagined Italian landscape. So Leach's Proposal for landscaped cosmos, 2010, did not only not depict Australian scenery, but no real scenery at all, perhaps uncomfortably confirming that landscape is a construct and not innate. In fact, even the most naive realism relies on a foundation of myth. The process of colonisation in Australia, frequently celebrated in our national masterpieces, was not just one of adjusting to a different land or odd colours but of developing stories and images that would make the new land comprehensible; home rather than a harsh land of exile.

The stories and myths of Indigenous Australia offer other visions of how the land and its inhabitants (human and otherwise) came to be, and country is understood as a record of creation events. Indigenous Australians recognise that landscape is cultural, made through narrative, and that without these legends it cannot be explained or truly seen. Keeping the landscape alive depends on re-telling these stories. Landscape exists in and through discourse, so to re-imagine our stories, or write new ones, allows Australia to be seen or understood differently.

The paintings of Imants Tillers can be seen as pages of a great 'book of power', as the artist has described it. The canvas boards that make them up are numbered individually in a long sequence, just as are the pages of a book. They take the form of a sustained and wide-ranging project, and can also be understood as lines and

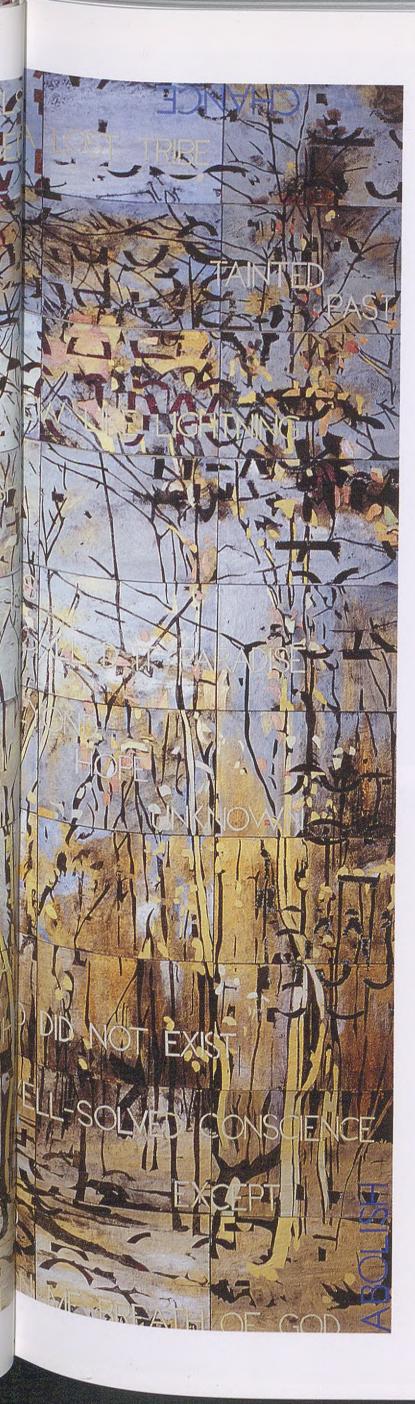
verses in a long epic poem or one extended unfolding story. From his early exhibitions in the mid-1970s onward, Tillers has shown himself to be the exemplary Australian postmodernist – absorbing and appropriating material from a variety of sources to create intricate multilayered works that challenge the power of authorial voices and the notion of originality.

Since the early 1980s Tillers has argued against a purely Australian art, criticising the push for an 'indigenous' form that claimed to reflect an authentic Australian identity untouched by outside influence.³ He has drawn a parallel with quantum physics, whereby distant and apparently unconnected events might affect what happens locally, and in turn events close at hand could have far-ranging effects. He has long been interested in theories of causality, using this parallel to argue that there can be no purely Australian (or any other) art, and that locality fails to encompass all the influences or connections in an artist's work. To strive for an authentically Australian art is 'an utterly futile and nonsensical activity'.⁴ Australian art can affect European art just as much as the reverse, and a world in which images and ideas are reproduced and disseminated, influencing and being able to be influenced from afar offers great possibilities.

The effect is liberating. In a crucial sense Tillers has been freed from both modernist strictures and the constraints of postmodern theories of appropriation. He is able to move laterally, to make work that draws on a host of other artists and materials sourced in reproduction but still genuinely his own. The results include grand history paintings of a kind few Australian artists of the last century have been able to approach, and landscapes that are complex and rich. From his early mid—1970s paintings until now, landscape and the ways in which it has been conceived and understood has been a powerful component of his art. He is acutely aware that 'a landscape is not something you look at but something you look through'.5



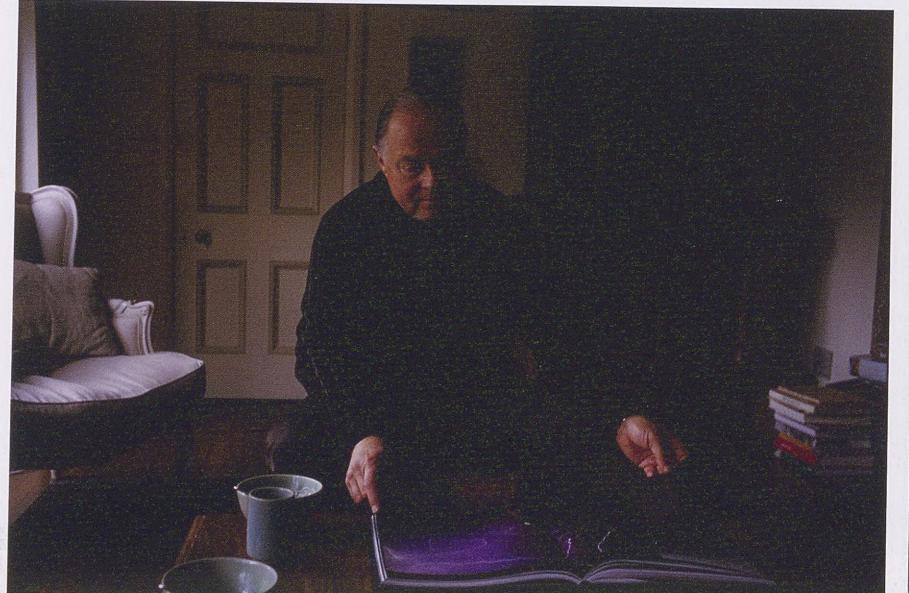




Tillers's 1985 painting Mount Analogue is a transcription of Eugene von Guérard's North-east view from the northern top of Mount Kosciusko, 1863. Von Guérard's status as a great romantic painter and father-figure of the Australian sublime made him a fitting subject for a postmodern appropriation that might challenge his position, the originality of the work and the role it has played in the modern story of Australia. Von Guérard's painting is another great Australian landscape, but is more than just a re-telling of national myths and target for Tillers's appropriational response. Tillers knows this area of the Snowy Mountains intimately. He has walked through it and it holds special meaning and appeal for him. The title he gave his painting is significant, coming from an unfinished book by René Daumal, an early twentieth-century French para-surrealist poet and writer. Daumal describes the fictional Mount Analogue's summit as being inaccessible, distant though apparent to the searcher, for: 'The door to the invisible must be visible.'6 The journey up the mountain's slopes, the quest to look out from its summit, is a spiritual one; the attempt to find a pathway up and down the mountain being the goal rather than simply to view the scene from above. The title shifts the ground for Tillers's painting, expanding the vision out from the mountain top with its tiny figures looking over the territory of the sublime, to one that gazes inwards and beyond the horizon.

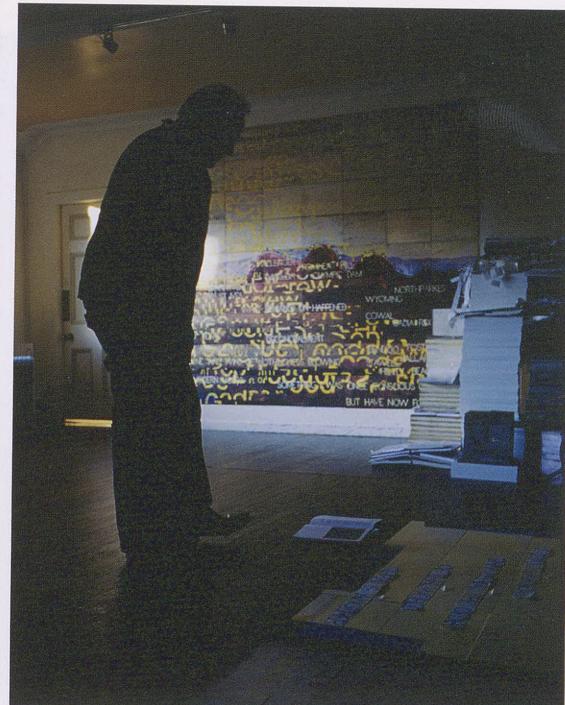
Tillers's epic 'Diaspora' series – from the eponymous 1992 work through to the ninth and last in the group, *Lacrimae rerum* (for Dzidra), 2007 – layers maps, both imaginary and as plotted in words and texts, with images to create visions that are at once deeply personal and resonate socially, culturally and historically. They are landscapes that tell stories of place, culture and origin, delving into the strata of memory. *Lacrimae rerum* includes a painting of Central Australia by Albert Namatjira at its centre, surrounds it with elements from another depiction of an







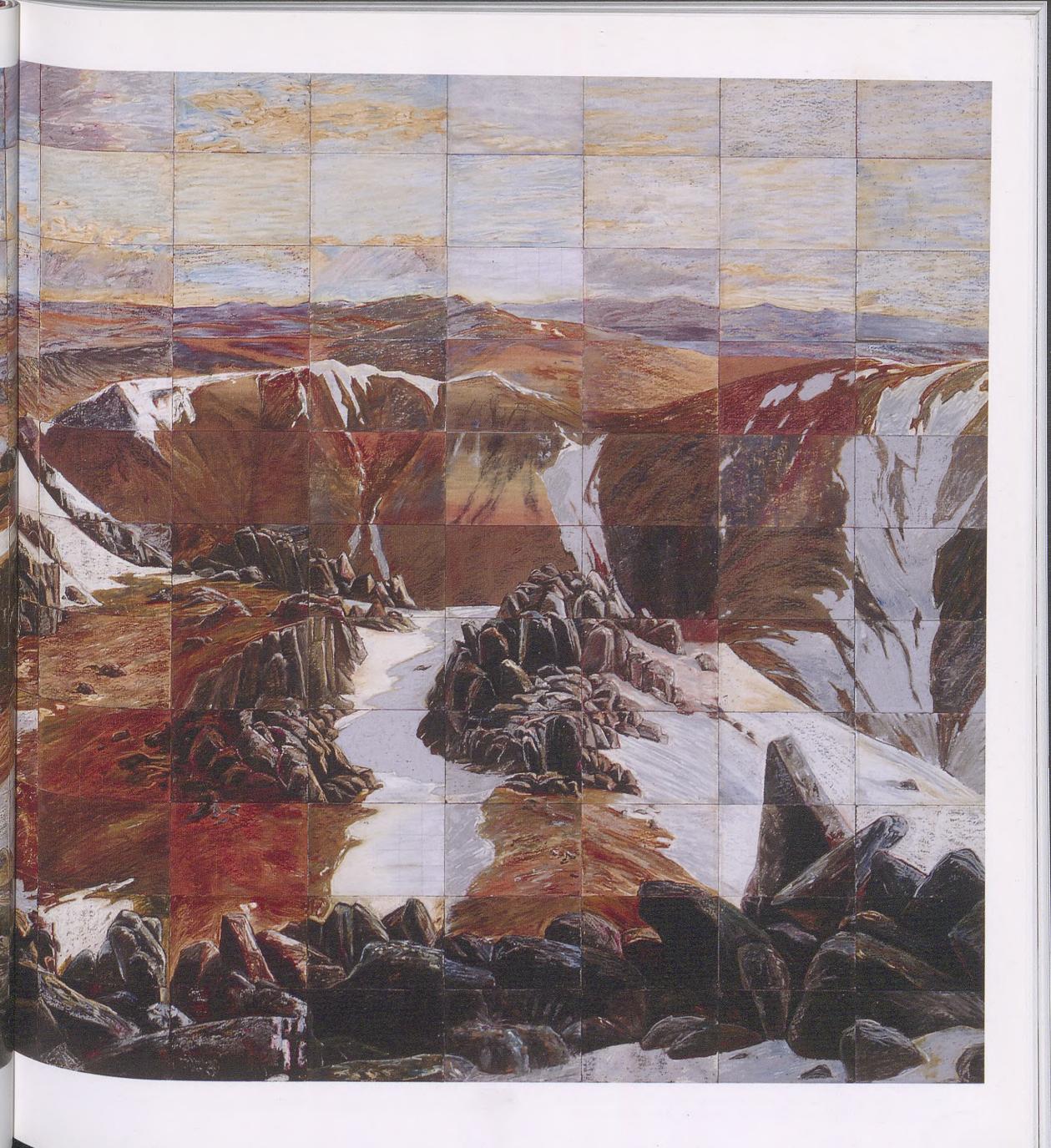


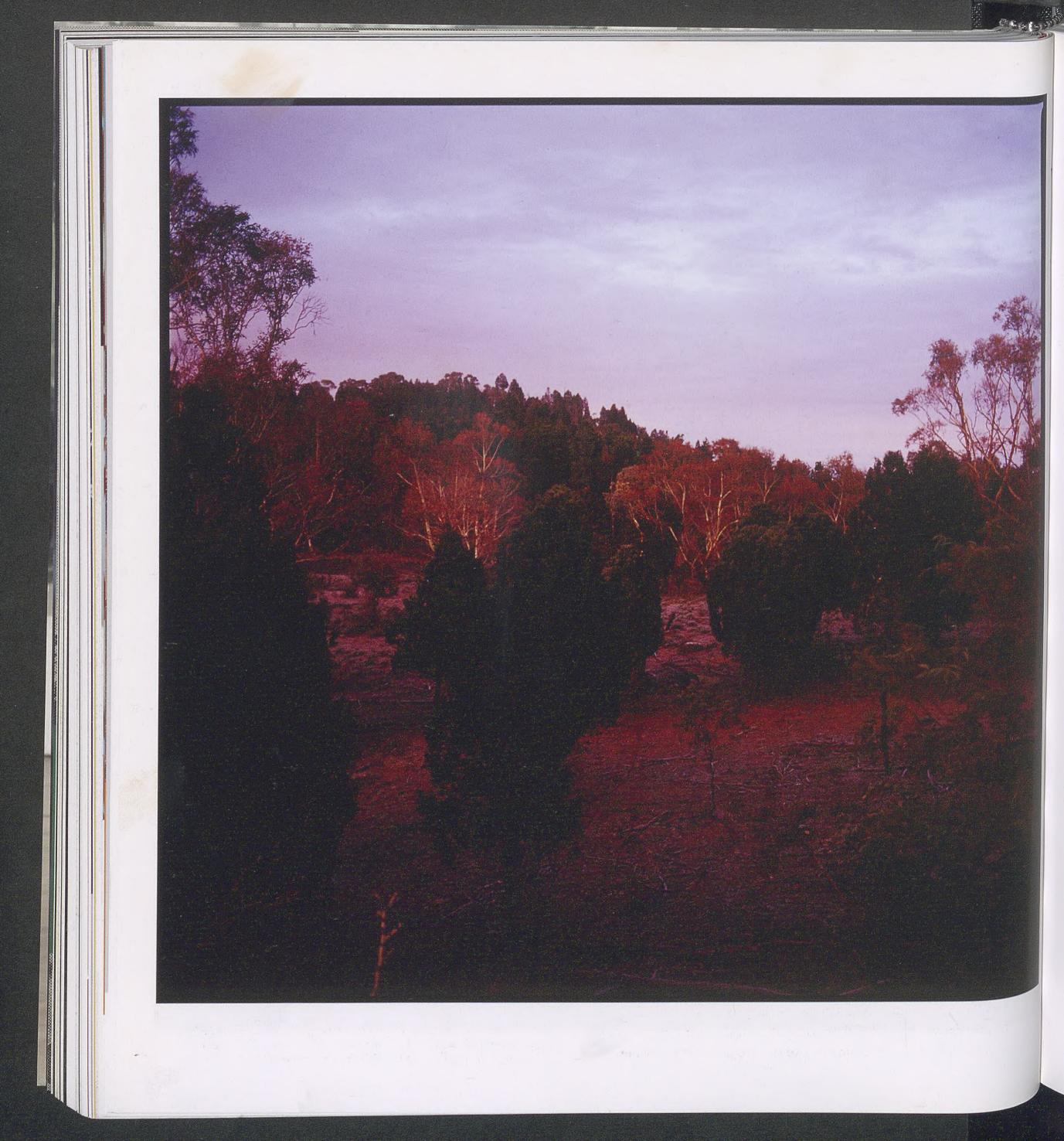












pages 100-101

Lacrimae rerum (for Dzidra), 2007

Acrylic and gouache on 288 canvas boards, 80293 – 80580, 304.8 × 914.4 cm Collection Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia, Perth Courtesy the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney Photograph Greg Weight

pages 104–105
The beech forest, 2010
Acrylic and gouache on 90 canvas boards, 85589 – 85678, 254 × 343 cm
Courtesy the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney
Photograph Theo Schoo

pages 108–109

Mount Analogue, 1985

Oil, oil stick and synthetic polymer paint on 165 canvas boards, 279 x 571 cm

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 1987

Courtesy the artist

Indigenous story of country - Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri and Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri's Napperby death spirit dreaming, 1980 - and combines both with the bleached hills of the Monaro region as evoked in Rosalie Gascoigne's Monaro, 1989, in which the country is made up of, and by, words. Across this field are fragments of text, including names of towns and deserted outback settlements (a 'kind of readymade poetry' as Tillers has noted in another context7), excerpts from poems by Stéphane Mallarmé and Thomas Bernhard, portions of other artworks that use text, including the work of Colin McCahon and Lawrence Weiner, and a repetitive inscription in Tillers's mother's flowing handwriting. The painting's title comes from a line in Virgil's Aeneid, which appears in the painting translated as 'tears in the nature of things, hearts touched by human transience'. Lacrimae rerum is a meditation on death, extinction and the travails, disappearance and survival of cultures, languages and places.

Over the last couple of decades Tillers's paintings have increasingly combined an element of the introspective – reflections on personal experience and cycles of life, death and the natural world – with the philosophical and the social: memory and history, extinction and change, and the lingering narratives of dreams and the past. He continues to draw on European artists he admires (from Otto Runge and Caspar David Friedrich to Joseph Beuys, Anselm Kiefer and Georg Baselitz) as well as Australians and New Zealanders (from McCahon and Gascoigne to Fred Williams, Emily Kame Kngwarreye and Ian Burn). He borrows from them, appropriating fragments of their work as well as quoting historical documents, poems, other artists' writings, and various phrases and images collected from a host of sources.

Once upon a time, 2009, from Tillers's recent 'A Poem of the Land' exhibition at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, combines images drawn from McCahon, Gascoigne and Baselitz with a line of hills and a horizon reminiscent of the Monaro region – whose

main town, Cooma, has been the artist's home since 1996. Across this landscape appear placenames from the district, a reference to the Ngarigo, the original people of Cooma, and a phrase from a Tennyson poem – 'Thou majestic in thy sadness at the doubtful doom of humankind'⁸ – that derives from Virgil's line quoted in *Lacrimae rerum*. As with that earlier painting, *Once upon a time* speaks of trauma and extinction in multiple layers, the beauty of the country, the common experience of artists and people (in Australia and well beyond), the continuing power of narrative in remembering the land into being and the constant allure of landscape in Australian art.

Tillers continues to create work that is austere, bleak and informed by the appeal of the romantic, while at the same time being conceptually rigorous and sophisticated. His paintings are like memories, cut through with glimpses of the past, of fragmentary visions and influences, and rich in the juxtapositions and multiple perspectives they offer. They dissolve the landscape even as they render it anew.

- Simon Schama, Landscape and Memory, Knopf, New York, 1995, pp. 6-7.
- Both of which are, fittingly, in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.
- 3 Imants Tillers, 'Locality fails', Art & Text, no. 6, June 1982.
- 4 ibid.
- Ian Burn, 'A landscape is not something you look at, but something you look through', The Australian Journal of Art, vol. 12, 1995.
- 6 René Daumal, Mount Analogue: A Novel of Symbolically Authentic Non-Euclidean Adventures in Mountain Climbing, Shambhala, Boston, 1992.
- 7 Imants Tillers, 'Land Beyond Goodbye', exhibition text, Sherman Galleries, Sydney,
- 8 Alfred Lord Tennyson, 'To Virgil', in Christopher Ricks (ed.), *Tennyson: A Selected Edition*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1989.

Photographs in this essay were specially commissioned by Art & Australia from photographer Andrew Quilty and taken at Tillers's home and studio, Cooma, June 2010. © Art & Australia and Andrew Quilty, www.oculi.com.au/.

The outback denier

Jarrod Rawlins and Lisa Radford







This interview first appeared in the Summer 1976 issue of the journal South by Southwest published by the departments of English and History at the University of Melbourne. At times brutal, it is a stark reminder of white Australia's obsession with cultural ownership of the outback, and a timely example of the prodigious nature of Dr David Loeb's once-controversial theory of outback denial. With permission from the original publishers, we re-present sections of the infamous interview between Dr Loeb and his colleague Dr Katharina Graw, which was conducted in the West Tower of the John Medley Building at the University of Melbourne, Parkville campus in April 1975. Given white culture's sustained interest in depictions and representations of the outback, it is timely to revisit this little-known but significant moment in Australian academia.¹

Katharina Graw: David, you recently presented a paper at the History of Land Clearing Conference, where you argued that there is no outback in Australia, that even as a construct it is deceptive to use the outback as a metaphor for non-Indigenous spiritual or cultural rituals. You went so far as to completely deny the existence of the outback, which is of course absurd, but I am intrigued at the genesis of this idea. Do you still stand by this claim?

David Loeb: There is no outback, Katharina. I have already stated this. What there is instead, is a short history of land clearing slapped on the back of identity issues that can only apply to Indigenous inhabitants. What I am referring to is representation. Anglo-Saxon artists and authors are not capable of making a meaningful contribution to Australian identity because it will always be a case of narcissism combined with aesthetics disguised as understanding. In the end, it's meaningless. If I were to pursue this goal, this goal of constructing a discourse for Australianness, I would need to avoid the mythical history of the landscape, at least the ones Anglo-Saxon inhabitants constructed in the nineteenth century. Obviously Australia is a construct – it's a colony. It

must always be considered that we are not at one with this land. Perhaps this can be called postcolonialism, a theory of something that comes after the colonial mentality has collapsed. But this postcolonialism will probably never occur if artists and authors continue to reinforce myths of the outback. When you look at cinematic examples such as *Jedda* (1955) or *Wake in Fright* (1971), how can they be considered in terms of identity and the outback – what do you think?

KG: Are you questioning whether these films are simply metaphors for psychological isolation? Or do you see something more sinister going on, where, perhaps, a myth is perpetuated and Aboriginality is denied? In Wake in Fright, the protagonist, John Grant (Gary Bond), finds himself having made a pact with the devil, so to speak, where in exchange for his education he must teach in a small, arid, perhaps imagined, outback. Seemingly trapped in a drug-induced, alcohol-fuelled hunt-or-be-hunted terrain, Grant attempts suicide and then escape, but the truck he leaves on delivers him back to the town from which he is absconding. The portrayal is that the town is 'outside of culture' and the parable perhaps not too far removed from the original settlement of Australia - white, 'cultured' and 'educated' man attempts to conquer 'wild' frontier. I'm wondering what you think David? Is there some sort of fissure in the narrative and representation?

DL: Fissure is polite, Katharina. In fact there is a lot you are saying that is polite, but what you were getting at in terms of the parallel between history and representations of the outback in Wake in Fright is correct. There is a cultural problem both in imagining and actually experiencing this idea of the outback or frontier in Australia, if not in all settler and colonised societies: myths and stories are generated to justify the chain reaction of arrival, occupation, dispossession and then continued domination of Indigenous peoples and their land. Wake in Fright is an excellent

example of how representations perpetuate the occupation, dispossession and continued domination of land in the ongoing construction of 'our' official history and national identity, where the outback is something to be conquered rather than known. The outback is not a place of life or, rather, of any life that is worth knowing. This is the representation and it is disturbing not only in its dystopic rendering but also in its negation of the other.

KG: It's a big place – not everything can be known. Maybe there is a relationship between the inability to comprehend an expansive landscape with an average of 0.02 inhabitants per square metre and the inability to unravel some 60,000 years of history that predates white settlement.

DL: That's the point – it's the illusion of knowing that's the problem; that, combined with worth and an imposed value system. Most depictions of the landscape present a digestible version of history: barren spaces and a romanticised landscape at times inhabited by 'strong' pastoralists and patronising visions of noble savages. They are renditions of a filtered experience that suggest a 'nice' history, or a dramatised notion as discussed previously, one that alleges or alludes to an honourable conquest of land and distance, rather than extravagant violence and violations of man and landscape. They are opportunistic appropriations colluding with a desire for home, place and identity. Representations such as these can only lead to the corrosion of public memory and thus a failure to reconcile with the past.

This failure, this corrosion, is exemplified in such legislation as the seven-decade White Australia Policy. It's a type of repression that will lead to abnormality. In the primary phase, which I am going to suggest is invasion up until Federation (1788–1901), infants learn that some aspects of reality aren't pleasant. They learn that both the pleasant and unpleasant are sometimes controllable and sometimes not. The natural assumption that all things are equal is repressed. Self and other, fear and desire,

are determined and distinguished, which works as an analogy for white settlers and Indigenous peoples. In the second stage of repression, which might indeed cover Federation up until the recent dissolution of the policy (1901-1975), the child learns that acting on desires causes anxiety, leading to the repression of the desire. We are in, or heading towards, an abnormal cultural repression, or even a complex culturally neurotic behaviour, where this internalised anxiety will lead to a potentially illogical, selfdestructive and antisocial society. This is evident in the forms of extreme nationalism and patriotism that are enforced and justified by the very representations we are talking about - they validate a desire to conquer and own without any identifiable threat. I'm describing this in a linear way, but it is of course a complicated, interlocking and concomitant process. Specificity of time and space are vital in our understanding of it; revealing and re-introducing the repressed aspects of Australian history are essential for a conscious awareness of place and identity.

KG: Well, that is a lot for us to swallow. If I were to take your position of the outback denier and run with it, how would I then account for the history of colonial representation of the landscape? Here I'm thinking of Australia's pastoral painting tradition which ended with Sidney Nolan's 'Inland Australia' series. These works have come to represent what is considered to be a greater Australianness than the representations made by the country's original inhabitants. When we think about the avant-garde glimpsed in 'The Field' exhibition at the opening of the National Gallery of Victoria seven years ago, it is clear that representing the outback, or the mythologised Australia, is of little concern to Anglo-Australian artists, with the exception of those continuing the traditions of the sentimental pastoralists - the colonials, if you will. And when I think about the artefacts being made up north in Papunya, where that schoolteacher has started things, and how they are being mythologised, there emerges the potential for

apologists to follow your lead. My point being, if you are making a claim to be the first outback denier, what is the future for the Australian myth?

DL: I am no apologist. The outback is a right-wing conservative myth stemming from an ideological impairment. Think of it as a conceptual and moral disability. Imagine someone presenting the idea that the conflict between Aboriginal Australians and white settlers had been fabricated, that the numbers of Aboriginal people killed and displaced was a politically motivated fraud. It is, of course, an absurd proposition. In light of that, my position of denying the existence of the outback could be considered little more than a furphy constructed to upset the moral right who continue to maintain this immoral and unethical myth of the Australian outback. They are denying the Aboriginal Australian by maintaining a landscape that is not lived. This landscape is simply unreal, and its perpetuation is irresponsible. Its continuation will eventually be of great social and cultural detriment.

KG: So by claiming to be an outback denier you are suggesting that any depiction of a mythologised outback is a condition unique to a far-right-wing racist attitude?

DL: Yes.

KG: And it is the clearing of land for agricultural profit that has perpetuated the outback myth, by making previously vegetative areas of land appear barren. There are great examples in Western Victoria, north of Horsham, past Manangatang and the areas south of the Mallee Cliffs National Park in New South Wales. These areas cleared for agriculture can be romanticised as being part of the harsh, barren, remote Australian outback.

DL: This is where my denial originates because it is hardly ever acknowledged in creative practices, or documentary for that matter, that the Australian outback is a cultural construction.

Almost 75 per cent of the population live on the eastern littoral. There's a psychological escape, a sea-route out. What can we find

in this 'accidental' location? If there is no outback, there is no need for escape. No outback, no delineation. You know, Katharina, I doubt there is an outback or frontier if you are Indigenous. The outback only exists when in someone else's place. You arrive and deem the place and its inhabitants are in need of conquering. When the outback ceases to exist, so too does the desire to possess it. The need to dispossess its inhabitants is emasculated and what is repressed can be freed. After that, inclusive and fluid ideas can be explored and more interesting representations of actual, lived culture will result.

All characters appearing in this work are fictitious. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

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Ian Ward, Lift off, 1978, silver gelatin print, 40.6 x 30.6 cm, gift of the Wimmera Mail Times, 1990, collection and courtesy Horsham Regional Art Gallery, Victoria.

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Wake in Fright, 1971, film still. © 2009 Wake in Fright Trust; Jedda, 1955, Marbuck (Robert Tudawali) standing over Jedda (Ngarla Kunoth) lying on a raft, with Katherine Gorge in the background, publicity still: SSA 348109.

Courtesy National Film and Sound Archive, Canberra. © Susanne Chauvel Carlsson and the H. C. McIntyre Trust.

Elina Spilia

Things are not always as they seem. If we ease the hold of our eyes and open our senses to darkness, if we loosen our flesh to expose the bones beneath, we may glimpse it. Attentive to the transformative qualities of shadow and illumination, the Yolngu people are mindful that the darkness is also a kind of light periodically revealing the stellar landscape hidden behind the diurnal sky. The transitions between visibility and invisibility offer revelatory thresholds where the surface may betray the substance it conceals. Form is a ruse, for anything of consequence is never so simply contained.

It is little wonder, then, that the trajectory of Gulumbu Yunupingu's work displays an incremental departure from form, a gradual dematerialisation that accompanies a deepening conceptual practice. Yunupingu's signature starscapes on sheets of bark and hollow eucalypt trunks have more in common with the performative than the painterly. She titles them simply *Ganyu* (stars) or *Garak* (universe), and they form a single body of work that has sustained the core of her artistic practice over a period of ten years.

Yunupingu's career as a commercial artist began in earnest in the late 1990s, and her first star shapes – unconsciously resurrected from paintings made by her father, the acclaimed postwar painter Munggurrawuy Yunupingu – featured on small barks illustrating Yolngu ancestors associated with astronomical phenomena. Most significant to Yunupingu's later work is the narrative related to the constellation of Djulpan. In a Promethean drama played out each night, a constellation of ancestral women paddle a canoe towards the western horizon through vast celestial waters, fleeing a constellation of men paddling after them through the aqueous night. In its sacred permutations, this narrative and the sacra derived from it is one of the means by which Yunupingu's Gumatj lineage (together with other Yolngu groups) is linked to an ancestral realm that joins terrestrial and celestial geographies. The

heavens are animate with traces of ancestral activity evident in the changing landscape of the night sky.

From these illustrative beginnings, Yunupingu isolated the star motif and painted starscapes divided into panels of different colours. Soon after, the divisions in her work disappeared, leaving shifting fields of hue and form. In more recent work, the artist has further dispensed with form, reducing the star motif to a mere gesture. Cross-like linear markings interspersed with dots impart a fluidity and movement enhanced by the uneven surfaces of bark. At their most impressive these bark paintings appear to hang like rippling sheets or veils, their pigments glowing with a silken sheen.

Yunupingu was among the first painters in the Yirrkala region to depart so decisively from the characteristic painting styles of north-east Arnhem Land, which are typically either illustrative in their emphasis or bear sacred ancestral designs. The calibre of her work was quickly evident. Yunupingu's distinctive style inspired a new genre of painting in the region, evident, for example, in Boliny Wanambi's and Ralwurrandji Wanambi's paintings of swarming bees and mosquitoes. In 2004 Yunupingu won the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award with three star poles titled Garak - the universe. Following the 2006 unveiling of her designs at the Museé du quai Branly in Paris, she was recently commissioned to incorporate her starscapes into the centrepiece of the Australian National University's new building for studies in Asia-Pacific diplomacy and allied studies. Her life-size Macassan prau sail honours several hundred years of Asian-Australian exchange, which was particularly acute in the economic and cultural relations between Yolngu and Macassans. At the recent 17th Biennale of Sydney her work formed part of the installation Larrakiti, an unsurpassed collection of painted memorial poles from north-east Arnhem Land which were acquired over more than a decade by Anne Brody for the Kerry Stokes Collection. Until late October this year Yunupingu's work is being exhibited in the

Australian Pavilion at Shanghai World Expo 2010 ahead of private shows in China and Singapore. But while her work is highly regarded, it is not well understood.

The artist describes her star motif as a figure comprising a body, a spirit and an eye from which it may 'cry', a double reference to the idiom of night rain falling from the 'eyes' of crying stars and the keening liturgies performed by senior Yolngu women. The latter are weeping songs of compassion and lament which provide restoration and comfort and celebrate a natural order preordained by ancestral action. Yunupingu regards her painting as possessing a similar restorative quality, part of a broader life's work as a practitioner of Yolngu medicine and an astute mediator, diplomat and political leader.

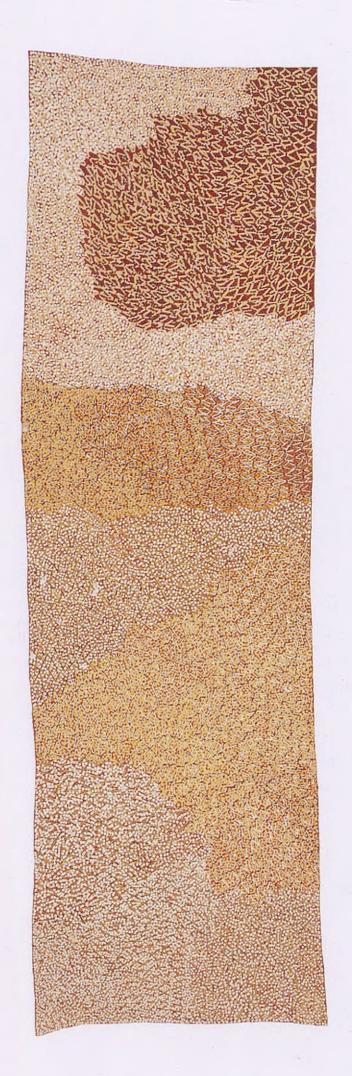
Yunupingu's oeuvre has largely been framed in terms of a painterly practice that conveys a universalist or humanist metaphor – a world encircled and unified beneath a single night sky or an earth reflected in a heavenly mirror. At a deeper level, she is concerned with the nature and limits of knowledge, the utter incomprehensibility of the universe, the tantalising threshold that tethers us to our humanity and holds us back from the mysteries of the scientific and divine. This limit is reached in the beauty, awe and human fragility inspired by our fleeting nightly interface with the fraction of the universe perceptible to human sight.

A growing sensitivity to the conceptual aspects of Yunupingu's work has led to its increasing exhibition as a synthesised installation rather than as a display of discrete objects. Since 2009 Yunupingu's Melbourne gallerist, Beverly Knight, has exhibited her work as an immersive environment, situating viewers within a celestial landscape. As we walk through a woodland of star poles, we find ourselves in the blackness between galaxies – or, more precisely, in the interstices the artist has created between fragments of space. Yunupingu casts the viewer into the metaphoric space of her conceptual concerns – the limits of

human perception, investigated through the spatial metaphors of the edges of the universe and the territory between life and death. 'We don't know what is after the last stars', the artist has told me, 'we don't know what is beyond'. Through the simplicity of the star motif, her work elegantly transposes questions that have vexed the most accomplished scientific, humanist and theological minds into a seemingly effortless distillation of Yolngu aesthetics and philosophy. Though these are secular artworks, from her immersion in sacred art traditions Yunupingu uses the act of painting as a conduit - an activity that becomes a revelatory process and an internal meditation performed across hundreds of objects. She tests the nature and limits of knowledge, painting the night sky star by star, as if by painting each one she might discover the finitude of the universe and reach beyond its edge. Each painting is a fragment of a whole, part of a performative documentation of the apparently expanding universe.

In the cavity of her star poles, Yunupingu offers us a second spatial metaphor that links the object, the night sky and Yolngu metaphysics concerned with the transition between life and death. Yolngu regard the cavity of the memorial pole to be a space of metamorphosis and a channel to the ancestral realm. Prior to the prohibition of customary Yolngu funerary practices, hollowed eucalypt trunks were used as repositories for the final interment of human remains purified of mortal flesh and reduced to a symbolic spiritual core: bone. They were consecrated by the application of sacred designs to assist the Yolngu spirit to return to its place of ancestral origin by uniting the ochred bones of the deceased (the residue of the spirit), the bones of country (sacred places), and the bones of ancestors (sacred objects and their designs). In certain Yolngu funerals, the sanctified memorial pole (or its contemporary counterpart, the coffin) becomes the symbolic vehicle for the final journey of the spirit through an ancestral geography, a vessel which carries the spirit of the deceased through metaphysical landscapes





Ganyu, 2010

Earth pigments on bark, 91 x 40 cm

Courtesy the artist, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala
and ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore

Garak, the universe, 2008

Natural ochres on bark, 197 x 63 cm (variable)

Courtesy the artist, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala

and Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne



(aqueous, celestial, terrestrial) which Yolngu regard as immanent and fleetingly perceptible beneath the surface of the world we inhabit.

The principle that meaning exists beyond visible perception is a central tenet of Yolngu philosophy that finds specific application in Yolngu aesthetics. Yunupingu wraps surface around substance, painting her starscapes around a cavity in which matter, space and time are thought to be reshaped in mysterious ways. She paints the hollow by painting the surface, probing the depths of the darkness by painting the light. With a mind-bending logic typical of Yolngu epistemology, the visible surface of the object is both a revelatory mirror and a translucent veil to the substance hidden inside. According to Yolngu scholarship, an invisible or semivisible trace may indicate an intrinsic but obscured presence or power that holds profound and hidden meaning. Astrophysicists provide us with an apt analogy: each star is a perpetually changing state of energy and matter momentarily perceptible within the scope of human senses. Astronomical bodies are not perceptible in themselves, they are visible only through fragments of light beamed across unfathomable light years; eye and light join across distance and time to provide traces of an ancient past manifest in the present.

Memorial poles were historically erected in an ancestral estate of the deceased and left undisturbed to be reabsorbed by the land. This dematerialisation paralleled the separation of the spirit and its journey back into the spiritual homeland. For some Yolngu, this spiritual homeland is the night sky, hence some stars are considered to be the spirits of unborn children waiting to be born. In a curious parallel of cultural relativity, astrophysics tells us that all human life is created from the debris of stars. As a star approaches death, its heart cools and slows until the celestial body collapses, exhaling to a fraction of its size before bathing the darkness in searing light. In the vacuum of space, the supernova explodes in majestic silence,

hurling billion-year-old debris – carbon, oxygen and nitrogen – into the blackness. The scattered ashes of dead stars form the elements of human life.

Equally compelling is the fact that despite the array of their forms, mass and energy are finite; recycled, for example, between sound and motion, heat and light, energy and matter. Yolngu regard the body's dematerialisation and the spirit's transformation within an analogous framework, made possible by the transformation of ancestral substances and forces. As it happens, Yolngu cast aesthetic affect into a continuum of song (sound), dance (motion), optical effects described as shiny or brilliant (hence connected with light), and the power of objects, places and painted forms (matter). Things are not always as they appear. A visual form may therefore be described as an apparition of ancestral sound or motion, an alternative manifestation of an ancestral force. Consequently, Yolngu art has always been (albeit in a very specific sense) postmedium. In painting the surface Yunupingu paints the space it conceals, the threshold between the known and the unknown, the boundaries of human knowledge. Form is a ruse, because anything of any consequence is always, also, something else.

opposite
Larrakitj installation, detail
Earth pigments on hollow tree trunks
National Indigenous Art Triennial
National Gallery of Australia (NGA), Canberra, 2007
Courtesy NGA

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Garak, the universe, 2005, detail

Musée du quai Branly (MQB), Paris, courtesy MQB

© The artist and MQB. Photograph Antonin Borgeaud

The outsiders: Olegas Truchanas and Peter Dombrovskis

Richard Flanagan

In this world we walk on the roof of hell gazing at flowers

Issa

In March 1996, just before setting out on a solo trip to walk the rugged Western Arthurs in Tasmania's south-west, Peter Dombrovskis called. He wanted to talk about a forthcoming book of his photographs of Mount Wellington for which I was writing an introductory essay. The mountain defines Hobart and links it to the great wildlands of Tasmania. For generations Hobartians have walked, climbed, camped, tobogganed, swum and played over the mountain. Peter worried that the growing emphasis on notions of 'sacred wilderness' created a lie, or rather that it was the other pole of a lie. He lived on one of the mountain's higher flanks, and for him the mountain showed that the natural world wasn't something separate of us, but the essence of us.

Peter talked of doing a book on gardens to further explore this idea. In a world in which humanity is ever more autistic to the natural world, he felt anything that allowed people communion with nature mattered. Looking back on it now, I think he found all ways of being part of nature at once rich and mysterious. Rather than being dogmatic, Peter was curious.

He asked me about the boulders on the upper Huon River. He knew I was one of the few who had kayaked it and he wanted to know what they were like.

- -Why? I asked.
- —Because Olegas told me that they were beautiful, he said. One day I'd like to photograph them.

OLEGAS WAS OLEGAS TRUCHANAS, a Lithuanian who arrived in Tasmania post-Second World War and established a considerable reputation as both an explorer and landscape photographer.

Truchanas had been the first to kayak the upper Huon, as well as the Gordon River. In one of several ironies he worked as a draftsman for Tasmania's Hydro-Electric Commission, which, with its dams, was systematically destroying the wildlands that Truchanas was discovering, photographing and fighting to protect.

In the 1960s he began staging slide shows in the Hobart City Hall, showing the threatened wildlands with accompanying classical music. From the beginning these seemingly innocuous couplings of image and music were understood as the most political of events.

Then, in the great bushfire of 1967, his home, and with it his slide collection, was lost. Truchanas, now ageing, returned to the south-west to try to rebuild his archive of images of all that was on the verge of vanishing. In 1972, on a kayaking trip down the then threatened Gordon River, he lost his footing on a submerged log and disappeared into the dark, tannin-stained waters.

It was a young man who three days later found Truchanas's drowned body. He was the fatherless son of a Latvian migrant, born in a refugee camp in Germany in 1945, for whom Olegas had become a father-figure, teaching him canoeing and photography.

'He had been destroyed, with Biblical simplicity', wrote Truchanas's friend Max Angus, 'by two of the elements, fire and water. Five years had passed between their brief and terrible visits. He had perished in the river he sought to save. Classical mythology affords no stronger example of the drama of the example of the incorruptible man who passes into legend.'

The young man was Peter Dombrovskis. A month later Peter returned to Lake Pedder, which Truchanas through his kayaking trip was attempting to help save. From the same spot on the Coronets where Truchanas had once taken a photograph, Peter took an almost identical picture of the lake and its famed beach.

'I like to think', Peter later said, 'I'm carrying on where Olegas left off, in my own way, finishing the work he started.'

But Lake Pedder was as doomed as Truchanas. Within three years it would vanish.

Yet Truchanas's influence soared in the 1970s and 1980s, spurred on by the publication of a book of his photographs, The World of Olegas Truchanas (1975). As the environmental movement went mainstream, Truchanas passed into myth as a martyr. Meanwhile, with the publication of his early books The Quiet Land (1977) and Wild Rivers (1983) and his best-selling wilderness calendars, Peter came to be seen as his heir. His photograph of the Franklin River at Rock Island Bend became the most celebrated landscape photograph in Australian history. Used by conservationists, it was said to have helped sway the Federal election of 1983 in favour of Bob Hawke's Australian Labor Party, which promised to save the Franklin River.

It is perhaps not possible to convey what powerful effect the example of Olegas Truchanas and Peter Dombrovskis – the artist as adventurer, the merging of life and art, the radical and liberating possibilities of the natural world – had on many Tasmanians growing up in the benighted, marginal and often self-hating Tasmania of the 1970s and 1980s. They created another Tasmania: an invitation to dream for whoever wished to be part of it.

Outside Tasmania, the work of Truchanas and Dombrovskis has often appeared baffling. To some, their representations of landscape seem at best conventional, drawing from a romantic tradition that seems outdated, even reactionary. That their work has endured is strange; that it had radical political edge even more mysterious, and in some ways reprehensible. For the antipathy to art and artists in Australia that remains such a strong and destructive force in our national life sometimes appears to have been internalised and taken up by the Australian art world itself. It expresses itself variously: that great Australian lack of generosity to difference as well as a fear of any art that has political

connotation or, for that matter, spirit. It has also led to a culture of the corral: unless an artist is on the inside, part of a grant and gallery and critic system, they are not an artist.

Truchanas was a draftsman. Dombrovskis made a journeyman living, selling his images as postcards, calendars and books. They lived in Tasmania and made art about Tasmania, an island at once alien and marginal to Australia. It's hard to imagine artists more on the outside.

To the extent that they had a politics, it was not the monocultural nationalism of the Labor Party that had so often been the bedrock creed for how Australian art was divined. Since Federation, Australian art was seen to have a mission to make a single national culture in the image of either its great coastal cities or its mainland dry outback. Whatever the aesthetic it wore as its motley, that was the goal.

Though a nation, Australia is not one country but many, and one of these is the country of Tasmania. Both men created an idea of Tasmania that could not be dismissed as regional or small, and which like all powerful artistic ideas contained a universe within it. For many on the island, these two artists were liberating – they showed us we lived not in a small place dully conformist to a weary, century-old trope, but a world of infinite possibility most Tasmanians were unaware of. But in so doing they also drew attention to the profound human choice that went with that world. To seek to know it better, to love it, or to agree to its destruction.

Talent is love, Tolstoy once said. The idea that great art is made out of love and can only be comprehended through love recurs through history in defiance of schools, traditions, aesthetics and ideologies. Love unleavened, of course, leads to kitsch. But with the yeast of circumstance, history and ambition added, enduring work sometimes arises.

Dombrovskis's work has been criticised as determinedly false, refusing to acknowledge the human element of the natural world





top to bottom

Peter Dombrovskis, Morning mist, Rock Island Bend,
Franklin River, South-west Tasmania, 1979

Type-C print

Courtesy and © Liz Dombrovskis

Olegas Truchanas, Wet and shiny beach in the early morning from the Coronets track at Lake Pedder with the Arthur Range on the horizon, Tasmania, c. 1968
Digital reproduction from slide, 2010
Courtesy and © Melva Truchanas

by rarely showing humans or human artefacts. But the argument seems to make no more sense than applying it to abstract art. Dombrovskis spoke of how a photograph had to be filled with the character of the photographer or it was nothing. His images are, finally, an idea of humanity. But it is a particular and haunting idea of who we are and what we might be.

It is true that the conservation movement of the 1980s promoted a sense of 'wilderness' in which mankind had never been and should never intrude on. Given that human history in Tasmania is at least 40,000 years old and mankind has played a key role in shaping these wildlands for so long, such an idea was both demonstrably untrue and, as Dombrovskis understood, damaging to our souls. Though both men were environmentalists, and though that same movement used their images to promote environmental causes, as the years pass, as the politics recede, the images endure and seem to speak of something larger and more evocative than the battles of that era. Much of Dombrovskis's later work finds erotic images of women in abstracted landscapes. The close-up still lifes of kelp, sand pattern, broken seashells, myrtle leaf swirls, sand rib, river spume and snow-gum bark are even more mysterious, open and powerful.

I sometimes think both Truchanas's and Dombrovskis's attitude to the natural world of Tasmania can only be understood as a response to the immense human horror of the Second World War in Eastern Europe. At the edge of the world, where the contours of progress were perhaps more visible than at its centre, two photographers, products of the last great global conflict of nation and ideology against nation and ideology, perhaps came closer than many of their more celebrated peers in speaking of the conflict to come – of mankind against the natural world, and the terrible cost not just to our environment and economy, but to our humanity if we did not try and prevent it, if we did not try and understand ourselves and our world differently.

The storyteller, writes Walter Benjamin, is the man who would let the flame of his story consume the wick of his life. Peter was precise about language, and he may have dismissed such an idea. Certainly he would have seen no relevance to himself. But sometimes there is about an artist's life a profound and terrible poetry.

The Monday following my phone call with Peter I was driving to Salamanca through black clouds and heavy dropped rain that sweeps and slaps rather than falls, while Hobart's higher suburbs were being coated in snow. The radio news said a solo walker had failed to return from a walking trip to the Western Arthurs. I rang a friend who worked in police search and rescue.

-It's Peter Dom, he said.

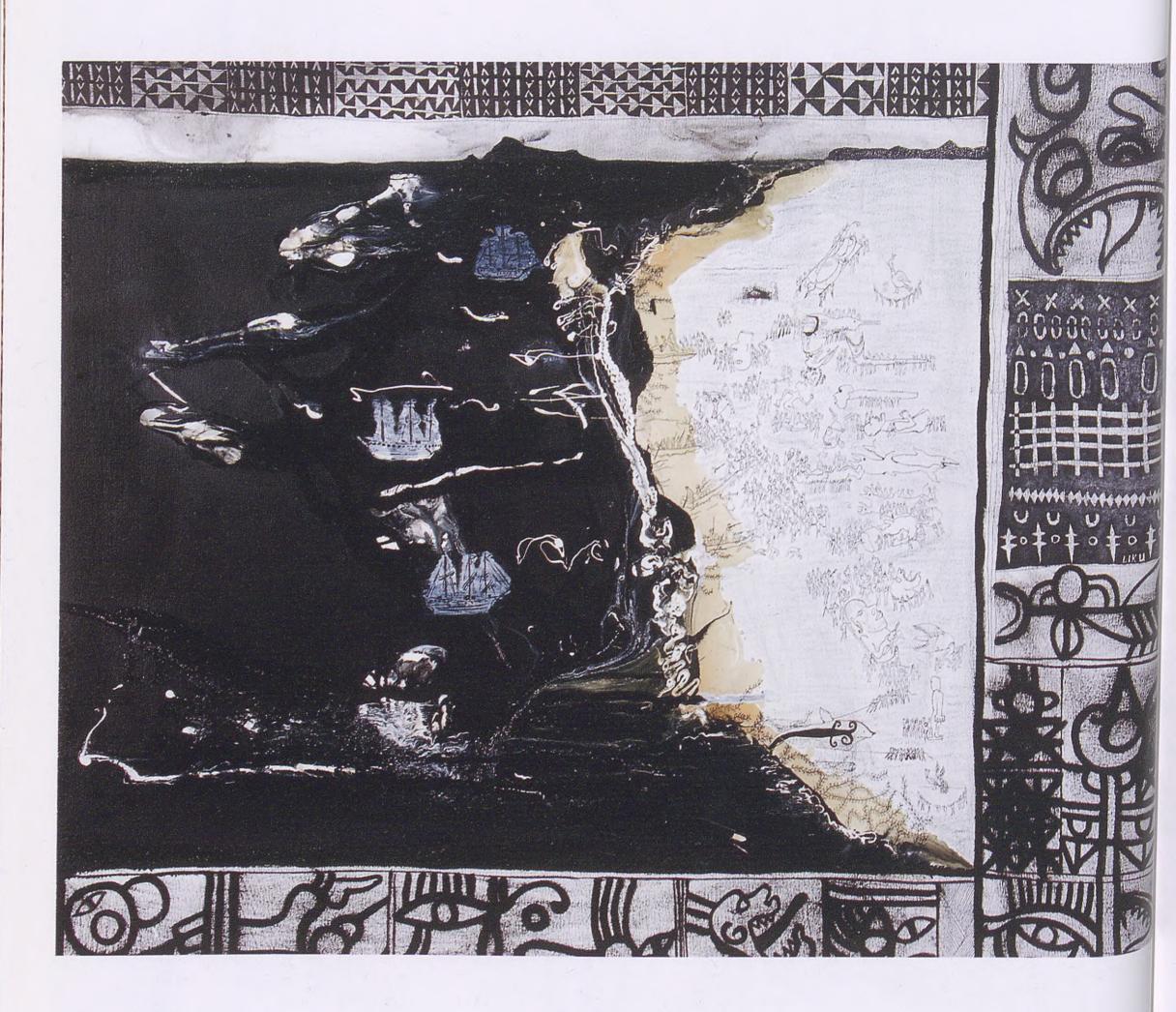
They searched in blizzards for three days. Far below, floodwaters rose and covered the beautiful boulders of the upper Huon River. They found him kneeling, looking out to the south-west wildlands. He had been dead for some days, killed by a massive heart attack. As the weather was about to change, Peter had fallen to his knees, bowing before the world he had invited us to love and discover ourselves anew in.

Max Angus, The World of Olegas Truchanas, Olegas Truchanas Publication Committee, Hobart, 1975, p. 55.

The cloudscapes of John Pule

Martin Edmond





Arrival, 2009, detail
Varnish, oil, enamel, ink and resin on canvas
200 x 200 cm, private collection, Auckland
Courtesy Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland

My name acquired the status of an adventive My voice a kind of indigenous plant uprooted from saint elsewhere

John Pule¹

In one version of the cosmology that prevailed in Polynesia when first contact with Europeans was made, the Pacific Ocean was a vast watery plain joined at the edges of the horizon to the arched and layered shells of the sky. Islands were fixed on a foundation stone, *Te Tumu*; below this stone and beyond the sky was the generative and all-enfolding darkness, *Te Po*, where gods and ancestors lived. Star pillars rose between island and sky, supporting the heavens; each island had its own star, which was also its sailing direction on the ancient maps. Marquesans called the European invaders 'sky breakers' because it was believed that they had cracked open the heavens, letting chaos and darkness in, destroying the world as the Marquesans knew it. Now, in the works of Niuean and Aotearoan artist John Pule it seems that this destroyed cosmology has returned in another form.

Of all Pacific Island cultures, that which flourished on Niue Fekai (wild Niue) was the last to admit Europeans. Captain James Cook failed in three attempts to land on The Rock, as it is also known; he called it Savage Island because he thought the red on the teeth of the people he saw was blood, not the juice of the *hulahula*, the red banana. The London Missionary Society from 1846 likewise tried and failed numerous times to gain a foothold there and conversion to Christianity was only accomplished after the abduction and indoctrination of Nukai Peniamina, who returned to evangelise his fellows at the cost of his own martyrdom. Thereafter, in common with most other Pacific nations, conversion was rapid and universal and by 1900 Niue was both Christian and British, although after it was annexed in 1901 it was governed by the Dominion of New Zealand.

John Pule was born at Liku on Niue in 1962; when he was two years old his family moved to Auckland, where they lived first in inner-city Grey Lynn, and later in state housing at Otara to the south of the city. Pule has said that the two main influences on his art are hiapo, Niuean tapa cloth, and the New Zealand state

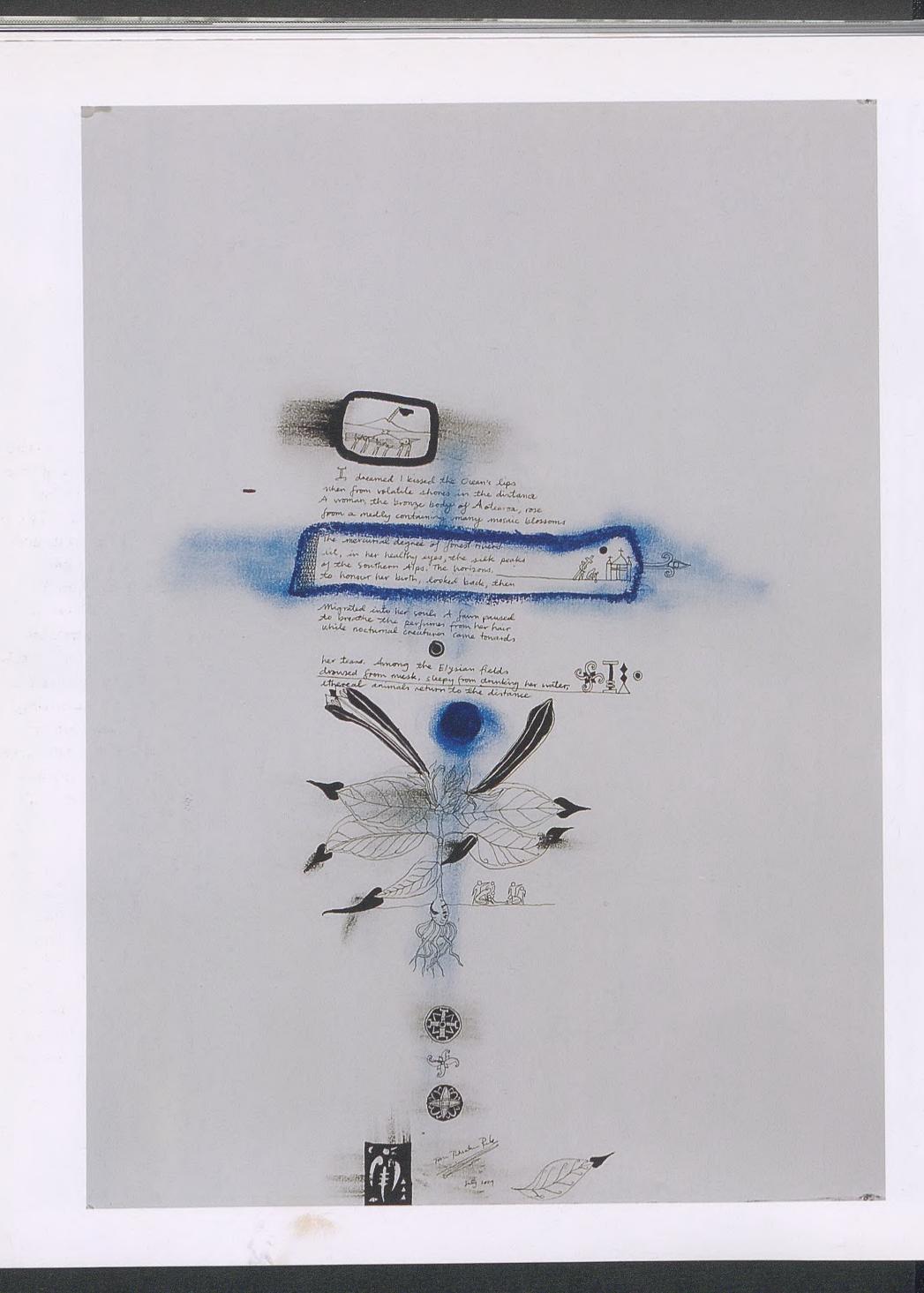
house. Hiapo is a unique bark-cloth artform that flourished over a period of just a few decades at the end of the nineteenth century. How it looked before about 1870 is unknown, and after the turn of the twentieth century it ceased to be made. The New Zealand state house was similarly evanescent: built, usually to an identical pattern, only during the middle decades of the twentieth century and languishing since. Pule grew up when Otara was meant to be a kind of working people's haven, but it swiftly decayed into what many would now call a slum. Polynesia similarly conflates opposed notions: island paradise, tropical ghetto, wireless nations, drowning world.

From this distance, hiapo looks less like a single form than an inventory of forms: on its grid are recorded motifs both abstract and literal, particularly leaf and plant forms, many of which were those introduced to the island via missionary gardens, or weeds such as deadly nightshade that piggybacked thereon. The hand-drawn motifs include ships and compasses, stars and hands, figures of men and women, writing that identifies family names and villages of origin. Such inventories are common across Polynesia, where the iconography of the tribe is traditionally inscribed on a variety of media: skin, tapa cloth, wood, stone, shell, pottery – indeed any surface on which marks can be made. This iconography, essentially a pattern book, has been taken from island to island as a template from which individuals, and individual cultures, continue to elaborate a practical infinity of variations.

As a teenager, perhaps seeking understanding of the Pakeha pattern book, Pule would come up to Auckland city and, being too shy to go in, read off the new titles in bookshop windows. He gravitated in the early 1980s to 'Poetry Live', the weekly poetry readings hosted by David Mitchell at the Globe Hotel. Pule was a poet before he was a painter and part of his interest in hiapo was as a means of getting his poetry off the page and up onto the wall; his printmaking explores the visual potential, or analogues, of his







page 129
I will never leave you, 2009
Oil, ink and enamel on canvas, 101.5 x 101.5 cm
Courtesy the artist and Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne

pages 132–33
Another green world, 2006
Oil, ink and enamel on canvas
200 x 400 cm (diptych), private collection
Courtesy the artist and Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland

opposite
I dreamed I kissed the ocean's lips, 2009
Ink and oil-stick on paper, 81 x 61 cm
Courtesy the artist and Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne

poetry. Texts of various kinds remain intrinsic to Pule's work and alongside his art he has published three novels so far.

Pule's work from the 1990s, especially his paintings, often resembles hiapo. Then, from the end of that decade, new forms begin to appear: clouds perhaps, or the strange ships that slide through the murky atmosphere of Ridley Scott's 1982 film *Blade Runner*. Intricate vines rise or descend from these nebulous forms. Or they might be seen as the long trailing leaves of the willow trees that grow alongside so many New Zealand rivers and streams; or the tendrils of some great jellyfish, a medusa or a Portuguese man-of-war. Of the wayfarers who inhabit these cloudscapes Pule has said they: 'are all trying to go from one level to another and hopefully at the top there is some kind of sanctuary. None of them climbs down.'2

These paintings – of which there has been a green and a red series as well as other permutations – are gorgeous to look at but they are not anodyne. They draw you in and then you begin to see the imagery that nestles in and around the clouds: dismembered or decapitated whales and sharks; churches; crucifixions; ambulances attending gruesome accidents; war scenes; graphically depicted sex acts; monsters; angels and devils, and a great deal more. There are motifs from European art history too, such as the ox carcasses painted by Chaim Soutine and, before him, Rembrandt. The detail in these works can take on a Bosch-like complexity and grotesquery, yet the imagery is as much Polynesian as European, or else a hybrid of both, and is definitively located in a space reminiscent of Polynesian cosmology.

Pule has remarked that Polynesia (many islands) is 'a single phenomenon', yet within this singularity he explores multiplicity, with an encyclopedic instinct for the inventory of forms. His most recent works, the so-called 'black' paintings, are rather more graphic, releasing across the canvas bird-like mythological entities seemingly sent forth from the dark backward, perhaps Te Po, as

envoys or emissaries. These startling works do not so much depart from earlier works as incorporate their forms – the clouds and the grids of hiapo – in new inflections and additions to an ongoing catalogue of an irretrievably mixed and fallen world. Some of them feature an ochre-haunted beach where decapitated whales lie under a smoking or quiescent volcano often surmounted by a cross.

Some years ago Pule decided to investigate the two hearths at which he was raised. On Niue, at Liku, an uncle took him to where the house in which he was born once stood; where his whenua, or afterbirth, is buried. They found the slab on which this house had been built overgrown with tropical vegetation, some of which they cleared away. Pule visited again and again, looking for clues, documenting in detail this lost domicile. Then, on his return to New Zealand, he went out to Otara to see the state house his family had lived in while he was growing up. This house was extant but empty and Pule likewise meticulously documented his exploratory visits – right down to finding the place at the bottom of the wardrobe where as a kid he had hidden his treasures.

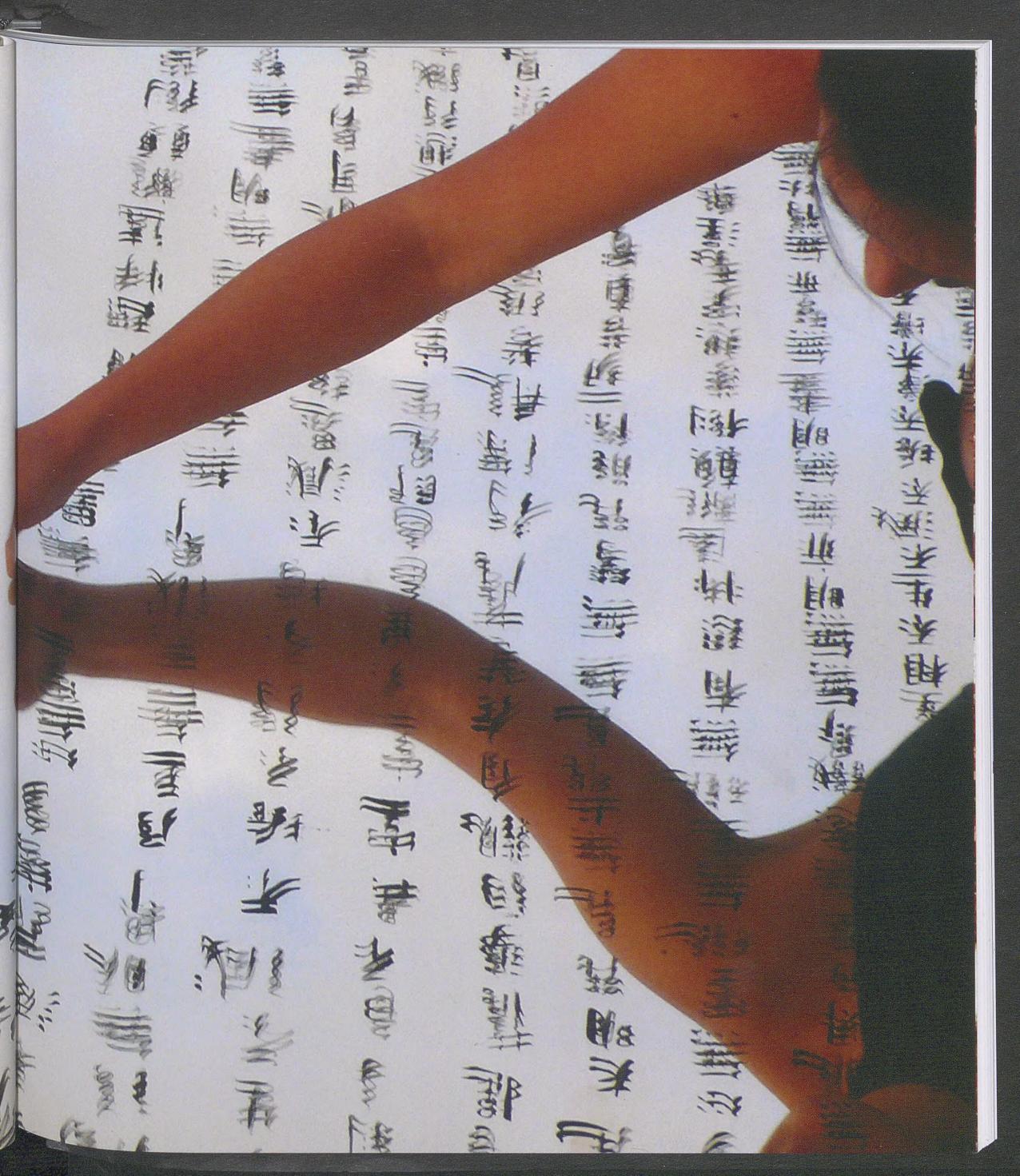
As one of the most distinct, powerful and idiosyncratic voices to emerge from the Pacific diaspora, Pule is eclectic and inclusive by nature and emphatically non-parochial. Within half an hour of our first meeting he was standing in his studio reciting from memory 'Ode to a Nightingale' by John Keats: 'Was it a vision or a waking dream?' Perhaps echoing Gauguin, Pule says that he has been 'dealing with the idea of migration for a very long time and it is still fascinating because eventually you have to find out where you are from and where you are going'. Such experiences are now near universal, cross-cultural, ubiquitous in Australia as elsewhere. We are fortunate indeed to have among us such an eloquent teller of our tales.

John Pule, 'Ka hola', *Tagata Kapakiloi / Restless People*, Pohutukawa Press, Auckland, 2004.

² Quoted in Virginia Were, 'Pacific narratives', Art News, Spring 2004, p. 49.

Charwei Tsais art of liberation

Laura Murray Cree



Meat map II & IV, 2008
Raw meat and black ink
Installation view, gallery.sora, Tokyo
Commissioned by gallery.sora/Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo
Courtesy the artist and gallery.sora/Taka Ishii Gallery

Now is life very solid or very shifting? I am haunted by the two contradictions. This has gone on forever; will last forever; goes down to the bottom of the world – this moment I stand on. Also it is transitory, flying, diaphanous. I shall pass like a cloud on the waves.

Virginia Woolf¹

Charwei Tsai is an artist for whom life and work are indivisible. Her present concern is to understand more deeply her place within the natural world through aesthetic meditations on the cycles of existence. Her Buddhist studies provide a framework for exploring philosophical and ethical issues around humanity's relationship with nature and the inevitability of death. A recent invitation to exhibit in Australia gave her the opportunity to reflect on a vast island continent very different from her birthplace of Taiwan. She chose 'Water, Earth and Air' as the title of her 2009 exhibition at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation (SCAF) in Sydney because these most basic elements provide the materials of her thought and art. Creating work outdoors and in changing environments allows Tsai to contemplate the heating and cooling of the earth and how the movement of wind and tides affect natural systems.

Although not from a religious family, Tsai memorised the *Prajna Paramita*, or Heart Sutra, to quell her childhood fears; now she uses this and other texts as the wellspring of her art. When she wrote the sutra in calligraphic script on a slab of fresh tofu at the opening of 'Water, Earth and Air' Tsai's movements were fluid, her demeanour calm and centred. This quietude is evident in many of her video works, whether she is alone or working with others. Yet she freely admits that her *Fish project*, 2008, which involved writing text from the 'One China' policy onto a living fish, caused her extreme stress: 'Coming from a Chinese cultural background, I saw animals less as living beings and more as food ... [but] when it came to the actual writing part, I was shaking and had a hard time

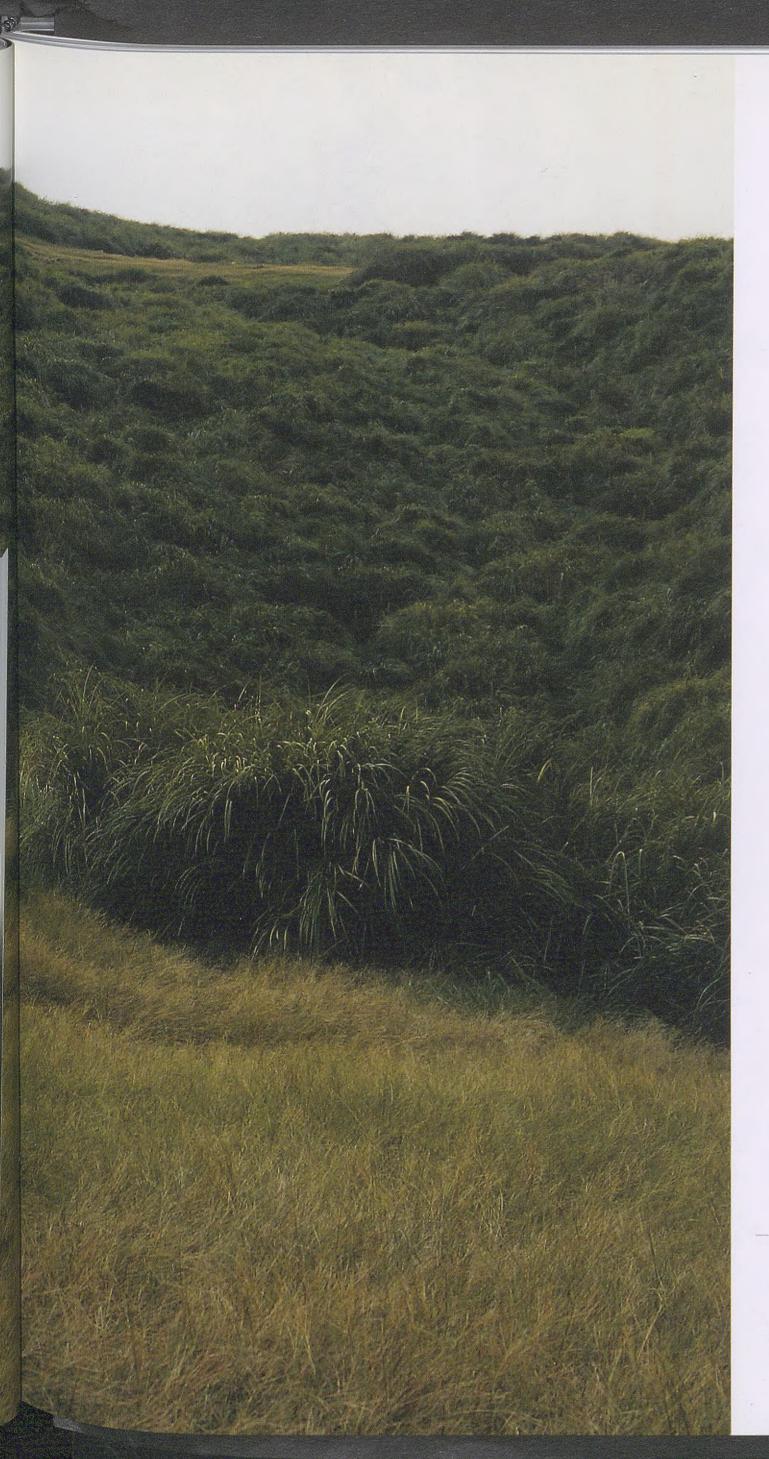
justifying the act. I stopped eating meat for a month.'² Although she has used hermit crabs, raw baby octopus and raw meat in her practice, Tsai now works only with plant materials.

Tsai's debut exhibition at Fondation Cartier in Paris in 2005 saw the initiation of her 'Mantra' series, when she wrote the Heart Sutra with ink and brush on a fresh-cut iris, a slab of tofu and a cluster of mushrooms. The artist explained the connotation of each material, mushrooms being 'more masculine' in promoting strength and sexual potency, the iris 'more feminine' (in France associated with the fleur-de-lis and the Virgin Mary), and the tofu or soybean curd 'more neutral'. The Paris exhibition was titled 'J'en Rêve' and opened with the performative aspect of Tsai's work. The iris was then replaced with its image projected onto a waterfilled glass casket and the tofu with a video of its gradual decay. The mushrooms dried and shrivelled in the soil. As the process of decomposition evolved so the Chinese characters altered to become embodiments of thought. Witnessing these changes - and the unchanging beauty of the flower - magnified the experience of impermanence in actual and virtual realities.

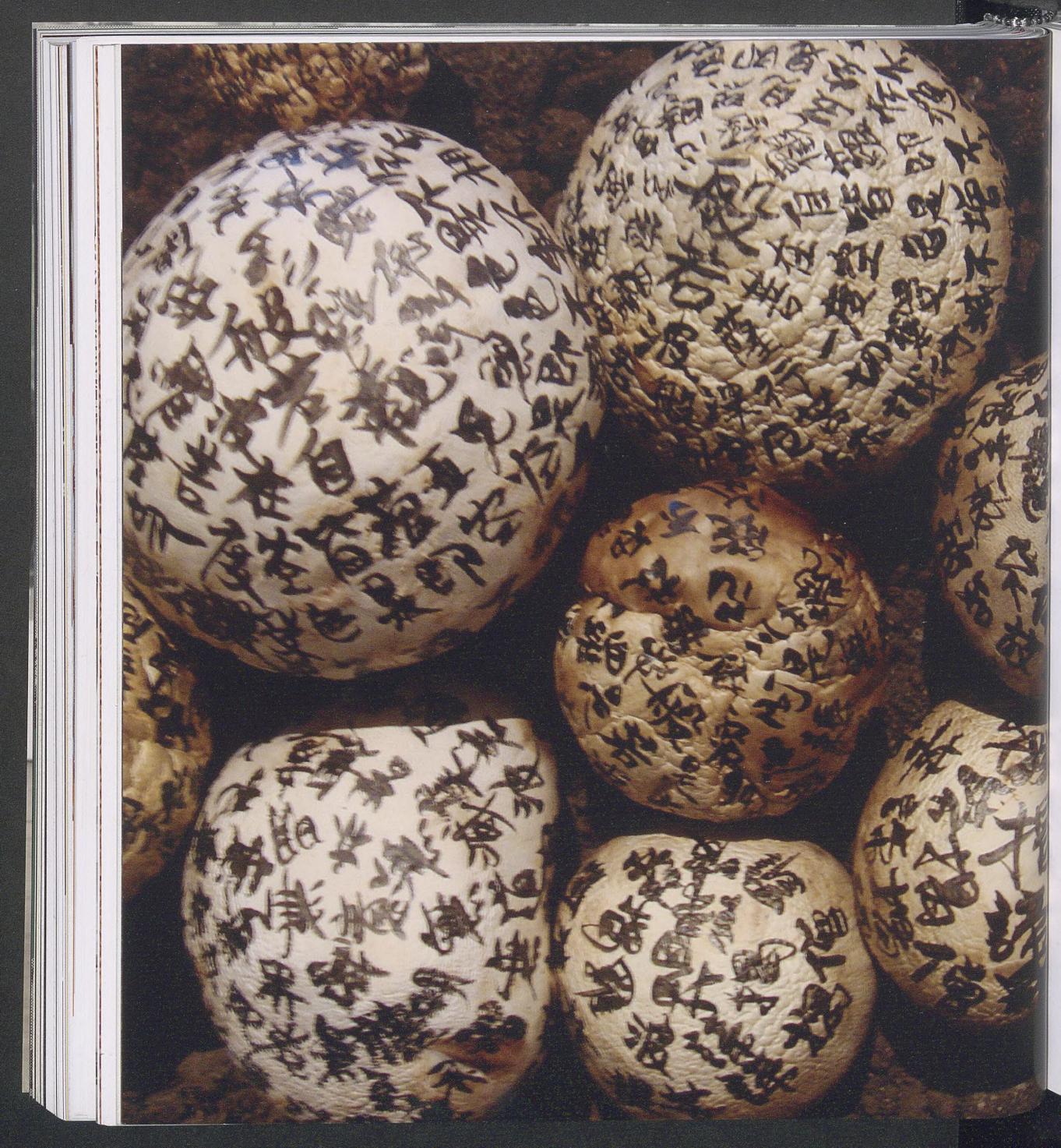
The mushroom mantra was incarnated on several occasions before assuming a more expansive scale at the 6th Asia–Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT6) in Brisbane as *Mushroom mantra IV*, 2009. For this a group of Taiwanese venerables joined the artist at the Queensland Art Gallery's Gallery of Modern Art to write the sutra on a multitude of fresh mushrooms. The work gathered intensity through their hushed collaboration and the vision of mushrooms planted in beds like forest outcrops on the gallery walls. Tsai also made videos of handwashing for APT6 that were projected onto actual restroom basins so that visitors were literally 'immersed' in the artwork. In Australia the work suggests mindfulness about water use but it has a precedent in *Baptism*, 2009, filmed at the Church of Saint-Séverin in Paris and exhibited in Sydney. The video shows the hands of a child gently washing







Earth mantra, 2009
Digital video, 20 mins duration
Filmed near Taipei, Taiwan
Commissioned by Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation
Courtesy the artist



pages 136–37 Sky mantra, 2008 Digital video, 20 mins duration Filmed in San José, Costa Rica Courtesy the artist and Frederico Herrero

opposite

Mushroom mantra IV, 2009

Black ink on mushrooms, installation view
6th Asia–Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
Commissioned by Queensland Art Gallery
Courtesy the artist and Queensland Art Gallery

those of a woman in the baptismal font. The actions are patient, intimate and loving. The adult–child relationship is reversed in this sequence, much as Jesus reversed the roles of master and acolyte when he washed his disciples' feet.

Two major new works in Tsai's 'Mantra' series were commissioned for her Sydney exhibition and shown in Australia with Sky mantra, 2008. All three works were created en plein air and amplified by the use of a mirror, an idea perhaps stemming from Tsai's experience of James Turrell's Roden Crater art project in Arizona where the sky is visible by day and night from within the dormant volcano; or by Anish Kapoor's imposing Sky mirror, erected in New York in 2006. Tsai's works are, by comparison, humble in scale, yet their conception is no less profound and they encompass a wide geography. In each work Tsai wrote the 262 Chinese characters of the Heart Sutra on a large mirror: Sky mantra was made and filmed in Costa Rica; Earth mantra, 2009, on a mountain near Taipei; and Sea mantra, 2009, at Little Bay in Sydney. These works are particularly attuned to Australia's landscape art tradition. We not only view the artist as a figure Within the landscape but in Sea mantra also recall Christo and Jeanne-Claude's Wrapped coast - one million square feet, Little Bay, Sydney, Australia, 1968-69 - a major undertaking that saw 2.4 kilometres of coastline wrapped in erosion-control fabric for a period of ten weeks. Tsai's choice of site aligns her work with this significant art-historical moment in Australia and internationally; moreover, as she transposes the sutra to the sounds of the sea, she sets thought, word and image adrift on winds and tides that travel without ceasing around the globe.

Freedom is the central idea of A dedication to the Sixth Dalai Lama (1683–1706), 2009, created in Sydney by the artist in honour of a monk so intoxicated by the love of women, wine and song that he was unable to follow his vows. Although his life was cut short at the hands of assassins, Tsangyang Gyatso's poetry is

still venerated in Tibet. Tsai was so moved by his story that she wrote his words on the trunks and leaves of bonsai specimens to liberate them with the breath of the living plants.

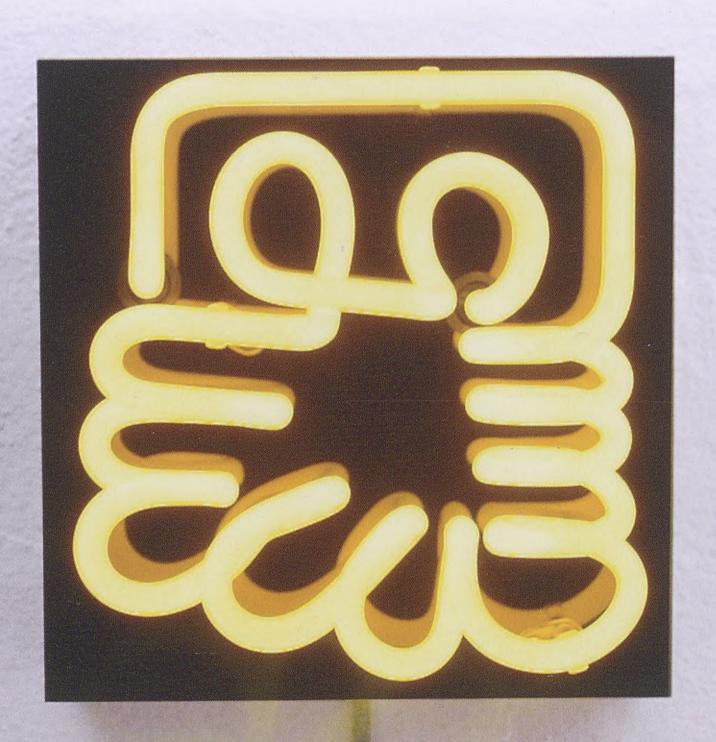
Ideas about transformative processes are encapsulated in Tsai's works using ice and mirrors. *Ice explorations*, 2009, comprises photographs showing the artist's fingertip creating tiny indentations on a circle of ice. The warmth of each touch hastens the transition of ice to water. *Numbers*, 2009, is a video work focusing on single numerals written with ink and brush on a block of ice. Each number creates a feathery pattern on the ice before it melts and disappears, inviting philosophical speculation, but *Numbers* raises issues affecting people's everyday lives – from the cost of childcare to global financial crises and climate change.

Born in Taipei, Tsai is currently engaged in postgraduate research in Paris, having studied fine arts and industrial design in Rhode Island, New York, as well as working as an assistant for Cai Guo-Qiang. She has gained increasing recognition since 2005 following her debut as an artist and as publisher/editor of the biannual journal Lovely Daze. Tsai's main interest in creating Lovely Daze was to encourage young artists to develop their ideas through writing and making art rather than resorting to 'shock' to gain recognition. Perhaps her own work could be considered shocking in a milieu that celebrates grand gestures. But Tsai's poetic works have rapidly borne fruit; she travels extensively and intensively, producing work for a global audience and peeling back the layers of non-attachment as she pursues her practice.

Virginia Woolf, diary entry, 1929, quoted in Robyn Davidson (ed.), *The Best Australian Essays* 2009, Black Inc., Melbourne, 2009, p. 364.

The fish was returned to the water. See interview by Tony Brown, 22 August 2009, in *Charwei Tsai: Water, Earth and Air*, exhibition catalogue, Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney, 2009, p. 26.

ART & AUSTRALIA PRESENTS: ARTIST EDITION #6 BLACK, 2010, BY BROOK ANDREW



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Review, Spring 2010

Exhibition reviews

17th Biennale of Sydney; Paths to Abstraction 1867–1917; Structural Integrity; Aaron Seeto: Fortress; Mirror Mirror: Then and Now; Sam Smith: Permutation Set; Play On; NEW010

Book reviews

The Finger: A Handbook; Conceptual Beauty: Perspectives on Australian Contemporary Art; Alun Leach-Jones: Painting and Sculpture; The &-Files: Art & Text 1981–2002; Seven Days in the Art World; Green Light: Toward an Art of Evolution

Tributes
Peter Blizzard, Tom Bass

Art pages
Noel McKenna

Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces and Art & Australia Emerging Writers Program Susan Cohn

Art & Australia / Credit Suisse Private Banking
Contemporary Art Award
Chantal Fraser

The 17th Biennale of Sydney

Ngahiraka Mason Adam Geczy

On MY THIRD FERRY RIDE TO COCKATOO ISLAND I overheard an exchange between a couple discussing their perception that this 17th Biennale of Sydney was strongly, even overly, Indigenous. There was no judgment in their comments, only a curiosity that the public were not informed that this was an 'Indigenous' rather than simply 'contemporary art' biennale.

We are accustomed to claiming theoretical positions for contemporary art and exhibitions in a limited field, often operating inside cultural institutions that uphold limiting thought patterns concerning the sharing, encountering and support of contemporary art. The fallback position is to skim over the multiple realities, cultural depth and visual foundations that artists draw on. Indeed, we often defend conclusions based on perceptions and by interpreting the experiences of others with whom we barely know.

My initial impulse was to relate literally and deeply to the idea that contemporary art is indeed a condition of our times. Part of my wish as a viewer was to become clear in my own mind as to what is relevant and specific to me as an Indigenous curator, postmodern traditionalist¹ and recovering artist. My curious curatorial door was open enough to challenge my own conditioning about contemporary art.

The large conceptual heart of 'The Beauty of Distance: Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age' (both the exhibition and the catalogue) was an experience I completely recommend. The biennale brought forward tricky contemporary predicaments into public view. Artistic director David Elliott's approach to Indigenous, Fourth World and diasporic peoples and western art practices was an exploration of the purpose and function of contemporary art in bringing forward a different attitude. Being exploratory is part of the job but it is quite another thing to contour multiple approaches to visual art and the contemporary, and to package it as one big art experience. Perhaps this was why this biennale's title felt so suggestive and engaging, intentioned on

turning ideas of art, history and being contemporary on their head.

A case in point was the exoticisation of 'beauty' which loomed large in the paintings by Canadian First Nations artist Kent Monkman. His alter ego – the artist, hunter and femme fatale Miss Chief Eagle Testickle (named from 'mischief' and 'egotistical') – was the star performer in a series of story-lines arranged on imagined 'New World' landscapes. The accounts were intentioned to humorously refute the colonial history paintings of George Catlin and Albert Bierstadt, with Indians, cowboys and Miss Chief depicted in all states of dress, undress and cross-dress and strategically placed in Claudian and sublime landscapes. It was hard not to read the paintings as hysterical role reversal power plays between new settlers and Miss Chief's Aboriginal nation.

Also constructing alternative histories, Mexican artist Enrique Chagoya's two large charcoal paintings graphically described something of the conditions that produce art from his cultural context. Mocking everyone including his beloved homeland, the artist's frontline battle was reserved for the United States and popular global and religious icons. It was hardly a new idea to challenge the reality of global borders, but what Chagoya managed in the process was to describe the changing nature of culture.

Following his presentation at the biennale's opening week symposium session, 'Is it smart to be materialist?', Tibetan artist Gonkar Gyatso was asked whether he thought the fabric of his sticker collages was in conflict with the historicised aesthetic of Tibetan Buddhism. The artist simply answered: 'No.' Gyatso's biennale work, Wheel of modern life, 2010, comprised stickers within an Indian ink and pencil drawing representing a Tibetan perspective on existence with instructional themes and teachings to understand the circle of life. I was told that most people struggle to move past the first lesson, ignorance. The second lesson that sustains ignorance is conditioning. While the materiality of Gyatso's art did not conform to some conventions of taste –

including the renewal of traditional Tibetan art – the intentionality behind his contemporary practice was refreshing.

The cooption and function of 'beauty' as a recurring motif throughout the exhibition implied some sort of understanding about the condition of Indigenous contemporary art based on aesthetic, cultural and spiritual evidence. Aboriginal Australian artist Fiona Foley's 2009 photographic series, 'Bearing Witness', was necessary proof of the blunt edge of this understanding. Foley's images implicated everyone as a witness to the survival and distinctiveness of Aboriginal people. Bearing witness 1 depicted a man wearing two red-tipped black cockatoo feathers. The black cockatoo is an endangered species, with a deeply haunting song. These birds survive because we bear witness to a species under threat. From the series there came the sense that nature often reflects strangely on human life.

Borrowing from eighteenth-century Mexican casta or caste painting, Claudio Dicochea's biennale works such as De Queen y Sitting Bull el Presidente (of Queen and Sitting Bull, the President), 2009, substantiated a different evidence of survival. Making funelsewhere of a host of outdated figures from popular, political and celebrity history, Dicochea's recasting of idealised history painting from the Enlightenment subverted clichéd and romanticised ideas of social structures and identity.

In the accompanying catalogue, Elliott saturated his tonal typescript and layout design with figures from the worlds of musicology, art and literary history, perhaps to dimensionally pace the experience of the book. It was liberating to read a catalogue I will enjoy well into the future. In much the same way, experiencing the biennale made me feel spoilt for the rich spectrum of experiences of art, of individuals and communities, venues and Indigenous colleagues; leaving me with a genuine gratitude for being there.

N. M.

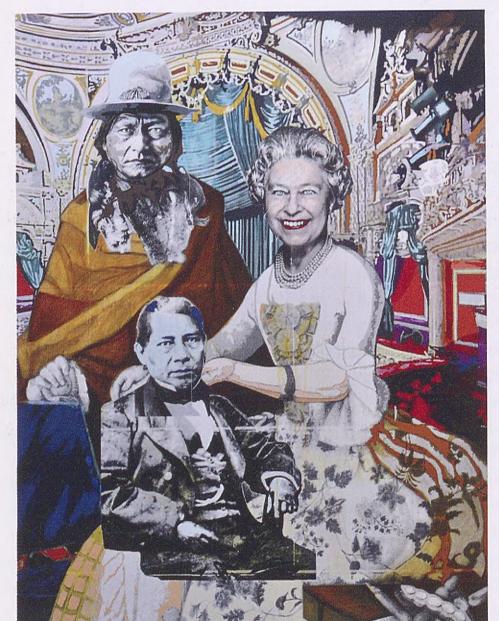
THE 17TH BIENNALE OF SYDNEY confirmed two things already noticeable in previous biennales: first, that it may be advisable to overlook the title; and second, that the parts are generally superior to the sum. 'The Beauty of Distance: Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age' was unusually tedious in what is a long tradition of fatuous titles, with more than a noxious whiff of colonial patronising. (Actually it was inspired by Paul Klee, notorious for retiring from the political torment of his age.) David Elliott's art festival was a neatly packaged bundle in which the voice of cultural anxiety was ultimately drowned out by the pervading air of pageantry.

With over a hundred artists, the reach was so broad one had the impression that the curator had gone shopping and enjoyed it. Not that there is anything wrong with that approach, but a more tightly curated show with fewer artists would perhaps have made more sense – especially for the Australian artists who at times seemed a little tacked on, and some of whom found themselves stranded during the set-up and installation with a dearth of resources, in contrast to the more royally accommodated overseas celebrities.

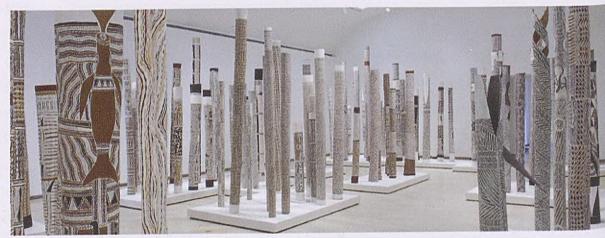
Cultural crossovers and mildly left-wing concerns helped characterise the biennale. 'Left wing' is ironically meant for the default position of artistic correctness. It was a proclivity especially acute at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) which, together with Cockatoo Island, amassed the lion's share of artists. Makoto Aida's postwar horrors haunting Japan were placed directly one floor above Folkert de Jong's vaudeville-style installation of figures that cast generic seventeenth-century Dutch traders as symbols of capitalist rapaciousness. Nearby, Enrique Chagoya's adroit and arresting collages surreally conjoined history, allegory and parody with current events. These were placed outside the characteristically provocative sideshow-style installation by Jake and Dinos Chapman in the 'bad art' protest style that was, simply,

Gratitude to Dr Manulani Aluli Meyer of the University of Hawaii for introducing me to this term.













clockwise from top left

AES+F, The feast of Trimalchio, 2009, video still, nine-channel video installation, 19 mins duration, courtesy the artists, Triumph Gallery, Moscow, and Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow; Kent Monkman, The death of Adonis, 2009, acrylic on canvas, 182.9 x 304.8 cm, courtesy the artist and TrépanierBaer Gallery, Calgary; 110 larrakitj by 41 Yolngu artists from North-east Arnhem Land, earth pigments on naturally hollowed log, courtesy Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth. Photograph Sebastian Kriete; Paul McCarthy, Ship of fools, ship adrift 2, 2010, rigid urethane foam, steel, wood and carpet, 600 x 365 x 730 cm, courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth, Zurich and London; Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook, Manet's Dejeuner sur I'herbe, 1862–63 and the Thai villagers group II, 2008–09, from 'The Two Planets Series', photograph and video, 110 x 100 cm and 16 mins duration, courtesy the artist and 100 Tonson Gallery, Bangkok; Claudio Dicochea, De Queen y Sitting Bull el Presidente (of Queen and Sitting Bull, the President), 2009, detail, acrylic, graphite, charcoal and transfer on wood, 121.9 x 91.4 cm, courtesy the artist and Lisa Sette Gallery, Scottsdale.

bad. Perhaps with the exception of the Chapman brothers the political sincerity was not to be questioned, but seen as a group the politics became so high-handed as to dispel ambiguity or depth.

The occasional peppering of comparatively innocuous abstractions did not mitigate the didacticism of 'lefty' correctness. Canadian Dana Claxton's multi-channel video about Sitting Bull and Custer's Last Stand was like the Discovery Channel on video filter steroids. Meanwhile an entire room devoted to New Zealand artist Fiona Pardington's oversize photographs of mostly Maori and Pacific Islander head casts seemed to shout: 'Keep historical guilt alive!' The performance videos of Thai artist Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook ensured that the appearance of critical credibility was worn firmly on its sleeve. Here she assembled modest Thai villagers to comment on life-sized, framed reproductions of seminal western paintings such as Millet's The gleaners, 1857. The strategy says it all: cultural commentary in art has never been so bland. Except perhaps in the work of Mette Tronvoll who has travelled to remote quarters of the world taking photographs of locals staring impassively at the camera - that tired photographic convention in which triteness passes for profundity.

Just as questionable, but visually more abrupt, was the role that Indigenous artists played in Elliott's show. Most formidable was the enormous forest of Yolngu artists' *larrakitj* burial poles on loan from the Kerry Stokes Collection. This was decontextualisation and cultural tokenism at its best. Even more unsettling was the ostensibly experimental and inclusive gesture of asking ten Yolngu artists to 'respond' to Hiroshi Sugimoto's *Faraday's cage*, 2010, a work citing the same era of science and exploration that led to these people's subjugation.

The imperial air was a little lighter at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, which was given over to Asian artists, but alas an Asia still seen as exotically 'oriental'. The protocols of cultural inclusion is a vexed and tumultuous issue. With this biennale

the necessity for collaboration with curators who have detailed regional and cultural knowledge was even more urgent. 'Distance' was therefore a more complex thought than Elliott's post-imperial framework had bargained for.

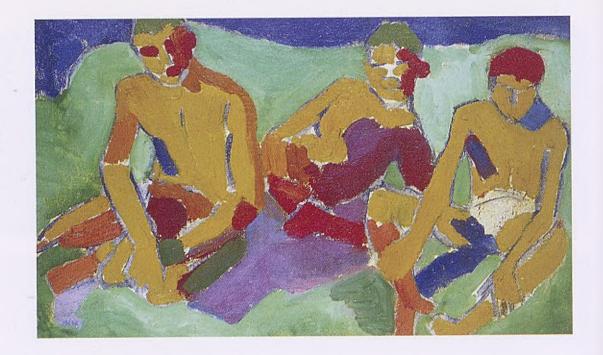
Needless to say there were works that cut through the exhibition's soft politics. At Pier 2/3 that master of contemporary political art, Paul McCarthy, showed how it's done with his gorgeously harsh *Ship of fools, ship adrift* 2, 2010, a sardonic meta-comment on both power and dissent following his excoriating work during the Bush era. Janet Laurence's oasis in the Royal Botanic Gardens was a sensuous, pseudo-alchemical fantasy rich with reflections on the seesaw of environmental devastation and restitution. Not far away, at Artspace, PechaKucha nights by Tokyo-based experimental art venue SuperDeluxe regularly raged with spilled-out audiences.

Within the vast architectural jaws of Cockatoo Island, Peter Hennessey's massive wooden reproduction of the Hubble Space Telescope was an extravagant folly carried out with devout seriousness. Breathtaking was the already legendary video extravaganza *The feast of Trimalchio*, 2009, by AES+F, operatic in its sumptuousness, imposing in its finesse. Rodney Glick's elaborate sculptures heavily inspired by Hindu iconography continue to engrave themselves on the memory. And armed with a purpose-programmed mobile phone, Perth-based collective pvi allowed audience-users to roam The Rocks area and partake in a fictive anti-consumerist uprising. Such works prove that art can 'survive' forced curatorial dicta, and that the 'beauty' of original and genuine ideas prevail over strained political expediency. A. G.

The 17th Biennale of Sydney, 'The Beauty of Distance: Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age', Artspace, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Cockatoo Island, Museum of Contemporary Art, Pier 2/3, Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney Opera House, 12 May – 1 August 2010.

Paths to Abstraction 1867–1917

William Wright



Terence Maloon's 'Paths to Abstraction 1867–1917' is another of the original marriages of singular artistic judgment and detailed historical comprehension for which the Art Gallery of New South Wales's Senior Curator of Special Exhibitions has become quietly renowned during the past decade. As its title suggests, the show charts a critical course through the early developmental terrain of late nineteenth-century European art, stopping judiciously short of its subsequent transformation towards total abstraction in post-revolutionary Russia. It is an exhibition that provides an encompassing picture of the intensive experimentation and accomplishment that took place during a half-century of hitherto unparalleled upheaval and creative innovation.

At the close of the nineteenth century the revolution in science and increased understanding of the physical world was inevitably mirrored in the nature of society's constructs – and nowhere more so than in the visual arts. A gradual but irreversible change had taken place in artists' understanding of the nature of sensory perception and how it could be expressed artistically. While the *feeling* aspects of form and content remained constant, the *subject* was increasingly displaced as irrelevant, a descriptive imposition distracting from painting's true material integrity. Art had begun to expand into a more palpable affirmation of its inherent experiential vantage in the use of colour and light and the communicant properties of the artist's materials.

'Paths to Abstraction' charts the core artistic movements with generous scope. Indeed, each component is exhibited with such breadth as to constitute a convincing exhibition in its own right: for example, the display of analytical cubism and causally related cubofuturist and orphic works is possibly the most complete show of its kind yet seen in Australia. It gathers together a stunning diversity of exemplary works by all the major contributors – such as Picasso, Braque, Mondrian, Klee, Picabia, Léger, Balla and Carrà.

The exhibition's historic momentum begins in the work of

James McNeill Whistler, painter of those crepuscular Thames mists so lauded by Oscar Wilde, which Maloon identifies as abstraction's turning point. Foremost a celebration of painting, the exhibition then weaves a sequential tapestry of inspirational works from the various movements, ideological tendencies and material approaches of the period. It also pays generous homage to the great nineteenthcentury masters Cézanne, Monet, Vuillard, and the most influential of them all, Matisse. There are several brilliant pre-1909 examples by the latter, and equally vivacious small works by other fauves - especially Derain with his vividly prescient Knight on a white horse, c. 1905, and Three figures on the grass, 1906. There are other stunning paintings by German expressionists Münter, Marc and Jawlensky and, important within the overall scheme of the show, Kupka's spectral Disks of Newton (study for 'fugue in two colours'), 1912, and Robert Delaunay's Woman with a parasol, 1913. Other artists appositely celebrated are Kandinsky, who is well represented by works from several of his developmental periods, and Arp, another of abstraction's important precursors.

Collectively, these were the artists who opened the twentieth century's Pandora's box of new creative possibilities with the energy of their revisionist art. 'Paths to Abstraction' provides a rare opportunity to see so many inspired and inspirational works. If, as A. J. P. Taylor has suggested, history is but a version of events, this narrative of art's evolution during a fervent half-century is a lucid one. Maloon's exhibition and its excellent companion catalogue richly re-engender a time of artistic transformation which determined the course of art for generations to come.

Paths to Abstraction 1867–1917, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 26 June – 19 September 2010.

André Derain, Three figures on the grass, 1906 Oil on canvas, 38 × 55 cm Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris

Structural Integrity

Rebecca Coates



For the 2010 Next Wave Festival's keynote project, curators Jeff Khan and Ulanda Blair chose to build on Melbourne's long, rich and diverse history of artist-run initiatives (ARIs) by inviting independent ARIs from across Australia and Asia to participate in a residency and exhibition project held at the Arts House Meat Market in May. Built in 1888, the Meat Market has evolved variously from its original eponymous function to a venue for artists' studios and, more recently, the site for temporary exhibitions. For 'Structural Integrity', the curators co-opted the whole of the bluestone-cobbled ground floor space, and the flanking butchers' meat hangers, to create a twenty-first century World Fair-style exhibition – or perhaps a subversion of the international commercial art fair – with a series of discrete pavilion-esque zones in which the eleven ARIs exhibited.

While previous shows have explored Australia's Anglo-European roots, Khan and Blair focused resolutely on our more immediate Asian neighbours and their relationship to 'home'. Following Khan's recent Asialink residencies in the Philippines and Indonesia, and Blair's ongoing research on Asian ARIs, the pair invited groups from Tokyo, Singapore, Guangzhou, Yogyakarta and Manila for month-long residencies in Melbourne, where they were joined by local ARIs and others from Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane and Hobart.

The pavilion mode of exhibition has, of course, a longstanding currency, most notably with the Venice Biennale and its garden of porticoed pavilions demarcating artistic and national boundaries. For 'Structural Integrity', each exhibiting pavilion took a wildly different form. As homogeneity would have seemed a pale response to such an ambitious premise, this was a definite strength. For the Australian participation, the curators focused on innovative ARIs such as Melbourne's West Space, which has evolved to reflect changing artistic practice and the 'geo-cultural' landscape rather than simply being a space for rent. For Next Wave, West Space

collaborated with a local secondary college to create a post-heroic monument, a smoke-ring machine which wafted giant 'O's over ephemeral Buren-esque bunting. It was a gesture at once fabulously politically incorrect and a delightful participatory component of the overall project. Another Melbourne group, Y₃K, created a homely, inviting space using drops of old floral-patterned sheets and recycled flooring populated with rubber plants.

The five Asian ARIs were fascinating for their differing voices. There was a new-media laboratory ambience with Yogyakarta's House of Natural Fiber and its installation inspired by the hexagonal cloud encircling Saturn's north pole. Dedicated to social issues, Singapore's Post-Museum worked with Melbourne NGOs and activist groups to create an exchange of garments that functioned as an alternative to the object-driven art market. Creating a shaman-like aura, Masahiro Wada from Tokyo's Art Center Ongoing made an eyrie from piles of local sticks and videoed the mystic burials of a found dead cat. Zhou Tao of Guangzhou's Vitamin Creative Space presented a small video work of what at first seemed a protest, but which transpired to be various groups warming up before work, an everyday occurrence in China, with cooks chanting in unison or hotel staff jogging in a line.

'Structural Integrity' drew together such disparate groups of voices. While each worked uniquely and individually within their own social and political environment, the exhibition gained its strength through a collective desire to explore new forms of organisation through participatory practice and an engagement with a wider regional audience.

Structural Integrity, Arts House Meat Market, Melbourne, 13–30 May 2010.



West Space pavilion, 2010 Various artworks, installation view Arts House Meat Market, Melbourne Photograph Shea Bresnehan

Aaron Seeto: Fortress

Souchou Yao



'Fortress' wrapped two shows into one: an installation of videos, photographs and 'poems' written in silver nitrate on paper; and a meditation on the nature of images and their archiving, designed to mute the works' pained slithering voices. The paradox worked much like the silence of an Edward Hopper painting.

And, like Hopper, Aaron Seeto never belittled the social setting of the images in which he pitched his ideas and yearning. For its polemics, 'Fortress' was an allegiance to the visual and its power.

If this exhibition seemed full of teeming energy it was because it struggled to say the unsayable. The idea of images, the nature of photography, the social formation of the individual: these complex notions all found resolution in the works' silences. Realism is rarely what it seems, and one was never far away from being reminded of its transience. Daguerreotypes of Seeto's own body parts - finger, foot and head - were mirrored and repeated, a reminder of how unreliable our mode of 'seeing' is. Of the works in 'Fortress', none was more expressive of the problem of seeing than the videos of Seeto's family house projected onto two large screens. They were full of shadows with children at play, silent feet running across the lawn, half-shaded windows through which one caught the view inside like a thief. The human presences, such as they were, were disquieting and disturbing. The uncertain sources of light and distorted perspective were mystifying and moving. The sensation was one of exclusion, emptiness and social intimacy in the last stage of its undoing.

However, in spite of himself, Seeto – whose parents are ethnic Chinese from Papua New Guinea – could not escape the driving needs of narrative and longing. In a gesture of submission he mulled his family life down to its essence of domestic comfort, social confinement and wider political history. *Parade*, 2004/10, was the title of two photographs seemingly depicting scenes of Chinese funeral processions, but which could pass for a South-East Asian street riot in a thick tear-gas haze. Just as the videos

deconstructed the iconography of the family, here the unsettling politics were brought forth to remind us of its fragility.

Fortress as a metaphor for the nurture and repression of home is, of course, an old, old Chinese story. While central to the works in 'Fortress', Seeto's attitude to family was ambivalent rather than dismissively critical. His emphasis on the nurturing potency and social restrictions of family life; his refusal to give over to the lyricism of his parents' exile; his implicit rebuff of the tendency among 'Asian' artists to make much of the real and imaged experiences of their marginalisation in Australia – all pointed to an impressive conceptual wisdom. In both emphasising and understating the fact of his ethnic background, Seeto created an intelligent suave nihilism inviting us to ponder more generally on the fate of images after the time of their recording.

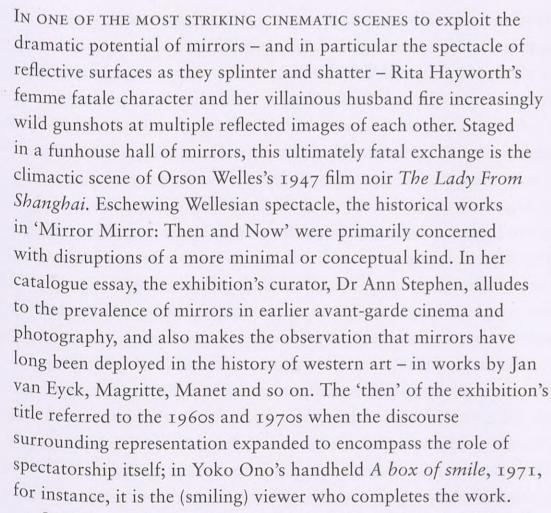
What one 'saw' were ghostly traces of some mysterious events which could only be fully explored through fantasy and imagination. One was pushed to ask questions: How can we call up the events from images so assiduously created, stored and archived? How can we do this without nostalgia and self-mockery? With his daguerreotypes of body parts and 'calligraphy' of silver nitrate on paper, one was reminded of the ease of photographic manipulation and the problem of archiving against disintegration, with photographic 'truth' a convoluted notion in the first place. Dark shadows of oblivion hung over the photographer's every move. While viewers perhaps gave in to a desire to construct narratives around the photographs, this enterprise also seemed futile and beside the point.

Aaron Seeto: Fortress, Hazelhurst Regional Art Gallery and Arts Centre, Sydney, 15 May – 27 June 2010.

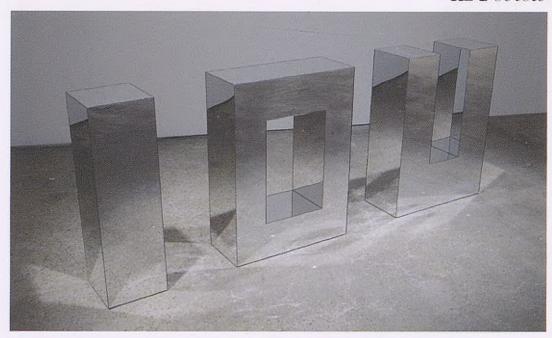
Aaron Seeto, Fortress, 2010 Digital HD video still Courtesy the artist

Mirror Mirror: Then and Now

Wendy Walker



Stephen is Ian Burn's biographer, and the impetus for 'Mirror Mirror' was Burn's recollection of the moment in 1967 when he became aware that other artists – including Michael Baldwin, Joseph Kosuth and Robert Smithson – were also experimenting with mirror-like materials. The dual levels of Adelaide's Samstag Museum of Art afforded a clear and very effective division between the generally smaller historical mirror-pieces in the show and the work of eight contemporary artists. On the upper level, three of Burn's 1960s mirror-pieces were aligned with a remarkable array of historical works by artists such as Shusaku Arakawa, Art & Language and Michelangelo Pistoletto, as well as early kinetic pieces by Julio le Parc and Hugo Demarco. The latter's Métamorphose, 1963, imparted a rare splash of colour in an exhibition that was almost entirely monochromical.



Many of the works were puzzles, such as Mikala Dwyer's enigmatic *IOU*, 2009, or 'Diglossia', Eugenia Raskopoulos's 2009 photographic series of eight panels featuring indecipherable letters traced in the condensation of their mirrored surfaces. With the shadowy figure of the artist barely discernible, Raskopoulos offered a play on the earlier text-based works while also invoking Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 film, *Psycho*. Nearby, the moody blurriness of Jacky Redgate's *Light throw (mirrors)*, 2009 – the outcome of photographing the light projected by a variety of old compact mirrors – was an unexpected choice from this artist but nonetheless arresting.

In a number of the contemporary and historical works there existed a denial or disabling of the mirror's reflective function, evident in Christian Capurro's 2009 whited-out wardrobe doors; Pistoletto's highly polished reflective panel silk-screened with an image of an old-fashioned shaving mirror; and Smithson's *Untitled (mirror-glass quarter-stepped pyramid)*, 1969, which had been assembled so that the stepped layers of mirror-glass panels were largely shorn of their reflective qualities.

Grafting yet another layer onto this thoughtful exhibition was the accompanying catalogue, in which scholarly essays, artist statements and a useful time line have been insightfully interspersed with selected images, including film stills from Jean Cocteau's Orphée (1950) and Michael Powell's Peeping Tom (1960).

Mirror Mirror: Then and Now, Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide, 14 May – 16 July 2010; University Art Museum, University of Sydney, 4 January – 2 May 2010; Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 24 October – 12 December 2009.

Mikala Dwyer, IOU, 2009 Mirror acrylic Courtesy Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

Sam Smith: Permutation Set

Anneke Jaspers



In Smith's twenty-second adaptation, the artist (acting as film director) gives instructions to the cast, who configure themselves around the space imitating the milieu of a crowded street. The action climaxes when two of the protagonists meet and one delivers the other a contrived slap to the face. This narrative is intermittently spliced with footage documenting the crew's behind-the-scenes activity. Smith acknowledges that 'the take was good' and directs everyone to move on. The scene ends, then it rolls again in another edited variation. Watching this repeat over and over from different perspectives produces a feeling of cinematic time imploding. Yet, despite an almost hyperactive accumulation of activity, nothing remarkable or conclusive takes place. Smith is less interested in recuperating Truffaut's character-driven storyline than in deconstructing how the tools and effects of cinematography are used to engineer spectator experience.

Smith's approach suspends the possibility of narrative resolution, shifting the emphasis to more formal and technical aspects of production: choreographed movement, camera angles, image composition and, above all, variations in tempo produced through non-linear editing. This fetishisation of technique ultimately works to illuminate Smith's agenda in appropriating *Day for Night*.



Truffaut's film echoes the artist's concern with a self-reflexive appraisal of filmmaking, while also providing Smith a point of departure in allowing him to articulate his interest in the digital revolution of cinematic technology.

Investigating the illusory potential of video has long been a focus of Smith's practice. The footage in *Permutation set* appears raw by comparison, but nevertheless extends the artist's approach in other recent videos, namely *Into the void* and *Time travel*, both 2009. In these works, Smith similarly appropriates extant material already circulating in the realm of popular culture – restaging a performative gesture by Yves Klein and dialogue drawn from film and television respectively – to reflect on the capacity of time-based media to alter our perception of space and duration.

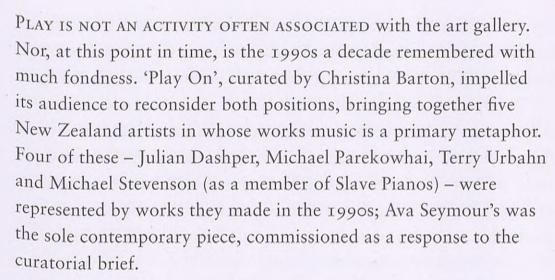
However, sculpture and installation also remain key elements of Smith's practice. The spatial composition of Permutation set played a pivotal role, working in conjunction with the fractured, repetitive videos to generate a sense of disorientation and intrigue. The videos were dispersed across four screens configured at different scales and on opposing axes. In addition, a number of props visible in the footage reappeared in the gallery, conflating the audience's perception of the sculptural and cinematic dimensions of the work. The gallery was effectively recast as an extension of the film set, enveloping the viewer within a matrix of images, actions, phrases and objects. Amid this surfeit of detail, the tension between physical presence and temporal 'presentness' was amplified, providing a strong sensory counterpoint to the more technical facets of Smith's artistic inquiry. As such, Permutation set produced a spectator experience that flickered restlessly between immersive and reflective engagement.

Permutation Set, Artspace, Sydney, 5 March – 10 April 2010.



Play On

Abby Cunnane



It was an agreeably simple premise, and on entering the gallery viewers met the works on simple terms: Parekowhai's Patriot: ten guitars, 1999, handmade wooden instruments lined up and resplendent; Slave Pianos's Slave pianos (of the art cult), 1998–99, a mechanical piano cued to play a stream of sonic art and experimental music translated to piano score; Dashper's The big bang theory, 1992–93, five drum kits bearing the names of New Zealand Art Greats; and Urbahn's The karaokes, 1995–97, a karaoke set-up featuring artists as performers. Seymour's 11 bars of oboe, 2010, lined the wall of a transition corridor with eleven photographic prints.

Unexpectedly, it was this contemporary piece that tied the experience together. Its self-possession, its restraint or poise, was conspicuously absent from the other works. The distinction perhaps reflected the time divide between the works' making, and a significant shift since the 1990s. Dashper, Parekowhai, Stevenson and Urbahn represent the rockers of a decade; their works demonstrated the inclination to make a resounding statement, to claim a position in relation to a public, and to art history. Seymour's contemporary gesture felt less direct, an exercise in pushing the boundaries of visual communication, but also in the communicative Power of acute restraint. Its performance offered a note of silence, the place between beats where time itself seemed to stop and listen.



As Barton's introductory essay observed, a significant difference between artistic production and musical performance is the concept of authorship. While the art world often hinges on the creative individual, in musical terms creativity embodies a notion of collectivity – 'the band' must be thanked; the entire orchestra is integral to the definition of a soloist. Commentators such as Greg Burke have suggested the 1990s was the decade where New Zealand began to come to terms with globalisation; perhaps in confronting a legacy of geographical isolation and cultural loneliness, visual artists turned with gusto towards collectivity, provider of warmth in a lonely decade. Certainly the unplayed drum kits, incessantly grinding mechanical piano and line of mute guitars all signified cheerless visual metaphors for aloneness.

Justin Paton's question in the original catalogue response to Urbahn's *The karaokes* – 'What if art were ... not a dutiful solo performance but a kind of amiable singalong?' – seems to articulate a key inquiry of the decade, and one newly relevant in this re-staging. For many, the experience was of *re-encounter* and, in more ways than one, it was like a high-school reunion with everyone glancing around to see who had best survived gravity and what new meanings had been arrived at.

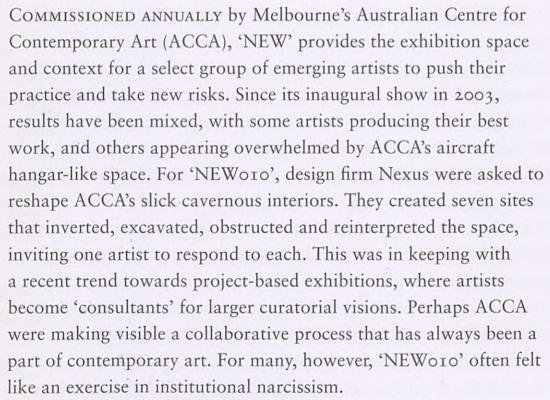
While time conferred classic status on these works, an 'amiable singalong' was not what the gallery contained. If anything, the restaging asked more of an audience than before. To *play* is an active verb; to *play on* is imperative, implicating the audience. Revisiting these works required that viewers engage with them on newly energetic terms. In 'Play On' the gallery became the site for this game.

Play On, Adam Art Gallery, Wellington, 8 May – 25 July 2010.



NEWoio

Maura Edmond



Fiona Connor answered ACCA's architectural intervention by punching holes in the wall and installing a row of domestic windows that looked onto the building's gritty internals: steel stud walls, cables and insulation. The portals themselves were replicas of the bedroom windows belonging to the gallery's invigilators. In the process Connor revealed not only something of ACCA's institutional nuts and bolts, but also something of the private spaces of its junior staff. Agatha Gothe-Snape also involved ACCA's floor staff. They were asked to choose and wear different coloured T-shirts with ambiguous slogans – such as 'Try Not to Do Everything All the Time' – depending on how they were feeling that day.

Lou Hubbard's rubber horse – scaled up from a 5-centimetre toy – lay crushed on the floor under three huge glass circles, the massive weight of the glass refusing to let the horse be figurative. Next to its head lay a crumpled, discarded plastic cup, as if this were the result of some sad sculptural accident. At the far end of the first gallery, Alicia Frankovich transplanted herb and vegetable plants grown in her suburban backyard onto ACCA's ceiling. Their



roots were bound in plastic and strung from a rack well above head height. The air smelt of basil and dirt, and from time to time the plants would stain the glossy gallery floor with overripe produce.

The space housing Susan Jacobs's *Being under no illusion*, 2010, contained a large internal room that hovered half a metre off the ground. Visitors had to crouch on their knees to peer at several small plinths on which tiny objects levitated by the push and pull of magnets. Jacobs is interested in the materiality of space – no doubt this was why her work interacted almost seamlessly with Nexus's efforts to reshape the gallery.

Arlo Mountford offered another of his wry, surreal videos about our personal encounters with contemporary art and its institutions. Sections of one wall were cut out to reveal the projector. On the other wall, props used in the video were displayed behind museum diorama-like glass. Positioned at the end of the exhibition, Raafat Ishak's polite row of MDF cube plinths resembled cafe seats – like those in ACCA's foyer. It was a strangely subdued work given the images of disorderly junk and raucous crowds that covered the cubes.

Until now 'NEW' shows have largely avoided thematic boxes, preferring to focus on the individual artists. With 'NEWo1o' a theme was induced during the exhibition's production, almost as a by-product, rather than being dictated from the outset. All seven artists were given such specific physical limitations within ACCA that they were forced to grapple not only with the gallery but the institution itself. A sense of hostility was elicited, with artists destroying their spaces, implicating the staff, and making works that were bound, crushed and contained.

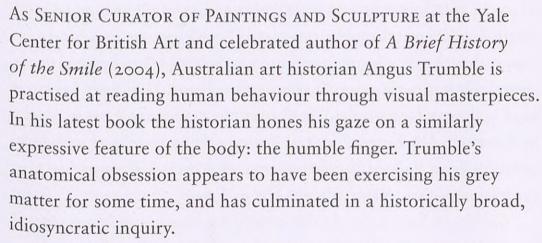
NEW010, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 18 March – 23 May 2010.

Alicia Frankovich, Medea, 2010

Plastic, carabenas, dirt, coconut fibre, newspaper, water tank, water pump, and others Courtesy the artist

The Finger: A Handbook

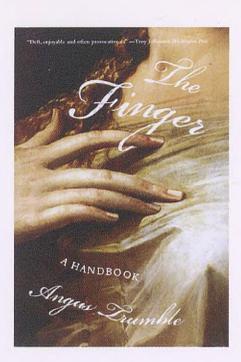
Marni Williams



Beginning with some meaningful insights into the gestures of Picasso's *Guernica*, 1937, Trumble's writing soon follows the eccentrically discursive model established in *The Smile*. The ten technical wonders at the end of our palms are first mechanically tested and then circumlocuted through religion, communication, the economy, gloves, play and combat with a prose style ranging from the expatiated to the academically erudite. Trumble's introduction eschews hypotheses for 'a series of reflections that, by deeply cutting into (in this case) one narrow seam of human anatomy and experience, may with luck provide access to rather more'.

With etymology and anatomy out of the way, the reader soon becomes privy to such fascinating trivia as the sign language of silence-observing Cistercian monks, Tutankhamun's striped linen gloves and the use of highly toxic green aviation paint that was the first form of nail polish. However, without an overarching agenda, Trumble's dexterous research can sometimes read as a meandering thematic list rather than a more logical historical treatise. What The Finger reveals in the process is that if one looks hard enough, sociological signposts – ranging from class-driven prejudice (thin fingernails were regarded as indicative of good breeding) to racial attitudes (an English nobleman proposed that Americans were using nail polish to conceal their 'black blood') – can attach themselves to any subject, including our appendages.

It is a small fact of great wonder that our manual dexterity



has kept us firmly atop the food chain, even if many manual systems have now been superseded. Trumble's most pertinent inquiries concern communication (the origins of sign language are captivating) and the handling of currency and manual arithmetic (Romans calculated marketplace transactions of up to one million with open gestures using their fingers and toes – a significantly more transparent form of business than that conducted electronically today). Considering our contemporary use of fingers for computer-based learning and social interaction, it is surprising not to see some reference to the impact of smartphones and touch-screen technologies in this context.

A consummate art historian, Trumble's artwork plates are well chosen and reflect the vast timeline traversed in relatively few pages. He illustrates his topics with such examples as Michelangelo's highly-charged space between the index finger of God and that of Adam in the Sistine Chapel, Van Dyck's suggestive placement of gloves and Picasso's green-nailed Dora Maar. Though the reader can on occasion get lost in detail, Trumble's accomplishment lies in his ability to find a full, if more convoluted, historical picture. And yet while the research is painstaking and many of Trumble's simpler assertions ring especially true - such as fingers being the 'only parts of our bodies ... that we see (without the aid of mirrors) routinely uncovered, acceptably naked' - The Finger primarily points to the past. Perhaps a more forwardthinking flow of ideas may have served to unlock this large topic and situate it within contemporary inquiry. But even as we are left grasping for a wider significance, the book amply illustrates the point that detailed historical inquiry can impregnate even the smallest gesture with poignancy and charm.

Angus Trumble, The Finger: A Handbook, Melbourne University Press, 272 pp., \$44.95.

Conceptual Beauty

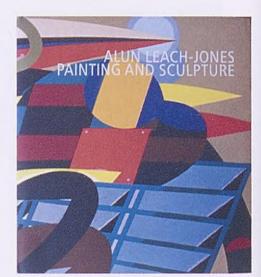
CONCEPTUAL BEAUTY

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Alun Leach-Jones: Painting and Sculpture



Talia Linz

Danielle Neely

STRUCTURED AROUND SIX UMBRELLA THEMES – 'Nature', 'Space(s)', 'Body Relations', 'Politics', 'History' and 'Beauty' – in Conceptual Beauty: Perspectives on Australian Contemporary Art, Dr Jacqueline Millner has collated a key group of her art writing from the mid-1990s to the present. The title is somewhat misleading as the book is in fact the documentation of one perspective – Millner's own – but luckily it is an intelligent, curious and confident voice that guides readers through the work of an array of Australian artists including David Noonan, Beata Geyer, Mike Parr, Ben Quilty and Vanila Netto. It is not, the author writes in her introduction, a comprehensive survey or an attempt at historicising, but rather a series of essays on 'works that grapple with the apparent dichotomy between the critical idea and beautiful object'.

The included pieces have been previously published in various exhibition catalogues, books and journals such as Art & Text, Artlink, Broadsheet and Photofile. Like most literary assemblages, some of the pieces in Conceptual Beauty are more accessible or compelling than others (I particularly enjoyed the writings on Ruth Watson and Virginia Ross) but as a collection they are an impressive showing of Millner's aptitude as a writer and academic, ebullient with insightful offerings, contextualising theory and critical analysis.

The selection of colour plates aid in the digestion of the material, but this reader could have benefited from added imagery from some of the more obscure exhibitions discussed in detail. With an enticing cover from Bronia Iwanczak, an artist Millner describes as 'a monitor of the pervasive cultural toxicity that characterises contemporary life in the West', *Conceptual Beauty* does indeed, as Millner intends, 'add nuance to existing perspectives on Australian art'.

ALUN LEACH-JONES IS A SEMINAL FIGURE in the movement of Australian abstraction. His practice is both complex and bold – as is this beautifully mounted monograph which extensively chronicles a career spanning almost fifty years. The eye is led from page to page of colour-saturated reproductions, while essay texts by Jonathan Goodman and Rex Butler, and an interview with the artist by Brett Ballard, further illuminate Leach-Jones's highly evolved, emotive and intelligent body of work.

Goodman backgrounds the artist's practice by asserting that Leach-Jones operates within a very specific idea of modernity. Acknowledging the legacy of such masters as Picasso, while creating utterly contemporary work, Leach-Jones succeeds in 'resurrecting a fallen language'. Work such as the 'Noumenon' series, begun in London in 1964, amply illustrates this idea, and Goodman also considers the interplay of poetry and music and other crucial elements of Leach-Jones's oeuvre.

These stylistic considerations provide an apt segue to Butler's essay, 'Allegories of Feeling', which explores the content of Leach-Jones's work – namely, emotion. This is, of course, an inherently difficult subject to broach in the context of viewing art, but Butler suggests that emotional intelligence rather than superficial judgment is key to a rewarding engagement with the artist.

Perhaps not surprisingly, in recent years Leach-Jones has increasingly turned his attention to sculpture, producing often small-scale bronzes that shift between fluid forms and mechanical components. Here Ballard's interview with the artist is especially enlightening, discussing how his sculpted and painted forms fit into a wider field of 'baroque abstraction', and revealing how 'titles, ideas and meanings seem to flow across the divide of the two disciplines without difficulty'.

Jacqueline Millner, Artspace, Sydney, 2010, softcover, 207 pp., \$25.

Jennifer Blunden (ed.), Marnling Press, Sydney, 2009, hardcover, 239 pp., \$85.

The &-Files: Art & Text 1981–2002

The &-Files
Position

ART & TEXT 1981-2002
Risk Writerist with Ross Chambers Res Ballet, and Streen Res

Michael Fitzgerald

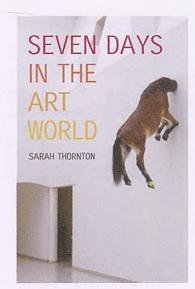
'The ampersand years' recorded in this history of *Art & Text* magazine do have, as the title suggests, an agreeably sci-fi quality about them. The two decades it traverses, from 1981 when young art critic Paul Taylor set up shop at Melbourne's Prahran College of Advanced Education, to 2002 when Taylor's successor Paul Foss published the final instalment in Los Angeles, makes for a bumpy ride (the magazine survived countless near closures), is filled with mythical characters (Meaghan Morris, Eric Michaels, Giovanni Intra) and often seems light-years away.

Indeed, it is difficult these days to imagine an art magazine cover emblazoned with Gilbert & George's posterior (no. 20, 1986), a man masturbating on a chair (no. 66, 1999) or 'The AIDS Crisis is not Over' (no. 38, 1991). Yet these were among *Art & Text*'s sundry provocations, as were seminal texts such as Foss's 1983 translation of Jean Baudrillard's 'The Precession of Simulacra', Michaels's essays on postmodernity and 'Bad Aboriginal Art', and Juan Davila's 'Spider Woman' artist collaborations. As Adrian Martin observed in 1996: 'Such is the gauntlet that the magazine has helped lay down: how to move through art, sometimes past it when necessary, to somewhere really significant?'

This international co-publication stays true to the magazine's open-ended spirit. The &-Files is staged around a series of interviews with Los Angeles-based Foss, and Rob McKenzie, Rex Butler and Simon Rees collectively elicit many revealing recollections. The late Taylor is described as a likeably shambolic figure and his literary brainchild an unwanted orphan after Taylor's sudden move to New York. As mercurial as the magazine he inherited, Foss remains everelusive about his own artful contribution: 'Whoever is in charge of Production has to be a kind of magician, palming off as tricks what must forever remain a secret.'

Paul Foss et al, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane/Whale & Star, Delray Beach, 2009, softcover, 119 pp., \$20.

Seven Days in the Art World



Sarah Tutton

SARAH THORNTON'S COMBINED BACKGROUND IN ART HISTORY and sociology gives her a unique position as a participant-observer in this gossipy, often hilarious anthropological study of the contemporary art world. Structured around seven days – 'The Auction', 'The Crit', 'The Fair', 'The Prize', 'The Magazine', 'The Studio Visit', 'The Biennale' – the book argues that the art world is not a system but rather a 'conflicted cluster of subcultures – each of which embrace a different definition of art'. As Thornton travels from a Christie's auction in New York across to the California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles for Michael Asher's endurance crit 'Post-Studio Art', these differences couldn't be more starkly etched.

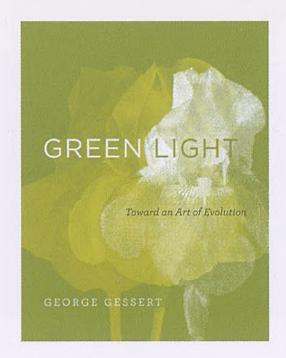
Populated with vividly drawn, larger-than-life characters such as the enigmatic and taciturn Takashi Murakami, the scruffy and entertaining John Baldessari and the vermilion-suited *Artforum* publisher Knight Landesman, it is the world of the super-rich jetsetting collector that dominates *Seven Days*. Written in the late 2000s at the height of the contemporary art market boom, Thornton's book captures the collector at the zenith of their power, with artists, curators and writers jostling for relevance. Driven by the vagaries of the market, the art world itself emerges in an unflattering light, appearing shallow and fickle despite the undoubted talent and industry of many of its denizens.

Thornton ends on an oddly uplifting note, recalling a moment of art-world camaraderie which one has difficulty imagining these days. When asked about the time he represented Great Britain (despite holding an Indian passport) at the 1990 Venice Biennale, Anish Kapoor recounts entering a restaurant near the Giardini and receiving rapturous applause: 'It was completely spontaneous. I was just a young guy. It was amazing. It was wonderful.'

Sarah Thornton, Granta Books, London, 2009, softcover, 286 pp., \$25.

Green Light: Toward an Art of Evolution

Ingrid Periz



IN BIOLOGIST E. O. WILSON'S NOW FAMOUS FORMULATION, biophilia is the name given to humans' 'innate tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes'. As sketched in his 1984 book Biophilia: The Human Bond with Other Species, this propensity to 'explore and affiliate with life' underwrites our common existence; indeed, 'our spirit is woven from it'. According to Wilson, biophilia's central concern is aesthetics. By this he means not the familiar forms of art but a specific kind of natural environment sought or engineered by humans in order to ensure their habitats are 'livable': a mix of open space and semi-ordered vegetation coupled with some topographical features and water that recall the environment in which early hominids appeared. This so-called 'savanna gestalt' operated across the gardens of Pompeii and Imperial Japan, extended to the opening of the American West and lingers today in contemporary corporate parks and suburbs, where it represents a 'deep genetic memory of mankind's optimal environment'. Philosopher Denis Dutton has recently argued that a near-universal preference for landscape imagery is further evidence of the continued existence of this savanna gestalt.1

As evolutionary psychology attempts to explain increasingly disparate aspects of contemporary hominid existence – systems of morality, voting behaviour, shopping styles – what might Wilson's biophilia hypothesis tell us about current art practice, particularly as contemporary art gets greener? George Gessert's collection of essays, *Green Light: Toward an Art of Evolution*, gives a partial and particular answer. Gessert, an Oregon-based artist and plant breeder who sits on the editorial board of the art, science and technology journal *Leonardo*, looks specifically at the aesthetic issues associated with bioart and what he calls 'other interventions in evolution'. Essays alternate between an urgency of tone predicated on imminent environmental collapse and an optimistic sense of connecting with a supra-human nature or, as he puts it, 'life in all life's variousness'. Gessert himself works with irises,

coleus and streptocarpus, and there is a particular emphasis here on plants as the life form most shaped by humans.

Gessert calls plant hybridisers 'major interpreters of nature' and he sees these interpretations as evidence of aesthetic choice operating within human-directed evolution. Several essays in Green Light are devoted to ornamentals - those plants which serve no purpose beyond display and which comprise the largest category of domesticated organisms. He cites photographer and plant hybridiser Edward Steichen's show of delphiniums at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1936 as a failed effort to establish plant breeding as a legitimate artform. Elsewhere he recalls visiting a farmers' market in Irkutsk during the collapse of the Soviet Union and finding a plenitude of flower seeds when basics such as milk were often unavailable, suggesting that 'one of the great unacknowledged forces of domestication today may be a hunger for abundant uselessness'. This type of botanical domestication, however, appeals to humans' 'playful and inquisitive' natures while helping to answer our need for 'contact with nonhuman life'.

The very features of ornamental plants – their bountiful lack of utility, the way they elicit human wonder – could have been marshalled by Gessert to enhance his argument that plant breeding shares the characteristics of art but this he doesn't do. Similarly, his assertions about the strength of aesthetic experience afforded by plants remains undeveloped as an analogy for the experience of art. Instead, he reiterates the biophilia hypothesis, giving it an idiosyncratic twist. 'To me', he writes, 'the biophilia hypothesis also suggests that we feel most at home in environments filled with diverse and conspicuously useless things, prominent among them plants.'

When Gessert turns to the history of ornamental breeding and domestication more generally, he finds a cautionary tale. In flowers bred for extra petals, known as doubles, he sees a complex of associations – overbreeding, tameness, luxury, irrelevance,

corruption and boredom – that 'remind us of our capacity to debase wild nature'. When plant hybridisers produce organisms that are both beings and images, the potential for kitsch, for plants that look like something other than themselves, is enormous. Better then, Gessert says, to breed for the older intrinsic values of plants: 'nonhuman beauty, originality, slowness, and creative power.'

While domesticated plant species represent at most 10,000 years of human evolutionary intervention, and most ornamentals a scanty 500, the genetic manipulations of bioart are much more recent. The first artwork created through genetic engineering was Joe Davis's 1984–85 *Microvenus*, which comprised a DNA segment coded to represent the Germanic rune for life and then inserted into an E. coli bacterium. Eduardo Kac, who coined the term 'bioart' in 1997, extended Davis's *Microvenus* conceit with *Genesis*, 1999, translating 'Let man have dominion over the fish of the sea ... ' (Genesis 1:28) into the letters of DNA's four bases which were again inserted into a bacterium. Gessert likens Kac's Projected bacteria to 'glowing rain, almost classically beautiful, which only made the hubris of the biblical passage more apparent'.

Hubris stalks bioart as regularly as it appears in the desire to breed large-flowered hybrids, and sometimes it's difficult to see whether, like ornamental breeding, bioart warns of the folly of hubris or whether it simply exemplifies it. A case in point is Kac's GFP bunny, 2000, an albino rabbit known colloquially as 'Alba', who is capable of glowing green thanks to an added and enhanced jellyfish gene. Conceived as part of a 'complex social event' rather than a discrete object, Alba was intended for a life of domestic petdom but when the laboratory responsible for her Creation refused her release, her case attracted enormous attention from scientists, artists and animal rights activists. At that point the Project entered the conceptual realm and Alba's existence moved beyond her material presence.

Gessert writes convincingly of the way plant hybridisers can

render certain varieties kitsch, and he notes the potential for even native plants to become kitsch when put to political effect, but he scarcely considers whether bioart's desire for light-emitting organisms might lead to the same result. Perhaps here bioart functions like the more egregious examples of plant hybridising, serving, as he puts it in his essay on doubles, 'as luxurious garbage to warn the wise away'. In other examples, bioart is shown to serve as a gentler corrective. Artist Jun Takita has been engaged in a decade-long quest to produce luminescent moss. In his *Light*, only light, 2004–08, a magnetic resonance scan of the artist's brain was rendered three-dimensionally and covered with transgenic, bioluminescent moss. According to Gessert, the work has so far produced 'a barely perceptible glow, but that glow may be exactly what we need to see', adding: 'the greatest marvels that biotechnology might bring us are patience and humility.'

Given bioart's short history, it is perhaps unsurprising that Gessert can't decide between its cautionary function and its potential to offer genuinely rich aesthetic experiences. Put like this, bioart shares much with ornamental plant breeding and to this extent his unlikely coupling works. Strangely, however, his comments about patience and humility don't extend to the much older practice of gardening. As an activity involving the care of plants within a specific site, gardening is not mentioned by Gessert even though the biophilic desire for certain features of the landscape – for what could otherwise be called the need for green – is taken as a given. While Gessert clearly aspires to proclaim such aesthetic virtues, bioart as revealed by *Green Light* can only offer them by default, by which point its own hubris becomes apparent.

George Gessert, Green Light: Toward an Art of Evolution, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2010, 192 pp., \$39.95.

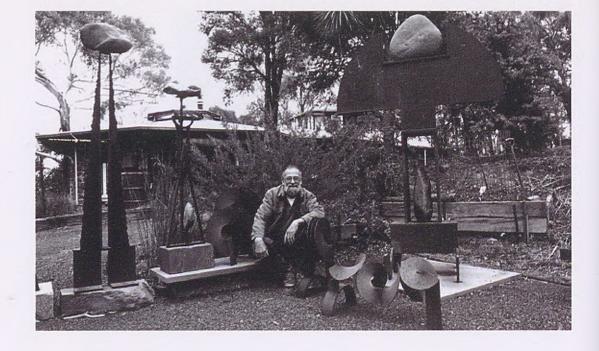


Denis Dutton, The Art Instinct: Beauty, Pleasure, and Human Evolution, Bloomsbury Press, New York, 2009.

Peter Blizzard

1940-2010

Sheridan Palmer



DEIFYING NATURE is strongly associated with eastern concepts, and the late Peter Blizzard's art was recognised for its profound mystical affinity with the natural environment. Using materials such as sticks, wood, stones and rocks gathered from quarries or paddocks, melted and cast metals or rusted steel, he produced an extraordinary body of work that elevated and sanctified the spiritual conditions of nature - a stone cradled between steel tripod legs represented both refuge and homage. Known for his passion and humility, his gentleness and strength of character, Peter's sculptures resonate with religiosity: stacked slate resemble hymnbooks but to Peter they were remnants of the earth's thrust and pressure. Part of this spiritualism can be traced to his Catholic childhood; as he said: 'A lot of the symbols I remember from church, but they are actually expressing the sacredness of the land.' The challenge for him was to work with nature and allow it to retain its own formal beauty.

Peter grew up in the Melbourne working-class suburb of Brunswick. By fifteen he had left school and begun studying art at Prahran College of Advanced Education, as well as attending night classes in graphic design at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. He gained a Diploma of Art in 1967, by which time he was working as an engineering draftsman, designing and building models for exhibition stands at international trade conventions, and posters, medallions, stamps and tapestries for the Vatican Museum.

In the 1960s Peter established a studio at Wantirna, where one of his partners, a dentist, taught him how to cast, and the other, a welder, helped him construct large steel sculptures. At the time, Robert Klippel, Clement Meadmore and Inge King were major influences on him, as were the international sculptors Alexander Calder and David Smith. However, the bush continued to attract and he travelled often to the Grampians or Sacred Canyon in the Flinders Ranges to study Aboriginal drawings and symbols in which he recognised the unifying arc between prehistory and the present.

By the early 1970s Peter's connection with the land was confirmed when he and his painter wife, Liz, bought 8 hectares of bushland at Trentham and embarked on a rural idyll. Peter was appointed lecturer in painting, drawing and sculpture at the Ballarat College of Advanced Education, a position he held until 1995. As a teacher he communicated his skills and craft with ease and enthusiasm, often taking students to the same magical rural sites he loved to visit. His respect for the environment and his spiritual concern for the land was contagious; as he said, it sat 'somewhere between Catholicism, Christianity, Buddhism, Shintoism and Aboriginal beliefs'.

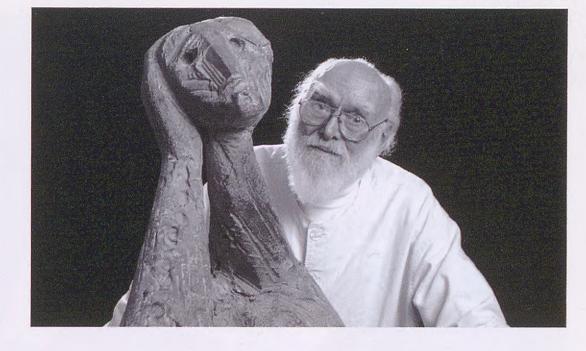
Although a regular exhibitor in major group shows such as the Mildura Sculpture Triennial, Peter's professional career only really accelerated after 1990. Of particular importance was his 2006 exhibition at the Hakone Open-Air Museum, the acclaimed sculpture park south of Tokyo, where he was the first Australian invited to have a solo show. His sculptural language, use of wood, stone and metals, and the relationship with nature and man found great accord with eastern aesthetic values.

Among his many public commissions and numerous awards the Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial in the Ballarat Botanical Gardens confirmed Peter's command of material, form and spatial aesthetics. A 130-metre long slab of black granite is engraved with many names of men imprisoned in four of the major wars of the twentieth century. Five large vertical slabs of stone stand like obelisk sentinels guarding the site. A highly emotive work connecting mortality and human life with the treachery of war, it is also a memorial to Peter Blizzard.

Tom Bass

1916-2010

Genevieve Carson



The passing of Tom Bass signified a profound loss to those who cherished him as a husband, father, artist and teacher, champion of public sculpture, poet and friend. Having only retired from teaching at the end of 2009 aged ninety-three, the familiar sight of his trademark black beret, snowy white beard, vivid blue eyes and hands covered in clay are now tightly held memories.

Tom's journey as an artist was one of dogged conviction, embracing the sculptural process of determining the form of the object and its meaning. As with many others of his generation, world events helped shape Tom's artistic life, and his transformation as a sculptor coincided with the rapid urban development of Australia following the Second World War.

Born in Lithgow, New South Wales, Tom enjoyed a peripatetic childhood before the Bass family settled permanently in Sydney by 1927. When the Depression took hold Tom left school and spent several years 'on the track' doing odd jobs to survive. In 1937 his long-held dream to become an artist led him back to Sydney where for three years he attended drawing classes with Antonio Dattilo-Rubbo. Here Tom met fellow artist Lenore Rays, whom he married in 1941. On being conscripted to serve in the Second World War, Tom's plans for art school were put on hold until 1946 when, aged twenty-nine, he enrolled at the National Art School (NAS) under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme.

It was at the NAS that Tom began formulating what would become his guiding philosophy: sculpting totems that would enrich and be of particular significance to the societies in which they were placed. By choosing to work outside the gallery system Tom generated income principally from commissions for corporations, universities and religious institutions. A skilled craftsman in carving, moulding and casting, Tom's largely self-taught sculptural techniques evolved through early commissions such as *The student*, 1953 (University of Sydney), and his labour-intensive copper depositing processes, as witnessed by *The falconer*, 1953–55

(University of New South Wales), *The trial of Socrates*, 1954–59 (University of Melbourne) and *Ethos*, 1959–61 (Civic Square, Canberra).

While the 1960s represented Tom's most creative and prolific period, it was also his most turbulent. Initially devastated by Oz magazine's 1963 cover featuring three irreverent students urinating into his recently unveiled POO wall fountain, 1962–63, Tom was one of the magazine's most public supporters during its later obscenity trial. For much of his career he felt isolated from his peers, who may have resented his approach to making sculpture inclusive and accessible.

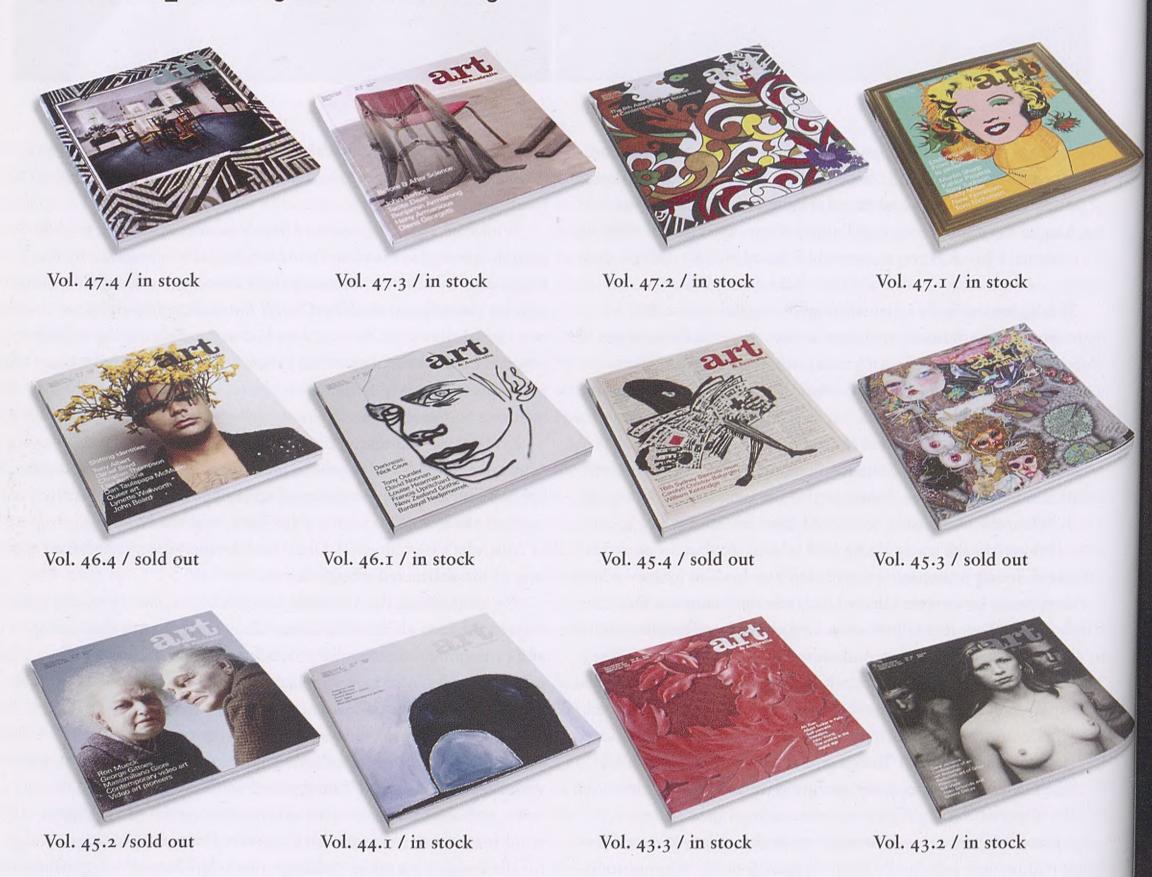
Undeterred and unquestioning in his commitment, Tom continued innovating his production techniques to produce more lightweight works of monumental scale. The copper fabrication method of the *AGC sculpture*, 1962–63, and the National Library of Australia's monumental *Lintel sculpture*, 1967–68, represent the best of his abstracted totemic forms.

On establishing the Tom Bass Sculpture School in 1974, the artist entered the next phase of his career: dedicating himself to teaching and promoting sculpture and producing an expressive body of personal work. In 1985, following the end of his first marriage, Tom married Margo Hoekstra who, along with a network of colleagues and supporters, has dedicated herself to changing ambivalent attitudes about her husband's contribution to Australian art. It was with deep gratitude that Tom received an Order of Australia in 1988, and then a Doctor of Visual Arts (University of Sydney) in 2009 for services to Australian sculpture. However, just as satisfying for the sculptor was the knowledge that many Australians continue to move admiringly in and around his work.

Tom Bass, 2008 Courtesy Tom Bass Sculpture School, Sydney Photograph Brian McInerney

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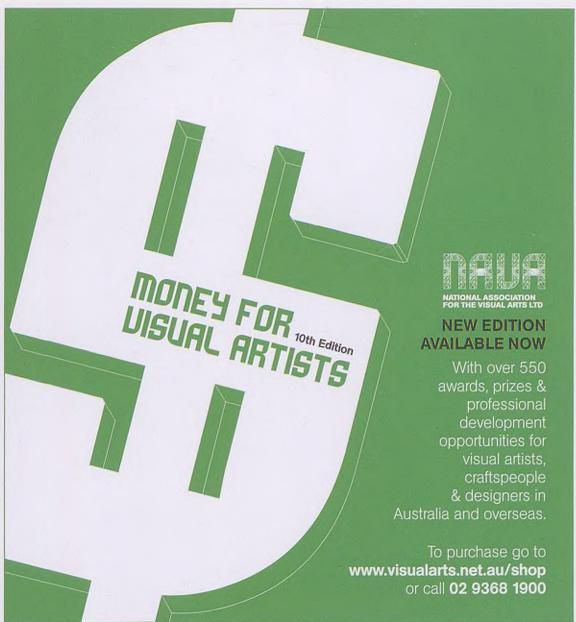
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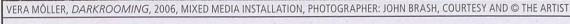
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The rose 1927
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Purcahsed 1975

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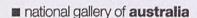
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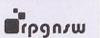












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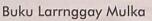
John Wolseley

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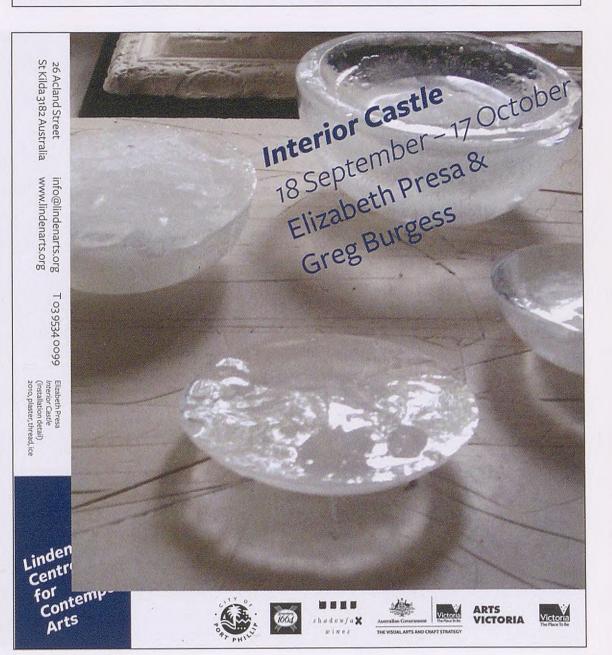




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Until 24 October

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5 - 21 November

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NOOSA REGIONAL GALLERY

2 SEPTEMBER - 3 OCTOBER

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Throwing Shadows Works by Brisbane-based photographer Vivienne Kelly and jeweller Madeleine Brown based on early scientific illustrations of microscopic marine forms.

Time Travellers Il An installation of light, music and sculpture by Terry Bouton.

Public Program Art over Coffee with Margaret Turner: 11 September, \$12. Workshop with Margaret Turner: 12 September, \$35. Bookings essential.

7 OCTOBER - 21 NOVEMBER

Sunshine Coast Art Collection The first public display of visual artworks held by the Sunshine Coast Council. A Cultural Heritage and Collections Unit initiative.

|Sunshine Coast |Council

Public Program Art over Coffee: 16 October, \$12, bookings essential.

25 NOVEMBER - 23 JANUARY 2011

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Public Program: Art over Coffee: 27 November, \$12, bookings essential.

Noosa Regional Gallery Riverside, Pelican Street Tewantin Qld 4565 Phone: 61 +7 5449 5340 Wednesday – Sunday 10am – 4pm www.noosaregionalgallery.org



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15 September – 16 October

Interpretive Matter - Looking at Abstraction by Australian Artists curated by Maree Nipperess. This exhibition will examine the development of abstraction in Australian art from the 1950s to the present day. Starting with the introduction of modernism to geometric abstraction and concluding with the movement's acceptance of more linear forms. Featuring works from the Moreton Bay Region Art Collection as well as other public and private collections.

20 October - 13 November

15 Artists 2010 15 invited artists are asked to produce artwork that has a relationship to the Moreton Bay region and the collection. Their artwork plays a pivotal role in defining the region; in illustrating its uniqueness, identity and spirit. This \$8000 annual acquisitive exhibition will be judged in 2010 by John Walsh, Director, Gold Coast City Art Gallery.

17 November - 7 December

The Moreton Bay Region Art Collection in Perspective: The Artwork of Yvonne Mills-Stanley Mills-Stanley first began exhibiting in Brisbane in 1981 and has maintained a consistently strong painting and exhibition practice, winning the Pine Rivers Art Awards in 1998 and the 15 Artists exhibition in 1998 and 2003. Since then her most distinctive paintings are the 'Grass' series begun in 2004. The austerity and boldness of this subject matter is balanced by a delicate depth and finish - enhanced, seemingly, with the very fragrance of the Australian landscape.

470 - 476 Oxley Ave, Redcliffe QLD 4020 Open: Mon to Sat, 10am to 4pm Phone: 07 3283 0415 Redcliffe City Art Gallery is owned and operated by Moreton Bay Regional Council www.moretonbay.qld.gov www.creativemoreton.org.au

www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au | Phone 3205 0555



Gladstone Regional Art Gallery & Museum

10 - 29 SEPTEMBER

IN THE WAKE OF FLINDERS AND WESTALL

New artworks depicting coastal Central Queensland 200 years after William Westall's first exhibition of paintings recording his voyage on HMS Investigator captained by

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6 NOVEMBER - 9 DECEMBER

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A community cultural initiative of the Gladstone Regional Council



Caloundra Regional Art Gallery

18 August - 3 October

SUNSHINE COAST ART PRIZE 2010

The Sunshine Coast Art Prize is a national aquisitive painting and 2D art prize valued at \$25,000 and includes an artist residency in Maleny on the Sunshine Coast Hinterland. The exhibition of forty finalists is a showcase of contemporary practice by leading local and national artists.

Public program: The Gallery and SCAP Partners will present an entertaining and informative program of events. For detailed information, visit www.scap.org.au

6 October - 7 November

TWELVE DEGREES OF LATITUDE

Regional Gallery and University Art Collections in Queensland

Twelve Degrees of Latitude explores how and why Queensland's regional collections began, their historical roles within their communities, the role of patronage and donor support, and the strength of Queensland's state-wide regional gallery culture. The exhibition features major Australian, Indigenous, Pacific, European and other works dating from the 17th to 21st centuries.

Public program: 14 October, 6pm

Curator and Coordinator Floor Talk presented by Curator Bettina MacAulay and Rebecca Butler from Museum and Galleries Queensland.

10 November - 16 January 2011

GROUP WORK, Creative and Community Groups Working Together Group Work reveals the diversity and dedication of community-based groups in the Sunshine Coast region.

Public program: The exhibition includes a diverse workshop program conducted by the participating groups as part of the broader public program.

Sunshine Coast

Caloundra Regional Art Gallery 22 Omrah Ave, Caloundra QLD 4551 tel: (07) 5420 8299 fax: (07) 5420 8292 email: artgallery@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/caloundragallery Open Wed-Sun 10-4 Free Entry

MOSMAN ART GALLERY



4 September - 10 October

AUSTRALIAN ACCENT: THE DESIGNS OF ANNAN FABRICS & VANDE POTTERY IN THE '40S & '50S

ph powerhouse museum

This exhibition showcases two Mosman businesses which featured distinctive Australian designs using native flora, fauna and Aboriginal motifs. It includes examples of the bold silk screen-prints produced by Annan Fabrics, and the quirky handcrafted ceramic pieces by Vande Pottery produced for the thriving tourism scene of the 1950s. Australian Accent is supported by the Powerhouse Museum.

4 September – 14 November

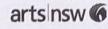
ADAM HILL: NOT A PROPPA ABORIGINE

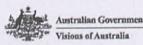
Adam Hill is broadly recognised as an accomplished Indigenous painter who is a keen advocate of social justice. His powerful and intensely original works are firmly located within the tradition of urban Aboriginal art, and engage directly with the political conditions of Australia's contemporary Indigenous society. The exhibition will present a series of key works from over ten years of the artist's professional art practice, along with new works.

16 October – 14 November

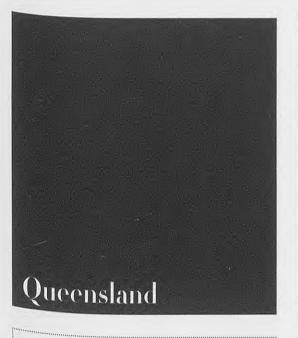
CONTEMPORARY ABORIGINAL ART FROM THE ANN LEWIS ABORIGINAL

Dr Ann Lewis is one of Australia's most important private collectors and benefactors. In 2008 she generously gave the Moree Plains Gallery major works from her Aboriginal collection. The works in this exhibition represent Aboriginal Art from across Australia, from Papunya in Central Australia and Balgo Hills in Western Australia to Ramingining in the Northern Territory and across each state capital city.





Mosman Art Gallery cnr Art Gallery Way and Myahgah Road Mosman NSW 2088 Tel (02) 9978 4178 Fax (02) 9978 4149 www.mosman.nsw.gov.au Daily 10-5, closed public holidays Free admission



Grahame Galleries and Editions

I Fernberg Road, Milton 4064
PO Box 515, Paddington 4064
Tel 07 3369 3288 Fax 07 3369 3021
info@grahamegalleries.com
www.grahamegalleries.com
Director: Noreen Grahame
Specialising in fine art prints, works on
paper and artists' books. Organiser of the
Artists' Books and Multiples Fair.
Wed-Sat 11-5, and by appointment

Institute of Modern Art
at the Judith Wright Centre of
Contemporary Arts
420 Brunswick Street (entrance Berwick
Street), Fortitude Valley 4006
Tel 07 3252 5750 Fax 07 3252 5072
www.ima.org.au
Director: Robert Leonard
Tues-Sat 11-5, Thurs until 8

Jenni Gillard Art Dealer
1/37 Wyandra Street, Newstead, Brisbane
P.O. Box 644, Springhill 4000
Tel 07 3852 5582 Mobile 0409 900 578
jenni@glowaustralia.com.au
Director: Jenni Gillard
Specialising in contemporary Australian
art. Sole representative of artist
Dooley Zantis.
Wed-Sat 11-5 by appointment

Anthea Polson Art

18–20 Mariners Cove
Seaworld Drive, Main Beach 4217
Tel 07 5561 1166
info@antheapolsonart.com.au
www.antheapolsonart.com.au
Director: Anthea Polson
Specialising in contemporary Australian
art and sculpture. Representing some of
Australia's top emerging artists as well
as exhibiting major investment works.
Mon–Sun 10–5

Graydon Gallery
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info@graydongallery.com.au
www.graydongallery.com.au
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Exceptional exhibition space for hire
by artists in Brisbane's gallery precinct.
Contact Cath Nicholson to discuss your
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of space.

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Ipswich 4305
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www.ipswichartgallery.qld.gov.au
Queensland's largest regional gallery
presents a dynamic program of visual art
exhibitions, social history displays,
educational children's activities and
special events.
Daily 10–5, closed Christmas Day, Boxing

Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday and

Anzac Day morning, Free admission

Fortitude Valley 4006
Tel 07 3358 3944 Fax 07 3358 3947
bris@libbyedwardsgalleries.com
www.libbyedwardsgalleries.com
Monthly exhibitions of paintings by
contemporary Australian artists.
Tues-Sat 10-5, Sun 12-5

Libby Edwards Galleries

482 Brunswick Street,

Crows Nest Regional Art Gallery
New England Highway,
PO Box 35, Crows Nest 4355
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art@crowsnestshire.qld.gov.au
www.toowoombarc.qld.gov.au/cngallery
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sculpture, photography, ceramics, textiles,
jewellery and much more.
Annual acquisitive competition each July.
Tues-Sat 10-4, Sun 11.30-4

90 Arthur Street, Fortitude Valley 4006
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bh@heisergallery.com.au
www.heisergallery.com.au
Director: Bruce Heiser
Representing leading Australian artists
and dealing in modern Australian works
of art.
24 August – 18 September: Karla Marchesi
21 September – 16 October: Lewis Miller
19 October – 13 November: Celeste
Chandler
16 November – 4 December: Julie Fragar
Tues–Fri 10.30–6, Sat 10.30–5

Jan Murphy Gallery 486 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley 4006 Tel 07 3254 1855 Fax 07 3254 1745 jan@janmurphygallery.com.au www.janmurphygallery.com.au Director: Jan Murphy Representing leading established and emerging contemporary Australian artists including Jason Benjamin, Kirra Jamison, Angus McDonald, Ben Quilty and Alexander Seton. Until 4 September: Rhys Lee 7 September - 9 October: Aboriginal Show 12 - 30 October: Angus McDonald 2 – 20 November: Jason Benjamin

23 November – 11 December: Leslie Rice

Tues-Sat 10-5

Logan Art Gallery cnr Wembley Road and Jacaranda Avenue, Logan Central 4114 Tel 07 3412 5519 Fax 07 3412 5350 artgallery@logan.qld.gov.au www.logan.qld.gov.au/artgallery Program Leader - Cultural Services: Annette Turner Logan Art Gallery celebrates the diverse practices of visual artists, craft workers and designers, and presents a dynamic exhibition program for residents and visitors to the region. 8 September – 9 October: Artwaves 2010: Logan and Adjacent Areas Secondary Schools Exhibition 13 October - 13 November: Seduction and Subversion: The Art of James Guppy 1989-2009 From 17 November: Habitus-Habitat Contemporary Wearables Tues-Sat 10-5, Free admission

Edwina Corlette Gallery
2/555 Brunswick Street,
New Farm 4005
Tel 07 3358 6555 Fax 07 3358 6333
gallery@edwinacorlette.com
www.edwinacorlette.com
Director: Edwina Corlette
Representing contemporary emerging and
mid-career artists including Vexta, Kill
Pixie, Bundit Puangthong and Julian
Meagher. With an annual schedule of
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www.herveybayregionalgallery.org.au
Director: Marj Sullivan
Enjoy a diverse program of touring
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artists' talks and children's programs.
Mon-Sat 10-4, Free admission

artdirectory

Percolator Gallery
134 Latrobe Terrace, Paddington 4064
Tel 07 3368 3315 Fax 07 3368 3318
Mobile 0419 499 228
info@percolatorgallery.com.au
www.percolatorgallery.com.au
Director: Helena Lloyd
Gallery space for hire in the heart of
Brisbane's Paddington gallery precinct.
Check website for opening hours

Redland Art Gallery
cnr Middle and Bloomfield Streets,
Cleveland 4163
Tel 07 3829 8899 Fax 07 3829 8891
gallery@redland.qld.gov.au
www.redland.qld.gov.au
Director: Emma Bain
The Redland Art Gallery showcases a mix
of innovative exhibitions and specialises in
a varied program that looks to define the
cultural identity of Redland City.
Mon-Fri 9-4, Sun 9-2, Free admission

QUT Art Museum

Until 3 October:

Until 19 December:

Sat-Sun 12-4

artmuseum@qut.edu.au

www.artmuseum.qut.com

15 October - 28 November:

Tues-Fri 10-5, Wed until 8,

2 George Street, Brisbane 4001

(next to Brisbane City Botanic Gardens)

A Generosity of Spirit: Recent Australian

Glenn Murcutt: Architecture for Place

Zen to Kawaii: The Japanese Affect

Women's Art from the QUT Art Collection

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Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery
Cnr Lock and Marsh Streets,
Stanthorpe 4380
Tel 07 4681 1874 Fax 07 4681 4021
director@srag.org.au
www.srag.org.au
Director: Justin Bishop
Home to the permanent collection
established in 1972 and hosting local, state
and national exhibitions.
Mon-Fri 10-4, Sat-Sun 11-4, closed some
public holidays, Free admission

Suzanne O'Connell Gallery
93 James Street, New Farm 4005
Tel 07 3358 5811 Fax 07 3358 5813
suzanne@suzanneoconnell.com
www.suzanneoconnell.com
Director: Suzanne O'Connell
Specialists in Australian Indigenous art
from Papunya Tula, Yuendumu, Balgo
Hills, Kununurra, Fitzroy Crossing, Tiwi
Islands, Maningrida and Yirrkala.
Wed-Sat 11-4

Toowoomba 4350
Tel 07 4688 6652 Fax 07 4688 6895
art@toowoombarc.qld.gov.au
www.toowoombarc.qld.gov.au
Curator: Diane Baker
Established in 1938, Toowoomba has
the oldest public art gallery in regional
Queensland. Housing the Lionel Lindsay
Art Gallery and Library, the Fred and Lucy
Gould Collection, and the City Collection
(including the Dr Irene Amos OAM: Amos
Bequest and the Cay Gift), the Toowoomba

Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery

9 September – 10 October: Future Nurture Toowoomba Biennial Emerging Artists Award Exhibition

Regional Art Gallery displays historical

and contemporary artwork.

Future Nurture will showcase creative artworks that explore the fragile nature of our relationships with cultural and natural environments in which we live.

14 October – 7 November: Urapun Kai Buai

Contemporary Torres Strait linocuts by Billy Missi.

A Kickarts touring exhibition. Tues-Sat 10-4, Sun 1-4, public holidays 10-4, Free admission New South Wales

Albury Art Gallery 546 Dean Street, Albury 2640 Tel 02 6051 3480 Fax 02 6051 3482 artgallery@alburycity.nsw.gov.au www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/art gallery With an ever-changing program of exhibitions, selections from the collection and the interactivity of Kidspace, the Art Gallery is a place of experience for all ages. Until 26 September: National Photographic Prize - Modern Narratives: Photography as Storyteller Until 3 October: The Glass Percussion Project A collaboration between glass artist Elaine Miles and composer Eugene Ughetti 17 September – 19 November: Retro-Machine Dane Lovett, Victoria Reichelt and Greg Shapley 1 October - 5 December: Los Caprichos - Francisco de Goya A set of eighty etchings on the miseries of war, first published in 1799 8 October - 5 December: Liz Williamson - Textiles Explores learned traditional techniques from across the world Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-4, Sun 12-4 Free admission



2 Arthur Street, Fortitude Valley 4006 Tel 07 3358 3555 Fax 07 3254 1412 artenquiries@philipbacongalleries.com.au www.philipbacongalleries.com.au Director: Philip Bacon Artists include Davida Allen, Charles Blackman, Arthur Boyd, Rupert Bunny, Cressida Campbell, Peter Churcher, Charles Conder, Grace Cossington Smith, Ray Crooke, Lawrence Daws, Ian Fairweather, Donald Friend, Sam Fullbrook, James Gleeson, Gwyn Hanssen Pigott, Nicholas Harding, Barry Humphries, Philip Hunter, Michael Johnson, Robert Klippel, Norman Lindsay, Stewart MacFarlane, Sidney Nolan, Justin O'Brien, Margaret Olley, John Olsen, John Perceval, Margaret Preston, Lloyd Rees, William Robinson, John Peter Russell, Wendy Sharpe, Garry Shead, Gordon Shepherdson, Jeffrey Smart, Tim Storrier, Arthur Streeton, John Young, Roland Wakelin, Tony White, Brett Whiteley, Fred Williams, Philip Wolfhagen and Michael Zavros. 24 August – 18 September: Criss Canning and Tony White 21 September – 16 October: Wendy Sharpe 12 October - 26 October: Margaret Olley (Philip Bacon Galleries exhibiting at Sotheby's Gallery, Sydney) 19 October - 13 November: Ralph Wilson 16 November - 11 December:

Philip Bacon Galleries

Michael Zavros

Tues-Sat 10-5

Albury Library Museum

Corner Kiewa and Swift Streets, Albury 2640

Tel 02 6023 8333

librarymuseum@alburycity.nsw.gov.au www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/librarymuseum Albury's award-winning LibraryMuseum brings together state-of-the-art technology, a focus on the city's heritage, engaging interactive exhibitions and contemporary library services all under one roof. Until 12 September: Memorial: The Silence of Extinction

A worldwide project highlighting the annual globe extinction rate Until 10 October: Bilbies to Boom-chachas, Frogmouths to Foxes: Illustrations from the picture books of Narelle Oliver 1989 to 2009

²³ September – 14 November: A is for Animals

Examines how animals are put to many uses in war

14 October – 12 December: Water on Tap Water as captured by eight Charles Sturt University lecturers and artists
18 November – 16 January 2011: Women Transported: Life in Australia's Convict Female Factories
Mon, Wed and Thurs 10–7, Tues and

Mon, Wed and Thurs 10–7, Tues and Fri 10–5, Saturday 10–4, Sun 12–4 Free admission

Bathurst Regional Art Gallery
70–78 Keppel Street, Bathurst 2795
Tel 02 6333 6555
brag@bathurst.nsw.gov.au
Director: Richard Perram
Visit our website for updates on
exhibitions, education programs and to
view the entire permanent collection.

Sun and public holidays 11-2

BREENSPACE

Tues-Sat 10-5

289 Young Street, Waterloo 2017
Tel 02 9690 0555
media@breenspace.com
www.breenspace.com
Director: Sally Breen
Until 18 September: Mitch Cairns and
Vanila Netto
24 September – 6 November: Janet
Laurence
12 November – 24 December: David

Haines and Monika Behrens

Tues-Sat 11-6, and by appointment

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www.cdaygallery.com.au
Quality traditional and modern masters.
NSW agent Graeme Townsend. Including
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Sydney/Cologne
2 Danks Street, Waterloo 2017
Tel 02 9690 0215 Fax 02 9690 0216
info@conny-dietzschold.de
www.conny-dietzschold.de
International contemporary art including
painting, sculpture, installation,
photography, video and new media,
focusing on new tendencies in conceptual,
concrete and constructive art.
Tues-Sat 11-6

Eva Breuer Art Dealer 83 Moncur Street, Woollahra 2025 Tel 02 9362 0297 Fax 02 9362 0318 art@evabreuerartdealer.com.au www.evabreuerartdealer.com.au Eva Breuer Art Dealer specialises in buying and selling museum-quality Australian paintings and works on paper by traditional, modern and contemporary Australian artists, such as Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd, John Olsen, Brett Whiteley, Garry Shead, William Robinson, James Gleeson, Fred Williams, Ray Crooke, Kevin Connor, Donald Friend, David Boyd, Brian Dunlop, Margaret Olley and many more. From 15 September: Geoffrey Proud: New Work From 2 October: Sam Wade: New Work From 10 November: Tony Irving: Art Fills the Void Tues-Fri 10-6, Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5

Anna Schwartz Gallery

245 Wilson Street, Darlington 2008
PO Box 1926, Strawberry Hills 2012
Tel 02 8580 7002
mail@annaschwartzgallery.com
www.annaschwartzgallery.com
Located in the historic Carriageworks,
Anna Schwartz Gallery Sydney presents
ambitious projects by leading international
and Australian artists. The artistic
program focuses on large-scale
installations and curated exhibitions.
Tues-Fri 10-6, Sat 11-5

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Fine Art Advisors and Valuers
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Tel 0414 377 227
Brenda Colahan @bigpond.com
Approved to value Australian painting,
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Australian photography after 1900; and
Indigenous art after 1970 for the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program.
Member Art Consulting Association of
Australia.
Registered National Council Jewellery

Valuers, NSW (Fine Arts Division).

Cooks Hill Galleries
67 Bull Street, Newcastle 2300
Tel 02 4926 3899 Fax 02 4926 5529
mail@cookshill.com
www.cookshill.com
Representing Arthur Boyd, Sidney Nolan,
Fred Williams, Charles Blackman, John
Olsen, John Perceval, Russell Drysdale,
Norman Lindsay, Brett Whiteley, Tom
Roberts, Arthur Streeton, Frederick
McCubbin, Ray Crooke, Jeffrey Smart
and Charles Conder.
Fri, Sat and Mon 11–6, Sun 2–6, and
by appointment

Gallery Barry Keldoulis
285 Young Street, Waterloo 2017
Tel 02 8399 1240
gallery@gbk.com.au
www.gbk.com.au
Director: Barry Keldoulis
Very contemporary with a focus on the
best of the emerging generation.
Tues-Sat 11-6

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110 Trafalgar Street, Annandale 2038
Tel 02 9552 1699 Fax 02 9566 4424
info@annandalegalleries.com.au
www.annandalegalleries.com.au
Directors: Bill and Anne Gregory
Australian and international contemporary
art and modern masters. Specialists in
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2 Danks Street, Waterloo 2017
Tel 02 9318 1122 Fax 02 9318 1007
info@brendamaygallery.com.au
www.brendamaygallery.com.au
Director: Brenda May
The gallery hosts solo and thematic
exhibitions, has an extensive website and
an 'open' stockroom of movable racks.
Tue-Fri 11-6, Sat 10-6, Sun 11-4

Dominik Mersch Gallery
11/2 Danks Street, Waterloo 2017
Tel 02 9698 4499
info@dominikmerschgallery.com
www.dominikmerschgallery.com
Director: Dominik Mersch
Representing contemporary European
and Australian artists, including Stephan
Balkenhol, Isidro Blasco, Marion Borgelt,
Peta Clancy, Tracy Cornish, Elger Esser,
Tim Johnson, Clemens Krauss, Berit
Myreboee, Helen Pynor, Caroline Rannersberger, Stefan Thiel, Thomas Weinberger,
Philip Wolfhagen and Beat Zoderer.
Tues-Sat 11-6

Goulburn Regional Art Gallery
Civic Centre, cnr Bourke and Church
Streets, Goulburn 2580
Tel 02 4823 4494 Fax 02 4823 4456
artgallery@goulburn.nsw.gov.au
www.goulburn.nsw.gov.au
Director: Jane Cush
Exhibitions and public programs with a
focus on contemporary regional practice.
Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat 1-4, closed Sunday
and public holidays

artdirectory

Harrison Galleries

Tel 02 9380 7100

Harrington Street Gallery
17 Meagher Street, Chippendale 2008
Tel/Fax 02 9319 7378
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www.harrisongalleries.com.au

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Adam Hill, Anna Hoyle, Christopher

Director: Olga Harrison

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Tue-Fri 10-6, Sat 10-5

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Tel 02 9247 2740 Fax 02 9251 4884
gallery@done.com.au

Www.kendone.com.au

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Tues-Sat 10-6

Iain Dawson Gallery

gallery@iaindawson.com

www.iaindawson.com

Director: Iain Dawson

443 Oxford Street, Paddington 2021

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showcasing the best emerging artists from

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Nationally significant exhibitions alongside
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syd@libbyedwardsgalleries.com
www.libbyedwardsgalleries.com
Monthly exhibitions of paintings by
contemporary Australian artists.
Tues-Fri 10.30-5.30, Sat 11-5, Sun 1-5
during exhibitions

artgallery@mq.edu.au www.artgallery.mq.edu.au 11 September – 7 November: Newcastle Region Art Gallery Virtual Encounters: Paula Dawson Holograms Partnership exhibition presented by Macquarie University and Newcastle Region Art Gallery Curators: Rhonda Davis and Ron Ramsey A major survey exhibition highlighting the holographic work of Paula Dawson. The work To absent friends, 1988, will be launched for the first time to the public. It is the largest hologram ever produced showing the greatest depth of field on an international scale.

Macquarie University Art Gallery

Building E11A, North Ryde 2109

Tel 02 9850 7437 Fax 02 9850 7565

'Virtual Encounters' will explore the way technology and advanced systems in communication have altered our understanding of 'presence' in real time and space.

Mon-Fri 10-5, Free admission

Hazelhurst Regional Gallery
& Arts Centre
782 Kingsway, Gymea 2227
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hazelhurst@ssc.nsw.gov.au
www.hazelhurst.com.au
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from curators and artists for solo or group
exhibitions.
Wed-Fri 11-6, Sat 11-3, and by
appointment between exhibitions,
closed public holidays

King Street Gallery on William 177-185 William Street, Darlinghurst 2010 Tel 02 9360 9727 Fax 02 9331 4458 kingst@bigpond.com www.kingstreetgallery.com.au Representing: John Bokor, Andrew Christofides, Elisabeth Cummings, Jayne Dyer, Robert Eadie, John Edwards, Rachel Ellis, Paul Ferman, David Floyd (estate), Kate Geraghty, Salvatore Gerardi, Madeleine Hayes, Frank Hinder (estate), Robert Hirschmann, James Jones, David Keeling, Jan King, Martin King, Joanna Logue, Idris Murphy, Peter O'Doherty, Amanda Penrose Hart, Leo Robba, Jenny Sages, Wendy Sharpe, Adriane Strampp, Kensuke Todo, John Turier, Richard Wastell, Shona Wilson. Extensive stockroom selection. Approved valuer for the Cultural Gifts Program. ACGA member. Tues-Sat 10-6, and by appointment

Liverpool Street Gallery 243a Liverpool Street, East Sydney 2010 Tel 02 8353 7799 Fax 02 8353 7798 info@liverpoolstgallery.com.au www.liverpoolstgallery.com.au Directors: James Erskine and Basil Scaffidi Gallery exhibits: Rick Amor, John Beard, Tony Bevan (UK), Gunter Christmann, Kevin Connor, Virginia Coventry, Steven Harvey, Christopher Horder, Anwen Keeling, David Keeling, John Kelly, Jennifer Lee, Kevin Lincoln, Enrique Martinez Celaya (USA), Guy Peppin, Jon Schueler (USA), David Serisier, Peter Sharp, Jeannette Siebols, Aida Tomescu, Kate Turner, Dick Watkins and Karl Wiebke. Until 2 September: Virginia Coventry 2 - 28 October: Rick Amor

Tues-Sat 10-6

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Terms and Conditions of Entry:

This offer is open to new two-year Art & Australia subscribers and renewing two-year subscribers within the designated period from 1 September 2010 to 26 November 2010, closing at 5pm. Only residents of Australia are eligible for the prize, to be drawn at 3pm on 10 December 2010. There is a draw for three packs valued at \$89.90 each. If unclaimed, the Prizes will be redrawn on 20 January 2011.

The promoter is Art & Australia Pty Ltd, 11 Cecil Street Paddington, NSW 2021, and the draw will take place at company premises. The draw is authorised under New South Wales Permit Number: LTPS/10/06344.

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Subscription to commence Current issue next issue	Gift recipient's details
Payment details	Name
Please debit my Mastercard Visa	Address
Name on card	State
Card Number	Country
Expiry date	Tel
Signature	Fax
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Maitland Regional Art Gallery 230 High Street, Maitland 2320 Tel 02 4934 9859 Fax 02 4933 1657 artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au www.mrag.org.au Until 5 September: Tom Kearney and Michelle Gearin - The Nest Until 12 September: Documentary Photography, a CCP touring exhibition Adrian Lockhart - Shorelines Until 7 October: In[two]art, a group exhibition of new work by artistic and life couples, curated by Joe Eisenberg 18 September – 14 November: Geraldine Berkemeier and Garry Shinfield - On the Hunter Susan Archer - Afterlife Until 14 November: MRAG education exhibition of student Works K-10 from the Hunter and Central Coast region Until 31 October: Ruth Downes - Food for the Trades 15 October - 5 December: Liz Cummings, Graham Kuo, Steve Woodbury and Yaeli Ohana - Solitary Pursuits in Red 19 November – 9 January 2011: Cathy Bowen - Photographs of the Old Maitland TAFE Peter Poulet - A Survey 5 November - 12 December: Our Water, developed by Questacon - The National Science and Technology Centre Canberra, proudly sponsored by the

National Water Commission

Public holidays

Tues-Sun 10-5, closed Mondays and

Martin Browne Fine Art 57-59 Macleay Street, Potts Point 2011 Tel 02 9331 7997 Fax 02 9331 7050 info@martinbrownefineart.com www.martinbrownefineart.com Director: Martin Browne Specialising in contemporary Australian and New Zealand art. Representing Peter Atkins, Israel Birch, Robert Brownhall, Liyen Chong, Michael Cusack, Paul Dibble, McLean Edwards, Neil Frazer, Linde Ivimey, Ildiko Kovacs, Tim Maguire, Karl Maughan, Alexander McKenzie, Kirsteen Pieterse, John Pule, Simon Strong, A.J. Taylor, Simon Taylor and The Estate of Colin McCahon. Tues-Sun 11-6

Menzies Art Brands Pty Ltd 12 Todman Avenue, Kensington 2033 Tel 02 8344 5404 Fax 02 8344 5410 sydney@deutschermenzies.com www.deutschermenzies.com Deutscher~Menzies & Lawson~Menzies Fine Art Auctioneers and Valuers Chairman: Rodney Menzies Chief Executive Officer: Litsa Veldekis National Head of Art: Tim Abdallah The leading Australian-owned art auctioneers and valuers. Mon-Fri 9-5.30, free appraisals Wed 2-5

Miles Gallery Shop 17 Dural Mall, Kenthurst Road, Round Corner, Dural 2158 Tel 02 9651 1688 sales@waynemilesgallery.com www.waynemilesgallery.com Directors: Kelly and Wayne Miles Digital artworks of Wayne Miles, emerging artists, Tim Storrier, Reinis Zusters, Robert Dickerson, works on paper by Barbara Bennett, Anne Smith, Judy Cassab and Frank Hodgkinson.

Moree Plains Gallery 25 Frome Street, Moree 2400 Tel 02 6757 3320 moreeplainsgallery@bigpond.com www.moreeplainsgallery.org.au Moree Plains Gallery in north-western New South Wales features solo shows by artists from the region and exhibitions of the Gallery's collection, especially the recent Ann Lewis gift of 70 works by Aboriginal artists from across Australia. Until 30 September: Leo Robba Leo Robba is based in the Blue Mountains and his work explores regionalism in Australian landscape painting. The Newcastle Maitland and Dungog areas have been the driving force behind his work.

1 October - 14 November: William Yang William Yang is well known for his portraiture and recording of places and events he has encountered throughout his career. Yang has recently been documenting the Kamilaroi people in Moree.

Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-1, Free admission

Museum of Contemporary Art

The Rocks, Sydney 2000

140 George Street, Circular Quay,

1 Laman Street, Newcastle 2300 Tel 02 4974 5100 Fax 02 4974 5105 artgallery@ncc.nsw.gov.au www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/go/artgallery The gallery exhibits over 25 exhibitions annually, reflecting the diversity of contemporary art practice and the breadth of the gallery's significant collection of Australian art and Japanese and Australian ceramics. Tues-Sun 10-5, closed Good Friday and Christmas Day

Newcastle Region Art Gallery

Peloton 19 and 25 Meagher Street Chippendale 2008 Tel 02 9690 2601 info@peloton.net.au www.peloton.net.au Directors: Matthys Gerber, Lisa Jones A program of exhibitions and exchange projects of national and international contemporary art and artists.

Thurs-Sat 1-6

Rex Irwin Art Dealer 1/38 Queen Street, Woollahra 2025 Tel 02 9363 3212 Fax 02 9363 0556 brettballard@rexirwin.com www.rexirwin.com Directors: Rex Irwin and Brett Stone Rex Irwin Art Dealer was established in Sydney in 1976. The gallery represents important Australian and international artists, and supports and encourages emerging artists. The gallery also provides valuations, development of corporate and private collections, portrait commissions and restoration and framing advice. Tues-Sat 11-5.30, and by appointment

Rex-Livingston Art Dealer Flinders Street, Surry Hills 2010 Tel 02 9357 5988 Fax 02 9357 5977 art@rex-livingston.com www.rex-livingston.com Director: David Rex-Livingston Specialising in dealing quality investment art and the exhibition of professional, emerging and mid-career artists. Tues-Sat 11-6, Sun 12-4

Richard Martin Art
98 Holdsworth Street, Woollahra 2025
Tel 02 9327 6525
info@richardmartinart.com.au
www.richardmartinart.com.au
Director: Richard Martin
Regular exhibitions of paintings and
sculpture by prominent and emerging
contemporary Australian artists.
Also buying and selling quality investment
pieces.
Tues-Sat 11-6, Sun 1-5

Robin Gibson Gallery
278 Liverpool Street, Darlinghurst 2010
Tel 02 9331 6692 Fax 02 9331 1114
robin@robingibson.net
www.robingibson.net
Ballan Bolton, Stephen Bowers,
Gina Bruce, Robert Clinch, Lawrence
Daws, Marian Drew, David Eastwood,
Erwin Fabian, Catherine Fox,
Guy Gilmour, Steve Harris, Geoff Harvey,
Elwyn Lynn, Clement Meadmore, Phillip
Piperides, Avital Sheffer, Terry Stringer,
Mark Thompson, Bryan Westwood,
Maryanne Wick.
Tues-Sat 11-6

National Trust Centre Watson Road, (off Argyle Street), Observatory Hill, The Rocks, Sydney 2000 Tel 02 9258 0173 www.nationaltrust.com.au 6 August – 19 September: Slow Burn – A century of Australian women artists from an extraordinary private collection that evolved over 25 years under the guidance of the late art dealer Eva Breuer. Includes work by Clarice Beckett, Grace Cossington Smith, Margaret Olley, Tracey Moffatt and Bronwyn Oliver. 24 September – 7 November: Portia Geach Memorial Award The 45th Annual Portia Geach Memorial Award celebrates portraiture by Australian women artists. 12 November - 19 December: Surface Tension - The Art of Euan Macleod 1991-2008 The first major touring exhibiting of one of the foremost painters currently working in Australia and New Zealand. Featuring paintings, graphics and ceramics. Tues-Sun 11-5

S.H. Ervin Gallery

Sullivan + Strumpf Fine Art
44 Gurner Street, Paddington 2021
Tel 02 9331 8344 Fax 02 9331 8588art@ssfa.com.au
www.ssfa.com.au
Directors: Ursula Sullivan, Joanna Strumpf
Specialising in contemporary Australian
art including painting, sculpture, photography and new media by emerging and
established artists. Extensive stockroom.
Tue-Fri 10-6, Sat 11-5, Sun 2-5, and
by appointment

Trevor Victor Harvey Gallery
515 Sydney Road, Seaforth 2092
Tel 02 9907 0595 Fax 02 9907 0657
service@tvhgallery.com.au
www.tvhgallery.com.au
Directors: Trevor and Skii Harvey
Celebrating 16 years at Seaforth. Notably
eclectic monthly exhibitions featuring
a rotation of contemporary paintings
and sculptures with select pieces from
established and emerging Australian and
international artists.
Tues-Sat 11-6, Sun 12-5

39 Gurner Street, Paddington 2021 Tel 02 9360 6069 Fax 02 9361 5492 wagnerart@bigpond.com www.wagnerartgallery.com.au Director: Nadine Wagner Gallery Manager: Megan Dick Wagner Art Gallery has been proudly exhibiting the work of Australia's emerging, established and elite artists for thirty years. Exhibitions change monthly and there is always a great variety of artwork held in the stockroom. Untill 8 September Cynthia Breusch Narrative works revealing an introspection of simple life experiences and moments of 'just being' Mon-Sat 10.30-6, Sun 1-6

Wagner Art Gallery

SOHO Galleries
104 Cathedral Street, Sydney 2011
Tel 02 9326 9066 Fax 02 9358 2939
art@sohogalleries.net
www.sohogalleries.net
Director: Nigel Messenger
Innovative contemporary art including
paintings, sculpture, glass and works on
paper by contemporary Australian artists.
Tues-Sun 12-6

Stills Gallery
36 Gosbell Street, Paddington, 2021
Tel 02 9331 7775 Fax 02 9331 1648
info@stillsgallery.com.au
www.stillsgallery.com.au
Contemporary Photomedia. Representing:
Paul Adair, Narelle Autio, Roger Ballen, Pat
Brassington, Christine Cornish, Brenda L.
Croft, Sandy Edwards, Merilyn Fairskye,
Anne Ferran, Petrina Hicks, Mark Kimber,
Steven Lojewski, Ricky Maynard, Anne
Noble, Polixeni Papapetrou, Trent Parke,
Bronwyn Rennex, Michael Riley (est. of),
Glenn Sloggett, Van Sowerwine, Robyn
Stacey, Danielle Thompson, Stephanie
Valentin and William Yang.
Tues-Sat 11-6

Utopia Art Sydney 2 Danks Street, Waterloo 2017 Tel 02 9699 2900 Fax 02 9699 2988 utopiaartsydney@ozemail.com.au Representing contemporary Australian artists including John Bursill, Liz Coats, Tony Coleing, Helen Eager, Marea Gazzard, Christopher Hodges, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Peter Maloney, Makinti Napanangka, Walangkura Napanangka, Ningura Napurrula, Gloria Petyarre, Lorna Napanangka, Angus Nivison, Kylie Stillman, Ronnie Tjampitjinpa, Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri, George Tjungurrayi, George Ward Tjungurrayi and John R. Walker. Representing Papunya Tula artists in Sydney. Tues-Sat 10-5, and by appointment

UTS Gallery
Level 4, 702 Harris St, Ultimo 2007
Tel 02 9514 1652
utsgallery@uts.edu.au
www.utsgallery.uts.edu.au
Staff curator: Tania Creighton
UTS Gallery is committed to presenting
critically engaged, innovative work by
artists, designers and architects.
Until 3 September: Graphic Material
14 September – 15 October: (the heart that
has no love/pain/generosity is not a heart)
Exhibitions accompanied by free public
programs, see website for details.
Mon-Fri 12-6, Free admission

Watters Gallery 109 Riley Street, East Sydney 2010 Tel 02 9331 2556 Fax 02 9361 6871 info@wattersgallery.com www.wattersgallery.com Directors: Frank Watters, Geoffrey Legge and Jasper Legge 7 - 25 September: Derek O'Connor - paintings Ruth Waller - paintings 29 September – 16 October: Rod McRae - paintings Paul Selwood - sculpture 20 October - 6 November: Wally Barda - paintings Tony Tuckson - paintings on newspaper 10 - 27 November: John Bartley - paintings Max Watters - paintings Wed-Fri 10-7, Tues and Sat 10-5

16-20 Goodhope Street, Paddington 2021 Tel 02 9331 1112 Fax 02 9331 1051 info@sherman-scaf.org.au www.sherman-scaf.org.au Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation (SCAF) is a not-for-profit exhibition and cultural space. Until 18 September: Brook Andrew: The Cell An immersive, inflatable installation Supported by the Nelson Meers Foundation 6 October - 18 December: Contemporary Art for Contemporary Kids Presented partnership with Queensland

Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art

Wed-Sat 11-5, Free admission

Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation

Western Plains Cultural Centre
76 Wingewarra Street, Dubbo 2830
Tel 02 6801 4444 Fax 02 6801 4449
info@wpccdubbo.org.au
Www.wpccdubbo.org.au
Recognised as a cultural icon of inland
NSW, the Western Plains Cultural Centre
combines Dubbo Regional Gallery – The
Armati Bequest, with the Dubbo Regional
Museum, the Outlook Cafe and extensive
community arts centre.
Wed-Mon 10-4, Free admission

Wollongong City Gallery cnr Kembla and Burelli Streets, Wollongong East 2500 Tel 02 4228 7500 Fax 02 4226 5530 gallery@wollongong.nsw.gov.au www.wollongongcitygallery.com One of the largest regional art museums in Australia, with a major collection of contemporary Aboriginal, Asian and Illawarra colonial art. Until 10 October: Kathryn Orton: Out of the Ordinary Until 10 October: ²⁰⁰⁹ Resident Artist Andrew Tenison: Calenture 4 - 26 September:

Sounds of Homes: Nature's Place?
Tegan Northwood, Shane Fahey & Honi
Ryan

² October – 28 November:
Paul Ryan: No Country for Dreaming
O November 2010 – February 2011:
Roger Grellman Collection: Memories
of Silk
Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat-Sun 12-4,

closed public holidays, Free admission

Yuill | Crowley

5th Floor, 4-14 Foster Street,
Surry Hills 2010

Tel 02 9211 6383 Fax 02 9211 0368

Yuill_crowley@bigpond.com
www.yuillcrowley.com
Contemporary art.

Wed-Fri 11-6, Sat 11-4.30

Australian Capital Territory

ANU Drill Hall Gallery Kingsley St (off Barry Dr), Acton 2601 Tel 02 6125 5832 Fax 02 6125 7219 dhg@anu.edu.au www.anu.edu.au/mac/content/dhg The gallery presents national and international artists' exhibitions developed in conjunction with the University's academic interests. Until 26 September: Gooch's Utopia, Wendy Fairclough 30 September – 7 November: Elisabeth Kruger: On Beauty 11 November - 19 December: Dadang Christanto Wed-Sun 12-5, Free admission

Beaver Galleries 81 Denison Street Deakin, Canberra 2600 Tel 02 6282 5294 Fax 02 6281 1315 mail@beavergalleries.com.au www.beavergalleries.com.au Directors: Martin and Susie Beaver (ACGA) Canberra's largest private gallery. Regular exhibitions of contemporary paintings, prints, sculpture, glass and ceramics by established and emerging Australian artists. Until 7 September: Caitlin Perriman – drawings Amanda Shelsher – ceramics 9 – 28 September: Wendy Teakel, Remnants - paintings and sculpture Belinda Fox, Day to Day - paintings and works on paper 14 October – 2 November: Nicole Slatter, Lucienne Rickard, Maria Parmenter – painting, drawing, ceramics Sophia Szilagyi – prints 4 - 23 November: Sue Lovegrove, Still Light – paintings Peter Rushforth – ceramics Gallery and licensed cafe open Tue-Fri 10-5, Sat-Sun 9-5

Chapman Gallery

1/11 Murray Crescent, Manuka 2603 info@chapmangallery.com.au www.chapmangallery.com.au Tel 02 6295 2550 Fax 02 6295 2550 Director: Kristian Pithie Established in 1976, Chapman Gallery has built its reputation on providing high-end contemporary Australian art, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Wed-Fri 12-6, Sat-Sun 11-6

Solander Gallery
10 Schlich Street, Yarralumla 2600
Tel 02 6285 2218 Fax 02 6282 5145
sales@solander.com.au
www.solander.com.au
Bringing the best of Australian art to the
National Capital.
Canberra investment gallery, established
1974 by Joy Warren OAM.
Advice on collecting, large stock
of significant Australian artists,
gazetted valuer.
Fri-Sun 10-5, and by appointment

National Gallery of Australia Parkes Place, Parkes, Canberra 2600 Tel 02 6240 6411 information@nga.gov.au www.nga.gov.au Director: Ron Radford AM Until 3 October: Robert Dowling: Tasmanian Son of Empire The first major exhibition of Dowling's Until 31 October: Life, Death and Magic: 2000 years of Southeast Asian Ancestral Art A major exhibition featuring dramatic sculpture, jewellery and textiles from prehistoric to recent times.

sculpture, jewellery and textiles from prehistoric to recent times.

23 October – 6 February 2011: In the spotlight: Anton Bruehl Photographs 1920s – 1950s

Australian-born Bruehl's work includes advertising, images of stars of stage and screen, and documentary photography.

30 October – 27 February 2011: Space Invaders: Australian . Street . Stencils .

Posters . Zines . Stickers

This exhibition looks at work by 35 contemporary artists from around Australia.

Daily 10–5

National Portrait Gallery
King Edward Terrace, Parkes 2600
Tel 02 6102 7000 Fax 02 6102 7001
www.portrait.gov.au
Untill 12 September:
National Youth Self Portrait Prize 2010
9 September – 7 November:
Headspace – 10 Years
24 September – 7 November:
Martin Schoeller: Close Up
24 September – 16 January:
Process of Portrait Making
Daily 10–5
Free admission, Disabled access

Victoria

Alcaston Gallery

11 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy 3065 Tel 03 9418 6444 Fax 03 9418 6499 art@alcastongallery.com.au www.alcastongallery.com.au Director: Beverly Knight, ACGA member. Exhibiting contemporary Aboriginal art: paintings, works on paper, limited-edition prints, sculpture, ceramics and artifacts. Until 4 September: New Sculptures by Patrick Freddy Puruntatameri from Jilamara, NT

7 - 25 September: New Carvings and Paintings From Elcho Island Arts, NT 9 - 13 September: Korea International Art Fair 2010

28 September - 16 October: New Ceramic Work by the Hermannsburg Potters, NT 11 - 23 October: Rupert Betheras @ Depot Gallery, Sydney

19 October - 6 November: New Ceramics and Paintings from Ernabella Arts, NT 9 - 27 November:

New Paintings by Paula Paul, Mornington Island Art, QLD Group Show by Tjungu Palya Desert Artists from the APY Lands, SA

Tues-Fri 10-6, Sat 11-5

2-4 Carlton St, Prahran 3181 Tel 03 8598 9915 Fax 03 8598 9914

Anna Pappas Gallery

info@annapappasgallery.com www.annapappasgallery.com Director: Anna Pappas Representing a diverse selection of established and emerging international and local artists in all

contemporary mediums. Tues-Fri 10-6, Sat-Sun 12-6

Anna Schwartz Gallery 185 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000 Tel 03 9654 6131 mail@annaschwartzgallery.com www.annaschwartzgallery.com Established in 1982, Anna Schwartz Gallery exhibits the ongoing practice of represented artists and presents projects by international guest artists. Tues-Fri 12-6, Sat 1-5, groups by appointment

ARC One Gallery 45 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000 Tel 03 9650 0589 Fax 03 9650 0591 mail@arc1gallery.com www.arc1gallery.com Directors: Suzanne Hampel and Fran Clark Australian and international contemporary art. Tues-Sat 11-5

Arts Project Australia 24 High Street, Northcote 3070 Tel 03 9482 4484 Fax 03 9482 1852 info@artsproject.org.au www.artsproject.org.au Director: Sue Roff Innovative studio and gallery with exciting calendar of exhibitions and collection of works featuring the 'outsider art' genre.

Mon-Fri 9-5, Sat 10-1,

and by appointment

Australian Tapestry Workshop 262-266 Park Street, South Melbourne Tel 03 9699 7885 Fax 03 9696 3151 contact@austapestry.com.au www.austapestry.com.au Director: Antonia Syme Changing exhibitions of contemporary tapestries by Australian and international artists, displayed in a studio setting with public viewings of works in progress. Bookings for tours essential. Mon-Fri 9-5

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art

111 Sturt Street, Southbank 3006

Executive Director: Kay Campbell

Artistic Director: Juliana Engberg

The Australian Centre for Contemporary

Art (ACCA) operates as a kunsthalle, a temporary exhibitions space delivering the very latest and best of Australian and international artistic practice. Located in a landmark rust-red monolith within the new contemporary arts precinct in Southbank, ACCA is Melbourne's premier

contemporary art space presenting a

changing program of exhibitions, events

and education programs. Please visit the

website for updated information about

Open public holidays except Christmas

Day and Good Friday, Free admission

exhibitions and other events.

Summer Hours: Tues-Sun 11-6

Winter Hours: Tues-Fri 10-5,

Mon 10-5 by appointment only

Australian Print Workshop

auspw@bigpond.com

Director: Anne Virgo

range of prints for sale.

Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 12-5

210 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy 3065

Tel 03 9419 5466 Fax 03 9417 5325

www.australianprintworkshop.com

Specialising in fine art limited-edition

prints by leading contemporary artists.

Regular exhibitions and a comprehensive

Sat and Sun 11-6

info@accaonline.org.au

www.accaonline.org.au

Tel 03 9697 9999 Fax 03 9686 8830

Axia Modern Art 1010 High Street, Armadale 3143 Tel 03 9500 1144 Fax 03 9500 1404 art@axiamodernart.com.au www.axiamodernart.com.au Established in 1973, Axia is one of Australia's leading contemporary art galleries showcasing a diverse range of paintings, works on paper, sculpture, studio glass and ceramics. Axia is committed to advancing exceptional contemporary art through an exciting and challenging program of exhibitions by prominent Australian and

Mon-Fri 9-5.30, Sat-Sun 11-5

international artists.

Bridget McDonnell Gallery 130 Faraday Street, Carlton 3053 Tel 03 9347 1700, Mobile 0419 306 593 www.bridgetmcdonnellgallery.com.au Established 1983. Specialising in nineteenth and twentieth-century paintings, drawings and prints; also featuring realist paintings and oil sketches from St Petersburg from 1940s onwards. Wed-Fri 10-5, Sat 12-5, and by appointment

Bridget McDonnell • Hampton Gallery 392 Hampton Street, Hampton 3188 Tel 03 9598 8398 mail@bmghampton.com.au www.bridgetmcdonnellgallery.com.au Established 2007. Exhibitions include collectors exhibitions and contemporary artists Celia Perceval, Brigid Cole Adams, Art from the Kimberley, Jeff Ferris and Juliana Hilton.

Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-3

Level 1, 8 Martin Street, St Kilda 3182

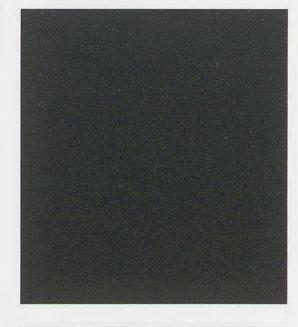
Tel 03 9593 9366 bright@brightspace.com.au www.brightspace.com.au Directors: Kantor, Greer, Hefner and Owen Brightspace is a large, naturally lit two-room gallery in St Kilda. We show established and emerging contemporary artists and actively promote the space to host creative endeavours and presentations of all types. Wed-Sat 12-6, Sun 1-5

Brightspace

Alison Kelly Gallery 1 Albert Street, Richmond 3121 Tel 03 9428 9019 Fax 03 9428 9049 Mobile 0417 542 691 ak@alisonkellygallery.com www.alisonkellygallery.com Director: Alison Kelly Exhibiting contemporary Indigenous art from art centres across Australia. Tues-Sat 11-5

Catherine Asquith Gallery
48 Oxford St, Collingwood 3066
Tel 03 9417 2828
enquiries@catherineasquithgallery.com
www.catherineasquithgallery.com
Regular solo exhibitions showcasing
a variety of exemplary artist practices,
working within the genres of landscape,
abstraction and figuration. Extensive
stockroom and private viewing room.
Tues-Fri 11-6, Sat-Sun 12-5

DACOU Dreaming Art Centre
of Utopia
Head Office:
10b Phillip Court, Port Melbourne 3207
Tel 03 9646 5372
Second exhibition space:
41 Canterbury Road, Middle Park 3206
info@dacoumelbourne.com.au
www.dacoumelbourne.com.au
Director: Fred Torres
Specialising in fine Indigenous art from
Utopia since 1989.
Tue-Sat 11-6, Sun 11-4. Middle Park
exhibition space by appointment



Geelong Gallery
Little Malop Street, Geelong 3220
Tel 03 5229 3645 Fax 03 5221 6441
geelart@geelonggallery.org.au
www.geelonggallery.org.au
Geelong Gallery's outstanding collection
of paintings, sculpture and decorative
arts spans the art of Australia, from
the colonial period to the present day,
including the Frederick McCubbin
masterpiece, A bush burial.
Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat-Sun and public
holidays 1-5, Free admission

Charles Nodrum Gallery
267 Church Street, Richmond 3121
Tel 03 9427 0140 Fax 03 9428 7350
gallery@charlesnodrumgallery.com.au
Www.charlesnodrumgallery.com.au
Exhibiting and dealing in a broad range of
modern and contemporary Australian and
international paintings, works on paper
and sculpture for corporate and private
collectors.
Tues-Sat 11-6

Deakin University Art Gallery
Deakin University,
221 Burwood Highway, Burwood 3125
Tel 03 9244 5344 Fax 03 9244 5254
artgallery@deakin.edu.au
www.deakin.edu.au/art-collection
Manager: Leanne Willis
Presenting a vibrant and contemporary
exhibition program, check website
for details.
Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 1-5 during

exhibition period, Free admission

y

Flinders Lane Gallery 137 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000 Tel 03 9654 3332 Fax 03 9650 8508 info@flg.com.au www.flg.com.au Director: Claire Harris Assistant Director: Phe Rawnsley Established 1989. Contemporary Australian painters, sculptors and collectable Aboriginal art. Representing: Margaret Ackland, Richard Blackwell, Marika Borlase, William Breen, Claire Bridge, Terri Brooks, Lizzie Buckmaster Dove, Lilly Chorny, Damien Elderfield, Karen Gray, Ian Greig, Juli Haas, Greer Honeywill, Dion Horstmans, Abie Loy Kemarre, Jean Lyons, Marise Maas, Mark Ogge, Gloria Petyarre, Garry Pumfrey, Emily Pwerle, Galya Pwerle, Minnie Pwerle, George Raftopoulos, Kathryn Ryan, Melinda Schawel, Keren Seelander, Ken Smith, Christophe Stibio, Emma Walker, Simeon Walker, Barbara Weir, Kevin White, Christine Willcocks, Dan Wollmering, Mami Yamanaka. New exhibitions every three weeks. Tues-Fri 11-6, Sat 11-4

Gould Galleries
270 Toorak Road, South Yarra 3141
Tel 03 9827 8482
art@gouldgalleries.com
www.gouldgalleries.com
Buying and selling significant paintings
by prominent Australian artists. Gould
Galleries offers expert advice on the
formation, management, valuation and
conservation of private and corporate
collections.
Tues-Fri 10-5.30, Sat 11-5

Hamilton Art Gallery
107 Brown Street, Hamilton 3300
Tel 03 5573 0460 Fax 03 5571 1017
info@hamiltongallery.org
www.hamiltongallery.org
Director: Daniel McOwan
Historic and contemporary collections of
silver, porcelain, glass, oriental ceramics,
paintings and prints, including The Shaw
Bequest, Australian art and eighteenthcentury landscapes by Paul Sandby, R.A.
Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-12, 2-5, Sun 2-5

C.A.S. Contemporary Art Society of Victoria Inc. PO Box 283, Richmond 3121 Tel 03 9428 0568 mail@contemporaryartsociety.org.au www.contemporaryartsociety.org.au Founded 1938, C.A.S. is a non-profit art organisation run by artists, for artists. Australia-wide membership. 6 - 19 September: C.A.S. Inc. Annual Exhibition 2010, Gallery 314, 314 Church St, Richmond. Bi-monthly members' exhibitions at Richmond and Fitzroy Libraries. Gallery walks, social events. View recent exhibitions plus 500+ artworks from 150+ artists on our website. Quarterly newsletter. Artist Membership \$60, Friends of C.A.S. \$20.

dianne tanzer gallery + projects 108-110 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy 3065 Tel 03 9416 3956 dtanzer@ozemail.com.au www.diannetanzergallery.net.au Director: Dianne Tanzer Roy Ananda, Natasha Bieniek, Dale Cox, Sebastian Di Mauro, Daniel Dorall, Marian Drew, Vincent Fantauzzo, Juan Ford, Neil Haddon, Matthew Hunt, Louisa Jenkinson, Donna Marcus, Harry Nankin, Shaun O'Connor, Helen Pynor, Victoria Reichelt, Reko Rennie, Charles Robb, Natalie Ryan, Yhonnie Scarce, Roh Singh and Ken Yonetani. Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 12-5, and by appointment

Gallerysmith
170–174 Abbotsford Street,
North Melbourne 3051
Tel 0425 809 328
marita@gallerysmith.com.au
www.gallerysmith.com.au
Director: Marita Smith
Three large gallery spaces. Vibrant
monthly schedule. Representing
a selection of exceptional early and
mid-career Australian artists.
Thurs–Fri 11–6, Sat 11–4

James Makin Gallery
67 Cambridge Street,
Collingwood, 3066
Tel 03 9416 3966 Fax 03 9416 4066
info@jamesmakingallery.com
www.jamesmakingallery.com
Director: James Makin
Tues-Fri 10-5.30, Sat 11-5

Museum of Art
La Trobe University, Bundoora 3086
Tel 03 9479 2111 Fax 03 9479 5588
www.latrobe.edu.au/artmuseum
La Trobe University Museum of Art
(LUMA), located at the Bundoora campus,
engages in historical and contemporary

LUMA La Trobe University

art debates. It is a creative institution that seeks to make a significant contribution to contemporary critical discourse; add to the knowledge of Australian artists, movements and events; work in cross-discipline paradigms; and be actively engaged in important state, national and international collaborative projects.

The Museum also manages the University Art Collection, one of the most significant university collections in the country, which charts the development of Australian art

practice since the mid-1960s.

Lauraine Diggins Fine Art
5 Malakoff Street, North Caulfield 3161
Tel 03 9509 9855 Fax 03 9509 4549
ausart@diggins.com.au
www.diggins.com.au
www.diggins.com.au
Director: Lauraine Diggins
Specialising in Australian colonial,
impressionist, modern, contemporary
and Indigenous painting, sculpture and
decorative arts. We unconditionally
guarantee the authenticity of all artworks
offered for sale.
Mon-Fri 10-6, Sat 1-5,

and by appointment

Libby Edwards Galleries
1046 High Street, Armadale 3143
Tel 03 9509 8292 Fax 03 9509 4696
melb@libbyedwardsgalleries.com
www.libbyedwardsgalleries.com
Monthly exhibitions of paintings by
contemporary Australian artists.
Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat-Sun 12-5

McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park 390 McClelland Drive, Langwarrin 3910 Melways ref. 103 E3 Tel 03 9789 1671 Fax 03 9789 1610 info@mcclellandgallery.com www.mcclellandgallery.com Australia's leading sculpture park and gallery, set in sixteen hectares of bush and landscaped gardens in Langwarrin, a 45 minute drive from Melbourne. McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park houses an excellent collection of paintings, works on paper and an extensive collection of works by leading Australian sculptors. The home of the 2010 McClelland Sculpture Survey and Award, the gallery presents a vibrant program of exhibitions and public programs. McClelland Gallery Cafe is available for special functions, weddings and corporate Guided tours Wednesday and Thursday at II and 2, Saturdays and Sundays at 2,

[MARS] Melbourne Art Rooms 418 Bay St, Port Melbourne 3207 Tel 03 9681 8425 Fax 03 9681 8426 andy@marsgallery.com.au www.marsgallery.com.au MARS showcases outstanding contemporary Australian art from emerging and established artists. Two-level state-of-the-art gallery space with an extensive stockroom. 2 September - 3 October: Jo Bertini and **David Tolley** 5 - 25 October: Graeme Base 29 October - 28 November: Guest curator Kirstin Rann Tues-Sun 10-5

bookings essential.

Tues-Sun 10-5, Entry by donation

Menzies Art Brands Pty Ltd

1 Darling Street, South Yarra 3141
Tel 03 9832 8700 Fax 03 9832 8735
artauctions@menziesartbrands.com
www.menziesartbrands.com
Deutscher~Menzies and Lawson~Menzies
Fine Art Auctioneers and Valuers
Chairman: Rodney Menzies
Chief Executive Officer: Litsa Veldekis
National Head of Art: Tim Abdallah
Mon-Fri 9-5.30
Free Appraisals Wednesdays 2-5

Metro Gallery

1214 High Street, Armadale 3143

Tel 03 9500 8511 Fax 03 9500 8599
info@metrogallery.com.au

www.metrogallery.com.au

Director: Alex McCulloch

Senior Art Consultant: Anita Traynor

Art Consultant: Julia Matthews

Representing established and emerging
artists: Olsen, Storrier, Benjamin,

Canning, Green, Booth, Lister, Knight,
Stevens, Truscott, Danzig, Peck,

Langridge, Hoddinott, Stavrianos, Laity,
Young, Hirata, Loculocu, Chen and Swan.

Tues-Fri 10-5.30, Sat-Sun 11-5

Monash Gallery Of Art
860 Ferntree Gully Road,
Wheelers Hill, 3150
Tel 03 8544 0500 Fax 03 9562 2433
mga@monash.vic.gov.au
www.mga.org.au
Director: Shaune Lakin
Holding one of the finest collections of
photography, MGA also represents a range
of exhibitions, educational programs and
events.
Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat-Sun 12-5

Mossgreen Gallery
310 Toorak Road, South Yarra 3141
Tel 03 9826 0822 Fax 03 9826 1255
mail@mossgreen.com.au
www.mossgreen.com.au
Directors: Paul Sumner and
Amanda Swanson
Mossgreen Gallery represents Australian
artists and also specialises in the sale
and re-sale of Australian art: modern,

contemporary and early Aboriginal.

Tues-Sat 10-5.30

Mossenson Galleries

ACGA member.

Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 11-5,

and by appointment

41 Derby Street, Collingwood 3053

Tel 03 9417 6694 Fax 03 9417 2114

Established in 1993, Mossenson Galleries

exhibits work from Australia's leading

contemporary and Indigenous artists.

art@mossensongalleries.com.au

www.mossensongalleries.com.au

Director: Dr Diane Mossenson

Monash University Museum
of Art (MUMA)
Ground Floor, Building F,
Caulfield Campus, Monash University,
900 Dandenong Road, Caulfield East 3145
Tel 03 9905 4217 Fax 03 9905 4345
muma@adm.monash.edu.au

muma@adm.monash.edu.au
www.monash.edu.au/muma
Monash University Museum of Art offers
a unique perspective on the recent history
of contemporary art and culture, and is
adventurous, with a forward outlook into
the production, research and exposure of
new art and ideas. Exhibitions range from
newly commissioned projects to surveys
of significant contemporary artists from
Australia and elsewhere. The Monash
University Collection represents a leading
overview of Australian art since 1961.
Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 2-5, closed between
exhibitions, Free admission

The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia Federation Square Corner Russell & Flinders Streets Melbourne 3000 Tel 03 8620 2222 www.ngv.vic.gov.au Until 24 October: John Davis: Presence Until 24 October: Mari Funaki: Objects Until 23 January 2011: Australian Made: 100 Years of Fashion Until 27 February 2011: Contemporary Encounters 11 September – 30 January 2011: Harrell Fletcher: The Sound We Make Together (Melbourne) 24 September – 14 March 2011: Stormy Weather: Contemporary Landscape Photography Daily 10-5, closed Mondays, Good Friday and Christmas Day

National Gallery of Victoria

National Gallery of Victoria NGV International 180 St Kilda Road, Melbourne 8004 Tel 03 8620 2222 www.ngv.vic.gov.au Until 3 October: Timelines: Photography and Time Until 10 October: European Masters: Städel Museum, 19th-20th Century Until 23 January 2011: Lace in Fashion 22 October - 13 March 2011: Luminous Cities Daily 10-5, closed Tuesdays (except for Melbourne Cup Day 2 November), Good Friday and Christmas Day Free admission, entry frees apply to European Masters: Städel Museum, 19th–20th Century

Niagara Galleries 245 Punt Road, Richmond 3121 Tel 03 9429 3666 Fax 03 9428 3571 mail@niagara-galleries.com.au www.niagara-galleries.com.au Director: William Nuttall Niagara Galleries is committed to the exhibition and sale of the finest modern and contemporary Australian art. Offering one of the most extensive stockrooms in Melbourne, William Nuttall and his staff can advise on all aspects of creating a rewarding art collection. William Nuttall is an approved valuer under the Cultural Gifts Program. Until 20 September: Samuel Namunjdja and Rick Amor 28 September - 23 October: Ken Whisson Tues 11-8, Wed-Sat 11-6

Sophie Gannon Gallery
2 Albert Street, Richmond 3121
Tel 03 9421 0857 Fax 03 9421 0859
info@sophiegannongallery.com.au
www.sophiegannongallery.com.au
Director: Sophie Gannon
Representing artists Campbell, Ferretti,
Hanssen Pigott, Harding, Jamison, Moller,
Nicholson, Ou, Sleeth, Martin Smith,
Wright and Zavros. Extensive stockroom.
Tues-Sat 11-5, and by appointment

TarraWarra Museum of Art
311 Healesville-Yarra Glen Road,
Healesville 3777
Tel 03 5957 3100 Fax 03 5957 3120
museum@twma.com.au
www.twma.com.au
Located in the centre of Victoria's beautiful
Yarra Valley wine region, TWMA is
Australia's first major publicly owned,
privately funded art museum and features a
program of seasonally changing exhibitions.
Until 24 October: TWMA Contemporary
2010
Until 21 November: Australian
Masterpieces from the TWMA Collection
Admission \$5 (pensioners and students free)
Tues-Sun 11-5

South Australia

Adelaide Central Gallery
45 Osmond Terrace, Norwood 5067
Tel 08 8364 2809 Fax 08 8364 4865
acsa@acsa.sa.edu.au
www.acsa.sa.edu.au
Specialising in new works from emerging
and mid-career Australian artists, monthly
exhibitions and stockroom. Exclusive
dealer for Pro Hart in South Australia.
Mon-Fri 9-5, Sat 11-4
Mon-Thurs 9-7 during school term

National Gallery of Victoria
NGV Kids Corner
Corner Russell & Flinders Streets,
Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel 03 8620 2222
www.ngv.vic.gov.au
Until 7 November: Light Play

Port Jackson Press Print Room 61 Smith Street, Fitzroy 3065 Tel 03 9419 8988 Fax 03 9419 0017 info@portjacksonpress.com.au www.portjacksonpress.com.au Tues-Fri 10-5.30, Sat 11-5 Wangaratta Exhibitions Gallery 56–60 Ovens Street, Wangaratta 3676
Tel 03 5722 0865 Fax 03 5722 2969
d.mangan@wangaratta.vic.gov.au
www.wangaratta.vic.gov.au
Director: Dianne Mangan
The Wangaratta Exhibitions Gallery
presents a relevant, diverse and changing
visual arts program consisting of national,
state and regional exhibitions, including
local artists, urban artists and touring
exhibitions.
Mon–Tues 12–5, Wed–Fri 10–5,
Sat–Sun 1–4

Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art
University of South Australia
55 North Terrace, Adelaide 5001
Tel 08 8302 0870 Fax 08 8302 0866
samstagmuseum@unisa.edu.au
www.unisa.edu.au/samstagmuseum
Director: Erica Green
Until 8 October: Abstract Nature
22 October – 17 December:
Other side art: Trevor Nickolls, 1972–2007
Generosity of Spirit: Recent Australian
Women's Art from the QUT Art Collection
Tues-Fri 11–5, Sat-Sun 2–5, and
by appointment, Free admission

Nellie Castan Gallery
Level 1, 12 River Street,
South Yarra 3141
Tel 03 9804 7366 Fax 03 9804 7367
mail@nelliecastangallery.com
www.nelliecastangallery.com
Specialising in contemporary Australian
painting, photography and sculpture from
emerging and prominent artists.
Tues-Sun 12-5, and by appointment

RMIT Gallery
RMIT Storey Hall, 344 Swanston Street,
Melbourne 3000
Tel 03 9925 1717 Fax 03 9925 1738
rmit.gallery@rmit.edu.au
www.rmit.edu.au/rmitgallery
Director: Suzanne Davies
Presenting a vibrant and diverse program
of Australian and international fine art,
design, fashion, architecture, craft and
new media.
Mon-Fri 11-5, Sat 12-5,
closed public holidays, Free admission

William Mora Galleries
60 Tanner Street, Richmond 3121
Tel 03 9429 1199 Fax 03 9429 6833
mora@moragalleries.com.au
www.moragalleries.com.au
Contemporary Australian and Aboriginal
art. William Mora is an accredited valuer
under the Australian Cultural Gifts
Program.
Wed-Fri 10-4, Sat 12-4, and
by appointment

Art Gallery of South Australia North Terrace, Adelaide 5000 Tel 08 8207 7000 Fax 08 8207 7070 www.artgallery.sa.gov.au Until 4 October: Rupert Bunny: Artist in Paris Until 31 October: A Beautiful Line: Italian Prints of the Renaissance & Baroque Untill 26 January 2011: Desert Country: Indigenous Australian Art from South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory Daily 10-5. Bookshop and art gallery restaurant, Daily 10-4.45. Free admission, charges may apply to special exhibitions

31-33 North Street, Adelaide 5000 Tel 08 8231 4440 Fax 08 8231 4494 art@bmgart.com.au www.bmgart.com.au Monthly exhibitions by leading contemporary Australian artists. Sculpture, paintings, graphics and photography. Tues-Sat 11-5, and by appointment

Kensington Gallery

39 Kensington Road, Norwood 5067 Tel 08 8332 5752 Fax 08 8332 5066 e.kengall@kern.com.au www.kensingtongallery.com.au Interesting exhibitions each month by leading Australian artists. Agents for Barbara Hanrahan, John Dowie, Jim Kinch and Jörg Schmeisser. Specialising in South Australian female artists. Wed-Fri 11-5, Sat-Sun 2-5

Western Australia

Tel 08 9324 2460 gdef@goddarddefiddes.com.au www.goddarddefiddes.com.au Directors: Glenda de Fiddes and Julian Changing monthly exhibitions of contemporary art.

Goddard de Fiddes Gallery

31 Malcolm St, West Perth 6005

Wed-Fri 12-6, Sat 2-5, and by appointment

Flinders University City Gallery

State Library of South Australia North Terrace, Adelaide 5000 Tel 08 8207 7055 Fax 08 8207 7056 city.gallery@flinders.edu.au www.flinders.edu.au/artmuseum Director: Fiona Salmon Flinders University City Gallery conducts a program of changing exhibitions with an emphasis on contemporary Indigenous art. Tues-Fri 11-4, Sat-Sun 12-4

Peter Walker Fine Art 101 Walkerville Terrace Walkerville, 5081 Tel 08 8344 4607 Fax 08 8364 5817 info@peterwalker.com.au www.peterwalker.com.au Director: Peter R. Walker Specialising in rare Australian and

Thurs-Sat 11-5, and by appointment

Ainslie Gatt Art Consultancy

11/2 Henry Lawson Walk, East Perth 6004 Tel 0431 967 069 ainslie@westnet.com.au Director: Ainslie Gatt Offering over 14 years of experience. Specialising in modern Australian investment and Aboriginal art. Purchasing, resale, framing, installation and professional advice, developing and managing collections, ensuring a discrete and professional service to corporate and private clientele.

Greenhill Galleries

6 Gugeri Street, Claremont 6010 Tel 08 9383 4433 Fax 08 9383 4388 info@greenhillgalleries.com www.greenhillgalleries.com Director: Paul Swain Showcasing a collection of local, interstate, and international artworks, representing many of Australia's finest contemporary artists and providing advice to art collectors. Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-4,

Greenaway Art Gallery: Adelaide, and GAGPROJECTS: Berlin 39 Rundle Street, Kent Town 5067 Tel 08 8362 6354 Fax 08 8362 0890 gag@greenaway.com.au www.greenaway.com.au Director: Paul Greenaway OAM Monthly exhibitions. Representing Atkins, Bennett, Bezor, Cullen, Folland, Hassan, Hennessey, Kutschbach, Lock, McKenna, Nikou, Paauwe, Shead, Siwes, Smart, Tillers, Valamanesh and Watson. Tues-Sun 11-6

Port Pirie Regional Art Gallery

international art.

3 Mary Elie Street, Port Pirie 5540 Tel 08 8633 0681 Fax 08 8633 8799 info@pprag.org www.pprag.org Enjoy a changing exhibition program of Australian visual art and craft with an emphasis on contemporary regional South Australian artists. Visit our website for further information. Mon-Fri 9-5, Sat 9-4, Sundays and public holidays 10-4

Bunbury Regional Art Galleries

Mon-Fri 9-5, and by appointment

64 Wittenoom Street, Bunbury 6230 Tel 08 9721 8616 Fax 08 9721 7423 mail@brag.org.au www.brag.org.au Situated in the heart of the city in a distinctive pink former convent, Bunbury Regional Art Galleries hosts the City of Bunbury art collection and runs an extensive program of regional and touring exhibitions, professional development workshops and cultural events. Daily 10-4, Free admission

Gunyulgup Galleries

closed Sunday and Monday

Gunyulgup Valley Drive, Yallingup 6282 Tel 08 9755 2177 enquiries@gunyulgupgalleries.com.au www.gunyulgupgalleries.com.au Directors: Nina and Ashley Jones Located in the Margaret River wine region since 1987. Exhibits fine art and craft by emerging and established Western Australian artists. Daily 10-5

Hill Smith Gallery

113 Pirie Street, Adelaide 5000 Tel 08 8223 6558 Fax 08 8227 0678 gallery@hillsmithfineart.com.au www.hillsmithfineart.com.au Director: Sam Hill-Smith Hill Smith Gallery features solo and group exhibitions by established and emerging artists from South Australia and interstate. Mon-Fri 10-5.30, Sun 2-5

Galerie Düsseldorf

9 Glyde Street, Mosman Park 6012 Tel/Fax 08 9384 0890 gd@galeriedusseldorf.com.au www.galeriedusseldorf.com.au Directors: Magda and Douglas Sheerer Contemporary Australian Art. Established 1976. New gallery built 1995. Representing the Estates of Howard H. Taylor and David Watt. Wed-Fri 11-5, Sun 2-5, and by appointment

Holmes à Court Gallery Level 1, 11 Brown Street, East Perth 6004

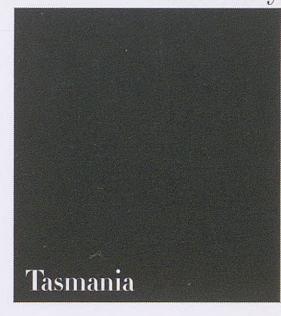
Tel 08 9218 4540 Fax 08 9218 4545 hacgallery@heytesbury.com.au www.holmesacourtgallery.com.au Director: Sharon Tassicker The gallery presents a diverse program: exhibitions from the Holmes à Court collection, contemporary art, artist residencies and forums for critical discussion.

Thurs-Sun 12-5, and by appointment, closed public holidays

Indigenart - Mossenson Galleries 115 Hay Street, Subiaco 6008 Tel 08 9388 2899 Fax 08 9381 1708 art@mossensongalleries.com.au www.mossensongalleries.com.au Director: Dr Diane Mossenson Established in 1993, Mossenson Galleries exhibits work from Australia's leading contemporary and Indigenous artists. ACGA member. Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat 11-4, and by appointment

Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts Perth Cultural Centre, James Street, Northbridge 6000 Tel 08 9228 6300 Fax 08 9227 6539 info@pica.org.au www.pica.org.au Director: Amy Barrett-Lennard Through a program of exhibitions, performances, screenings, studios and interdisciplinary projects, PICA promotes contemporary art while stimulating critical discussion about the arts and broader cultural issues. Tues-Sun 11-6

Tjulyuru Regional Arts Gallery Tjulyuru Cultural and Civic Centre Great Central Road, Warburton PMB 71, via Kalgoorlie 6430 Tel 08 8954 0011 Fax 08 8954 0101 tjulyuru.gallery@bigpond.com www.tjulyuru.com Artistic Direction: Warburton Arts Project Presenting an exhibition program based on the lifestyles, histories and vibrant stories of the Ngaanyatjarra. Mon-Fri 8.30-4.30, weekends and public holidays by appointment



Japingka Gallery 47 High Street, Fremantle 6160 Tel 08 9335 8265 Fax 08 9335 8275 japingka@iinet.net.au www.japingka.com.au Directors: Ian Plunkett and David Wroth Two floors, 400 square metres, extensive stock room and a full exhibition program of established and emerging Indigenous fine art. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30, Sat 10.30-5.30, Sun 12-5

Purist Gallery Blue Orchid Court, Yallingup 6282 Tel 08 9755 2582 art@puristgallery.com www.puristgallery.com Directors: Penny Hudson and Max Ball Contemporary fine art gallery representing West Australian artist Penny Hudson and jeweller Max Ball. Paintings, jewellery, sculpture in a purpose-built 'retro' gallery, situated on a bush block in the Margaret River wine region of Western Australia. Sat, Sun, public holidays 10-5, Dec and Jan 10-5.

Art Mob - Aboriginal Fine Art 29 Hunter Street, Hobart 7000 Tel 03 6236 9200 Fax 03 6236 9300 euan@artmob.com.au www.artmob.com.au Director: Euan Hills Tasmania's only dedicated Aboriginal fine art gallery exhibiting works from many Australian communities including local Tasmanian artists. Located in Hobart's historic wharf precinct. Monthly exhibition schedule provides a vivid spectrum of works. Daily from 10

Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery The University of Western Australia 35 Stirling Highway, Crawley 6009 Tel 08 6488 3707 Fax 08 6488 1017 info@lwgallery.uwa.edu.au www.lwgallery.uwa.edu.au Changing exhibitions of Western Australian and Australian art, including Works from the UWA Art Collection, all supported by a diverse public program. Tues-Fri 11-5, Sun 12-5 Free admission

Linton and Kay Fine Art

info@lintonandkay.com.au

www.lintonandkay.com.au

Directors: Linton Partington

1aco 6008

and Gary Kay

299 Railway Road (cnr Nicholson Road),

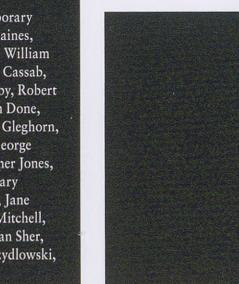
Exhibiting and representing a wide range

of leading regional and national artists.

Tel 08 9388 3300 Fax 08 9388 2116

Stafford Studios of Fine Art 102 Forrest Street, Cottesloe 6011 Tel 08 9385 1399 Fax 08 9384 0966 artstaff@iinet.net.au www.staffordstudios.com.au Regular exhibitions of contemporary artists. Representing Andrew Baines, Barbara Bennett, Robert Birch, William Boissevain, John Borrack, Judy Cassab, Michael Challen, Brendon Darby, Robert Dickerson, Judith Dinham, Ken Done, Paul Evans, Tania Ferrier, Tom Gleghorn, Victor Greenaway, Pro Hart, George Haynes, Diana Johnston, Heather Jones, Douglas Kirsop, John Lacey, Gary Leathendale, Mary Jane Malet, Jane Martin, Dan Mazzotti, Larry Mitchell, Milton Moon, Jann Rowley, Jean Sher, Christopher Spaven, Henryk Szydlowski, Garry Zeck and Len Zuks. Tues-Fri 10-5, Sun 2-5

Masterpiece@IXL Shop 2, 19a Hunter Street, Hobart 7000 Tel 03 6231 3144 Fax 03 6231 3143 info@masterpiece.com.au www.masterpiece.com.au Tasmania's premier fine art gallery, specialising in Australia's colonial, impressionist, post-impressionist and contemporary works. Located in Hobart's historic wharf precinct. Mon-Sat 10-6



Sidewalk Tribal Gallery 19-21 Castray Esplanade, Battery Point 7004 Tel 03 6224 0331 Fax 03 6224 0331 ann@sidewalkgallery.com.au www.sidewalkgallery.com.au Director: Ann Porteus Antique and traditional African sculpture representing more than 85 cultures collected from 26 countries across Africa. Ethnic jewellery and other items of adornment, both antique and contemporary, from every continent. Daily 10-5

Northern Territory

New Zealand

PO Box 5449, Auckland

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki cnr Wellesley and Kitchener Streets

12 Crummer Road, Ponsonby Auckland 1021 Tel +64 9 361 6331 dwhite@whitespace.co.nz www.whitespace.co.nz Director: Deborah White Whitespace builds partnerships with artists to bring their work to the attention of local and international collectors and curators. The expansive exhibition program promotes emerging and established artists from New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific region. Deborah White is a founding trustee and co-director of the Auckland Art Fair. Tues-Fri 11-6, Sat 11-4

Whitespace

Book Shops

Muk Muk Indigenous Fine Art
14 Lindsay Ave, Alice Springs, 0871
Tel 08 8953 6333 Fax 08 8953 1941
admin@mukmuk.com
www.mukmuk.com
Managing Director: Mike Mitchell
Specialising in Indigenous fine art from
Utopia and the Central and Western
Deserts.
By appointment

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory

Conacher Street, Bullocky Point,
Fannie Bay 0820
Tel 08 8999 8264 Fax 08 8999 8148
www.magnt.nt.gov.au
Overlooking the Arafura Sea, the gallery
covers aspects of the region's art, natural
history and culture with a diverse selection
of permanent and changing exhibitions.
The gallery also hosts the country's
premier Indigenous art exhibition, the
Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander Art Award.

Mon-Fri 9-5, Sat-Sun 10-5

RAFT Artspace
8 Hele Crescent
Alice Springs, 0872
Tel 0428 410 811
art@raftartspace.com.au
www.raftartspace.com.au
Director: Dallas Gold
RAFT continues to display a commitment
to Indigenous art as an important
contemporary art movement in Australia,
and contemporary art in general from local
and visiting artists.
Tues-Sat 10-5, or by appointment

Tel +64 9 307 7700 Fax +64 9 302 1096 gallery@aucklandartgallery.govt.nz www.aucklandartgallery.govt.nz Director: Chris Saines
Auckland Art Gallery holds the largest collection of national and international art in New Zealand. A public art gallery exhibiting work from its collection and a program of national and international exhibitions.
Daily 10–5, closed Good Friday and Christmas Day

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery
Corner of Queen and King Streets,
New Plymouth, 4340
Tel +64 6 759 6060
mail@govettbrewster.com
www.govettbrewster.com
Director: Rhana Devenport
Celebrating 40 years of the
Govett-Brewster in 2010
11 September – 28 November:
Simryn Gill – 2010 International Artist in
Residence
25 September – 5 December:
Alex Montieth – Deep in it
Daily 10–5

International Art Centre
272 Parnell Road,
PO Box 37344, Auckland 1511
Tel +64 9 379 4010 Fax +64 9 307 3421
richard@artentr.co.nz
www.fineartauction.co.nz
Directors: Richard Thomson and
Frances Davies
New Zealand's only auction house
specialising solely in fine art. The gallery
represents over fifty New Zealand,
Australian and European artists.
Mon-Fri 10-5.30, Sat 10-5, Sun 11-4

Art & Australia's Art Directory is a comprehensive guide to galleries in Australia and New Zealand.

To be part of this guide please contact: Karen Brown

Advertising, Marketing & Trade Manager Tel 02 9331 4455 Fax 02 9331 4577 karen.brown@artandaustralia.com.au

Australian art history 1975–2008 Answers

53. Laing

Down

46. Capon

49. Praxis

48. Watters

54. Smart 1. Bill Henson 56. Bond 2. Brack 3. Victoria Lynn Across 4. Rex Butler 2. Booth 5. Tim Storrier 7. Moffatt 6. Pearce 8. Oxley 9. Sue Cramer 10. Roar 12. Thancoupie 11. Churcher 15. Kent 13. Fiona Hall 16. Rooney 14. Ian Burn 20. Buckley 17. Rie 21. Mori 18. Maloon 23. Norrie 24. Davida Allen 19. Arkley 21. McAuliffe 26. Cullen 22. Nixon 28. Thwaites 25. Kaldor 29. Parr 27. Komon 32. Ted Colless 31. Macgregor 34. Judy Annear 33. Taylor 35. Williams 38. McLaren 36. MacPherson 39. Juan Davila 37. Neri 42. Gascoigne 40. Edwards 43. Weaver 41. Hart 42. Greenaway 44. Darren Knight 44. Done 47. Amor 50. Tension 45. Kaliman

51. Niagara

52. Colless

55. Moore

The Bookshop
Art Gallery of South Australia
North Terrace, Adelaide 5000
Tel 08 8207 7029
Fax 08 8207 7069
agsa.bookshop@artgallery.sa.gov.au
www.artgallery.sa.gov.au
Daily 10-4.45

Adelaide's only specialist visual arts bookshop – stocking books, magazines, merchandise and gifts. We specialise in the publications of the Art Gallery of South Australia – including exhibition catalogues, reproductions, postcards and greeting cards from the gallery collections.

The Gallery Shop
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Art Gallery Road, Sydney 2000
Tel 02 9225 1718 Fax 02 9233 5184
galleryshop@ag.nsw.gov.au
Daily 10-5
The gallery shop carries Australia's
finest range of art publications.
Art books without boundaries:
prehistory to postmodernism,
Australian and international, artists'
biographies from Michelangelo to
Bacon, art movements and histories.

Noel McKenna

Australian art history 1975–2008 is the second art history crossword puzzle I have created, the first one covering 1933–1978. They form part of my 'Map' series about Australia which I began eight years ago. The questions in the second crossword are of a slightly different nature to those in the first, due to the fact that the latter period is when I have more or less been involved in the art world, starting from my days as a student through to now. Some of the clues relate to events I have witnessed or people I have known. History is interesting and creating the work has brought back many memories about context, fashion and, more generally, the movements and changes within our increasingly large Australian art world.

Noel McKenna, June 2010

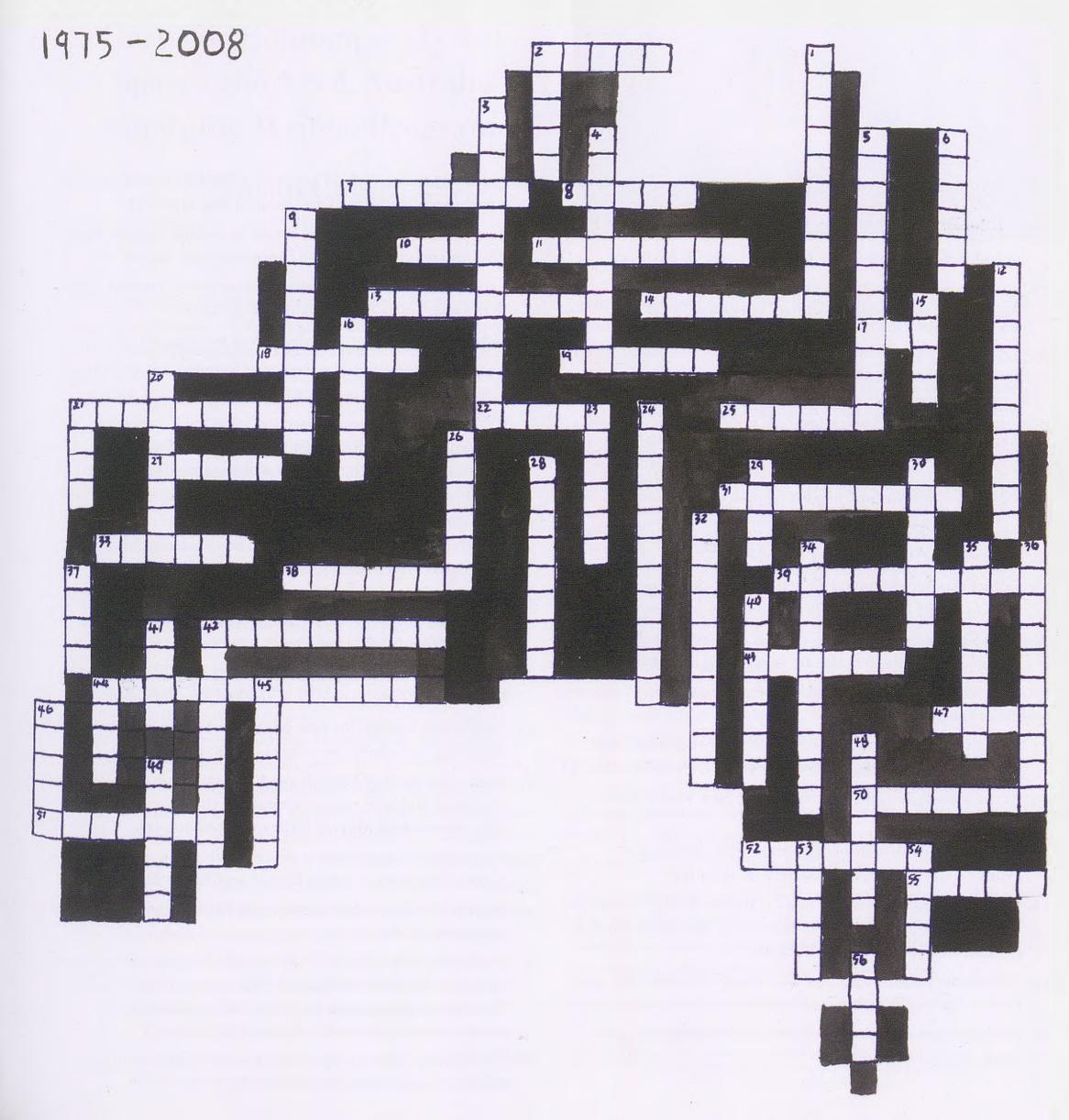
Australian art history 1975–2008

Down

- 1. Melbourne artist who designed the interior of the Moët et Chandon marquee at Flemington's Spring Racing Carnival in 2007, which was swathed in one kilometre of emeraldgreen, custom-dyed silk to match his photographs (4, 6)
- 2. This late painter had a major retrospective at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1987 (5)
- 3. Melbourne-based curator and writer who exhibited a watercolour, *Rocky plains*, *Eucumbene*, in the Art Gallery of New South Wales's (AGNSW) Wynne Prize in 1983 (8, 4)
- 4. Arts academic who wrote that Anne Wallace 'will be able to make the step into adulthood and complete that seemingly most impossible thing in Australian art: confessional painting' (3, 6)
- 5. Artist who celebrated their fifty-ninth birthday at the opening of a seventy-suite hotel named after them in early 2008 (3, 8)
- 6. Curator who wrote the 1989 book Australian Artists, Australian Birds (6)
- 9. Curator of the first 'Primavera' at Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) in 2005 (3, 6)
- 12. Indigenous potter from Western Cape York area (10)
- 15. Curator of 'Masquerade: Representation and the Self in Contemporary Art' at the MCA in 2006 (4)
- 16. Artist whose tongue-in-cheek review of 'Popism' in 1982 led to their dismissal from a leading Melbourne paper (6)
- 20. Founding director of Melbourne's Australian Centre for Contemporary Art in 1984 (7)
- 21. Gallery that began as Student Gallery in Sydney's Leichhardt in the late 1970s (4)
- 23. Inaugural winner of the Moët et Chandon Fellowship in 1987 (6)
- 24. Australian artist and filmmaker who exhibited their extended sexual fantasies of Sam Neill in 1987 (6, 5)

- 26. As a Sydney art school student this painter skinned a road-kill cat, wearing the carcass around their shoulders (6)
- 28. Vivienne Shark LeWitt's surname when she was at art school in 1981 (8)
- 29. David Bromfield wrote a book about this artist who co-founded the artists' cooperative Inhibodress (4)
- 32. Arts academic who curated 'Design for Living' at Sydney's Artspace in 1985, with works hung and lit so that the shadow of the viewer fell across them (3, 7)
- 34. Curator of 'Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' at Melbourne's George Paton Gallery in 1980 (4, 6)
- 35. Australian landscape painter who died in 1982 having had more than seventy solo exhibitions (8)
- 36. Post-conceptual artist who had their first survey exhibition at Brisbane's Institute of Modern Art in 1985 (10)
- 37. Inaugural director of what is now Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, currently at New York's Gagosian Gallery (4)
- 40. Sydney artist who was a finalist with Cate Blanchett's family portrait for the 2006 Archibald Prize (7)
- 41. Canberra curator who has authored books on John Olsen, Joy Hester and Richard Larter (4)
- 42. Australian dealer whose eponymous gallery had a stand at Madrid's ARCO Art Fair from 1993 to 2007 (9)
- 44. Artist who began studies at the National Art School at age 14 and became known for colourful renditions of Sydney Harbour (4)
- 45. Sydney dealer who showed Louise Bourgeois in 2007 (7)
- 46. Longstanding state gallery director with a passion for the art of China (5)
- 48. Sydney gallery that staged 'The D'Oyley Show', a 1979 exhibition of women's needlework and domestic handiwork, with five of the gallery's major artists leaving in protest (7)
- 49. Alternative art space opened in Fremantle in 1981 (6)

Australian Art History



- 53. Sydney photographer known for large-scale photographs of surreal images such as brides floating in the sky (5)
- 54. Figurative painter, born in Adelaide in 1921 and now living in Italy who studied under Fernand Léger in Paris (5)
- 56. Former sign-writer who bought a Van Gogh in 1988, declaring it the greatest painting in the world (4)

Across

- 2. Nick Cave is a fan of this Melbourne painter who suffers from epilepsy and is known for dark figurative works (5)
- 7. Artist quoted in a 2008 inflight magazine: 'I like to be a good hostess and entertainer ... the key to my success is utter relaxation. As a hostess you've got to chill out, plus you have to wear a party dress. The second a guest sees the hostess in a great dress and breaking into gales of laughter at a bad joke, the party has begun.' (7)
- 8. Sydney dealer who opened a gallery in 1982 showing artists such as Geoff Lowe, Gareth Sansom and John Nixon (5)
- 10. Melbourne group of artists formed in 1982 who declared that all one needs to make art is beer and a faithful dog (4)
- 11. First woman to be appointed director of an Australian state gallery in 1987 (8)
- 13. Artist who had a large survey show at Sydney's MCA in 2008 curated by Gregory O'Brien and Vivienne Webb (5, 4)
- 14. Artist who drowned at Pretty Beach, New South Wales, in 1993 (3, 4)
- 17. Austrian-born British-based potter who exhibited at Sydney's Garry Anderson Gallery in 1989 (3)
- 18. Sydney curator who wrote in a catalogue of Aida Tomescu's work in 2007: 'As the works start to fill the space some of the paintings begin to preponderate' (6)
- 19. Melbourne painter who died of a heroin overdose in 1999, known for bright airbrushed renditions of suburban life (6)
- 21. Art historian and museum director who wrote the 1996 book Art and Suburbia (9)

- 22. Sydney Morning Herald art critic John McDonald received a cockroach in the mail and blamed this artist (5)
- 25. Arts patron who sent three artists to exhibit at New York's P.S.1 in an exhibition titled 'An Australian Accent' (6)
- 27. Late Sydney dealer who showed naive artists such as Sam Byrne and James Fardoulys in the 1970s (5)
- 31. Sydney museum director who enjoys wearing tartan (9)
- 33. Australian curator and editor who founded Art & Text in 1981 and famously conducted the last interview with Andy Warhol (6)
- 38. Late English arts identity brought to the 1986 Sydney Biennale who fled the Sebel Townhouse leaving a large unpaid account, later paid by girlfriend Lauren Hutton (7)
- 39. Painted *Stupid as a painter*, 1981, the subject of a censorship scandal after the work was removed from the 1982 Sydney Biennale (4, 6)
- 42. Late New Zealand-born artist who made the work, *Lillee* among the daffodils, 1975, about Australia's greatest fast bowler, Dennis Lillee (9)
- 43. Artist whose work, It would seem that eyes can live without hearts (oracle fox), 2005, is in the MCA collection (6)
- 44. Dealer who opened his first gallery in Melbourne in 1992, relocating to Sydney five years later (6, 6)
- 47. Melbourne painter born in 1948 whose father played in a jazz band and who was in a coma for three weeks at age 5 after contracting Murray Valley encephalitis (4)
- 50. Now-defunct magazine started in Melbourne in 1983 by Ashley Crawford, Terence Hogan and Robin Barden (7)
- 51. Martin Parr had exhibitions at this Melbourne gallery in 2005 and 2008 (7)
- 52. Melbourne arts academic who in 1981 staged a performance in Sydney University's English Department where a porn film was projected onto their face while they read an erotic text to a somewhat appalled audience (7)
- 55. Late Sydney photographer who had the exhibition 'The Unseen Images' at the AGNSW in 1997 (5)

Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces and Art & Australia Emerging Writers Program: Susan Cohn

Our experience of art is generated primarily by short-lived temporal exhibitions – solo and group shows, art fairs, surveys and large-scale international spectacles such as the biennial and blockbuster. The competition for public attention is hungrily sought through a proliferation of media lures. Words such as 'masterpieces', 'highlights' and 'permanent collection' suggest the credibility of an established public institution and respectable curatorship. The National Gallery of Victoria, for instance,

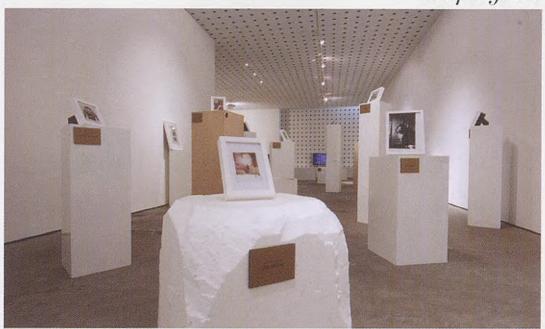
Melbourne curator Mark Feary sought to critique the nature of such blockbusters in his 'Autumn Masterpieces: Highlights from the Permanent Collection' at Melbourne's Centre for Contemporary Photography. The curatorial premise, as outlined in the 'gold' leaflet accompanying the exhibition, was twofold: to draw attention to the media-focused popular formula of the blockbuster; and (more interestingly) to explore ideas about the photographic image and its display.

recently opened its seventh 'Melbourne Winter Masterpieces',

presenting works from the Städel Museum in Frankfurt.

The obvious irony in 'Autumn Masterpieces' was expressed in its installation, with works displayed in a cordoned-off space, accompanied by italicised gold signage, moody lighting and classical music. As a collection the photographic images were not explicitly 'works of art', but rather a compilation of images from the personal archive of twenty-five contemporary artists including Paul Knight, Nat & Ali and Martin Parr. Each image was casually presented in an inexpensive domestic frame on plinths of varying heights and conditions arranged randomly through the gallery space. A formal gold label stating 'From the collection of ...' reinforced the presentation as a deliberate tactic.

The exhibition concluded with a video work, *Museum highlights: A gallery talk*, 1989, by New York-based artist Andrea Fraser. Posing as a museum tour guide at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the artist employs performative 'art-speak' as



satire to highlight a general misunderstanding of the value and ethics inherent in art, and how easily these are adopted by an indiscriminating public. This underpinned Feary's approach which was indicative of what Paul O'Neill calls 'the changing perception of the curator as carer to a curator who has a more creative and active part to play within the production of art itself'. The rhetoric in 'Autumn Masterpieces' critiqued the institutional blockbuster, yet it also seemed to undermine Feary's premise, as transgression itself became a form of marketing and product differentiation.

Questions about the status of the photograph had more resonance in this exhibition. The photograph on a plinth did not have the gravity or representational function of the framed photograph on the wall, but instead became an object in the real world. This strategic move emphasised the experience of the photograph in a phenomenological and sociological sense, albeit institutionally determined.

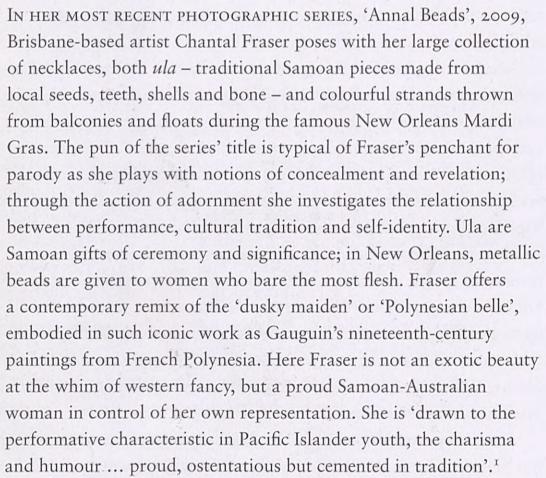
Feary's approach cogently considered strategies of exhibition, but perhaps less so the critique of the curator as primary producer of signification. While the exhibition invited reflection on how media culture is ritualised by institutions in large-scale exhibitions, and articulated the interdependent relationship between the photograph and its display, it was inevitably subject to the selfsame logic of capital and spectacle which elevates critique to the status of masterpiece or trademark exhibition.

Susan Cohn was mentored by Max Delany, Director, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne; Autumn Masterpieces: Highlights from the Permanent Collection, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 19 March – 18 May 2010.

Autumn Masterpieces: Highlights from the Permanent Collection
Installation view
Courtesy Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne
Photograph Oliver Parzer

Art & Australia / Credit Suisse Private Banking Contemporary Art award Chantal Fraser

Talia Linz



Drawing on her experience as a child of the Pacific diaspora, and using objects as cultural signifiers, Fraser's photographs present a predominantly faceless character floating between cultures and representations. In 'Cross-Cultural Swagger Like Us', 2009, the artist turns her attention to another object of personal cultural significance. Traditionally worn by Pacific Islanders of both sexes, a *lava-lava* is a single piece of material secured around the waist originally made from pandanus leaves, paper mulberry or *tapa* cloth, and decorated with flowers and feathers. Aside from its traditional use, the sarong-like lava-lava is perhaps the most touristic item travellers bring back from the Pacific region. Shrouding her face and body with fabric of varying colour and pattern, at times delicately folded and others tightly bound, Fraser conjures a range of imagery from Magritte's bound lovers to the Muslim *burga* to hooded prisoners at Abu Ghraib. While



challenging the traditional meaning and use of this culturally iconic object, the artist also flirts with the idea of body as sculptural form, herself becoming another object to be manipulated within the work.

The juxtaposition of object, ritual and jocularity in Fraser's body of work allows serious politics to sit side by side with her humour. In *The assembly*, 2005, Fraser constructed thirteen dunce and jester hats out of 'seemingly islandery stuff'. Suspended in an arc from the ceiling her headdress forms represented a minority striving to be heard: 'My community was being met with aloofness and disinterest from the Queensland government, as if a room full of brown faces was enough to form a decision.' In her 2007 installation O le taualuga, the works on display were loosely modelled on intricate Samoan ceremonial headdresses, however Fraser's contemporary versions were constructed from cheap paper towel, 'taking something readily available and disposable and returning the richness back into the material through process and time'.

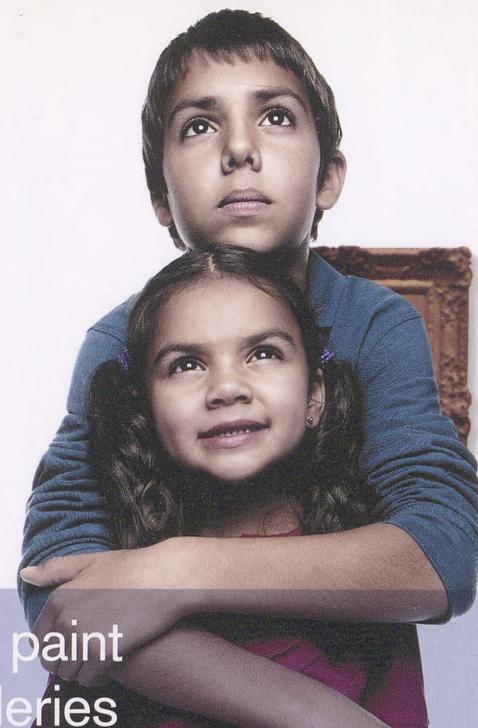
Fraser recontextualises her ancestral patterning in site-specific wall and floor works, giving a contemporary accent to an ancient custom. Body adornment and decoration, such as the male waist-to-knee tattoo pe'a, or the female version, the malu, are central to traditional Samoan rites of passage and patterning covers everything from skin to cloth. This kind of body marking identifies those who culturally belong, separating the legitimate from the impostor, the insider from the outsider. Fraser is particularly interested in the ritual of tourism, which relies heavily on perceptions of cultural exchange. Her recent exhibition at Kings ARI in Melbourne included a brightly decorated jester-like headdress adorned with keepsakes for viewers to take home in exchange for a 'holiday snap' taken on the camera provided. So too, Fraser enacts rites of cultural interchange, trading images of Pacific stereotypes for a more complex idea of representation.

Ou

Su

¹ All quotations are taken from correspondence with the artist, July 2010.





5 years of age – learning to paint 8 years of age – visiting galleries One Credit Suisse encouraging young artists

Credit Suisse is proud to partner with many leading artistic and cultural institutions and organisations like Art & Australia, the Singapore Art Museum and the National Gallery in London. We are committed to supporting and nurturing Australia's emerging artistic talent through our sponsorship of the Art & Australia Contemporary Art Award. At Credit Suisse Private Banking Australia we strive to understand what success means to our clients, to deliver what really matters and to help clients thrive.

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Art & Australia / Credit Suisse Private Banking Contemporary Art Award Chantal Fraser Chantal Fraser, Maiden militia, 2009 Type-C photograph, 130 x 110 cm Courtesy the artist ISSN 0004-301X Spring Quarterly journal A\$22 (incl. GST) 2010 CREDIT SUISSE For applications and guidelines, visit the NAVA website www.visualarts.net.au NZ\$25