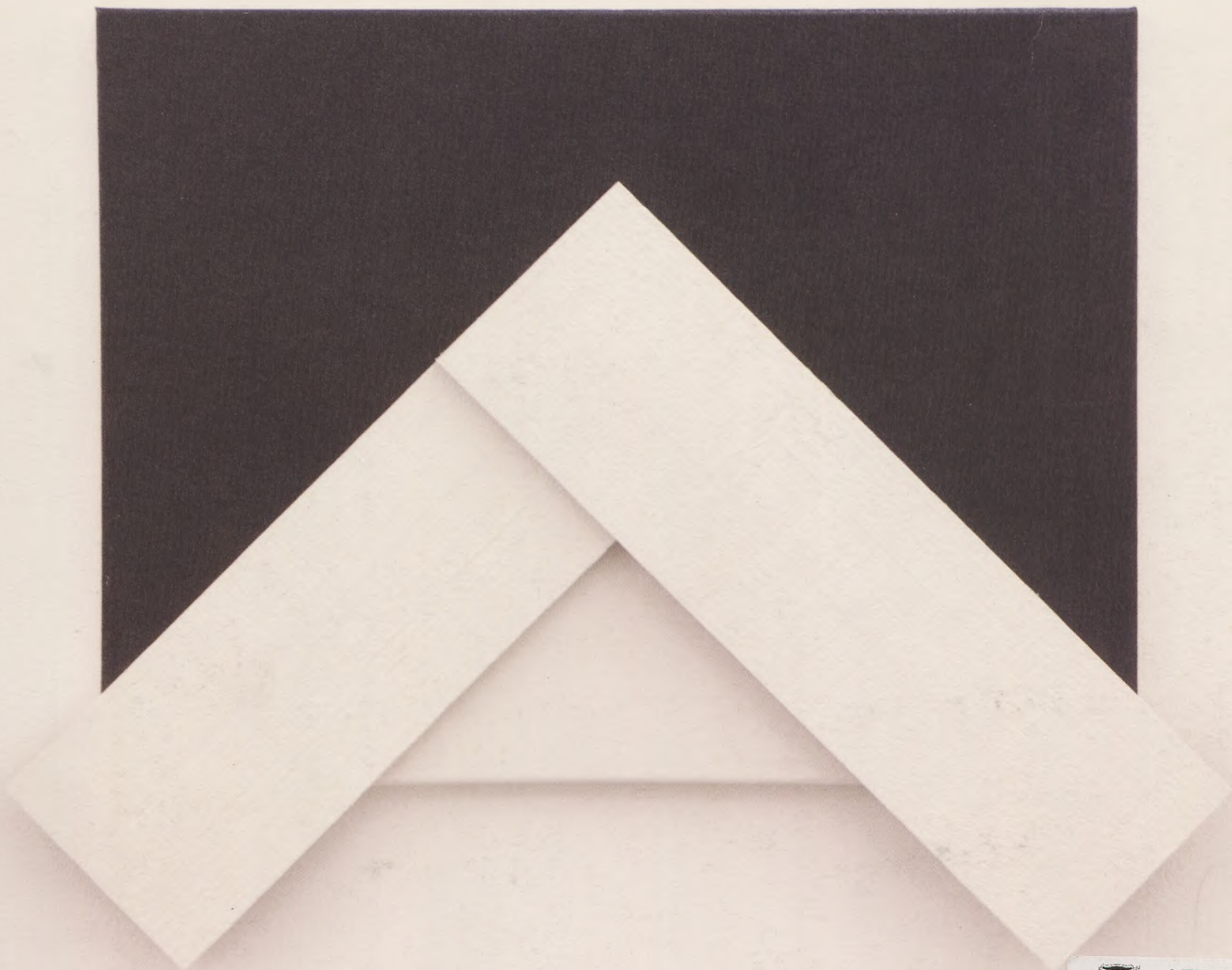


ART · ARCHITECTURE · DESIGN · FASHION

ARTAND

AUSTRALIA · ISSUE N°51.2 · 2013

LOS ANGELES · MELBOURNE · CANDICE BREITZ · SEAN GODSELL
LINDA MARRINON · LUCY MCRAE · LESLEY VANCE · THE PROPELLER GROUP



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MICHAEL GOVAN¹⁹⁶

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MULKA PROJECT²³⁴

COLLECT: RON &

GEORGE ADAMS²³⁶

LINDA MARRINON²⁴²

PROJECT: PATRICK

POUND²⁶⁶ FOCUS: LA²⁷²

PLATFORM: FRANCIS

E. PARKER³⁰³



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THE UNIVERSITY OF
You promised me,
and you said a lie to me

Heman Chong, Laurent Grasso, Susan Jacobs,
Jesse Jones, Jane and Louise Wilson,
Ming Wong, Haegue Yang

—

Curated by Alexie Glass-Kantor

October - November 2013

Del Kathryn Barton

pressure to the need



Del Kathryn Barton. *Pressure to the need*, 2013 (detail), acrylic on polyester canvas, 204 x 183cm

17 October - 16 November, 2013
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www.roslynnoxley9.com.au

THE CITIES OF MELBOURNE AND LOS ANGELES ARE JOINED BY OCEAN,
BY AIR AND, HERE, BY ART.

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THE UNIVERSITY
OF MELBOURNE

IN THIS ISSUE, *ARTAND AUSTRALIA* CONSIDERS THE ART OF BOTH
CONTEXTS, DEDICATING THE ESSAY SECTION TO CONTEMPORARY VISUAL
PRACTICE IN MELBOURNE AND THE FOCUS SECTION TO THE LAY OF THE
LA LANDSCAPE. TO HELP US LOCATE THE SEAMS THAT CONNECT THE
TWO CITIES, ARTIST PATRICK POUND PRESENTS THE PROJECT *TOWARDS
A GALLERY OF AIR*, 2013.

IN BOTH SITES, MUSEUMS ARE TACKLING THEIR FUTURES, NEGOTIATING
EXPANSION AND TRANSFORMING THEIR AUDIENCES WITH DIFFERENT
APPROACHES. MUSEUM DIRECTOR MICHAEL GOVAN AND ARCHITECT
SEAN GODSELL PRESENT DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THE TOPIC, WHILE GENE
SHERMAN CHARTS THE SUCCESS OF THE TEL AVIV MUSEUM OF ART'S
RECENT DEVELOPMENT.

TWO GUEST SPOTS BOOKEND THIS ISSUE. IN THE FIRST PART OF AN
ONGOING PROJECT WHERE *ARTAND AUSTRALIA* PRESENTS COLLECTORS
THROUGH THE ARTIST'S LENS, ARTIST HEATH FRANCO PHOTOGRAPHS
THE SYDNEY-BASED COLLECTION OF MOP'S RON AND GEORGE ADAMS.
AND FOR OUR PLATFORM SECTION, FRANCIS E. PARKER OF MELBOURNE'S
MONASH UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART SELECTS FOUR MELBOURNE-
BASED ARTISTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THEIR ARTISTIC CAREERS.

ELEONORA TRIGUBOFF

Masthead

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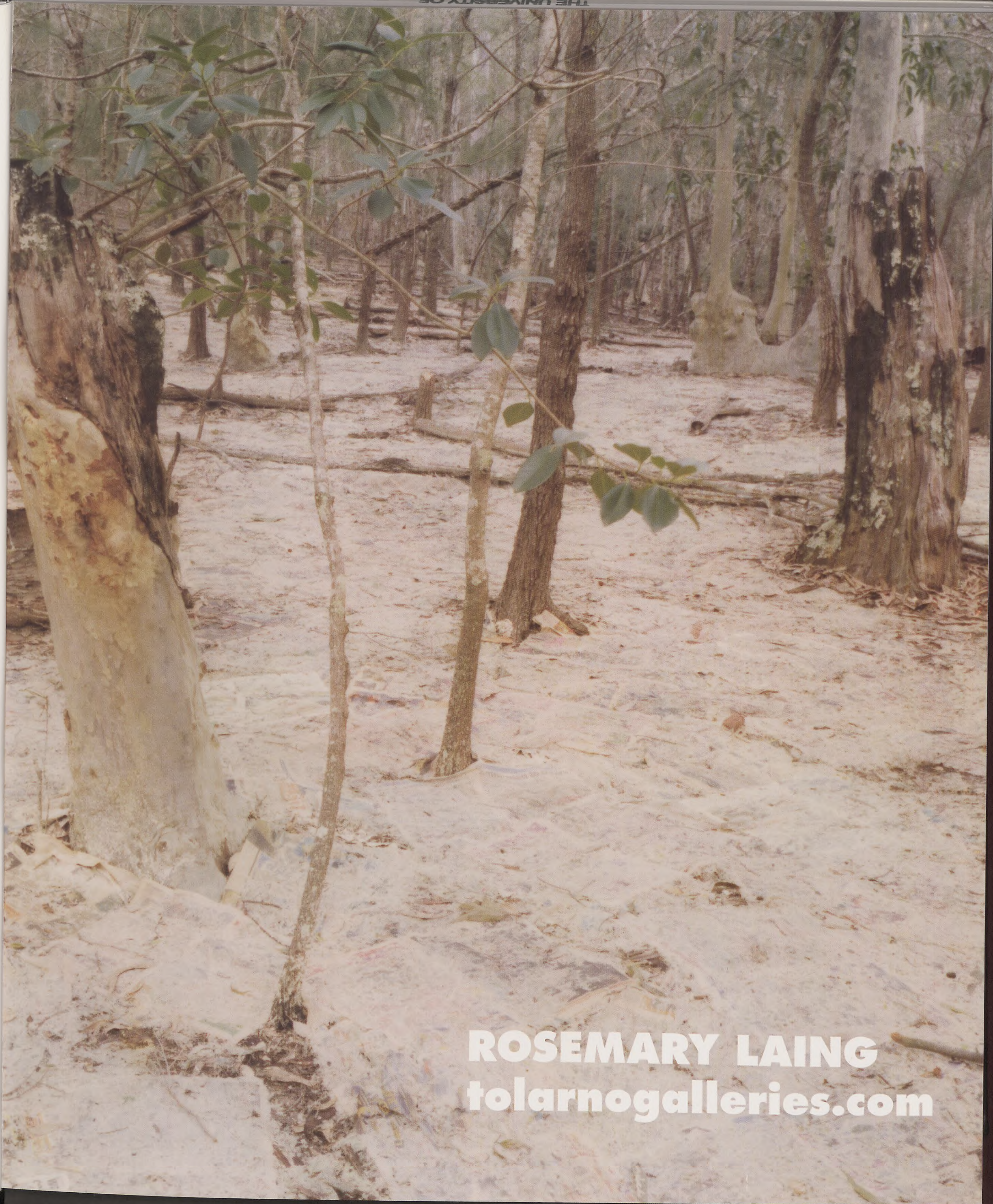
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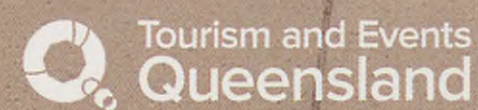
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Cai Guo-Qiang / Installation view of *Head On* 2006 at Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin / 99 life-sized replicas of wolves and glass wall / Wolves: gauze, resin and painted hide / Deutsche Bank Collection, commissioned by Deutsche Bank AG / Photograph: Hiro Ihara / Courtesy: Cai Studio

GOMA

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Miri Hirschfeld

COVER

John Nixon, *Untitled (black and white monochrome)*, 2013
Enamel on canvas and wood, 55.7 x 70 x 4 cm
Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery



CAI GUO-QIANG

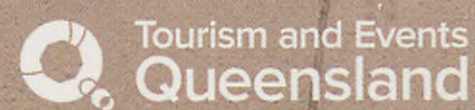
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John Nixon, *Untitled (black and white
monochrome)*, 2013
Enamel on canvas and wood, 55.7 x 70 x 4 cm
Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

Contributors

Liv Barrett

lives in Los Angeles. She recently curated 'Air to Surface' (2013) at PRISM, Los Angeles, and co-wrote 'Sponsored Post' with Fiona Connor, published within an issue of *X-TRA*.

Andrew Berardini

is a writer. He writes about the permeability between imagination and reality as well as the art of Los Angeles, where he lives. Currently he is at work on a book about colour.

Jon Bywater

writes about art and music, with a particular interest in politics and place. He teaches at Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Charlotte Day

is Director of the Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne. Previously she worked as associate curator at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne.

Karen Fermo and Martin Musiatowicz

Karen Fermo is a curator and teaches in design history at Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne. Martin Musiatowicz is an architect and lecturer in the RMIT Architecture program. Together they form Kart Projects, a Melbourne-based architecture practice.

Heath Franco

is an artist based in Sydney, working primarily in performance-based digital video. His work currently features in 'Primavera 2013: Young Australian Artists' at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

Miri Hirschfeld

is an art writer based in Melbourne. She studied at the Courtauld Institute of Art, London, and currently works at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne.

Helen Hughes

is co-editor and co-founder of *Discipline*, and is an editor of *emaj*. She teaches at the University of Melbourne and the Victorian College of the Arts.

Wendy Kaplan

has been Department Head and Curator, Decorative Arts and Design, at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art since 2001.

Natalie King

is a curator, writer and Director of Utopia@Asialink, a pan-Asian incubator at the University of Melbourne. She is co-curator with Djon Mundine of the TarraWarra Biennial 2014.

Chris McAuliffe

is an independent scholar and Honorary Fellow at the Australian Centre, University of Melbourne. From 2000–13 he was director of the Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne.

Robert MacPherson

is an artist. He has been represented in major international biennales including São Paulo (2002), Sharjah (2009) and the Biennale of Sydney (1979, 1990, 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2010).

Christopher Myers

is an artist and writer who lives between Brooklyn and Saigon. He has shown at MoMA PS1 and the Studio Museum in Harlem, and is currently working on a book on global censorship.

Francis E. Parker

is Curator – Exhibitions at the Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, where he has co-curated, most recently, 'Reinventing the Wheel: The Readymade Century' (2013).

Patrick Pound

is a Melbourne-based artist. His work is held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, and National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, among others.

Aaron Seeto

is a curator of contemporary Asian and Asian–Australian art and is the Director of 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art in Sydney.

Gene Sherman

is Executive Director, Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation; Deputy Chair, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra; and sits on the Tate Asian Acquisitions Committee and (Advisory) Board of Melbourne University's Institute of Art History.

Oli Stratford

is a London-based writer. He is the Online Editor of *Disegno* and has written for *Icon Magazine*, *Wonderland* and *Antidote*.

Sarah Tutton

is Senior Curator at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne.

Anna Waldmann

is an art consultant, visiting fellow at the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney, and a former director of visual arts at the Australia Council.

Julian Worrall

is an Australian architect and writer based in Tokyo since 2000. He returns to Australia in 2014 as Associate Professor of Architecture and Urban Design at the University of Adelaide.

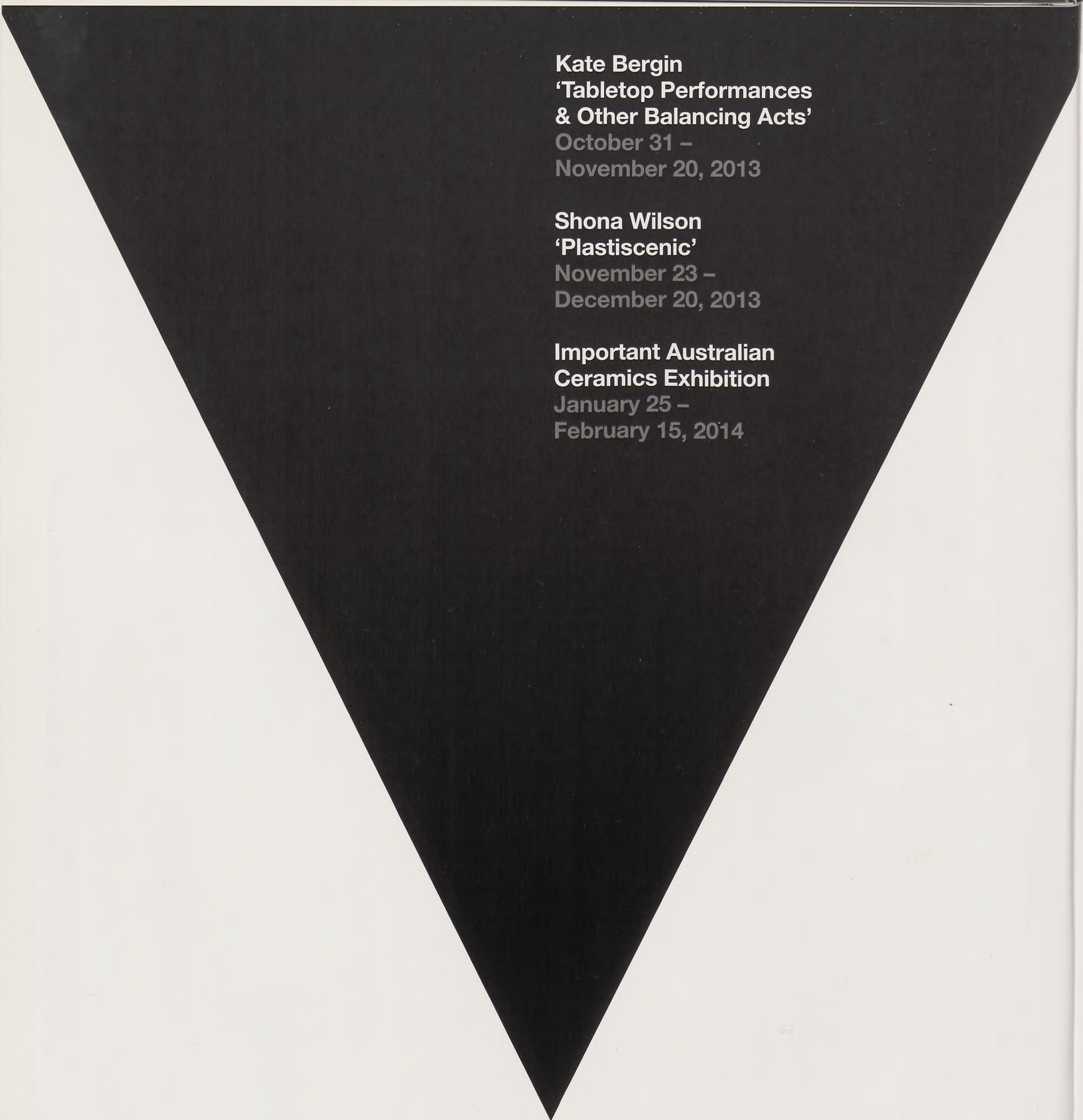
october
JOHN NIXON
DIENA GEORGETTI

november
SIMON BARNEY
JOHN NICHOLSON

december
ELIZABETH PULIE
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& Other Balancing Acts'
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November 20, 2013

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'Plastiscenic'
November 23 –
December 20, 2013

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January 25 –
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05 NOVEMBER-
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LOCAL: CURRENT 2013

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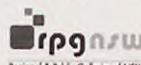


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THE STAIN PAINTINGS: 1971–80

EXHIBITION + BOOK LAUNCH
22 OCTOBER – 16 NOVEMBER

refiguring dystopia

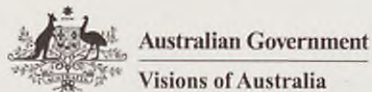
RICHARD GOODWIN

1991 - 2012

Curated by Gavin Wilson

A Bathurst Regional Art Gallery Exhibition

BATHURST REGIONAL ART GALLERY 13 Dec 2013 - 26 Jan 2014 | GALLERIES UNSW 7 Feb - 15 Mar 2014



GALLERIES





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Newcastle Art Gallery collection





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DAVID CAPRA

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LEAHLANI JOHNSON

NAOMI OLIVER

JULIETTE PASTOROK

TOM POLO

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www.parramattastudios.com



Marilyn Schneider's studio, 2012. Photo Alex Wisser.
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Frederick McCubbin, *The old slip, Williamstown 1915* (detail), oil on canvas, Private collection

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<http://mprg.mornpen.vic.gov.au>



This monument remembers Coranderrk.
 This monument remembers the long march from Acheron in 1862,
 the men, women and children walking
 to this home by the banks of the Yarra,
 a home for the Wurundjeri,
 displaced by the invasion that begins in 1835
 with Batman's Treaty,
 and a home for Aboriginal people
 from other parts of Victoria and beyond.
 This monument remembers the beauty of Coranderrk,
 the bounty of that home,
 and the continuing force
 of what is created at Coranderrk.
 This monument remembers the destruction of Coranderrk in 1924,
 its residents forced to Lake Tyers Mission in East Gippsland,
 five old people who would not leave,
 the houses cleared away,
 the bricks from Coranderrk used
 to supplement building materials for the expansion of Healesville.
 This monument is created from used bricks collected
 from the citizens of Healesville in 2013,
 for an obelisk
 that is also a chimney,
 the reminder of a home.

TarraWarra Museum of Art

Future Memorials

Jonathan Jones, Tom Nicholson
and Aunty Joy Wandin Murphy

19 October 2013 – 9 February 2014

A major new contemporary art project
in the 150th anniversary year of
Coranderrk Aboriginal Station

Tom Nicholson *Towards a monument to Batman's Treaty* (detail) 2013. Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

TWMA

TarraWarra Museum of Art
 311 Healesville-Yarra Glen Road, Healesville
 OPEN 11:00am - 5:00pm, Tuesday to Sunday
 7 days a week from Boxing Day to Australia Day
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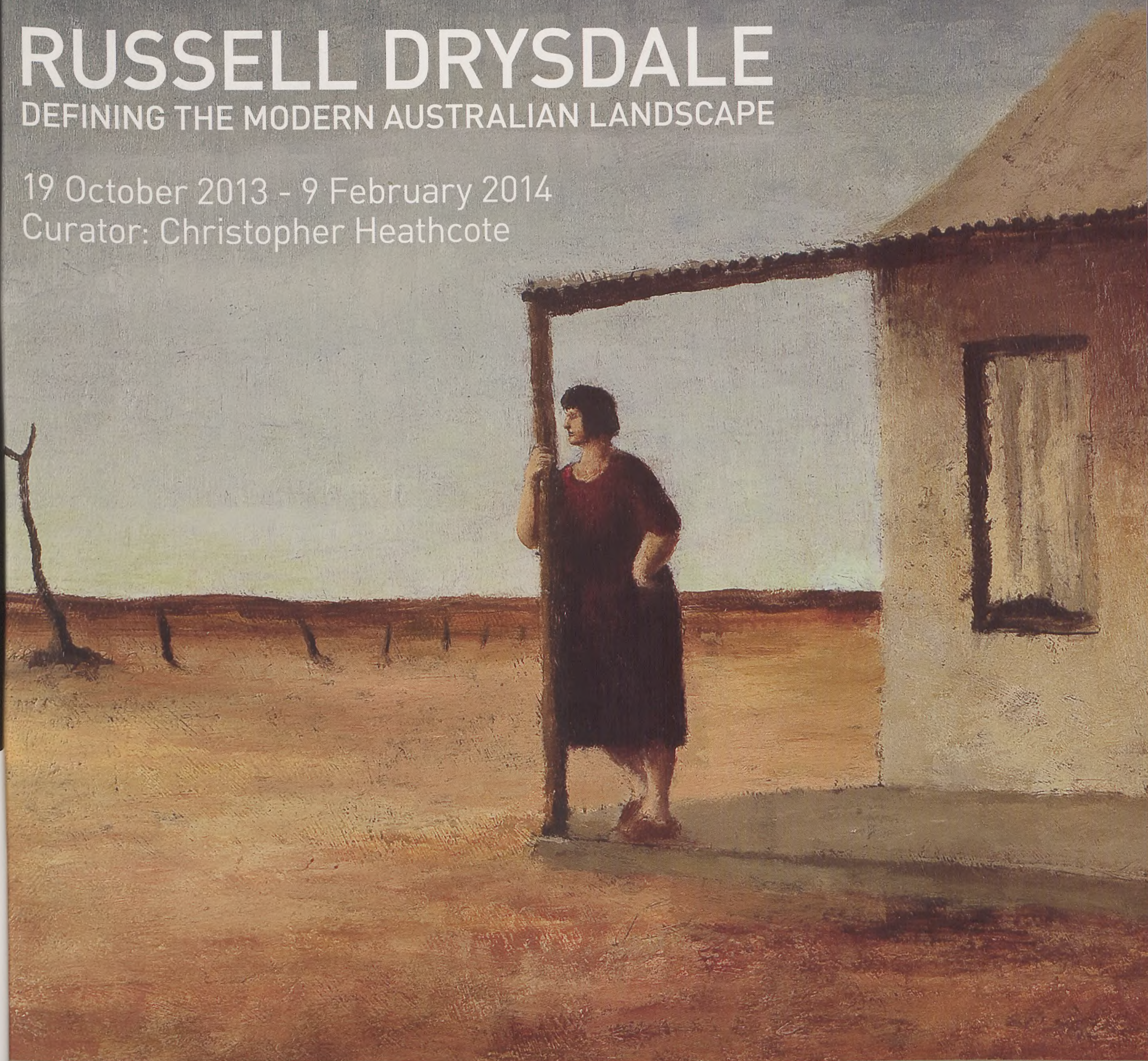
TarraWarra Museum of Art

RUSSELL DRYSDALE

DEFINING THE MODERN AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE

19 October 2013 - 9 February 2014

Curator: Christopher Heathcote



Russell Drysdale *Evening* (detail) c. 1945, oil on canvas, 50 x 60.5 cm. Private collection © Estate of Russell Drysdale

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311 Healesville-Yarra Glen Road, Healesville
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Julie Ewington

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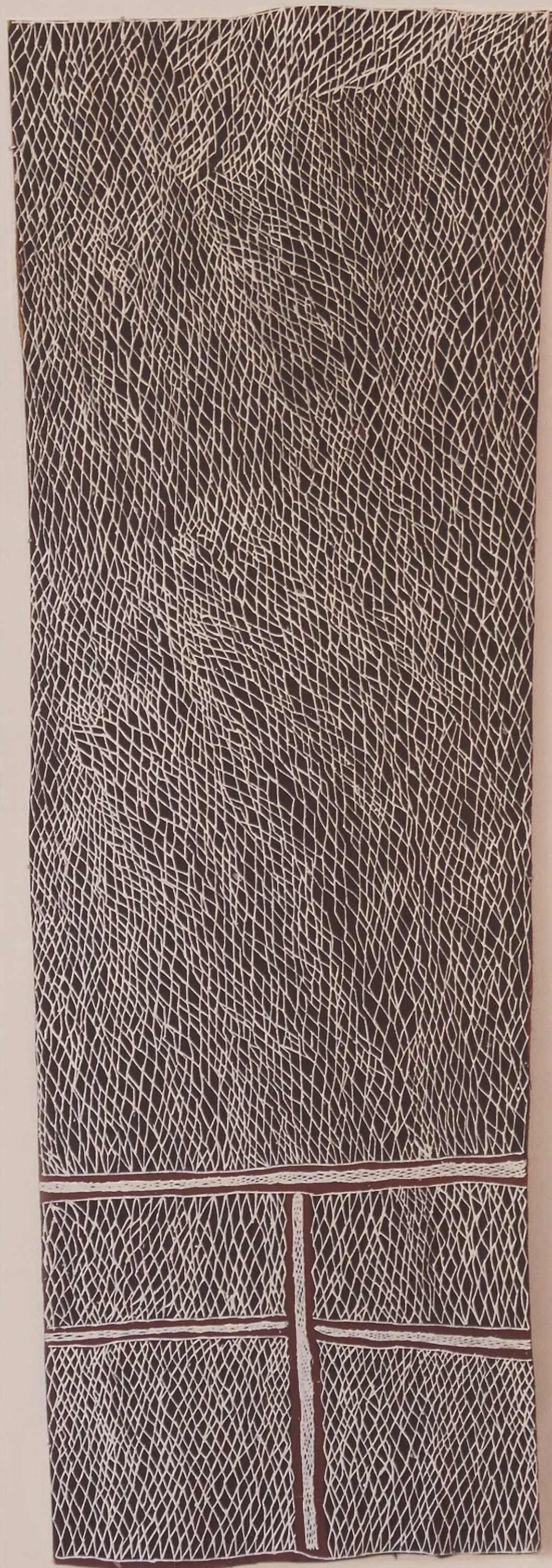
14 January - 14 February 2014

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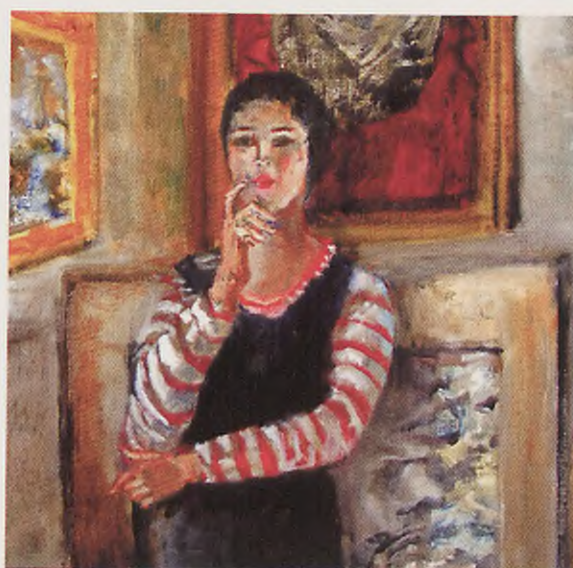
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T|+61 3 9418 6444 E| art@alcastongallery.com.au

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The Judy Cassab Festival

60 Years in Australia



Eva Breuer Art Dealer in collaboration with Mossgreen Gallery
presents The Judy Cassab Festival

To be opened at Eva Breuer Art Dealer by
Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO
on Saturday 16 November 2013. Drinks with the artist from 3-5pm.

Eva Breuer Art Dealer, Sydney
16 November 2013 - March 2014

Mossgreen Gallery, Melbourne
March 2014

National Portrait Gallery, Art Gallery of NSW, Woollahra Council, Sydney Jewish Museum, Montefiore Home Randwick, Macquarie University and the University of Sydney will be participating by exhibiting works from their collections.

EVA BREUER
a r t d e a l e r

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detail: *Length of fabric with hamsa geese*, 15th–16th century, Gujarat, India, found in Indonesia, block-printed, batik and mordant dyes on cotton, 521.0 cm x 98.0 cm; Gift of Michael Abbott AO QC through the Art Gallery of South Australia Foundation 2008. detail: *Kalpa Sūtra*, dated VS 1524 / 1467 CE, Gujarat or Rajasthan, India, ink, opaque watercolour and gold on paper, 92 loose leaves, 11.0 x 25.5 cm (each leaf); Collection of Michael Abbott AO QC

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IN THE AGE OF THE MULTIPLE, HOW DO WE HOLD ON TO SPECIFICITY? ARTIST CANDICE BREITZ ASKS THE QUESTION, AND CONTEMPLATES OTHERS ON FEMINISM, IDENTITY AND SUBJECTIVITY.

A HUMAN TEXTURE: THE VIDEO PORTRAITS OF CANDICE BREITZ

NATALIE KING
PORTRAIT BY DEREK HENDERSON

Candice Breitz draws us into the devotional world of fandom and pop music by recruiting twenty-five ardent John Lennon fans to re-perform, a cappella style, his entire first solo album, *John Lennon/Plastic Ono Band* (1970). The participating fans revisit Lennon's doleful lyrics, penned while he was undergoing primal therapy with Dr Arthur Janov to probe the trauma of his childhood. Breitz configured *Working Class Hero (A Portrait of John Lennon)*, 2006, as a single row of luminous screens that envelop the viewer in surround sound amplified through the soaring, vaulted ceiling of Anna Schwartz Gallery in Sydney.¹ Some participants are reticent while others sing emotively. Breitz's collective video portraits suggest the congregational dimension of incantation, while returning us to songs as the soundtrack of our experiences.²

Natalie King: How did you become an artist in South Africa?

Candice Breitz: I graduated from art school in Johannesburg in 1993, at the moment that South Africa was shaking off its pariah status and slowly starting to engage the world. Though the isolation of the country at that time made it seem particularly delusional to study art, the context encouraged strong thinking. The fact that none of us expected to be able to sell our work or be represented by a gallery meant that the focus was really on ideas.

I left South Africa shortly after that first degree to pursue graduate studies abroad, first in Chicago and then later at Columbia University in New York, with Rosalind Krauss and Benjamin Buchloh as my mentors. I eventually abandoned the PhD just as I was approaching the last chapter, in favour of working full-time as an artist. So I only really started to think of myself as a fully-fledged artist sometime after leaving South Africa.

NK: What was the subject of your PhD?

CB: My topic was post-1968 Warhol, abstract Warhol: the Warhol of the *Shadows*, 1978–79, *Rorschachs*, 1984, *Camouflages*, 1986, and *Piss Paintings*, 1977–78.

NK: Was Warhol a formative influence in terms of his cult status, his interest in cinema and the way he used repetition and seriality?

CB: Definitely. After Warhol, it is impossible to think about subjectivity, and how it might be represented, in the same way. Warhol effectively destroys portraiture in the sense that it had existed before his arrival on the scene.

NK: What about Warhol's *Screen Tests*, 1964–66, which are like filmic portraits?

CB: The *Screen Tests* are a great example of Warhol's radical reappraisal of portraiture as a genre. My own interest has been in moving the focus away from Warhol's service to celebrity, and in focusing instead on the people on the other side of the equation – the audience, the fans, the subscribers. In 2006 there was a face-off between these two sides of the same coin when the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen installed my *Queen (A Portrait of Madonna)*, 2005, which features thirty Madonna fans, directly opposite *Thirty Are Better Than One*, 1963, one of Warhol's gridded Marilyn portraits.³

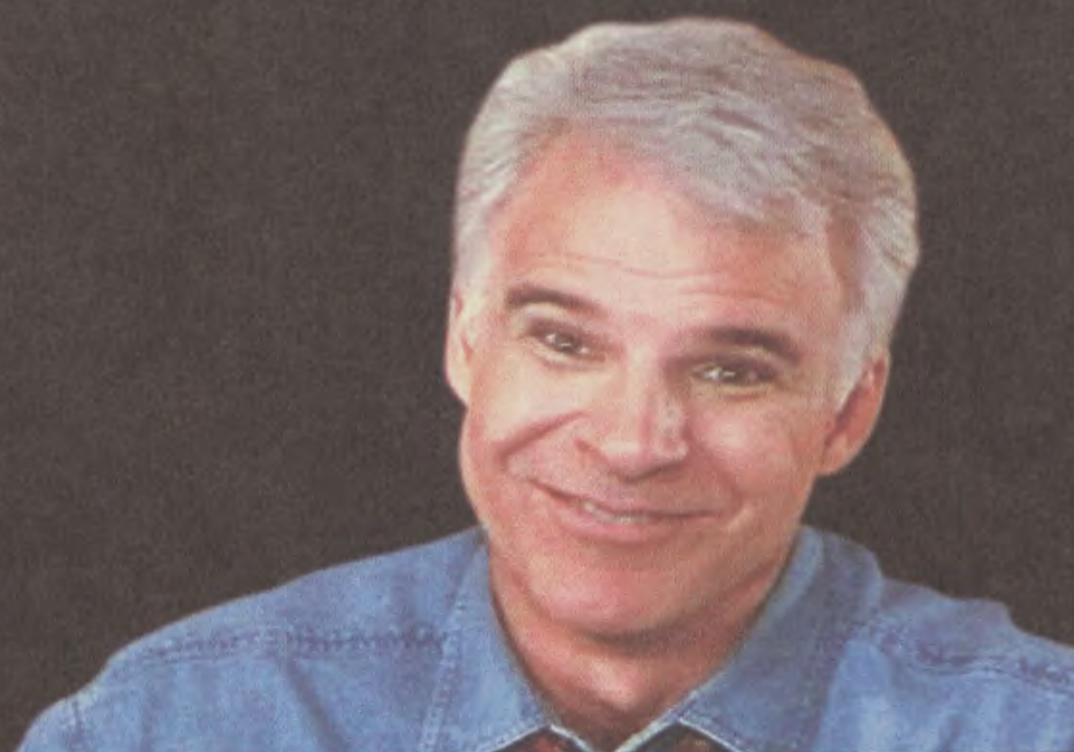
NK: You have been preoccupied with fans and those who are invisible. Let's discuss *Ghost Series*, 1994–96, and the two-dimensional montaged and partly obliterated female figures.

CB: Looking back on *Ghost Series*, perhaps what connects it with my more recent work is an ongoing grappling with the absence that is endemic to portraiture. Portraits absent their subjects, rewrite their subjects, and ultimately they survive their subjects.

Ghost Series was made directly after the historic elections that took place in South Africa in April 1994. I used Tipp-Ex to alter ten tourist postcards depicting 'exotic' African women. The flattening layer of white-out applied to the postcards polemically reproduces the violence and erasure that black South Africa had for so long endured under the white nationalist regime, leaving behind a series of ghostly figures whose spectral absence, at the time that the series was made, testified to the ongoing and haunting consequences of apartheid.

NK: In *Becoming*, 2003, you probe Hollywood clichés of femininity. What is your stance on gender politics and feminism?







ABOVE

Factum Kang, 2009

From the series 'Factum' (2010)

Dual-channel installation, 69 mins 10 secs duration

Commissioned by The Power Plant, Toronto;

commissioning partner, Partners in Art

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Mother, 2005

Stills from six-channel installation, 13 mins 15 secs duration

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Father, 2005

Stills from six-channel installation, 11 mins duration

CB: I am an ardent feminist! *Becoming* is an attempt to come to terms with the vast distance that separates the airbrushed femininity served up by mainstream entertainment from the actual experience of being a woman. Without the benefit of makeup, alluring costumes or props, and without the help of slick post-production, I try on seven Hollywood actresses, attempting to inhabit their gestures and expressions by re-enacting their performances as precisely as possible. The resulting footage is awkward, and hopefully revealing of the very limited range of options available for the representation of women within the media.

NK: It's a unique experience casting yourself in your own work. Are you interested in Cindy Sherman and the performative self?

CB: Many artists have explored the performativity of selfhood, often in more nuanced ways than Sherman, but she was nevertheless a key figure in this regard. Being a self involves an endless series of performances, performances that are often responsive to the particular contexts in which they take place. We really become ourselves in the space between ourselves and others, which is why I find the term 'inter-subjectivity' more useful than 'subjectivity' when it comes to thinking about how a series of performances of the self coagulate into a particular identity.

NK: If subjectivity is mediated by the encounter and relationships, let's discuss *Mother + Father*, 2005, which is the quintessential Oedipal relationship. You have said that making *Mother + Father* was like a decade of therapy compressed into one year.

CB: Our relationship with our parents is of course very primal, formative in the most epic sense. That said, given the fact that we are increasingly parented by the culture industry (which much of the time also means being infantilised by that industry), *Mother* and *Father* are attempts to imagine and confront the media forces that have become like parents to us. More and more we learn who we are – our personal vocabulary of words, gestures and expressions – not only from our parents and our immediate social contexts, but also from the culture industry. In that sense, the media has gradually come to share, and in certain instances to take over, the complex job of raising us. *Mother + Father* is my stab at thinking about that conundrum.

NK: If *Mother + Father* looks at the parental relationship, then you have siblings or twins in *Factum*, 2010, named after Robert Rauschenberg's quasi-identical combine paintings of 1957. What were you trying to uncover about that very particular sibling relationship?

CB: I'd say I was primarily interested in exploring the internal and external forces that drive individuation. Each work is a fictional conversation between a pair of identical twins, fictional in the sense that the siblings were interviewed separately, their responses then woven together later in the editing process. While the initial interview allowed each person to tell his or her own story unencumbered, each double portrait in the series introduces the other twin as a fictive interlocutor who offers a subtly or radically different perspective. This interplay between a documentary approach and the fictionalising force of the edit is ultimately about creating a space in which to think about the inter-subjective dynamics via which people become themselves, a ping-pong process that is not exclusive to twins.

NK: I am interested in that process of becoming in relation to place and your work currently on display at Anna Schwartz Gallery in Sydney, *Working Class Hero (A Portrait of John Lennon)*.

CB: *Working Class Hero* belongs to a larger series of works, each of which zooms in on a particular community of fans in a particular part of the world, inviting the individuals in that imagined community to re-perform an album in its entirety. I'm interested in thinking about the extent to which it might be possible to hold on to individuality in

the light of the plethora of homogenising forces that we increasingly encounter. Each portrait frames a relatively limited space within which fans are invited to interpret and translate an album that in a sense functions as the script for the installation. To what extent are we obliged to follow the scripts written for us by the circumstances that we enter into or are defined by in our daily lives? And to what extent is improvisation and creativity possible? In other words, to what extent can we deviate from the script? The structure of *Working Class Hero* and the other works in this series opens on to these questions, I hope.

NK: Place is embedded in many of your works. You recruited Lennon fans and set up parameters like Sol LeWitt's *Instructions, 1971* – like rules.

CB: What has always fascinated me about Sol LeWitt is the rigour and precision with which his works are articulated, and yet the manner in which they become interpretive at a certain point – the play between what is fixed and what is left open.

NK: *Working Class Hero (A Portrait of John Lennon)* has a strong congregational, symphonic quality with a cappella sound. How important is the sonic dimension?

CB: There's something deeply profound about hearing a large number of voices sounding together: the sonic texture of community. The choir is always to some extent about the play between an individual and a larger constellation. Single voices are important, but only in their relationship to the whole.

NK: Lennon's lyrics are mournful and consider issues of class and place.

CB: The lyrics are visceral, the songs somewhat raw. Lennon sings about the death of his mother, abandonment by his father, a deep-seated sense of isolation. I find the album very moving. The lyrics continue to speak to me very strongly.

NK: What are you listening to in Sydney?

CB: Right now I'm listening to Lana Del Rey, Vampire Weekend and late Neil Diamond.

1 *Working Class Hero (A Portrait of John Lennon)*, 2006, was on show at Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, 27 July – 28 September 2013.

2 This interview took place in Sydney on 26 July 2013.

3 'Lifestyle' (2006) was exhibited at the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland.



ON THE EVE OF TWO LACMA-TOURING EXHIBITIONS HITTING AUSTRALIAN SHORES, CEO AND DIRECTOR MICHAEL GOVAN SPEAKS ABOUT HOW HE SEES THE MUSEUM AS AN INVITATION, NOT AN ASSUMPTION.

ALL ART IS CONTEMPORARY: MICHAEL GOVAN

ANDREW BERARDINI

Los Angeles builds a new art museum about every ten years. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), established in 1961 with an encyclopedic collection of 100,000 objects and a commitment to contemporary art, has, under the directorship of Michael Govan, grown into more than one entity.

Since Govan became Chief Executive Officer and Director in 2006, LACMA has built the Broad Contemporary Art Museum and Lynda and Stewart Resnick Exhibition Pavilion, both designed by Renzo Piano; installed two major permanent sculptures, *Urban Light*, 2008, by Chris Burden, and *Levitated Mass*, 2012, by Michael Heizer; convinced the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to open its film museum on the LACMA campus; and unveiled a new plan to demolish all the original museum buildings for a new one designed by Pritzker-winning architect Peter Zumthor. The only building unchanged, if all goes according to plan, will be the eccentric and beloved Pavilion for Japanese Art designed by Bruce Goff. When Andrew Berardini interviewed Govan, the director was in the process of fundraising US\$650 million to realise Zumthor's new master plan for the museum and looking ahead to two LACMA exhibitions that will visit Australia in 2013–14 – 'America: Painting a Nation' and 'California Design, 1930–1965: Living in a Modern Way'.¹

Andrew Berardini: Tell me about your interdisciplinary interests, starting at Dia Art Foundation, New York, where you worked with architects and designers, and now at LACMA. For example, the LACMA projects with Jorge Pardo and Franz West, where both artists rearranged different parts of the collection, as well the collaboration between Sharon Lockhart and Noa Eshkol. How do you see these things continuing at the museum?

Michael Govan: I believe we are in a period where there is potentially a lot of back and forth between disciplines. If you look at ancient art, there is a blurry distinction between art, architecture, performance, textiles and ceremony. Everything works together. The professionalisation of every one of our disciplines has maybe gone to an extreme.

I've always been interested in the interrelationship between art and architecture – place, space, the history of it and how it works in the present. And that's taken many forms, whether it's thinking about

Chris Burden's *Urban Light* as an artwork that has architectonic scale and sits in front of the museum as a kind of temple architecture/sculpture, or Michael Heizer's *Levitated Mass*, which is art on an architectonic, nearly Egyptian scale, or even land art, which has that quality too. Artworks of that scale are not unlike architecture.

In some ways the proposal that Peter Zumthor has made for the new building seriously blends art, architecture and experience. We've taken into account the campus, and we've thought about the experience of the place – there will be a number of permanent artworks situated in it.

AB: Where do you think museums are heading in terms of satisfying their audiences?

MG: Well 'audiences' is the right word because there is no *one* audience. There are many audiences and different audiences have different interests. LACMA allows for mixing audiences, so that people don't just come for the things they know and like, but to encounter what they don't know but will like.

At the Resnick Pavilion it was imperative to have a large horizontal space that could hold more than one exhibition at a time, because if you have to go up a staircase or into an elevator to see something you're not sure you'll like, you won't go. But if you can step sideways and peek through the doorway at, say, a Hans Richter painting currently on view, and then take two steps further, you'll see films and other paintings; you're invited in.

AB: How do you feel the new Zumthor plan for the museum responds to the institution's many responsibilities to its different audiences?

MG: Would you build a retail store with a brick wall and a door? Not usually; it's not that inviting. And so I wonder why we build most of our museums as brick walls and doors, like this one was in the 1980s.

AB: I've never been a fan of this part of the museum.

MG: It's a brick wall and a door. Museums can take their audiences for granted; they come anyway. So one of the most brilliant and beautiful aspects of the Peter Zumthor plan is that you're invited to Hancock Park; there's an art museum, there's going to be a movie museum,



there's the beautiful La Brea Tar Pits and the Page Museum of the Natural History Museum, and you can just walk around. There's free sculpture to see outside; there's a restaurant and a place to sit.

In the Zumthor plan, the building is lifted so that you can walk through without paying admission. You can look through windows into exhibitions and collections – literally window shop – before you decide to come into the museum. You can have the park and the casual experience and then be enticed slowly, by what you see, to come inside. On the upper floor it is quieter, more contemplative. Something you expect from a museum. It's a very gradated experience, and very inviting to the public. Vast numbers of our potential audience have never been to a museum, ever. So it's an obligation, now, in big diverse cities like LA, to build museums as an invitation and not as an assumption that's playing to one particular audience.

AB: In the current museum campus, it seems that the different departments have territories more or less staked out. Is that going to be continued in the new plan of the museum, or will it be much more fluid?

MG: I see in the future much more collaboration between departments, and also more collaboration between exhibitions and collections. Our collections shouldn't sit in dark rooms. They should be activated. They should be accessible. Even if they have to be on a painting rack, the painting rack should be seen; if in a drawer, that drawer should open.

In Peter Zumthor's plan for the museum, he said that it's important that it doesn't have a front but more important that it doesn't have a back, meaning there's no hierarchy, starting in Europe or in ancient Egypt and moving in one progressive forward direction. Different cultures have different views of time. We take progress and linear development of time for granted in European cultures, but in Asian and pre-Columbian cultures time is more cyclical. The idea of this building is that there is not simply one viewpoint on time, or culture, or history.

There's also not one viewpoint on media. We've been paying a lot of attention to photographs, prints, drawings and textiles, and this building will have more work in rotation, and more study centres; there isn't the hierarchy of painting and sculpture first and everything else second. This non-hierarchical quality is less territorial, less of the real-estate model, more of the mixed model, and that goes with the time. It speaks of a culture that's constantly juxtaposing times and places in what we call cyberspace because there are no limits of geography or time.

I see in the future that the balance between globalisation and maintaining cultural identities is going to be a constant back and forth. Too much globalisation makes everyone the same; too much segmentation and you can't understand each other. The museum is hopefully the meeting place that strikes a balance between the whole world and individual cultural identities in a constantly evolving mix.

AB: A number of LACMA shows are coming to Australia: 'America: Painting a Nation' and 'California Design, 1930–1965: Living in a Modern Way', which are really about a sense of place, both in the United States and then more specifically in Southern California. Are there comparisons to be made between the nature of things going on here in the United States, and more specifically Southern California, and in Australia?

MG: There are definitely parallels between the development of western-style art and design in the United States and Australia. Both begin as colonial cultures in the shadow of European art and are slow to be recognised. And California, like Australia, is an extreme outpost that develops even later. It's only now, as the balance of global economic and cultural powers begins to shift to the Pacific, that Pacific cultures are being more equally considered in art history.

When we first proposed the exhibition on Southern California design and presented it to museums around the world, there were no

takers. There was a sense that Southern California design wasn't a category, or not one that people were especially interested in. And that's the nature of a groundbreaking exhibition.

After we put the show together, we exhibited it for eight months here,¹ and the catalogue sold tens of thousands of copies. Subsequently there's been demand for that show around the world, because it was an exhibition that put together the specific historic phenomenon of how fast LA grew, right in the late 1920s–30s, showing how many designers and architects from around the world moved here. Mid-century design is LA mid-century design; most of it came from here. So if you're watching *Mad Men*, those Eames chairs come from LA.

I think there's a parallel with Australia in the development of the cities: they developed late and quickly in the twentieth century and so there is a lot of new art and design that is made and not yet recognised because it's not yet historical. There's a kinship between these Pacific-rim cities that comes later, after Europe and the east coast is well developed, and sits slightly separate from the more contained and localised Asian cultures, although there's a shared influence of modernity and a relationship with Asia. I don't know enough about the situation to describe it well, but I'm not sure anybody knew enough about the situation in Southern California before the exhibition, so that's the beauty of research, scholarship and exhibition.

AB: I am curious about the curatorial thrust of the museum as it moves forward. Contemporary art seems a fundamental component.

MG: If you look at the expenditures and the time people spend, contemporary art isn't in disproportion. You saw the Broad Contemporary Art Museum building made first.

AB: Yes, but also *Urban Light* and of course the huge stone in the back [*Levitated Mass*]. These are major projects that are really visible to a general public.

MG: All art is contemporary. It's made at some point by an artist. Contemporary art isn't a category, because it gets old. I'm interested in those pieces not because they are contemporary art as a category, but because they show that we are building our culture right now.

America: Painting a Nation, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 8 November 2013 – 9 February 2014; **California Design, 1930–1965: Living in a Modern Way**, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 2 November 2013 – 9 February 2014.

¹ This interview took place at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art on 29 July 2013.

² 'California Design, 1930–1965: Living in a Modern Way' was on display at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1 October 2011 – 3 June 2012.

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OPPOSITE, FROM TOP
'Sharon Lockhart/Noa Eshkol' (2012)
Installation view, Los Angeles County
Museum of Art
Photograph © 2012 Museum Associates/LACMA

'The Presence of the Past: Peter Zumthor
Reconsiders LACMA' (2013)
Installation view, Los Angeles County
Museum of Art
Photograph © 2012 Museum Associates/LACMA

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Michael Govan, 2013, with Michael Heizer's
Levitated Mass, 2012,
Photograph Adrian Gaut

CLAIRE HSU FORMED THE ASIA ART ARCHIVE OUT OF A SENSE OF PERSONAL URGENCY. HERE, IN CONVERSATION WITH AARON SEETO, DIRECTOR OF 4A, SHE DETAILS THE WAY THE ORGANISATION SEEKS TO ACTIVATE THE ARCHIVE AND REMAP LANGUAGE.

INDEPENDENCE AND THE ARCHIVE: CLAIRE HSU ON THE ASIA ART ARCHIVE

AARON SEETO

Claire Hsu and Aaron Seeto met on the eve of ART HK in 2013 to discuss the emergence and future direction of Asia Art Archive (AAA) in Hong Kong.¹ The archive is one of the key collections and resources documenting the recent history of contemporary art in Asia. Asia Art Archive and 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, of which Seeto is the Director, are roughly the same age, established around the late 1990s during a period of development and growth among local artistic communities throughout the Asia Pacific region. In this conversation, principles of independence clearly mark out the emergence of an alternative artistic scene from which much of the discussion and discourse of the art from the region has emerged, sometimes in concert with and often in reaction to the various agendas of political bureaucracies and the art market. Hsu articulates a position of critical independence necessary for the future of AAA and the need to be responsive to changes on the ground among artists, curators and critics, while also changing the ways in which the art history of the region is written and taught.

Aaron Seeto: The Asia Art Archive began in the year 2000. AAA describes itself as emerging from a sense of 'urgency'. What was going on in Hong Kong and in the region at this time?

Claire Hsu: First, the development of AAA came about from a sense of personal urgency. In 1999 I was completing my Masters at the University of London. My course focused on the history of traditional Chinese art – landscape painting and ceramics. I was writing a dissertation on contemporary 1990s Chinese art and realised that it was very difficult to find material on these important developments. The library collection for Chinese art at the School of Oriental and African Studies literally stopped in the early twentieth century.

I was very lucky to intern at Hanart TZ Gallery in Hong Kong that summer. Its pioneering Director, Johnson Chang (Chang Tsong-zung), allowed me access to the material that he had amassed on contemporary Chinese art. We had a discussion about the need for the establishment of a space to document this important moment in time, and the idea for AAA was born.

At the same time, there were a number of interesting developments taking place in Hong Kong and the region. In many ways, AAA was

born from an increased awareness of alternative curatorial practices and the emergence of different kinds of spaces. On the one hand, there was a need to document these developments and make them visible, and on the other, to ground them in an understanding of continuity with the past and not as something that had dropped from the sky.

The Hong Kong Arts Development Council, set up in 1995, was crucial to the emergence of a number of independent spaces in Hong Kong. A dialogue around alternative spaces was also occurring: Videotage had been established in the 1980s, Para Site in 1996, and 1a space and artist commune followed shortly after; 4A in Sydney was established in 1996, among others in the region.

During this period there was a real consciousness of the need to establish spaces that could show the range of art being produced that could not be shown in more official venues. One of the first projects AAA cooperated on was 'Space Traffic: Symposium of International Artist Spaces' in 2001 with Para Site. We invited a number of alternative spaces to Hong Kong to participate in discussions. There was a sense of urgency in the questions posed – now that there were all these initiatives on the ground, how could they be sustainable? How to survive? How to continue carving out a space for experimental practice?

There was also an awareness that many critical discussions about art were being shaped by national agendas and also by the market, especially prevalent in Hong Kong in later years. These discussions were occurring among independent spaces, and AAA was interested in how this could be documented and activated further.

AS: The discussions you describe were happening in many places in the region in the 1990s and to a point provided the impetus behind organisations like ours. They were part of a much broader ecology occurring alongside museum and biennale projects, for instance Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial, the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art and even magazines such as *ArtAsiaPacific*. Perspectives emerging at both the independent and museum levels, in some way or another addressed very localised needs. We have spoken briefly about the market, and perhaps the burgeoning market for contemporary art from the region has been a major influence on its



broader global awareness. Do you think it has also shaped the alternative view and concepts of independence? How has the market impacted more generally here in Hong Kong and specifically on AAA?

CH: It is a strange relationship – we are trying to create a space that is alternative to and independent from the art market, yet our ability to grow can largely be attributed to the rise and dominance of the market in Hong Kong.

In the absence of any public institutions doing this kind of work in Hong Kong, whether for pure altruism or because as individuals build their personal collections they realise that the work we are doing is beneficial to their own activities, AAA has been able to generate considerable support.

AS: Do you think the market is something that can be archived?

CH: It could be, but this is not what we are interested in. I think that the market is archiving itself extremely well. Of course it is not so black and white, and the market has led to many positive developments. Take this year's ART HK – there are numerous projects happening around town that are both challenging and offer something different from the art-fair aesthetic, such as the Burger Collection and la space's 'I Think It Rains' (2013) exhibition. The art fair in many ways performs as both a catalyst and a construction from which alternative conversations can emerge in reaction.

AS: What was the first set of materials donated to AAA?

CH: Johnson Chang donated his personal archive and this was the starting point from which our current collection developed. Johnson is a pioneer in the field and is a scholar, curator and dealer. His interests and activities are far-ranging – for example, he is trying to reintroduce Confucian rites into contemporary Chinese society, while curating major biennales and developing intellectual exchange projects between India and China. His archive is of course very China-centric, and our goal has been to extend this to the region.

AAA is very much evolving; we are constantly coming to terms with what is defined as Asia. It is never defined. Hong Kong is an anchoring point, but the borders are and must be continually remapped depending on internal and external priorities and urgencies.

AS: Some of the interesting conversations that we seem to have in Australia, and also with colleagues worldwide, revolve around how the concept of Asia is always fracturing in response to the different ways in which it is framed by institutions. There are both very local discussions that are influenced by local cultures and the needs and interests of artists in particular places at particular times, as well as national political agendas that define a geography through their own interests and activities. These views are not always sympathetic. I also see the concept of Asia fracture as it moves through other discourses outside the arts, as well as Asia's relationship to 'the international' and a general shift in language from a discourse of 'world' cultures to a 'global' culture. How does AAA operate or map itself within these changing political and social environments?

CH: You are right that these views are often not sympathetic. It is indeed these very fractures – between the local, the national, the regional and the global, and between, say, the promise of art and the realities on the ground – that force AAA to constantly remap, reposition and evolve.

There are certain vocabularies we no longer use. We don't use the word 'comprehensive' to reflect these constant fractures – comprehensiveness is not only an impossibility but the 'complete' is not what we are interested in. We also avoid using 'contemporary Asian art' (although there are exceptions), as this terminology has become clearly associated with auction houses and the market to position art and artists.

We are interested in local or micro-histories and narratives. These are histories that you or I may think are really obvious, but within mainstream discourses on contemporary art are largely overlooked. Sometimes this is because of their political or non-commercial nature, or because they do not conveniently fit into the framework within which the mainstream art-historical canon has been written.

I think here AAA has a role, of course not alone, but as a node in a larger network of other like-minded institutions.

The archive as a form is not unique to AAA, and in fact since the digital age has been transformed from a space associated with control and authority to one that can be democratic and subjective. The archive is being used in multiple ways to probe and make visible urgent issues – around ownership of knowledge, memory and histories.

For instance, the Southern Conceptualisms Network is a project that involves forty researchers and curators throughout Latin America using the archive as a method to keep material and knowledge in their place of origin. This effort is in reaction to the acquisition of archives in Latin America by major American educational institutions that not only sees this material leave the region, but become publicly inaccessible. These comparative processes give one a better understanding of our own activities, which is why we included them as a case study in the second issue of our online journal *Field Notes*, 'Archive as Method'.

AAA's philosophy is about accessibility, not ownership. We don't believe in buying archives. Our huge digital collection of material has been built up through systematic research and digitisation processes, where original materials are left with their owners in their place of origin. Our goal is to get permission to make the digital copies publicly accessible. Our website now has online public access to the archives of Delhi-based art critic and curator Geeta Kapur, Indian artist and activist Vivan Sundaram, the late Filipino conceptual artist Roberto Chabet, and the now-defunct Hanoi-based space Salon Natasha.

But it's not just about accumulation. We feel a strong responsibility to make sure that the ideas and content within the archive are activated. We don't want to be an ivory tower for researchers and scholars only, but a space that inflects and connects through the multiple public programs we undertake. Earlier this year, after doing a project with 4A, Song Dong came to Hong Kong to present *36 calendars*, 2013, developed from his residency at AAA.² It is an ambitious drawing project that charts the last thirty-six years through his eyes and includes personal, sociopolitical and art events.

I see AAA as an evolving process that I hope will extend beyond my lifetime, and certainly not as something that exists in isolation. We are constantly considering ways to activate the network. We hope to enrich the way in which art history is being taught and the way that it is being written. At the end of the day, if we put this material out there, you can't just ignore it.

¹ This conversation took place in May 2013.

² The project was co-presented by Asia Art Archive and Mobile M+ of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority.

TO CELEBRATE TARRAWARRA MUSEUM OF ART'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY, DIRECTOR VICTORIA LYNN DESCRIBES HER APPROACH OF DRAWING IN INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS WHILE UTILISING THE LOCAL.

THROUGH THE FILTER OF THE PRESENT: TARRAWARRA MUSEUM OF ART VICTORIA LYNN

SARAH TUTTON

Victoria Lynn, Director of the TarraWarra Museum of Art (TWMA) in Healesville, Australia's first significant privately funded, public art museum, was interviewed on the occasion of its tenth anniversary. The museum and collection were gifted to the public by Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AO, and today TWMA's principal sponsor is the Besen Family Foundation.¹

With fifteen months at the not-for-profit institution under her belt, Lynn's interest in both international and Australian contemporary art can already be seen in the museum's programs, most notably the TarraWarra Biennial 2012, 'Sonic Spheres', and the current exhibition, 'Animate/ Inanimate', the inaugural TarraWarra International 2013. With a keen understanding of TWMA's historical underpinnings and collection – it holds works by leading artists such as Charles Blackman, Arthur Boyd, John Brack, Russell Drysdale, Rosalie Gascoigne, Brett Whiteley and Fred Williams, with recent acquisitions by contemporary artists including Callum Morton, Jon Cattapan, Stephen Bush and Jenny Watson – Lynn's vision for the museum is one that is sensitive not only to these precedents but also to the relationship between local and international practice, and the role of the museum in bringing these different arenas into play.

Sarah Tutton: When you came to TWMA, did it have an established audience and program?

Victoria Lynn: Because my background lies in working with contemporary artists I've been trying to encourage our audiences to look at

the past through the filter of the present. When we had the Jeffrey Smart exhibition over last summer (an exhibition I inherited), I invited Nadine Christensen and Anne Wallace to exhibit in the north gallery, so that after a visit to the Jeffrey Smart show you would see two contemporary artists who are working with realism, albeit in very different ways – Nadine approaching it from the point of view of the everyday and a kind of tonality that I think is reminiscent of Smart, and Anne Wallace considering a very psychologically charged space of the urban environment. Looking back from the present rather than in an art-historical way is a principle that I will continue at TWMA.

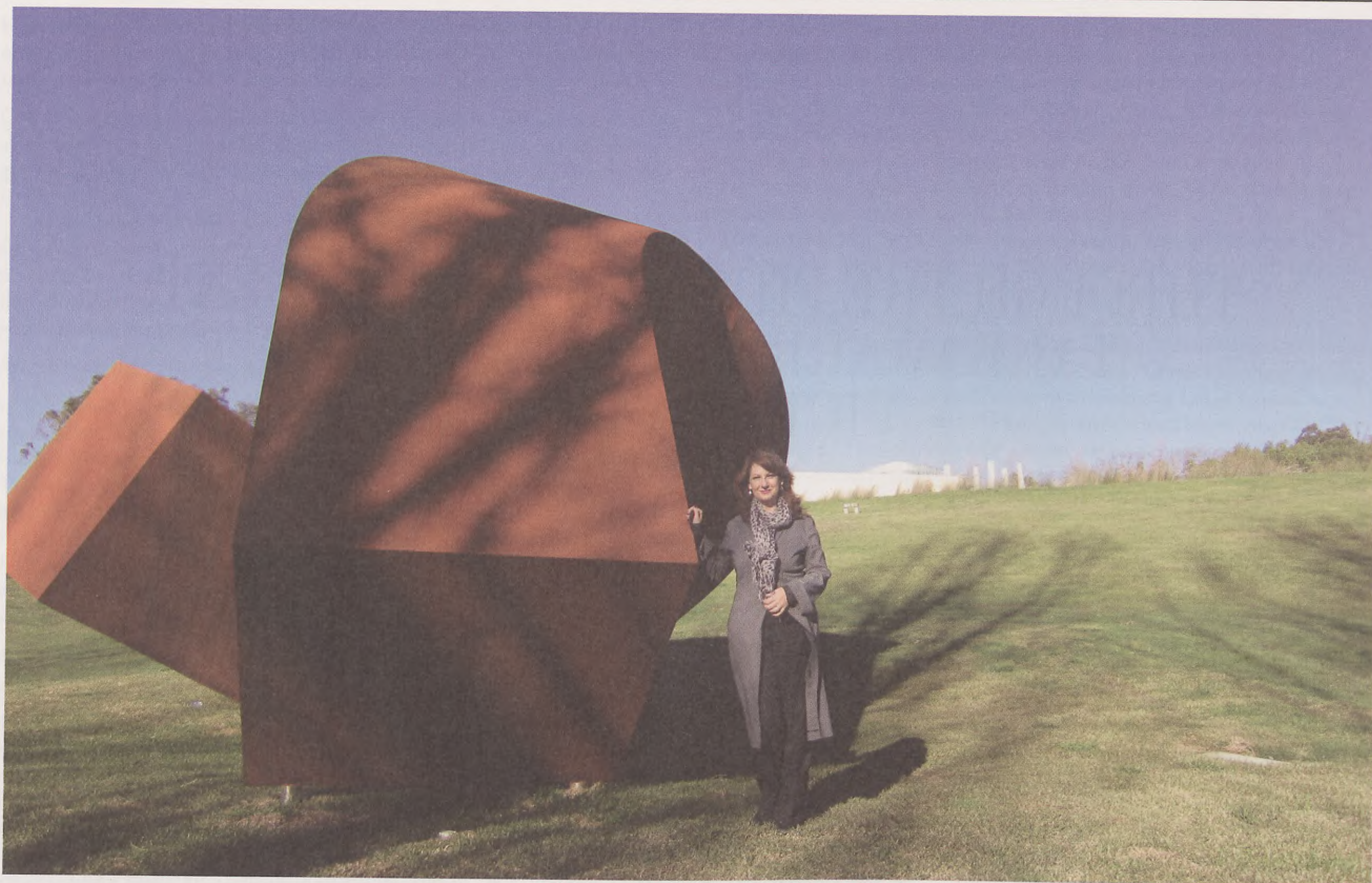
The second element that I've tried to bring to the museum is an international component. There have been international shows here in the past, but nothing on the scale of TarraWarra International. I see this more as a stream of activities, so we might, down the track, bring somebody out from overseas to give talks, and it would all be under our international program. The plan is for TWMA to present a large show of international contemporary work every two years, inspired, in some ways, by either a piece in the collection or the museum's location. On this occasion the exhibition is inspired by the location: in my first fifteen months here, the first thing everybody talks about is the view.

ST: The museum's siting and design make the most of the surrounding Yarra Valley landscape. The views, even from within the museum, are inspiring.

VL: Yes, and the light and the sunsets and the reflections in the lake and the changes of green throughout the year give visitors an extraordinary experience. But I just felt there was an opportunity for audiences to have a deeper engagement with the natural and animal world around us: its history and vulnerabilities. The exhibition, 'Animate/ Inanimate', was also a wonderful opportunity for me to work with Janet Laurence again. Her work was a trigger for the exhibition, as was our annual symposium, last year entitled 'The Landscape Awry'. In addition, there is a stream of painting in the collection to do with landscape, but the painting that I've installed in the reception area is Sidney Nolan's *Leda and the swan*, 1959, a mythological piece about the entanglement of human and animal. I'm quite interested in this work as a starting point, or a finishing point, for how we might encourage audiences to think in and through the exhibition.

ST: Historically speaking, Australian art has been largely focused on the landscape, and yet there has been a movement away from this in contemporary times. Your program is unique in that it embraces a contemporary artist community that is revisioning the landscape and the environment, no longer seeing it as passé. At the same time you are appealing to an art-educated audience familiar with Australian landscape art, and you bring them into the conversation with these contemporary artists.

VL: That's true and Janet Laurence's work provides an opportunity for audiences to



think about traditional nineteenth-century landscape painting in Australia in a new way: she has spoken about the imagery of the encroachment of farming on land or the idea of the fence. She explored this in an installation, *The memory of nature*, 2010–12, at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, and at our symposium last year. We aim to enrich the knowledge, passion and creative instinct of our visitors, including artists, and hope to provide the opportunity for new experiences for our artists. For example, over 2013–14 we are juxtaposing two new commissions by Australian artists Tom Nicholson and Jonathan Jones with a major exhibition of Russell Drysdale's work (that has also been planned for some time), in order to encourage a conversation about Drysdale's empathy with Aboriginal people, and Nicholson's and Jones's response to the 150th anniversary of the founding of Coranderrk Aboriginal reserve in the Yarra Valley. Our collection is such that we can continue to make links between key moments in the past and the present. For the 2013 exhibition 'Vibrant Matter', the museum's Curator, Anthony Fitzpatrick, installed new works by Robert Owen next to Ralph Balson, and Aida Tomescu alongside Peter Upward.

ST: I'd love to hear more about how you've worked with Janet Laurence and the Healesville Sanctuary.

VL: Janet had worked with the sanctuary before. The new Director, Glen Holland, was very open to the idea of hosting an artist, and Janet spent a day filming Tasmanian devils, dingoes and other animals with Gary Warner. I went with them, and we had a personalised tour of the endangered species program. When I was with Janet in that environment I realised that she has utter empathy with the animal world. When she hears a story about one of the animals, tears well up in her eyes. And her work is a call to us; it's asking us not to position ourselves at the centre of the world, and to allow animals to look back at us. John Berger made the point that we are always looking at animals through glass or screen. Her own use of glass and filtering techniques encourages us to become aware of how we perceive the animal world.

ST: I saw the dingoes at the sanctuary and I've never been up close to a dingo before. The keeper explained to me how they're like cats; they don't care about humans. I suppose that goes to the heart of what Janet's work is saying. We're not the centre of things.

VL: Janet creates these mini assemblages. I see an art exhibition as an assemblage of parts – something akin to an ecology of relations. Both the curator and the artist create new connections between works and

parts. The viewer is then invited to enter that space, in between these objects. So when the dingo in Janet's work appears in one of the 'cells' with an image of a thylacine, it speaks to the culling of dingoes, and the extinction of the thylacine.

Within that space, Janet will include a substance, maybe sulphur, and she often works with the idea of a palette. The dingo appears in tawny light colours with a piece of yellow mesh hanging across the image, and there's the yellow sulphur on the mirrored surface below.

We co-belong in the space of the works by Laurence, Allora & Calzadilla, Amar Kanwar, Lin Tianmiao and Louise Weaver, who all feature in 'Animate/Inanimate'. Our process of observation and circumnavigation immerses us in an imaginative spectrum of ideas about art and nature. We enter into the process of the exhibition.

ST: Deborah Bird Rose's book, *Wild Dog Dreaming: Love and Extinction* (2011), has obviously been very important to Janet. Her ideas about connectivity seem to resonate throughout Janet's work, and, really, throughout the exhibition as a whole.

VL: Yes. The title 'Animate/Inanimate' can be taken as simply the idea of inanimate objects such as sculptures dealing with the animal world and with living, breathing plants. But it also explores the proposition of the objects being imbued with the sensibilities that are at play in a living world – in Louise Weaver's case it is the textures and structures of the natural world, such as *Bird hide*, 2011, or in Janet Laurence's work it is the call to think ethically and ecologically. Timothy Morton said that we should think of ecology 'as a sprawling mesh of interconnection without a definite centre or edge. It is radical intimacy, coexistence with other beings sentient or otherwise.'² Radical intimacy. I think all the works in this show are intimate in a way and invite us to feel intimate with their chosen subjects. Lin Tianmiao, for example, brings us into direct communication with the human skull combined with items of everyday use and wrapped in silken thread.

ST: Do you think that with the international focus of this exhibition, bringing Australian artists together with artists from overseas, you have a special platform to pose those questions?

VL: Since the first time I worked with international art, I've wanted to present exhibitions that bring international artists to Australia and situate Australian art in a global context. I've had a long history of working with Indian artists. Amar Kanwar is keenly interested in the impact of mining in Australia, and mining is the subject of his film

The scene of crime, 2012, set in Odisha, India, and on exhibition here. It is a wondrous meditation on the wind, colour, light and vulnerability of the landscape for 'tribal' (Adivasi) farmers. Allora & Calzadilla's video juxtaposes a 35,000-year-old flute made from the wing bone of a vulture with a living griffon vulture to consider the impact of ancient cultures on our understanding of 'nature'. Such sensitivities to history, culture and nature are globally present.

ST: And you also have the TarraWarra Biennial, which has a purely Australian focus.

VL: The inaugural director, Maudie Palmer, launched the TarraWarra Biennial in 2006 and I was invited to curate the first one. We presented a painting show because the TWMA collection is primarily painting. (This is where I fell in love with Allan Powell's volumes.) This was followed by Charlotte Day's biennial in 2008, and in 2010 the museum presented TarraWarra Contemporary. Last year I presented 'Sonic Spheres' as the biennial, an exhibition that explored the visualisation of sound. And in 2014 I am delighted to announce the appointment of curators Natalie King and Djon Mundine to guide what has grown into a major statement on contemporary Australian art, one of only two Australian art biennials in the country.

Russell Drysdale: Defining the Modern Australian Landscape and Future Memorials: Jonathan Jones, Tom Nicholson and Aunty Joy Wandin Murphy, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, 19 October 2013 – 9 February 2014.

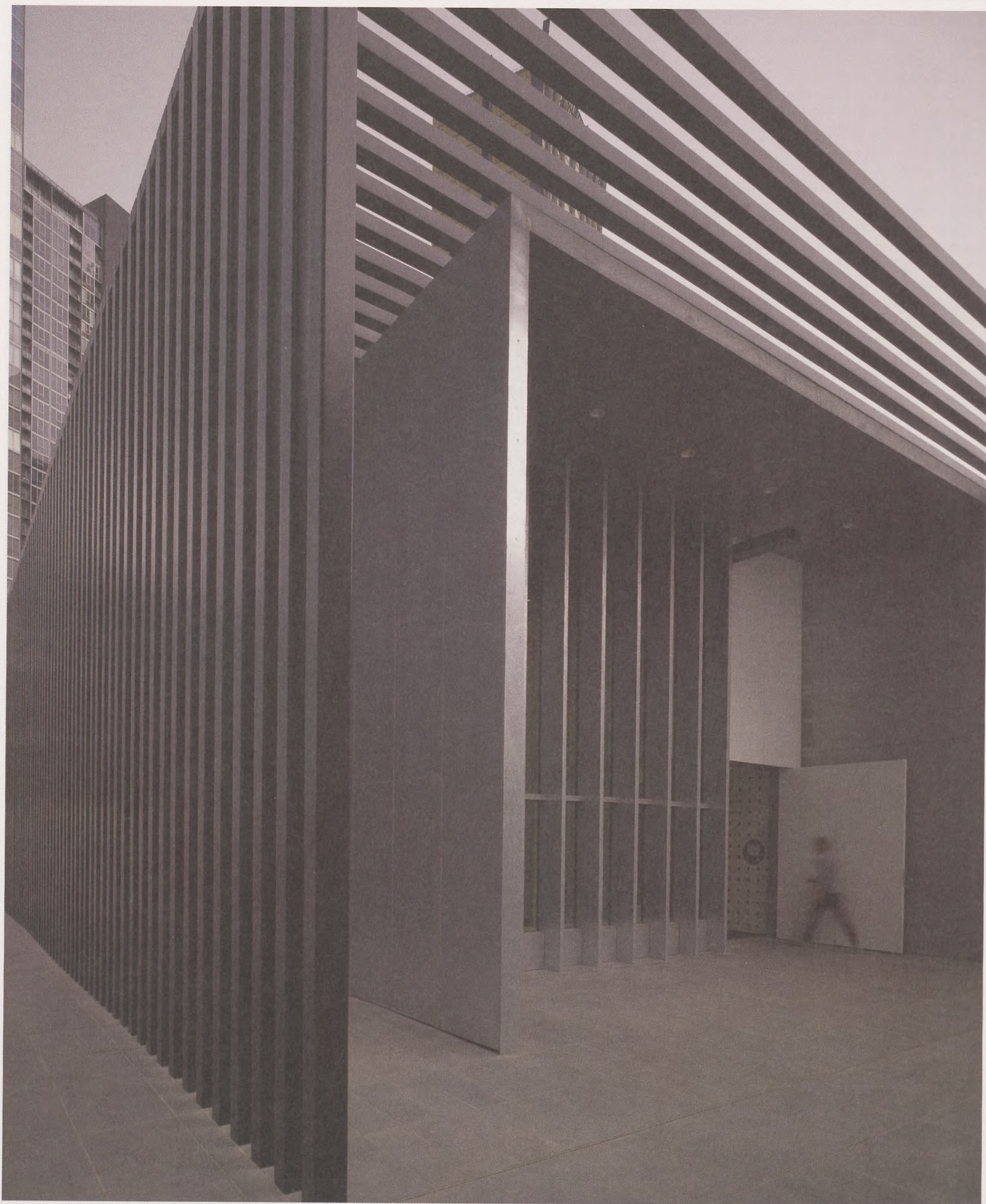
¹ This interview took place on 15 July 2013.

² Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., and London, 2010, p. 8.

OPPOSITE, FROM TOP

Victoria Lynn, TarraWarra Museum of Art, 2012
Courtesy TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, Victoria

Janet Laurence, *Fugitive*, 2013
Duraclear photograph, acrylic, mirror, video projection, resin, tulle, scientific and hand-blown glass, resin, pigment, crystals, taxidermy animals, plant specimens, dimensions variable
Installation view, 'Animate/Inanimate' (2013), TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, Victoria
Courtesy the artist and ARC ONE Gallery, Melbourne
Photograph Mark Ashkanasy



WITH THE RECENT DEBUT OF HIS RMIT DESIGN HUB, ARCHITECT SEAN GODSELL EXPLAINS THE IDEA BEHIND THE VIBRANT UNIVERSITY FACILITY.

SPARKING CURIOSITY: SEAN GODSELL AND THE RMIT DESIGN HUB

KAREN FERMO AND MARTIN MUSIATOWICZ

Well known for his domestic architecture locally and abroad, Sean Godsell shifts to an urban and institutional scale with the design for the RMIT Design Hub. Completed earlier this year in association with Peddle Thorp Architects, the aspiration of the project was to bring the scattered postgraduate teaching and design research groups in architecture, landscape architecture, industrial design, interior design and interactive gaming from across RMIT University into a single collegial building. In addition to the studio spaces designed to support the production and presentation of research outcomes, the building's role is to act as a public beacon for design. Karen Fermo and Martin Musiatowicz interviewed Sean Godsell in his studio to discuss ideas that informed the design of the building and its relationship to RMIT's campus in the Melbourne CBD.¹

Martin Musiatowicz: You are better known for your domestic work and this is by far the largest building you have completed to date, yet there are visible links. How do you transfer ideas that you've explored at a smaller scale to a building like this?

Sean Godsell: Very carefully and very skilfully. Before I started my practice I had a lot of experience, here and overseas, working on buildings much bigger than the Design Hub. There is nothing particularly daunting about its scale. The trap for a lot of practices when they change scale is that it is not possible to reproduce the level of detail of, for example, a house in a building of this scale.

MM: Does it enable you to explore things that you wouldn't get to with a house – urban engagement, for instance?

SG: I absolutely believe that if you can design, you can design anything. Urban design is something any serious practitioner is interested in. It's nice to get to deal with those problems and to also, within the scope of the project, explore ideas that you don't necessarily get to in smaller work.

The other opportunity a larger building presents is more money, so here we had the chance to more thoroughly investigate the idea of skin and introduce some things that in residential architecture we would not normally have the budget for – for example, the automation of the façade, the capacity of the façade to evolve and some of the passive ESD (ecologically sustainable development) components.

Karen Fermo: Your practice has designed some small gallery spaces such as Craft Victoria and the Centre for Contemporary Photography, both in Melbourne, and now the Design Hub, which includes gallery spaces. What differences do you see between designing for art and for design?

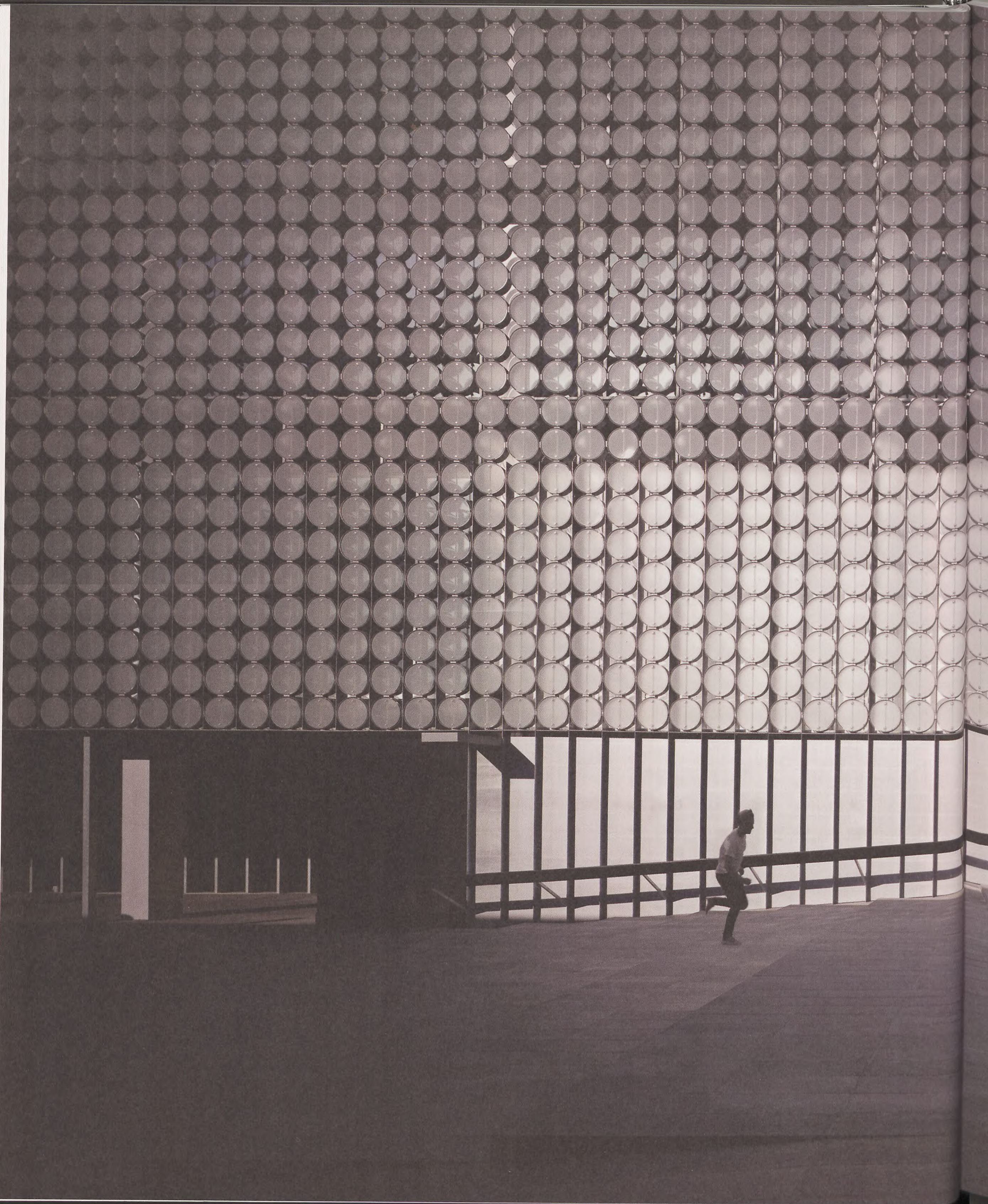
SG: There is no real difference. The biggest mistake architects make when they are designing gallery space is that they make it about the architecture, not what's on display. In the small gallery spaces we've produced, we tried to make it about the art and not the architecture. The Design Hub is also an example of this. Instead of trying too hard in

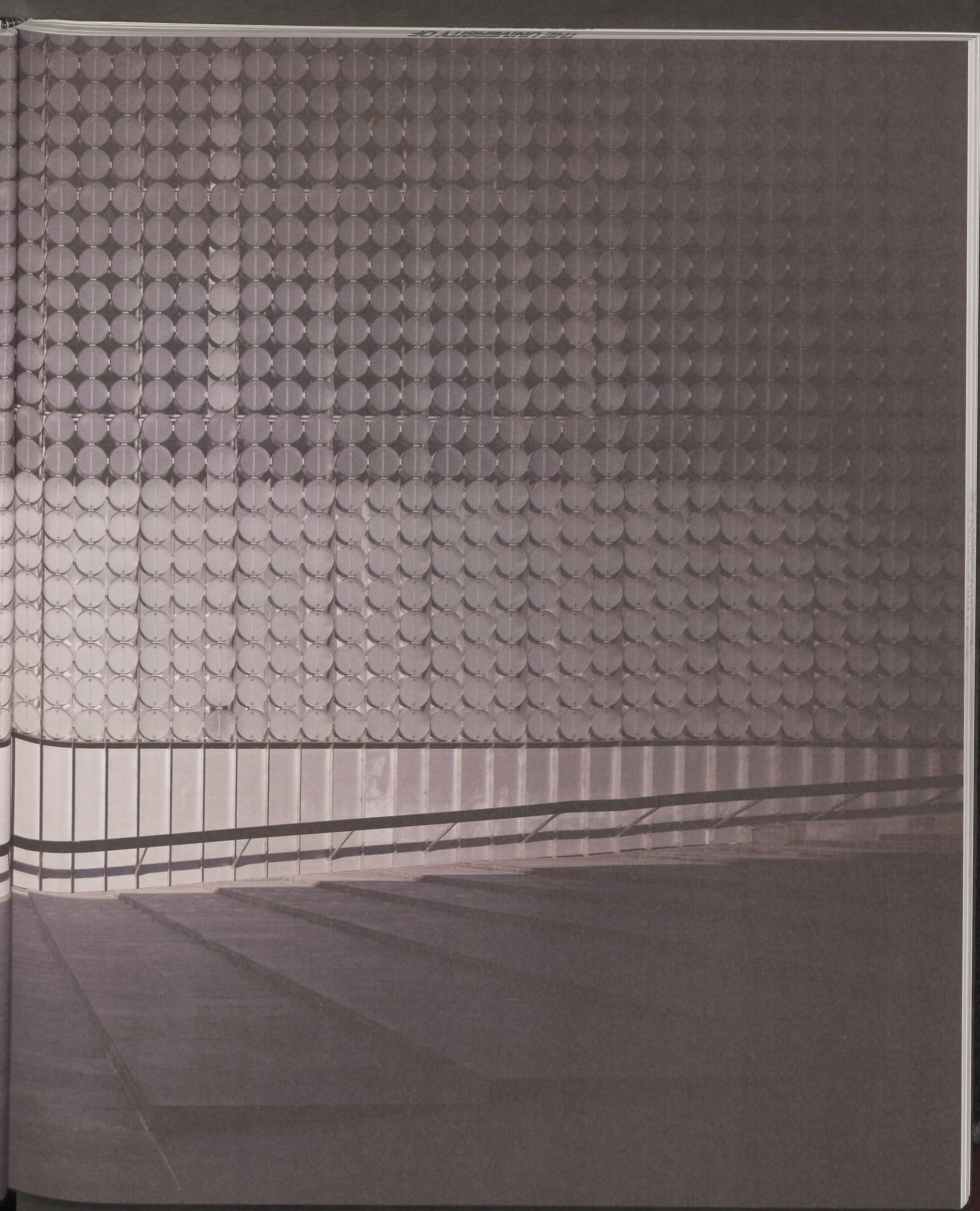
the gallery spaces, you make the architecture in the circulation spaces – the bridge link, large stair and ramp. The large exhibition space on the semi-basement level is just that, a big exhibition space. It's beautiful because it's well proportioned and well considered, but it's also rectangular, not full of oblique angles. Its primary function is to exhibit.

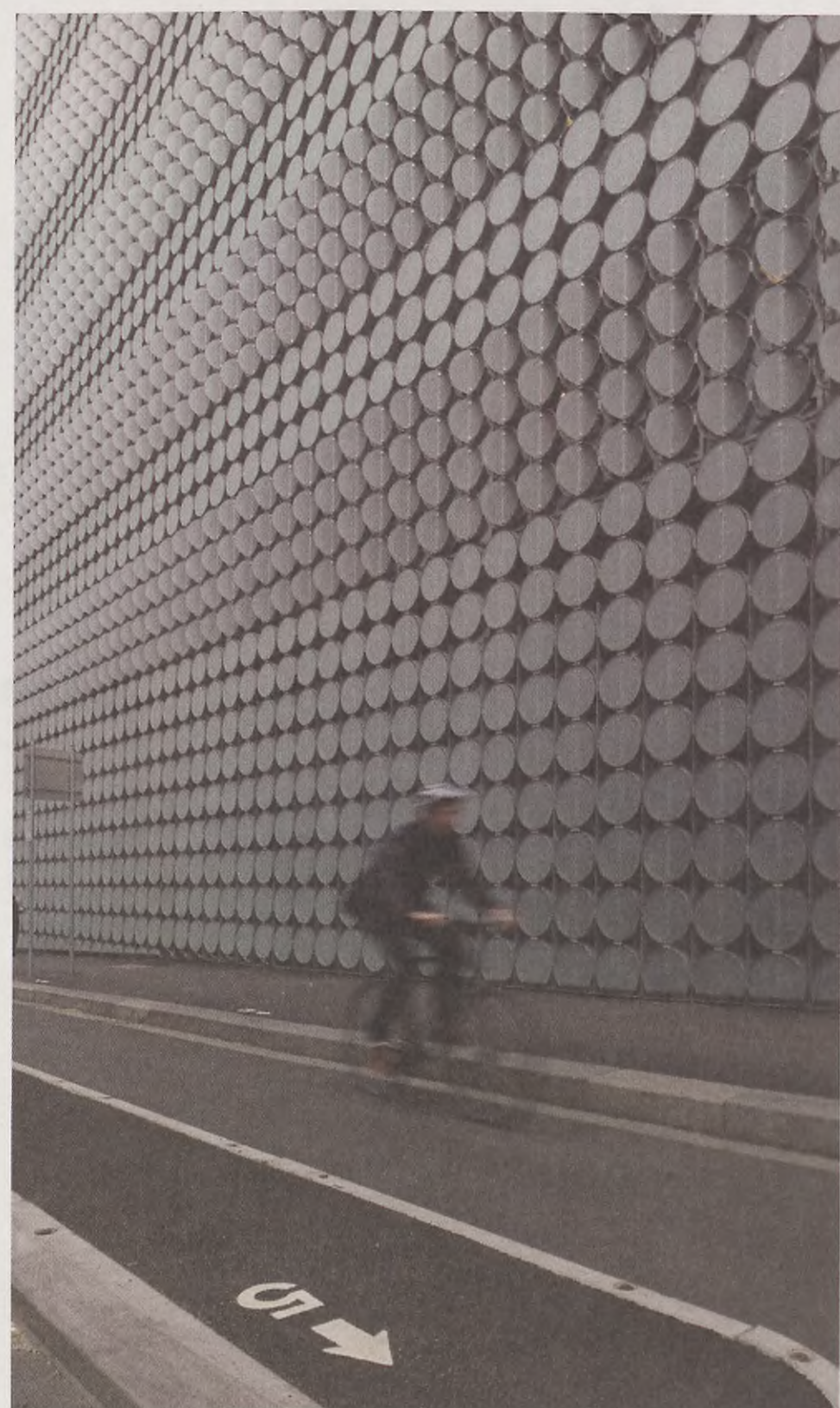
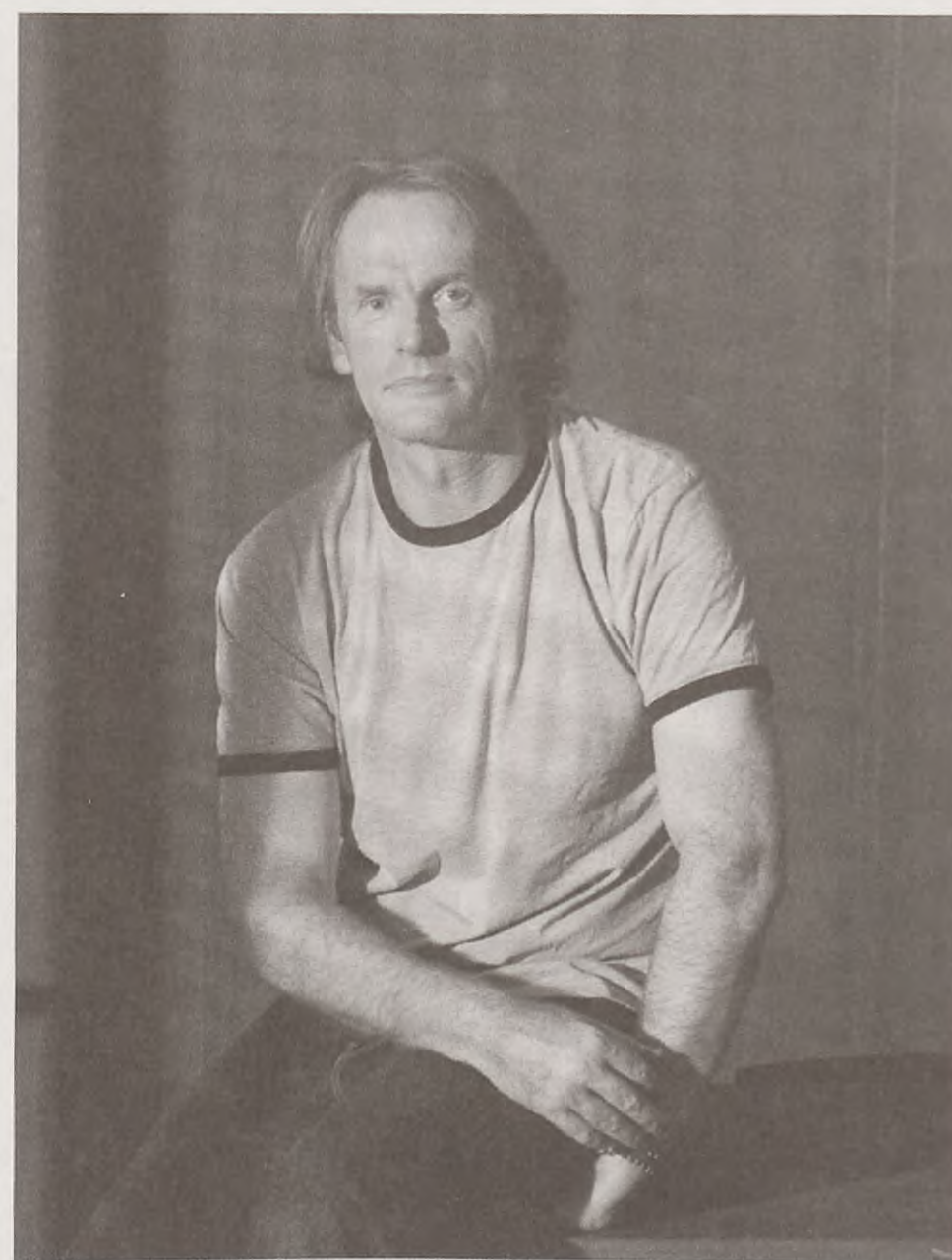
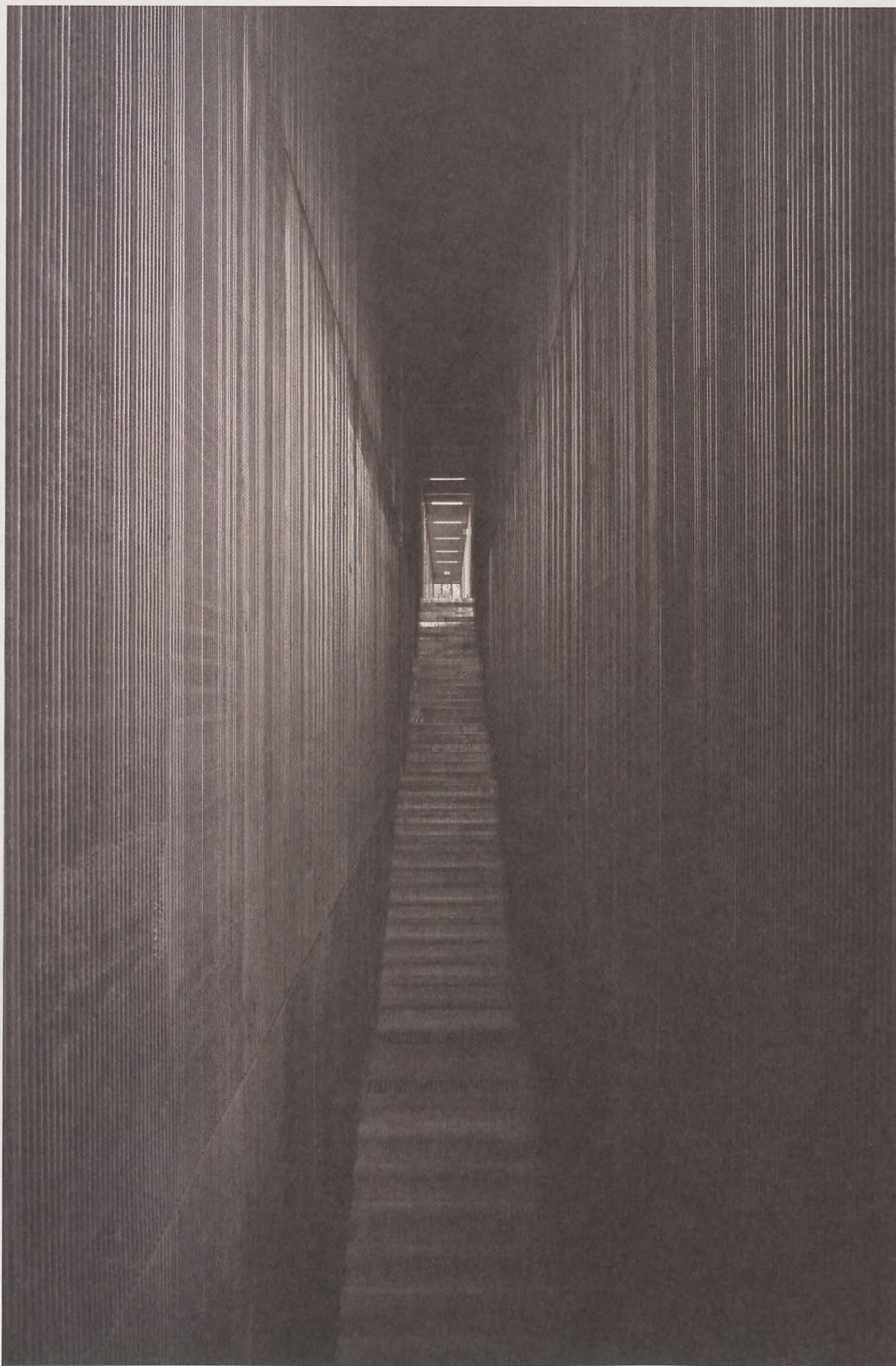
KF: What about the various wall surfaces incorporated for display – the large exhibition space in comparison with the 'long rooms', where the studios and researchers are located on the tower's higher levels?

SG: In the large exhibition space, the gallery walls have plasterboard on chipboard so you can hang and then repair. It is no different from what we have done in other galleries. The student areas include a different strategy that isn't necessarily about public exhibition. It's about short-term exhibition and critique. The strategy is part of a much bigger picture for not only the building and its purpose, but for the building as a facility. The reality is that university buildings, probably more so than other types, collect an absolute hammering from the users – students are predominantly dismissive of their facilities – and most universities are faced with massive recurrent maintenance costs.

In response to the university's request for flexibility in these spaces, we designed a 'kit of parts' of furniture. In the design studios all the furniture is on wheels so that you can move it around and configure space. We extended that to the wall surfaces. Rather







PAGES 206-10
Views of RMIT Design Hub, Melbourne

Sean Godsell, 2008
All photographs Earl Carter

than providing pin boards and gallery walls that require regular ongoing maintenance we used galvanised industrial steel walkway grating (one of the primary materials for the building) and described that as a surface that could receive pin boards, whiteboards, projection surfaces and so on.

KF: Can you explain some of the thinking behind the public space between the two buildings that links to a notion of a university campus creating for itself but also sharing with the city?

SG: The forecourt space between the archive building and main building sets up two axes, with the north-south axis the big wide feeder of people, not only to the Design Hub, but to the whole CUB (Carlton United Brewery) site. The strategy is to make those public spaces charged with people and hyper-dynamic so that the space between the two buildings is full of people moving north and south, east and west. This was all based on our understanding of what the proposed Ashton Raggatt McDougall (ARM Architecture) tower on the adjacent site would do. That is, it would hit the ground plane at the lower level and expose its base to our forecourt, and then you would have the really interesting dynamic of their work and my work and the adjacent heritage building all talking to each other. But my understanding is that ARM have abandoned this plan and now that interface is just going to be an opening in the temporary wall to the north of our forecourt, which is hardly satisfactory.

KF: There is also an interesting change in topography as you drop down into the site.

SG: One of our really early design drawings, made when we thought we might have a voice in the master plan for the CUB site, showed the Swanston Street axis in section, with the Shrine of Remembrance at one end and the Shrine inverted and upside down on the site. Our argument was that you could create a monumental public space by inverting the topography of the space (think of the Grand Canyon), which is a strategy I used in a competition entry for the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra.

The building envelope was heavily controlled by planning requirements for the site along with the master plan that we were working to for the whole CUB site. We ended up with a fairly constrained site above ground and so adopted a strategy of going into as well as above the ground. As it turned out, we got the opportunity to push the ground floor down, not up, so the potential for a complex topography existed.

KF: This is where the most public areas of the building are.

SG: The exhibition space on the semi-basement level is for access by the general public. The strategy was to provide two exhibition spaces, one for digital display and one for object display, and a support space for general use – the cafe. The theory is that the cafe will support public exhibitions, and that over time that combined with the public archive space and the small archive building means that this level is fundamentally about the general public more than just the university. The Naomi Milgrom-sponsored exhibition currently on display [‘Walter Van Beirendonck: Dream the World Awake’ (2013)] is demonstrative of that. It’s exposing the university to the capacity of their new building. The idea of those spaces is fundamentally about exposition of research outcomes, but the spaces also give a public face to design.

MM: It goes with RMIT’s idea of seeing itself as an urban campus, embedded in the city rather than sitting on the edge of it.

SG: The big picture for the university as an urban campus is driven intelligently by the current Vice-Chancellor, Margaret Gardner, who can see the merit of the almost unique potential of a campus that is not just sharing itself with the city, but dominating a corner of the city. It becomes the university quadrant that brings so much good to the greater city in terms of street life, street activity, student life and student housing. It’s a great thing for Melbourne. The Vice-Chancellor gets it and so you have a spectacular champion of that kind of thinking right at the top of the university at the moment.

KF: Contemporary education and cultural institutions often desire direct visual connection between the contents of their buildings and the street to achieve a sense of greater transparency. This building is very interior, with the façade meeting the street. The access points are small, less obvious – can you elaborate on the design decisions here?

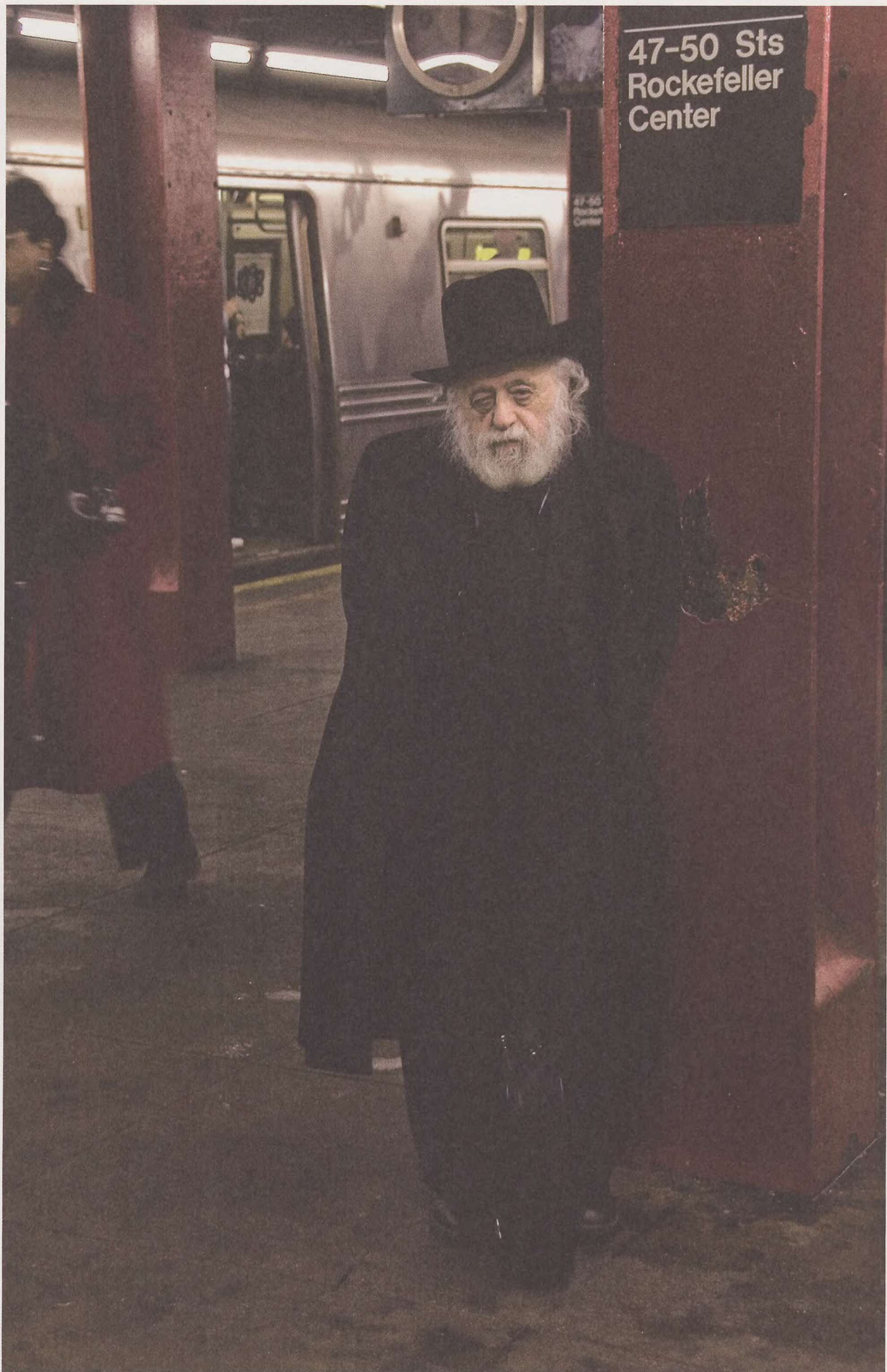
SG: Museum design changed for the worse when retail strategies were brought into the planning of museums. It’s completely moronic, the retail solution to everything. It’s linked more generally to how stupid we think we are. Society is being dumbed down to the point where everything has to be explained completely. I didn’t want to be that obvious.

We brought the skin to the footpath; the idea is that you get teased into the building. There are glimpses at the entry – you can see clearly from Victoria Street through into a processional ramp that on first glance doesn’t take you anywhere but out the other end – and you need to get inside to work the building out. Once inside you get another volume, the stairs, the bridge and so on. From the front

door you get a tiny little slice, a glimpse, a view – all of that is deliberate.

There is the idea of procession in the circulation. As a visitor you’re gently forced through in a very considered way; you have to do certain things to navigate your way through, which is nice, and that induces you to be drawn in and enticed to find more. That works well with the agenda of cross-pollination between the users of the building. I like buildings where your curiosity is sparked. The RMIT Design Hub causes you to wonder. It stimulates your imagination.

1 This interview took place in Melbourne on 26 July 2013.



MARK TEDESCHI IS DRIVEN TO CREATE. HE IS ALSO A LAWYER, AND HE MARRIES THE TWO PRACTICES WITH A CONCENTRATION ON PEOPLE ABOVE ALL ELSE. HERE HE SPEAKS ABOUT WHAT INSPIRES HIM MOST.

THE CREATIVE LAWYER: MARK TEDESCHI

ANNA WALDMANN

Mark Tedeschi AM QC is a prominent Queen's Counsel and New South Wales Senior Crown Prosecutor. He has prosecuted some of Australia's most high-profile cases, including Ivan Milat, Bruce Burrell, Kathleen Folbigg, Sef Gonzalez, Keli Lane and underworld figure Arthur 'Neddy' Smith. He is also a well-known photographer, with exhibitions both here and abroad and work held in public collections across Australia. Here Anna Waldmann asked Tedeschi about balancing the roles of artist and advocate.¹

Anna Waldmann: In his essay on the 'decisive moment', photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson said: 'Of all the means of expression, photography is the only one that fixes forever the precise and transitory instant.'² Do you approach photography from a documentary perspective?

Mark Tedeschi: The photographer sees a continual progression of 'decisive moments'. Most of them are very mundane. Every now and again you see one forming that you think might be unique and you are seized with an overwhelming desire to capture it. If you fail, if it vanishes into thin air, there is a sense of loss.

AW: Your family comes from Turin and you have been awarded the Italian national honour of Cavaliere della Repubblica for services to photography and the law. What is your spiritual and artistic connection to Italy?

MT: I identify very strongly with my rich Italian cultural heritage. My grandparents left in 1938 after the Fascist 'racial laws' were introduced and arrived in Australia in July 1939, just weeks before the Second World War broke out. I have been to northern Italy many times. The Italian government recognised me with a national award largely because of my photographs taken in Italy and exhibited extensively over here. I think it was also a belated acknowledgment of my grandparents for the hardship they suffered having to flee from Italy – a way of saying sorry through their grandson.

AW: You have been quoted as saying 'It's important to maintain your interests outside the law. I think you maintain your sanity like that.'³

MT: I often say to people that it is my photography that keeps me sane

in my legal work. But that is actually not what motivates me as a photographer. I have a constant, pressing need to create. I don't have a choice about it. If I sit still for five minutes, my mind constantly wanders to what I could be creating.

AW: Your series cover an encyclopedic range of topics, from *The Block in Redfern* to images of Paris, from Holocaust survivors to NRL players. Are these projects thematically and emotionally linked?

MT: I tend to get enthused about particular topics, until I feel that I have captured their essence. It might be an individual person whom I come back to photograph time and again, or a community of people. The common link is people, which is what really interests me.

AW: John McDonald described you as a 'super amateur' and a 'photographic Everyman'.⁴ Does one need formal training to be a good photographer?

MT: I don't think that an artist must necessarily have a formal art education. You can read as many how-to books and go to as many lectures as you like, but until you do it yourself – push yourself, experiment and complete a body of work, then compare your output with the efforts of others, and allow others to see and critique your creations – you can't call yourself a practising artist.

AW: Is it important for you to develop a distinctive personal style?

MT: This is one of the most difficult things for a photographer. It is much easier for a painter, a sculptor or writer to have a distinctive style. This is one of the reasons why some purists view photography as a second cousin to art. Many of the great photographers are known for just one or two images. I am probably best known in Australian photographic circles for my 1989 photograph of five boys in Eveleigh Street, Redfern, or for my 2004 portrait of Margaret Cunneen SC washing up dishes in her barrister's robes. I would like to be known for other images as well that, in my view, convey the most esoteric aspects of human existence in a way that only photography can, but so far these haven't captured the public imagination.

AW: You have a knack for revealing unfamiliar facets of familiar



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
Mark Tedeschi, 2011
Photograph Lewis Morley

Inner sanctum, 1988
Silver gelatin print
Courtesy the artist

The cat saw that!, 1989
Silver gelatin print
Courtesy the artist

PAGE 212
47th Street station, 2007
Digital photograph
Courtesy the artist

personalities. Do you gain your subjects' trust before photographing?

MT: If I am doing street photography, I believe in 'shooting first and asking questions later'. I have the chutzpah, the hide, to be able to get in there, close up, and to take the photo before anybody has realised. Once you announce yourself and ask for permission, the moment is lost and you can never regain it. Instead, after taking the photograph, I will wait and give the person time to voice any objection.

AW: Artist Jeff Wall told me that he took 1600 shots to achieve the one image he felt was emotionally and intellectually satisfying. Are your photographs serendipitous or do you plan them?

MT: I believe that good photography is a subtle blend between going out there with a steely determination and having a receptive, almost-Zen Buddhist approach, and that if you are in the right frame of mind opportunities that you never expected will present themselves to you in a serendipitous way. I have found on numerous occasions that if I have the right attitude, the most remarkable opportunities will present themselves to me. This is not only in photography. This is in life.

AW: Do you believe photography is the most socially inclusive of all the mediums?

MT: Undoubtedly photography is the most universally practised artform around the globe. That makes it very difficult for serious, exhibiting photographers to achieve recognition. Photography is so pervasive that when you have an exhibition most people will not try to analyse an image. People who would spend a full two minutes looking at a painting will give a photograph no more than a momentary glance.

You talk about photography today being socially inclusive. The most common apparatus for taking photographs is the mobile phone, and the most common delivery platform is in electronic social media. While this is a fantastic mode of visual communication, it tends to dilute serious art photography. In the future, gen X and gen Y will be almost bereft of a photographic record, because most of the images we take will disappear into the digital netherworld.

AW: Is your work about memories and your attempt to reclaim them?

MT: It is only in retrospect that I can look at my photographs and see that they say something about my state of mind at the time. I can now see that some of my most poignant images were taken at a time when I was feeling particularly vulnerable. I look at an image like *It's a dog's life*, 1988, or *Proud to be Australian*, 1989, and I think it says as much about me at that time as it does about my subject.

AW: What do you value most in photography?

MT: Photography has the capacity to portray the most exquisitely subtle emotions, or 'states of being' that pass almost imperceptibly during our everyday lives. I have managed to capture the most amazingly obtuse and obscure emotions: obsequiousness, envy, emotional hunger, sexual alienation, femininity, emotional distance, grand-maternal love, social isolation, and a sense of disconnectedness from one's environment (there is no word in English for this emotion). I am intensely satisfied when I have a photograph that depicts the quintessential qualities of one of these subtle states, so that anyone, in any country, of any culture, and at any time would recognise it.

AW: Henri Matisse, Wassily Kandinsky and Igor Stravinsky studied law. Many lawyers become actors, stand-up comics and writers. Is a legal career a good a stepping stone to creativity?

MT: Law *can* be very creative – many people would be surprised to hear this – particularly my area of law, which is advocacy. While the law strives to be eminently rational and logical, if you are going to convince people to your point of view, you have to be creative in the

way that you present the facts. I think that being a jury advocate, as I am, is almost the same as being a teacher. Both my paternal grandmother, Rosina, and my mother, Ruth, were excellent teachers. I think that I have inherited this from them. There is nothing more creative than teaching and mentoring.

AW: Which photographs claim a greater share of your affection?

MT: I love 'The Block' series (1988–90) because it is now part of a history that no longer exists. I think that in 'Femininity and Other Feelings' (2005) I succeeded in capturing an extensive array of emotions. And with the series 'Legal Chameleons' (2007) it was such fun to portray my colleagues in incongruous situations, but cloaked in the 'authority' of their robes.

My favourite photographs include *47th Street station*, 2007, which is about how time is not a completely objective, scientific phenomenon, but rather a subjective, individual experience; *Precocious fashionistas*, 2007, an image in which I have captured two young girls imagining their future lives; and *Kiss by the Hotel de Ville (homage to Robert Doisneau)*, 2009, an updated look at how romance has changed since Robert Doisneau took his original image in 1950.

AW: Have you been influenced or inspired by other photographers?

MT: One is always influenced and inspired by other photographers. Off the cuff, I would highlight André Kertész, Bill Brandt, Eugène Atget, Brassai, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and Australians Harold Cazneaux and Carol Jerrems.

1 This interview took place in May 2013.

2 Henri Cartier-Bresson, *The Decisive Moment*, Simon & Schuster with Editions Verve, New York, 1952, unpaginated.

3 Stephanie Quine, 'Stranger than fiction', *Lawyers Weekly*, 2 November 2011.

4 Mark Tedeschi, *Shooting Around Corners*, The Beagle Press, Roseville, 2012, p. 9.

IN THIS QUARTER'S 'ARTIST'S CHOICE', ROBERT MACPHERSON WRITES AN ODE TO *MRS FRASER* FIFTY YEARS IN THE MAKING.

ARTIST'S CHOICE: SIDNEY NOLAN'S *MRS FRASER*

ROBERT MACPHERSON

I LOVE THE WAY HE HAS STRETCHED *MRS FRASER*'S PINKISH BODY ACROSS THE PLANE LIKE A SKINNED RABBIT ... SO VISCERAL. I LOVE THE SCRATCHY PAINT HANDLING. I LOVE THE SCRAPPY BACKGROUND, THE HORIZON LINE AND THE PALM TREES, THE WAY THEY CONJURE FOR ME A FEELING OF HEAT, OF THE TROPICS, BETTER THAN SOME TRAVEL PRINTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY ROMANTIC PERIOD.

Any time I visit the Queensland Art Gallery I go and have a look at Sidney Nolan's *Mrs Fraser*, and if I have company I regale them with its virtues, I must say at times to their

surprise or silent disagreement maybe. I've loved this work from the first time I saw an image of it, in the late 1960s. It was reproduced in a copy of a book on Nolan published by Thames & Hudson (and quite lush for a publication on Australian art at that time).¹ I was surprised when the gallery acquired the painting in 1995; finally, after fifty years, I had a chance to see the work in the flesh. There was no diminution of its power for me. What joy!

Hopefully I have been influenced only minimally by Nolan, but given his eclecticism – I've also been described as 'highly eclectic' – we come close together as birds of a feather in some way at least.

Mrs Fraser was painted in 1947, making the work contemporary with the work of Francis Bacon of the time, and, who knows, in advance of Bacon in some way. This painting differs from Nolan's 'Kelly' series (1946–47), which depends heavily on the myth as a prop. *Mrs Fraser* sloughs off the prop of mythology and stands on her own two feet. I love (there seems to be a lot of love here) Nolan's use of a grey horizontal tondo (a Victorian framing device for early photographic portraits). Nolan was painting from early photographs at the time. I love the way he has stretched

Mrs Fraser's pinkish body across the plane like a skinned rabbit ... so visceral. I love the scratchy paint handling. I love the scrappy background, the horizon line and the palm trees, the way they conjure for me a feeling of heat, of the tropics, better than some travel prints and illustrations of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century romantic period. And so on. I love the use of masonite. I love the use of household enamel, the total lack of any apparent facility – maybe this is just down to the enamel's obdurate quick-drying qualities. Maybe, what the hell! The work is a victory with its great presence – with its victory over felt space ... Why not be brave enough to install *Mrs Fraser* in a room of her own and see what happens.

In these times of the flagrant use of the word 'icon', *Mrs Fraser* comes close ... So!

¹ Kenneth Clark, Colin MacInness and Bryan Robertson, *Sidney Nolan*, Thames & Hudson, London, 1961, p. 69.



Sidney Nolan, *Mrs Fraser*, 1947
Ripolin enamel on hardboard, 66.2 x 107 cm
Collection Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
Purchased 1995 with a special allocation from
the Queensland Government. Celebrating the
Queensland Art Gallery's Centenary 1895–1995

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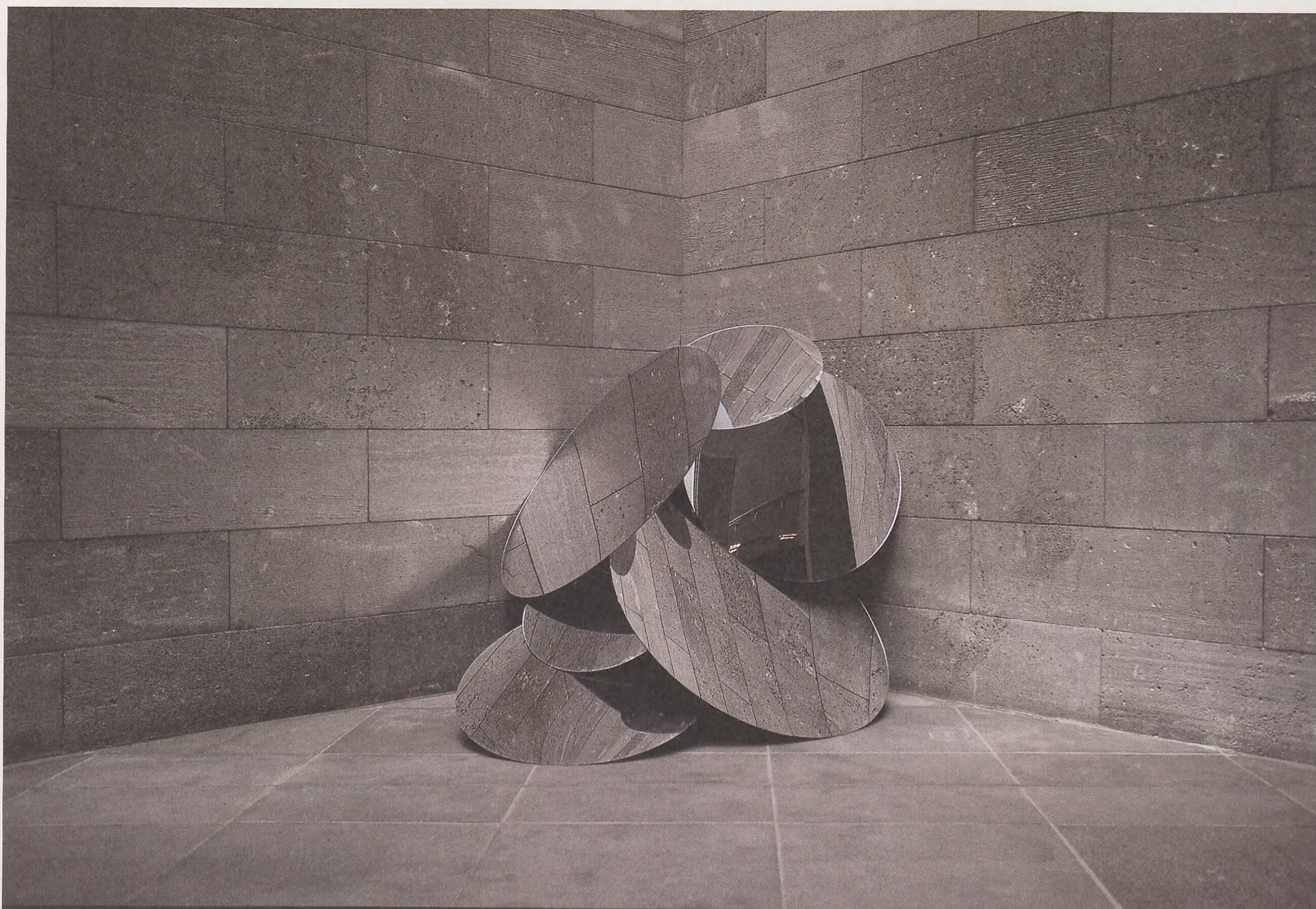


Image: Linda TEGG, *Tortoise*, 2013, high definition video, 11 minutes



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TEL AVIV MUSEUM OF ART: HERTA AND PAUL AMIR BUILDING

GENE SHERMAN

The founding date of the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (TAMA), as is the case with many Israeli institutions, surprises. In 1932, Meir Dizengoff, the first mayor of the city, formed a tiny art establishment with a grand vision in his private Rothschild Boulevard home. In 1971, having grown considerably, the museum opened on Shaul Hamelech Boulevard in a brutalist building designed by Dan Eytan and Yitzhak Yashar. A complex of cultural and public institutions – including the Ministry of Justice and the Golda Meir Cultural and Art Center (comprising the New Israeli Opera and Cameri Theatre) – grew around the nascent art museum, creating a precinct and a plaza symbolising dreams of a stable future.

By the turn of the century, the 1970s building housing TAMA had long been looking tired. The museum needed to grow and to embrace the international community more intensely. Under incoming director Suzanne Landau, long-serving exceptional chief curator of fine arts at Jerusalem's encyclopedic Israel Museum, a new brief was made clear: connect with international audiences and, most importantly, deliberately and specifically attempt to include and engage the Arab Israeli community. These were unmet goals under the late Dr Motti Omer, who was director for seventeen years.

A two-stage design competition was initiated in 2002 and Preston Scott Cohen, Inc. (Professor Preston Scott Cohen is Chair of Architecture at Harvard University Graduate School of Design) was selected. The site presented multiple problems: triangular, and sandwiched between the existing museum structure and the abovementioned cultural and public facilities, there was little room to move. Nevertheless, the US\$55 million Herta and Paul Amir Building of TAMA was completed at the end of 2011.

The Amir family donation enabled the project to go ahead. The generosity of the Los Angeles-based Israeli couple was both financial and authentically philanthropic. Unusually, they were apparently willing to give up naming rights if other donors came forward with funds that surpassed theirs. Individually named rooms bear testimony to the presence of a small but active, culturally sensitive, wealthy community within an often financially stretched and sometimes impoverished population, in a country war-torn since establishment.

I saw the building for the first time in December 2012, a year after the opening, and found that the architecture, the space itself, and the twin temporary exhibitions of fashion then on display provided me with a heightened experience during a substantially longer-than-anticipated visit.

The building is one of three that make up the museum as a whole. The external shape looks twisted, as though hands have grasped the top and the

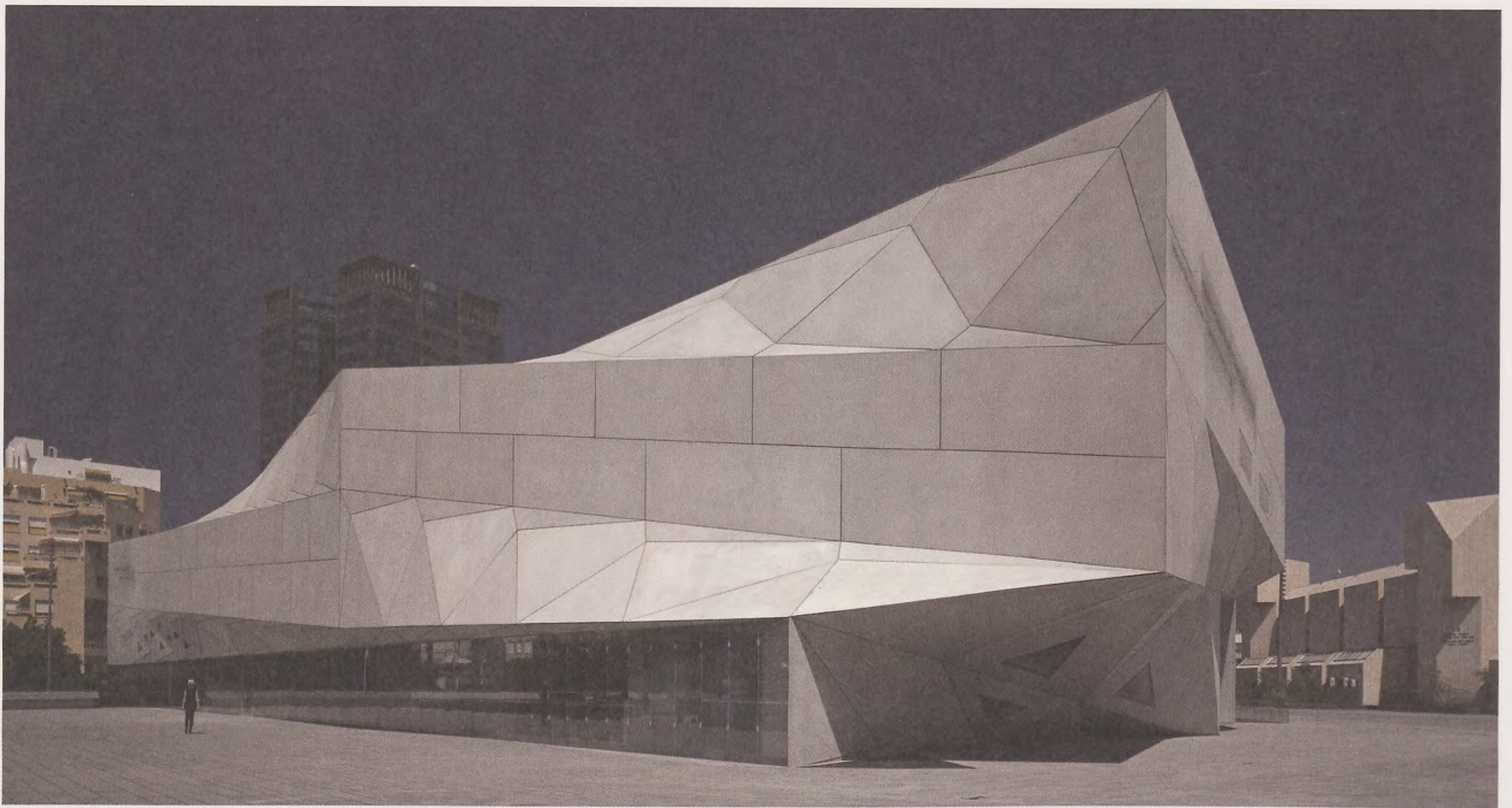
base and turned them slightly away from each other. The mosaic-like façade comprises polished, differently shaped, reinforced concrete panels, glass panels and (I later learnt) cast-in-place concrete. Internally, grooved maple was among the materials selected to clad the steel frame. One might think of Melbourne's Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia in Federation Square, whose façade I find visually troubling. However, in the case of TAMA, in my non-specialist opinion, while the mosaic is undoubtedly unusual, the surface feels integrated. Perhaps the gloss creates the washed-over, elegant effect.

Central to the Herta and Paul Amir Building, which provides double the space of the original museum, is the 'Light fall'. If the external visitor experience is one of viewing a twisted stack of independent spaces niftily layered one on the other, the internal experience is one of cascading light via a 26.5-metre spiral atrium. From the outside, the building appears to be two storeys. Inside, 'Light fall' reveals five floors, its brilliant light penetrating every nook and cranny. While each level feels uneven, the effect is welcoming, despite and perhaps as a result of its angularity.

A museum-as-art-gallery it clearly is, incorporating the white-box rectangles that best serve art. The structure's twin attraction is its function of museum-as-spectacle: strikingly unusual geometries tightly contained within a triangular site, exploration of curvature unimaginable prior to new high-tech software, resolution of the curvature in the flat external mosaic panels and, finally, the soaring space of the core that elevates the spirit.

The two remarkable fashion shows that shone in the equally remarkable new wing also deserve mention. 'Cristóbal Balenciaga: Collector of Fashions' (2012–13) originated at the Olivier Saillard-directed Musée Galliera in Paris. The crisp exhibition design – complete with drawers of objects collected by the master and drawings that accompanied the frocks and furbelows – was simply stunning. 'Fashioning the Object: Bless, Boudicca, Sandra Backlund' (2012–13) featured three labels that look beyond fashion boundaries, meshing wearables with film, performance and sculpture: Boudicca's darkened room, in which unsettling video projections added layers of meaning to the garments; Bless's wall-scapes, hung with fashion-like objects; Backlund's sculptural knits – all standing proudly as innovative experimental exhibition displays. I simply cannot imagine these shows being selected for, or working in, the original TAMA structure.

The Amir Building has achieved, and will continue to achieve, its goal: a special architectural framework to house twenty-first-century cross-cultural collaborations, the art of Israel and the global art of our time.



FROM TOP
Exterior, Herta and Paul Amir Building,
Tel Aviv Museum of Art

Installation view, 'Cristóbal Balenciaga:
Collector of Fashions' (2012–13)
Photograph Ran Erde

OPPOSITE
'Light fall', interior, Herta and Paul Amir
Building, Tel Aviv Museum of Art

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Interior, Herta and Paul Amir Building,
Tel Aviv Museum of Art
All images courtesy Tel Aviv Museum of Art



Spectra (Tasmania), 2013
Site-specific installation, Hobart
49 Xenon searchlights, 8-channel sound system
Technical partner, Skylight, Paris
Courtesy the artist and Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo
Image courtesy Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart
Photograph Rémi Chauvin

FIRST YOU FEEL: RYOJI IKEDA

JANE SOMERVILLE

Ryoji Ikeda doesn't like to explain his work. He prefers viewers to experience it in the same way one does music. As Ikeda stated: at a concert 'you don't ask "what is the meaning of the melody?" before you listen ... first you feel'.¹ This engagement with and direct response from the audience is key to the work's completion. Ikeda's contribution is 'only half the work ... without people it is nothing'.

For the Japanese-born, Paris-based artist, site specificity plays an important role, with each installation configured for the space in which it is shown. *Test pattern [no. 5]*, 2013, on view at Sydney's Carriageworks during June 2013,² is the fifth incarnation of the immersive installation that converts large amounts of data into flickering black-and-white barcode images against an enigmatic soundscape. *Test pattern* has been exhibited in various guises. For its first showing at the Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, Japan, in 2008, the work was displayed on a series of small screens, while in 2011, at New York's Park Avenue Armory, it was installed on two large perpendicular screens, across the floor and floor-to-ceiling. At Carriageworks, imagery was projected onto a 40-metre-long, 10-metre-wide platform placed on the floor, which viewers could walk and lie, even dance, on.

The data that Ikeda collects and reorganises is drawn from vast streams of real information sourced from the internet. *Test pattern [no. 5]* includes data relating to text,

sound, photos and movies; other works use information from flight patterns. Nicole Durling, co-curator of 'The Red Queen' (2013–14) exhibition at the Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, where Ikeda's *data.tron*, 2009, and *data.matrix*, 2009, are on show, suggested that Ikeda does not explain his use of this data because it has 'no specific meaning'; it is employed as a 'raw medium'.³

Ikeda's practice draws on mathematics and science and he is in dialogue with mathematicians and scientists who are also his friends. His fascination with these disciplines centres on their use of abstract theories. For Ikeda, 'some mathematicians are more artists than artists'. He views his own practice as similar to the work of a composer, combining sound, image and the visual elements of line and colour intensity into one single artwork – 'like cooking'. Central to Ikeda's process is making these abstract elements – streams of pure mathematics, data, science, quantum theory and nature – tangible.

Reluctant to call himself an artist, Ikeda wasn't educated through the traditional avenue of the art school. Instead his practice is self-taught and his involvement in the collective Dumb Type was formative to the work he does now. Ikeda joined the collective in 1984, working with the group and performing worldwide until 1993. With fifteen members from different creative disciplines, including choreographers, architects,

designers and dancers, 'There was no leader ... it was democratic', Ikeda said. This very practical experience, through which each member was involved in all aspects of the performance, taught Ikeda about the complex elements he incorporates in his works today.

Like most of Ikeda's works, *Spectra (Tasmania)*, 2013, shown over nine nights during June on a hilltop on Hobart's Regatta Grounds, was best experienced in person. Our group stood around in the cold winter twilight near a grid of forty-nine searchlights. White beams of light stretching 15 kilometres up into the night sky gradually became visible as the light faded. A booming alarm-like sound drawn from sine waves rang through the air. Seeing these light beams gradually get stronger and hearing the sounds repeat, we felt like we were part of something a little eerie, perhaps extraterrestrial.

Later, from another part of town, we saw the seemingly infinite white line rising up into the night sky.

The Red Queen, Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, 18 June 2013 – 21 April 2014.

¹ All Ryoji Ikeda quotes are from a conversation with the writer at Carriageworks, 7 June 2013.

² Ryoji Ikeda's work was presented by Carriageworks and ISEA2013 in collaboration with Vivid Sydney.

³ Nicole Durling in an interview with the writer at the Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, 18 June 2013.



MAKING PLACES REAL: JACKSON SLATTERY AT THE SETOUCHI TRIENNALE

JULIAN WORRALL

The Setouchi Triennale, on its second iteration in 2013, has quickly established itself as among the most ambitious and successful of regional arts festivals in Japan. Spanning a dozen islands in the eastern reaches of the Seto Inland Sea, its inaugural edition attracted nearly a million visitors over a hundred days. The festival is an outgrowth of the long-running undertaking on the island of Naoshima to embed contemporary art and architecture into the spaces and times of a declining corner of rural Japan. These initiatives have diverse constituencies, and all have their own perspective on their impacts, but purely in terms of visitor numbers they have been extraordinarily successful, transforming the economy of the region, influencing the landscape of art production and reception in Japan, and for those concerned with the role of the arts in the wider society, offering a powerful demonstration of how the cultural sector can be a major driver of regional revitalisation and development.

The 2013 triennale encompasses over 200 artists and art producers, and its organisation gathers national and local government resources, private corporate and philanthropic interests, and a multitude of artistic, academic, community and volunteer energies. The vision driving this cultural juggernaut is that of two individuals, Soichiro Fukutake, of the Benesse Art Site Naoshima and General Producer of the triennale, and Fram Kitagawa, the triennale's Artistic Director, who has for decades pioneered the linkage of contemporary art to regional community development through the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale.

In previous editions of these festivals an improvised space named Fukutake House provided a temporary venue for showing work from major Japanese contemporary art galleries. On this iteration Fukutake House has settled into a permanent home in a disused primary school in the port of Fukuda, on Shodoshima, the largest island in

the festival's archipelago. Less nomadic but more international now, it has been renamed the Fukutake House Asia Art Platform, and explicitly aims to be a nodal point in a regional network linking contemporary art producers across Asia, while embedding itself deeply into its local village setting.

This geographical restitching, in which local sites and communities are connected to distant elsewhere and foreign constituencies, lies at the heart of the Fukutake–Kitagawa vision, and constitutes its most innovative aspect intellectually. It embeds artistic activity within a geographical consciousness attuned to places and networks. This approach is evident in the theme of the inaugural exhibition, 'How Have We Responded to Globalisation?' (2013), which brings together curators and artists from seven nations in the region, including Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore. Interestingly, rather than mainland China, it is representation from Australia, in the form of Melbourne-educated, Montreal-based Australian artist Jackson Slattery, curated by Asialink's Eliza Roberts, that rounds out the line-up. This is in part a reflection of the strong relationships that Kitagawa has built with the Australian Embassy in Japan and arts organisations in Australia.

Most of the featured artworks make use of place-based motifs and relational approaches to engaging local communities in their formulation, both explicit elements of the framing agenda. The inclusion of Slattery in this artistic constellation is surprising, even provocative. Slattery has built a reputation in Australia with meticulously executed watercolour renditions of photographs depicting isolated moments torn from their context. Frequently of dark or disturbing subject matter, Slattery's images captivate due to their imbrication of precision and ambiguity, and their skittish refusal to be pinned to the real, despite their overt photorealist technique. Copies and doubles, traces of forgotten

pasts, and simulacra of lost or non-existent realities are the obsessions of Slattery's practice – difficult material to shoehorn into a community-oriented agenda questioning a geographical macro-phenomenon such as globalisation.

Slattery's response here has been to apply his techniques of doubling and dissimulation to spaces, rather than images. His installation, entitled *Monument within a sculpture*, 2013, aims to direct attention to the affective power of the empty school building itself, whose haunted spaces he finds 'the most powerful sculpture on the island'. A small tatami-matted room once used as the maintenance workers' quarters is replicated at full size in a corner of a classroom elsewhere in the school. In each, a flower arrangement bearing an olive branch in a vase set within a stone frame is placed in the centre of the space – a gesture whose kitschy inauthenticity is destabilised once it is grasped that the olive branch is hand-carved, and the stone, variously granite or marble, handpainted on a timber support in a virtuoso demonstration of skilful artistic labour. There is a symbolic payload pointing to the duality of globalisation here too: the island's ancient granite stonecutting industry has been decimated by cheaper imports of Chinese marble, while newly cultivated olive plantations are thriving, generating a new source of local livelihood.

Overall, the piece itself is less accomplished than Slattery's work with images; it is able to bear the weight of these meanings, but only when told, not felt. It is, however, when seen within its larger frames – that of the Fukutake House Asia Art Platform, and the Setouchi Triennale as a whole – that its aesthetic methodology suggests a deeper truth: that real places, like real images, are formed from amalgams of fictions.

Monument Within a Sculpture, Setouchi Triennale, 20 July – 1 September 2013.



FROM TOP

Monument within a sculpture, part 2, 2013,
detail
Maple plywood, acrylic paint, fibreglass,
balla wood, resin and Museum of Modern
Art gift-shop-bought vase
Installation view, Fukutake House Asia Art
Platform, Japan
Courtesy the artist and Asialink Arts

Diptych 1, 2012

Watercolour on paper, each 39 x 29 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery,
Melbourne



JORGE PARDO FROM SEA VIEW LANE TO DADS CUBA

JON BYWATER

Early in his career Jorge Pardo remade some industrially produced objects – an art gallery seat (*Newport Harbour Museum bench*, 1990) and a stepladder (*Ladder*, 1989), for example – by hand, in craft woods. From there, functional furniture and furnishings became his artistic preserve. Flights of tiles and flocks of lamps are forms he repeatedly reinvents. Design produced as art, they provoke questions of value, the art audience's double take ('Does this belong here?') potentially bringing the differential social systems that circulate art and other commodities into the work's frame. Along these lines, his practice was a frequent reference point in the 1990s 'design art' conversation that probed the established ambitions of and hierarchy between the fields.¹

As you might expect from this, Pardo's paintings can approach the condition of wallpaper. While he exhibits them and his 'design' objects in galleries, he also makes architecture. From an art standpoint this is his most compelling work. Its status as art obtains more purely and more obviously by fiat, and so tests the artist's role more boldly. Pardo's first whole house is a key work. *4166 Sea View Lane*, 1998, was built as a commission from the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and opened to the public during museum hours for five weeks before becoming his private property.

The clear possibility that there is something wrong with the artist materially helping himself through this institutional opportunity might be rebutted, to start with, with a question that could equally address the accusation that as a painter he is only making expensive decor: 'But who doesn't?' Our sense of precisely what could constitute a self-consistent critical outlook in art is challenged by the work's entrepreneurial undertone.

A peer of 'relational aesthetics' star Rirkrit Tiravanija, Pardo's concern for functional objects and spaces can be aligned with a recent reconfiguration of the old avant-garde ambition to fuse art and life. Touching on this in a recent interview, he concluded simply: 'I think of what I do as my job – a job I very much like and one I get very well remunerated for.'²

As an experimental design for a relatively modest domestic building, an obvious context, indeed inspiration, is the modern architecture for which Los Angeles is most famous – Rudolph Schindler, Richard Neutra, the Case Study Houses (from which Pardo seems to quote the conversation pit in *Sea View Lane*); and much that is celebrated this year by the exhibitions that make up 'Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in LA'.³ Pardo's project, though, has an ambiguous relationship to the utopian spirit of these precedents.

While Schindler's Kings Road House in LA was conceived as a home for two couples, *Sea View Lane*'s extra rooms are a guest suite. Where Schindler sought to reverse the conventions of private interior and public exterior, Pardo's house presents solid walls to its neighbours. In the interview he gave for his Phaidon monograph, Pardo himself suggested that it uses elements from the California tradition 'more phenomenologically than ideologically'.⁴

Pardo's reference to phenomenology recalls Kenneth Frampton's arguments for a 'critical regionalism' in architecture. Pardo's work certainly evinces commitments both to place and to how things feel over pure theory, concordant with Frampton's call for a modernist approach adapted to place. His position as an artist is always in reserve to suggest that there could be something critical in what his works offer. He consistently frames his work without suggesting that this includes commentary or critique, however. As he put it: 'I'm not one of those artists who makes everything so clear it means nothing'.⁵

What Pardo brings to architectural problems may simply be what would be expected of an artist, namely an auteurist singularity of vision. There is a geocultural dimension to the specialisation and regulation of architecture that this contrasts with, of course, and Pardo's informality of method and aesthetic is consonant with his affinity with Spanish-speaking American cultures. Born in Cuba, Pardo left aged six and grew up in Chicago's working-class Cuban community. He moved to LA to study in the mid-1980s and now lives between the north-east LA address and a newer home in Yucatán, Mexico, where he has a studio and completed a project renovating a ruin in Tecoh (*Madrazo Tecoh project*, 2007). For the 2012 Havana Biennial, he returned to Cuba for the first time. His installation consisted of interlocking, textured, star-shaped paintings, hung in relation to cloth-shaded lamps, all in a palette derived from the work of Wifredo Lam. His title: *DADS CUBA*, 2012.

¹ See Alex Coles (ed.), *Design and Art*, in the series *Documents of Contemporary Art*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., and London, 2007.

² Alex Coles, *The Transdisciplinary Studio*, Sternberg Press, Berlin and New York, 2012, p. 30.

³ 'Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in LA' is an initiative of the Getty. It presented exhibitions and public programs (April–July 2013) across seventeen LA cultural institutions celebrating Southern California's lasting impact on modern architecture.

⁴ Christina Végh, Lane Relyea and Chris Kraus, *Jorge Pardo*, in the series *Contemporary Artists*, Phaidon, London and New York, 2008, p. 25.

⁵ Jorge Pardo in Végh, Relyea and Kraus, op. cit., p. 26.







FROM TOP
Madrazo Tecoh project, 2007
 Exterior view
 Tecoh, Mexico
 Courtesy the artist and 1301PE, Los Angeles

4166 Sea View Lane, 1998
 Los Angeles
 Commissioned by Museum of
 Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
 Courtesy the artist and 1301PE, Los Angeles

OPPOSITE
'Jorge Pardo' (2010)
 Installation view, Petzel, New York
 Courtesy the artist and Petzel, New York

PAGE 229
DADS CUBA, 2012
 Installation view, 11th Havana Biennial, 2012
 Courtesy the artist and 1301PE, Los Angeles
 Photograph Sergio Olivares



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
Buff, Straub, Hensman, *Recreation pavilion*,
Mirman House, Arcadia, 1958
Photograph Julius Shulman, 1959
Getty Research Institute
© J. Paul Getty Trust. Used with permission.
Julius Shulman Photography Archive,
Research Library at the Getty Research
Institute

Charles Eames and Ray Eames, Molded
Plywood Division, Evans Products
Company, *Elephant*, 1945
Moulded plywood, 41.9 x 78.1 x 41.3 cm
Eames Collection
© Eames Foundation
Courtesy Eames Office

Greta Magnusson Grossmann, Ralph O.
Smith Manufacturing Company,
Lamp, c. 1949, manufactured c. 1949-54
Iron, aluminium, 129.5 x 37.8 x 31.1 cm
LACMA, Decorative Arts and Design
Council Fund
© Greta Magnusson Grossman Estate
Photograph © 2011 Museum Associates/
LACMA



CALIFORNIA DESIGN, 1930-1965: LIVING IN A MODERN WAY

WENDY KAPLAN

'California is America, only more so', the author Wallace Stegner famously declared in 1959.¹ Throughout most of the twentieth century, the state symbolised the good life in America. By the end of the Second World War, a regional style of architecture and design had emerged, as the modernist sensibilities of European émigré architects, native designers and transplants from other parts of the country responded to California's special conditions: a benevolent climate, informal lifestyle and pervasive optimism. As Viennese émigré architect Rudolph M. Schindler declared: 'I abandoned the "modern" as imported from Europe ... and tried to develop a contemporary expression of California.'²

The exhibition 'California Design, 1930-1965: Living in a Modern Way' showcases over 250 objects – furniture, ceramics, metalwork, fashion and textiles, graphic design, and architectural drawings and period photographs. It also features a very early (1936) Airstream 'Clipper' trailer and a 1961 sports car, the Avanti, designed by Raymond Loewy in Palm Springs. One important characteristic of California design was the embrace of new materials, particularly ones associated with the flourishing aircraft industry, as with the Airstream's aluminium and the Avanti's fibreglass. While these iconic objects are included in the exhibition to demonstrate the mobility and freedom that were the *sine qua non* of California living, the focus of the show is on the California home.

The 1958 recreation pavilion for the Mirman House that architects Buff, Straub & Hensman built in Arcadia (outside Los Angeles) provides an ideal example, and the exhibition is replete with others. Intended as indoor/outdoor space, the pavilion's open-plan

living room seamlessly flowed into areas for ping-pong, badminton, basketball, and of course, the pool and garden. All the spaces have casual, sturdy metal furniture designed to be equally suitable for living room or patio. The living-room planters serve as a visual link, as does the built-in seating; the floor-to-ceiling windows also blur any boundaries between indoors and out.

Flat roofs, rectangular rooms and sparse decoration show the debt to European modernism, but the pavilion also shows how the California variant was looser and warmer. While many California architects championed steel framing (and are well represented in the exhibition), Buff, Straub & Hensman built with post-and-beam construction using Douglas fir, a wood native to the west coast. Although post and beam was not the most avant-garde construction, the size of the glass windows was only made possible through new technology developed during the Second World War. The war also resulted in even greater design influences from Asia, as seen in the low tables and floor cushions.

The image was taken by Julius Shulman, the Los Angeles architectural photographer instrumental in disseminating the California dream. Like most of the interiors published at mid-century, the Mirman pavilion was staged for publicity purposes. Photographs in magazines and newspapers served as agents of persuasion – to purchase a product, a home, a lifestyle, or all three. Shulman's depiction of the pavilion reached a local audience when published in the *Los Angeles Times* in September 1960, a regional one in *Western Architect and Engineer* in November that year, and national and international acclaim in the *Architectural Record* three years later.

One of the themes of the 'California Design' exhibition is 'Selling' – publications were important disseminators, as were stores, exhibitions and Hollywood movies. Shulman's perfectly choreographed images presented an idealised California, where prosperity and leisure were available to all.

Yet the promise was real in an age of unprecedented economic growth. California's population explosion produced an attendant need for furnishings, and its enlightened educational system provided the training to execute them. The lack of competition from abroad in the immediate postwar years, as European nations struggled to rebuild their economies, also benefitted the state's nascent manufacturers, as did their own adventurous spirit. Nowhere else in the United States were there so many trained artisans working cooperatively with industry. The Ralph O. Smith Company provides an excellent example. While the firm consisted of only a few people working in a Los Angeles garage, it hired Swedish émigré architect and cabinet-maker Greta Magnusson Grossman to design its sleek, organic lamps and quickly achieved national and international attention. Such success stories explain how California became part of the world's collective imagination and elucidate how this image was translated into a material culture that defined an era.

California Design, 1930-1965: Living in a Modern Way, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 2 November 2013 – 9 February 2014.

¹ Wallace Stegner, 'The West Coast: Region with a view', in Wallace Stegner, *One Way to Spell Man*, Doubleday, New York, 1982, p. 108, first published in the journal *Saturday Review*, 2 May 1959.

² Schindler to Elizabeth Mock, 10 August 1945, Rudolph M. Schindler Collection, Art, Design and Architecture Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara.

Nawurapu Wunungmurra, *Mokuy*, 2010
Mixed media, dimensions variable
Installation view, 27th Telstra National and
Torres Strait Islander Art Award, 2010
Courtesy Museum and Art Gallery of the
Northern Territory, Darwin

THE MULKA PROJECT

GENEVIEVE O'CALLAGHAN

The Mulka Project is a digital library and production centre located in Yirrkala in north-east Arnhem Land. It exists as part of the community's art centre, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, facilitating the production of audiovisual material and new-media artwork, and since 2008 has gathered 50,000 images, 4000 songs and 400 videos – 'stories [that] were recorded over time but never stored together to make one collection'.¹

Steering the Buku/Mulka new-media works are two principles – a process of experimentation and the sophisticated use of 'discovered' material – that weave them into Yolngu art history. Translating traditional technique to new materials has a precedent in the 'Yirrkala Drawings' of 1946–47, which saw artists including Mawalan Marika and Munggurawuy Yunupingu create 365 drawings in brightly coloured crayon on butchers paper for anthropologists Ronald and Catherine Berndt. Like these images, durational new-media work transforms ways of seeing Yolngu art. But at its essence The Mulka Project is about connecting the past to the present and people to each other. 'With Mulka we bring together all the stories to make meaning for Yolngu and non-Yolngu people', senior law man and musician/singer Yumutjin Wunungmurra explained.²

Perhaps the most widely seen Buku/Mulka production is Nyapanyapa Yunupingu's *Light painting*, 2011, which featured in the following year's Biennale of Sydney. Nyapanyapa is an energetic storyteller. With furious and unbridled rarrk and figures that exist well beyond their outlines, her paintings brim with emotion. But Nyapanyapa works faster than the seasonal material of bark can accommodate. Through the art centre in collaboration with The Mulka Project she developed a solution, creating for the biennale over 115 images in white paint on acetate sheet, layered by a computer program in groups of three, with one image changing every three to four minutes. What

the viewer sees is a moving painting in light – infinite, eternal, mercurial. And like light, this work will rarely present the exact image twice.³

In 2010 the Telstra New Media Award was given to Nawurapu Wunungmurra for *Mokuy*, 2010, a work combining moving image, sculpture and installation. Five ancestral mokuy figures – their faces stern with fixed stares, ribs like barbs; their bodies a series of bulbous joints – have gathered on the sacred ground Balambala to dance. They hover above a projected image – a 1920s piece of footage, discovered by Nawurapu over eighty years later, that had serendipitously captured his clan's dance. This work again relied on the interaction between the media input of The Mulka Project and the visual art portfolio of Buku-Larrnggay.

By adding moving image, Nawurapu establishes in the artwork an elegant equilibrium of intention and chance. Hung from above by a thread, the mokuy gently twist and turn, looking this way and that over Balambala, their shadows joining the dance below, as if slowed by the thick glass of time.

'Vimeo', says its homepage, 'is the home for high-quality videos and the people who love them'; it features *Baywara Manda* (2013), an animated short directed by Randjupi Mununggurr about two sons abandoned in the bush by their mother. A true story of once-upon-a-time proportions, it presented the animators a challenge: to maintain the story's epic heights but ground it in reality. To do this they used a multi-level lightbox for layering, stop animation (to produce jaunty movement), and a non-linear approach to interpreting the script. A Yolngu story created by Yolngu and for Yolngu, *Baywara Manda* reflects its primary audience, just as Mulka TV streams community-related historical and contemporary content into Yirrkala. But *Baywara Manda* is also of the world, and its presence on Vimeo places it on a global platform.

Like Nawurapu Wunungmurra before him, Ishmael Marika this year used something 'found' to

create an original work. On a c. 1960s–70s cassette tape found in a shipping container, Ishmael's grandfather, Milirrpum Marika, explains the significance of an artwork to his children. Randjupi Mununggurr, a Mulka Project Cultural Director, recognised a relevance to the community's current problems, and alerted Ishmael.

Ishmael first distributed CD copies of the recordings and later translated his grandfather's speech, developing an audiovisual work with words floating through space, untethered to person or place. Written in white on black, these messages spoken by Milirrpum, echoed by his grandson and disseminated through the network of Yolngu contemporary art seem to have arrived by design.

With these works, by Ishmael, Randjupi, Nawurapu and Nyapanyapa, among others, Yolngu art breaks ground and taps into the global current of artists activating the archive. But new-media artwork is just one of the strings to Mulka's bow. Television, song recording, event documentation and film screening, the scope is as broad as the view from Yirrkala across the Arafura Sea. The Mulka Project is a non-profit initiative that relies on funding and donations. It shows that, given resources, artists can create highly visible, award-winning works; they can determine the way they are represented and interpret messages from the past to convey to the future.

Yirrkala Drawings, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 12 December 2013 – 23 February 2014.

¹ Wukun Wanambi, a Mulka Project Cultural Director, in *The Mulka Archive*, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala, 2011, unpaginated.

² *The Mulka Archive*, op. cit.

³ Description of artworks mentioned is based on a phone interview with Joseph Brady, The Mulka Project Program Director, 27 June 2013, and correspondence with Will Stubbs, Coordinator, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, 31 July 2013.





THE RON & GEORGE ADAMS COLLECTION

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HEATH FRANCO



WHEN A COLLECTOR BUYS YOUR WORK, IT IS A FANTASTIC FEELING. TO KNOW SOMEONE FINDS THE WORK SO IMPORTANT THAT THEY WANT TO OWN IT PROVIDES AN UNDENIABLE CONFIDENCE BOOST. IF THE COLLECTOR THEN CHOOSES TO INTERACT WITH IT ON A DAILY BASIS, THEY ARE ALLOWING THE WORK, HOWEVER SUBTLY, TO SHAPE THEIR MOODS AND THOUGHTS, AND, IN TURN, THEIR MOODS AND THOUGHTS TO CONTINUALLY RESHAPE THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE WORK. — HEATH FRANCO

Ron and George Adams, founding directors of Sydney's MOP and Galerie pompom, speak about forming their art collection:

In the mid-1990s, with a new-found love for young and emerging artists, we began collecting by supporting artist-run initiatives.

Each work has a story behind it, whether it's the night we bought it, the show it came from, the friends at our side, or the new artist we talked with and whose work we just had to have.

We've always said that anyone can start collecting, no matter how large or small the budget. Artist-run initiatives are still the best way to get to know how the art community works. If you meet the people who run these spaces and start following certain artists whose work you like, you can't go wrong.

Our relationship with our artworks is a friendship of sorts. We rarely replace work for the sake of having something new. Each artwork speaks volumes to us, whether it's a scream or a whisper.

— Ron and George Adams





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Christian Boltanski, Chance. Pavillon français, Biennale de Venise, 2011
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ESSAY

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A correct and delicate mind:
Linda Marrinon's recent sculpture
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Project: Towards a gallery of air,
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Patrick Pound



A CORRECT AND DELICATE MIND

LINDA MARRINON'S RECENT SCULPTURE
CHRIS MCAULIFFE

THE PURPOSE BEHIND MARRINON'S USE OF THE TRADITIONS OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY SCULPTURE TO INVESTIGATE THE TYPE BECOMES CLEAR. THE STATUETTE HAD THE CAPACITY TO INSPIRE AND UPLIFT. BUT IF ITS TECHNICAL AND MORAL INTEGRITY IS LOST, THE STATUETTE BECOMES A BIBELOT, A MERE DECORATIVE KNICK-KNACK. THE RISK OF THIS WAS GREATER WITH A MINOR SUBJECT, SUCH AS A WOMAN.

Beginning in the 1990s, Linda Marrinon mixed her media, exhibiting paintings, watercolours and sculptures in equal measure. Since 2006, however, her focus has been on sculpture; she has presented sixty figure sculptures in eight exhibitions, working in plaster, terracotta and bronze, the materials of classical nineteenth-century sculptural practice. In her most recent exhibition, in the ornate vestibule of Sydney's Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW), sculptures were positioned as an array of historical personages, fashion plates and theatrical stereotypes before elegant niches in walls of cleanly dressed sandstone. Here, as in earlier displays, Marrinon's figures rub shoulders, exchange glances and open up a dialogue between twenty-first-century experience and nineteenth-century sculptural practices.

Linda Marrinon has always chosen her idiom carefully, whether drawing on popular or high culture. As the occasion demands, she has adopted a Thurber-style minimalism in her line, manga-influenced maximalism in costume, raw naivety in brushwork and academic discipline in composition. The same holds for Marrinon's modestly scaled statuettes. As that word suggests, the statuette is a physically reduced form of figure sculpture; none of Marrinon's is more than 100 centimetres in height, some are half that size. A statuette is neither a monumental nor civic form of sculpture. Its natural environment is the architectural interior, set on a tabletop, without the formal trappings of an art museum or the physical grandeur of a civic statue. And yet the statuette can be just as elaborate in its symbolic and allegorical meaning.

This is because the statuette is a cousin of the classical fragment or the exotic artefact; it invites the connoisseur's close examination and prompts the aficionado's reflection. The lesser forms of the statuette – the many quaint peasants of nineteenth-century Italian sculpture, or the menageries of the French *animaliers* – were diversions and entertainments. But at its best, the statuette was inspirational, representing historical personages of high repute or allegorical figures alluding to admirable virtues.

A statuette both pictured and prompted a high moral tone. In 1891, the sculptor Giovanni Fontana sent Sir Henry Parkes, then premier of New South Wales, a small marble figurine. Parkes, who had trained as an ivory turner and risen from abject poverty, understood both the message and purpose of the statuette. 'It is the figure of a sturdy boy',

he wrote in his diary, 'with a sculptor's mallet and chisel, intended ... to be an allegorical representation of my own life – the boy carving out and shaping his own destiny'.¹ Later, in 1896, another sculptor, Tomaso Sani, sent Parkes a portrait figurine of himself, which Parkes acknowledged to be a fine likeness. But he gave it away to a friend, noting that while 'It was a very pretty piece of sculpture', to display it in his house 'would be a piece of arrogance'.² Ideally, owning and using a statuette was an exercise in reflection and propriety, a domestic exercise in moral discipline.

The allegorical or moral impact of Marrinon's statuettes is not so weighty. There is little moral inspiration in *Woman with princess hairstyle*, 2008, and the moral compass of her *Rake in mourning*, 2009, is hardly true. Marrinon offers few stirring portraits; *Voltaire*, 2012, is perhaps the only 'Great Man of History' and *Field Marshal Montgomery*, 2009, the only military hero (he appears also as *Monty in Italy*, 2012, and *Monty in camouflage*, 2010). Her non-specific figures are more like poseurs and fashion plates than resolute beacons of virtue. *Emergency services worker (greetings to Antony Gormley)*, 2008, might count as one, but the rest – an assortment of debutantes, brides, ladies, matrons and ingenues from the Regency, Victorian and Edwardian periods – appear light-hearted in tone. This array of seemingly frivolous figures poses a question both aesthetic and social. In the absence of robust role models, in an age of superficial self-presentation, can sculpture still exercise its moral impact?

The paradox of Marrinon's statuettes is that even as she diligently revives nineteenth-century studio practice, she charts the evaporation of sculpture's inspirational and allegorical effect. The problem is not material; venerable studio manuals such as Edouard Lanteri's *Modelling and Sculpture: A Guide for Artists and Students* (1902–11) are still there to be read and a sculpture can still be built now as it would have been 150 years ago. It seems more a matter of cultural and historical change. Marrinon declares a cut-off point; with the exception of a fantasy figure (*Cosmonaut with moondust*, 2010) none of her cast dates to after the Second World War. Montgomery is Marrinon's last action hero.

The fragile moral weight of figure sculpture also registers in the gender and character of Marrinon's subjects. Marrinon has studied the techniques and conventions of the nineteenth century closely, and is acutely aware that women were primarily depicted as modest, self-









effacing types rather than as specifically identified individuals.³ In many sculptures, her subject is the type. *Ingenue*, 2012, depicts not a young woman but a tool in the repertoire of theatre. The ingenue is a template, the virginal innocent, who in melodramatic plays completes the circuit between Hero and Cad. The ingenue has neither interior life nor agency; she is the prop around which male action circulates, she is there to be set upon in a darkened drawing room and rescued from railway tracks. Women are also cast in vaudevillian walk-on parts in *Woman in a sailor suit*, 2009, and *Green golfer*, 2009. Others of Marrinon's troupe – *Debutante*, 2009, and *Winter bride*, 2010 – map a woman's life as a passage through a succession of conventional roles.

That said, Marrinon's men are often types also. Her *Voltaire* (in bronze in 2010 and in painted plaster in 2010 and 2012) is all breeches and wig, whereas Houdon's iconic 1778 portrait bust shows the balding lion of the Enlightenment without an artificial mane. But for its title the sculpture does little to portray Voltaire; he is separated from various rakes, serfs and cowboys in name only.

What brings all these figures together, then, is the idea of typecasting. Among the figures displayed at the AGNSW is *Gibson girl*, 2012, a homage to the winsome, voluptuous women drawn by American illustrator Charles Dana Gibson during the belle époque. The Gibson Girl was alluring and vulnerable, forceful and flighty, a form of popular resistance to the spectre of the New Woman. The Gibson Girl was also a product, competing for dominance in a crowded illustrated press against sundry other 'girls', among them the Christy, Wenzel, Peirce and Schneider.

In the Gibson Girl, both the 'ideal' and the 'idol' were corrupted; art critic Donald Kuspit remarked that her very essence as a cultural phenomenon lay in her 'inferior aesthetic quality'.⁴ Here, the purpose behind Marrinon's use of the traditions of nineteenth-century sculpture to investigate the type becomes clear. The statuette had the capacity to inspire and uplift. But if its technical and moral integrity is lost, the statuette becomes a bibelot, a mere decorative knick-knack. The risk of this was greater with a minor subject, such as a woman. And perhaps even greater if the woman represented a hollow convention or contemporary vogue rather than a genuine virtue. These challenges to the sculptor became greater over the period on which Marrinon concentrates – the early-nineteenth-century Regency to mid-twentieth century. An affirmative concept – the 'type' as substantively representative of a class – is signalled by Marrinon with key words such as 'Lady', 'matron' or 'knight'. But it appears alongside its corrupted negative – 'typecasting' as a formulaic expediency – which Marrinon embodies in the ingenue, 'fancy dress', 'hairstyle' and 'fake fur'.

The passage from a *Regency matron*, 2010, to a *Cosmonaut with moondust* maps the route from type to typecasting. Taking her guidance from published manuals on fashion and decorum, the Regency woman learned 'the simple laws of just taste',⁵ demonstrated 'a correct and delicate mind' and formed 'a judgment which makes elegance inseparable from propriety'.⁶ In personal adornment as in art, external appearance was founded on inner virtue; both sought to express the 'chaste, elegant and appropriate'.⁷ Indeed, art was recommended as a model of decorum: ladies were urged to 'consult the statues of fine sculptors, and the figures of excellent painters' rather than their 'dancing masters, or the dictates of their looking glasses'.⁸ The cosmonaut, on the other hand, is a fantasy figure; perhaps one of Marrinon's most beautiful, but, like her *Patriot in uniform*, 2013, all costume and no inner virtue.

Marrinon's production of multiple versions of a figure – her several Voltaires and Montys, her translation of *Woman with hobble skirt*, 2010, into *Gibson girl* – is not in itself a sign of the collapse of type into typecasting. Repetition, in Marrinon's view, was inherent in the fabrication methods of nineteenth-century sculpture and as such is to be managed on procedural or professional grounds. The problems she identifies lie with sculpture's subjects and with its consumption. The

first amounts to an absence of figures that convincingly unite an emblematic exterior with a sense of moral interiority in order to speak effectively of virtue. *Emergency services worker* comes close, especially given the renewed civic status of such figures in Australia in recent years. A *Patriot in uniform* is, as Texans say of braggarts and wannabes, all hat and no cattle. The second has to do with the viewer's ability to adopt a contemplative gaze and to discover a 'correct and delicate mind' or an allegorical presentation of their life within the representation of a type. This is increasingly difficult in a culture attuned to the presentation of the self in social situations; we look only to rapidly decode the surface signs of status; interiority offers no pay-off. Marrinon's remarkably disciplined revival of nineteenth-century techniques, and her determination to invest the surfaces of her statuettes with dense physical and decorative effects, is an invitation to contemplate our own superficiality in the depths of her materials.

Melbourne Now, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne,
22 November 2013 – 23 March 2014.

- 1 Sir Henry Parkes, (entry for 15 July 1892), *Sir Henry Parkes Diary*, 1 January – 30 August 1892, 1 January – 28 August 1893, manuscript, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 1891.
- 2 'Statuette of Sir Henry Parkes', *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 30 May 1896, p. 27.
- 3 Linda Marrinon, 'Sibell Mary, Countess Grosvenor by Jules Dalou and its forgotten history', Master of Fine Arts thesis, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne, 1999, is a case study of this effect.
- 4 Donald B. Kuspit, 'Charles Dana Gibson's girl', *Jahrbuch für Amerikastudien* 3, Bd. 7, 1962, p. 183.
- 5 'A lady of distinction', in *The Mirror of the Graces; or, The English Lady's Costume: Containing General Instructions for Combining Elegance, Simplicity and Economy with Fashion in Dress*, Adam Black, Edinburgh, 1830, p. 12.
- 6 *ibid.* p. 51.
- 7 *ibid.* p. 52.
- 8 *ibid.* pp. 155.

OPPOSITE

Debutante, 2009
Tinted plaster, muslin, 74 x 24 x 21 cm
Courtesy the artist and Roslyn Oxley9
Gallery, Sydney

PAGE 242
Young man as Hussar, 2012
Painted plaster, 33 x 31 cm
Collection Art Gallery of New South Wales,
Sydney
Tony Gilbert Bequest Fund 2013
Courtesy the artist and Roslyn Oxley9
Gallery, Sydney

PAGE 245
Voltaire, 2010
Painted plaster, 81 x 25 x 32 cm
Courtesy the artist and Roslyn Oxley9
Gallery, Sydney

PAGE 246
Regency matron, 2010
Painted plaster, 73 x 20 x 18 cm
Courtesy the artist and Roslyn Oxley9
Gallery, Sydney

PAGE 247
Cosmonaut with moondust, 2010
Tinted plaster, 74 x 24 x 21 cm
Courtesy the artist and Roslyn Oxley9
Gallery, Sydney



MELBOURNE NESS

HELEN HUGHES

AND MELBOURNE NOW

'MELBOURNE NOW' DOES NOT SEEK TO UNCOVER THE 'MELBOURNE-NESS' OF CONTEMPORARY ART FROM MELBOURNE; IT SEEKS, CONVERSELY, TO UNCOVER THE QUALITY OF CONTEMPORANEITY IN ART FROM MELBOURNE, THE QUALITY THAT MAKES CONTEMPORARY ART FROM MELBOURNE CONVERSANT WITH CONTEMPORARY ART FROM AROUND THE GLOBE.

The forthcoming 'Melbourne Now' (2013–14) exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) is transparent in its aim to redress the main criticisms that have beleaguered the gallery for the last forty years. The most virulent of these criticisms have been that the NGV lacks a commitment to the exhibition and acquisition of contemporary art, meanwhile uncritically endorsing the canon of European modernism through its blockbuster Winter Masterpieces exhibition series. These criticisms were given iconic expression by the August 1975 sit-in, which protested the NGV's scant allocation of funding to local art practices, and have persisted more or less unabated ever since.

'Melbourne Now', by contrast, will inaugurate a new series of summer exhibitions of contemporary art. One of the first exhibitions to be overseen by the NGV's new Director, Tony Ellwood, formerly of the Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Brisbane, these 'Summer Contemporary' shows will serve as the direct antidote to the Winter Masterpieces series, a hallmark of former director Gerard Vaughan's twelve-year tenure. As such, 'Melbourne Now' can be seen in the first instance as delivering an unambiguous statement about the NGV's new-found commitment to local contemporary art, with the gallery making an effort to acquire many of the exhibition's commissioned works, just as GOMA did with its own hallmark Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art program.

Though a non-recurring exhibition, 'Melbourne Now' is biennale-like in scale. Taking over both the NGV International (NGVI) and NGV Australia (NGVA), as well as the more urban locales of Melbourne's laneways and flagpoles, the exhibition will include work by over 130 contributors from art, design, architecture and fashion backgrounds, of which, for reasons that will become apparent, the architectural collaborations are the most significant. Following a recent trend in biennale curatorship (exemplified by Okwui Enwezor's Documenta11 in 2002 and, more recently, Bice Curiger's series of 'para-pavilions' at the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011), architectural structures by collectives such as McBride Charles Ryan and SIBLING or individuals like Rory Hyde will be a key feature of 'Melbourne Now', creating platforms for exhibitions within the exhibition, or spaces for transient events like reading groups, lectures and performances.

The 'Community Hall' designed by McBride Charles Ryan will, for instance, house events organised by different artistic, academic and community groups. John Nixon, an artist whose prolific career as a musician (and anti-musician), gallerist, curator, publisher and artist has demonstrated considerable influence on the contemporary generation of artists like Christopher L. G. Hill and curators such as David Homewood, will curate an exhibition of drawings, as well as performances by his musical collective Donkey's Tail, and a new

project called 'Donkey's Tail Junior' for the NGV Kids program. Meanwhile, Patrick Pound, an artist who works with taxonomies of photography and syntaxes of collecting, will explore the NGV's own collection to stage a mini-exhibition within the bigger show. *un Magazine* has also been invited to curate a section of the exhibition, drawing on its own network of emerging artists, writers and designers.

This is all to say that the types of collaborations with architectural organisations that the NGV will undertake in 'Melbourne Now' are necessary to frame the ways in which so much contemporary art is produced and presented today – often as ephemeral gestures, interactive performances, or simply as spaces in which something can happen (like a curated show, a discussion, or a workshop). Indeed, these collaborations have become somewhat of a standard practice in contemporary art institutions (take for instance the Serpentine Gallery's iconic Pavilion commission). They not only reflect how so much art from the 1990s onwards has taken on a functional value (like architecture itself) or is distinctly 'relational' – whereby the architectural structure forms a backdrop to the ephemeral interpersonal activity that is the artwork – but also the museological impetus to capitalise on the so-called 'experience economy', the marketing strategy that sees traditional goods and services replaced with elaborately tailored 'personal experiences'.¹

Following this logic, Laith McGregor's intricately illustrated table-tennis table will be installed near the ground-floor cafe at NGVI, inviting playful use of the work alongside a cup of coffee, and Rory Hyde will build a variation of the 'Bucky Bar' in Federation Court, a Buckminster Fuller-inspired dome structure made of everyday recycled material (such as umbrellas, as used in a 2010 iteration of the structure in Rotterdam called *Bucky Bar manifest*) in which artists, curators and visitors can stop for a drink. If the benefit of such interactive artistic/architectural ventures is that through them the contemporary art institution can attract more viewers by offering new specialised 'experiences', then one of the downfalls of this model is that it does so, in part, by masquerading contemporary artworks as amenity spots like cafes, kids rooms or bars.²

The exhibition development of 'Melbourne Now' is structured according to a collaborative curatorial model. Led by Ellwood and the NGV's new Senior Curator of Contemporary Art, Max Delany, and his team, it seeks to employ a non-hierarchical model of collective curatorship, incorporating the ideas of many younger in-house curators such as Maggie Finch, Simon Maidment and Katie Somerville, as well as colleagues from design and public programs, and several independent curators such as Simone LeAmon, Ewan McEoin and Fleur Watson. The immediate problem that this model



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

Rory Hyde with DUS Architects, *Bucky Bar*, 2010

Umbrellas, installation

Private collection © the artist

Reko Rennie, *Royalty*, 2013

Acrylic and gold ink

Installation view, Gertrude Contemporary Studio 12

Courtesy the artist and Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne

Bianca Hester, *a world, fully accessible by no living being*, 2011

Three-part project, Federation Square, cinder-

block wall, 32-page broadsheet, performances,

November 2011

Courtesy Bianca Hester and Sarah Scout Presents,

Melbourne

Photograph Bianca Hester

PAGE 250

John Nixon, *Untitled (black monochrome)*, 2013

Enamel on canvas and wood, 67 x 64 x 3.5 cm

Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery







ABOVE

Daniel Crooks, *A garden of parallel paths*, 2012
Single-channel HD video, 16:9, colour, sound,
9 mins 33 secs duration
Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

PAGES 254-5

Laith McGregor, *Pong ping paradise*, 2012
Mixed media on paper with table-tennis table,
glass and net, 153 x 274 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney

presents is that of clarity. It seems improbable that an exhibition spread over so many sites with so many contributors and curatorial voices could develop a coherent argument about contemporary art, which is what viewers of biennales have come to expect. (Even the absence of an argument is interpreted as a coherent position, as with Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev's curatorially theme-less dOCUMENTA (13) in 2012.)

Delany has explained that the exhibition aims to celebrate the community of contemporary creative arts from Melbourne rather than attempt to survey it systematically or develop an argument about it. Put another way, 'Melbourne Now' does not seek to uncover the 'Melbourne-ness' of contemporary art from Melbourne; it seeks, conversely, to uncover the quality of contemporaneity in art from Melbourne, the quality that makes contemporary art from Melbourne conversant with contemporary art from around the globe.

One key feature of a global contemporary art is its dominant mode of exhibition: the staging of biennales and triennales that in their totality are beginning to form a 1:1 map of the world, with exhibitions or museums of contemporary art for every city.³ Echoing projects such as Juliana Engberg's one-time Melbourne International Biennial (now dubbed the 'one-annale') from 1999, or Christopher L. G. Hill's more recent and related First/Final, Second/Third and Third/Fourth Melbourne Artist Facilitated biennials from 2008, 2011 and 2013, 'Melbourne Now' aims to put contemporary art from Melbourne on this world map.

The vast number of artists as diverse in their practice as sculptor Linda Marrinon and interior designer-cum-artist Lucy McRae, alongside the many designers, architects and curators involved, coupled with the exhibition's broad mission statement to 'celebrate' does, however, present a very real obstacle for the cohesion of 'Melbourne Now'. To combat this, the exhibition design will be based on the urban design of Melbourne city – the many different characters of its neighbourhoods; its boulevards (public daytime spaces of grand narrative) juxtaposed with its laneways (private night-time spaces of intimacy and encounter).⁴ This curatorial rationale is further inflected in the choice of artists: the urban interventions of Bianca Hester will be represented at one of the first points of entry at the NGVI – she will show work related to her important *a world, fully accessible by no living being*, which won the 2011 Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture – as will a specially commissioned abstracted urban video-portrait of Melbourne's laneways by Daniel Crooks. It will also be explored implicitly in the grid-based charcoal drawings by Brian Martin that both depict and embody Wurundjeri country, and the research-based work of Tom Nicholson, who explores Australia's public monuments, especially those rare few dedicated to its Indigenous population, and then creates counter-monuments that are often more ephemeral and analytic in nature.

Indeed, a large part of the success or failure of 'Melbourne Now' will be contingent on the way in which it meaningfully engages with the representation of Indigenous art. Another prominent critique that has been levelled specifically at the NGVA's ground-floor Indigenous galleries has been that the gallery should focus on incorporating non-Indigenous Australian art into the significantly older (by tens of thousands of years) history of Indigenous Australian art, rather than the other way round. While not completely dissolving the distinction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous art ('Melbourne Now' will retain a focus on Aboriginal art in the NGVA's Indigenous galleries), the exhibition will partly dismantle these often separatist art histories by incorporating art by non-Indigenous artists, such as a new video work by Emile Zile, into the Indigenous galleries, and including the work of Indigenous artists such as Reko Rennie and Destiny Deacon in the not-specifically Indigenous spaces of the NGVI, thus underscoring the ways in which contemporary art exhibitions can stage important cross-cultural conversations.

Despite foregrounding the importance of contemporary art in such cosmopolitan projects, it is impossible to ignore the major overlaps that this exhibition's thematisation of Melbourne creates with the tourism industry, which, as Melbourne-based academics such as Rebecca Goodbourn have pointed out, are closely intertwined with the city's urban psychogeography, and particularly its laneways.⁵ To celebrate the city of Melbourne is the task of tourism campaigns, whereas analysing and developing an argument about its psychogeography is, as Goodbourn's research has shown, a distinctly different and more difficult task. The theme of urbanism and the psychogeographic experience of a city, of any city, are topics Delany has explored rigorously throughout his curatorial career, as with the 1998 exhibition based on situationist *dérives*, 'Strolling: The Art of Arcades, Boulevards, Barricades, Publicity', and his meticulous 'city report' on the art of Melbourne, co-authored with Nicola Harvey for a 2008 issue of *frieze*, which mapped the climatic, historical and urban topography of the city onto its key artists, publications and exhibition venues.⁶ In this vein, Delany has commissioned for 'Melbourne Now' the restaging of a work by George Egerton-Warburton in which the artist runs through a city with a stolen video camera, filming his frantic escape. For Delany, then, the experience of the city is clearly more interesting as a curatorial methodology and a theme in contemporary art than it is an attempt to braid the NGV's exhibition program with City of Melbourne tourism campaigns.

The NGV's new and hitherto unmatched attention to contemporary art from Melbourne as emblematised by 'Melbourne Now' directly remedies a very serious defect in the gallery's agenda. But the NGV must be wary not to swing from one polar extreme of the pendulum (an ultraconservative attitude towards contemporary art, and the reinforcement of the Euro-American canon as exemplified by Vaughan) to the other (an uncritical adoption of the now-standard model of contemporary art institutions with an emphasis on interactivity and participation). To turn the museum into a place that celebrates the city, increases visitation, and puts Melbourne on the world map is to borrow directly from the rhetoric of the tourism industry. Reconfiguring the significance of contemporary artists from Melbourne who directly employ strategies couched in the languages of urban design or public space, or attempting to reframe the relationship between contemporary Indigenous art and non-Indigenous Australian art, on the other hand, is the task of a curator, an art historian and a state art institution like the NGV. Although the former task is undeniably easier, and presents wonderful opportunities to many great contemporary Melbourne artists, the latter is an infinitely more meaningful use of the vast funds being directed towards this project and the historically singular intersection of so many intelligent local curators, artists, architects and designers.

Melbourne Now, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne,
22 November 2013 – 23 March 2014.

1 On this topic, see Claire Bishop's essay 'Antagonism and relational aesthetics', *October*, no. 110, Fall 2004, pp. 51–80, especially p. 52.

2 *ibid.*, p. 53.

3 In this region alone consider the Biennale of Sydney, Melbourne's Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art, and the rumoured forthcoming third NGV: NGV Contemporary.

4 Max Delany, from a conversation with the author, 18 July 2013.

5 Rebecca Goodbourn, 'Sensing the city', PhD dissertation, forthcoming, Criminology, School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Melbourne, 2013.

6 'Strolling: The Art of Arcades, Boulevards, Barricades, Publicity' (1998) was presented at Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne; see also Max Delany and Nicola Harvey, 'Melbourne: City report', *frieze*, issue 115, May 2008, <http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/melbourne/>.



BUILDING ON BODIES

THE ARTWORK OF LUCY MCRAE
OLI STRATFORD

BEHIND ALL MCRAE'S WORK THERE IS A CONSTANT: THE NOTION OF THE SKIN AND BODY AS THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN OUR PERSONAL IDENTITIES AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD; AND A CURIOSITY AS TO HOW THAT BOUNDARY CAN BE DISTORTED FROM EITHER SIDE.

Lucy McRae creates body extensions, derivations and subversions. Working with liquids, plastics, gels and rubber, she conjures wearable technologies and clothing that alter and exaggerate the human silhouette, documenting the process through film and photography.

McRae's creations share a distinct aesthetic – science-fiction heavy, organically technological and often macabre – but thematically her practice is diverse, with the playful and provocative silhouettes she creates sometimes serving as gleeful speculations on how the human body might adapt to changing environments and technology, sometimes as meditations on personal identity. McRae has photographed herself dressed in foam, wearing inflatable muscle tissue, and coated in shimmering tacks and safety pins, her self-coined title of 'body architect' nebulous enough to incorporate the gamut of her interests. 'I've always tried to swerve definitions', the artist acknowledged. 'But "body architect" is so vague that it's transformed with me. It's a way of describing my misfit background and a way of making me feel comfortable.'

This misfit background lies behind much of McRae's practice. Born in London, her family moved to Australia when she was three after her father accepted a teaching job in Melbourne. Here she trained in athletics and ballet, before studying interior design at the city's RMIT University. Following graduation she returned to London to work in architecture, leaving the city in 2006 for the Netherlands, where her studio is now based in Amsterdam. On arriving in Holland, she joined the Probes division of the electronics corporation Philips, a far-future research initiative that examines sociocultural and technological shifts, and the job for which McRae invented her title of body architect to satisfy the company's human-resources department. 'I look at my trajectory in terms of the places I've lived and the people I've met', said McRae. In all her work, it is easy to see the traces of where she has been.

At Philips, McRae began collaborating with the avant-garde Dutch textile designer Bart Hess on their seminal LucyandBart project.

Producing photographic collections of silhouette curios and grotesques – McRae shrouded in a suit made from balloons; Hess enveloped in a tumescent grass-covered bodysuit – LucyandBart's work reinterprets themes of human enhancement, genetic manipulation and conceptions of beauty as thrilling, rat-a-tat visual stimuli. The images defy easy interpretation, existing somewhere between tongue-in-cheek predictions about future human shapes, sight gags, Photoshop filters as analogue images, and ruminations on technological development. McRae summarised these as 'optimistic and curious experimentations' and Hess proved similarly ambiguous: 'My work is scary and beautiful at once.'² The final images frequently arrive with minimal context or explanation, their power derived from their strangeness and openness to interpretation.

Yet beyond this ambiguity there is certainty in McRae's work. Her models – often herself – are posed carefully and athletically, and her images are studiously curated: 'The final result is not necessarily controlled, but I know when an image is finished. I'm highly experimental, but I still try to perfect the execution of all my experiments. My whole childhood was about discipline.' McRae's background in ballet is frequently cited as the root of her interest in the human body, but its influence extends beyond this and imbues her treatment of materials with a careful choreography.

McRae's 2009 short film *Chlorophyll skin*, developed in conjunction with the sculptor Mandy Smith, shows a body covered in layered cotton buds. Over the course of the film, pigments wash down the skin, staining individual buds orange, red, green and blue. The colours then begin to mix, creating geometries reminiscent of stained glass. It is a beautiful effect, and one that only succeeds through the meticulousness with which the individual dyes are applied.

Such discipline, however, contrasts with McRae's chaotic working process. When beginning a new project the artist selects a theme – 'Anything that fascinates me: the architectural function of the Svalbard Seed Vaults in Norway; how when astronauts return from space they







have accelerated osteoporosis' – before undertaking unstructured material research. Based in her studio, she experiments with materials and lighting, photographing the results until she produces an effect she wishes to pursue.

In 2010, McRae worked on the pop artist Robyn's *Indestructible* music video, creating a dress made from one kilometre of coiled translucent tubing, capable of being pumped through with coloured liquids. 'I had been trying to blur the edges of skin with compressed water and air, which wasn't as successful as I had hoped', said McRae. 'So I started to think about creating that blurring through a skin that could change colour instead.' The futuristic appearance of the finished piece belies its low-tech construction. The liquid's movement through the tubing is powered by simple drill pumps, which were untested before filming began. It is a contrast that recurs throughout McRae's work. Her creations are suggestive of future avenues for technology and biology, yet do not disguise the unstructured, low-tech experimentation through which they arose.

As McRae's career has progressed, this fluidity in her working process has grown more evident in her output. Since directing the synth-pop group Rat vs Possum's 2011 *Fat Monk* music video, in which she collaborated with design students from RMIT, McRae has worked increasingly in film. *Morphē*, 2012, for the Australian cosmetics brand Aēsop, shows an ageing scientist, ensconced in a fictionalised laboratory, administering beauty treatments to his sleeping subject. As the subject is gel-wrapped, swaddled, bathed and groomed, she slowly awakens. Distanced from the popish joy in materials that characterised LucyandBart, *Morphē* is a slower, more mature work, where materials are no longer subverted – foams reimaged as clothing; liquids transformed into solid skins – but instead celebrated for their intrinsic qualities. Lingered shots show fluids rushing into bottles, rubbery gels peeled from the skin and creams squeezed from piping bags.

Morphē was inspired by the nineteenth-century scientist Hermann von Helmholtz, whose credo that 'everything is an event on the skin' proves a fitting philosophy for McRae's practice. In McRae's work, skin is not only a barrier between us and the outside world, but also the point at which we enact and shape our identities. In this respect *Morphē* parallels McRae's ongoing 'Swallowable Parfum' project. Presented as part of her 2012 TED Fellowship talk, 'Swallowable Parfum' is a program to develop a digestible scented capsule that secretes fragrance as its wearer perspires, its exact scent determined by the person's genetic makeup. As skin in 'Swallowable Parfum' is manipulated to become an expression of personal choice and selfhood, so too in *Morphē* is it emblematic of identity; only when her skin begins to be shaped and worked does *Morphē*'s subject awaken and come to life.

Many of the motifs of *Morphē* are shared with *Make your maker*, 2012, McRae's most ambitious work. A three-minute film, *Make your maker* shows a backroom laboratory in which genetically altered, cloned human flesh is grown, sliced and packaged for consumption. The gels and jellies of *Morphē* are relocated from their role as invigorating cosmetics for the skin and reimaged as the flesh itself. Divided up into gelatinous scraps with cheese wire and plastic croupier sticks, the flesh is picked up by the model from whom it has been cloned and carefully placed into her mouth with bamboo chopsticks. The film's themes are classic McRae – a world in which we eat our own flesh to genetically alter ourselves from the inside out, and the skin as an agent for personal re-creation – but the piece is also a departure for the artist, signifying the first time in which developed narrative has entered her work.

'Whereas *Morphē* was about materials, *Make your maker* was focused on the story', said McRae. 'I've never directed characters or written scripts before, so I'm learning as I go along. I meet the models two days before and on set it's pure improvisation.' Yet there is already a

distinctiveness to McRae's direction that extends beyond the thematic or aesthetic. She encourages passivity in her models' performance. As they are probed, submerged in fluids, experimented upon and re-created, the models barely react, maintaining instead childlike wonder at what surrounds them. 'Their openness is my curiosity for the materials and technology', suggested McRae. 'That character in *Make your maker* is really me experimenting with things in a laboratory and using my body as a way of testing them.'

This notion of the body as testing ground has characterised McRae's work from the beginning, when she created her SKIN dresses at Philips that blushed colour in response to the wearer's emotional state. Her work has matured and diversified, drawing on narrative and deeper explorations of the materials with which she works; this development is described best by McRae's artistic partner, Hess: 'As you experiment, you get better at things like sticking cardboard on yourself, or applying shaving foam all over your body. Which is strange, because you wouldn't think of those as things you could get better at.' Yet behind all McRae's work there is a constant: the notion of the skin and body as the boundary between our personal identities and the outside world; and a curiosity as to how that boundary can be distorted from either side. As McRae explained:

There's a red thread running through my work, but from the middle it often feels chaotic. It's not disjointed, but it's unclear, and it's definitely a work in progress. It's like everything is inside of me and it's choosing at what point things come to the surface and are made manifest. I never know where I'm going to shoot my next cannon from.

Melbourne Now, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne,
22 November 2013 – 23 March 2014.

- 1 All Lucy McRae quotes are from a conversation with the writer, 24 July 2013.
- 2 Both Bart Hess quotes are from a conversation with the writer, 30 July 2013.

OPPOSITE

Lucy McRae, *Morphē*, 2012
Short film commissioned by Aēsop, film stills, colour,
sound, 3 mins 30 secs duration
Courtesy the artist

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LucyandBart (a collaboration between Lucy McRae
and Bart Hess), *Evolution*, 2008
Pantyhose and balloons
Courtesy the artists

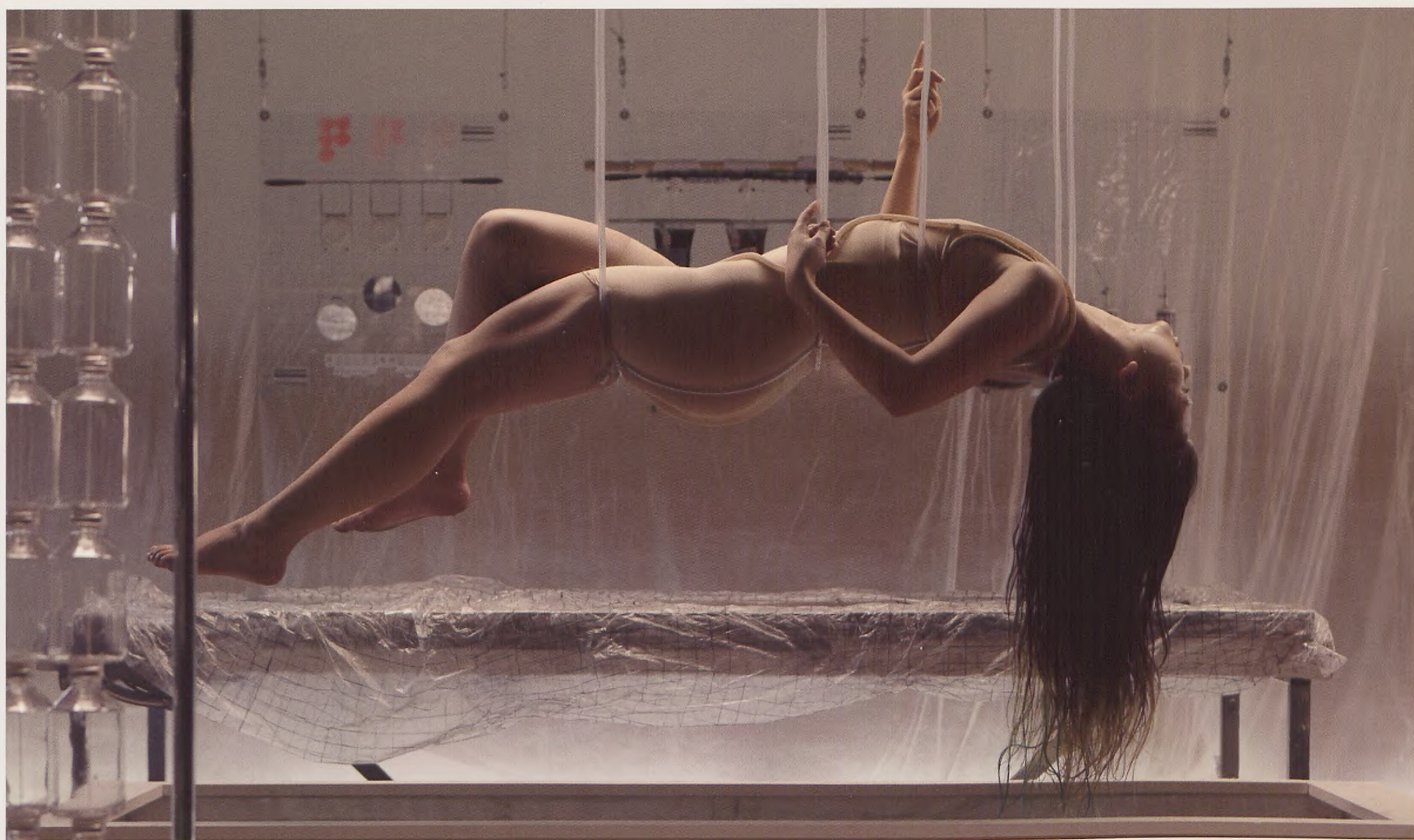
PAGE 261

Lucy McRae, *Becoming transnatural*, 2011
Sculpted thermo plastic
Courtesy the artist

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LucyandBart (a collaboration between Lucy McRae
and Bart Hess), *Germination day eight*, 2008
Pantyhose, saw dust and grass seed
Courtesy the artists

LucyandBart (a collaboration between Lucy McRae
and Bart Hess), *Dripping color*, 2008
Balloons
Courtesy the artists





TOWARDS A GALLERY OF AIR: BETWEEN MELBOURNE AND LA

PATRICK POUND

To collect is to gather your thoughts through things.

My work considers how things hold ideas. I collect things. And one of my collections is made up of hundreds of things – from a draught excluder to an asthma inhaler; from a battery-powered ‘breathing’ dog to an old bicycle pump – each of which variously holds an idea of ‘air’.

Surveying the evidence, a detective might notice that the examples scattered over the following pages begin with things from Los Angeles that hold an idea of air and end with those from Melbourne. There

is a knife handle from US Air, a cartoon about LA’s air quality, a postcard of Los Angeles International Airport, and an aerial view of the Los Angeles Olympic village. An envelope from Melbourne

Airport and a letter sent from Melbourne’s Olympic village to an LA address round out the spread, tethering the two cities through the constraint of air.



Bel Air



Mr. A. Frederick Lamken,
Coiffure Guild of Los Angeles and Hollywood,
960 East Third Street,
LOS ANGELES, 13, Calif.
U.S.A.

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION



Mrs. Lola Claybourn,
4512 Richard Drive,
LOS ANGELES 32,
CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



Patrick Pound, *Towards a gallery of air*, 2013
ARTAND Australia artist project
Photographs Andrew Curtis

Melbourne Now, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne,
22 November 2013 - 23 March 2014.

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Henna-Riikka Halonen, *Moderate Manipulations*, 2012, HD single channel video, 6 mins. Courtesy the artist. Photograph: Minttu Mantynen

4

FOCUS

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Los Angeles displays itself
Liv Barrett

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Dreaming futures: The Propeller Group
Christopher Myers

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A secret life of paintings: Lesley Vance
Charlotte Day

Los Arboles



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Olmeca & Tolteca gym

Los Pajaros



Villas Health Center

Lounge-Information

Reflexology Path

Fiona Connor, *Object no. 3, bare use (small ceramic signpost)*, 2013
Mixed media, 121.9 x 45.7 x 36.2 cm
Courtesy 1301PE, Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES DISPLAYS ITSELF

LIV BARRETT

President: *Man is too dumb to survive LA.*
Malloy: *We're holograms, Plissken.*
from John Carpenter's *Escape from LA* (1996)

By design and incident, Los Angeles has never been a coherent place. It lacks an articulated centre and its defining spatial characteristic is sprawl. The dominant vessels through which the city communicates are studio feature films, which is to say that LA is largely represented by a deep and perpetual archive of fictions, strained through the sieve of capitalism. These attributes have historically attracted steady arguments as to why LA isn't suited to sustaining an ecosystem of contemporary art: that the sparseness isn't conducive to creative communities; that decentralised urban planning can't grow a fervid market for dealers; that the film industry imposes a repressive air on other cultural activities. With the last decade's significant inflation of art activity in Los Angeles (seemingly defined by its fluctuations), it seems crucial to ask why LA might no longer be considered a difficult or dysfunctional city.

You used to be anti-internet / but now you constantly blogging and shit
The-Dream, *Used to Be*, 2011

Saturated in images-within-images and without a central congressional point or delineated edges, Los Angeles has always felt a lot like the internet. In this sense, LA's inhabitants were already accustomed to something that resembled internet navigation: constant transit between sites; using fiction to shrink geographical distance; incessant streams of images that form an irrational optical chain in the psychology of the viewer. It also provides reason as to why

the artist who seemed to foreshadow the current cultural moment was a resident of Los Angeles for the majority of his life, until his sudden death in 2006 at the age of forty-one. The last exhibition Jason Rhoades staged was 'Black Pussy Soirée Cabaret Macramé', held at an LA warehouse in 2006. Guests were admitted privately, with the intention that the work would become public via myth, anecdote and press. It was an overspill of scripted performance, improvisation, sculpture, intentional props and unintended detritus. On the floor of the space were hundreds of printed images, casually multiplied and torn from their context. Here Rhoades's work appears to pre-empt art that is preoccupied with Web 2.0, which is largely defined by the spirit of the readymade image.

At times he seems to want to swallow the world of things in a single gulp, the way you might an oyster on the half shell.

Daniel Birnbaum on Jason Rhoades¹

Seven years after Rhoades's last exhibition in Los Angeles, Ryan Trecartin and Lizzie Fitch are pursuing work that has this same oyster-gulping sensation. Trecartin and Fitch's videos and installations make deliberate use of LA's salient resources: a large population experienced in acting, abundant space and unoccupied real estate, and communities concerned with the performance of identity. Their work is populated with characters that evince the melting point between psychology and technology. The dialogue sounds like an involuntary geyser of language spilling from made-up mouths, computer-processed poetry and dramatic recitations of YouTube comments.

Social networking services pass the opportunity to users to edit and publish a version of their existence. These public platforms





allow artists' practices to spill out of the levees built up by gallery spaces into more impulsive arenas that set the artist's identity beside the work. Before the premiere of their video installation at the 55th Venice Biennale this year, Trecartin and Fitch's work had already been broadcast in truncated excerpts via their performers' Instagram feeds, supporting Michael Sanchez's recent evaluation in *Artforum* that 'the function of the biennial format has clearly become more mnemonic than predictive, more a retrospective than a preview. Art is no longer discovered in biennials and fairs and magazines, but on the phone.'² Sanchez's article also concentrates on the influence and implications of *Contemporary Art Daily*.³ Trecartin and Fitch's work has barely been represented on *CAD*, which is significant in that an internet-based platform for displaying contemporary art is essentially inadequate for effectively treating work that so potently expresses the psychological blowback and aesthetic reflux of inveterate internet use.

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CONSTANT TRANSIT BETWEEN SITES;
USING FICTION TO SHRINK GEOGRAPHICAL
DISTANCE; INCESSANT STREAMS OF IMAGES
THAT FORM AN IRRATIONAL OPTICAL
CHAIN IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE
VIEWER.

I chose a chrome snare because I knew how well chrome works in CGI.
Mark Leckey⁴

For the last twelve months, Los Angeles-based artist Parker Ito has been producing work that is aware of its prospective online documentation at the moment of its inception. His 'reflector paintings' register their own resistance to the idea of pure or accurate documentation through their hypersensitivity to light sources. In an interview concentrating on his exhibition at IMO in Copenhagen, entitled 'Parker Cheeto: The Net Artist (America Online Made Me Hardcore)' (2013), Ito announced that he 'wanted to make something that was like looking into a computer screen'.⁵ Prior to 'Parker Cheeto', the reflector paintings were entirely abstract, operating as props to complicate documentation. The paintings at IMO, however, were rich with pictorial content, offering a similar vista to a computer screen, so that the exhibition, where it was difficult to separate the images from the technology producing them, began to feel like the internet.

my life is more conceptual than yr art, therefore I do not need to make conceptual art
parker cheeto (@creamydreamy), Twitter, 12 July 2012

As though he embodies the symptoms of both being from Los Angeles and being a net artist, Ito is being treated for agoraphobia. His 'fear of the gathering place' and other biographical details are habitually documented via his Twitter account, demonstrating that while he doesn't make work *about* the internet, he submits all his

processes to its dominant logic: circulation, hyperactivity, profusion, oversharing and the narrative impulse of manicuring a strong online presence. 'Parker Cheeto' incorporated images of Tumblr girls, girlfriends, stock photography, drawings made by the son of the IMO owner, a seven-hour unedited video shot by Ito over 2010–12, the exhibition press release, movie publicity posters, and photos from the artist's Instagram feed.⁶ It's this cacophonous ensemble of images that defines the tone of the work, a strategy redolent of Tumblr, or of Jason Rhoades's disorienting landscape of images in 'Black Pussy Soirée Cabaret Macramé'. Ito is compelled towards content for its circulation, and the attenuation and elaboration that this entails. Images of his exhibitions published online don't just document the work, they become conductors for the kind of romantic-fictive space that he hopes to create through making art.

Sorry I can't hear you I live in LA
Total Freefall (Ashland Mines), Instagram caption, 2013

Rhoades's version of aesthetic corporeality targeted the body as well as cognitive perception. Ashland Mines (Total Freedom) has been scripting visceral aesthetic experiences in the form of events, parties and performances since moving to Los Angeles. His work is now frequently exported to art fairs, institutional events and gallery productions around the world. The art world's attraction to Total Freedom is likely due to his creation of complete and intoxicating environments, or, in his own words, 'fish tanks where fishes can be happy and well fed'.⁷ He folds spectacularly popular music into sheaths of guttural, abject, industrial sounds. The result is a kind of transcendence in which one recognises the manipulated material, but experiences it at levels beyond the reach of the original. If LA has a prevailing feeling of seduction and discordance, Total Freedom has developed sonic and environmental strategies to reflect this feeling back onto the city.⁸

With my work it needs to be bigger than me to control me. It just needs to be more fucked up than me.
Jason Rhoades⁹

Yung Jake, a recent graduate of the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), based in LA, makes work specifically for YouTube while also enacting a kind of institutional critique of the video-sharing website, as in his 2012 work *e.m-bed.de/d*. His practice functions as music videos, websites, performances and smartphone apps, threaded together by the narration of his Twitter, Facebook and Vine accounts.¹⁰ Jake is a polylinguist, equally fluent in the vernaculars of art theory, rap music and the internet. His video *Datamosh*, 2011, has been viewed over 177,000 times on YouTube, the lyrics for the same song are decoded on Rap Genius, and his work has been exhibited at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival and at the Hammer Museum and REDCAT (Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater), both in LA. A similar kind of mercurial, entertaining delirium gave shape to Jordan Wolfson's 2012–13 exhibition at REDCAT, 'Raspberry Poser'. In the single-channel video projection, an animated protagonist pioneers through a shifting landscape of cultural sites and landmarks, sampling songs and the pervasive themes of love and death. Like Rhoades, Wolfson inhabits the work as both artist and character, progressing the idea that the artist always exists within the theatre of their work.

The fictive possibilities of site continue to prompt artists and curators in Los Angeles. When invited to produce an image for a public billboard, Cayetano Ferrer created *End credits on Hollywood*, 2012. The roman numerals for the year 2012 were laid over a photographic image of the Hollywood Hills, positioned to obscure the same hills as the billboard, creating a seamless continuity between flattened image and actual landscape, an easy slide between sign and signifier. His



FROM TOP

Cayetano Ferrer, *End credits on Hollywood*, 2012
Billboard on Hollywood Boulevard
Courtesy the artist

Yung Jake, *At YouTube*, 2013
Courtesy the artist
Photograph Temra Pavlovic

PAGE 274, FROM TOP

Lizzie Fitch with Rhett Larue, Ryan Trecartin,
Limit, 2012
Chain, padlocks, knife sharpeners, zip ties,
handbags, purses, bags, watches, straw hats, levels,
belts, scarfs, key chains, metal hooks, ankle weights,
glove weights, plastic travel bag, suitcases,
handcuffs, yoga back support, Tupperware
container, steering wheel cover, caster wheels,
cement trowel, handles, pull-up bar, brick woven
basket, kettle bell, 15lb weight, wig, wrench, 95 x
153.9 x 149.9 cm
© Fitch/Trecartin Studios. Courtesy Andrea Rosen
Gallery

Parker Ito, 'Parker Cheeto: The Net Artist (America
Online Made Me Hardcore)' (2013)
Installation view, IMO, Copenhagen
Photograph Kristoffer Juel Poulsen

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Jason Rhoades, 'Black Pussy Soirée Cabaret
Macramé' (2006)
Installation view, Jason Rhoades Studio, Los
Angeles
Courtesy Estate of Jason Rhoades, Hauser & Wirth,
London, and David Zwirner, New York
Photograph Douglas M. Parker Studio





ongoing project *Proposal for a Las Vegas casino*, 2008–, is a proposal to wrap a digital display around the façade of a building, with footage of the previous controlled implosions of Las Vegas casinos playing on repeat – a kind of time-lapse analogy for the quixotic and amnesiac personality of the city. In Las Vegas, a hypersensitive real-estate market means buildings are in a continual loop of construction and destruction. Ferrer's work operates as a document of the past, euphoric stimulation for the present and the inevitable script of the future.

Since graduating with a Master of Fine Arts from CalArts in 2011, New Zealand-born, LA-based artist Fiona Connor has worked in reaction to architectural specificities through reproduction, repetition and relocation. For her second solo exhibition in Los Angeles, 'Bare Use' (2013), Connor reproduced objects that furnish spa retreats – towel dispensers, water-resistant daybeds, handpainted signs – and installed them at 1301PE, layering one heavily coded space (spa retreat) over another (art gallery). Her work's relationship to the initial object isn't 'original' versus 'duplicate', but is similar to how homonyms work in language, sharing the same formal appearance but coopting meaning via the words that accompany them.¹¹ Both Ferrer and Connor have produced projects for Works Sited, Olivian Cha's ongoing curatorial project at the Los Angeles Public Library where Cha is employed. The Works Sited displays are reprieved from the specificities of contemporary art and placed within a site of general knowledge and, through this process, Cha produces a study of translation.

Few works translate as successfully in print and pixel reproduction as Laura Owens's twelve recent paintings, exhibited on the edge of downtown Los Angeles at a space referred to by its address, 356 Mission. As Jason Rhoades had found necessary for 'Black Pussy Soirée Cabaret Macramé', Owens sourced a non-gallery site for these paintings, inventing a space to present the work rather than slipping into an environment already dedicated to contemporary art. The exhibition '12 Paintings' (2013) pursued the possibilities of painting in an optical space that is dominated by the image-making standards and graphic frameworks set by Photoshop. Her painterly brushstrokes refer to both the gestural hand and the Photoshop brush tool, a logical return of the skeuomorphism that dominates design programs. Phenomenological, graphic and complete, Owens's paintings describe themselves perfectly and sit confidently as reproduced image.

Like all documented artworks, images of Owens's twelve paintings will be circulated as versions of themselves, accumulating and dissipating information as they move. Their physical placement in Los Angeles is another piece of this information, crucial and contingent to the production and material reality of the work, but just a curious geographical myth to the vast global audience that will observe the work as an image of itself.

- 1 Daniel Birnbaum, 'A thousand words: Jason Rhoades talks about his Impala project', *Artforum*, September 1998, pp. 134–5, <http://www.davidzwirner.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/JR-Artforum-Birnbaum-98-09.pdf>.
- 2 '2011: Michael Sanchez on art and transmission', *Artforum*, Summer 2013, <http://artforum.com/inprint/id=41241>.
- 3 *Contemporary Art Daily* is looked at by so many curators, dealers, critics and collectors that having a show featured on *CAD* might now carry importance commensurate with a newspaper or art magazine review. The aesthetic that *CAD* favours is one that translates effectively as a high-resolution image on a smartphone.
- 4 Kari Rittenbach, 'Chrome and flesh: An interview with Mark Leckey', *Rhizome*, 17 December 2012, <http://rhizome.org/editorial/2012/dec/17/mark-leckey/>.
- 5 Maria Bendorff, 'America online made me hardcore', *Kopenhagen Magasin*, 25 March 2013, <http://kopenhagen.dk/magasin/magazine-single/article/america-online-made-me-hardcore>.
- 6 A publicity image for *Spring Breakers* (2013) is used in one painting and the director of the film, Harmony Korine, subsequently purchased a work by the artist. Ito has never seen the movie and doesn't intend to, but posted a picture that Korine sent to him on Instagram, a selfie taken in front of Ito's painting the day he came into possession of the work.
- 7 Ben Noam, 'Ashland Mines's collective solo', *Interview*, n.d., http://www.interviewmagazine.com/art/ashland-mines-blasting-voices/#_.
- 8 The most precise language available to describe the experience induced by Total Freedom comes from Lydia Davis's translation of Marcel Proust's *Swann's Way* (2004): *And the pleasure which the music gave him ... did indeed resemble, at those moments, the pleasure he would have found in testing fragrances, in entering into contact with a world for which we are not made, which seems formless to us because it evades our understanding, which we can attain only through a single sense.*
- 9 'Interview: Jason Rhoades & Michele Robecchi', *Contemporary*, issue #81 2006, <http://www.contemporary-magazines.com/interview/81.htm>.
- 10 Practices that privilege fluid space and the expeditious flow of the network are being embraced by institutions, and institutions are widening their varieties of presentation to invite artists into their programming. In October 2012, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, launched MOCAtv in partnership with YouTube, a channel to commission and host original and curated video content. The channel's ambition relies on the current that flows between art and entertainment and the idea of mutual enrichment. MOCA's attempts to create a non-geographical site for the institution were ambitious, but limited by the heavy presence of videos that felt like supplementary resources to MOCA exhibitions, rather than an extension of programming. MOCAtv further suffered from its proximity to the institution's recently departed director, Jeffrey Deitch. What could have been a successful cohabitation of art and the strategies of popular entertainment within MOCAtv was occurring at the fundamental level of the museum during Deitch's tenure, and being publicly perceived as a fatal collision. A playful exchange between art and other cultural economies might have been sustainable on a YouTube channel, but MOCAtv came to reflect the troubling direction of the museum and will follow the same fate as Deitch.
- 11 In *Human Soup*, the publication Connor produced to accompany her presentation at Frieze New York, 2013, Melbourne-based artist Helen Johnson explained: 'There are reconfigurations on the level of material substance and structural nuance, but there is fidelity to the form. In this sense Connor's works are something more like unready-mades.'

Television Commercial for Communism, 2011–12
Production still from colour video
with sound, 60 secs duration
Installation view
Courtesy The Propeller Group

DREAMING FUTURES: THE PROPELLER GROUP

CHRISTOPHER MYERS

There are two things you must know about Los Angeles.

First, it is a place that manufactures dreams. The business of dream-making is not starry, or full of fairy dust, or anything as soft as that. Los Angeles is a factory – sweaty, loud and tense. There are clanking machineries and breakneck engines around every corner in LA, busy cranking out dreams for the rest of the world. And much like the workers in a pastry shop who have long since lost the taste for baked goods, LA itself doesn't have a dream of its own; it is primarily a conduit for other people's dreaming.

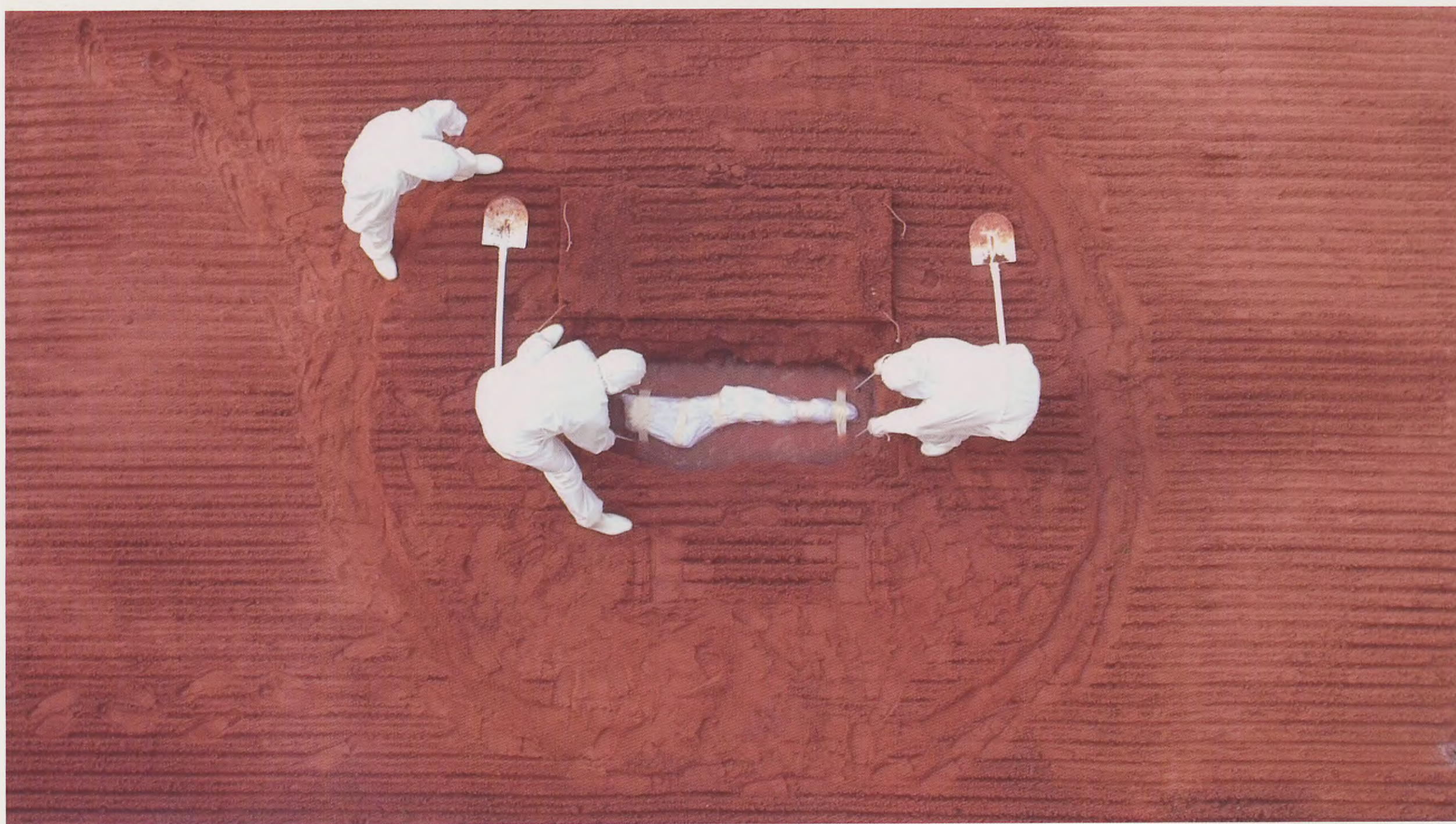
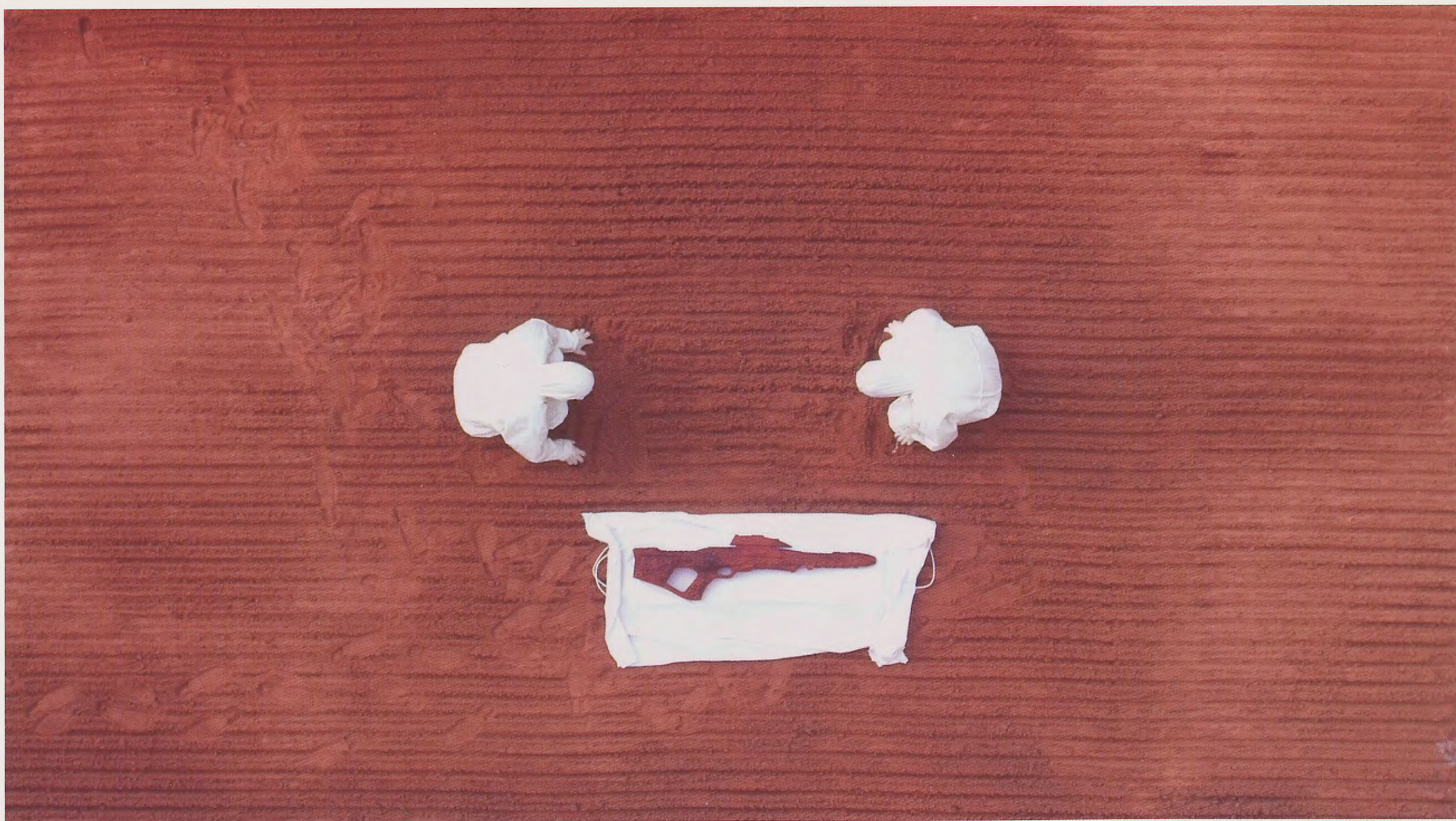
And second, Los Angeles doesn't exist. Certainly you can fly to Los Angeles International Airport, or see the boundaries of the city on a map, but on the ground there is no such place as LA. What we call LA is in fact a constellation of neighbourhoods, all with their own distinct characters, borders and dreams, knotted together in a web of highways, off-ramps and traffic jams. No-one ever lives in Los Angeles; instead they live in Compton, or Little Ethiopia, Hollywood, Koreatown, El Sereno or Silver Lake, any one of the neighbourhoods that spill from the endless sprawl. These neighbourhoods are distinct, and the borders are policed by a combination of geographic inaccessibility, class boundaries, occasional gang violence, and entrenched habits. The borders of Los Angeles itself, though, are porous, perhaps even absent. It is as if any neighbourhood throughout the world could be in Los Angeles, if you could navigate the correct sequence of freeways.

It was an intricate weaving of highways that brought the artists collective The Propeller Group (TPG), to Ho Chi Minh City (formerly and informally called Saigon) in Vietnam. But since leaving California, they have rewritten the boundaries of Los Angeles to include Saigon and South-East Asia. Their work asks important questions about the manufacture of dreams and the constantly shifting borders of

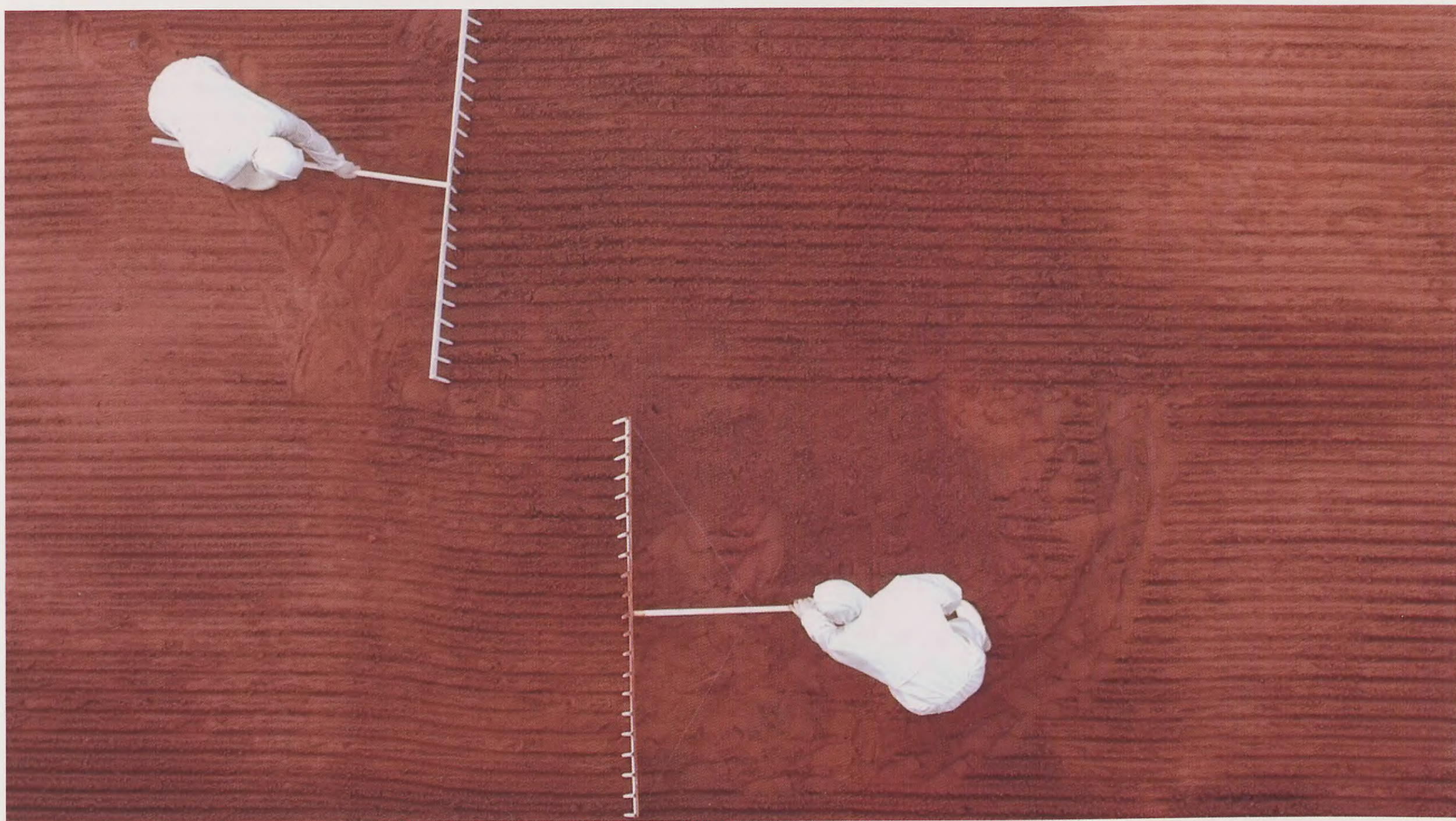
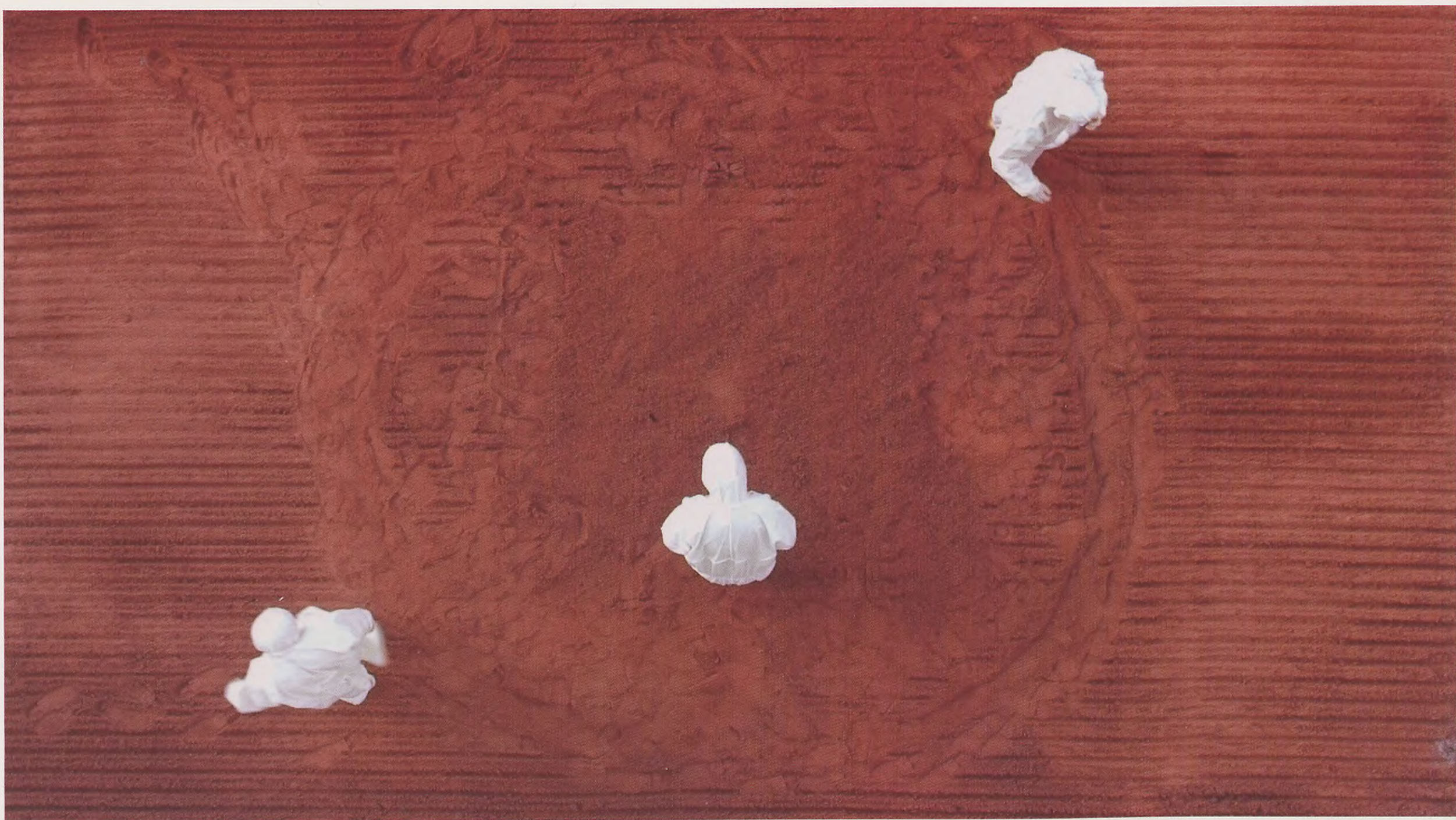
contemporary art in a global context. Tuan Andrew Nguyen and Matt Lucero met in grade school in Los Angeles. They were artists whose vision extended past the narrow confines of the museum and included customised low-rider cars, spoken-word poetry, hip-hop jewellery, and motorbikes. Phunam, the third collaborator of TPG, spent his time as a photographer and cinematographer among his father's extensive collection of South-East Asian antique sculptures. TPG was born from these sorts of cultural collisions and, more importantly, the mythologies from which they spring, the dreamings that underpin diamond-encrusted necklaces or many-armed carved-stone gods. Like Hollywood's dream machines, TPG may not bring you the actual future, but they can show what the future will look like.

Recently TPG have been obsessed with the dreamings of communism. Beyond the workers and the manifestos, communism has grown icons, saints of a sort. Ho Chi Minh's kind-uncle's grin is emblazoned across Vietnam's urban spaces. Lenin's stern sleek visage peers down from pedestals across Eastern Europe. There are so many Lenins crumbling in former soviet republics that they are being auctioned as memorabilia; bronze Marxist gods being sold to the highest bidder in online fits of irony. In their upcoming piece *Monumental Bling*, TPG observe these gaps in the tidy modernist fantasies of communism. Tuan, Phunam and Matt make analogies to another set of crumbling and unsteady iconographies: the straw masculinities of American hip-hop, where Black men hang jewel-encrusted Jesuses and representations of themselves around their necks in some futile attempt to support selfhoods compromised by socioeconomic status. In TPG's piece, a Lenin monument sports a gold and diamond representation of itself, an echoing of the ubiquitous nature of Lenin's image – more mask now than portrait – ideals and





The History of the Future: The Burial, 2012
Production stills from colour video with sound,
14 mins 10 secs duration
Courtesy The Propeller Group





Static Friction: Burning Rubber, 2012
Production stills from colour video with
sound, 3 mins 46 secs duration
Courtesy The Propeller Group

manifestos compromised by the evidence of history. TPG reinvest the image with value in the crudest way possible, by covering it with precious metals.

Along these same lines, TPG's *Television Commercial for Communism*, 2011–12, plays inside the fractures of this new hybrid communism that Lenin could not have imagined. It is an amalgam of economic systems that writes itself across Saigon, TPG's other home, in which the block-letter graphics of late-1960s Marxist design, celebrating state anniversaries and exhorting a proletariat to remember their roles, are reflected in the luxury shop windows of the Louis Vuitton flagship store. TPG hire a number of boutique advertising agencies, including the Vietnam branch of international advertising giant TBWA Worldwide, to re-brand communism itself, package it, make a logo for it, re-create it as yet another product ready for the eager consumption of a proletariat enamoured of their new-found wealth and bourgeoisie aspirations. The piece has had several iterations, first shown as a five-channel video installation, in which young ad men scratch their heads and earnestly pitch their ideas, seemingly oblivious to the irony of their position. Later, TPG create the advertisement themselves, in which a generic multicultural cast of characters smiles vacantly, engaged in slow-motion domesticities, clad in white, and devoid of specificity. Here, then, are the outlines of a dream world, a paper state, the kind of science-fiction confection that LA regularly sketches in films, now writ as documentary fact, the free-market communist states of China and Vietnam, with all their attendant contradictions. Of course, the work is purchased by the Guggenheim Museum: communism newly re-branded and for sale.

TPG's practice often traverses these intersections, these highway knots of how a group of people fantasise about themselves or others. For years the Vietnam War has been the ghost by which Americans measure their attitudes towards conflict, towards violence, towards war itself. (Though Vietnam has been replaced as a base metaphor in the American filmic imagination by unnamed wars in unnamed deserts.) TPG's single-channel video, *The Guerillas of Cu Chi*, 2012, peels back the skin of these American fantasies. Filmed at the Cu Chi tunnels, a popular tourist attraction near Ho Chi Minh City, where foreigners can fire automatic weapons for entertainment, the camera lingers on each lurid tourist. It renders their delight at the novelty of firearms with the slow-motion fascination of the movies it references. *Full Metal Jacket* (1987) and *Platoon* (1986), and numbers of lesser-known Vietnam War movies, become palimpsests for the imaginations of the tourists. The feature films themselves are spectres, of the war and of the relationship of the war to the American self-image. In *The Guerillas of Cu Chi* many of these images, filmed in and around Los Angeles, come home to where they started. The soft mechanical voice of a vintage propaganda film guides us through this imaginary landscape, a world as strange and constructed as a Hollywood back lot or an LA neighbourhood.

This is the world of The Propeller Group, an extension of Los Angeles, that city of surfaces, spanning oceans and cultures, exporting the spirit and the ideals of their metropolis. Like their city, TPG are concerned with the mechanics of dreams, exposing the chips in the paint, the necessary contradictions, the ways in which one dream is built on another.

There are two pieces, though, that define new forms of dreaming, that point the way out of an endless loop of fantasy and remix.

The History of the Future: The Burial, 2012, imagines a weapon found on some archeological dig, in some far-flung future, unearthing some far-flung past. The specifics of the time are less important than the interval, and the possibilities that are created by the imagining that is archeology. The ornate phaser rifle that TPG have had carved has elements of old-time Vietnamese craftsmanship, designs borrowed from tourist trinkets that are made to call up a pastiche of frozen-in-time orientalist themes. Still, it is a phaser rifle and points towards the

future – a video game come to life. The radical juxtaposition of these two aesthetics creates a space for dreaming that lies outside the 'easy', pointing out cracks in the façade of other people's dreaming. It is open-ended and pregnant with stories and possibilities that have not yet been seen.

THIS IS THE WORLD OF THE PROPELLER GROUP, AN EXTENSION OF LOS ANGELES, THAT CITY OF SURFACES, SPANNING OCEANS AND CULTURES, EXPORTING THE SPIRIT AND THE IDEALS OF THEIR METROPOLIS. LIKE THEIR CITY, TPG ARE CONCERNED WITH THE MECHANICS OF DREAMS, EXPOSING THE CHIPS IN THE PAINT, THE NECESSARY CONTRADICTIONS, THE WAYS IN WHICH ONE DREAM IS BUILT ON ANOTHER.

Closer to home, and certainly more immediate, TPG's multi-channel photographic and video installation, *Static Friction: Burning Rubber*, 2012, depicts a lone motorbike rider at a busy intersection in Ho Chi Minh City. The rider is dressed in black, and while Vietnamese of all walks of life pass him by on their multicoloured motors, the rider performs burnouts, spinning his back tyre until it smokes and leaves black streaks across the pavement. What he is doing is essentially an act of drawing, of mark-making. He uses the tools available to him – the motorbike, the urban landscape, the outfit, which is half-reminiscent of lone motorcycle riders from any number of Hollywood films – to make a new kind of mark on the city, one that is unique and specific to the place he comes from. Curator and writer Zoe Butt once described the motorbike as a fifth limb in Vietnam.¹ The Propeller Group take that limb and use it as a drawing tool to rewrite the dreams they have inherited, to redraw the borders of their cities, Saigon and Los Angeles, to imbue a ghost city that has been the centre of other people's dreaming with a dreaming of their own.

¹ Zoe Butt, 'Xe ôm drivers of the mind: The journey of Sàn Art', in *Six Lines of Flight: Shifting Geographies in Contemporary Art*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, 2012, p. 129, http://www.sfmoma.org/assets/documents/essays/sfmoma_glof_essay_butt.pdf.



Untitled, 2012
Oil on linen, 43.2 x 34.3 x 2.5 cm
Courtesy the artist and David Kordansky Gallery,
Los Angeles
Photograph Fredrik Nilsen

A SECRET LIFE OF PAINTINGS: LESLEY VANCE

CHARLOTTE DAY

One thing that you may miss in reproductions of Lesley Vance's abstract paintings is their size. They are noticeably smaller, of a more domestic and intimate scale, than much spectacular and monumental contemporary painting. But Vance's paintings have presence. They invite close attention from the viewer, enticing you with their velveteen darkness, rich jewel-like colours, sensual brushstrokes and general mysteriousness.

Milwaukee-born Vance completed her Master of Fine Arts at the California Institute of the Arts, Los Angeles, in 2003 and has lived and worked in LA for many years. She came to prominence through the 2010 Whitney Biennial where her work was recognised for its distinctive combination of old worldliness and contemporaneity. Steeped in art history, Vance's compact, curious paintings are not the kind of artwork that immediately springs to mind when thinking about contemporary art made in LA. While European in feel, Vance's work also connects with a younger generation of LA-based artists interested in early modernism and crafts and design, who are firmly grounded in a studio-orientated practice.

Over 2012–13 Vance exhibited for the first time with her husband, Australian-born artist Ricky Swallow, in a two-person exhibition at LA's Huntington Art Gallery.¹ This exhibition afforded the opportunity to observe the way each artist draws on the still-life tradition, and has developed very particular responses to it. As a house museum with an eclectic collection of painting and decorative arts, the Huntington was a perfect location and context for Vance and Swallow: both work on a domestic scale; both often reference familiar household objects. While clearly dedicated to and immersed in their individual disciplines, Vance in painting and Swallow in sculpture, the exhibition revealed the ways in which their works slip between artforms, with the impression of three-dimensionality in Vance's paintings and flattening out of form in Swallow's patinated bronze sculptures cast from

cardboard 'bootlegs'. It also revealed the very particular sense of temporality that is the hallmark of each artist's work.

Vance's paintings begin their life in the studio. Taking objects such as rocks, shells, horns and ceramic fragments as inspiration, Vance arranges and rearranges these collections into still-life compositions, which are then lit and photographed. The resulting photographic studies are the starting point for paintings that are produced under specific time constraints. Keeping the oil paint wet, Vance works over the surface of each painting with palette knife and big brushstrokes for a day or two at the most. This ensures that the painted surface is imbued with liveliness and the possibility of spontaneity. As Vance described: 'I do each painting in a day, so [the paint] all sits as one layer ... I want the image to all be in one layer, so you can't trace the steps backward to the original still life.'²

Whether aware or not of Vance's process, the viewer is likely tempted to relate to her untitled compositions, in the first instance, by looking for representational forms in them – like the edge of a table or shelf, or a plate or lemon, in one work; or in another, a silhouette, mask or face; or perhaps a rock in a landscape, or botanical specimens. The viewer may even be tempted to look sideways at a painting, as if to make more sense of it from this different vantage point.

Vance would, of course, be well aware of the viewer's habitual desire to seek out the recognisable in images. But, although grounded in studies of actual things, her paintings occupy a state of suspension between what is observed and what is evoked by what is observed – the *feeling* of objects in space and time. It is only when the viewer releases herself from the desire to relate forms to specific things that a greater world of possibilities begins to open up in the experience of looking at Vance's paintings.

Vance's earlier larger and more conventional representational paintings (pre-2009) appropriated key elements from the traditional



Untitled, 2011
Oil on linen, 45.7 x 35.6 cm
Courtesy the artist and David Kordansky
Gallery, Los Angeles
Photograph Fredrik Nilsen



Untitled, 2013
Oil in linen, 43.2 x 33 cm
Courtesy the artist and David Kordansky Gallery,
Los Angeles
Photograph Fredrik Nilsen



Untitled, 2012
Oil in linen, 45.7 x 35.6 cm
Courtesy the artist and David Kordansky
Gallery, Los Angeles
Photograph Fredrik Nilsen

still life, such as flowers or a collection of mussel shells, focusing in on the organic forms themselves rather than their symbolic role within a larger composition. The austerity and occasional flashes of brilliant colour in still-life paintings of seventeenth-century Spanish artists like Juan Sánchez Cotán and Francisco de Zurbarán have continued to be an important influence and point of reference for her artwork. And while her relationship to her still-life source material has shifted over time, becoming increasingly more peripheral, it is still possible to recognise how the quality of the still life as a record of a heightened and fleeting state of awareness continues to propel the production of her work.

VANCE WOULD, OF COURSE, BE WELL AWARE OF THE VIEWER'S HABITUAL DESIRE TO SEEK OUT THE RECOGNISABLE IN IMAGES. BUT, ALTHOUGH GROUNDED IN STUDIES OF ACTUAL THINGS, HER PAINTINGS OCCUPY A STATE OF SUSPENSION BETWEEN WHAT IS OBSERVED AND WHAT IS EVOKED BY WHAT IS OBSERVED – THE *FEELING* OF OBJECTS IN SPACE AND TIME. IT IS ONLY WHEN THE VIEWER RELEASES HERSELF FROM THE DESIRE TO RELATE FORMS TO SPECIFIC THINGS THAT A GREATER WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES BEGINS TO OPEN UP IN THE EXPERIENCE OF LOOKING AT VANCE'S PAINTINGS.

A notable quality of Vance's paintings is their sense of movement – they don't appear to sit still. In fact, the works can be characterised by perpetual shapeshifting and turning in, out and around on themselves, as if subject to some unseen movement or force. What is fascinating about these paintings is the way they move between surface and depth, solidity and fluidity, clarity and obscurity. Abstract forms appear in sharp focus and then blow out; outlines define and then disappear; colours come and are seen to dissolve and be washed away. There is an extraordinary push and pull between the creation of an illusory space and the revelation of the painting process itself. Vance skilfully achieves the coexistence of both in the one painting.

Vance's paintings appear to grant us special access to what may not usually be visible – inside, behind and looking through and past things. Especially when set against the darkest of backdrops, she creates the impression of looking into another dimension. Take, for example, the pale grey and chalky white painting with its swash of bright red (*Untitled*, 2012). A large part of this painting appears to have been purposely rubbed out, covered over or obscured. Only in one small area, like an open wound, can we peer into an unknowable darkness at its core. A number of paintings function in a similar way – as a threshold, looking from one space into another, or from the outside in. But then Vance will shift focus again, and it is impossible to establish a singular logic that can be applied across all paintings.

What is decipherable is Vance's passionate immersion in the history of painting. There is a deep knowledge and respect in her paintings for the intensity of the seventeenth-century still life, the visceral quality of the baroque, the dream state of surrealism, the cut-up of cubism and the modernist embrace of abstraction. As Vance has stated, 'There's so much in the history of painting, I can't even think of taking on anything beyond that.'³ But she does take on painting directly. This is not an artist interested in nostalgic remakes or sampling. There is clear evidence here of a determination to make something of her paintings, to find a space between abstraction and representation, the past and the present that Vance can make her own. These are deeply introspective paintings, but they are also generous, open paintings that invite the viewer into a rare, intimate experience of art.

¹ 'Lesley Vance & Ricky Swallow' was on show at the Huntington Art Gallery, Los Angeles, 10 November 2012 – 11 March 2013.

² Aimee Walleston, 'Five from the Whitney: Lesley Vance', *Art in America*, 16 February 2010, www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-opinion/conversations/2010-02-16/five-from-the-whitney-lesley-vance/.

³ *ibid.*



Geelong Gallery—Collections

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The Three O's: Orban, Olsen and Ogburn

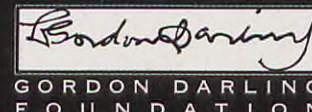
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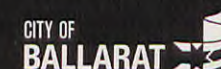


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Image: Desiderius Orban *Tower of Babel*
1951 pastel on paper. Private Collection.



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Monika Behrens, Pig-footed Bandicoot Marble cake, 2008, oil on canvas, 50 x 75 cm

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Alister Simpson, *Going Out*

Erika Beck, *Rockpool reflection* (detail)



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Lloyd Rees, Australia 1895-1988, *Rue Saint Julien le Pauvre*, Paris 1953, Oil on canvas
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Anthea Polson Art

18-20 Mariners Cove
Seaworld Drive, Main Beach 4217
Tel 07 5561 1166 Fax 07 5561 1133
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.
Also specialising in sales from the
secondary market. Gift registries
offered for special occasions.
Daily 10-5

Heiser Gallery

90 Arthur St, Fortitude Valley 4006
Tel 07 3254 2849 Fax 07 3254 2859
bh@heisergallery.com.au
www.heisergallery.com.au
Director: Bruce Heiser
Located in the arts precinct of Fortitude
Valley, convenient to Brisbane's Central
Business District, Heiser Gallery
presents the work of leading Australian
artists. With a burgeoning stockroom,
Heiser Gallery also deals in Australian
works of art from c. 1920 onwards.
Tues-Fri 10.30-6, Sat 10.30-5

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

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
Until 9 Nov: Artwaves 2013
15 Nov - 10 Jan: Mytho-poetic: print
and assemblage work by Glen Skien;
Madonna Staunton; Pop-up store: Local
craft and design; Mary Barron: from
threads to fabric of community.
Tues-Sat 10-5, Free admission

Philip Bacon Galleries

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
20th and 21st century Australian art,
including Cressida Campbell, Ray
Cooke, Ian Fairweather, Margaret
Olley, William Robinson, Jeffrey Smart,
Brett Whiteley, Fred Williams, Philip
Wolfhagen, and Michael Zavros.
Tues-Sat 10-5

QUT Art Museum

2 George Street, Brisbane 4001
(next to City Botanic Gardens)
Tel 07 3138 5370
artmuseum@qut.edu.au
www.artmuseum.qut.edu.au
Senior curator: Vanessa Van Ooyen
Until 24 Nov: Fragments: Another
Country, Isabel & Alfredo Aquilizan
30 Nov - 2 Mar: Traversing Borders: Art
from the Kimberley
Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat-Sun 12-4, Free
admission

Redland Art Gallery

cnr Middle and Bloomfield Streets,
Cleveland 4163
Tel 07 3829 8899 Fax 07 3829 8891
gallery@redland.qld.gov.au
www.more2redlands.qld.gov.au/
ArtGallery
Director: Stephanie Lindquist
3 Nov - 8 Dec: Crafting Memory: Jo
D'Hage and Slipstream; Russell Craig;
With or Without: Nicola Moss
15 Dec - 26 Jan: In Focus 2013; My
Island: Textile designs by Oodgeroo
Noonuccal
Mon-Fri 9-4, Sun 9-2, Free admission

Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

Australian Indigenous Art
93 James Street, New Farm 4005
Tel 07 3358 5811 Fax 07 3358 5813
Mob 0400 920 022
suzanne@suzanneoconnell.com
www.suzanneoconnell.com
Director: Suzanne O'Connell, ACGA
Representing indigenous artists and art
centres in North Queensland, Great
Sandy Desert, The Kimberley, Central
and Western Desert, APY lands, Arnhem
Land and Tiwi Islands. Paintings, works
on paper, sculpture, fibre objects and
ceramics.
Wed-Sat 11-4, or by appointment

Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery

531 Ruthven Street, Toowoomba 4350
Tel 07 4688 6652
art@toowoombaRC.qld.gov.au
www.toowoombarc.qld.gov.au/trag
Curator: Diane Baker
Established in 1937. Housing the Lionel
Lindsay Art Gallery and Library, the
Fred and Lucy Gould Art Collection,
and the City Collection (including the
Dr Irene Amos OAM: Amos Bequest
and the Cay Gift). Displays historical
and contemporary artwork.
Tues-Sat 10-4, Sun 1-4, Free admission

New South Wales

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art

181-187 Hay St, Haymarket 2000
Tel 02 9212 0380 Fax 02 9281 0873
info@4a.com.au
www.4a.com.au
Director: Aaron Seeto
4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art is
a non-profit organisation established in
1996. 4A is committed to Asian and
Australian cultural dialogue through its
innovative program of exhibitions, talks,
performances and community projects
featuring local and international artists.
Tues-Sat 11-6

Alison Renwick Art Consultancy

PO Box 744, Waverley, 2024
Tel 0412 363 431
info@alisonrenwickartconsultancy.com.au
www.alisonrenwickartconsultancy.com.au
Director: Alison Renwick
Buys, sells and values modern and
contemporary art for both corporate and
private clients. Services include curating
and managing collections, confidential
appraisals and valuations for insurance,
probate, family division and sale.
Mon-Sat by appointment

A.N.G. Art Consulting

12/21 Plumer Road, Rose Bay, 2029
www.angartconsulting.com
anna@angartconsulting.com
Director: Anna Groden
Specialising in the acquisition of
artworks, sale of individual works or
entire collections, collection
management and valuations for
insurance and fair market. Artists include
Whiteley, Blackman, Olley, Dickerson,
Bromley, Cullen, Boyd and many other
well-known Australian artists.
Viewing by appointment

Anna Schwartz Gallery

245 Wilson Street, Darlingtown 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.
Wed-Fri 10-6, Sat 1-5, and by
appointment

Annandale Galleries

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 Aboriginal bark paintings
and sculpture from Arnhem Land.
240 metres of space in three galleries.
Tues-Sat 11-5

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
Director: Nicky McWilliam
Specialising in museum-quality Australian
paintings and works on paper by
traditional, modern and contemporary
Australian artists; important Australian
paintings on view including Sidney Nolan,
John Coburn, James Gleeson, Margaret
Olley and Arthur Boyd.
Nov: Judy Cassab, celebrating 60 years
in Australia
Tues-Sat 10-5

Harrington Street Gallery

17 Meagher Street, Chippendale 2008
Tel 02 9319 7378
ra.coady@bigpond.com
www.harringtonstreetgallery.com
Artists' cooperative established in 1973.
Most exhibitions show the work of two to
four artists. A new exhibition is mounted
every four weeks from March to
December. Openings on the first
Tuesday of each exhibition 6-8.30pm.
Tues-Sun 10-4

Macquarie University Art Gallery

Building E11A, North Ryde 2109
Tel 02 9850 7437 Fax 02 9850 7565
artgallery@mq.edu.au
www.artgallery.mq.edu.au
Until 27 Nov:
K.J. Downhill: Chain Reaction
An exploration of painterly techniques
and styles, interwoven with a personal
journey investigating the artist's family's
experiences during the rise of the atomic
age. The exhibition will include historical
footage and personal memorabilia.
Mon-Fri 10-5, 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.
Tues-Sat 10-5
Sun and public holidays 11-2

Christopher Day Gallery

Cnr Elizabeth and Windsor Streets
Paddington 2021
Tel 9326 1952 Mob 0418 403 928
cdagallery@bigpond.com.au
www.cdagallery.com.au
Established 1979. Quality traditional
and modern masters. NSW agent for
Graeme Townsend. Including Beauvais,
Boyd, Dobell, Forrest, Heysen, Johnson,
Knight, Lindsay, Olsen, Rees, Storrier
and Streeton.
Tues-Sat 11-6, and by appointment

**Hazelhurst Regional Gallery
& Arts Centre**

782 Kingsway, Gympie 2227
Tel 02 8536 5700 Fax 02 8536 5750
hazelhurst@ssc.nsw.gov.au
www.hazelhurst.com.au
Director: Belinda Hanrahan
A major public and community gallery
with changing exhibitions,
comprehensive arts centre, theatre, tette,
gallery shop, café and artist-in-
residence space.
Daily 10-5, closed Good Friday,
Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New
Year's Day

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
Director: Joseph Eisenberg OAM
6 Dec - 9 Feb: Peter Elliott Collection,
curated by Lou Klepac
13 Dec - 23 Feb: Alan Jones: Paper and
Wood; Beauty From Nature: art of the
Scott sisters; Barbara Licha
13 Dec - 9 Feb: Orchids from the
collection
20 Dec - 2 Mar: Bronwyn Bancroft
Tues-Sun 10-5

Blue Mountains Cultural Centre

30 Parke Street, Katoomba 2780
Tel 02 4780 5410
info@bluemountainculturalcentre.com.au
www.bluemountainculturalcentre.com.au
Until 8 Dec: Ben Quilty: After
Afghanistan
22 Nov - 5 Jan: Paul Kelly & the
Portraits
13 Dec - 26 Jan: The Air Up There:
Vintage Tourism in the Blue Mountains;
Keepsake: the artist as tourist
Open daily, see website for hours and
admission fees

Gallery 9

9 Darley St, Darlinghurst 2010
Tel 02 9380 9909
info@gallery9.com.au
www.gallery9.com.au
Representing Peter Alwast, John
Aslanidis, Simon Blau, Brett East,
Michelle Hanlin, Julian Hooper, Matthew
Hopkins, Suzie Idiens, Simon Kennedy,
Anna Kristensen, David Lawrey & Jaki
Middleton, Tonee Messiah, Adam
Norton, Jade Pegler, David Ralph,
Michael Taylor, Jelena Telecki, Jelle van
den Berg, Craig Waddell, Jake Walker,
what and Andrzej Zielinski
Wed-Sat 11-6, and by appointment

The Ken Done Gallery

1 Hickson Road, The Rocks,
Sydney 2000
Tel 02 9247 2740 Fax 02 9251 4884
gallery@done.com.au
www.kendone.com.au
A vibrant space in The Rocks precinct,
with exhibitions by Australian artist Ken
Done, featuring Sydney Harbour, the
beach, reef and outback. Recent
original works on canvas and paper,
limited-edition prints and posters,
bookshop and art related products.
Daily 10-5.30, closed Christmas Day
only

Manly Art Gallery & Museum

West Esplanade Manly 2095
Tel 02 9976 1420
artgallery@manly.nsw.gov.au
www.manly.nsw.gov.au/attractions/
art-gallery-museum
8 Nov - 1 Dec: Keeping Company With
The Collection;
Northern Sydney Institute
6 Dec - 9 Feb: Bill Leak Survey; On
View: Sue Healey
Tues-Sun 10-5, closed public holidays,
Free admission

BREENSPACE

Level 3, 17-19 Alberta Street
Sydney 2000
Tel 02 9283 1113
media@breenspace.com
www.breenspace.com
Director: Sally Breen
Associate Director: Anthony Whelan
Until 23 Nov: Joyce Hinterding
29 Nov - 21 Dec: Kate Murphy
17 Jan - 8 Feb: Group Show
Wed-Fri 11-6, Sat 11-5

**Glasshouse Port Macquarie
Regional Gallery**

cnr Clarence and Hay Street, Port
Macquarie, 2444
Tel 02 6581 8888 Fax 02 6581 8107
info@glasshouse.org.au
www.glasshouse.org.au
Curator: Niomi Sands
The Glasshouse Regional Gallery
presents an engaging program of
touring and curated exhibitions from
international, national and local artists
as well as heritage exhibitions. Please
see the website for current exhibitions.
Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat-Sun 10-4

King Street Gallery on William

177 William Street, Darlinghurst 2010
Tel 02 9360 9727 Fax 02 9331 4458
Mob 0412 294 866
art@kingstreetgallery.com
www.kingstreetgallery.com
Director: Randi Linnegar
Representing Australian artists working
in the medium of paintings, prints,
sculpture, photography and installation.
Extensive stockroom selection. Approved
valuer for the Cultural Gifts Program.
ACGA member. Visit our website for
exhibition information.
Tues-Sat 10-6, and by appointment

Moree Plains Gallery

25 Frome Street, Moree 2400
Tel 02 6757 3320
moreeplainsgallery@bigpond.com
www.moreeplainsgallery.org.au
Moree Plains Gallery in north-west New
South Wales features solo shows by
artists from the region and the gallery's
collection, especially the Ann Lewis gift
of seventy works by contemporary
Australian Aboriginal artists.
Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-1, Free admission

**Museum of Contemporary Art
Australia**

140 George Street, Sydney 2000
Tel 02 9245 2400 Fax 02 9252 4361
mail@mca.com.au
www.mca.com.au
Director: Elizabeth Ann Macgregor OBE
15 Nov – 23 Feb: War Is Over! (if you
want it): Yoko Ono
Legendary artist, peace activist and
musician – Yoko Ono is an icon whose
work traverses generations. Spanning
five decades of her artistic practice, this
exhibition is created especially for MCA
audiences.
Daily 10–5, Thurs 10–9, Free admission

Tamworth Regional Gallery

466 Peel Street, Tamworth 2340
Tel 02 6767 5248 Fax 02 6767 5249
gallery@tamworth.nsw.gov.au
www.tamworthregionalgallery.com.au
Director: Sandra McMahon
A regular changing program of
exhibitions and events; known for the
development of the Tamworth Textile
Triennial and its collection of Australian
Contemporary Textiles.
Tue–Fri 10–5, Sat 10–4 and by
appointment

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
Director: Andrew Glassop
Combining Dubbo Regional Gallery,
Dubbo Historical Society Museum and
Community Arts Centre, known for its
collection focusing on the Animal in Art,
and a commitment to new media and
exhibitions of national importance.
Workshops and programs for children
and adults.
Wed–Mon 10–4, Free admission

Australian Capital Territory

Robin Gibson Gallery

278 Liverpool Street, Darlinghurst 2010
Tel 02 9331 6692 Fax 02 9331 1114
robin@robingibson.net
www.robingibson.net
Stephen Bowers, Gina Bruce, Karen
Choy, Robert Clinch, Lawrence Daws,
David Eastwood, Erwin Fabian, Simon
Fieldhouse, Catherine Fox, Guy
Gilmour, Steve Harris, Geoff Harvey,
Oliver Hopes, Andrew Hopkins, Elwyn
Lynn, Clement Meadmore, Phillip
Piperides, Avital Sheffer, Terry Stringer,
Mark Thompson, Zoe Tweeddale, Bryan
Westwood, Maryanne Wick.
Tues–Sat 11–6

Olsen Irwin

63 Jersey Road, Woollahra 2025
Tel 02 9327 3922 Fax 02 9327 3944
info@olsenirwin.com
www.olsenirwin.com
Directors: Tim Olsen, Rex Irwin
A cultivated stable of artists that
presents a comprehensive and poignant
view of the contemporary arts in
Australia. Exhibiting the work of both
emerging and established artists with a
continually changing calendar.
Representing John Olsen, one of
Australia's most esteemed living artists.
Tues–Fri 10–6, Sat 10–5, Mon–Sun
12–5

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.
30 Nov – 16 Feb: The Green Cathedral
23 Nov – 2 Feb: Local: Current
7 Dec – 23 Feb: Presence and Absence
Tues–Fri 10–5, Sat–Sun 12–4, Free
admission

ANU Drill Hall Gallery

Kingsley Street, Acton 2601
Tel 02 6125 5832 Fax 02 6125 7219
dhg@anu.edu.au
www.dhg.anu.edu.au
Presenting an exhibition program of
national and international artists in
conjunction with the university's
academic interests.
Until 3 Nov: Roy Jaikson Retrospective
1963–2013
8 Nov – 15 Dec: Trigger Happy: Ben
Quilty's Brave New World
16 Dec – 31 Jan: closed
Wed–Sun 12–5, Free admission

Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery

8 Soudan Lane, Paddington 2021
Tel 02 9351 1919 Fax 02 9331 5609
oxley9@roslynoxley9.com.au
www.roslynoxley9.com.au
Directors: Roslyn and Tony Oxley
Australian and international
contemporary art.
Tues–Fri 10–6, Sat 11–6

Utopia Art Sydney

2 Danks Street, Waterloo 2017
Tel 02 9699 2900
utopiaartsydney@ozemail.com.au
www.utopiaartsydney.com.au
Director: Christopher Hodges
David Aspden, John Bursill, Liz Coats,
Tony Coleing, Helen Eager, Marea
Gazzard, Christopher Hodges, Emily
Kame Kngwarreye, Peter Maloney,
Angus Nivison, Kylie Stillman, John R.
Walker, Papunya Tula Artists incl.
George Tjungurrayi, Yukultji Napangati,
Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri
Tues–Sat 10–5

Yuill | Crowley

Suite 1.01 East Exchange
318 Liverpool Street,
Darlinghurst 2010
Tel 02 9332 1590 Mob 0418 634 712
yuill_crowley@bigpond.com
www.yuillcrowley.com
Contemporary art.
Wed–Fri 11–6, Sat 11–4.30

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 paintings, prints,
sculpture, glass and ceramics; artists
exhibiting this quarter include Barbie
Kjar, Annette Blair, Jeremy Lepisto and
small works by emerging and
established artists.
Tues–Fri 10–5, Sat–Sun 9–5

Stills Gallery

36 Gosbell Street, Paddington, 2021
Tel 02 9331 7775 Fax 02 9331 1648
info@stillsgallery.com.au
www.stillsgallery.com.au
Representing contemporary photomedia
artists, including: Paul Adair, Narelle
Autio, Roger Ballen, Pat Brassington,
Meryl Fairbanks, Anne Ferran, Petrina
Hicks, Megan Jenkinson, Mark Kimber,
Ricky Maynard, Anne Noble, Polixeni
Papapetrou, Trent Parke, Glenn
Sloggett, Robyn Stacey, Warwick
Thornton, Stephanie Valentin and
William Yang.

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 Alex Legge
Until 9 Nov: Vivienne Ferguson:
paintings; Fiona Fell: ceramics
13–30 Nov: Rob McRae: paintings;
Frank Littler, paintings
4–14 Dec: Summer exhibition
15 Jan – 1 Feb: Euan Macleod, drawings
Wed–Fri 10–7, Tues and Sat 10–5

National Gallery of Australia

Parkes Place, Parkes, Canberra 2600
Tel 02 6240 6502
information@nga.gov.au
www.nga.gov.au
Director: Ron Radford AM
Until 27 Jan: Roy Lichtenstein: Pop Remix
– traces Lichtenstein's print projects
from the 1950s to the 1990s exploring
how he appropriated, transformed and
remixed numerous art historical sources
including Claude Monet's
impressionism, Max Ernst's surrealism
and de Kooning's abstract
expressionism.
Daily 10–5

Victoria

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 local and international represented artists and interventions of curated projects.
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.arcone.com.au
Directors: Fran Clark, Suzanne Hampel
Located in the heart of Melbourne's arts precinct, ARC ONE Gallery represents some of Australia's most highly respected contemporary artists across a spectrum of disciplines that include painting, sculpture, photography, video and electronic media.
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
Arts Project Australia is a centre of excellence that supports artists with disabilities, promoting their work and advocating for inclusion within contemporary art practice.
Mon–Fri 9–5, Sat 10–5, and by appointment

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art

111 Sturt Street, Southbank 3006
Tel 03 9697 9999 Fax 03 9686 8830
info@accaonline.org.au
www.accaonline.org.au
Executive Director: Kay Campbell
Artistic Director: Juliana Engberg
Melbourne's premier contemporary art space presenting a changing program of exhibitions, events and education programs. Visit the website for updates.
Tues–Fri 10–5, Sat–Sun and public holidays 11–6, Free admission

Australian Tapestry Workshop

262–266 Park Street, South Melbourne 3205
Tel 03 9699 7885
contact@austapestry.com.au
www.austapestry.com.au
Director: Antonia Syme
Changing exhibitions of contemporary tapestries by Australian and international artists, displayed in a workshop setting where the public can view weavers at work. Tours \$10, bookings essential.
Tues–Fri 10–5, Free admission to galleries, entry to viewing mezzanine \$5

Bendigo Art Gallery

42 View Street
Bendigo Victoria 3550
Tel 03 5434 6088 Fax 03 5443 6586
bendigoartgallery@bendigo.vic.gov.au
www.bendigoartgallery.com.au
Established in 1887, Bendigo Art Gallery is one of the oldest and largest regional galleries in Australia. The Gallery's collection is extensive with an emphasis on 19th century European and Australian art from 1880s onwards, alongside a strong collection of contemporary art.
Daily 10–5, closed Christmas Day

C.A.S. Contemporary Art Society of Victoria Inc.

PO Box 283, Richmond 3121
Tel 03 9428 0568 Mob 0407 059 194
mail@contemporaryartsociety.org.au
www.contemporaryartsociety.org.au
Founded 1938, non-profit organisation run by and for artists, Australia-wide.
22–24 Nov: Art at Burnley Harbour, Richmond Melways 58F1
Until 14 Feb: Contemporary Showcase 9, CAS members' works, Decoy Café Bar Gallery, 303 Exhibition St, Melbourne.
Online: view 500+ artworks; memberships

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, Edwina Bolger
With a focus on international art fairs and residency programs, as well as off-site projects in public spaces, dianne tanzer gallery + projects is a hub for professional artist development within Australia and the Asia Pacific region
Tues–Fri 10–5, Sat 12–5

Flinders Lane Gallery

137 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000
Tel 03 9654 3332
info@flg.com.au www.flg.com.au
Director: Claire Harris
Ackland, Amos, Baird, Blackwell, Breen, Bridge, Brooks, Cowell, Davenport, Eiseman, Ekholm, Elderfield, Green, Haas, Hastings, Horstmans, Maas, Ogge, Pumfrey, Quinlivan, Rannersberger, Rawkins, Robbins, Ryan, Schawel, Smith, James Smith, Stibio, Utopia, Walker, Warlukurlangu, White, Willcocks, Wollmering, Yamanaka
Tues–Fri 11–6, Sat 11–5

fortyfivedownstairs

45 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000
Tel 03 9662 9966
info@fortyfivedownstairs.com
www.fortyfivedownstairs.com
fortyfivedownstairs is a not-for-profit theatre and gallery showcasing independent, experimental and thought-provoking visual art, theatre, live music and discussion. As an unfunded and not-for-profit organisation we strive to make money for artists – not from them.
Tues–Fri 11–5, Sat 12–4

Galleriesmith

170–174 Abbotsford Street, North Melbourne 3051
Tel 03 9329 1860 Mob 0425 809 328
marita@galleriesmith.com.au
www.galleriesmith.com.au
Director: Marita Smith
Galleriesmith works with art consultants, collectors, curators and enthusiasts to develop strong and culturally significant collections. Artists include Eric Bridgeman, Mike Chavez, Dadang Christanto, Lucas Grogan and Christopher Pease.
Tues–Sat 11–5

Geelong Gallery

Little Malop Street, Geelong 3220
Tel 03 5229 3645 Fax 03 5221 6441
geelart@geelonggallery.org.au
www.geelonggallery.org.au
The Gallery's collection of paintings, sculpture and decorative arts spans Australian art from 'colonial' to today. Nine galleries showcase exhibitions of decorative arts, including 18th and 19th century English porcelain, British art pottery, colonial Australian silver, contemporary Australian paintings, sculpture and ceramics.
Daily 10–5, Free admission

LUMA La Trobe University Museum of Art

La Trobe University, Bundoora 3086
Tel 03 9479 2111 Fax 03 9479 5588
www.latrobe.edu.au/luma
LUMA engages in historical and contemporary art debates and seeks to make a significant contribution to contemporary critical discourse. LUMA also manages the University Art Collection, which charts the development of Australian art practice since the mid-1960s.
Mon–Fri 10–5

Lauraine Diggins Fine Art

5 Malakoff St, North Caulfield 3161
Tel 03 9509 9855 Fax 03 9509 4549
ausart@diggins.com.au
www.diggins.com.au
Director: Lauraine Diggins
Specialising in Australian colonial, impressionist, modern, contemporary and Indigenous painting, sculpture and decorative arts. As well as showcasing exhibitions, the gallery sources artworks, including European paintings. We buy, sell and value artworks and guarantee the authenticity of artworks for sale.
Tues–Fri 10–6, Sat 1–5

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
100 outdoor works in 16 hectares of landscaped gardens in Langwarrin. Home of the McClelland Sculpture Survey and Award, the gallery presents a vibrant program of exhibitions and public programs. The cafe is available for private functions.
Guided tours: Wed, Thu 11 and 2, bookings essential
Tues–Sun 10–5, Entry by donation

Monash Gallery Of Art

860 Ferntree Gully Road,
Wheelers Hill, 3150
Tel 03 8544 0500
mga@monash.vic.gov.au
www.mga.org.au
Director: Shaune Lakin
Monash Gallery of Art is one of
Victoria's leading public art galleries
and maintains a nationally significant
collection of Australian photography, the
only specialist collection of its kind in the
country.
Tues–Fri 10–5, Sat–Sun 12–5, closed
Mondays and public holidays

National Gallery of Victoria

NGV International
180 St Kilda Road, Melbourne 3004
Tel 03 8620 2222
www.ngv.vic.gov.au
Director: Tony Ellwood
Until 2 Mar: Edward Steichen and Art
Deco fashion, admission fees
22 Nov – 23 Mar: Melbourne Now
6 Dec – 9 Jun: Three Perfections: Poetry,
Calligraphy and Painting in Chinese art
Daily 10–5, closed Tuesdays and
Christmas Day

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.
Tues–Fri 10–4, Sat 12–4, and by
appointment

Flinders University City Gallery

State Library of South Australia
North Terrace, Adelaide 5000
Tel 08 8207 7055 Fax 08 8207 7056
www.flinders.edu.au/artmuseum
Director: Fiona Salmon
Until 8 Dec: Spinifex Country
14 Dec – 16 Feb: Their Shadows in Us
Tues–Fri 11–4, Sat–Sun 12–4, Free
admission

Monash University Museum of Art | MUMA

Ground Floor, Bldg F, Caulfield Campus
900 Dandenong Rd, Caulfield East, 3145
Tel 03 9905 4217
muma@monash.edu
www.monash.edu.au/muma
Until 14 Dec: Reinventing the Wheel: the
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This exhibition includes works by more
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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
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modern and contemporary Australian
art. Offers an extensive stockroom and
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7–30 Nov: Jan Senbergs, Garawan
Wanambi 3–20 Dec: Euan Heng
See website for 2014 calendar.
Tues–Sat 11–6 or by appointment

South Australia

Greenaway Art Gallery / GAGPROJECTS

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
Nov: Christian Lock
Dec: GAGPROJECTS/ Korogo Project
Jan: Closed
Feb: Imants Tillers
Tues–Sun 11–6

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, Amanda
Swanson
Mossgreen Gallery represents
emerging, mid-career and established
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sculptors with exhibitions changing
monthly. The Gallery also stages
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TarraWarra Museum of Art

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Healesville 3777
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museum@twma.com.au
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Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art

55 North Terrace, Adelaide 5000
Tel 08 8302 0870 Fax 08 8302 0866
samstagmuseum@unisa.edu.au
www.unisa.edu.au/samstagmuseum
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Until 20 Dec: Daniel Crooks
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commissioned work.
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National Gallery of Victoria

The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia
Federation Square, cnr Russell &
Flinders Streets, Melbourne 3000
Tel 03 8620 2222
www.ngv.vic.gov.au
Director: Tony Ellwood
22 Nov – 23 Mar: Melbourne Now
Daily 10–5, closed Mondays and
Christmas Day

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Art Gallery of South Australia

North Terrace, Adelaide 5000
Tel 08 8207 7000 Fax 08 8207 7070
agsainformation@artgallery.sa.gov.au
www.artgallery.ag.gov.au
Director: Nick Mitzevich
Until 27 Jan: Realms of Wonder: Jain,
Hindu and Islamic art of India
1 Mar – 11 May: 2014 Adelaide Biennial
of Australian Art
Daily 10–5, Bookshop and Art Gallery
Food + Wine, daily 8–4.45, Closed
Christmas Day, Free admission, charges
may apply to special exhibitions

Western Australia

Artgeo Cultural Complex

4-7 Queen Street, Busselton 6280
Tel 08 9751 4651
artgeo@artgeo.com.au
www.artgeo.com.au
Coordinator: Diana Roberts
Where art and heritage meet, Artgeo Cultural Complex hosts an ever-changing program of exhibitions in an historic precinct, and retails art and craft from around the South West of Western Australia.
Daily 10-4

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Perth Cultural Centre, James Street, Northbridge 6000
Tel 08 9228 6300
info@pica.org.au
www.pica.org.au
PICA is one of Australia's leading centres for the development and presentation of contemporary art, with a year round program of changing exhibitions, seasons in dance, theatre and performance and a range of interdisciplinary projects.
Tues-Sun 10-5, Free admission

Tasmania

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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.
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admin@mukmuk.com
www.mukmuk.com
Managing Director: Mike Mitchell
Showcasing Indigenous art from Utopia and the Central and Western Deserts and selected contemporary Australian art.
Alice Springs: Mon-Wed 9-5, Thurs-Fri 9-7, Sat 10-2
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Art Gallery of New South Wales
Art Gallery Road, Sydney 2000
Tel 02 9225 1718 Fax 02 9233 5184
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Daily 10-5

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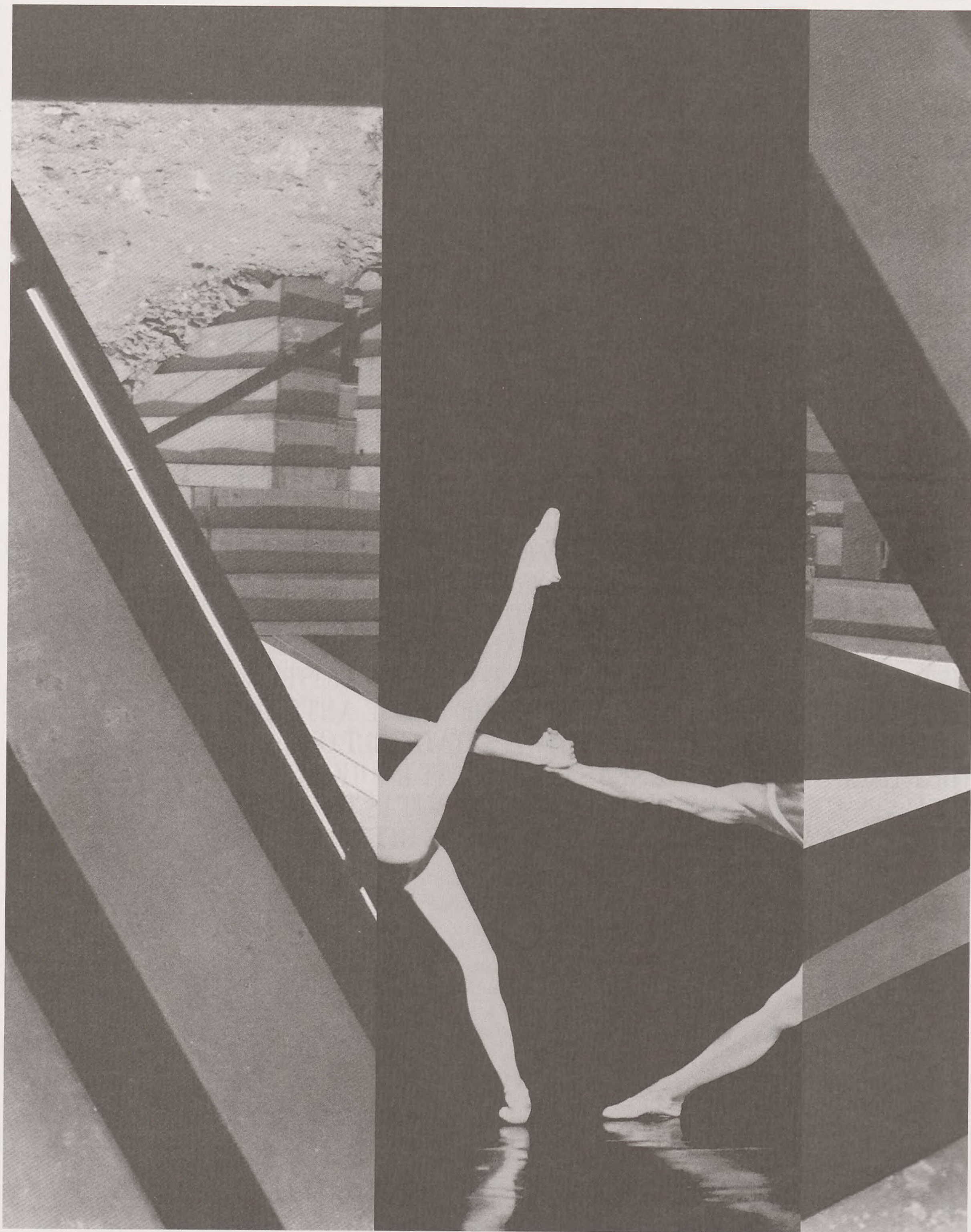
ARTAND Australia / Credit Suisse Private Banking
Contemporary Art Award
Karen Black

Gertrude Contemporary and ARTAND Australia
Emerging Writers Program
Miri Hirschfeld

PLATFORM *Introduction.* FRANCIS E. PARKER, *Curator – Exhibitions,* MONASH UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART, *Melbourne*

WITH ITS MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDY AND EXHIBITION, MELBOURNE CONTINUES TO DRAW YOUNG ARTISTS FROM ACROSS AUSTRALIA, WHICH, FOR CURATORS AIMING TO REPRESENT ALL STATES PROPORTIONALLY ACROSS THEIR SELECTIONS FOR MAJOR EXHIBITIONS, PRESENTS SOMETHING OF A CHALLENGE. THE NUMBER OF ARTISTS IN THE CITY CAN MAKE IT A COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT, BUT IT IS ALSO A NURTURING ONE, WITH A SUPPORTIVE VISUAL-ARTS COMMUNITY AND AN IMPRESSIVE NUMBER AND CALIBRE OF ARTIST-RUN INITIATIVES.

IN MAKING THIS SMALL SELECTION OF MELBOURNE-BASED ARTISTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THEIR CAREERS, I WANTED TO REFLECT THE CITY'S MAGNETISM BY INCLUDING SOME WHO HAVE STUDIED ELSEWHERE AND BEEN LURED HERE. AT THE SAME TIME, I SAW THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE NATIONAL PROFILE OF *ART AND AUSTRALIA* AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LIFT INTO BROADER VIEW SOME OF THE WORK THAT I BELIEVE WOULD BENEFIT MOST. WHAT IS COMMON ACROSS THE WORK OF THESE ARTISTS IS THE TINGLE OF EXCITEMENT THAT I HAD FELT ON FIRST ENCOUNTER, THAT SENSATION THAT IS DIFFICULT (PERHAPS UNNECESSARY) TO DESCRIBE BUT IS THE BEST GUIDE THAT ANYONE HAS TO FINDING THE BEST ARTWORK.



ZOË CROGGON

Born 1989, Melbourne
Lives and works in Melbourne
Represented by Daine Singer,
Melbourne

While Melbourne-based artist Zoë Croggon's practice encompasses drawing, video and sculpture, the most striking of her oeuvre are the photo-collages, which bring together disparate subject matter to highlight parallels between the natural and built worlds.

Working predominantly in black and white, Croggon juxtaposes immobility and human movement. *Dive*, 2013, contrasts the splash of a body on water against an architectural view, and *Untitled #1*, 2012, sees the joining of two ballet dancers extended through the architectural shapes that border them. Although the works suggest, even encourage, the viewer to draw links between each element, Croggon emphasises the divide, retaining a noticeable split between the images.

Croggon gathers her material from a range of sources, including old catalogues, dance journals, photography manuals, film stills and sports encyclopedias. Each image undergoes a process of metamorphosis whereby its original context is removed. Simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar, Croggon's constructed worlds prompt the viewer to question the reality they see before them. Rigid but fluid, stylised yet free-formed, Croggon presents a multitude of paradoxes on one picture plane.

The nature of collage sees an image suspended between its original context and its new conceptual premise. Croggon seeks to explore the aesthetic qualities of an image and the way it transforms according to its environment. Creating a sensuous pas de deux with architecture and the human body, Croggon's collages hope to embody an entirely new form that obliterates the meaning of the referent image. For Croggon, collage is an allegory, a response, to 'the modern physical and cognitive experience of incessant movement and excess'.¹

I WAS IMMEDIATELY STRUCK
BY THE SIMPLICITY AND
EFFECTIVENESS OF ZOË
CROGGON'S PHOTOGRAPHIC
COLLAGES AND THE
STRANGE DYNAMISM THAT
THEY MANAGE TO CONTAIN.
— FRANCIS E. PARKER

More than striking formal compositions, Croggon's montages, as Patrice Sharkey wrote, 'possess an intense kinetic energy that embraces the symbiotic relationship that exists between subject and environment'. Croggon draws on the concept of psychogeography – the study of the effects of the geographical environment on the emotions and behaviour of its inhabitants. Following this theory, Croggon sees her work as an investigation of the way in which our 'surroundings can ultimately become us'. ST

Melbourne Now, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 22 November 2013 – 23 March 2014; Solo exhibition at Daine Singer, Melbourne, 14 November – 21 December 2013.

¹ All quotes are from Patrice Sharkey, *Zoë Croggon: 1–24 November 2012*, exhibition catalogue, Daine Singer, Melbourne, 2012, unpaginated, http://www.dainesinger.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/2012_croggon_patrice-sharkey-essay.pdf.

SEAN BARRETT

Born 1989, Brisbane
Lives and works in Melbourne
Represented by Fort Delta,
Melbourne

Sean Barrett's video, *Love You*, 2011, depicts the artist bare-chested, kissing his reflection in a mirror. It is a simple, yet confronting, narcissistic performance and perhaps it isn't surprising that the work has elicited various reactions: 'some viewers feel uncomfortable, like they've walked in on someone in the shower; others are repulsed ... others turned on.'¹ Barrett saw *Love You* as a means of examining his own connection to his mirror image. For the artist, this 'performance video' is a type of self-portrait, and capturing himself in an intimate act allows him to explore a 'sense of authenticity', to glimpse an aspect of his soul. He explained: 'There's a certain level of comfort I feel in front of the camera in the studio. It's like the camera facilitates me to do anything because the end result is my image doing the kissing, not me.' The work invites viewers to consider their own position – the way they see themselves, and the way they see themselves as perceived by others.

As well as video, Barrett's practice involves photography. The series 'The Gathering' (2011), exhibited as part of 'Fresh Cut 2012' at the Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, is a response to the abundance of photographs in contemporary society and our passive reception as viewers. A variety of images was scattered across the gallery floor, including, among others, two black-and-white portraits – *Manipulation 1* depicting a young woman with upturned nose and *Jazzy*, showing a young man's face overlaid with coloured spots; *Eggs*, presenting seven egg-yolk-like objects with multifaceted surfaces hovering against a black background; and *Aether*, capturing the full colour spectrum, from blue to red. Through this random collection of images, Barrett intended to examine the language of commercial and stock photography, where an image may be beautiful, or cringe-worthy, or both, depending on the context in which it is seen. Barrett's manipulations are disruptive, his aim being to 'expose the underlying structure and explore the meaning of the photographic image in front of our eyes'. In 'The Gathering', high-key studio lighting, vibrant colours and slick, seductive surfaces – features that would commonly signify a pleasurable mode of looking – are inverted. For Barrett, 'there is a definite satisfaction ... in making an aesthetically polished photograph that has no apparent justification'. By presenting absurd, meaningless images, the artist questions what exactly a photograph depicts, and what it is that we see.

SEAN BARRETT'S VIDEO *LOVE YOU*, 2011, WAS ONE OF THE MOST MEMORABLE WORKS FROM THAT YEAR'S QUEENSLAND COLLEGE OF ART GRADUATE EXHIBITION, AND HIS SUBSEQUENT WORK CONFIRMS THE SUAVITY OF HIS VISION, CAST WITH THE SHARPNESS OF COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY BUT PREGNANT WITH AMBIGUITY.
— FRANCIS E. PARKER

Barrett's involvement in the artist-run initiative DIAGRAM with Genevieve Reynolds and Jared Worthington informs and supports his solo art practice. DIAGRAM formed while the group was studying honours at Queensland College of Art, Brisbane, and their inaugural performance for 'Congratulation Sensation' at Brisbane's Judith Wright Centre for Contemporary Arts Shopfront, called *Menu*, 2012, sought to create a direct connection between artists and audience. The performance was simple. A DIAGRAM member sat at a table with a menu listing five different 'experiences' that the audience member, seated opposite, could choose: 'KISS', 'TALK', 'DRAW', 'EAT', 'SLAP'. Only a few nominated the most physical options of 'SLAP' and 'KISS'. From this performance Barrett surmised that both artist and audience prefer to be mediated through the physical, usually silent, safety of the art object, an important consideration for contemporary art practice.

Having focused on studio photography to date, Barrett is currently turning his attention to technical photography, looking at principles of 'light as subject matter, colour as visual phenomena and illusions of depth'. The works feature a series of large-scale coloured light stencils of forms and shapes emerging from darkness, but he is reluctant to label them abstractions. In the future Barrett will return to the studio to expand on the ideas explored in 'The Gathering'. JS

¹ All Sean Barrett quotes are taken from email correspondence with the writer on 1 August 2013.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Jazzy, 2011

From the series 'The Gathering' (2011)
Archival inkjet print on painted MDF, glass,
80 x 60 x 2 cm

XP, 2011

From the series 'The Gathering' (2011)
Archival inkjet print on painted MDF, glass,
80 x 60 x 2 cm

'The Gathering' (2011)

Installation view, 'Fresh Cut 2012',
Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane





MARTIN BELL

Born 1978, Melbourne
Lives and works in Melbourne
Represented by Tolarno Galleries,
Melbourne

‘This world in suspension’ aptly describes the space marked out by Martin Bell’s creations. The Melbourne-based artist works in a variety of mediums, including collage, performance, photography and sculpture, in addition to self-published art books and contributions to independent publications such as *Serps Zine*.²

While Bell received his Bachelor of Fine Art from the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne, in 2000, his work wasn’t exhibited in a gallery context until 2009, when he was part of the group show ‘Batteries Not Included’ at the Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney. Bell’s first solo show, held at Melbourne’s Hell Gallery in 2010, showcased his extraordinary imagination with the series of drawings ‘Skull Gully’. Recently, in August 2013, ‘Skull Gully II’ (2012–13) was exhibited at Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne. The show presented a sequence of twenty-four intricately detailed landscapes filled with objects and fictional characters from childhood stories. Arranged as a frieze, the works attempt to express Bell’s feelings about the possessions we have during our formative years. As David Urwin explained: “‘Skull Gully’ exists as a world in which the best parts of our childhood never had to disappear, but instead live alongside one another in shambolic glory.”³

It was Bell’s first artist book, *My Birthday Party* (2007), that signalled the beginning of his artistic career. The title refers to a birthday party the artist had in Year four, and the book features Bell’s boyhood photographs alongside documentation of a performance where he transformed his home into a diorama of his childhood, complete with cubby houses.⁴ Bell’s 2011 self-published title, *From The Fourth Dimension*, chronicles his ongoing obsession with orb phenomena: those circular anomalies of flash photography that conspiracy theorists believe illustrate manifestations of energy from the fourth dimension. The 240-page book comprises collages, drawings, photographs and everyday ephemera, confusing the borders of fact and fiction. Again Bell incorporates nostalgic souvenirs from his past with objects of the present. For Bell, publishing his childhood drawings ‘is a way of giving gratitude to the kid I was then, now ... There are drawings and paintings in there from all different ages of me and they sit just as proudly next to a drawing I did last week.’ This integration of material questions the role of the artist and context. ‘What’s valid and what’s not?’⁵

ALL MARTIN BELL’S EXPERIENCES AND INTERESTS SEEM TO OCCUPY A SINGLE CONTINUUM, FROM WHICH COME PHOTOGRAPHS, BOOKS, SKETCHES, SMALL BRONZES, SHRINE-LIKE SCULPTURES AND PAINTINGS MADE WITH PLASTICINE. MOTIFS EVOLVE IN PARALLEL ACROSS MEDIA, ACTION FIGURES APPEAR ALONGSIDE ANTIQUE FURNITURE, AND CHILDHOOD ARTWORKS HAVE EQUAL VALUE TO HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN BRONZE CASTING.

— FRANCIS E. PARKER

‘UFO BUSTERS!’ (2012) is also drawn from Bell’s obsession with orbs and UFOs. This series of colourful works is made from wooden boards inlaid with plasticine in a do-it-yourself cloisonné fashion. Bell heats the modelling clay in tuna cans on the stove to mix the colours, later moulding them onto each panel with a spatula. The resulting kaleidoscopic patterns, replete with otherworldly beings, are then adorned with materials like aluminium foil and semi-precious stones to achieve a sense of religious iconography.

Bell’s practice traverses a medley of creative territories with multiple trains of thought present within the one object. From pseudo-biographical scenarios to garish mosaics, Bell’s work takes its viewer on an unexpected journey. EW

¹ Francis E. Parker, ‘It’s about time: Martin Bell’, ‘Skull Gully II’ (2013) exhibition essay, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, 2013, unpaginated.

² See http://theserps.com.au/sz_artistseries.html.

³ David Urwin, ‘Martin Bell: Skull Gully II’, *Broadsheet Melbourne*, 26 July 2013, <http://www.broadsheet.com.au/melbourne/events/event/martin-bell-skull-gully-ii>.

⁴ Parker, op. cit.

⁵ Oliver Georgiou, ‘See the light’, *The Blackmail*, April 2013, <http://www.theblackmail.com.au/issue/2011/04/see-the-light/>.

ELIZABETH PEDLER

Born 1988, Perth
Lives and works in Melbourne

Employing materials such as light, glass, mirror and sound, Elizabeth Pedler produces immersive installations premised on the notion of interactivity. 'I'm not forcing people to participate,' she said, 'but if you give people the opportunity to interact with art, they really run with it.'¹

Themes of fun, excitement and joy are a refreshing change from the seriousness that mires so much contemporary art. Central to Pedler's practice is creating an experience for the viewer, and *Smokescreen*, 2013, exhibited at TCB art inc., Melbourne, presented in a joint exhibition with fellow artist Jeremy Eaton, showcases this. The work consists of a makeshift turquoise-coloured enclosure sealed off with clear plastic and a wooden false wall. Inside, 3500 litres of styrofoam balls conjure a magical snow-scape that targets and accesses the spectator's inner child. With five fans generating a blizzard, the viewer becomes the centrepiece of this life-sized snow dome. Free to stomp around in the 'snow', to ball it and throw it, to plunge into it, the audience plays an integral role in animating the artwork. With the title 'smokescreen' referencing the masking of military units with smoke, Pedler's playpen becomes an ironic reversal of meaning, transforming the sinister connotations of concealment into an outward expression of euphoria.

A 2012 work, *Interventions in the present moment*, extends the interactive approach to exhibition viewing. Staged at BLINDSIDE artist-run space in Melbourne, this work comprises a series of installations that explore perception and vision. Two kaleidoscopes, one large and one small, direct the viewer's gaze through the gallery window onto street scenes below, which include the commuter-heavy locations of Federation Square and Flinders Street Station. *Interventions in the present moment* includes a mobile of square mirrors hung from the gallery ceiling, a large round mirror reflecting a sign painted on the floor, and five smaller mirrors positioned around the room. Altogether, these mirror installations create an infinite 'tunnel of reflections'. By playing with people's perceptions of themselves and of each other, Pedler seeks to upturn the conventional modernist 'one-way' gaze. Seeing oneself constantly and unexpectedly reflected back, or watching other people unawares, the viewer becomes absorbed in an oscillation between seeing and being seen.

ELIZABETH PEDLER'S
INSTALLATION
SMOKESCREEN, 2013,
WAS TRULY DELIGHTFUL TO
EXPERIENCE — ONE OF
THOSE RARE MOMENTS
WHEN AN ARTWORK HAS
FILLED ME WITH A
CHILDLIKE SENSE OF JOY.
— FRANCIS E. PARKER

In August 2013, Pedler staged a series of workshops at Top Shelf Gallery, Melbourne, that were part of an experiment called 'The Communication Project'. Its intentions were to create a scientific, empirical structure to observe the relationships that occurred between strangers within groups. During the free public workshops that operated throughout August, the participants worked together to create an artwork that responded to a theme and communicated a particular message. The attraction for Pedler was that the workshop, made up of different volunteers each time, garnered different results depending on the interactions of the group. Hoping to include participants from outside the art world, an additional intention of this project was to reveal the machinations of contemporary art and the artistic process. EW

The Walking Project [working title],
MAILBOX 141, Melbourne, October–
November 2013.

¹ Jake Millar, 'Artist profile: Elizabeth Pedler', *TheMusic.com.au*, 20 June 2012, <http://themusic.com.au/interviews/all/2012/06/22/artist-profile-elizabeth-pedler-interventions-in-the-present-moment/>.

Smokescreen, 2013
Sealed room, fans, styrofoam beans
Installation view, 'Smokescreen' (2013), joint exhibition
with Jeremy Eaton, TCB art inc., Melbourne
Courtesy the artist



ELI

Born
Lives a

Del Kathryn Bartol
Astra Howarth
Amanda Marbur
Selina O
Christian de Viet
James Lynch
Michelle Usshe
Rob McHaffie
Louisa Dawso
Giles Ryde
Mark Hilt
Helen Johnso
Grant Steven
Jamil Yaman
Ash Keating
Sara Hughes
Kushana Bus
Peter Madder
Emma White
Laith McGrego
Alasdair McLuckie
Patrick Francis
Sanné Mestron

A Newcastle Art Gallery
and ARTAND Australia
travelling exhibition

Laith McGregor, *Opal*, 2011
permanent marker on tarpaulin
300 x 240 cm
ARTAND Australia
Emerging Artist Collection

ARTAND AUSTRALIA COLLECTION

14 December 2013 – 27 January 2014

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Admission free, Open daily 10am-5pm, (closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day & New Year's Day)

Smokescreen
Sealed room
Installations
with Jere
Courtesy

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Astra Howard
Amanda Marbury
Selina O
Christian de Vietri
James Lynch
Michelle Ussher
Rob McHaffie
Louisa Dawson
Giles Ryde
Mark Hilton
Helen Johnson
Grant Stevens
Jamil Yaman
Ash Keating
Sara Hughes
Kushana Bush
Peter Madder
Emma White
Laith McGregor
Alasdair McLuckie
Patrick Francis
Sanné Mestrom

A Newcastle Art Gallery
and ARTAND Australia
travelling exhibition

Laith McGregor, *Opal*, 2011
permanent marker on tarpaulin
300 x 240 cm
ARTAND Australia
Emerging Artist Collection

ARTAND AUSTRALIA COLLECTION

14 December 2013 – 27 January 2014

HAZELHURST REGIONAL GALLERY & ARTS CENTRE

782 Kingsway, Gympie NSW 2227, 02 8536 5700, www.hazelhurst.com.au

Admission free, Open daily 10am-5pm, (closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day & New Year's Day)

Smokescreen
Sealed room
Installation
with Jere
Courtesy

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KAREN BLACK

ARTAND Australia / Credit Suisse Private Banking Contemporary Art Award

MIRI HIRSCHFELD

Overtrude Contemporary and ARTAND Australia Emerging Writers Program

In the centre of Karen Black's painting *Flowers grave*, 2013, is a pale pink rectangle, like a sail, floating almost inconspicuously. It recedes into the background, fading into the sky. It is not the most striking aspect of the painting, yet when Black recounted her inspiration – a photograph showing bodies of women being thrown out of blankets into the Afghanistan desert – the 'blanket' was what stuck.

There is a large figure the full height of the painting striding in from the left. Something militant in the step, like a march. He (the figure is almost certainly male) carries what looks like a rifle. He is mirrored by a similar but smaller figure on the right-hand side. Behind them are other figures. They are smaller still, with softer edges. Less distinct. Almost certainly female. The figures are set in a landscape, that much is clear. There is a narrative here but it is not obvious, and it doesn't seem to relate exactly to the photograph Black has described.

The title of this painting comes from a Tom Waits song lyric – 'No-one puts flowers on a flower's grave'. Black heard the lyric and knew the painting she wanted to make. This combination of music, politics and storytelling recurs throughout her work in composite images such as *Flowers grave*.

In an email, Black told me that her current series of works is based on stories of female asylum seekers escaping war-torn countries. Why this subject? Because it is everywhere, Karen explains when I visit her Brisbane studio. When I press her, not quite satisfied, I receive a somewhat oblique answer about beauty and tragedy, 'like an opera'. And this response, though ambiguous, is revealing.

It hints at Black's background. Prior to becoming an artist Black worked in theatre and costume design, and in each of her series she is drawn to the dramatic, the theatrical. When asked about her influences she cites some that I am expecting – abstract expressionism, Arshile Gorky – and others I am not – contemporary dance. But I can see it now – the way the figures move, the use of their bodies, their gestures, to convey emotion. In *The god of battle*, 2013, Black conveys horror through the eyes of the yellow foreground figure and despair through the hunched

stance of the figures in procession. There is a sense of theatre. It's in the mask-like face of the horned animal figure on the right, in what could be a curtain at the right-hand edge, lifted to expose a pair of enormous feet; and in the way the central female hovers puppet-like, suspended in space. In addressing some of art history's major themes – beauty, tragedy, war – Black not only connects with art's past, but also with her own.

Spending weeks preparing marine-plywood boards by sanding them back and applying coats of gesso, Black creates a perfectly smooth surface for her painting. Limiting herself to primary colours, she mixes directly on the board, using a slow-drying medium so that colour runs and bleeds. The result is a looseness of brushwork, a sense of fragility: the represented scene dissolves into painting, reminding you that although painting can create an illusion, it is still a physical object made from pigment on board.

When I look at Black's works I find myself searching: for figures, faces, meaning. That's the power of these paintings – they make you look closely and contemplate the large issues. At a time when art can be so physically demanding, so active – it moves, it makes noise, it requires participation – it can be difficult for a painting to command attention in the same way. Black's paintings do this by referring to the wider world in which they are produced, by engaging with social issues and art-historical precedents. They raise questions, create fictions, tell stories, arouse our curiosity, and all the while demonstrate Black's desire to investigate the properties of colour, surface and paint.

Miri Hirschfeld was mentored by Bala Starr, Senior Curator, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne.



POSITE, FROM TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT
possible scenario 4, 6, 8, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 2013
on Italian wood panel, each 25.5 x 20 cm
rtesy the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney

CK COVER
vers grave, 2013
on marine plywood, 67 x 116 cm
rtesy the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney

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Karen Black

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