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ARTAND

AUSTRALIA · ISSUE Nº51.3 · 2014

BIENNALE OF SYDNEY · ADELAIDE BIENNIAL · WAR · KHADIM ALI
BADEN PAILTHORPE · JUAN DAVILA · IRAN · PARASTOU FOROUHAR

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WITH NEWS, REVIEWS, THE FIFTY-YEAR ARCHIVE AND ADDITIONAL IMAGES AND VIDEOS THAT SUPPLEMENT THE PRINT MAGAZINE

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Issue N°51.3:

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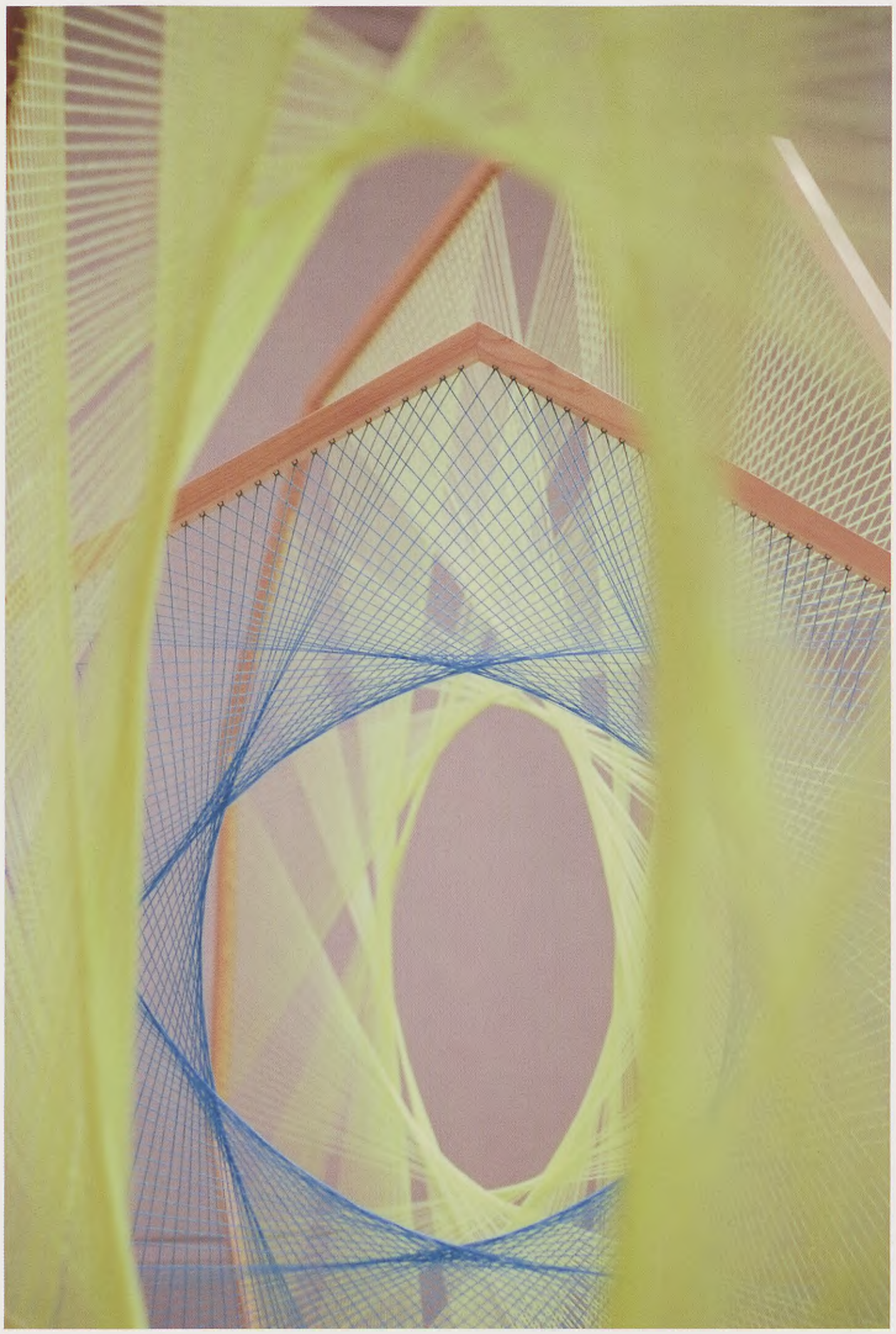

SLIDING LADDER: YELLOW WITH BLUE PENTAGON, 2012
WOOL, WOOD & STEEL
382CM X 231.5 X 219CM
PHOTO: JONTY WILDE

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08 APRIL-
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THE DEPICTION OF WAR HAS LONG TAKEN CENTRE STAGE IN THE HISTORY OF ART, FROM MESOPOTAMIAN TABLETS TO GOYA'S ETCHINGS. THIS ISSUE OF *ARTAND AUSTRALIA* CONSIDERS OUR CONTEMPORARY GRAPPLING WITH WORLDWIDE CONFLICT AND SUFFERING THROUGH THE WORK OF SOME OF TODAY'S MOST EVOCATIVE ARTISTS.

ELEONORA TRIGUBOFF

WE DEDICATE THIS ISSUE TO SAM URE SMITH (1922–2013), WHO FOUNDED *ARTAND AUSTRALIA* IN 1963. WE ARE FOREVER INDEBTED TO HIS VISION.

Masthead

Publisher / Editor
Eleonora Triguboff
editorial@ARTANDaustralia.com

Associate Editor
Genevieve O'Callaghan
genevieve.ocallaghan@ARTANDaustralia.com

Publication Manager / Assistant Editor / Online Editor
Jane Somerville
jane.somerville@ARTANDaustralia.com

Lucy Rees
lucy.rees@ARTANDaustralia.com

Consulting Editor
Laura Murray Cree

Contributing Editor, United Kingdom
Katrina Schwarz

Guest Editors: Platform
Christiane Keys-Statham and
Liz Nowell

Original Design Concept
Fabio Ongarato Design, Melbourne

Design
Criena Court
design@ARTANDaustralia.com

Staff writers
Boo Patrick (B.P.)
Jane Somerville (J.S.)
Saskia Tillers (S.T.)
Elli Walsh (E.W.)

Business Manager: Advertising, Marketing & Trade
Fiona David
fiona.david@ARTANDaustralia.com

Assistant to the Publisher
Fiona Dunne
assistant@ARTANDaustralia.com

Subscriptions
subscribe@ARTANDaustralia.com
Tollfree (Australia only) 1800 224 018
Online www.ARTANDaustralia.com

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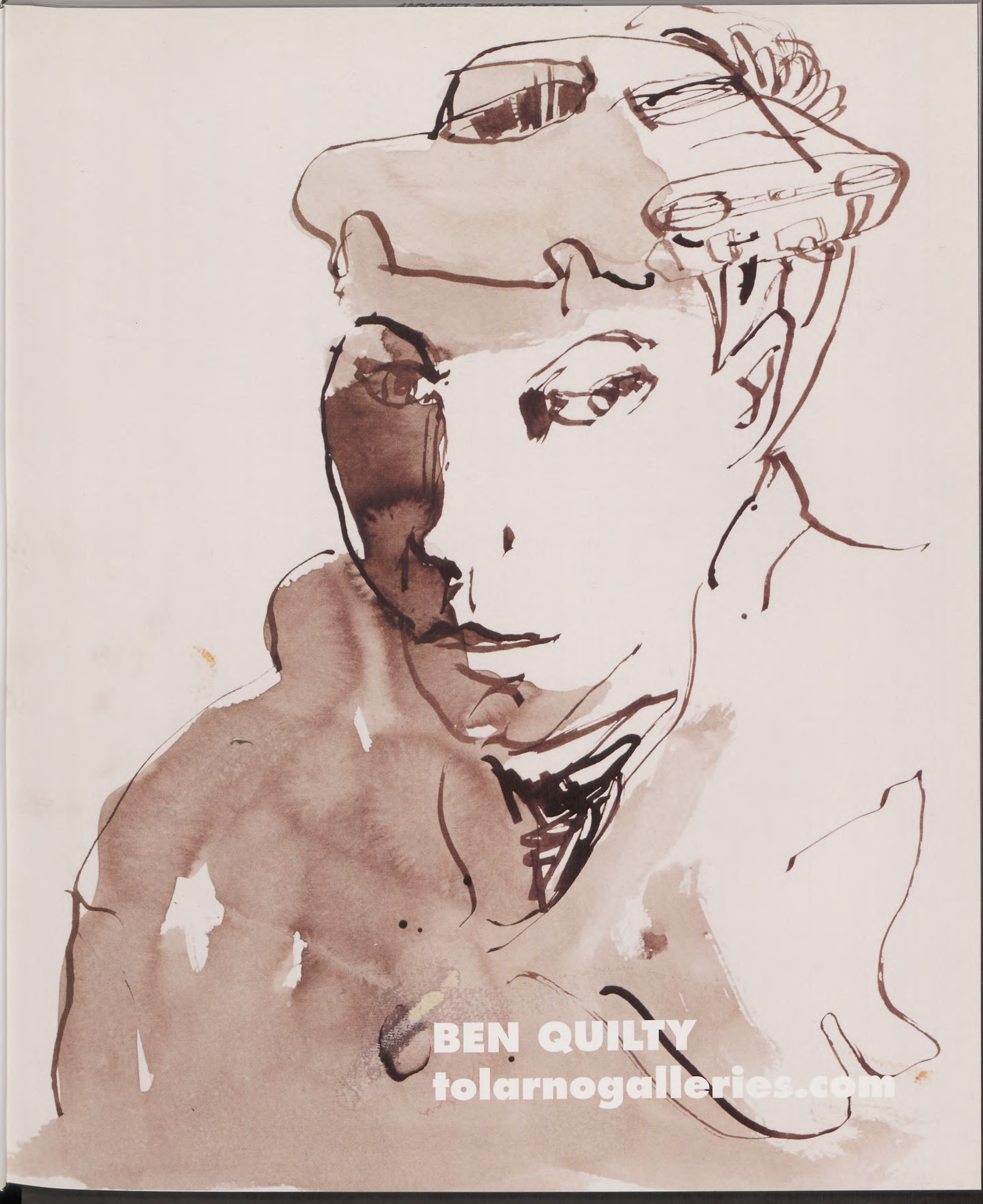
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Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation providing a platform for innovative visual artists primarily from Asia, Australia and the Pacific Rim. All donations over $2 are tax deductible and will support our exhibition, educational, public and artist-in-residence programmes.

Image: AR-MA, 2013
Concept sketch
Image courtesy AR-MA

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Issue N°51.3

COVER and PAGE 313 detail
Parastou Forouhar, *Fleck on the flag*, 2013
Digital drawing, 66 x 66 cm
Courtesy the artist

Contributors

Bavand Behpoor
is an art historian and art critic specialising in Iranian contemporary art. He studied at Goldsmiths, University of London, and is a PhD candidate in Art History at LMU, Munich.

Anthony Bond OAM
is a freelance writer and curator. He was director curatorial at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1984–2013, where he was responsible for collecting international contemporary art.

Rebecca Coates
is a Melbourne-based curator, writer and lecturer, and a research associate with Professor Charles Green and Dr Anthony Gardner for the forthcoming *Mega-Exhibitions: Biennales, Triennales and Documentas, 1950–2010*.

Susan Cross
is Curator of Visual Arts at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, North Adams. She is the co-editor of *Sol LeWitt: 100 Views* (2009).

Juan Davila
is a Chilean-born, Melbourne-based artist. His work has been included in the Biennale of Sydney (1982 and 1984), the São Paulo Biennial (1998) and documenta 12 (2007) in Kassel, Germany.

Cathryn Drake
is a writer and editor for art, design and travel magazines, including *Artforum*, *frieze*, *Metropolis*, *Men's Vogue*, *Time* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

Bonita Ely
is a pioneer of Australian installation art, sociopolitical art, and a founding member of the Environmental Research Initiative for Art at the University of New South Wales, College of Fine Arts, Sydney.

Media Farzin
is a New York-based art historian and critic, and a doctoral candidate in Art History at the City University of New York.

Shaun Gladwell
is a London-based Australian artist. He is preparing a solo exhibition as an Australian official war artist at the Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide, in 2014.

Rachel Kent
is Chief Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Sydney, and curator of the major MCA survey 'War Is Over! (if you want it): Yoko Ono' (2013–14).

Christiane Keys-Statham
is a freelance curator, writer and photographer. Her past curatorial projects include exhibitions of digital art, performance and photography. Currently she is the co-curator of SafARI 2014.

Quinn Latimer
is a poet and critic based in Basel, Switzerland. She is the author of *Rumored Animals* (2012) and *Describe This Distance* (2013), which explores the work of Sarah Lucas.

John Mateer
is a writer and curator, and was the Australia Council's inaugural art-writer in residence in London in 2012. He recently curated 'In Confidence: Reorientations in Recent Art' (2013) for the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts.

Nina Miall
is a Sydney-based curator and writer. She currently commissions artists working at the intersection of art, dance and film for Carriageworks, Sydney, and runs Future Perfect, a commercial gallery in Singapore.

Liz Nowell
is an independent curator, writer and arts administrator. She was curator and exhibition coordinator at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery & Arts Centre, Sydney, 2011–13, and is currently co-curator of SafARI 2014.

Mitchell Oakley Smith
has written for *Art Monthly*, *GQ*, *Harper's BAZAAR*, *The Australian* and *Vogue Living*, and edits and publishes the quarterly men's journal *Manuscript*. He is co-author of *Art/Fashion in the 21st Century* (2014).

Nadim Samman
is Curator in Residence at Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna, and Director of IMPORT Projects, Berlin. In 2012 he curated the 4th Marrakech Biennale with Carson Chan.

Daniel Schreiber
is a Berlin-based writer, columnist and art critic. He is the author of *Intellect and Glamour* (2014), the first comprehensive biography of Susan Sontag.

Victor Stamp
is an Australian artist and writer living and working in Madrid, Spain.

Chloé Wolifson
is an independent writer and curator. Chloé was gallery manager at Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney, 2007–13, and is currently a board member of *Runway Australian Experimental Art*.

Andrew Yip
is an art historian and writer specialising in the art of war and Australian artists in the Middle East. He is Coordinator of Public Programs at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney.

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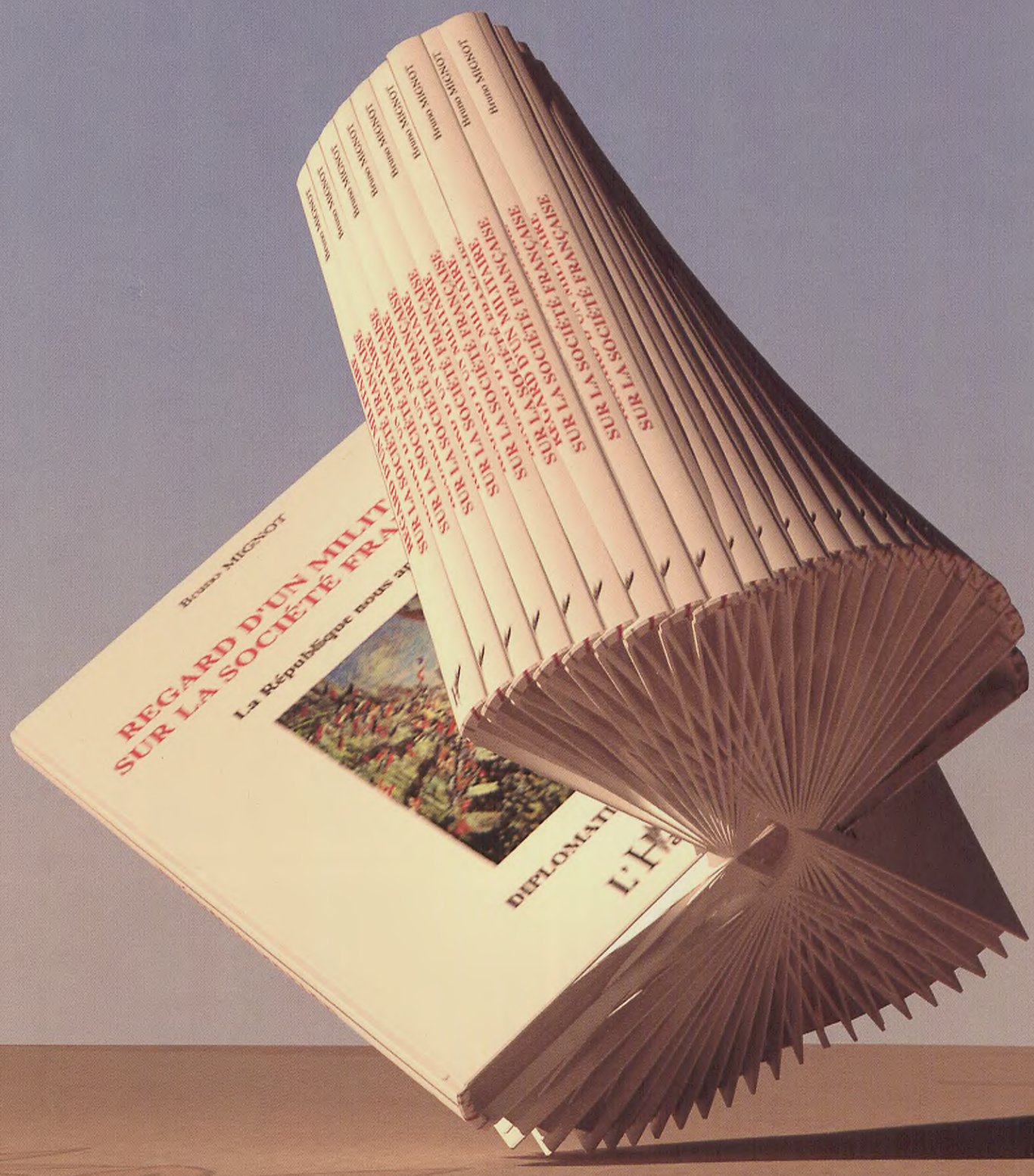
Stuart Ringholt
Anger Workshops 2008/12
courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery
photo: Nick McGrath



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Hors Pistes, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, January 2014

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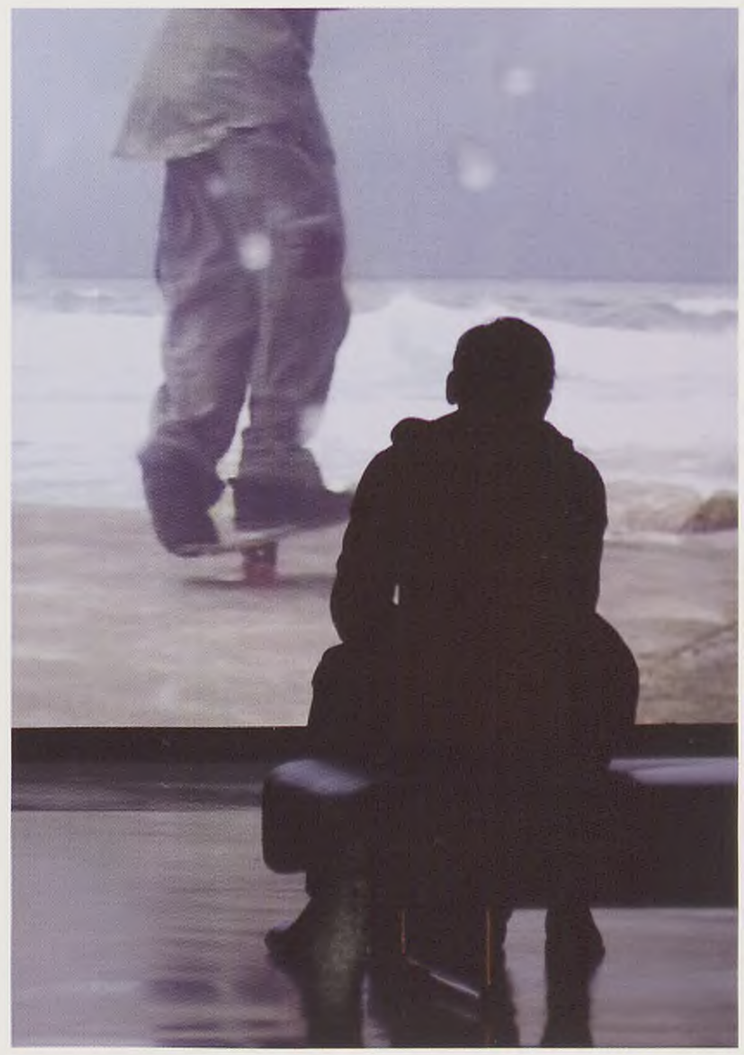

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– Must close 23 Feb

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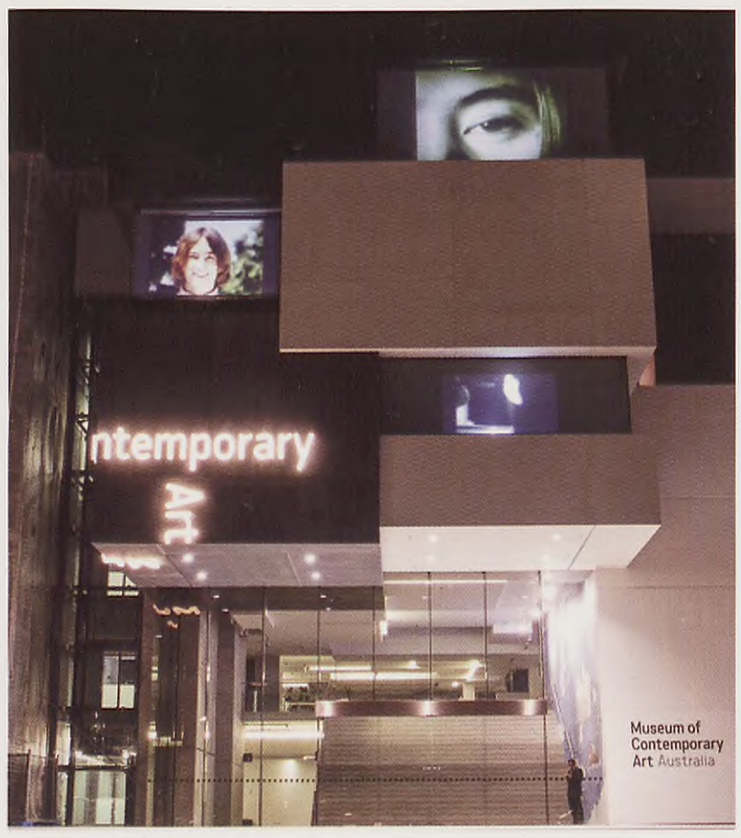


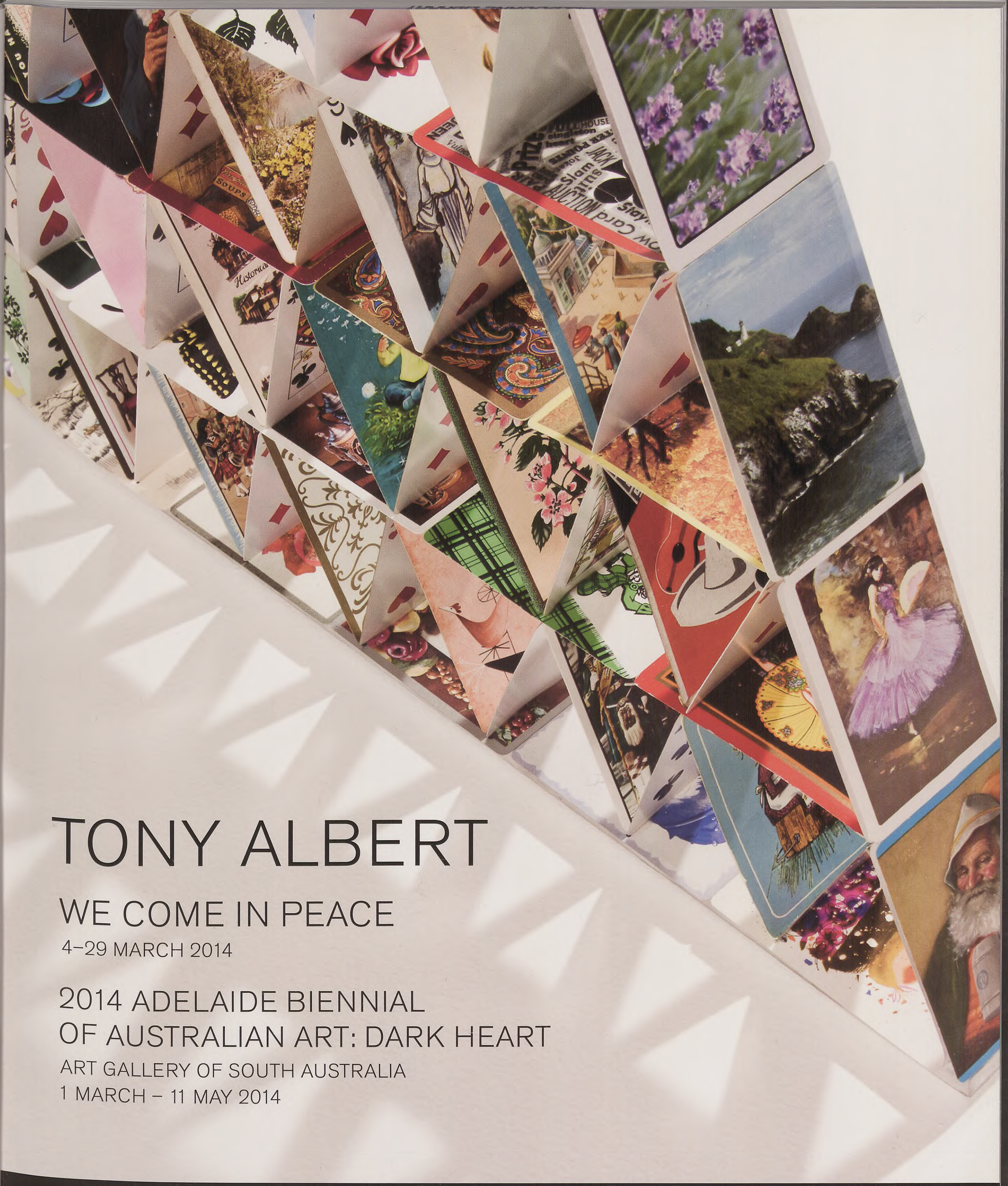
NIGHT PROJECTIONS

WAR IS OVER! (IF YOU WANT IT): YOKO ONO
– Every night after dark 'til 23 Feb

COMING SOON TO MCA

19TH BIENNALE OF SYDNEY:
YOU IMAGINE WHAT YOU DESIRE
– Opens 21 March

Top left: Photography: Alex Torcutti. **Top right:** Shaun Gladwell, *Storm Sequence*, 2000, installation view, Volume One: MCA Collection, 2012, single-channel digital video, sound, commissioned by Peter Fay, Museum of Contemporary Art, donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Andrew and Cathy Cameron, 2011, image courtesy and © the artist. **Bottom left:** Yoko Ono Photography: Matthu Placek **Bottom Middle:** Night projections on the MCA building **Bottom right:** Gerda Steiner & Jörg Lenzlinger *Souls 2*, 2011, collage 37 x 24 cm, courtesy the artists.



TONY ALBERT

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MAY 2014

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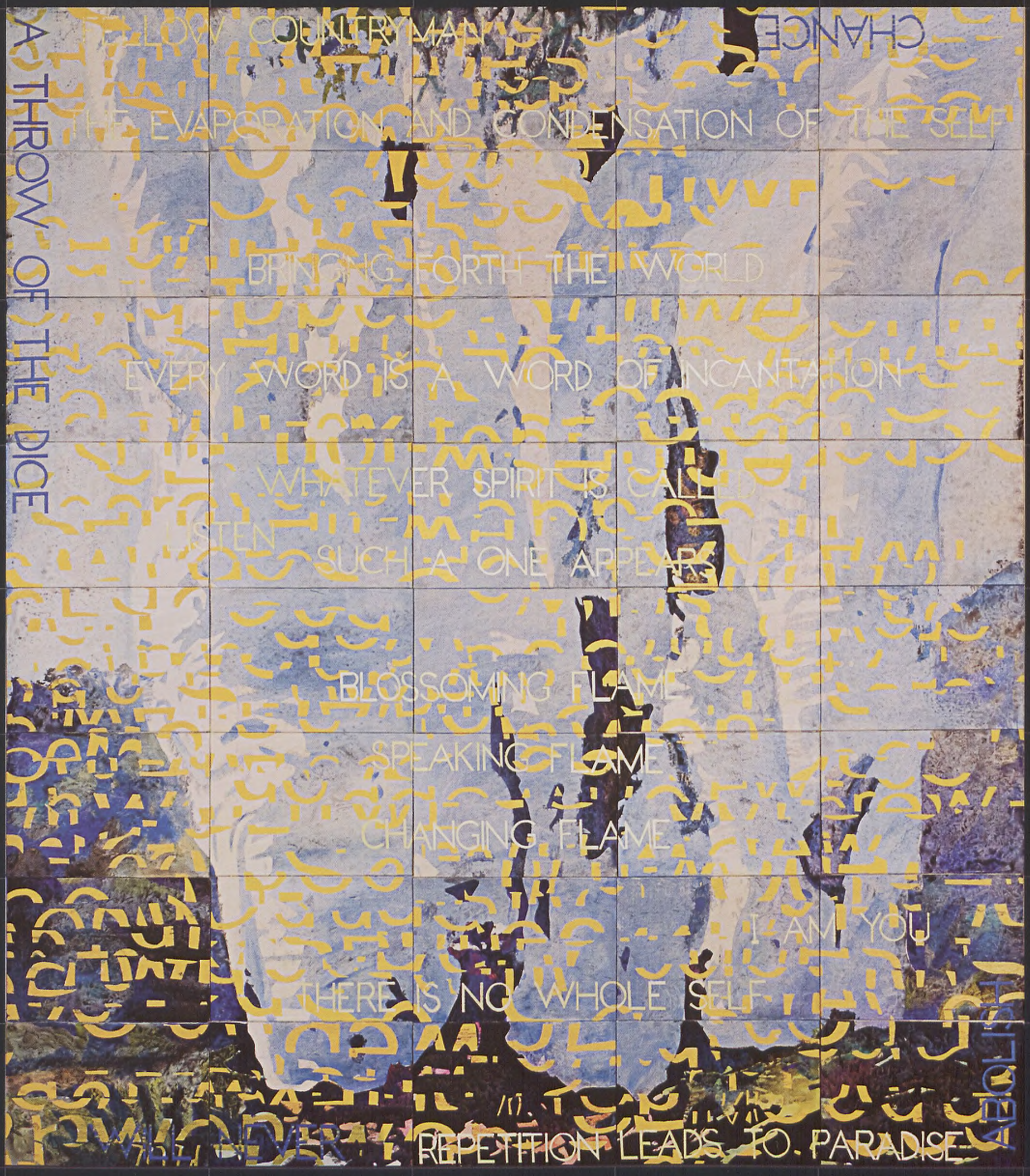

Imants Tillers, Ghost Gums 2013, 92501 - 92540, synthetic polymer paint, gouche on 40 canvasboards, 203.2 x 177.8 cm

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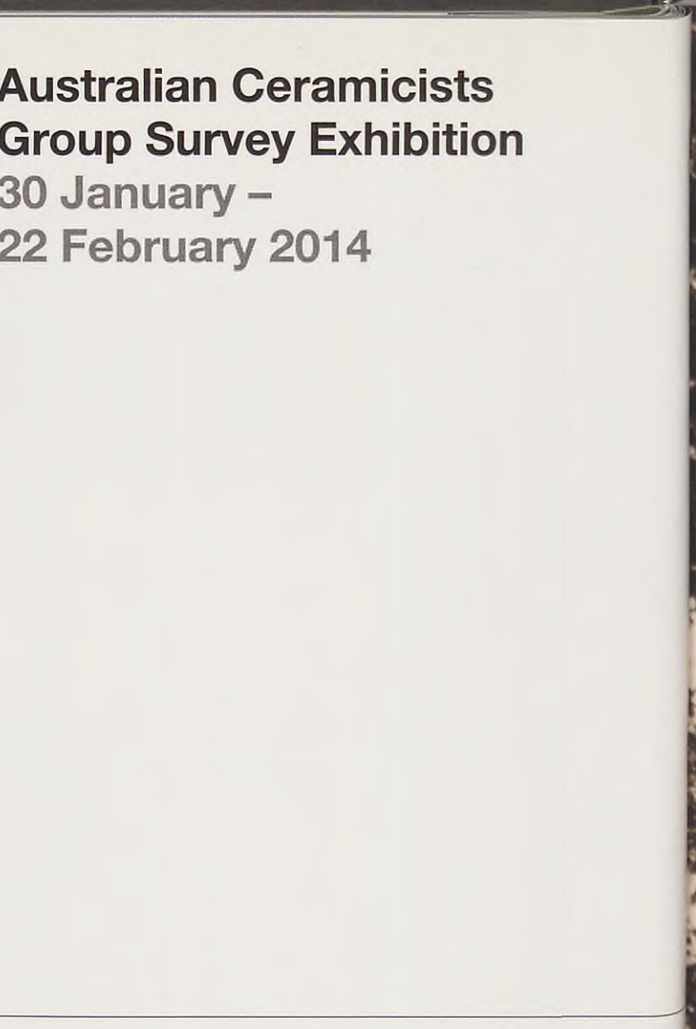

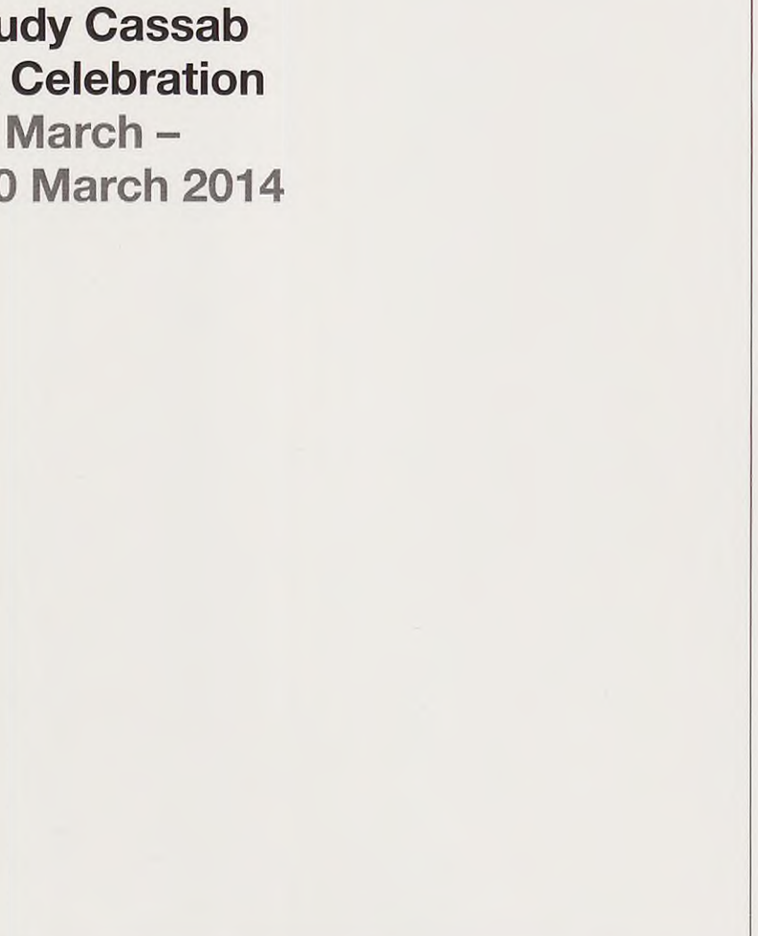

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Frank Hurley (Australia 1885 –1962) *Ruins of the Temple at Boro-Budur, Java* 1913 (detail), gelatin silver photograph, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Playing the beach, 2012, oil, acrylic and oil crayon on canvas, 122 x 152cm.

Autumn highlights

left to right: Sol LeWitt *Wall drawing #1091: arcs, circles and bands (room)* 2003 (detail), painted room on 4 walls. Art Gallery of NSW. © Estate of Sol LeWitt. ARS, licensed by Viscopy
One of a pair of boot buckles (detail), gold, turquoise, carnelian, Tillya Tepe, Tomb II, 1st century CE, National Museum of Afganistan
Deborah Kelly *The Magdalenes (Praise)* 2012 (detail), archival print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag paper with collage, 206.5 x 112 cm. Courtesy the artist and Gallery Barry Keldoulis, Sydney. Photograph: Alex Wisser

Sol LeWitt: Your mind is exactly at that line

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Tarik Ahlip's studio 2013. Photo Alex Wisser.

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Saif Almurayati, *Attaining Safe Haven*, 200x160cm, acrylic and clay on canvas. Image courtesy of the artist.

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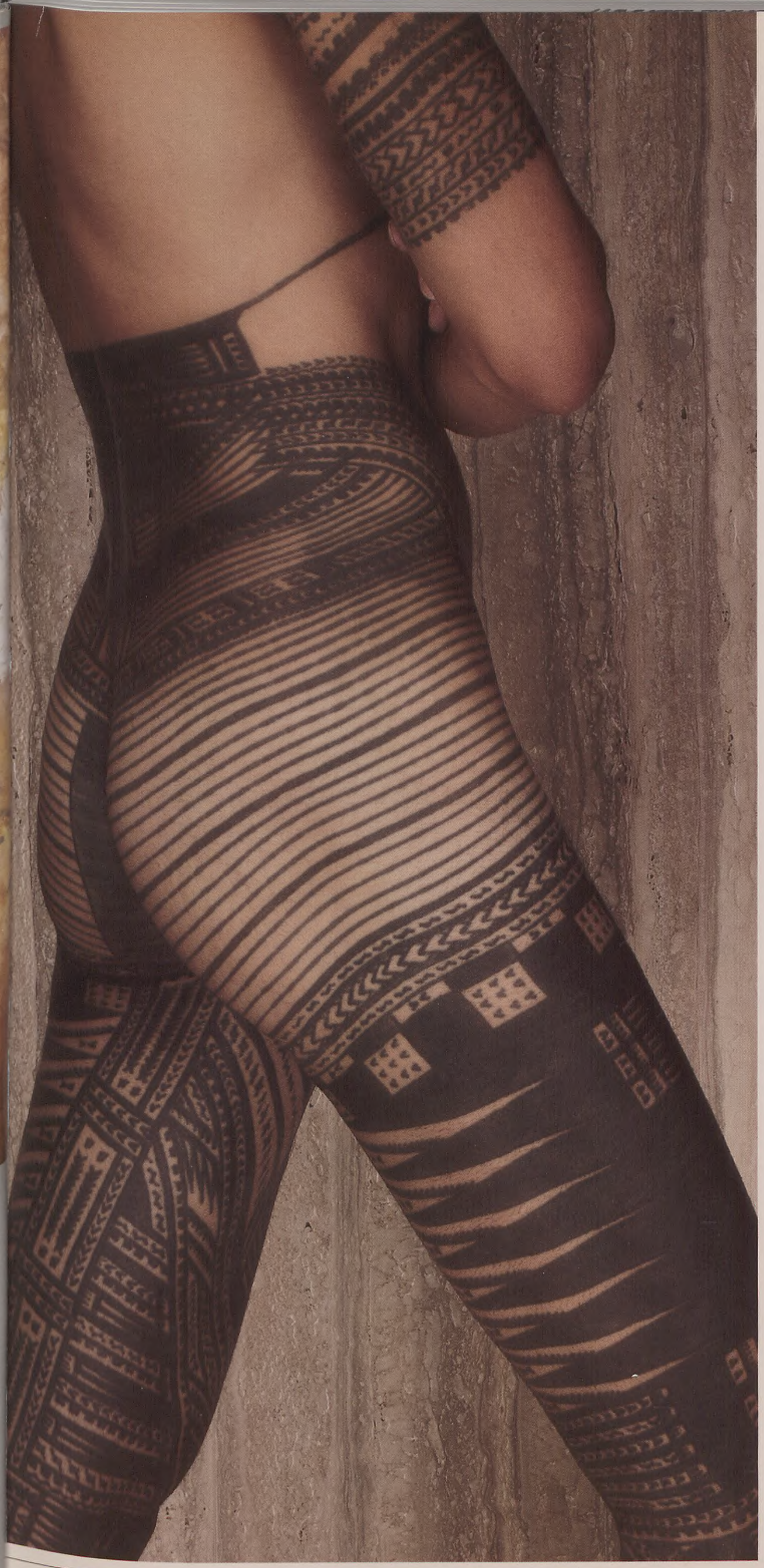

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Image details: Greg Semu *Self-portrait with Side of P'ea, Sentinel Road, Herne Bay* 2012 Digital C-Type Print Edition of 10 100 x 72 cm (detail)


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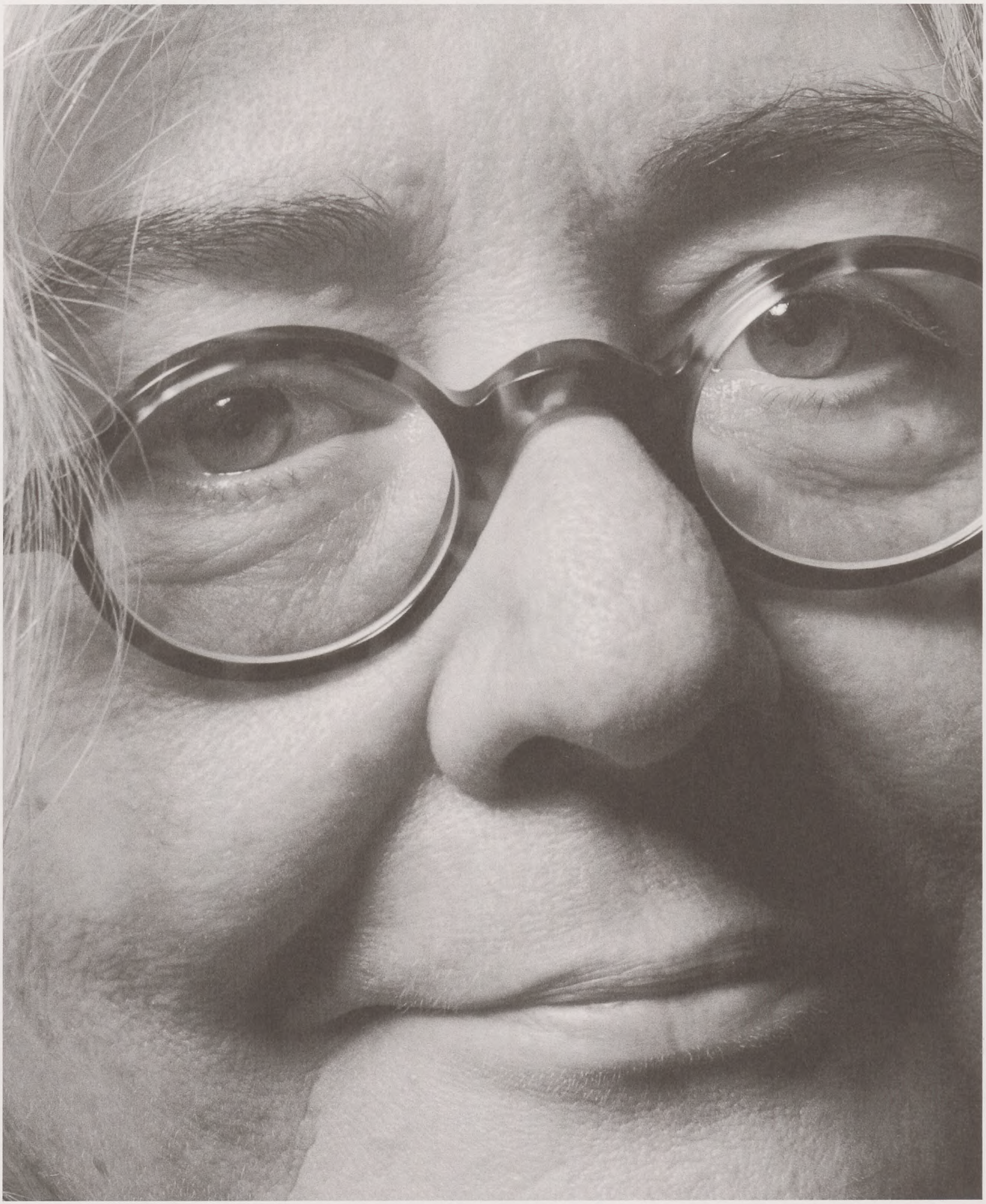
VISION



JULIANA ENGBERG WANTS PEOPLE TO FALL IN LOVE WITH ART AND ITS IDEAS. ON THE EVE OF 'YOU IMAGINE WHAT YOU DESIRE', THE UPCOMING 19TH BIENNALE OF SYDNEY, THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR SPEAKS WITH ANTHONY BOND ABOUT EMBEDDING INSTALLATIONS IN MEMORY.

THE BIENNALE OF SYDNEY EPIC, FREE-RANGING AND FUN: JULIANA ENGBERG

ANTHONY BOND
PORTRAIT BY DEREK HENDERSON

Ahead of the 2014 Biennale of Sydney, 'You Imagine What You Desire', Anthony Bond interviewed Artistic Director Juliana Engberg, a highly experienced curator whose reputation among artists is exceptional. Bond has always responded to the intelligence and sensuality of Engberg's projects, as so many artists have done, and her particular blend of 'sense and sensibility' is a focus of this conversation. It becomes clear that Engberg's sharp observation and sensitive appreciation of artists allows for exciting collaborative possibilities in her large curatorial projects.[1]

Anthony Bond: Do you feel that the biennale is still a worthwhile format for exploring contemporary art, and what is particular about Sydney as a venue?

Juliana Engberg: The biennale format has something unique to offer: for an audience, a kind of large, even grand, experience of art that, if organised by an artistic director, is brought together with a particular vision and aesthetic. I really enjoy biennales. For me, no biennale is like another; they each have their own DNA. For this reason, and for reasons of site, context and history, there are many variations on the structure. Some tend towards a very local set of ideas: for instance, the recent Istanbul Biennial, which focused on issues of contested territories, was a very particular culmination, broadening out to issues of protest and the polis under pressure. At the same time you have the Lyon Biennale, another mid-sized gathering, considering ideas of narrative, sometimes somewhat whimsically, through which a number of subjective propositions flowed, and the Venice Biennale, with its central focus on esoteric and obsessive, self-styled cosmologies and the independent national pavilions. These deliver a plurality of art that I find very energising to engage with.

Sydney has its own history and as one of the most established biennales it has formed the attitude of an epic scale. At a distance from the intense circuit of the European cities that are in artistic and theoretical dialogue with each other very closely, it continues to fulfil the desire of our local audience to see work from a range of destinations. The Biennale of Sydney is one of the big ones, and therefore one of the free-range types. The task, curatorially, is to bring your vision to that catchment. One of the most exciting things for me about Sydney is that it has developed an expanded audience beyond the obvious art world, seeking out interesting venues beyond the museum. I like to acknowledge that audience, make a vivid, vivacious set of gatherings that can captivate people and hopefully help them fall in love with art and its ideas.

AB: You mentioned the variety of kinds of biennale, from national representations in pavilions to others that are very closely curated according to a theme or an attempt to capture the Zeitgeist. What are the benefits of a theme?

JE: I think that the idea and days of articulating a Zeitgeist are long gone. An exhibition such as the one Norman Rosenthal and Christos Joachimides curated at Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin, in 1982 (entitled 'Zeitgeist: International Art Exhibition') would not, I think, be possible today. In fact, the view it promoted did not last for long even then.

AB: Yes, that was an attempt to manufacture a Zeitgeist that promoted new figurative expressionism and other forms of imagery, including appropriation and narratives that seemed to be illustrating aspects of postmodern theory, which made more sense in literature.

JE: It was also very welcome in the market where the imagery was more immediately saleable than more conceptual and minimal art.

AB: Surprisingly, I would say mercifully, that was short-lived even though new image painting, as it was loosely called, spread worldwide very rapidly. What about the well-considered theme that attempts to capture some of the ideas that drive artists' creativity?

JE: A theme can be very useful as a curatorial focus and an audience compass. Recently there have been some very good exhibitions organised around themes. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev's Biennale of Sydney, 'Revolutions: Forms That Turn' (2008), is a wonderful example. I am not looking to a historical accountancy of practice, however. Right now I want to start from the perspective of the audience in the context of the Biennale of Sydney, to create the kind of experience that will draw people in and provide something stimulating for all ages and

levels of experience and artistic knowledge. I will be working with artists to engage people directly and often in a playful way. To do this we need to create rich experiences that intrigue people. I have also tried to introduce a mix of new artists with more established.

AB: Do you think the extraordinary venues such as Cockatoo Island feed into this aspect of expanding the audience?

JE: Absolutely, and I see the island as a kind of readymade destination with which I can play. To me it is a trope, a kind of literary place. The 'island' is a destination, an idea before you even get to it – you *imagine* it. It can be a fantasy place, a utopia, a dystopia, a haunted place, a place with a past. To me it has a unique energy and I have asked a number of artists to respond to that site because their work has these inherent set of qualities and ideas that sit well with the island as trope. You can have fun with the island. To me it has been crucial to look closely at all the spaces we use for the exhibition and become very familiar with how they work, but importantly also the memories of past installations that leave traces in the minds of visitors who return to each biennale.

AB: Is it essential to have every artist research the site in advance?

JE: Sometimes. It really depends on the work. There are some works that are best created in response to site and to have the artist here to be in the space and understand its physical dimension is wonderful, and you get very particular outcomes from this engagement. But now we also have fantastic tools of communication – Skype, video 360s and so forth – so it is not always necessary. We have long and detailed discussions about what artists want to realise and I try to find the best place for their work in the context of the overall vision.

AB: The memory of past installations and how they completely transformed a place is very strong. For me one of the most indelible was Susan Philipsz's *The internationale*, 1999, which filled the old Turbine Hall on Cockatoo Island with that iconic song.[2] The place and its military and nautical background made it so exquisitely moving.

JE: Yes, that was an amazing location for the work and anyone who heard it then will almost certainly hear it in his or her head whenever they visit the island. I would add to that Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller's *The murder of crows*, 2008, at Pier 2/3 – such a memorable work; I think it's impossible to enter the pier now without remembering their wonderful sound narrative.

I am, I think, very aware of the history and trace of previous installations and the way they have lodged in the memory of the audience, in a way perhaps that curators who are not from Australia or who have not had the opportunity to visit each Biennale of Sydney might not be. And with this biennale I hope to lodge new memories, to leave a lasting experience.

AB: I have had it put to me that you and I are particularly interested in art from Europe and the United States and how this fits within an Australian context. What do you make of that?

JE: That surprises me. Take your Biennale of Sydney, 'The Boundary Rider' (1992–93), for example: it was, I think, a world first in trying to break down the old assumptions, and it certainly led the way for biennales exploring art from beyond Europe and the United States. Like you, I am looking everywhere for interesting artists who will surprise and challenge Australian audiences. I think both of us have worked with European artists because contemporary art, as we know it, wherever it comes from, has been informed by the avant-garde, which was essentially a European phenomenon in the beginning.

I guess I see my work in the context of the other deliveries around the biennale. The Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art concentrates on Asia-Pacific areas in a very fulsome way, and we also now have excellent venues such as Sydney's White Rabbit Gallery and the Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, both with a clear concentration on Asian art. I'm not eager to duplicate this delivery. For this biennale I have looked to emerging European countries, to Scandinavia, to the United States, Canada, and to Arab countries. I've travelled to Asian destinations. Being half-Scandinavian, I might interpret Europe more broadly; I am aware of the many strong visual cultures in the far reaches of Europe, not just the old West.

AB: I agree and have always tried to expand the field, especially in biennales, beyond the old 'centres'. It is worth making the point though that the most impressive artists to emerge from cultures that come new to what we now think of as contemporary art are very conscious of that avant-garde history. Someone like Ai Weiwei knows and completely understands what Marcel Duchamp brought to the art of the past century. Montien Boonma was determined to make art that sprang from personal experiences and particularly his Buddhist upbringing. But he also wanted to talk in a global language and took Joseph Beuys as a mentor. Naturally there are exceptions and the flow has never been one way. Japan in the 1950s had a very sophisticated avant-garde of its own with movements like Gutai and Mono-ha existing prior to and parallel with European and American developments. I am certain Yves Klein met Kazuo Shiraga before making the first Anthropometry works, and of course John Cage, Robert Rauschenberg et al. looked closely at Japan.

Back to biennales, what are the current challenges to curating and presenting biennales?

JE: Money and time of course! But really, one of the greatest challenges now is to keep things fresh. There are a huge number of people travelling the world to biennales and art fairs and they see the same things over and over, so this is why context and thoughtfulness about site is important to the shape and flavour of your event.

AB: Where do you see new movements coming from in the scope of the proliferation of biennales?

JE: I am certain that there is no point in worrying about new directions or movements in art. One thing we can be quite certain about is that we have no idea what will happen since artists will respond to changing cultural situations, new technologies and new opportunities to work with museums, biennales, commercial galleries and increasingly invent new situations in the public arena, online, just as they have throughout the era of biennales.

19th Biennale of Sydney: You Imagine What You Desire, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Cockatoo Island, Museum of Contemporary Art and other venues, 21 March – 9 June 2014.

1 This interview took place in Sydney on 23 August 2013.
2 Susan Philipsz's work was featured in the 16th Biennale of Sydney, 'Revolutions: Forms That Turn' (2008).

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Michael Cook, *Majority rule, memorial*, 2014, detail
Inkjet print on archival Hahnemühle photo rag paper, 140 x 200 cm (unframed)
Courtesy the artist and Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane

WITH FILMS LIKE THE NEW *INFERNO*, WHICH PREMIERES AT THE UPCOMING BIENNALE OF SYDNEY, ARTIST YAEL BARTANA WANTS TO CREATE A POSSIBILITY FOR SOCIETY TO ENVISION CHANGE. HERE, SHE TALKS ABOUT FICTIONS, DREAMS AND PRODUCING A GOOD IMAGE.

FACTIONS, FICTIONS AND THE WAY WE THINK: YAEL BARTANA

DANIEL SCHREIBER

Since the 2011 Venice Biennale, when she stopped the art world with her film trilogy *And Europe will be stunned*,[1] forty-two year old Yael Bartana has been considered the best-known Israeli artist of her generation. She certainly is one of the smartest and most outspoken. Her films and videos about the grip and shortcomings of our ideas of national identity are shown and collected by museums the world over. With her therapeutic approach to collective consciousness, Bartana stretches the boundaries of how we narrate history and trauma.

Bartana was born and raised in a small Israeli town, the fourth of four children. Her grandparents came from Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania and Belarus. Enjoying a conventional, Zionist mainstream education, Bartana learned, like many Israelis of her generation, about the geography of her country through war, through the locations of the constant battles reported in the news. When Daniel Schreiber met Yael Bartana in Berlin they discussed the traps of national and religious ideologies, her shift from documentary filmmaking to the creation of hauntingly poetic, contentious fictions, and her new film *Inferno*, 2013, which will premiere at the upcoming 19th Biennale of Sydney, 'You Imagine What You Desire'.[2]

Daniel Schreiber: One of your earliest works, the video *Kings of the hill*, 2003, has always struck me as the perfect summary of the problems of Israeli society, and of societies that get stuck in ideology. It shows SUV-driving middle-aged men attempting compulsively to dominate a hard-to-navigate landscape.

Yael Bartana: I was really interested in visual anthropology back then. I'm not an anthropologist, I don't have that academic background, but I understood the actions I documented as tribal.

Every Friday these men, all in their forties and fifties, come to this place just before Shabbat dinner. Their wives are at home, preparing their food, and they come here to have fun; it's good for them, it makes them happy. They're into using the power of their cars, showing the machismo of society. But it's a self-destructive ritual. They're destroying the landscape. Somehow this action encapsulates everything about how the society is stuck. I simply wanted to document their activities. In the early works, like *Kings of the hill*, nothing is staged.

DS: But in your best-known film, the trilogy *And Europe will be stunned*, the documentary disappeared. One sentence stays with me: the protagonist, Slawomir Sierakowski, a Polish intellectual who plays himself in the film, invites 3.3 million Jews who lived in Poland before the Holocaust back to Warsaw, saying 'This is a call not to the dead, but to the living'. Many of the stories we tell every day and that determine who we are concern the dead. Could your work be understood as an experimental attempt to wrestle back the monopoly over collective narrations from the dead?

YB: In general, my work talks through trauma, through the rupture, in a form of rehabilitation. It always considers groups and the ways in which they negotiate the experiences they go through. I'm very interested in the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion at work in the narratives that one grows up with. They are there behind every nation–state, and we're all somewhat racist in the end; we all live a kind of double morality. In Israel, my main problem is that our freedom – the Jewish people's freedom – is based on taking away the freedom of others. I am being blamed for so many things, for being anti-Semite, anti-Israeli, for being anti-Zionist. But I make my works because I care. They don't come from a place of bitterness.

DS: What's so bewildering about the stories nation–states create is that they are almost impossible to escape. If anything, the harsh reactions your works sometimes receive show exactly that. But in *And Europe will be stunned* you do escape, you make up a new story.

YB: These retroactive stories – the narratives, the myths – are fascinating. They often explain why a certain group occupies a certain territory. But it's all fiction, and that's why I allow myself to create fiction in my films. I understand the necessity for these stories, but I want to flip them, to question them. When these stories become ideologies perpetuated by political parties, ideologies that cannot be questioned anymore, this is when a problem arises. Of course I don't think that it's a solution for the Jewish people to move to Poland. That is not the point.

DS: Why did you start to create these kinds of haunting fictions that feel real and unreal at the same time?

YB: By mixing the factional and fictional, by working with actors who play themselves, I try to show people how problematic certain certainties are. It creates gaps. And it hopefully makes people question themselves and their understanding of the world.

DS: Dreams, in a psychoanalytical sense, have a similar relationship to the real.

YB: I want to create a possibility for people to dream, for society to dream that it can be different. Political imagination is something I often use in my work. It's very difficult for people to imagine something. To imagine things that make sense, that's the challenge.

IN GENERAL, MY WORK TALKS THROUGH TRAUMA, THROUGH THE RUPTURE, IN A FORM OF REHABILITATION. IT ALWAYS CONSIDERS GROUPS AND THE WAYS IN WHICH THEY NEGOTIATE THE EXPERIENCES THEY GO THROUGH. I'M VERY INTERESTED IN THE MECHANISMS OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION AT WORK IN THE NARRATIVES THAT ONE GROWS UP WITH. THEY ARE THERE BEHIND EVERY NATION–STATE, AND WE'RE ALL SOMEWHAT RACIST IN THE END; WE ALL LIVE A KIND OF DOUBLE MORALITY.

DS: And you go to any length to unearth that power of political imagination. There are very clear references in your work to not only Zionist propaganda movies, but also to the films of Leni Riefenstahl. Why is this?

YB: I think that my generation feels a certain sense of nostalgia, because when you look back through Israeli culture, there was something very beautiful in its beginnings. In the very early life of the state there was something so pure, so naive, and so ignorant at the same time. There was a necessity for building a culture, and so the most beautiful songs were written and the most amazing films produced. People were trying to tackle the struggle of the situation. But that's all gone. In Israel everything has become extreme, especially the TV culture. And, with a few exceptions, I cannot connect to Israeli culture anymore. Leni Riefenstahl, on the other hand, as a filmmaker, is one of my biggest heroes. She was a horrible person, but she was a master of filmmaking. Her whole life was about producing a good image. And I understand that ambition.

DS: Historically, those film aesthetics were connected, of course. How do you tap into that?

YB: These films connect to a certain kind of ideology that I question. I want to create space for that history to materialise, by reproducing the aesthetics and positioning them in a new context.

The twentieth century set in play a chain reaction that we all have to live with now. A psychoanalyst I know compares the Holocaust to the atomic bomb, in that it created a lot of mutations that we're still living with. And we continue to struggle with the consequences of this history, consequences that are impossible to predict.

DS: One of the legacies of the twentieth century seems to be a worldwide religious and ideological backlash. Your newest film, *Inferno*, deals with the resurgence of rigid, conservative religious movements such as the Seventh-day Adventists or other Pentecostal churches in Brazil.

YB: Yes, but I decided not to react to the kind of ideology carried out by these very powerful movements. The film is about utopian visions. All utopian visions foresee the destruction of utopia, the impending dystopia. That's what I believe. You cannot separate them; these visions are intertwined. *Inferno* is a metaphorical movie about this connection, rather than a specific sect. That's also why the imagery is very eclectic, combining Judaic and Christian symbols, voodoo culture and rituals, and elements of popular culture.

DS: Much of *Inferno* looks like a psychedelic disaster movie, like a subversive take on the Hollywood blockbuster. To music that sounds very much like 'Avinu Malkeynu', you destroy a well-known evangelical temple in São Paulo. There are explosions, flames, the ground opens up ...

YB: *Inferno* certainly nods to famous movies, such as Cecil B. DeMille's *The Ten Commandments* (1956), but it also has a lot of allusions to art history, to neoclassical paintings. One of my main references is Francesco Hayez's painting *Destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem*, 1867, which I deconstructed for the movie. *Inferno* is very eclectic in terms of my cinematic decisions and the choice of the soundtrack. I also thought a lot about Albert Speer and his destructive obsession with the Roman Empire, his vision for a Nazi Berlin and how it would look after it's destroyed.

But *Inferno* is not about religion for me. It's about the vision of creating a perfect world. So, what if the Messiah comes? What does it mean? And you don't even have to go that far – if you look at communism, you also find that utopian vision of creating the perfect society. We all know the end result of that.

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1 The trilogy *And Europe will be stunned* comprises the films *Mary Koszmary (Nightmare)*, 2007, *Mur i wieza (Wall and tower)*, 2009, and *Zamach (Assasination)*, 2011.

2 This interview took place in Berlin on 7 October 2013.

PAGES 348–9, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
Inferno, 2013
Production stills, single-channel 2K video, colour, sound
Courtesy the artist, Petzel Gallery, New York, Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam, and Sommer Contemporary Art Gallery, Tel Aviv

Yael Bartana on the set of *Inferno*, 2013
Courtesy the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York

POSING THE QUESTION, 'MOM, AM I BARBARIAN?', FULYA ERDEMCI, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF THE 13TH ISTANBUL BIENNIAL, INTERROGATES WHAT IT MEANS TO BE ACCEPTED. HERE, SHE TALKS ABOUT CURATING A MAJOR PROJECT AMID A SHIFTING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE.

ART, URGENCY AND CHANGE: FULYA ERDEMCI

REBECCA COATES

Since the Istanbul Biennial was launched in 1987 by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV) contemporary art in Turkey has undergone dramatic change. In twenty-five years, new institutions, countless galleries and artists' associations have been founded in the city. The biennial now functions as an intellectual critical platform, exploring the system in which it takes part, and engaging critically with pressing issues such as the relationship between art and capital. Fulya Erdemci, Artistic Director of the 13th Istanbul Biennial, 'Mom, Am I Barbarian?', focused the exhibition on 'the public domain as a political forum' in the form of 'a dialogue with the city'. When Erdemci chose this topic, the summer's protests in Taksim Square had not yet taken place.[1]

Rebecca Coates: By the time the Istanbul Biennial opened in September 2013 how had the position of the individual in the city changed, and how did this affect the viewing of art?

Fulya Erdemci: The situation in Istanbul had become violent and irreversible. Presently, there are forty-eight ongoing mega-development projects. These are mostly realised through public–private partnerships with a small number of powerful developers, leaving no room for ground-up negotiations. Many families have been displaced and our living spaces continue to be converted into commercial sites. It is a period in which the outcome of urban transformation in Istanbul is unfair, illegitimate and sad. Leading up to the biennial, there was a feeling of accumulated anger around urban transformation, and I felt obliged to highlight this.

The reaction towards the exhibition has been quite mixed. Some criticised it for not taking place in urban public spaces, which they saw as a sign of giving up and of not reflecting Gezi more directly.[2] Yet for others, the exhibition articulated the questions posed by Gezi, fully deploying the power of art without undermining the resistance movement. It certainly opened up a long-awaited debate.

RC: The 13th Istanbul Biennial took its title, 'Mom, Am I Barbarian?', from the influential Turkish poet and writer Lale Müldür's book of the same name. Historically, the term 'barbarian' had a dual meaning – both an outsider and a foreigner with a different language. How did you hope that artists and audiences would respond to this title?

FE: The title is extremely loaded, even to the point of being provocative. I expected diverse reactions. It is directly related to language and to issues of citizenship. The idea of the barbarian relates to pre-Christian, pagan times when women were believed to have magical powers. Thus the woman had a central position in society. The title also refers directly to women, as the question is addressed specifically to a mother, the woman who is closest to us all, and therefore takes on a psychoanalytical quality.

Artists responded in different ways: Ipek Duben's paintings and installation, *Manuscript 1994*, 1993–94, articulate her own body through the conflict between modernity and tradition in Turkish society; Yogyakarta-based new-media collective HONF (House of Natural Fiber) Foundation's *Diamagneti (C/Sm) species*, 2012–13, explores the communication of plants by charting their frequencies on suspended geometric forms and charts; and Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme interpreted the barbarian as an outcast, bandit or an anarchist in their installation and video *The incidental insurgents*, 2012–13.

The title 'Mom, Am I Barbarian?' became so popular in Turkish media that it even began to infiltrate daily life.

RC: You envisaged the biennial as taking place across a number of locations and platforms, with a prologue exhibition[3] and public discussions (although not all took place).

FE: There was also the film program 'Am I Not a Citizen?: Barbarism, Civic Awakening, and the City', co-curated with Yael Messer, Gilad Reich and Ece Üçoluk as part of the 2013 International Istanbul Film Festival. Through these different forms we aimed to articulate the subject from diverse angles as well as reaching out to diverse publics, and to prepare the ground for the exhibition.

RC: When the protests began in Taksim Square on 28 May 2013, what were your immediate thoughts on how the biennial could respond?

FE: There had been ongoing reactions and protests for such a long time in Taksim Square against the 'regeneration' plans for Taksim and Gezi Park – by May, 120,000 signatures had already been collected in opposition – so when the events broke out, we all got so excited that we couldn't think of the biennial for a while.

FROM TOP
Héctor Zamora, *Material inconstancy (Inconstância material)*, 2012
Performance with 36 bricklayers and 15 brick piles with 2800 standard bricks
Courtesy the artist and Luciana Brito Galeria, São Paulo

Christoph Schäfer, *Bostanorama: A Marmaray Tunnel excavation of the collective productions of space through Istanbul's stadiums, parks and gardens (present & recently destroyed)*, 2013
Aquarell pen, charcoal, pastel, gouache, acrylic on paper, dimensions variable

Photographs Servet Dilber

The Gezi resistance and the public protests revealed that the authorities suffer a strong sense of agoraphobia. Instead of listening and responding to the desperate voices in the streets, they preferred to violently repress these voices by police force (thousands of people were permanently injured and seven people died). For this reason, we began to question what it means to realise art projects in urban public spaces with the permission of the same authorities that do not respect their own citizens' freedom of speech.

Drawing on the political theorist Chantal Mouffe, our conceptual framework was that the raison d'être of any art project in the public domain is to open up the conflict and to make it visible and debatable. However, Gezi had already done this. Collaborating with the authorities would have given them the opportunity to regain their lost prestige and legitimacy after Gezi. This would have led to art becoming an instrument in their favour. In order not to collaborate, we decided to withdraw from the urban public spaces and to continue the discussion in the exhibition venues alone. In this way, like John Cage's silent composition '4'33"', we aimed to point out presence through absence, by asking the audience to listen to the voices of the streets.

RC: You also conceived an extensive public program.[4] The third component, 'Public Capital', itself became the subject of protest, when the performance/lecture of Brussels-based artists Katleen Vermeir and Ronny Heiremans 'Art House Index' was disrupted. Protesting artists groups blocked the activities and were subsequently removed by the production team of the IKSV. Hito Steyerl's performance/lecture, developed from her March 2013 Former West talk 'I Dreamed a Dream: Politics in the Age of Mass Art Production', became one of the most talked-about events of the opening weekend. Focusing on the arms industry, the proliferation of images via the media, and how the museum and battlefield are related, Steyerl's lecture explored the relationship between biennial sponsors and the arms industry. What led to your decision to cancel the final series of events?

FE: Actually, we didn't totally cancel the public program, but revised the format. We switched the concentration of the program from theory to practice to focus more on participatory activities such as workshops, talks and performances organised by the biennial participants. These included, among others, the Sulukule Platform,[5] the 'Mülksüzlestirme Aglari (Networks of Dispossession)' project (2013) by Yasar Adanali, Burak Arikan, Özgül Sen, Zeyno Üstün, Özlem Zingil and anonymous participants, and Maxime Hourani's *A book of songs and places*, 2013. During the five-week exhibition period, fourteen workshops, gatherings, activities and musical performances were realised. Like Héctor Zamora's performance and video, *Material inconstancy (Inconstância material)*, 2012, a ballet of local bricklayers tossing bricks from one person to another in a continual loop, Hito Steyerl's non-academic lecture wasn't conceived as part of the public program but considered as part of the exhibition.

RC: The proposed redevelopment of Gezi Park, which would erase one of Istanbul's green spaces, became the literal and symbolic product of Istanbul's experience of urban transformation. In a charged social and political context, can art still have a social impact or is it inevitably overtaken by the immediacy of political protest?

FE: Certain artworks (including poetry, literature and film) have the capacity to create a transformative experience, to open up the possibility of utopian moments in our daily routines. I believe that such art projects may have paved the road in the formation of the collective imagination and action that we have been experiencing through the Gezi resistance. Activism and art can have the same aim of social change in times of urgency, and they can learn from each other, as seen recently. However, they have different processes, experiences and impacts, and cannot be evaluated with the same criteria.

Although I believe that art functions in the symbolic realm, in certain times it may have an immediate impact: for instance, the Sulukule Platform; 'Networks of Dispossession'; Serkan Taycan's *Between two seas*, 2013, the canal Istanbul project; *Wonderland*, 2013, by Halil Altindere; the Gezi drawings by Christoph Schäfer; or *Monument to humanity: Helping hands*, 2011–13, by Wouter Osterholt and Elke Uitentuis were all able to create heated public debates.

RC: Privatisation, suburban sprawl, gentrification and the creation of gated communities have all become synonymous with an increasingly contested notion of public space. The large multinationals that initiate and undertake these developments of urban spaces also often sponsor contemporary art institutions and biennials. For the contemporary curator, how difficult is it to balance these pressures?

FE: As an established art institution with an independent international advisory board, the Istanbul Biennial is able to create a free zone for curatorial practices and concepts, and that is how I was able to bring out my critical reflections in the biennial concept and selection of artists and works. In the 'Networks of Dispossession' maps, for instance, there are companies that are closely related to IKSV, the organising body of the Istanbul Biennial. Hito Steyerl's work also clearly points out the relationship between the arms industry and some of the biennial sponsors.

But after we announced our withdrawal from the urban public spaces in order not to collaborate with the same authorities that suppressed the voices of its own citizens, for the first time the municipality didn't allow the biennial to use its billboards around the city for promotion. So actually, in certain cases, creating balances wasn't so easy.

RC: How do you hope that this biennial might influence the development of Istanbul as a city?

FE: I believe that together with Gezi, people are keener on gathering around creativity, art and culture. Although the biennial withdrew from the urban public spaces to the private venues, in the interest of the public, the biennial venues themselves became public spaces in which people gathered.[6]

I believe that art has the capacity to foster the construction of new subjectivities, symbolised by the 'barbarian'. Art can create a reflective experience appealing to our emotional intellect, encouraging us to halt and think about what we really need now in the context of such turmoil.

1 This interview took place via email during October–November 2013.

2 The Gezi Park protests began in April 2013, following a petition in December 2012. The protests were renewed on 27 May 2013, culminating in the creation of an encampment occupying the park. A raid on 29 May 2013 prompted outrage and wider protests. The initial cause of the protests was the plan to remove Gezi Park, thus pedestrianising Taksim Square and rebuilding the Ottoman-era Taksim Military Barracks (demolished in 1940) as a shopping centre and luxury apartments.

3 The prologue exhibition 'Agoraphobia' was held at TANAS, Berlin, over 25 May – 27 July 2013.

4 The biennial's public program, 'Public Alchemy', co-curated with Dr Andrea Phillips, was conceived to take place on a series of weekends in the months leading up to and throughout the biennial. See *http://13b.iksv.org/en*.

5 Consisting of architects, urban planners, sociologists, archeologists, activists and individuals from diverse backgrounds, the Sulukule Platform aims to reverse the unfair and forced eviction plans of the municipality against Sulukule (a neighbourhood in Istanbul where Roma citizens used to live) and propose new ways of urban regeneration for the area.

6 The 13th Istanbul Biennial was visited 337,429 times in five weeks, overtaking the Picasso exhibition ('Picasso in Istanbul') visitation numbers of the early 2000s and setting a new record for Turkey.

NICK MITZEVICH ACQUIRES THE WORK OF ARTISTS WHO TAKE SOCIETY'S PULSE AND MIXES IT UP WHEN IT COMES TO COLLECTION HANGS. HERE, THE DIRECTOR OF THE ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND CURATOR OF THE 2014 ADELAIDE BIENNIAL EXPLORES THE 'DARK HEART' OF AUSTRALIAN ART.

WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS: NICK MITZEVICH

NINA MIALL
PORTRAIT BY DEREK HENDERSON

Nick Mitzevich speaks often of blurring the boundaries. Appointed as Director to the Art Gallery of South Australia (AGSA), Adelaide, three years ago by a board who were looking to reinvigorate the institution, he has succeeded through a radical and fundamentally populist approach, which has transformed the museum into a more fluid, democratic space.

The youngest director of a state museum at forty-three, Mitzevich brings to the role vitality and enterprising resourcefulness, developed during his previous tenures as director of the Newcastle Art Gallery (for six years) and the UQ Art Museum at the University of Queensland, Brisbane (for three years). At AGSA he was quick to identify opportunities within the museum's limitations – budgetary and spatial, primarily – and to make his mark through a series of initiatives designed to broaden and deepen public engagement. He has paired this passion and populism with an energetic acquisitions strategy, which has seen some defining contemporary artworks by major international artists added to AGSA's existing collection, and a bold rethinking of how this collection should be displayed.

A self-professed 'chief friend-maker' and a man of infinite charm, Mitzevich also harbours an attraction to the darker side of human nature. Here, he discusses his plans for AGSA and the curatorial premise for his forthcoming 2014 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, 'Dark Heart'.[1]

Nina Miall: When he was in Australia recently, the Tate Modern's Director, Chris Dercon, spoke about his vision for the twenty-first-century museum in which it has a dual responsibility – to be the guardian of objects, and also, crucially, to take care of audiences. How does this idea sit with your approach?

Nick Mitzevich: Art museums in the twenty-first century are not simply guardians or presenters, they're collaborators, publishers, producers. Our approach is a pluralist one. We've been trying to create as many gateways into the museum as possible, and I don't mean simply physical gateways. It has increased our visitor figures by more than 200,000 in three years. It's about working with the community to make art as accessible, exciting and intriguing as it can be. Using strategies like moving away from a historical lineage for our European collection into something more thematic means that people who might not have ventured into the contemporary galleries now have contemporary art within their sight, and those who might only have visited the contemporary section now consider the historical background of where today's art might have come from. There are also the people who don't come through the door; I don't think museums should forget about them.

NM: Since taking up the AGSA directorship, you've overseen two major refurbishments and a thematic rehang that has re-energised the European collection by placing recent acquisitions (Berlinde de Bruyckere's *We are all flesh*, 2011–12, and Wim Delvoye's tattooed pig skin, *Untitled (Robert)*, 2004) among more traditional eighteenth- and nineteenth-century paintings. What ideas drive your acquisitions strategy, and how do you see a continuation between these striking contemporary works and the more conventional artworks acquired by your predecessors?

NM: The AGSA collection is idiosyncratic and eccentric. It's been assembled over 132 years by an eclectic group of people and has also grown considerably through private benefaction. Our current acquisitions strategy makes links with the past, but also reflects the world we live in. The artists I acquire have a very singular voice; they take the pulse of society right now. I want to make extraordinary acquisitions that are rooted in decision-making that responds to the existing collection. The Jake and Dinos Chapman vitrine, *Das swings unt roundabouts fur der kinder? Ja? Nein! Schweinhund! (Swings and roundabouts for the children? Yes? No! Pigface!)*, 2011, might seem like a crazy addition to an otherwise conventional but strong British collection, but we've got Goya's full set of 'The Disasters of War' series (1810–20), so to add a British artist-pair who draw so directly from Goya makes perfect sense.

NM: There is a trend among many international museums towards more event-based programming, an approach that admits performance, participatory art and other inherently social modes of expression to the hallowed space of the museum. The result is an


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engagement with art that is perhaps less didactic, more communal and experiential (Dercon speaks of the twenty-first-century museum as being 'more like a campus than a university'). You've introduced a number of new initiatives that seem aligned with this idea, from The Studio, an interactive centre where young children can create art, to DEPARTURE, an after-dark program of talks, live music, performances and drinks for young people. It seems these days the activities of the museum encompass everything from scholarship to speed dating! How do you balance these contradictory activities?

NM: I make sure that the balance is in keeping with the nature of our audience. These initiatives are what I call fluid entry points to the gallery; when people are critical of those sorts of initiatives they often judge them as the end point. I see these engagement strategies as the invitation to the museum – what's more important is how you make art truly accessible on an intellectual, educational and recreational level. With our kids program we've got specially designed guided tours that accompany the hands-on activities. These are not just a sideshow, but integrated into a much wider approach to learning and accessibility. Our DEPARTURE programs are underpinned by curator talks that encourage a deeper understanding of art. Art museums in the twenty-first century need to nurture the way people approach the institution. But I also think we need to provide people with sustenance beyond the gloss, through customising information for that audience. It's about thoughtful engagement.

NM: You have a fantastic track record of increasing benefactions and attracting private support and have previously referred to the role of an art gallery director as 'chief friend-maker'. How much of your time and energy is dedicated to fundraising activities?

NM: We get 50 per cent of support from the state, and 50 per cent from private benefaction. The Balnaves Foundation and the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation have been leading the way with kids' education, while also supporting acquisitions, publications, scholarship and curator travel, even the building's fabric. Private individuals are key to our gallery, and our focus has been to grow but also diversify benefaction. We have a Gallery Foundation and also our newer Contemporary Collectors group, which focuses its giving on contemporary art.

As well as the giving of money, I really value the giving of time. We have fifty paid staff, and 220 unpaid volunteers at the gallery – that army of support is critical. The success of benefaction is not convincing people to give, because I think that's a decision that people make themselves, it's actually about nurturing a deeper relationship with the gallery and honouring the wish that private individuals have to help others see the great benefits of having art in their lives. I feel very blessed to have worked with many extraordinary benefactors over the last fifteen years. I see benefaction as being a very positive part of the job.

NM: What is the curatorial premise for the next iteration of the Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art? What is it meant to reveal about the 'dark heart' of Australian art today?

NM: It's a continuation of the things I've always had a curatorial interest in. I'm drawn to works that address aspects of the human condition, and that reflect issues of the day, whether political or emotional. For 'Dark Heart' I've brought together a diverse group of artists who all look at the underbelly of contemporary society, who delve beneath the surface. The role of art today is to offer a more unique perspective on the world than the one we encounter daily through mass media.

NM: You've cited the late art critic Robert Hughes as a key reference point for this biennial, particularly works such as *The Fatal Shore* (1986) with its vivid description of 160,000 convicts arriving in this land, 'clanking their fetters in the penumbral darkness'. What aspects of Hughes's preoccupation with the harsh and blighted reality of the Australian experience resonate with you?

NM: Robert Hughes has always been an important figure in my life. When he passed away in 2012, I revisited his writing and read *The Fatal Shore*, a brutal, extraordinary book. Hughes describes how the artist derives meaning from feeling, so I wanted the biennial to be an inherently emotional experience. I feel I have a responsibility as a curator to work within an area I find personally compelling so as to get the best results.

NM: In the critical framework you've established for the biennial, you identify a return to figuration, narrative, the crafted object, and the cinematic imagination. Do you see these as sweeping current trends in contemporary Australian art, or do you perceive them as being more widely, internationally, in evidence? How isolated do you think Australia is from global currents?

NM: The biennial is obviously a platform for Australian artists, but many of its concerns are universal. I don't think the issues are particularly Australian per se. Essentially my biennial is a series of stories that together explore the deeper, darker issues in the world. I have twenty-five artists who tell unique stories and I've selected the works for their compelling narratives. What I find touching is that many of the issues are both personal and political.

NM: In discussing the role of the contemporary biennial, Lyon Biennale Director Thierry Raspail talks about its ability to mobilise publics, activate spaces and create meaningful experiences. How do you expect the work in the forthcoming Adelaide Biennial to connect with its audience?

NM: 'Dark Heart' is an unashamedly populist and engaging exhibition. I hope this premise, which speaks to the Zeitgeist in fashion, art and film, along with a series of artworks that push the boundaries and an active public program, will continue to grow the audience for the Adelaide Biennial. Physically, the biennial is going to be hard to escape. It will spill outside the building onto North Terrace, as well as occupy the galleries inside. My long-term vision is that it will become a city-wide event, but I want it to grow organically, to be sustainable. I see it as a great tent of ideas; the bigger we can make the tent, the more people will be touched by it.

NM: You've invited Australia's most outspoken expatriate, Germaine Greer, to write an essay for the biennial's catalogue, one of several 'difficult conversations' that run as a theme throughout the biennial. How are you staging these provocations and what's the intention behind them?

NM: It's about providing artists and writers with a structure for continuing a dialogue with the audience throughout the season of the exhibition. Our public program will be an embedded series of thought-provoking talks and events, designed to nurture the audience's curiosity about how an artist might see the world.

2014 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Dark Heart, Art Gallery of South Australia, 1 March – 11 May 2014.

1 This interview took place in Sydney on 20 September 2013.

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eX de Medici, *The law*, 2013, detail
Watercolour on paper, 114 x 700 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf Fine Art, Sydney

PHOTOJOURNALIST BENJAMIN LOWY TRAVELS THE WORLD DOCUMENTING LIFE IN ZONES OF CONFLICT. SPEAKING TO MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART SENIOR CURATOR RACHEL KENT, LOWY DESCRIBES HIS EMBRACE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND PONDERS THE ETHICS OF CREATING ART FROM TRAUMA.

THE ART OF COMMUNICATING: BENJAMIN LOWY

RACHEL KENT

With nearly 80,000 followers on Instagram, Benjamin Lowy is communicating his images of worldwide war and conflict on a scale as never before. Based in New York, Lowy travels far, documenting events in places like Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, and the unique images he creates have won him accolades, including the 2012 International Center of Photography Infinity Award for Photojournalism.

Following Lowy's 2013 visit to Australia for the Head On Photo and Sydney Writers festivals and his exhibition 'iAfghanistan' at the State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, Rachel Kent spoke with him about experimentation, logistics and making people care.[1]

Rachel Kent: How did you become a photographer? What attracted you to the medium?

Benjamin Lowy: I was always going to be an artist. My grandmother's a painter, my mother's a painter, it's something I was interested in doing. I wanted to become like Art Spiegelman or Joe Sacco, to do important stories about current events, but using illustration. I was also very influenced by the Guerrilla Girls and Sandy Skoglund early on.

I used to visit a bookstore that had a large selection of art and photography books. One day I pulled out James Nachtwey's *Inferno* (1999) and sat for three hours studying this book. In that time, my life changed. I decided then and there I was going to change everything I was doing.

RK: You became a professional photojournalist in 2003. How did you get your first job?

BL: I got injured in summer 2002, when I went to Israel, the West Bank and Palestine to cover a story on my own as a photographer. I was attacked by a group of men and lost all my equipment. My mentor at the time was a photo editor at *Time* magazine in Washington, DC. He said, 'Ben, if you leave now you'll always be scared. I have some equipment lying around the office I'm going to send to you; use it, shoot another story, then come back and show it to us'.

I had an excuse to go into the *Time* offices when I returned, to give back the equipment and show them my pictures. Through that constant interaction with editors, and by being the new kid on the block, I found my way into a photo agency. I then became the only photographer embedded for Corbis with 101st Airborne Division for the Iraq Corp. Most journalists and photographers didn't end up going with US Forces – they got there on their own.

RK: You spent six years on and off in Iraq. Were journalists working alongside you during this period?

BL: Sometimes, sometimes not. There was a period around 2005 where I sent myself to Iraq and worked on my own. I lived with half a platoon of soldiers for two months, instead of being separated like most journalists were. I wanted to be able to tell it from a squad member's perspective: what their rooms looked like, what they did in their spare time.

RK: What is it that draws you to this kind of work? There's a huge amount of travel involved, but it's also very risky.

BL: It's fundamentally who I am as an individual. My father was born in a concentration camp and my grandfather survived Auschwitz. My dad was very traumatised by his parents' experience and he used to show me pictures.

You don't live a normal life as a war photographer, and for the most part I really enjoy going to far-off lands, experiencing different lives. You see so much distrust in this world, but I find through my travels that people are more similar than you would think.

RK: Let's talk about some of your assignments. Iraq is obviously a very special place for you.

BL: When 9/11 happened, the attack on Afghanistan was the knee-jerk reaction in the United States, as was hunting down Osama bin Laden and starting this War on Terror. Iraq became the folly that is going to affect our grandchildren's lives.

RK: What of this spurious argument of weapons of mass destruction?

BL: Which ended up being a complete falsehood, an excuse. And all the conspiracy theories that went into it – was it oil, was it not? – and the way the military industrial complex took over more than ever before.

iPhone photographs from the series 'iLibya' (2011)
Courtesy the artist and Reportage by Getty Images, New York

iPhone photographs from the series 'iAfghanistan' (2011)
Courtesy the artist and Reportage by Getty Images, New York

RK: What about apathy in relation to the war in Iraq?

BL: Coming back home from a war zone, and seeing people not even care in the same way that I do – that was hard. I wanted to find a way to make them care. You can't stuff it down people's throats, but you need to be able to present it to an audience and introduce something that they would otherwise not look at.

We're supposed to communicate, though sometimes we forget about that. I needed and wanted to find a way to bring this war home and to acquaint people with it.

RK: You made some photographic essays including one series looking through the window of a Humvee vehicle and another using night vision. These approaches filter the images.

BL: Yes, there's a barrier between the images and the viewer. I didn't consciously approach this as a metaphor, the idea of us and them, the East and West. That came after, when creating a thesis for the work.

The Humvee work grew out of my mum wanting to see more of the Iraq landscape, and what Iraqis did outside of war. It was impossible for me to shoot on the street at that time because of how dangerous it was. So I shot out of the car window and built on the project from there.

As for the night-vision imagery, I had been exploring this medium early on in my work. I found it really interesting to experience the viewpoint of a soldier, using duct tape and dental floss and chewing gum to attach an actual soldier's device that I had borrowed to the front of my camera. And the images seemed raw in a way that others didn't, whether or not it slid a little bit, or if it was out of focus. The images became about exactly what the soldier experiences, his or her viewpoint.

RK: What about the basics: you've got to eat, you've got to have a safe place to sleep.

BL: It's about figuring out how to get in, how to get out, what to take with you. A lot depends on if you are with a group of soldiers or not. Going into Syria right now is logistically very difficult, as compared with going to Afghanistan. Going into Libya and following the front lines as they shifted back and forth was logistically incredibly difficult. I ended up living out of a backpack because I didn't know when I'd be able to get back to a hotel.

RK: Let's talk about the use of mobile technologies in your work. You've taken full advantage of the iPhone, for example, and social media as a communicative tool.

BL: It's important to look at how the public gets its information. Most of us use Facebook and Instagram. For the last few years I've been experimenting with using these different avenues because it's important for me to communicate, to present my vision to the public.

RK: But presumably there are also questions of portability and practicality. An iPhone is tiny, it can go in your pocket, it doesn't require a backpack of equipment.

BL: When the mobile-phone network is down in a place like Libya, you still have to carry a satellite dish and figure out how to connect the dish to a power outlet to send the pictures. It's the same as shooting with a giant camera.

RK: Mobile technology is also central to ordinary citizens' lives, as with the Arab Spring.

BL: That's why I thought it was apropos to cover the Arab Spring with the device that enabled the Arab Spring. I would go to the front lines in Libya and there were people with iPhones duct-taped to their AK-47s because they didn't have a GoPro.

A lot of people in the West experience warfare from first-person-perspective video games like *Call of Duty*. Teenagers in Libya were running to the front lines with their mobile phones, so I started doing the same thing with mine.

RK: There is a long tradition of photojournalism in documenting war, but there is also a strong tradition of art photography in relation to war and disaster. What are your thoughts on the ethics of creating 'art' from trauma?

BL: Art with a capital A is an extension of culture. It's about questioning our existence. It asks questions. Photojournalism in its purest form, documentary photography, is about answering questions. It's about saying 'this is what's happening in front of you'.

RK: What about the moral dimension?

BL: I have issues with putting the most horrible photojournalistic images on a pedestal in the art world, and it being about the photographer not the message. There's nothing wrong with the Brooklyn Museum, New York, holding a show on war photography[2] (which features my night-vision images) – this inspires conversation. But when you have a show about one photographer's depiction of inhumanity across the world, it's not about that particular dead body or that particular representation, it's about the photographer.

RK: Can you tell me about your 'fight project'?

BL: This began in 2007. It's a personal project. The images are black and white, very raw. I photograph the audience and I photograph the fights. Nothing else. And it became a way for me to reconcile what I was feeling after Iraq and Afghanistan, which was the need to see violence and to record it because that was my job, and to see its effect on people.

I want to explore wrestling in Turkey and I plan to visit other kinds of traditional fighting groups around the world, from kung-fu temples in China to traditional fighting in South America. There are also some interesting things going on in Russia in regard to fighting and the science behind it.

RK: How does this 'fight project' sit alongside your war imagery?

BL: Ultimately most people don't want to kill another human being. The difference is that this type of fighting[3] is a sport and people want to do it. Sport in general is a stand-in for fighting. Even the terminology of American baseball references warfare: it's a 'strike', it's a 'hit'. Sport is a way of keeping people in check.

1 This interview took place in New York on 14 July 2013.
2 The exhibition 'WAR/PHOTOGRAPHY: Images of Armed Conflict and Its Aftermath' was on display at the Brooklyn Museum, New York, 8 November 2013 – 2 February 2014.
3 Mixed martial arts.

CHRIS DERCON, DIRECTOR OF LONDON'S TATE MODERN, LIKES TO BREAK TRADITIONAL TABOOS, FOLDING FASHION INTO CONTEMPORARY ART THROUGH THE HYBRID MUSEUM AND EXPANDED EXHIBITION. INTERVIEWED DURING HIS AUSTRALIAN TOUR, DERCON SPEAKS ABOUT HIS PASSION FOR TEXTILES AND THE POTENTIAL OF THE PUBLIC COLLECTION.

LIFTING THE LID ON CONTEMPORARY ART: CHRIS DERCON

REBECCA COATES

Described as visionary, intellectual, democratic and, most of all, high-wattage, Chris Dercon, Director of the Tate Modern, London, visited Melbourne to open the exhibition 'Dream the World Awake' of his friend and fellow Belgian, fashion designer Walter Van Beirendonck.[1]

Dercon speaks six languages fluently, and phrases and words in at least three languages pepper this conversation. His international approach reflects his childhood in Belgium with its large African immigrant population, and his experiences working in the multicultural Dutch city of Rotterdam, where he co-founded the Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art. He has held directorial positions at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, and Haus der Kunst, Munich, and has curated notable exhibitions by fashion designers, including Maison Martin Margiela, Walter Van Beirendonck, and Japanese designers Rei Kawakubo, Yohji Yamamoto, Issey Miyake, Kenzo Takada, Junya Watanabe, Jun Takahashi and others. In 2011, Dercon commenced as Director of the Tate Modern, the most frequented museum in the world with approximately five million visitors a year. To Dercon the challenge is 'a nice problem to have'.

Rebecca Coates: What sparked your sustained interest in fashion as an important subject for the contemporary museum?

Chris Dercon: I was the director of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, which has the most amazing collection of Old Masters, arts and crafts, and especially industrial design. The curator Thimo te Duits argued that industrial design should also take on fashion. The museum is well known for its surrealist collection – Dalí, Magritte and many others – and fashion colonised surrealism very early on. Man Ray worked in fashion to make money, and fashion designers today such as Martin Margiela are inspired by the way Man Ray displayed, marketed and photographed fashion. So at the Museum Boijmans, one approach was to take our surrealist collection and inspect fashion there. And then you could take this further, fifty or sixty years later, when fashion started to colonise the art world with surrealism.

Today you could say that the fashion system – *le système de la mode* of the constant change for seasons – is almost becoming the model for *le système de l'art*. Cycles of art get shorter and shorter, as does the idea of recycling from previous periods.

There is also a sociological parallel between fashion and art with the idea of art becoming a fetish, which brings us back to surrealism. For one exhibition at the Museum Boijmans we focused on the fetish of the surrealists alongside contemporary fashion, showing Dalí's beautiful red shoe with the little sugar cube alongside the shoes of Miuccia Prada.

RC: You said that the Museum Boijmans had a substantial industrial design collection. How did fashion fit into that?

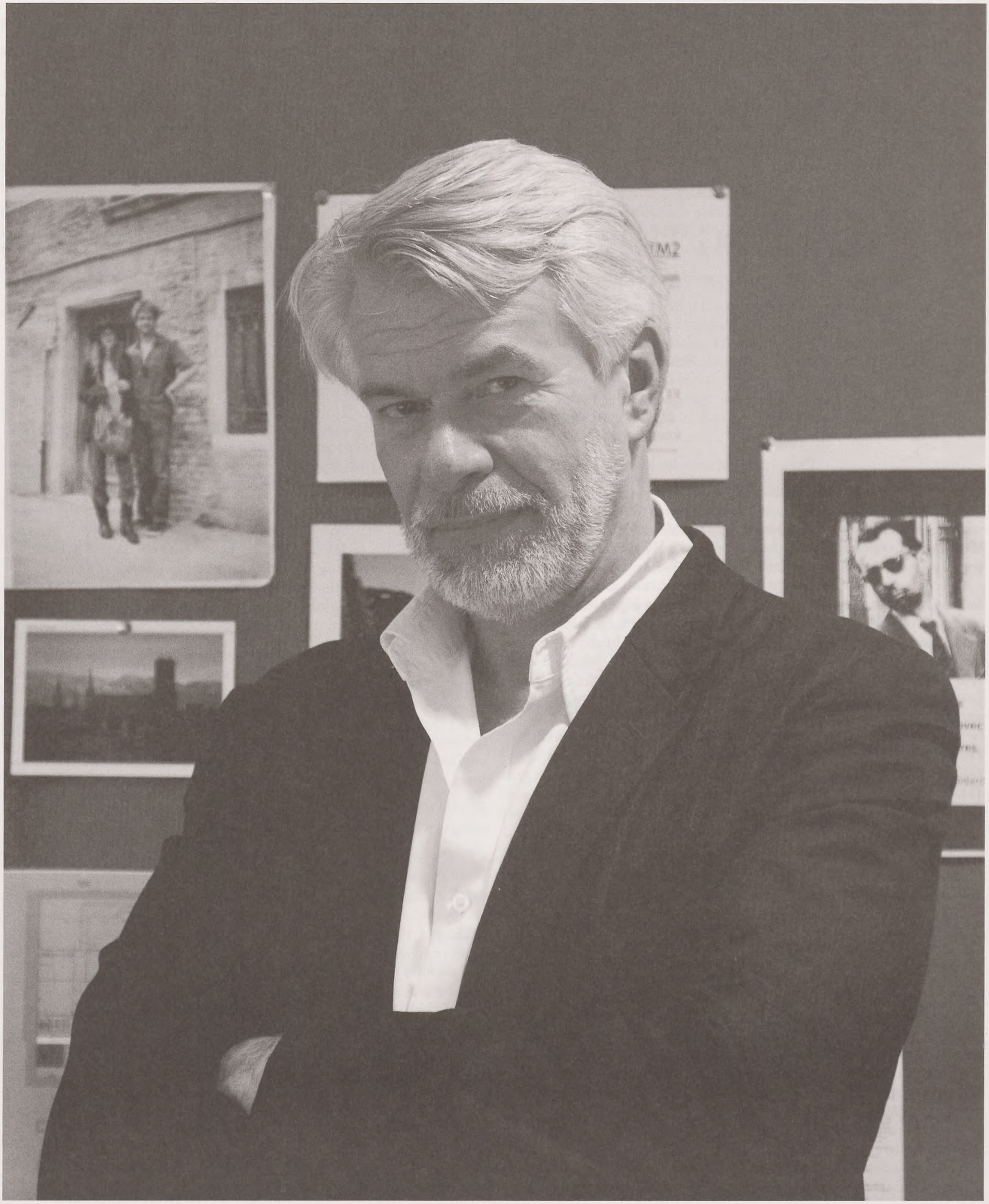
CD: I think fashion is often one of the most interesting forms of industrial design. In Europe we refer to vases and pots and pans as 'containers'. So for me fashion became a form of industrial design, a form of 'containment'.

RC: So if clothes are a 'container' for the body, part of industrial design, what sparked your early interest in Japanese fashion?

CD: The way that Japanese designers make things is so intricate. From the way that Issey Miyake went about trying to work with the fold, or the way that Rei Kawakubo and Yohji Yamamoto worked with silhouettes to create a form of deconstructed fashion, Japanese designers tried to understand what fashion was as a body piece, and from that, what sculpture really was. And without Japanese designers there would have been no Belgian designers. When Martin Margiela started working in fashion, and Walter Van Beirendonck, who was one of the Antwerp Six[2] in the 1980s, they were enormously interested in what the Japanese were doing.

RC: Are there other influences that also inspired your interest in textiles and fashion?

CD: Well, my mother taught clothes making, so I was used to looking at mannequins as objects, and as an essential part of her work. I now collect mannequins, and recently bought one that Miyake used in the 1980s. They present a form of sculpture and fetish, with their unique shapes and structural forms.



RC: Do you see other art museums becoming more interested in fashion and textiles?

CD: Textile exhibitions are proliferating. At Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art you have 'String Theory: Focus on Contemporary Australian Art' (2013) and across Europe there have been numerous textile shows in museums: Raven Row's exhibition of textiles collected by Seth Siegelaub in London, for example.[3]

Traditionally, textiles have been taboo for many art museums – even at the Bauhaus, in which textiles and the decorative arts played a central role, the women weavers were discriminated against. At the Tate we're working with the Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris, to present the work of Sonia Delaunay. We'll also continue to work with Richard Tuttle, who, as well as being a famous minimalist sculptor, is a scholar who has written extensively on Indonesian textiles. His sculpture from 1972 on was very influenced by textiles from the Asia-Pacific region, and this has never been explored. In 2015 we'll do a major exhibition at the Tate and Whitechapel Gallery on Tuttle's interest in textiles. And this is where Australia can play an important role, as hopefully the wealth of Australian Indigenous textiles can be revealed.

RC: Do you think there's a reluctance to examine connections between the contemporary art world and other influences?

CD: The visual arts are like a sponge, soaking up everything without giving anything back. Art critic and theorist Rosalind E. Krauss once said that while we soak up everything it's no longer possible to create a cultural space in the visual arts because the whole idea of critique is becoming hollow. And if you are not able to be discursive we struggle to allow these other influences in, whether it is global art, ethnographic material, or the hybrid museum. We block out the things that we don't know or don't fully understand.

RC: Why is there less critical discourse?

CD: I think the association of art and globalised financial streams is a reason why discourse is not welcome any more, because you might offend certain channels. This is a serious problem.

At the Tate Modern we now depend on private donors and self-generated income for 70 per cent of funding, with the public sector contributing approximately 30 per cent. This is a worldwide trend. So we are forced to rethink this partnership, and negotiate every aspect of public and private support.

We are part of a society in which financial value is taking over from symbolic value, which is extremely dangerous. This is becoming a major challenge for museums. How do we work with the private sector, and how does critical discourse fit in because we are no longer allowed to say when something is good or bad?

RC: As the director of a major institution, how do you chart that course – to introduce new ideas, take risks, and present new perspectives that may challenge and confront?

CD: You have to constantly negotiate everything, and make sure your judgment is transparent. Transparent in the sense that you don't block people off, because what we do too much in the art world is say 'listen, you don't understand it anyway'. The way we use language, the way we use discourse, and the way we use critical judgment since the 1960s and 1970s has become narrowed, and we have to open things up again. And transparent because there are still collectors who are fascinated by this tension between symbolic and financial value, which has always been one of the major characteristics of the art world and the avant-garde.

I don't think it helps for curators who are constantly confronted by patrons, donors and trustees to say one thing in public and another in private. We are paid to have our opinions. It's very important to keep saying 'this is not good, and that's the reason why it's not good'. You have to build an argument, and say 'I think it's not good for the following reasons'.

RC: There's a recent trend for design, fashion, architecture, and other related artforms to be increasingly prominent in the art museum. Is this a good thing?

CD: It's why the hybrid museum is becoming very important. This is the sort of thing that Walter Van Beirendonck has done in his exhibition at the RMIT Design Hub by including objects borrowed from Ray Hughes Gallery in Sydney, among others, alongside objects from his own personal collection.

It's this sort of expanded model that, for me, makes the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT), and the history of the exhibition absolutely essential. One of the things that Australia will have to look at is the reception, or post-reception, of the APT, which is much more important than anybody fully realises. In twenty years, the significance of the APT will be much more widely understood.

RC: The APT has played a major role both in Australia and as part of a global explosion of international mega-exhibitions since the 1990s. As well as its focus on our immediate neighbours in the Asia-Pacific region, it also created opportunities for the Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA), Brisbane, to acquire some of the works commissioned for the exhibitions for its permanent collection. What are the impacts of this model?

CD: Working at the Museum Boijmans, I borrowed numerous works from GOMA over many years. A public collection is all about public memory. The whole idea of a public collection is the right of an internal comeback. I don't see it as a repository, but as an imaginative site that produces events, which over time are always different.

RC: Since the late 1980s we have seen the evolution of the nomadic curator and artist, largely in line with the proliferation of international mega-exhibitions and biennales. You, however, have consciously worked within the art institution rather than as a roving curator. Why?

CD: I was always lucky to work in institutions. I think institutions are incredibly important. Whether it's a very tiny, non-commercial, small alternative space, or a large one, I don't care. It's so important to create and develop an institution. The biennial plays a different role: it's a platform for change, but it's temporary. Part of the reason for the APT's success is that it's embedded within an institutional structure. And for this reason it is able to keep an archive, and to continue to present and recontextualise that history.

1 Chris Dercon travelled to Melbourne at the invitation of Naomi Milgrom AO to open 'Walter Van Beirendonck: Dream the World Awake' (2013) at the RMIT Design Hub. This interview took place in Melbourne on 16 July 2013.

2 The Antwerp Six includes Dirk Bikkembergs, Ann Demeulemeester, Walter Van Beirendonck, Dries Van Noten, Dirk Van Saene and Marina Yee.

3 These shows include 'Decorum: Carpets and Tapestries by Artists' at the Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris, 11 October 2013 – 9 February 2014; 'The Stuff That Matters: Textiles Collected by Seth Siegelaub for the CSROT' (2012), at Raven Row, London; 'Textiles: Open Letter' (2013), at Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach; and 'To Open Eyes: Art and Textiles from the Bauhaus to Today' at Kunsthalle Bielefeld, 17 November 2013 – 16 February 2014. It should also be noted in an Australian public collection context that the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, holds an internationally recognised extensive collection of textiles from South-East Asia, particularly Indonesia.

OPPOSITE
Chris Dercon

Mestia Airport, Georgia, 2010
Courtesy J. Mayer H. Architects

FROM DEVELOPING AN AIRPORT IN A NIGHT TO CREATING NEW UNDERSTANDINGS OF NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ADJACENCIES, ARCHITECT JÜRGEN MAYER H. AIMS TO REASSESS THE FAMILIAR THROUGH HIS DESIGNS.

ARCHITECTURE AS NARRATIVE AND CATALYST: JÜRGEN MAYER'S GEORGIA

NADIM SAMMAN

Star architect Jürgen Mayer H. is best known for his Metropol Parasol, a futuristic canopy that transformed Seville, Spain, putting the city squarely on the contemporary architecture map. But regenerating one town through a 'statement' project was just a warm-up. Mayer has since played a key role in a national architectural revolution. Championed by the former president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, Mayer's quirky designs for a border checkpoint, airport, train station, highway rest stops and much more have changed the face of this country. His newest project (the world's tallest sculpture, no less) has recently been completed in Lazika on the Black Sea coast. High time, then, to sit down with the German architect to discuss his Georgian portfolio.[1]

Nadim Samman: How many projects have you completed in Georgia?

Jürgen Mayer H.: We made about thirty to forty designs, with twelve built now or under construction.

NS: Does this figure include your highway rest stops?

JMH: No. There are to be twenty rest stops.

NS: Why so much in Georgia?

JMH: The initial project came through the government, who saw our project in Seville – the Metropol Parasol – and thought it would be a good reference for a new public space for social and cultural transformation in Tbilisi. We made a couple of schemes but in the end our designs weren't realised. It was a starting point for a great exchange and collaboration that properly began with our new border station at Sarpi on the Black Sea coast.

NS: A lot of your buildings are for border or transit zones. How did you think about this function and approach related social issues through your designs?

JMH: Agriculture is a big part of the Georgian economy and in the future there will be strong development in the tourism sector – along the Black Sea coast and in the mountain villages. Transit is also a very important business – from Azerbaijan to Turkey and the Black Sea, and to Europe. So a new train station, a border checkpoint or rest stop is likely to be the only architecture that one encounters while passing through.

The government really saw these projects as places to meet, to introduce local culture to people in transit, and provide a social place for the community. The rest stops have markets and even art and craft rooms. At Gori, for example, some couples have already asked to hold their wedding festivities in the rest-stop buildings. Whereas the Sarpi checkpoint is unique because it has conference rooms and terraces overlooking the sea and countryside. Turkish and Georgian people only need to bring their ID cards to enter, so it functions as a meeting place instead of a site of separation between two nations. Such initiatives communicate a new understanding of neighbourhoods and adjacencies.

NS: You're talking about functionality. What about style?

JMH: There is a very sculptural aspect in our work, and an idea about the future – maybe a lost future that is recaptured or re-enacted somehow. There are also metaphorical or programmatic ideas that trigger aesthetic approaches. But there is more than one reading in each project. Designing is a messy process.

NS: Did you take into account the built environment and, more generally, Georgia's historical architecture?

JMH: There's actually nothing built around the rest stops and very little historic architecture around the border station – just some houses in the hills. So a new identity arrives with these constructions. When we worked in Mestia – in a very old village context – we looked into the characteristic pitched roofs of the area and the historic stone towers. This research informed the finished structure. At other times we really want to be contra, pushing a certain estrangement factor that forces viewers to look again at what we've made and to appropriate it for themselves.

NS: In terms of the idiosyncratic inspirations for these buildings and your ongoing interests, what are your unique concerns?

JMH: Architecture usually comes with a positive idea about the future, because you only invest if you expect to produce a positive change. In Georgia and Seville there was the idea of a different dynamic, a different meta-story that we wanted to tell. In Seville the new structure was supposed to completely elevate the city. Georgia was similar: we tried to use architecture as a catalyst to bring

people into public space. This agenda was complemented by our concern for pushing the limits of architecture.

NS: These building are completely new to the general public. Perhaps even shocking. How do you temper the alien factor? Or is it important that your buildings are alien?

JMH: If you can successfully explain what the references are when you design something then people are capable of understanding and, more often than not, willing to learn and get excited about 'the new'. They can embrace eye-opening moments about how a found condition can be transformed into a state-of-the-art contemporary interpretation. In Seville, for example, there were huge trees in the neighbouring plazas whose forms became references for our Metropol Parasol. The undulating stone roof of the nearby cathedral was also a touchstone. But I do like the idea of alienation, of familiar things being reassessed.

NS: President Saakashvili has said, quoting Winston Churchill: 'We shape our buildings and thereafter they shape us'. At least in terms of quantity, Saakashvili has been your most significant patron to date. How did your relationship develop?

JMH: I saw him on most of my trips, even if only for a short talk. He was the initiator of an extreme and fascinating change in the country, one that has perhaps slowed down a bit now. We are one of the few studios to be part of this transformation and it was exciting to see how public institutions can discover the sociocultural potentials of architecture.

NS: How has the recent change of leadership affected your ongoing projects there?

JMH: We have four projects, one being the international train station. We're more involved with our new pier sculpture in Lazika on the Black Sea coast.

NS: Have any state projects been cancelled since the leadership change?

JMH: No projects, but I know that the idea of building a new metropolis in Lazika for 500,000 people was cancelled by the new Prime Minister, Bidzina Ivanishvili.

NS: And yet it's reported that the new Prime Minister wants to build a Guggenheim,[2] which would suggest a commitment to statement architecture.

JMH: That's news to me. Well, his house was built by Shin Takamatsu so he does like contemporary architecture. This was perhaps the first contemporary architecture piece in the country for a long time.

NS: Rewinding to Lazika, I read that the city was supposed to be for 1.5 million but Georgia's population is not growing. The sculpture has just been completed. Does it matter to you if it crowns Georgia's newest city or just stands there on its own?

JMH: It has a special aura when you imagine that it now sits, lonely, on the Black Sea coast, glowing at night. There is a kind of resort town a couple of kilometres away, so it might be part of the beach culture of that region. But imagine it sitting in front of a big city like Barcelona in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea ... I would like to see it alive for the people.

NS: What are you thoughts on 'instant city' projects in general?

JMH: We don't come from a culture where this is a big issue. We come from a context of modest growth, maybe managing a status quo and sometimes even shrinking cities rather than overpopulation. The challenge is really important, and it happens all over the world where new homes have been initiated and promoted and where big cities may offer new chances to make your living. You can build a lot of innovative infrastructure when you start from scratch – driverless cars or a completely new electric power infrastructure. How much that actually adds to an emotional anchoring of people to a site I don't know.

In projects like these you need to make sure that there is something people can be proud of, something unique to the place. Our Lazika pier was one of these first keystones to create a special place.

NS: Looking at its design, there are striking similarities with the Metropol Parasol. You mentioned that the parasol was inspired by trees. Was there a unique formal rationale behind producing that sculpture for the Lazika site?

JMH: When you have worked for a period of time you create a body of work, a sort of creative primordial soup from which projects emerge. I wanted to give Metropol Parasol a little offspring, so that it didn't just stand by itself, so it could become a set of projects. We wanted to create a splash moment for Lazika and it won't be the last time that we use this grid-like structure. This universal orthogonal grid is built inside an amorphous invisible envelope and continues conceptually outside the materialised form.

NS: Other foreign architects have produced signature projects for Georgia, like Massimiliano Fuksas, Shin Takamatsu, UNStudio and others. One critic has said that these buildings appear exotic and parachuted, and that today there are seemingly no important Georgian buildings designed by Georgian architects. Is this a problem?

JMH: This is a moment of transition. Part of what we are doing is creating design concepts and then collaborating with local offices to realise a contemporary architectural language, and to research how to build it. It is part of a professional process – bringing different expertise into the country, generating discourse. Before the recent architecture boom in Georgia there wasn't much interesting architecture happening. Now you have young offices cropping up.

NS: In terms of the peculiarities of working within Georgia's contemporary situation, you must have to operate with a certain degree of reactivity when dealing with what is thrown at you.

JMH: It was a great testing ground. A lot of ideas that we couldn't have built in such a short time, or in general, were tested and we could see what their potentials were. We were lucky that it was made easy for us to participate in this construction and remodelling of the country. It was a very special situation.

NS: I read somewhere that you had one night to design the Mestia Queen Tamar Airport.

JMH: I was in Venice at the Architecture Biennale when I got the call to design the airport. I think it was 24 August 2010. They wanted a small airport designed by tomorrow. So we designed it the next morning, it was approved the following day, the construction drawings were delivered in two weeks and it was built three months after that.

NS: In the history of state-commissioned airports that's probably the fastest ever. Is anything lost when working at this speed?

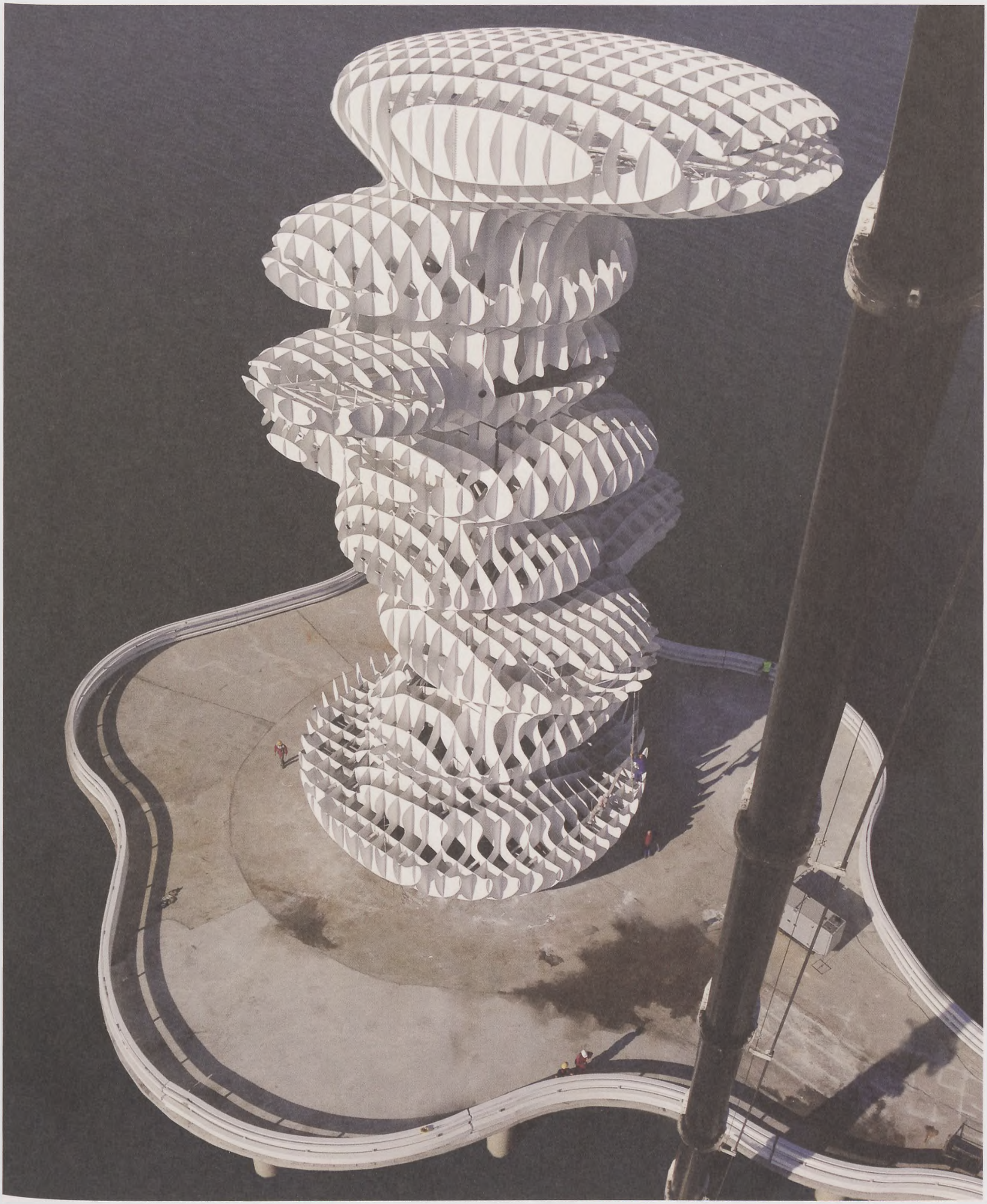
JMH: In Georgia there is still a lot of handmade work. When you do a curve here in Germany the construction company says it costs such and such more. In Georgia nobody really cares how many curves you have because they just have the manpower to do it.

NS: You spoke about your primordial soup of ideas. Now that you have realised so many ideas in Georgia, have any of your experiences there fed into your European projects?

JMH: The experience of mobility and architecture with our rest stops in Gori and Tbilisi, the border checkpoint in Sarpi and the airport in Mestia gave us a great insight into issues that we were exploring with our Audi Urban Future Award, and with the projects we are developing for Autostadt in Wolfsburg, in 2013.

1 This interview took place at Savignyplatz, Berlin, in December 2012.
2 Javier Pes, 'Billionaire art collector set to be next Georgian Prime Minister', *The Art Newspaper*, 2 October 2012.

OPPOSITE
Lazika Pier Sculpture, Georgia, 2012
Courtesy J. Mayer H. Architects
Photograph Metal Yapi Eng&Const.



AKRAM ZAATARI DESCRIBES HIS POIGNANT VIDEO *LETTER TO A REFUSING PILOT* AS A THOUGHT IN THE FORM OF AN ARTWORK. HERE, HE DISCUSSES THE ROLE OF REFUSALS, THE WEALTH OF THE ARCHIVE AND BEING 'READY' TO RECEIVE STORIES.

FILM AS A FORM OF WRITING: AKRAM ZAATARI

QUINN LATIMER

Akram Zaatari's film installation for the Lebanese Pavilion at the 2013 Venice Biennale addressed the artist's recurring concerns – image-making, memory, the archival impulse, media and war, and the flux between literature and film – with poignant accuracy. *Letter to a refusing pilot*, 2013, began with a rumour about an Israeli airforce pilot who refused to strike a school for boys in Lebanon in the early 1980s, when the artist was sixteen. How Zaatari, one of the founders of the Arab Image Foundation,[1] addressed this rumour as an adult, and what he found out, sets the stage for his astonishing new film. Quinn Latimer and Zaatari recently discussed this work – in email letters, of course.[2]

Quinn Latimer: In your film's title, *Letter to a refusing pilot*, you do not use the pilot's name, but keep him as a kind of general cipher, known only by his profession and the action he refused to take. Were you interested in keeping him as a fable-like character, with the moral tenor that such fiction often carries?

Akram Zaatari: The film is metaphorically addressed to Hagai Tamir. Had it been addressed literally I could have simply written it in an email. It is not a direct message to him, but a thought that took the form of an artwork. Most of my works are testimonies of where I come from and a trace I care to leave for the future. Let's call it alternative writing that uses 'letters'. I've done many of this category, namely *Letter to Samir*, 2008, *Red chewing gum*, 2000, and *Time capsule, Kassel*, 2012.

A fable-like character is a nice description. There are many refusing pilots in Israel and the film is about them too. It is a coincidence that I learnt about Hagai's refusal and that I am connected to his refusal through my father and the public school he founded in Ain el Helweh. It was one of those stories that you keep for life. And the fact that Hagai and I met, and how and when, is amazing and almost unbelievable. I do believe that you need to be 'ready' so that stories start coming to you. Without my *Conversation with an imagined Israeli filmmaker named Avi Mograbi*, 2012, this story would not have reached me. And I am sure that *Letter to a refusing pilot* will lead me to more stories.

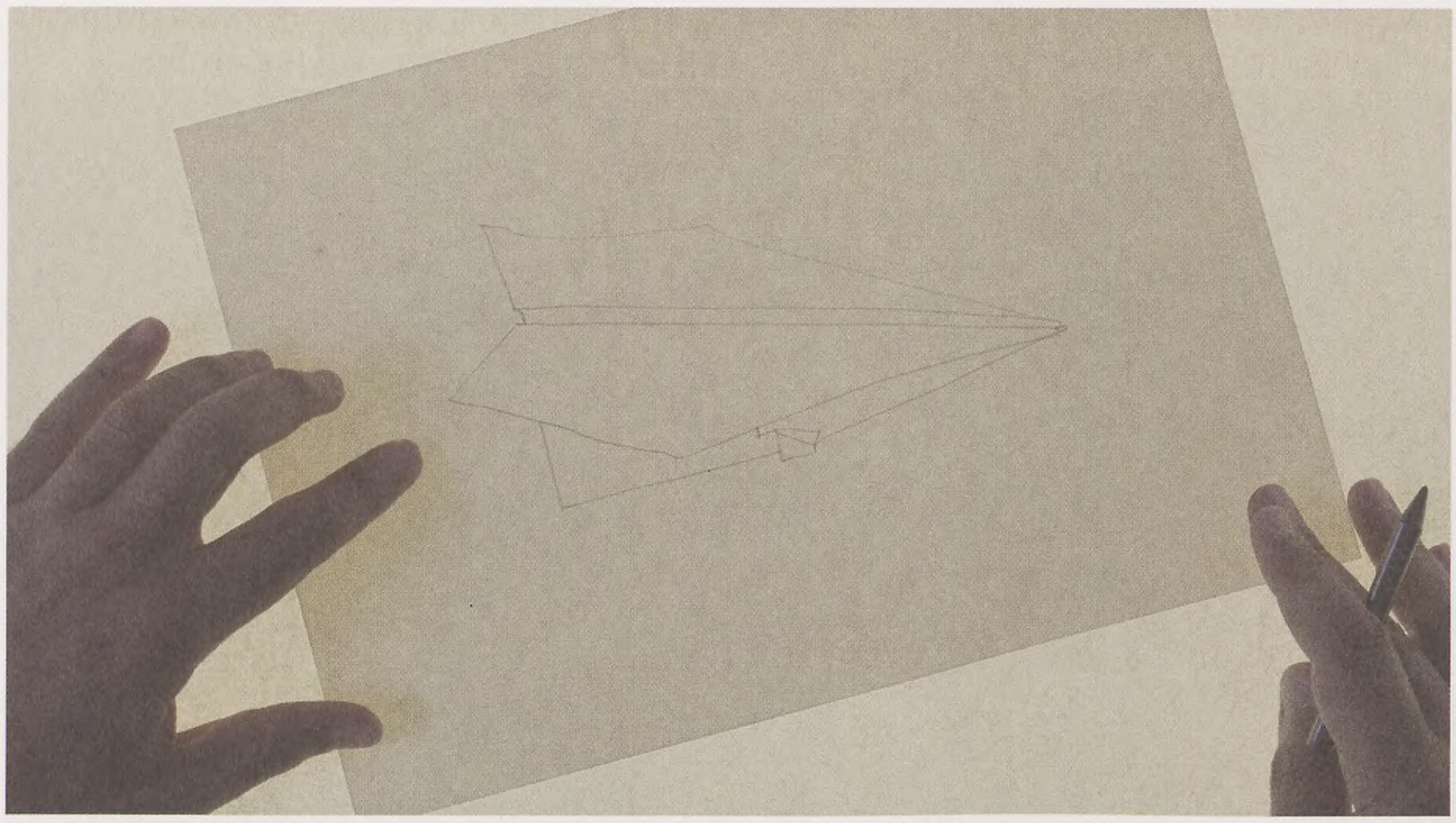
QL: Forms of non-visual narrative-making seem to preoccupy you, from the faxes and emails that fill *This day*, 2003, to the letter, the rumour and the journal entries of *Letter to a refusing pilot*. The latter feels strangely literary, with its invocation of Albert Camus's 'Letters to a German Friend' (1945). Why did you choose to call this film a 'letter', and what do you see as the relationship between literary and cinematic modes in your work?

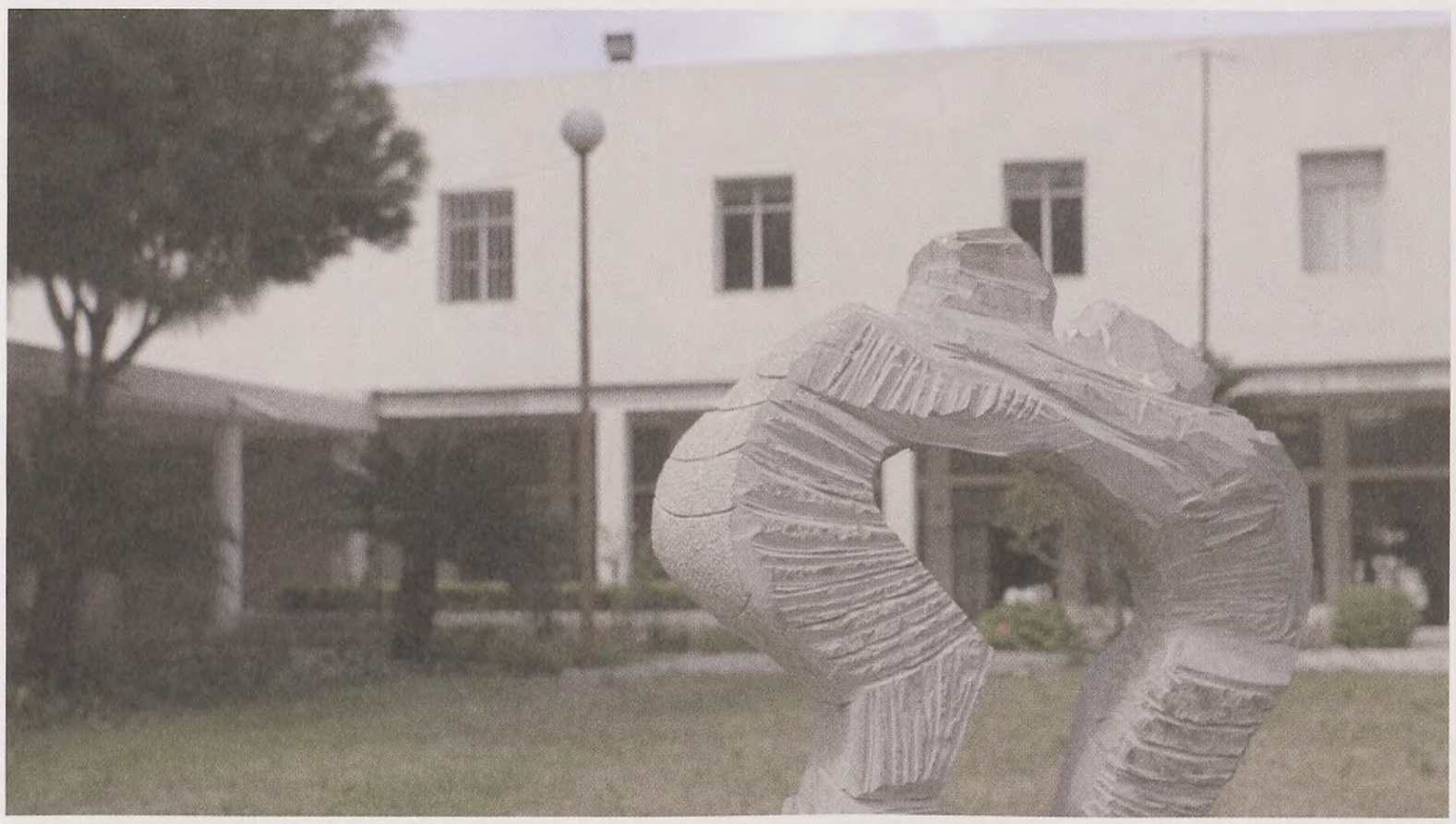
AZ: Film is a form of writing and films could be letters in the direct sense in pre-Skype times, or in the poetic sense, as in Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil* (1983). In the 1970s, when communication between different parts of Lebanon was difficult, people relied on audiotape recordings to communicate with each other, and later they used video.

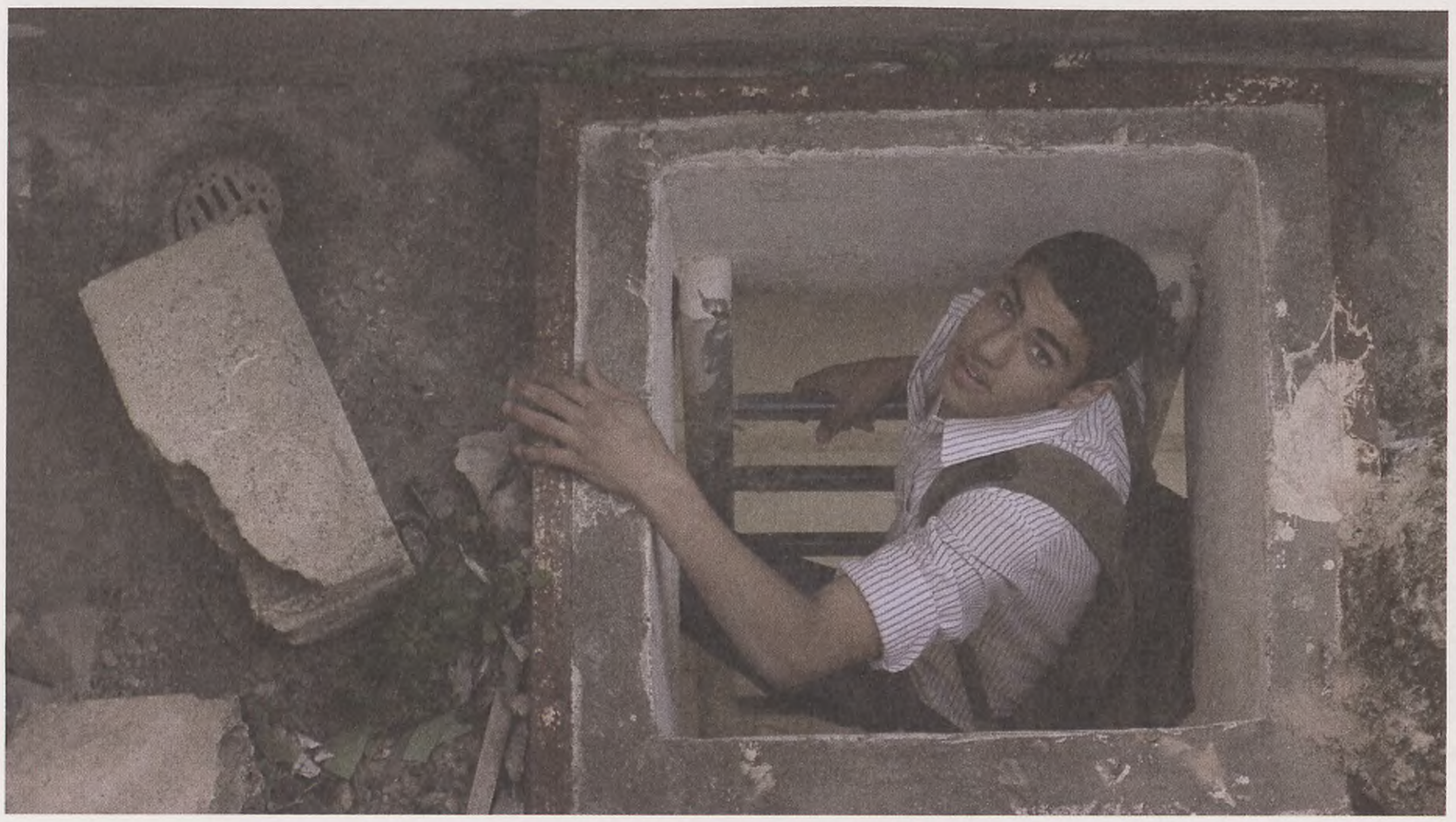
More and more I am interested in literature. I envy literature for being able to stay abstract – when authors need to – without being tagged abstract or experimental. In film you can't avoid being labelled the moment you go off the narrative track. It's a real loss for film as an evolving language, I would say. What would save film are non-rigid forms like literature (poetry mainly and maybe philosophy), dance and music, precisely for the possibilities of non-narratives to exist.

QL: In your films, your own voice and commentary – real or quasi-fictional – is almost always offered in the form of writing, as words typed out on the screen, whereas other voices are recorded live. Is this a conscious choice to make your voice, quite literally, a literary one?

AZ: I am a silent commentator, and I believe that writing communicates some of this reflective silence. Text is form too, and it introduces another voice that's not spoken, not read over the image. And if that content were managed differently, notably as text on screen, it could become a voice embedded in a picture, almost like a punctuation of a picture – a Godard lesson, I admit. This was even more visible in my very earliest works, such as the series 'Image + Sound' (1995–96), where I superimposed text over news images to give them a different meaning. A work like *Teach me*, 1995, is the best example of this attitude.







PAGES 370 and 372
Letter to a refusing pilot, 2013
Video stills, film and video installation, 16-mm film, 45 mins duration
Courtesy the artist and Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Beirut

QL: The archive is often the structure and subject of your films, as you move through its paraphernalia: photographs, letters, journals, newspapers, emails. When did you begin keeping your personal archive? When did you recognise its central place in your work?

AZ: I kept notes when I started taking photographs during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. At the time, the only way for me to keep a record was to write daily, and to take pictures of what happened, maybe because very little of it was being reported in the news. I never thought these were worth anything until I started working on *This day*, where I used images and recordings to talk about what triggers someone to record the banalities around them. In the 1980s people used chronicles like diaries; the early 2000s was when people used to circulate emails; and towards the end of 2008 people began to make blogs. Now people film with mobile phones and upload immediately to YouTube.

MORE AND MORE I AM INTERESTED IN LITERATURE. I ENVY LITERATURE FOR BEING ABLE TO STAY ABSTRACT – WHEN AUTHORS NEED TO – WITHOUT BEING TAGGED ABSTRACT OR EXPERIMENTAL. IN FILM YOU CAN'T AVOID BEING LABELLED THE MOMENT YOU GO OFF THE NARRATIVE TRACK. IT'S A REAL LOSS FOR FILM AS AN EVOLVING LANGUAGE, I WOULD SAY. WHAT WOULD SAVE FILM ARE NON-RIGID FORMS LIKE LITERATURE (POETRY MAINLY AND MAYBE PHILOSOPHY), DANCE AND MUSIC, PRECISELY FOR THE POSSIBILITIES OF NON-NARRATIVES TO EXIST.

QL: I am struck by the sound in your films, from heightened atmospheric tracks to composed music to older popular songs, and the roles it plays. There is that scene in the school's garden in *Letter to a refusing pilot*, as the camera rotates around the sculpture – the piano music plays a rather central role. Then there is the school bell, which is immediately familiar.

AZ: When I visited the school for preproduction, I was struck by the fact that the school bell had not changed. What a familiar, frightening sound! I am equally sensitive to sound as to images.

Since 2010, I have worked with the excellent composer Nadim Mishlawi on sound design. For this scene in the school I wanted to have two zones playing in parallel and a little bit out of synch. Nadim came up with this brilliant idea of using a primitive string instrument that has a constraining scale, and later added a few piano notes in parallel. It created a hypnotising effect.

QL: The idea of refusal in contemporary art and literature is a familiar one; yet in *Letter to a refusing pilot* this idea is not just metaphoric, but actual. How do you see the pilot's act of refusal reverberating in our current political and art-historical environment? Do you see the act of refusal as essential to your own work?

AZ: Indeed, my life has been full of refusals. I quit practising architecture to study film in a country that has no film industry. I quit television when I felt I was slipping into the art world. But this is my life, and I believe that a 'no' somewhere is a 'yes' elsewhere.

There are so many types of refusal. I am interested the least in refusal as a political statement, because then refusal becomes a media act. The role of an artist is to stir or shake certain convictions, not necessarily to provoke them. Hagai Tamir's refusal remained a secret because he wasn't sure what to do with it; it probably made him afraid to be seen as betraying his country or the military. It is not easy to say *no* in times of war! His refusal was not informed by political motivation, but was almost a rebellion against oneself. This is an officer raised on military values of a certain generation, trained to defend the State of Israel, and all of a sudden his mind tells him 'do not bomb'. It's amazing to be able to listen to yourself in such a situation – you are flying high above enemy territory, engaging in a huge invasive operation, and you say no to bombing a target that you suspect could be a school. That Hagai decided not to tell anyone about his refusal to bomb, except close friends, until twenty years later is so human and so indicative of the complexity of being in a war. What I like about the story is that it takes us away from predictable argumentation about the war between Lebanon and Israel.

1 The Arab Image Foundation is a non-profit organisation established in Beirut in 1997. It collects and archives images from the nineteenth century to today, and produces exhibitions and publications.

2 This interview took place via email during October–November 2013.

SHAUN GLADWELL TAKES A RUNNING LEAP OFF MIKE PARR'S UNTITLED SCULPTURE. RUINS, ICEBERGS, WAVES AND A JUMP – GLADWELL ENGAGES WITH PARR IN A WHOLLY UNIQUE WAY.

ARTIST'S CHOICE: MIKE PARR'S UNTITLED

SHAUN GLADWELL

If architecture for Goethe is 'frozen music' then at some point that sonic structure exploded into shards of feedback and distortion. One of these sharp fragments landed near the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW), Sydney, in the form of a sculpture: Mike Parr's *Untitled*, 1988 (on loan from the John Kaldor Collection).

Moments after seeing the work for the first time, I was taking a hard run at it and launching into the air. But before getting into this, a quick note on how to find Parr's work.

It's best to sneak up on the AGNSW from behind, the Woolloomooloo side. It's the informal approach – no neoclassical façade appearing through the trees. Parr's sculpture flanks the gallery's offices, near the land bridge, a giant wedge rising from the cut grass, rendered in Naples yellow concrete.

Prima facie, the wedge looks less like sculpture than its immediate neighbours, the William Tucker, *Prometheus (for Franz Kafka)*, 1989–90, and Henry Moore, *Reclining figure: Angles*, 1980. In this company, Parr's work could be mistaken for the foundations of an aborted building. But we *know* it was designed this way – born as a ruin, or, as Robert Smithson would have it, a 'ruin in reverse'. I think of the work as embracing the aesthetic of the future. It's what so many urban forms will look like not so long from now – fragments and chunks, half buried and obscured. I can't resist these Ozymandian reflections before the wedge. The well-maintained surrounds throw Parr's raw and weathered aesthetic into sharper relief.

Up close, it's possible to see the handling of the concrete rendering – tactile and brittle. My internal protractor guesses the wedge is angled at about 30 degrees. A second, smaller, wedge branches from the first, and without any specific reason, there seems to be a complex subterranean volume, a sculptural netherworld, and all I'm seeing is the iceberg's tip.

Perhaps this work is the antipodean version of the enigmatic monoliths of Arthur C. Clarke's novel and Stanley Kubrick's film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). (The film depiction of the monolith, or Tycho Magnetic Anomaly 1 as per Clarke, looked suspiciously like a John McCracken or David Smith sculpture.) Parr's piece is an irregular monolith and yet just as esoteric. The past, present and future have collapsed into this concrete anti-monument. It's one piece in a giant ontological jigsaw puzzle that we will never completely understand.

Untitled is closely related to Parr's overall aesthetic: direct, unapologetic, clear, at times violently confronting, and yet politically sensitive. I imagine the sculpture critically 'wedging' itself within a discourse of various 'isms', from formalism to minimalism and even specific architectural styles such as brutalism. All this is evident in the work, however it's the relationship to the viewer's own body that is something also very Parr and must be experienced empirically with the sculpture en plein air.

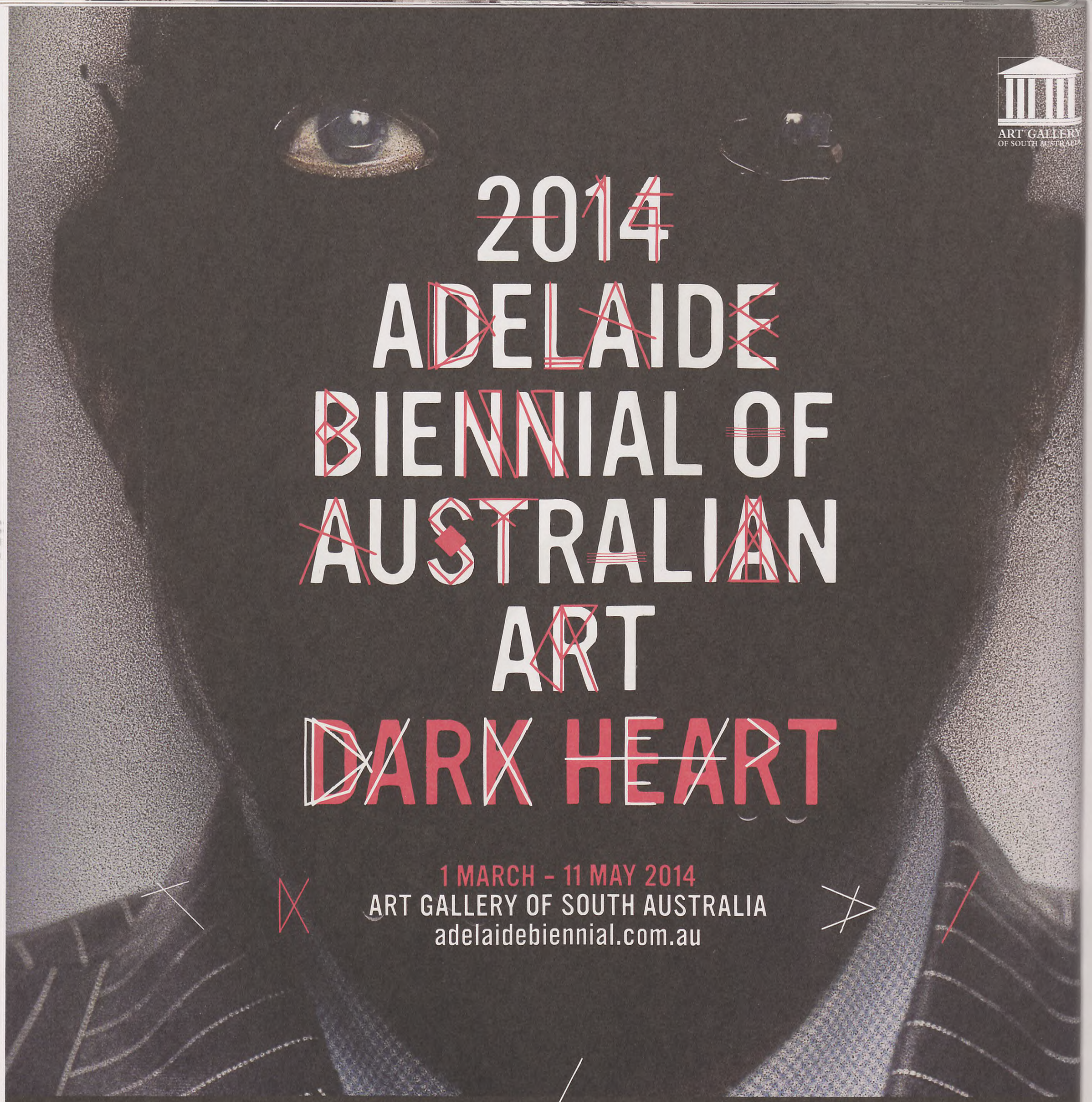
On occasion, the work has made me hungry. From a distance it's easy to see the sculpture as a giant slice of cake buttered with lemon icing, or a slab of polenta. Clearly, my stomach drives these hallucinations only moments before I've reached the AGNSW cafe.

Ruins, cake, polenta, a monolith, perhaps the reductive cross-section of a breaking wave and potentially an extreme sports facility, it's the deceptive simplicity of this work that allows it to perpetually become other. It is foremost a sculpture with only symbolic function; however, others will want to actually 'use' the wedge and find new functions for it. Mountain-bike riders will immediately perceive this sculpture as a launch ramp, screaming to be jumped from; the *traceur* and *traceuse* of parkour will read it as a runway to the sky; and, if set in a paved, smooth space, then without a doubt skateboarders would be all over it as well.

I didn't hesitate when spotting the sculpture for the first time many years ago. I gave myself a decent 10-metre sprint, building up enough speed to mount the flat spine of the wedge, which now looked like a steep gangplank, and launch from the top, veering away from the AGNSW towards Mrs Macquaries Chair. I also consciously launched feet first, not the headfirst position of Yves Klein's 'leap into the void' as, unlike Klein, I was doing this for real and wanted some chance of survival.

Now, after many jumps, some of which were on mountain bikes, I cannot dissociate this artist's surname from 'parkour'. My next statement might be totally misunderstood, but it's possible to get a 'serious rush' from this sculpture (and at least one second and 2 metres of airtime). As in so many of Parr's works, there is a clear connection *from* the work *to* the body of the viewer – a visceral path. Also indicative of Parr's overall oeuvre is the fact that *Untitled* offers no soft landing.

OPPOSITE
Shaun Gladwell with Mike Parr's *Untitled*, 1988
Concrete, dimensions variable
Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, Sydney, on loan from the John Kaldor Collection
Photograph Jamie North



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Tony Garifalakis *Mob Rule* (detail), 2013, enamel on offset print, courtesy the artist and Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide.

2

AND

SOL LEWITT: A WALL-DRAWING RETROSPECTIVE

SUSAN CROSS

The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA), a performing and visual arts centre housed in a sprawling nineteenth-century industrial complex in rural New England, is ushering in its sixth year of a twenty-five-year retrospective of the wall drawings of Sol LeWitt. Featuring 105 of the more than 1260 wall drawings the artist created over his forty-year career, the exhibition is the largest presentation of these works to date – and certainly the longest running for a temporary exhibition. If these first years are any indication, however, the twenty-five years will feel more fleeting than anyone expected. The museum's Director, Joseph Thompson, has explained that with plans for the exhibition to remain on view for a quarter of a century, the project demands a reassessment by the next generation, who will decide if the show will continue (should the lenders agree). Ostensibly the lenders should have no issue as LeWitt made clear the fact that he 'like[d] the idea that the same work can exist in two or more places at the same time'.[1] And certainly I cannot imagine that the exhibition – and LeWitt's groundbreaking work – would lose its popularity in general (it has become a pilgrimage site of sorts for an international audience), or even its particular relevance to MASS MoCA. There is hardly a young artist whose work the museum has exhibited who is not indebted to LeWitt in some way, either directly or indirectly, through his art, writings, or his quiet but legendary generosity.

Yet, in thinking about what it means to mount an exhibition slated to last twenty-five years, one the museum describes as 'semipermanent', I realise that the somewhat paradoxical concept reflects the very flexibility of LeWitt's thoughts on the nature of his wall drawings (as well as the contradictions that LeWitt allowed himself). In correspondence with curator Andrea Miller-Keller in the early 1980s, LeWitt responded to a question about the drawings' temporary character by stating in his straightforward but sometimes cryptic way: 'The difference between temporary and permanent is unclear'.[2] Even earlier, in a text titled 'Wall Drawings', published in *Artsmagazine* in 1970, LeWitt wrote: 'The wall drawing is a permanent installation, until destroyed. Once something is done, it cannot be undone'.[3] And so it is true for the exhibition at MASS MoCA. But the thought of painting over the remarkable assemblage of wall drawings is somewhat unimaginable – given both its significance and the incredible amount of work and skill that went into producing it. Sixty-five artists and student interns, including many draftsmen who had worked with LeWitt for decades and one who came out of retirement to install a single drawing (a homage to Eva Hesse and the first introduction of the not-straight line into LeWitt's work), spent a total of six months installing the drawings (and forging lifelong connections, making career-altering discoveries, and even falling in love – something that has happened over many a LeWitt installation). More significantly, the late artist himself was the curator and designer, having spent six months carefully choosing which drawings to include, and painstakingly choreographing the installation plan in a scale model of the museum. Though LeWitt died just a few months before the installation began and did not live to see it, the exhibition is his vision. Like the individual wall drawings that were conceived to be executed by others, the plan for the exhibition was also completed by others – overseen by LeWitt's long-time draftsmen who were interpreting a lifetime of instructions much in the way they had for years faithfully interpreted instructions for single drawings.

Installed on three floors of a building at the very centre of the museum complex – a location LeWitt chose – the exhibition is roughly chronological, with the earliest drawings in pencil on the ground floor, his fresco-like ink washes on the second, and his bold acrylic works on the top floor. This third floor also includes the somewhat illusionistic, atmospheric graphite works that LeWitt made in the last years of his life and that seem to bring his practice – and the show – back to the very beginning. Walking through the show is almost like having LeWitt as one's guide. His layout, the connections he made between drawings by his choice of location, placing a particular work next to or even above or below another on a different floor, provides numerous insights into his thought process. For those of us who thought we already knew LeWitt's work, this show includes countless surprises.

So, how might we bear painting over these drawings? Paula Cooper, LeWitt's long-time gallerist, felt a similar sense of discomfort when faced with the prospect of destroying LeWitt's very first wall drawing at the close of the inaugural exhibition at her gallery in 1968. As Cooper recalled, she could not bring herself to paint out the work according to LeWitt's instructions and implored the artist to do so himself.[4] Although, in the intervening decades, LeWitt's work has taught us to rethink many of our assumptions about art, its value, and how it is made (and remade), his ideas are still quite radical. It is not unusual for museum visitors to ask us how we will transport the walls at the close of the show ...

Sol LeWitt: A Wall-Drawing Retrospective, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, North Adams, until 2033; **Sol LeWitt**, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 20 February – 3 August 2014.

1 Excerpts from a correspondence, 1981–83, in Adachiara Zevi (ed.), *Sol LeWitt Critical Texts*, I Libri di A.E.I.U.O., Rome, 1995, p. 109, reprinted from *Sol LeWitt: Wall Drawings 1968–84*, exhibition catalogue, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, and Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Conn., 1984.

2 ibid.

3 In 'Wall drawings', *Artsmagazine*, vol. 44, no. 6, April 1970, reprinted in Zevi, op. cit., pp. 91–2.

4 See Andrea Miller-Keller and Jock Reynolds, *Sol LeWitt: Twenty-Five Years of Wall Drawings, 1968–1993*, exhibition catalogue, Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., and University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1993, p. 42.

Wall drawing 579, 1988; *Wall drawing 614*, 1989; and *Wall drawing 692*, 1991
579 and *692*, colour ink wash; *614*, India ink
Installation view, 'Sol LeWitt: A Wall-Drawing Retrospective' (2008–33)
Courtesy MASS MoCA

Wall drawing 999, 2001, detail
Acrylic paint
Installation view, 'Sol LeWitt: A Wall-Drawing Retrospective' (2008–33)
Collection of Thomas Weisel
Courtesy MASS MoCA

ROBERTO CAPUCCI

MITCHELL OAKLEY SMITH

Fashion as an artistic form hasn't traditionally found a place in museums and galleries, save for historic costume and textile collections. Much like art, not all designers warrant curatorial attention, despite the large audiences fashion exhibitions generate, the result of celebrity pulling power and attractive eye candy. But that's not to say that fashion belongs solely in the commercialised retail sector, that it can't escape the criticality lacking in its own construction, but rather that for a designer's work to carry artistic weight outside the wardrobe, it must, again like an artwork, redefine its own form, communicating complex ideas and ideologies through fabric.

Thanks to the canonising of a small handful of designers – the histories of Coco Chanel and Christian Dior romanticised by the companies that own their names in today's market – it would seem that contemporary designers draw on a small history of knowledge and ideas. The best are those whose innovation is influential beyond their own generation, whose ideas are reinterpreted, repurposed and, to put it bluntly, replicated. Unlike the art market, if a name isn't carried forward beyond its namesake founder's death in the fashion industry, it becomes largely, and quite quickly, unknown.

In its brilliant innovation, Roberto Capucci's work helped to define an era, and today his artistic output continues to influence contemporary designers, sometimes unknowingly. Capucci was part of a generation of designers, alongside Issey Miyake, in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s that employed pleating in sculptural forms to create gravity-defying, outrageously shaped pieces. He wasn't the first designer to invent pleating – French and Italian couturiers Madame Grès and Mariano Fortuny can be credited with that – but his artful approach and combination of techniques was to inform designers for years to come. A cursory glance at Capucci's archive of work is to recall pieces from designers in the past half-century that adopt and adapt his ideas: a 1984 silk crepe and silk gazar dress with sculptural ruffles is precursor to a 2012 Salvatore Ferragamo dress; a 1987 pleated silk lamé dress, buoyed by voluminous ruffles, is echoed in a 2012 design by local label Romance Was Born; his 1956 *Nove gonne* (nine skirts) silk taffeta dress, literally tiered layers of fabrics, might similarly have informed Viktor & Rolf's 2003 experimentation. Designers today might be using technological fabrics, such as neoprene, but the effect of a garment enveloping and framing the body is no different.

Born in Rome in 1930, Capucci was educated at the art schools Liceo Artistico and Accademia di Belle Arti. With no formal fashion education beyond apprenticeship offered at the time, it was not unusual to come to fashion from art, much like Capucci's French peer, Christian Dior, who worked as a gallerist for Alberto Giacometti and Salvador Dalí before moving into haute couture. Following the reign of surrealist designer Elsa Schiaparelli, Capucci was considered Italy's best designer, and certainly the youngest, opening his atelier in Rome at the age of twenty during the height of the city's cultural boom with the advent of contemporary filmmaking. It was Capucci's development of the 'box line' silhouette in 1958 – a square shape constructed of four flat panels seamed at the front, back and sides – that propelled the young designer's name into the international press, and his atelier to Paris in 1962.

Capucci's frustration with the changing nature of European fashion, driven increasingly by commercialisation, led him to return to Rome in 1968; over the next decade he was to realise the artistic worth of his creative output by experimenting with unusual materials, such as bamboo and raffia, making the art museum his new runway. In 1980, Capucci announced his official retirement from the haute couture calendar, instead presenting his works as installations where they could be truly appreciated. Beginning with 'Roberto Capucci l'Arte Nella Moda: Volume, Colore e Metodo' (1990) at the Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, Capucci's work has been displayed no less than six times in addition to the permanent display at the Roberto Capucci Foundation Museum, opened in 2007 in Florence's Villa Bardini, which holds close to 500 original pieces from his archive, as well as illustrations and a photo and media library, and for which the artist continues to create new work.

One of Capucci's most recent exhibitions, 'Roberto Capucci: Art Into Fashion' (2011) at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, was successful in highlighting the work made in the later part of his career – still from fabric like his dresses, but not intended for a wearer – and how the concepts of his clothing seem just as relevant when not presented on a body. It is particularly interesting to see the self-reflexive way in which Capucci now uses his earlier clothing as a platform for broader creative expression. His archive may not be *en vogue* in the sense of its relevance, but it offers a time capsule into the changing nature of European fashion, demonstrating how ideas are filtered; in the same way that Capucci employed the pleating of Grès and Fortuny and blew it up to enormous proportions, later designers would reverse his tactic, scaling it back, presenting it in new fabrics – pleating shaped for the modern wearer.

OPPOSITE
Nove gonne, 1956
Sculpture-dress, silk taffeta
Courtesy Roberto Capucci Foundation
Historical Archive, Rome

PAGE 384
Linee, 2007
Sculpture-dress, pleated taffeta
Courtesy Roberto Capucci Foundation
Museum, Florence
Photograph Claudia Primangeli

PAGE 385
Sculpture-dress, 1984, red crepe
silk, gazaar sleeves
Courtesy Roberto Capucci
Foundation Historical Archive, Rome
Photograph Claudia Primangeli

'Rudolf Stingel' (2013)
Installation view, Palazzo Grassi, Venice
Courtesy the artist
Photograph Stefan Altenburger

RUDOLF STINGEL: CARPET FETISH

CATHRYN DRAKE

Walking through the meandering chambers of Rudolf Stingel's carpeted Palazzo Grassi in Venice[1] was like a journey through the neurotic subconscious. Nearly every surface within its 5000 square metres was swathed in a colossal eighteenth-century replica Turkish carpet. The monumental hush made you feel like a tiny Alice in a Vermeer home, the rug's geometry reverberating, like the motif of a baroque symphony, around every corner.

From the columned neoclassical atrium a grand staircase led to the second floor, past a fresco by Alessandro Longhi, known as a mediocre portraitist, to where dreamy grisaille paintings by Stingel captured the Venetian archipelago under fog; one small canvas had sky blue emerging from a wash of atmospheric greys; another, a monumental triptych, invoked materialised mist, with textural crinkles rubbed out in spots. Other rooms held only single paintings, ghostly beacons calling to mind temporal windows. The patinas mimicked the blurry quality of memory, like deceitful veils playing hide-and-seek to confound recollection with desire. In some, liminal traces of arabesque ornamentation recalled Venice's past as a powerful trading port allowing passage of exotic luxury goods into Europe, some certainly adorning this very palace, like Stingel's Islamic carpet from the same era.

The complex structure of Palazzo Grassi generates suggestive interplay between its spaces. Viewed across the inner courtyard through symmetrical arched portals, for example, Stingel's shimmering triptych became the centrepiece of a multidimensional composition, the vermillion carpet and temple-like architecture acting as a stylistic frame. From other angles, carpeted portals outlined architectural features, and series of identical receding doorways formed dizzying diminishing perspectives. The whole could have been a portrait of the city, invoking the mingling of far-flung cultures or lovers engaged in clandestine assignations. Indeed, the construction of Palazzo Grassi coincided with the life of Casanova, who was born and baptised on the next street.

On another level, Stingel instigated a figure–ground reversal, transforming the background into a prominent subject and rendering the monotone paintings as negative spaces. This device was intensified on the top floor, where diminutive depictions of medieval religious icons levitated as if disembodied in overwhelming rooms. Portraits depicting ideal feminine and masculine beauty were blighted with florid patterns, rendered in tar-like paint; an image of a praying Saint John, prophet of the Apocalypse, was obfuscated with a textured smear that reflected the carpet weave. Near-photorealistic reproductions, these greyscale images could have been blow-ups of badly framed snapshots but for their tactile painterly surfaces. Nevertheless, Stingel's bloodless, amputated depictions rendered the figures static and lifeless.

The music wafting throughout the palace did not so much evoke the sinuous melodies of the carpet's origins as the bombastic chords of Sigmund Freud's Mitteleuropa, where oriental ornament was the apotheosis of bourgeois fetishism. Freud had a collection of miniature sculptures crowding his desk, copies of religious icons from various eastern and western faiths. He saw psychoanalysis as akin to archeological excavation and these figures as manifestations of archetypal human desires. Such objects comprised the context of his science, and populated his own dreams, although he likened religious belief to neurotic obsession. Stingel's palace could be a surreal, fragmented portrait of Freud's legendary studio, which was adorned with Turkish carpets, most famously associated with the bolstered couch that is synonymous with psychoanalysis.

At Palazzo Grassi, Stingel created a giant *Gesamtkunstwerk* that implicated its audience and radiated out into the city and beyond. The exhibition also evoked the hermetic mechanism that fuels the continuum of art history, nodding to the late Franz West in a portrait obscured with sanguine paint splatters (*Untitled [Franz West]*, 2011), which in turn echoes Urs Fischer's 2012 Palazzo Grassi exhibition, 'Madame Fisscher', where the artist referenced the work of West in his own and portrayed himself and Stingel as life-sized candles – mutating *vanitases*. Here, in 2013, where a depiction of the Grim Reaper straddling a lion dominated a room, Stingel seemed to render the Palazzo Grassi itself a *vanitas*.

Indeed, the monumental palace was transformed into an immersive psychoanalytic divan encouraging an inner journey of free association, the carpet a vehicle dissociating the building from space and time. A large self-portrait of a pensive Stingel, installed on the ground level, bade welcome to the warped universe within. Paint-can rings marred the canvas, as if out of disrespect for its assumed cultural value. All the artworks were untitled (some with subject in parentheses), prompting viewers to read between the lines. Similarly, by privileging details that normally register only subliminally and by portraying archetypal figures through second-hand reproductions, Stingel turned things inside out. One wonders what Freud would have said of someone who takes the trouble to carpet over the pristine Mies modernism of Berlin's Neue Nationalgalerie with a decorative pattern that would make the architect turn in his grave.[2] I would say that Stingel is excessive-compulsive.

1 Presented at Palazzo Grassi, Venice, over 7 April – 31 December 2013.
2 The exhibition, 'Rudolf Stingel: LIVE', was exhibited at the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin in 2011.

Untitled (Madonna), 2009
Oil on linen, 40.6 x 33 cm
Installation view, 'Rudolf Stingel' (2013), Palazzo Grassi, Venice
Pinault Collection
Courtesy the artist
Photograph Stefan Altenburger

Untitled (Franz West), 2011
Oil on canvas, 334.3 x 310.5 cm
Installation view, 'Rudolf Stingel' (2013), Palazzo Grassi, Venice
Pinault Collection
Courtesy the artist
Photograph Stefan Altenburger

Paula Rego Museum
Courtesy Casa das Histórias, Cascais,
Portugal
Photograph Luís Ferreira Alves

CASA DAS HISTÓRIAS PAULA REGO

VICTOR STAMP

What is familiarly known as the Paula Rego Museum, designed by the Portuguese Pritzker laureate Eduardo Souto de Moura and completed in 2009 to house almost 600 works by the Anglo-Portuguese artist, is not strictly speaking a museum but rather, and more modestly, a *casa das histórias*, a 'house of stories', or, playing on the ambiguity of the Portuguese word *histórias*, perhaps a house of histories as well. While these stories implicitly refer to the narrative richness of Rego's mythological-, folk- and fairytale-inspired paintings, drawings and etchings, the building itself has more than a tale to tell.

The most immediate and iconic aspect of Souto de Moura's striking red-orange concrete structure are two truncated pyramidal forms that may be seen as paying ironic lip service to the 'Pharaonic' nature of the traditional museum: a receptacle safeguarding and prolonging the life of objects beyond the death of their creators and thereby offering the latter a species of immortality. (The pyramids actually house the gift shop and the cafeteria and their funereal aspect has inspired locals to refer jocularly to the museum as 'the crematorium'.) While our postmodernity has subverted the equation of museum and mausoleum – many classical museums now schedule work by contemporary creators – museums devoted to the work of single living artists are few and far between. And Lisbon-born Rego (Dame Paula since receiving her CBE in 2010) is still very much alive and living in London, her principal home since the 1950s. Although maintaining a summerhouse in Estoril not far from the Casa das Histórias, the artist remains entrenched in a very English kind of eccentricity that transpires in her numerous interviews. Among various fascinating tidbits are her engagingly lowbrow pop-cultural tastes: her favourite TV show is *EastEnders* and her favourite novel *Forever Amber* (1944). (Her son-in-law, incidentally, is Australian hyperrealist sculptor Ron Mueck, so it is clear that a sense of the grotesque runs in the family.)

The museum project began when the mayor of Cascais approached Rego and told her of his desire to create a museum for her. At first 'horrified', the artist relented and went on to propose the design to Eduardo Souto de Moura, a leading figure in the so-called Porto School of Architecture. Situated on the coast just 30 kilometres west of Lisbon, Cascais is a salubrious, cosmopolitan town of considerable charm and one of the richest municipalities in Portugal. During the Second World War it was, thanks to Portugal's neutrality, the chosen home of exiled European royalty.

Entrusted with selecting a site, Souto de Moura settled on a fenced-off copse with a large empty space in the middle occupied by the remains of tennis courts that had fallen into disuse after the Revolução dos Cravos (the Carnation Revolution) that saw the overthrow of the Salazar dictatorship in 1974, at a time when tennis was no doubt viewed as an elitist sport by the far-Left factions that came close to assuming power in Portugal.

More rooted in the surrounding landscape and less dependent on abstract considerations than some of Souto de Moura's other works, the design of the Casa das Histórias is nevertheless motivated by clear formal concerns. The architect recounted:
On the basis of the elevation of the trees, particularly the treetops, I proposed a set of volumes with different heights in response to the diversity of the brief. The arrangement of the boxes acts like a mineral positive to the negative left over from the perimeter of the treetops. This 'Yin–Yang' play between artefact and nature helps to define the exterior material, red concrete, a colour in opposition to the green forest, whose mass becomes less intense with the botanical prophylaxis.[1]

The two large pyramids were inserted to break up the neutral arrangement of boxes destined to display the exhibits, and Souto de Moura tells how their design was influenced by, among other references, the engravings of the eighteenth-century French

THE MOST IMMEDIATE AND ICONIC ASPECT OF SOUTO DE MOURA'S STRIKING RED-ORANGE CONCRETE STRUCTURE ARE TWO TRUNCATED PYRAMIDAL FORMS THAT MAY BE SEEN AS PAYING IRONIC LIP SERVICE TO THE 'PHARAONIC' NATURE OF THE TRADITIONAL MUSEUM: A RECEPTACLE SAFEGUARDING AND PROLONGING THE LIFE OF OBJECTS BEYOND THE DEATH OF THEIR CREATORS AND THEREBY OFFERING THE LATTER A SPECIES OF IMMORTALITY.

visionary architect Étienne-Louis Boullée. Souto de Moura's intimate knowledge of the European architectural tradition has resulted in the creation of a building that is both 'historicist' but also regionalist, the latter being visible in the material used, especially the paving laid in *azul de Cascais*, the local grey-blue limestone.

The construction of the Casa das Histórias practically signalled the modest tail end of a golden age of Portuguese architecture revolving largely around the Porto School. Souto de Moura forms part of a powerful architectural elite that benefited from a massive influx of funds when Portugal joined the European Union in 1986. The country's national infrastructure was overhauled and large-scale public works were undertaken that lent a veneer of ultra-modernity to what is still a relatively 'archaic' country. A so-called Portuguese style was born.

Twenty-five years later, the country, which forms the first letter of the acronymic PIGS,[2] is one of the sick men of Europe. While many of Portugal's best and brightest architects are now working in dynamic former colonies such as Angola and Brazil, the ones who stayed are largely involved in low-budget eco-conscious projects involving sustainability and recycling that offer a chilling reflection of the country's current economic reality.

'Portugal is like a room in which there is no oxygen to breathe', declared Souto de Moura in 2012.[3] The architect, whose entire recent trajectory has been placed under the sign of the crisis, lent his support in September 2012 to the movement 'Que se lixe a troika! Queremos as nossas vidas' ('Fuck the troika![4] We want our lives back'), a not-unreasonable demand that mobilised hundreds of thousands of Portuguese in a nonpartisan revolt against the crippling austerity measures of the Prime Minister, Pedro Passos Coelho.

In April 2013 the Paula Rego Foundation was dissolved by the Portuguese Government and responsibility for the management of the institution was transferred to the Cascais City Council. Then the director of the Casa das Histórias, Helena de Freitas, submitted her resignation, arguing that conditions were no longer adequate for continuing her mission. At the same time Paula Rego requested the return of the 186 works she had lent to the institution, albeit on the understanding that they may be borrowed in the future for exhibition purposes. Apart from the budget reductions already announced, the economic and cultural upshot of these recent events is unclear; at the time of writing the museum continues to offer free entrance to the public and is still financed in large part by proceeds from the nearby Estoril Casino, the largest in Europe. Just four years into its history, the future of this ambitious project remains uncertain: the story continues and it remains to be seen whether the bold initial gamble will pay off.

1 *Casa das Histórias Paula Rego, Cascais*, 2005–09, *http://www.elcroquis.es/media/pdf/Articulos/Proyecto_146.pdf.*

2 Contemptuous acronym for 'Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain', the four southern European countries initially subjected to widespread austerity measures in the face of the Global Financial Crisis.

3 'Portugal é como "uma sala sem oxigénio para respirar", diz Souto de Moura', *Público*, 17 September 2012, *http://www.publico.pt/cultura/noticia/portugal-e-como-uma-sala-sem-oxigenio-para-respirar-diz-souto-de-moura-1563460.*

4 'Troika' is an expression commonly used in southern Europe to refer to the combined policies of the European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

OPPOSITE
Paula Rego, *Dame with the goat's foot (I), (Undressing the Divine Lady)*, 2011–12
Pastel on paper, 137 x 102 cm
Courtesy Marlborough Fine Art, London
© the artist

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Douglas Gordon, *Phantom*, 2011 (video still), stage, screen, a black Steinway piano, a burned Steinway piano and monitor, dimensions variable. Courtesy Studio lost but found / Galerie Yvon Lambert. Rufus Wainwright, 'All Days Are Nights: Songs For Lulu' used courtesy Decca Label Group

3

ESSAY

WAR'S UNQUIET EYES

A BRIEF DISQUISITION ON CONTEMPORARY ART AND CONFLICT

JOHN MATEER

IF WAR IS AN EXTREME SIMPLICITY DURING WHICH THOUSANDS OR EVEN MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ARE MOBILISED WITH A SINGLE AIM, IT IS THE ULTIMATE FORM OF UTILITARIANISM, A PROCESS IN WHICH EVEN HUMAN LIFE IS SIMPLY USED. THE EFFECT THIS HAS ON THE SENSIBILITY OF THOSE INVOLVED, ON THEIR SENSES, MEMORIES AND EMOTIONS, ALTERS PERCEPTIONS OF THE MOST STRAIGHTFORWARD OF EVERYDAY THINGS.

It is usual to think of war as an extreme circumstance, a state that we descend into as a last resort in an attempt to resolve political conflict. War is a distressing event, occurring seldom and, when it does, with great reluctance. But this is to ignore that military power is essential to the everyday functioning of nations: a standing army, effective border policing, treaties with allied nations, a secret service. In fact, the wealthier the nation and the more central to global politics, the more intense must be the latency of its military.

Today, following the War on Terror, which continues not as a conventional war but as a kind of low intensity global insurgency and as a global peacekeeping project called by its detractors 'imperialism', it is difficult to have sufficient naivety to believe that conventional international governance does not necessitate conflicts. Carl von Clausewitz, modern war's foremost theorist, encapsulated this well: 'War is the continuation of politics by other means'.[1]

The admission that everyday life has war in its shadow need not require artists to be concerned with, or even critical of, conflict. While after the First World War artists such as George Grosz and Otto Dix produced political, provocative work, others, Pierre Bonnard and Claude Monet among them, continued their leisurely depiction of the beautiful life. It would not be helpful, even bearing in mind the severity of the Second World War, to dismiss one in favour of the other.

For artists today, mindful of the tension between their own image-making and that of the media through which 'visions' of conflicts are circulated, the choice is not simply between deciding to engage with their society's complicity in war or to ignore it. Works like Mike Parr's notorious performance *Close the concentration camps*, 2002, in which he had his face sewn up as a gesture of solidarity with the asylum seekers who were self-mutilating to bring attention to their suffering in Australia's detention centres, and Marlene Dumas's *Osama*, 2010, a painting of a man that viewers assume is Osama bin Laden, situate the effects of war in the realm of the visual. Parr disfigures himself to show that he – a citizen – might be disfigured were he one of the detainees. Dumas, painting the faces of those people who might be 'profiled' as prospective terrorists, shows everyday people from a predominantly Islamic neighbourhood in Amsterdam, giving her viewers a sense of just how racialised visual culture becomes in wartime.

The intense anxiety created by the War on Terror during the past decade has meant that for the small number of international artists directly concerned with images of war, the understanding of how art might critique politics and its extension into warfare resides not solely in what they depict but also in the nature of representation.

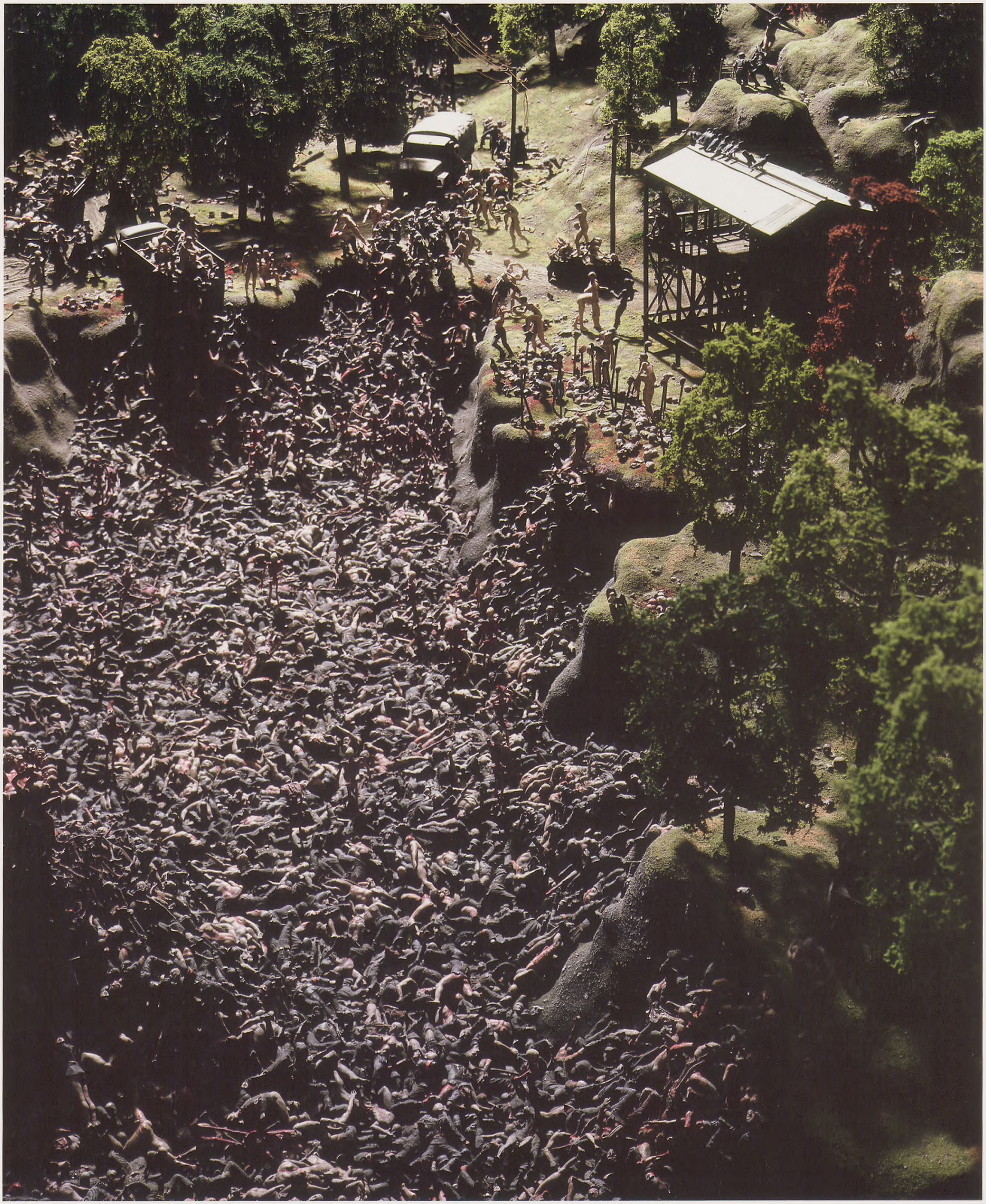
War simplifies activity. In war, especially in Total War, society's resources are mobilised for the purpose of defeating the enemy. The kinds of conflicts that are taking place today are mostly not of that order. The war being waged between the West and the 'terrorists' is an asymmetric war; the opposing parties are unevenly matched.

While war has the simplicity of being focused on a goal, its complexity resides in the scale of activity. Even if it is no longer termed the War on Terror, this ongoing engagement exemplifies asymmetric war, as the United States, the wealthiest, most militarised country in the world, was drawn to defend itself after an attack during which civil aviation airplanes were commandeered by people wielding tools like knives and scissors against the flight crews. More recently it has become clear that the United States, wanting to reduce its visibility in conflict zones in Afghanistan and elsewhere, has been relying heavily on the use of unmanned drones for its attacks. Like the commanders in movies of the 1940s and 1950s who observed pins representing troops on their battlefield maps, today's far-removed drone pilots see the terrain and the combatants miniaturised and distant.[2]

It is in scale, an asymmetry of the seen, that some artists intervene to transform the absolute simplicity of conflict into a poetics of reflection amid the fog of war.

Although much has been written about the role of violence and war in the work of Jake and Dinos Chapman, little has been said about the crucial part played by miniaturisation and its verisimilitude. In *Hell*, 1999–2000, *Fucking hell*, 2008, and *The end of fun*, 2010 – vitrines containing tiny figures enacting often appallingly vivid violence – it is that the scenes are being observed as if under a magnifying glass that makes them simultaneously horrific and comic. By diminution the 'evil', the absolutism, in these works is rendered unreal.

When asked by an interviewer why they had chosen to make miniature sculptural scenes of Goya's 'The Disasters of War' series (1810–20), Jake Chapman answered: 'To rob death of its magnitude and place genocide within the realm of play'.[3]



ABOVE
Mona Hatoum, *Grater divide*, 2002
Mild steel, 204 x 3.5 cm variable
Courtesy White Cube
Photograph Iain Dickens

PAGE 396
Doris Salcedo, *Shibboleth*, 2007
Installation view, 'The Unilever Series' (2007–08),
Tate Turbine Hall, Tate Modern, London
Courtesy and photograph Tate Modern
© Doris Salcedo

PAGE 399
Jake and Dinos Chapman, *Fucking hell*, 2008,
detail and installation
Fibreglass, plastic and mixed media in nine vitrines,
215 x 128.7 x 249.8 cm overall
Courtesy White Cube
Photograph Hugo Glendinning
© the artists

PAGES 400–401
Jake and Dinos Chapman, *Hell*, 1999–2000; and
The end of fun, 2010; details
Both fibreglass, plastic and mixed media in nine
vitrines, 215 x 128.7 x 249.8 cm overall
Courtesy White Cube
Photographs Stephen White; Hugo Glendinning
© the artists

Reversing the scale of images can also be liberating. The Afghan–Australian artist Khadim Ali uses techniques of Mogul and Persian miniature painting to give images back the magnitude of life. In his large, several-panelled *The haunted lotus*, 2012, Ali reimagines the destruction of the massive Buddhas of Bamiyan by the Taliban in an event designed for the international news media, and has in the foreground horned figures modelled on the character Rostam from *Shahnameh*, the Persian epic poem by Ferdowsi. Not only does Ali provide a kind of restitution for the violence by showing the Buddha as a vast reclining figure, rather than as rubble and dust, he also recasts the Taliban, presenting them as a kind of literary demon. As with the Chapman brothers' work, it is through the irony of scale that Ali is able to negate war's destructiveness by an evocation of the imagined.

It is one thing to talk about the image in war, but the object – 'thingness' – is also transformed. If war is an extreme simplicity during which thousands or even millions of people are mobilised with a single aim, it is the ultimate form of utilitarianism, a process in which even human life is simply used. The effect this has on the sensibility of those involved, on their senses, memories and emotions, alters perceptions of the most straightforward of everyday things.

Beyond the effects of paranoia and objectification and the strange disorientation of scale is the feeling of fissure and collapse, as if the stress and trauma of conflict were tearing apart the senses themselves. The art of dada illustrates this well, particularly the work of John Heartfield and Hannah Höch, where even the visual plane is torn and reconstituted through montage. And there are the 'bandaged' postwar paintings of the Italian Alberto Burri.

The Colombian artist Doris Salcedo, whose country has been debilitated for many decades by drug wars, took this sensory trauma as her subject when she created the famous crack in the floor of Tate Modern's Turbine Hall in London, violently objectifying that massive space. Named *Shibboleth*, 2007, the project was sculptural and linguistic, referring to the practice whereby a speaker pronounces a particular, tricky word to test the verity of her affiliation to the group. Salcedo's usual sculptural practice uses the presentation of simple objects to evoke an intimation of violence.

This is akin to the work of Mona Hatoum, a Palestinian artist born in Beirut, who sometimes alienates or massively enlarges everyday objects, as seen in *Marble slicer*, 2002, and *Grater divide*, 2002. Even more insightful are her classic works *Home*, 1999, and *Homebound*, 2000, in which life-sized kitchen utensils are illuminated and electrified. Often spoken of in the context of a feminist art critical of the masculinity of war, these works are foremost dramatic, literally shocking, examples of how conflict can transform anything into a violent instrument.

For anyone familiar with accounts of interrogation and torture the idea that ordinary utensils might be used as weapons will be unsurprising. And, contrary to the usual idea of war with its focus on the battlefield, interrogation and torture may be war's secret paradigm: the circumstance in which one party inflicts pain on the other until the injured individual abandons even their last refuge, their mental defences.[4] As defeat requires psychological capitulation – hence the constant emphasis on 'mental toughness' and morale in the military – it is often very difficult to get an accurate sense of the origins of conflict at its cessation because, through violence, memory itself has been rendered unreliable.

Prior to a conventional war all manner of diplomatic measures are undertaken to prevent it. Once the war has started, the project of defeating the enemy is the focus of all parties, and when the war ends reconstruction begins immediately, as if the war itself had been simply an unavoidable, regrettable mistake. Counterintuitive as it may be, in retrospect it is always difficult to understand what exactly led to a particular war. For this reason the notion of the archive is essential. Not only are documents insights into the past but images are too, even with all their attendant ambiguities.

Sometimes artists literally create archives. In the past decade two striking examples of this kind of recovery can be found in the work of artists Walid Raad, whose fictional collective The Atlas Group produces exhibitions using apparently factual documents on the Lebanese Civil War, and Akram Zaatari, who was instrumental in the creation of the Arab Image Foundation, an organisation that collects and preserves a wide range of images from the Arab world and its diasporas. In both cases, the archive becomes a way of reconstituting memory independent of reliance on embodied, individual memories, gathering and redistributing 'evidence' to facilitate a more objective recollection, and perhaps the writing of histories.

Not all wars are conventional, and if it is the case that states at peace are only so due to military-backed equilibrium, it could be that stable cultural circumstances are only apparently so. In Australia, where little attention is given to the profound implications of Henry Reynolds's descriptions of what he terms the 'frontier wars', even the founding of this peaceful nation could be said to have required war.[5] Also, Australia has always been part of larger imperial projects, whether British or American, and mostly without a nuanced political critique, which has meant that history writing in Australia has tended to rely on narratives that are not as self-conscious as they should be.

Admittedly, since the 1980s, with the unstoppable rise of Aboriginal art, there has been tacit recognition of the violence that underlies the beginnings of the nation, but very few non-Indigenous artists appear sufficiently confident to enter this fraught, conflict-ridden terrain. Of notable exception is the Melbourne artist Tom Nicholson, whose now substantial body of work engages not only with the history of Australian art and the role of Aboriginal dispossession, as in his 2011–12 project *Evening shadows*, but also with the larger questions of Australia's relationship to East Timor and Indonesia in *After action for another library*, 1999–2003, and with the geopolitics of international borders in *Documents from a banner marching project 2004–2007*, 2007.

While Nicholson's work is dependent on research in the archive, he remains sensitive to that most elemental artistic tool: drawing. He is deeply respectful of the line itself. A border is, at very least, just a line, yet countless wars have been the consequence of border disputes.

In his controversial essay 'The Gulf War Did Not Take Place' (1991), Jean Baudrillard stated: 'From the beginning, we knew that this war would never happen. After the hot war (the violence of conflict), after the cold war (the balance of terror), here comes the dead war – the unfrozen cold war – which leaves us to grapple with the corpse of war ...'[6] In his characteristic way, moving from historical circumstance to concepts of war and then on to his haunting, poetic image – the corpse – the theorist captures a sense of the problematic state we are in today, now well aware that world peace is a lost ideal and that war, in whatever form, is always ongoing.

It may be by contemplating visions of the corpse of war as presented to us by today's artists that we might find a way, if not to bury it, at least to contemplate shutting its unquiet eyes.

1 Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. by Michael Eliot Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1989, p. 87.
2 See Nasser Hussain, 'The sound of terror: Phenomenology of a drone strike', *The Boston Review*, 16 October 2013.
3 Interview with Nick Hackworth in *Flogging a Dead Horse: The Life and Works of Jake and Dinos Chapman*, Rizzoli, New York, 2011, p. 15.
4 For a careful and deeply reflective consideration of the relationship between pain and making, see Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1985.
5 Among Henry Reynolds's books that consider this are *Forgotten War*, New South Publishing, Sydney, 2013, and the classic, *The Other Side of the Frontier: Aboriginal Resistance to the European Invasion of Australia*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2006.
6 Included in his book *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, trans. Paul Patton, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1995, p. 23.

مدح سمک عیار در مهمانی ماما گل سرخ حلما بمدی هما و بحر سیمی حرم

۱۳

ل ۲۰

ل لحمه ها ماساد حسر

ع

سرو گپ لحمه ها بحر وی اسد می جو لکوی عامر

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ناکه تم حی ستنی ی طاید ی

فرع لحمه ی

خامه علی ۲۰۱۳

حبا جالیکی اگر سبر و بام تحری

پستر م ن نمع همانند آ ویدو ویر

ON ANGELS AND DEVILS

THE ART OF KHADIM ALI

RACHEL KENT

IN ITS IMAGERY *THE HAUNTED LOTUS* REFERS TO THE GIANT SLEEPING BUDDHA THAT LIES UNDISTURBED, ACCORDING TO LOCALS, BENEATH THE SOIL OF BAMIYAN, IMPERVIOUS TO THE DESTRUCTION ABOVE IT. ITS CRISSCROSSED WRAPPING RECALLS THE ARCHITECTURAL SCAFFOLDING SUPPORTING THE EMPTY CLIFF-FACE NICHES THAT ONCE HOUSED THE BAMIYAN BUDDHAS BEFORE THEIR DESTRUCTION.

Khadim Ali combines historical tradition and contemporary storytelling in his delicate miniature paintings. Working between Sydney, Kabul and Quetta since 2009, Ali explores notions of good and evil through his art, drawing inspiration from the epic poem *Shahnameh*, or Book of Kings, by the late tenth-century Persian court poet, Ferdowsi. Against a backdrop of muted pigment washes and floating calligraphic forms, Ali's ambiguous characters emerge with white wings and curled malevolent horns. Stories unfold with them, exploring the complexity of identity and survival in a region wracked by centuries of intertribal warfare, then Taliban rule.

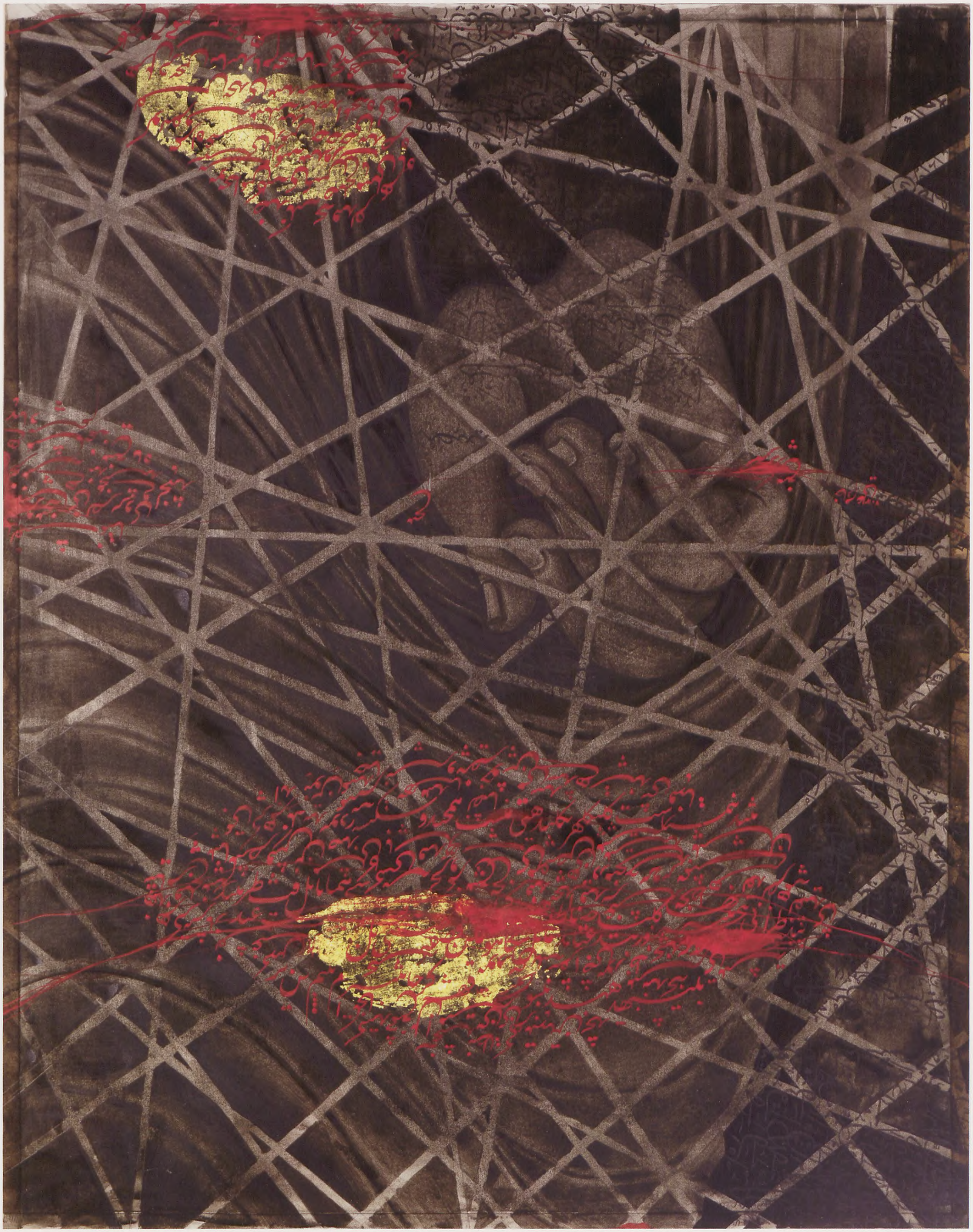
Ali was born in Quetta, Pakistan, in 1978, and his family's story, like that of many Hazaras of Afghan descent, is one of dispossession and persecution. Massacres against the Hazaras in the 1890s and 1920s saw his great-grandfather, then grandfather, driven from their Afghan homeland, the latter fleeing as a teenager to pre-partition India and serving in the British Army. When he left Afghanistan, Ali's grandfather took just two books with him: the Holy Koran and *Shahnameh*. With its exquisite illustrations and vivid stories of human suffering and triumph, *Shahnameh* would play a central role in Ali's upbringing many years later. So too would the heroic character Rostam, who appeared in many of its stories and fought against humanity's dark side, symbolised by demons.

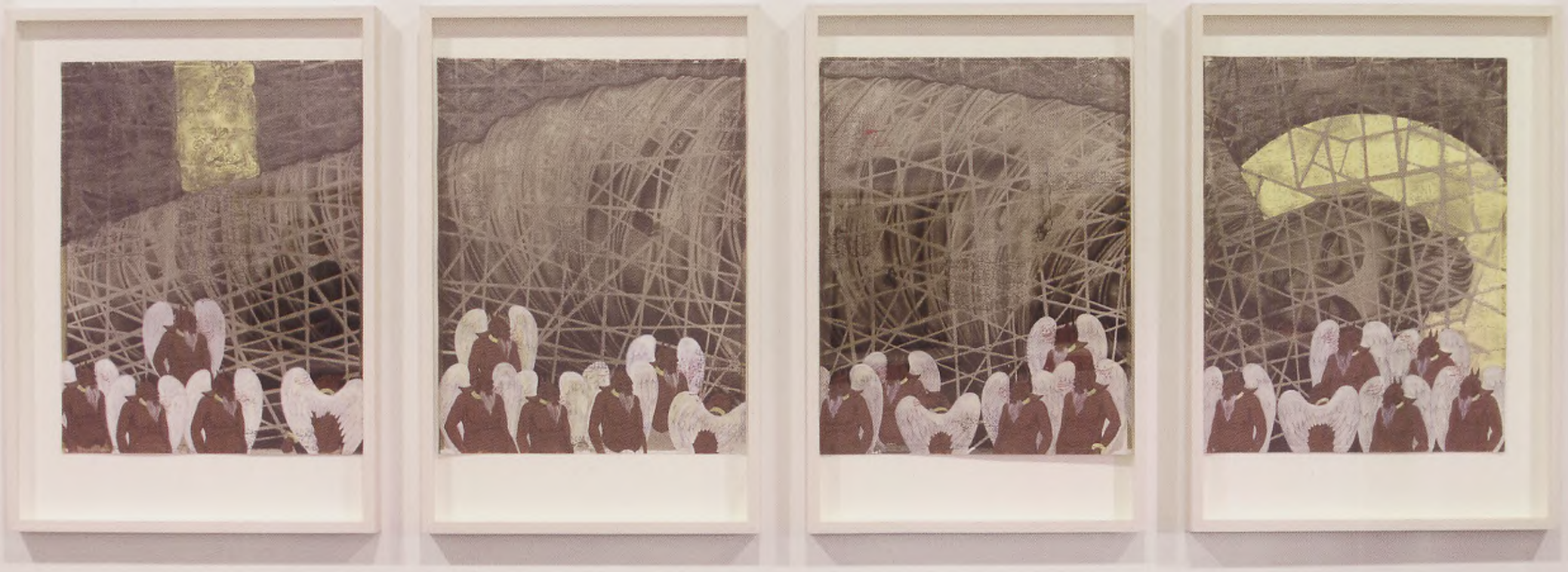
One of Ali's strongest childhood memories is of his grandfather singing stories from *Shahnameh* to entertain family and guests during the coldest months of the year, when they would gather for warmth at the local mosque. Ali's first encounter with miniature painting came through his grandfather's book, which was copied from an Indian sixteenth-century edition with illustrations by the acclaimed Persian miniaturist Bihzad. By listening to the book's stories and the conversations of his elders, Ali discovered his own history: 'When I learned of the massacres of the Hazaras, I found myself as a Rostam in my imagination, making our land free'.[1]

Ali made his first short visit to Afghanistan in 1995 as the Taliban fundamentalist political party rose to power there. It formed a new government the following year, ruling with oppression and brutality until its Allied overthrow in 2001, and has since continued to inflict terror and violence on civilians, particularly women and girls. With their long beards and dark clothing, the Taliban soldiers embodied for Ali the demons from *Shahnameh*. Although they had no beards in Bihzad's original illustrations, Ali's demons appropriated this characteristic as a way of linking past history with the present situation. The experience of being violently slapped about the face by Taliban soldiers at checkpoints, and repeatedly called a Hazara and Shia 'infidel', are indelible in Ali's memory. They find expression too through his art with its ambivalent cast of characters: at once devils and angels, monsters and heroes. This was, he said, the start of 'being demon in my dark history of genocide, of finding myself to be the infidel – and being so helpless when they were so powerful, ruling the city'. He concluded, 'Since then, I have found myself somewhere between the demon and Rostam; this was the only form of illustration I knew'.

Speaking more widely of a crisis in national identity, Ali has observed that there is 'no common or collective history' in Afghanistan due to centuries of conflict, and that one group's hero is another's demon. There is no 'hero figure' portrayed on Afghan bank notes – something that would be forbidden under Islam, but impossible in any case, due to the longstanding divisions between ethnic groups in the country. Following Ali's first visit to Afghanistan he has returned repeatedly to the capital city of Kabul, eventually establishing a studio there, and to the mountainous region of Bamiyan. Well known for the towering sixth-century stone Buddhas that were destroyed by the Taliban in March 2001, Bamiyan is situated on the ancient Silk Road, a connecting route between east and west. It is also the historical centre of Hazara culture and has become a reference point for Ali's miniature paintings.

In 1996 Ali left Quetta for Iran, spurred by the rising persecution of Hazaras in Pakistan and Taliban oppression. There were almost no opportunities at this time for young Hazaras living in Pakistan, many of whom were fleeing to Iran, a country that shared their Shia Muslim faith. Situated at the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan, Quetta had become a recruitment site for the Taliban, fuelled by propaganda and prejudice, so Ali would spend the next year and a half in Tehran working as a manual labourer. During this period he came across an advertisement for evening drawing classes and after several approaches was reluctantly accepted by the teacher, who had no other foreign students. But the teacher soon recognised and nurtured his new pupil's talent, employing Ali to work with him as a public mural





ABOVE
The haunted lotus, 2012
Gouache, ink and gold leaf on Wasli paper,
70 x 54 cm each
Installation view, dOCUMENTA (13),
Neue Galerie, Kassel
Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

RIGHT
Carpet weaving work in progress based on
The haunted lotus, 2013
Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

PAGES 404–9
The haunted lotus, 2012–13
Gouache, ink and gold leaf on Wasli paper, 70 x 54 cm
Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

painter during the day. He also introduced Ali to his colleagues at the local university, who invited him to join their diploma class in Persian miniature painting.

Ali returned to Quetta in 1998 and a year later received a scholarship to study miniature painting at the prestigious National College of Arts in Lahore, where he graduated in 2003. He then established a studio in Quetta and another in Kabul, travelling between Pakistan and Afghanistan regularly as he built his practice, and subsequently exhibited his work in Karachi and Dubai, then London and Fukuoka, Japan. In 2006 he participated in the 5th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art in Brisbane with 'The Bamiyan Drawing Project', inviting Afghan children to share their culture with local school-children in Australia. Another iteration saw children in Fukuoka respond to the Afghan children's drawings through their own illustrated narratives. Ali emigrated permanently to Australia three years later, the first Hazara to do so on the grounds of 'distinguished talent', and is completing a Master of Fine Arts at the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney, this year.

Since his relocation to Sydney Ali has exhibited, spoken publicly and curated independent projects introducing contemporary Afghan art to the wider world. In 2012 he participated in a seminar series initiated by dOCUMENTA (13) linking the cities of Kabul, Bamiyan and Kassel, then showed his miniature paintings as part of the prestigious quinquennial exhibition at the Neue Galerie, Kassel. Built around shared themes of destruction and renewal, the relationship between Kassel and Kabul was further expanded through a group exhibition of contemporary Afghan artists in Kassel as part of dOCUMENTA (13). His miniature paintings were also exhibited, then acquired, by the Guggenheim Museum, New York, as part of the institution's South and South-East Asia curatorial program.

Ali's ambitious miniature painting *The haunted lotus*, 2012, formed a centrepiece of his dOCUMENTA (13) participation. Presented across four individually framed parts, it depicts a reclining Buddha figure wrapped within an elaborate network of crisscrossing lines, and winged demon figures massed before it. In its imagery *The haunted lotus* refers to the giant sleeping Buddha that lies undisturbed, according to locals, beneath the soil of Bamiyan, impervious to the destruction above it. Its crisscrossed wrapping recalls the architectural scaffolding supporting the empty cliff-face niches that once housed the Bamiyan Buddhas before their destruction. Using a simple palette of white, red and gold leaf against a rust-brown backdrop, it brings together the artist's concerns across time and place, suggesting the possibility for renewal that lies dormant within all violent acts.

Speaking about the controlled, often sombre, use of colour in his miniature paintings, Ali observed that he grew up 'in a depressed, deprived community' as a Hazara: 'I had no control over my art; whatever was pouring out of me, whenever I tried to do something joyful, beautiful or colourful, I couldn't'. His paintings incorporate the natural colour of the Afghan landscape and its objects – disused weapons, rusting military tanks – as well as the black and lapis lazuli of the local women's burquas: 'Rust, blood, blue linen, dark history – that is where my colour palette is'.

Ali has also spoken about the complex relationship that many Afghans have towards the history of carpet weaving, something that he explores in his latest body of work:
The only colourful thing I could look at was carpets, carpets woven by refugees to survive. Now the children of refugees hate the carpets, as adults, because they were made to weave them and suffered injuries. Most of my friends have lost their childhoods to carpet weaving factories where they worked for ten rupees a day, or two loaves of bread.

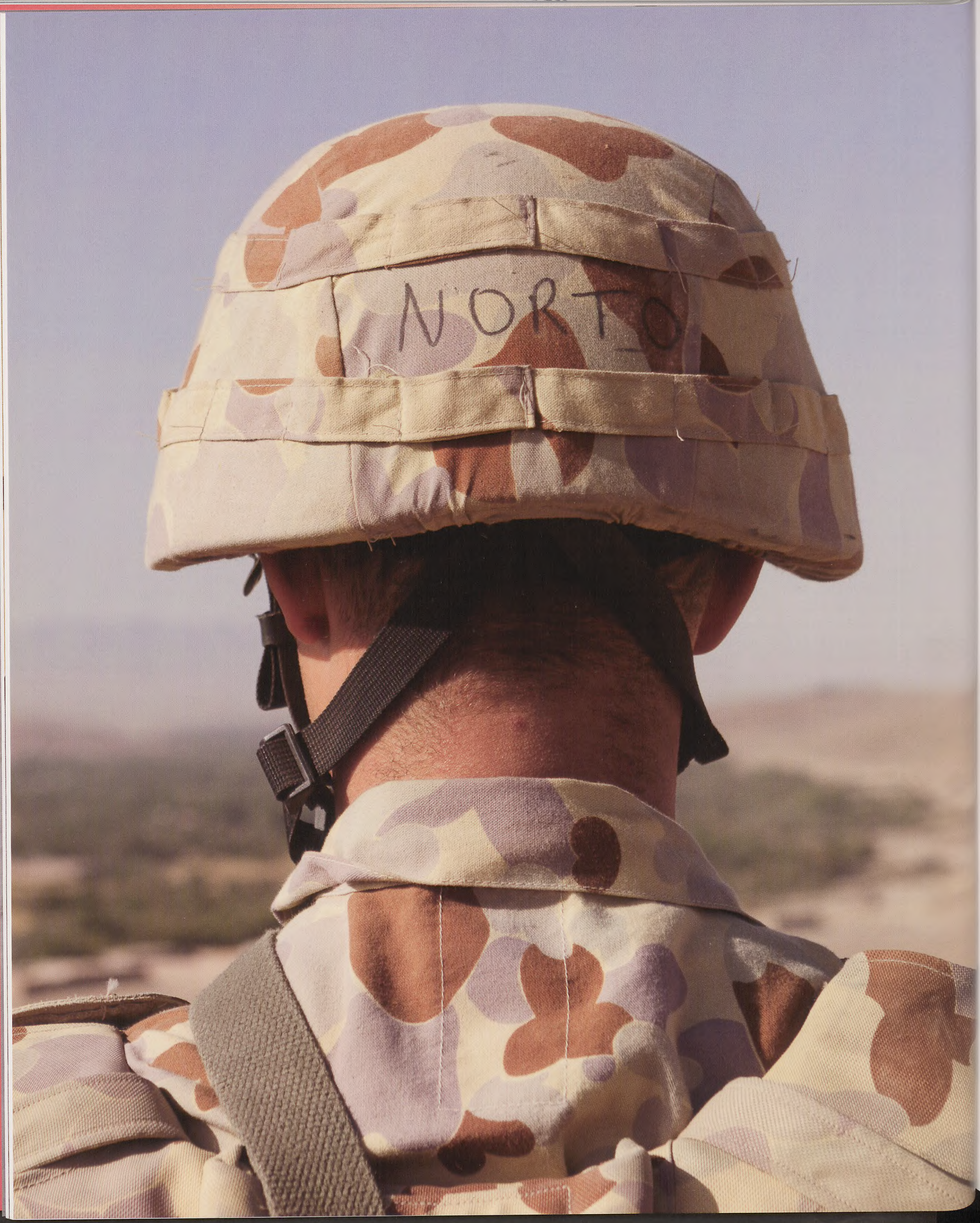
In his March 2014 solo exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Ali seeks to alter the meaning of the woven carpet as an artform, working in collaboration with Hazara weavers in Herat and Kabul who have become deeply involved with the project. A creative and joyful activity, rather than a forced one, which also injects money into the local community, the weaving of a large, lapis-blue-robed devil has been undertaken in secrecy to avoid censure by conservative Islamic scholars who oppose its overt pictorial format.

Time is a central factor in all of Ali's art, from the miniature paintings that can take up to two years to complete to the weaving process, which is equally time-consuming and intricate. Ali uses traditional Wasli paper for his paintings, pasting four layers together with a wheat-based glue for extra rigidity, and sulphate for protection against insects. Using a combination of dyes, including tannins derived from tea, coffee, onions and walnut skins, as well as ground pigments and gold leaf, an under-layer is created. Pencil outlines are then filled with thick black carbon lamp and gum arabic, with the paper washed and dried repeatedly to create the impression of colour coming out of the page, not absorbing into it. The sanding back of the surface further creates a worn, textured effect onto which the earthy stains and colour pigments are then applied. Fragments of Farsi and Arabic script float across the picture plane, like text above a page; often untranslatable, they comprise a palimpsest of stories and memories that coexist alongside the pictorial imagery.

Reflecting on his creative process, Ali has observed, 'Sometimes in my practice of art, when I do something, I have no words for it. So I have to spend some time, have some intimate discussion with a piece of art, to understand it, to make it clearer for myself'. This process of understanding – of channelling then unravelling layers of history and trauma – reflects the healing of a culture that has withstood violence and oppression, to emerge as both resilient and powerful in voice. Using traditional miniaturist form and narratives, Khadim Ali's art transforms history into the present. It resonates for audiences today around the world who have experienced conflict, offering new ways of understanding a landscape that is built on loss and determined in its reinvention.

Khadim Ali: The Haunted Lotus, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 6 March – 1 June 2014.

1 All quotes are from a conversation with the artist, 16 October 2013.


NORTON

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER

BADEN PAILTHORPE, VIDEO GAMES AND THE BIOPOWER OF WAR
ANDREW YIP

BUT THE GESTURAL REHEARSAL IN PAILTHORPE'S WORK HAS IMPLICATIONS BEYOND THE DOWNTIME HORSEPLAY OF INFANTRY. IT REFERS IN A DIRECT WAY TO THE INTENSE PHYSICAL TRAINING OF SOLDIERS IN WHICH THE CHOREOGRAPHY OF INDIVIDUAL MOVEMENTS AND SQUAD MANOEUVRES, REHEARSED THOUSANDS OF TIMES IN COMBAT TRAINING AND MILITARY SIMULATORS, IS ESSENTIAL TO COMBAT CAPABILITY.

If the first Gulf War was known as the 'Nintendo War' for its introduction to mass media of the godlike cruise-missile camera, then the apotheosis of this vision was captured during the second Gulf War in the WikiLeaks video *Collateral Murder*. The 12 July 2007 attack by two Apache helicopters in the Baghdad neighbourhood of Al-Amin al-Thaniyah, which killed, among others, two Reuters correspondents and a father-of-two who had stopped to assist the wounded, has become one of the defining media moments in the War on Terror.

The events proceed with a clinical inhumanity. The pilots spot a group of men ('fucking prick ... have individuals with weapons ... request permission to engage ...'). They manoeuvre into position ('just fuckin', once you get on 'em, just open 'em up ... light 'em all up ... keep shoot'n', keep shoot'n'.'). They fire. There is a brief delay before the bullets register their targets and the men evaporate. The Apaches circle around the heap of bodies. More chat ('look at those dead bastards. Nice. Good shoot'n'. Thank you.').[1] All of this is filmed through the lens of the chopper's 30-millimetre cannon and viewed third-hand on YouTube.

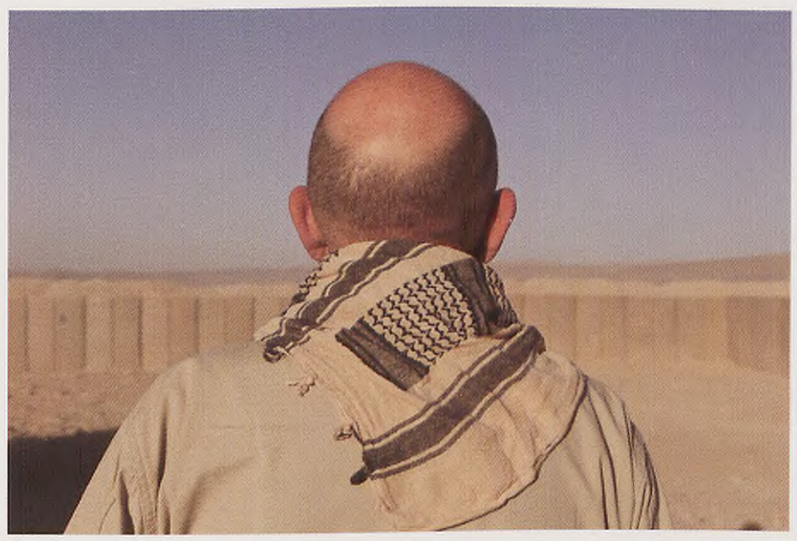
Collateral Murder exemplifies the displaced subjectivity characteristic of the modern battlefield, which has produced not only the surreality of young American pilots flying drone incursions into Pakistan from bases in Nevada, but an accompanying string of robotic acronyms that sever combat from its human capital: UAV, RPA, TALON, SWORDS, MARCbot.

But as *Collateral Murder* has demonstrated, the transmission of combat imagery via media channels such as YouTube and Twitter has the potential to shape social responses to war. To this media stream must be added what has rapidly become a performative space in which the politics of war are prosecuted: the virtual world of video games. Consider the popular first-person shooter *Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare*, released in the same year that *Collateral Murder* was recorded. In the mission 'Death From Above' the player assumes control of the gun camera of an AC-130 Spectre gunship. The vision and crew's chatter are eerily familiar ('we have armed personnel ... request permission to engage ... okay you got 'em ... light 'em up ... good kill, good kill ... I see lots o' little pieces down there.'). The player succeeds by eliminating targets while avoiding civilian casualties, which is to say by positively enacting the doctrines of the US military.

Much work has been done by game theorists on how video games rehearse their subjects for warfare, either actively, through the promotion of military cultures, or passively, by socialising the game-playing population to endorse the conditions under which wars are fought.[2] Indeed, games such as the wildly successful *America's Army* and *Full Spectrum Warrior* were developed by the US military for their ability to influence social perceptions, the former as an overt recruitment exercise, the latter as a squad-based tactics trainer. Both have equivalent versions used by the military as combat simulators. In this sense it has been argued that such games are tools of biopower, with the aim to 'distribute and normalise the institutional logic of the military among civil society'.[3] They form a component of what has been coined (with Orwellian dread) 'MIME NET' – the military-industrial-media-entertainment network.[4]

Contemporary Australian war artists have begun to interrogate this parlous relationship between bio and military power, between the virtual subjectivity of a video game and its real-world equivalent. Take for instance Shaun Gladwell's photographic series 'BPOV MEAO (Behind Point of View, Middle East Area of Operations)' (2009–10). These are portraits of individuals but shot from behind; they are effaced. To the media-saturated consumer of Nintendo War, two positions avail themselves: in the third person the soldiers might be exemplars to be imaginatively inhabited, but from the perspective of the first-person shooter they are targets in a position of immense vulnerability. Christopher Langton's 2007 work *Hide and seek* makes this more literal. In this painting of combat in Iraq, an image taken from the internet is superimposed on one from a video game, blurring the lines between virtual play and battlefield reality.


LUCY




AusAID

While these works reflect on the performative logic and visual syntax of video games, for new-media artist Baden Pailthorpe it is the system itself that forms both the structure and target of his practice.

As Pailthorpe argued, it is the performativity of video games that gives them their particular power:
... you don't just watch the ideology as you would in a film, you actively generate it. The video game is one of the most closed environments you could imagine ... everything is restricted. You might be given the illusion of free will but it's among a set of choices already predetermined. You have to enact certain gestures and perform in a certain way that matches an American soldier.[5]

In his recent series, 'Cadence' (2013) and 'Formation' (2011–13), Pailthorpe hacks and modifies military simulators – in this case the game *Arma 2* – to use them as a form of performative software, and in so doing exposes the rituals that structure military society. In *Cadence I*, 2013, an American soldier dances on a desert landscape appropriated from the 2005 Sam Mendes film *Jarhead*. There is a relationship here with traditional cinematic techniques. Pailthorpe used a game script to film the digital avatars dancing. He then put a green screen in the simulator to isolate the figure, approximating a filming technique in a virtual environment. The soldier emerges onto the resulting scene almost joyously, tearing aside the fabric of the space he inhabits. A replicating series of almost 500 layers of bodies creates a dazzling illusion of speed and movement. The lingering traces of the figure's gestures form an immense, kinetic Rorschach blot that has affinities with military camouflage. However, here the patterns work to recast the predetermined subjectivity of military simulators by allowing a space for subliminal and individual psychological responses.

The dance reveals a lyrical beauty in the processes of war, which is part of the artist's intention. As Pailthorpe explained: 'the original idea was to make poetic works out of violent machines and violent systems and in that gesture it's kind of subversive. But it is humorous to some extent and there is an absurdity to war'. The script used to create the dancing exists as an 'easter egg' coded into the simulator, but these dances have a real-world equivalent in one of the more interesting cultural memes to have arisen from the War on Terror – 'combat dancing', the phenomenon of soldiers filming themselves in choreographed dance routines in combat zones.[6]

But the gestural rehearsal in Pailthorpe's work has implications beyond the downtime horseplay of infantry. It refers in a direct way to the intense physical training of soldiers in which the choreography of individual movements and squad manoeuvres, rehearsed thousands of times in combat training and military simulators, is essential to combat capability. Here, performative equivalents between players of war games, real-world soldiers and Pailthorpe's avatars emerge: muscle memory becomes an embodied ideology, an expression of the military's political mission encoded in the physical expression of the men and their digital avatars.

The replication in the 'Cadence' series emerged by chance from within the game engine. During production for his 'Formation' works Pailthorpe found that issuing the simple command to 'walk' caused a glitch that made the digital soldiers unexpectedly replicate. In doing so he discovered that the internal politics of the simulator – to train its players to enact a particular doctrine – could be resisted.

It is through this phenomenon that Pailthorpe develops his critique of military biopower. In *Cadence III*, 2013, Taliban and American soldiers dance in unison, side by side on a virtual airfield, their images multiplying and transforming. What begins as an image of two individuals quickly becomes a representation of a body politic. The cloning that occurs in *Cadence III* mimics the process of cultural image-making and the transmission of digital images in mass media. It is an approximation of viral activity that speaks the biopolitical language so often used to describe the War on Terror: terrorists group in cells, cells replicate, they spread and infect a national polity; they must be eradicated.[7] Yet the replication of the Taliban soldier is in tandem with the actions of the American soldier and here equivalences between the two military structures emerge: the synchrony speaks to the fear that fighting the War on Terror has spawned more terrorist threats than it has silenced.

We can extrapolate from this to view the military body as a whole as an assemblage of individual units, each with a range of roles to be performed in tandem. 'What is war but a giant choreography', Pailthorpe remarked. 'War is logistics.' It is the format of this revelation that is particularly significant. Pailthorpe's appropriation of video games touches on the danger inherent in an uncritical socialisation of warfare. Indeed, it is precisely at the point at which the social reception of war becomes banal that violent action is legitimised, for 'what's the point of training for the game,' as one young Australian infantryman recounted to the artist, 'if you never get to play?'

Baden Pailthorpe: Hors Pistes, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 20 January 2014.

1 Numerous iterations of *Collateral Murder* can be found on YouTube. See for example *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rXPrfnU3Go*.
2 See Nick Dyer-Witheford and Greig de Peuter, *Games of Empire: Global Capitalism and Video Games*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis and London, 2009, pp. 97–122.
3 Robertson Allen, 'Games without tears, wars without frontiers', in Koen Stroeken (ed.), *War, Technology, Anthropology*, Berghahn Books, New York and Oxford, 2012, p. 85.
4 James Der Derian, *Virtuous War: Mapping the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network*, 2nd edition, Routledge, New York, 2009.
5 This and all subsequent quotes are taken from an interview with the artist on 4 August 2013.
6 One video, 'The Ding Dong Song', made by American infantrymen, has over 3.8 million views alone, see *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8rm56hTDDs*. A casual YouTube search on 20 September 2013 for 'dancing soldiers Iraq' returned 105,000 results.
7 For a discussion of the biopolitical power of images of the War on Terror see W.J.T. Mitchell, *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2011.

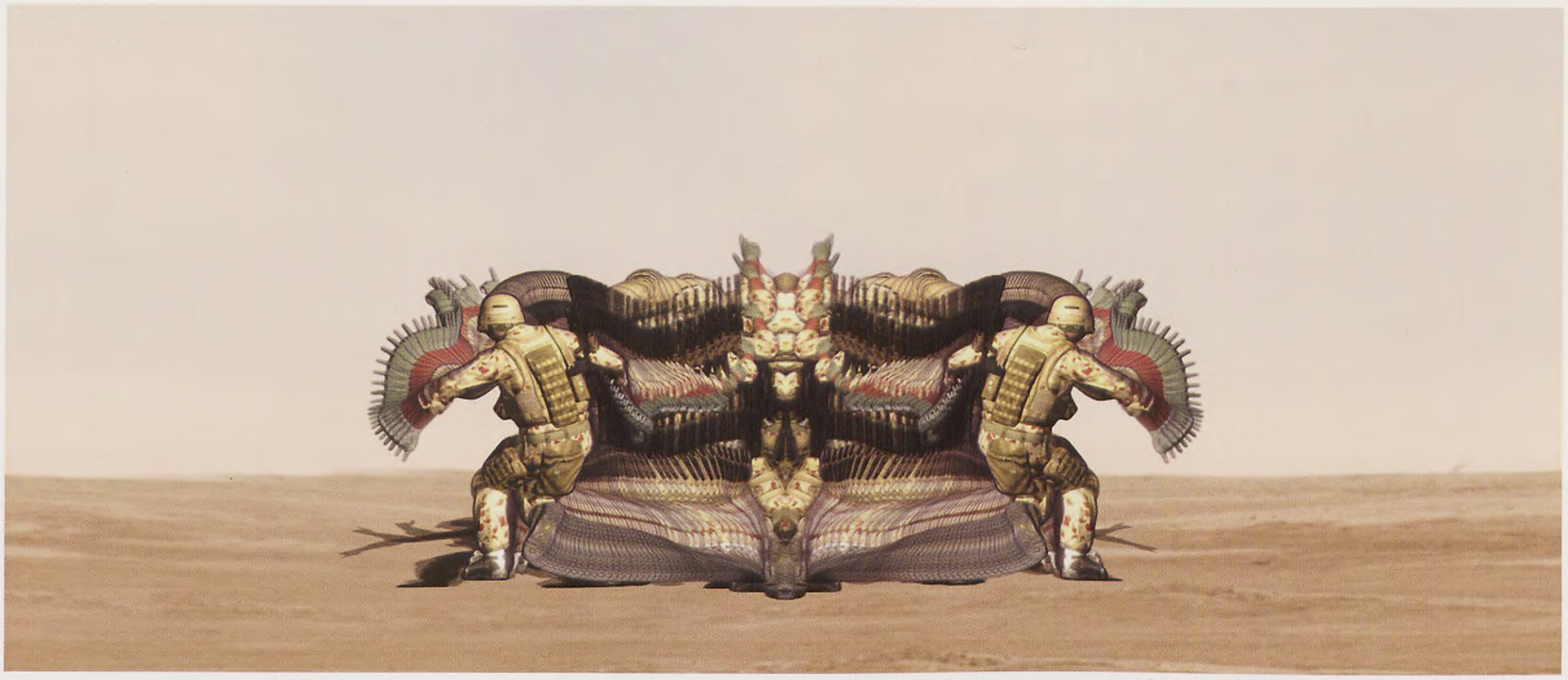
OPPOSITE, FROM TOP
Baden Pailthorpe, *Cadence I*, 2013
Production still, HD video, colour, stereo sound, edition of 5, 6 mins duration

Baden Pailthorpe, *Cadence II*, 2013
Production still, HD video, colour, stereo sound, edition of 5, 6 mins duration

Baden Pailthorpe, *Cadence IV*, 2013
Production still, HD video, colour, stereo sound, edition of 5, 4 mins duration
All courtesy the artist and Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney

PAGES 412 and 415
Shaun Gladwell, 'BPOV MEAO (Behind Point of View, Middle East Area of Operations)' (2009–10)
Digital colour photographs, inkjet on paper, edition of 1, each 95 x 63.3 cm
Australian War Memorial Collection, acquired 2010
Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

PAGES 416–17
Baden Pailthorpe, *Cadence III*, 2013
Production still, HD video, colour, stereo sound, edition of 5, 4 mins duration
Art Gallery of South Australia collection
Courtesy the artist and Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney



INTERIOR DECORATION: A RICOCHET THROUGH TIME

BONITA ELY

THE FAMILY'S SMALL, MUCH-LOVED, SMOKE-YELLOWED ALBERT NAMATJIRA PRINT IS JUXTAPOSED WITH 'STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS' PHOTOGRAPHS OF WATCHTOWERS IN EGYPT AND ISRAEL, OPENING INTERPRETATION TO SHARED TRAUMA, A RICOCHET THROUGH TIME.

'Interior Decoration'[1] investigates the interpersonal effects of untreated post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) suffered by war veterans and their families as an overlooked factor in Australian military history and our narratives of identity. The artwork is personal. My father served in the 2/1 Australian Machine Gun Battalion during the Second World War.

The installation is constructed from domestic objects: my parents' bedroom furniture, Mum's Singer sewing machine, the ubiquitous bobby pin resonant of a brave woman's demure beauty. What triggered my father's traumatic memories? A click-clacking machine? An intractable plough? A light left on? Out in the yard, in the kitchen, the bedroom, ranting abuse through the dark night – he's going right off. Did the grace of domesticity, a woman's touch, a child's laughter or fear, soften the trauma?

These domestic scenarios were repeated across the nation when in 1945 strangers with medals called 'Dad' returned home. Refugees from Europe also arrived. Many were sent out to provide a workforce in towns such as Robinvale on the Murray River, where my family took up a soldier settlement block growing grapes and oranges, and many remained, establishing farms and businesses, the beginnings of multicultural rural Australia. In soldier settlement communities the effects of war were demographically concentrated. Problems went unspoken, given the social mores of stoic respectability masking dysfunction; alcohol's degrading self-medication was often a secret within the home. For the more restrained, like my father, release surfaced on 'benders' where the man of the house disappeared for days, to be dropped off by his mates, legless and ranting.

Typically, my mother and brothers bore the brunt of Dad's affliction; he was kinder to his daughters. Yet my father loved us all. He taught us to swim, to ride a bike; happy hours were spent working the block, keeping him company. He was a gentleman, a crooner, a ballroom dancer, a sportsman with an egalitarian spirit and sense of community. On one rare occasion he recalled in tears his experiences in Borneo 'mopping up' after the ceasefire. Japanese soldiers, cut off from supply and communication lines, would not believe the war was over and refused to surrender. In a foxhole he saw human bones, evidence of cannibalism. He wept for the enemy, calling them 'poor bastards'.

After Dad died, my mother told us that when he was young disease had turned his insides black, and, as there was no cure, he shot himself and she brought us up alone. This chilling projection onto her marriage is extraordinarily accurate.

Much research has identified the after-effects of extreme war-related shock leading to PTSD. Shell shocked, bomb happy, troppo – ex-soldiers experience much difficulty in adjusting to civilian life if PTSD is left untreated, as Joshua S. Goldstein has described.[2] The narrow diagnostic criteria of war-related neurosis denied returned soldiers treatment until the Vietnam War, when the condition was more widely accepted.

Now the effects of PTSD on marriages and parenting are well researched. The importance of fathering is a related issue, as the dysfunctional behaviours of PTSD sufferers are likely to negatively impact their offspring, particularly, but not exclusively, their sons. This is paired with a 'parenting alliance', where parents' behaviours correlate.[3] Complementary parenting is unlikely if one partner is endlessly compensating for the other's inappropriate behaviour. Combined with the self-perpetuating effects of alcoholism, these characteristic factors have proven to cause intergenerational cycles of domestic abuse and psychological disorders.

'Interior Decoration' addresses these emotional impacts. The family's small, much-loved, smoke-yellowed Albert Namatjira print is juxtaposed with 'stream of consciousness' photographs of watchtowers in Egypt and Israel,[4] opening interpretation to shared trauma, a ricochet through time. Louise Bourgeois, Ai Weiwei, Tracey Emin and Doris Salcedo have also used furniture to convey rupture and abuse, and here domestic objects are deployed to explore what war means for family, anchoring my gendered reflection on perceptions of consequence.

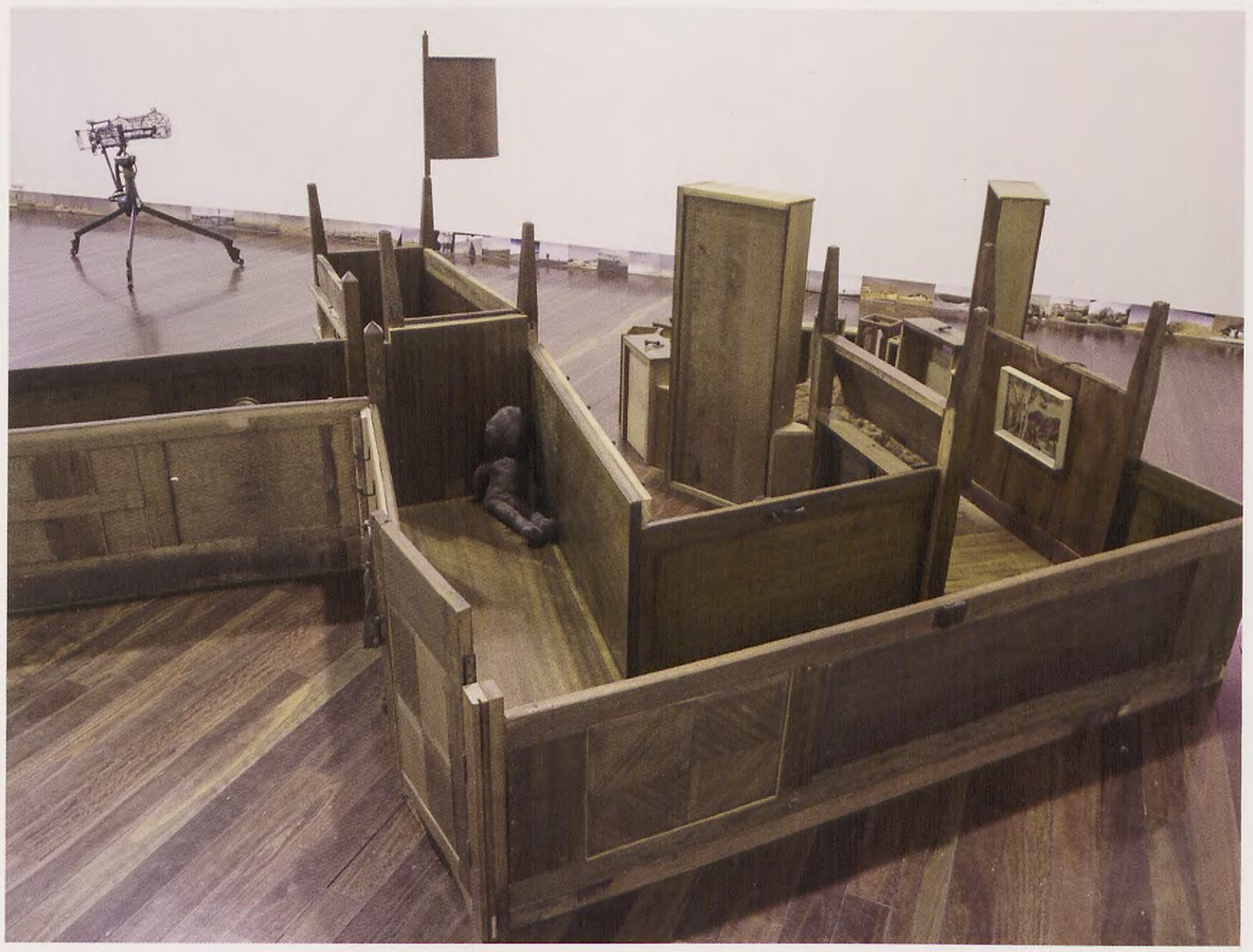
The conjunction of the sewing machine, a woman's industry, and the Vickers machine gun problematises the encoding, presenting the viewer with emotionally charged conundrums. The bedroom furniture turned inside out forms polished-wood tunnels, hiding places, all surveyed by the ladder-less watchtower made from a marriage bed, its floor a baby's stripped-back mattress. 'Interior Decoration' seeks to embed the viewer in the uncanny feelings of an adult transported back to childhood, inviting exploration to uncover its multiplicities.

1 The installation 'Interior Decoration' was presented at Milani Gallery, Brisbane, over 3–19 October 2013.

2 Joshua S. Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa*, Cambridge University Press, Mass., 2001.

3 M.J. Diamond, *My Father Before Me: How Fathers and Sons Influence Each Other Throughout Their Lives*, W.W. Norton & Co, New York, 2007.

4 Following consultations with my father's fellow machine gunner, Philip Hocking (see Philip Hocking, *The Long Carry: A History of the 2/1 Australian Machine Gun Battalion, 1939–46*, 2/1 Machine Gun Battalion Association, Nunawading, Victoria, 1997), I travelled along their tour of duty in Israel and Egypt, photographing the detritus of war, drawing the artwork into the present from the past.



FROM TOP
Sewing machine gun, 2013
Singer sewing machine, bobby pins, 108 x 143 x 178.5 cm
Installation view, 'Interior Decoration' (2013),
Milani Gallery, Brisbane
Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

Trench, 2013
Furniture, metal, vacuum cleaner lint, silk, framed
Albert Namatjira print, dimensions variable
Installation view, 'Interior Decoration' (2013),
Milani Gallery, Brisbane
Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

PAGE 420
Watchtower, 2013
Double bed, cot mattress springs, 304 x 114 x 160 cm
Installation view, 'Interior Decoration' (2013),
Milani Gallery, Brisbane
Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

WHITE AUSTRALIA'S GHOST

JUAN DAVILA

In 2002, Kalli Rolfe Contemporary Art, Melbourne, presented an exhibition of my new work, called 'Woomera'. At the time, the exhibition was an indictment of the indefinite detention of refugees in Australia, but now, if anything, the situation has worsened. Australia now has a policy of continuous, indefinite, mandatory detention both here and overseas for the incarceration of refugees; as per the Refugee Council of Australia's website, those who have failed security assessments are required continually to justify themselves and no longer have the opportunity to seek asylum or settle in Australia. And so modern oppression creates a modern master and non-modern slave. According to Ashis Nandy in his 1983 book, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism*, this process is not 'an encounter between the self and the enemy, the rulers and the ruled ... the gods and the demons', but a 'battle between dehumanised self and the objectified enemy'.

Australia is joined with the United States in an obscene pact of military bonding, the war of western civilisations against barbaric others. It seems that our culture requires for its survival a vilified figure like the refugee. We steal from them their rights and their freedom. We dupe them. We put their symbolic treasure in circulation for political gain. We delegate belief to the politician's discourse and deprive ourselves of the naive belief in the other and their potentials. In 2013 both major political parties in Australia endorse the same approach to refugees. They do so against international condemnation, infringement of human rights and sheer perversion of the moral code. My project in the following pages exhumes the ghost of White Australia.

All works *Untitled*, 2012–13
Gouache and ink on paper, 50 x 65 cm
Courtesy Kalli Rolfe Contemporary Art, Melbourne
Photographs Mark Ashkanasy © Juan Davila

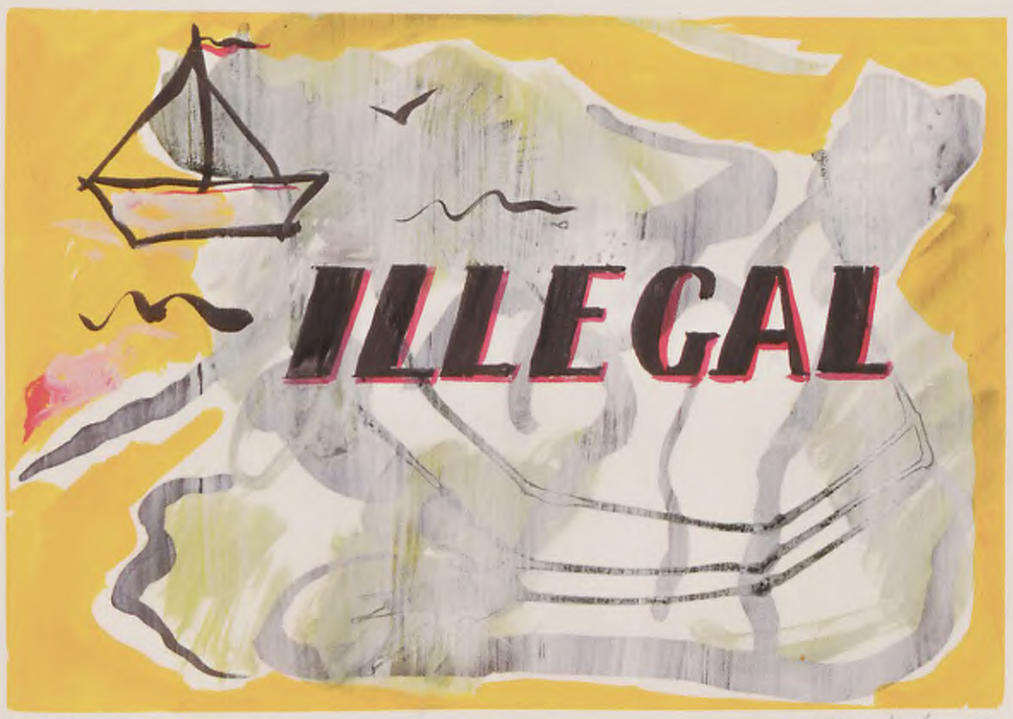
Untitled, fig. 159, 2013
Untitled, fig. 98, 2013

f.g. 152 Juan Davila 2013

fig. 56 Juan Davila 2012

Untitled, fig. 152, 2013
Untitled, fig. 56, 2012

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
Untitled, fig. 87, 2013; *Untitled, fig. 91*, 2013; *Untitled, fig. 95*, 2013; *Untitled, fig. 105*, 2013; *Untitled, fig. 102*, 2013; and *Untitled, fig. 99*, 2013



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
Untitled, fig. 106, 2013; *Untitled, fig. 109*, 2013; *Untitled, fig. 153*, 2013; *Untitled, fig. 161*, 2013; *Untitled, fig. 154*, 2013; and *Untitled, fig. 140*, 2013

4

FOCUS

Mohammad Hosseini, *Lady in red,* 2012
Performance, Tehran
Courtesy the artist
Photograph Hossein Goliya

READING IRANIAN CONTEMPORARY ART

BAVAND BEHPOOR

While it seems that Iranian contemporary art is a branch of the global art-production system, much is overlooked by considering it out of the context of a local history of art. One is always justified in questioning the function of this art on a local, regional and global setting, as the function determines the expectation according to which this art can be read and evaluated.

Experiencing postmodernism before tradition[1]

When Marcos Grigorian was paving the way for Iranian contemporary art with his installations and readymades, Iranian modernist art had achieved a character of its own. Its artists had exploited the various potentials of European modernism in order to expand the capabilities of the existing visual culture. Self-confident of what it had achieved, Iranian modernist art was trying to go further. It had already moved beyond imitating western art and was now even exerting power over the international art scene: Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian had established a position from which to share experiences with Andy Warhol, Milton Avery and Jackson Pollock; Manoucher Yektai had already become a distinct figure within the group of abstract expressionists; and Marcos Grigorian had been making his experiments decades before the similar attempts of Anselm Kiefer and Richard Long. Yet such an influence was only a by-product: generations of artists were bent on decoding the potentials of the local arts and had tried to discover something specific to themselves. In the lead-up to the Iranian Revolution of 1979 tireless giants such as Parviz Tanavoli were working on the everyday and the mundane to find middle points between irreconcilable extremes: to bitterly criticise tradition while lovingly acknowledging its powers, to communicate with outsiders in one's own visual language, and to use the support of the benevolent royal regime while mindful of the sentiments of a nation preparing for revolution.

Detached from the masses yet interested in their visual culture, Marcos Grigorian's experiments with pop art had to wait some decades for a comeback in the hands of a new generation in revolt. The space that had opened up for the smirking mad creativity of Grigorian, who also worked as an actor, welcoming roles offered to him in cheap romantic films under the stage name 'Gregory Mark' (reminiscent of Gregory Peck!), was to be substituted by the bitter and earnest smile of the post-1979 Iranian Revolution generations.

A full range of modernism: Grim giants

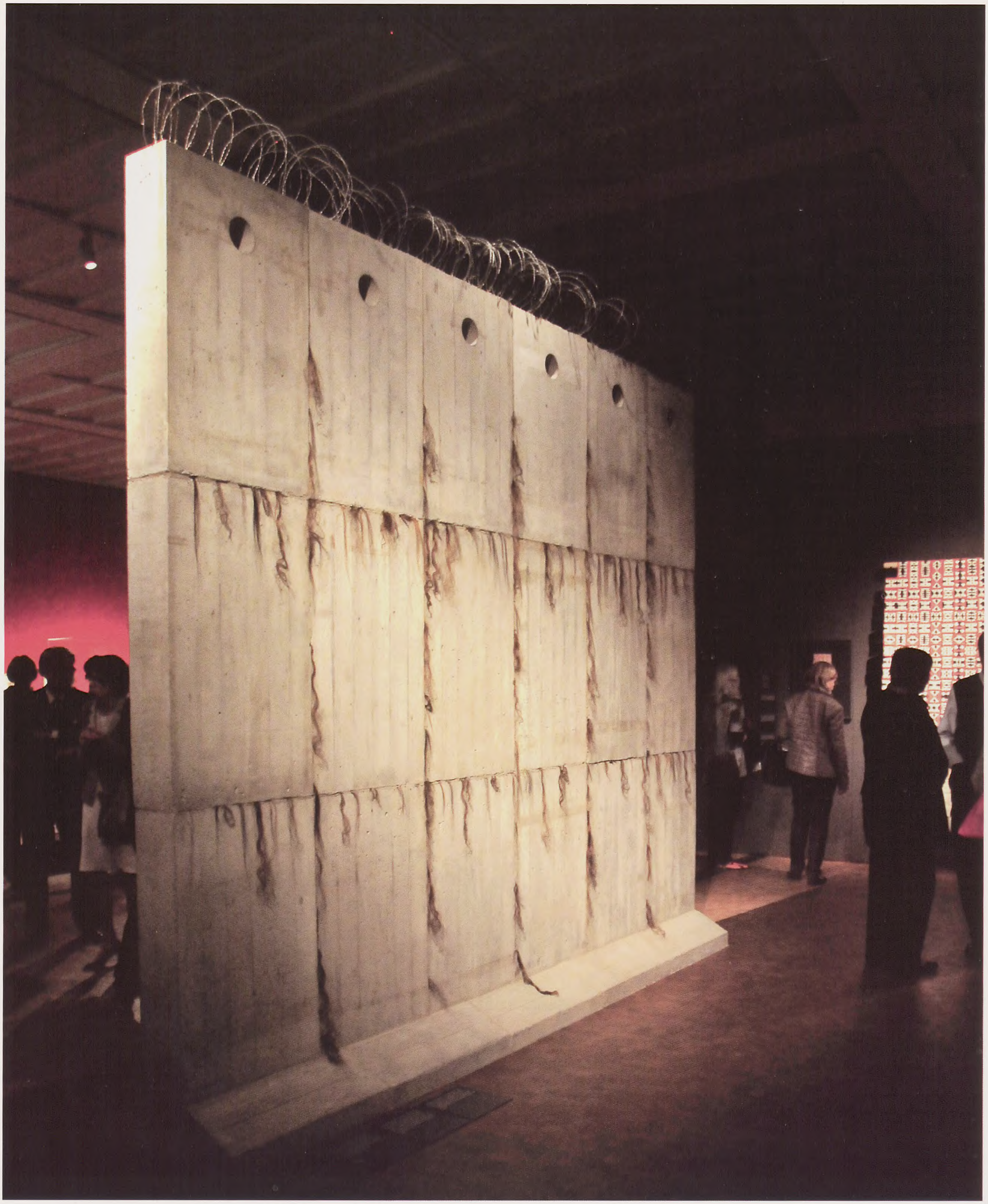
Before Grigorian's Independent Artists Group issued their 1976 manifesto protesting against what they considered a derailed modernism, modernist art had appeared in its full range of options, giving birth to stern and solemn figures as well as those pop and mystical. Bahman Mohassess took pleasure in portraying isolated and devastated human figures that compare with the philosophic horrors of Francis Bacon's paintings, while Davood Emdadian was polishing his monolithic trees to a mythical perfection. At an intersection of the two, Abolghassem Saidi used the brushstrokes of Francis Bacon for his mystical landscapes and still-life paintings, reminiscent, in their serious decorativeness, of Viennese Secessionists.

Tradition resurrected but ridiculed: The Saqqakhaneh School

Parallel to the grim giants, who showed no formal interest in the local arts but rather believed that their aesthetics and ways of seeing would inevitably show through their art, were the artists of the Saqqakhaneh School. Gaining official recognition in 1962, the Saqqakhaneh School focused on the potentials of the popular arts of the past. Either calligraphers by training (Mohammad Ehsai and Faramarz Pilaram) or interested only in the visual aspect of calligraphy (Hossein Zenderoudi); either in love with carpets, rugs, locks, gravestones and local crafts (Parviz Tanavoli) or simply attracted to the visual richness of popular religious culture, the artists of the Saqqakhaneh School benefited from traditional motifs without there being anything traditional about what they did. If there was an intention of 'reviving' anything, then the formal religious art of the mosque or the secular historical art of the courts were more appropriate choices than the popular visual culture of Saqqakhaneh (literally, the religious drinking fountain), with its obscurantist mystical connotations. But not all artists

Iman Afsarian, *Untitled*, 2011
Oil on canvas, 120 x 130 cm
Courtesy the artist and Assar Art Gallery, Tehran

Marcos Grigorian, *Dizy abqousht #3*, 1979
Bread, sugar, ceramic and food sealed in resin,
63.5 x 64.8 cm
Courtesy Leila Heller Gallery, New York



of the Saqqakhaneh School were interested in probing the historical systematics and meanings of traditional art as much as they loved its sublime, ungraspable yet rich façade. The calligraphy painting inspired by the holy calligraphy of Islam would not only become unreadable in the hands of Zenderoudi, but would be transferred to his Citroën Dyane or used for writing nonsensical sentences. He was not alone in this; Tanavoli was also busy making sophisticated giant statues of the word 'nothing' over and over again, injecting a covert nihilism into his love for, and knowledge of, traditional art.

Modernist art in the hands of post-revolution Marxist Islamists

Although the 1979 Iranian Revolution can be seen as a rupture in the continuity of Iranian history, the ground for its emergence had some precedent, as did the visual culture it shaped. Many of the militant groups that worked towards revolution described themselves as Marxist Islamists, a self-contradictory term. It was no surprise that the largely unrecognised leftist art that had developed before the revolution now came to the fore. The revolutionary fervour was shared by nearly all sectors of society, including artists, who for some time had suspended their historical social status of working for the royal courts. There were artists, like Behzad Shishegaran and Koorosh Shishegaran, who went so far as to design and produce posters in their basement encouraging armed struggle, then sell them in the streets as an ideal form of producing art 'by the people and for the people'. Once the revolution succeeded, however, some of these artists were back on track with an 'art for art's sake' attitude towards contemporary art.

It appeared only natural to the revolutionaries that the avant-gardists who had benefited from governmental support go into exile, while those who taught at the universities (the main art institutions of the country) were 'cleansed' from the academic field in a relatively short time through a process called the Cultural Revolution. An official art was imposed on the scene, preferring a combination of socialist tendencies and spirituality, the latter seen through the prism of Kandinsky's treatise *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (1912). The resulting incongruent style (if worthy of the name) was unable to revive tradition but rather portrayed a caricature of it. The official visual culture of the time could result in such quixotic extremes as a walking image of the dead Leader translating as the 'Emperor's New Clothes'.

An orphaned generation deprived of inheritance

The priority for the post-revolution generation was not so much to overcome the rupture caused by the Cultural Revolution and its isolation from the outside world, but to reconcile with the complicated dynamics of a giant governmental image-production system that silenced any isolated representation through the sheer quantity of the images it produced. One cannot downplay its propagandist power over visual culture on the basis of the poor quality of its products. In the 1990s, a certain historicism combining a superficial modernist approach with an equally superficial understanding of traditional art dominated the art universities, forcing the new generation to divert its gaze from a modernist art – now appearing out-of-fashion on the global scene – as well as from the obligatory sources of inspiration recommended by the government, towards any other visual source they could find. As a result, the emerging Iranian contemporary art is more divergent than the previous modernist movements.

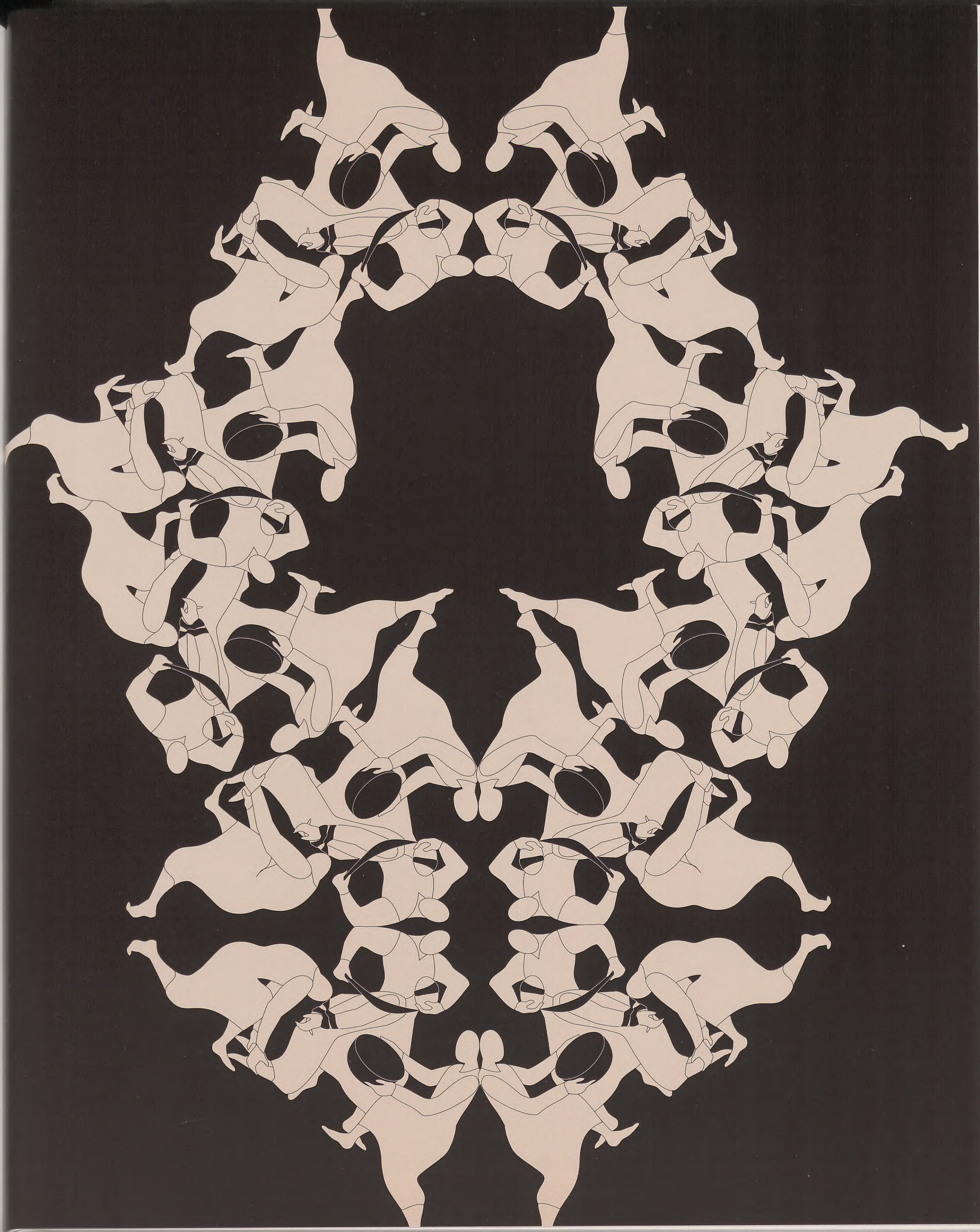
The range of visual solutions sought by both the celebrated artists and the young emerging artists of the movement varies. Artists such as Mandana Moghaddam fluently speak in the language of the 'other' to converse about a local situation, while Iman Afsarian shows respect for the visual representations of a recent past. Some address a general Iranian audience without framing it as art proper, as best exemplified by the urban installations of Shahab Fotouhi and Neda Razavipour or street performances of Mohammad Hosseini, while others insist on the modernist ambitions in a much more puritan way to distance their work from the official art, as seen in the practice of sculptors Mohammad Hossein Emad and Behrooz Darash. A younger generation of artists, including Saghar Daeeri, expresses pure hatred towards the existing visual culture through 'bad painting'. Others focus on the body banned from representation, as Zahra Hosseini does with her 'sincere' attitude and Ghazaleh Hedayat achieves with her covert intellectual grudge ('May I express how much I hate you?'). Parastou Forouhar and Jinoos Taghizadeh intertwine a bold political tone with local aesthetics, parallel to other Iranian artists who might simply look for colourful beauty in a place where aesthetics can be extremely political. To this must be added the art of the diaspora, which continues the uninterrupted paths of Iranian modernist art by following its own styles of mimesis.

No matter the medium or motivation, Iranian contemporary art within the country tries to reclaim a visual language – or (re)invent it wherever the gap is too wide – to enable a suppressed communication through a new visual vocabulary and grammar not yet usurped by the government. This attempt by artists living within the Iranian visual culture, however crucial their work is to that culture, might not appear necessarily 'contemporary' to the global art scene. To address the lack of consumable images concerning Iran within this global context, some Iranian contemporary art has engaged in producing an enormous body of exotic images and objects. In a tug of war between the two poles – and uncertain of taking sides with either audience, whether within or outside the country – Iranian contemporary art is shaping a language whose historical worth will depend on those using it.

1 It is the result of an underestimation of the complexity of the post-revolution governmental dynamics that the development of the new image-production system in Iran is often regarded as the 'comeback of tradition'.

OPPOSITE
Mandana Moghaddam, *Wailing wall*, 2013
Wood, concrete, human hair, paper, barbed wire, dimensions variable
Installation view, 'The Fascination of Persia' (2013–14), Museum Rietberg, Zurich
Courtesy the artist and Museum Rietberg
Photograph Rainer Wolfsberger

PAGE 430
Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, *Monagon*, 2009
Mirror on plaster and wood, 99.06 x 99.06 x 5.08 cm
Courtesy the artist and Haines Gallery, San Francisco



Drawings series I, 2007, detail
From the series 'A Thousand and One Days' (2003–)
Digital print on paper, 42 x 30 cm
© and courtesy the artist

PARASTOU FOROUHAR: DARK ORNAMENT

MEDIA FARZIN

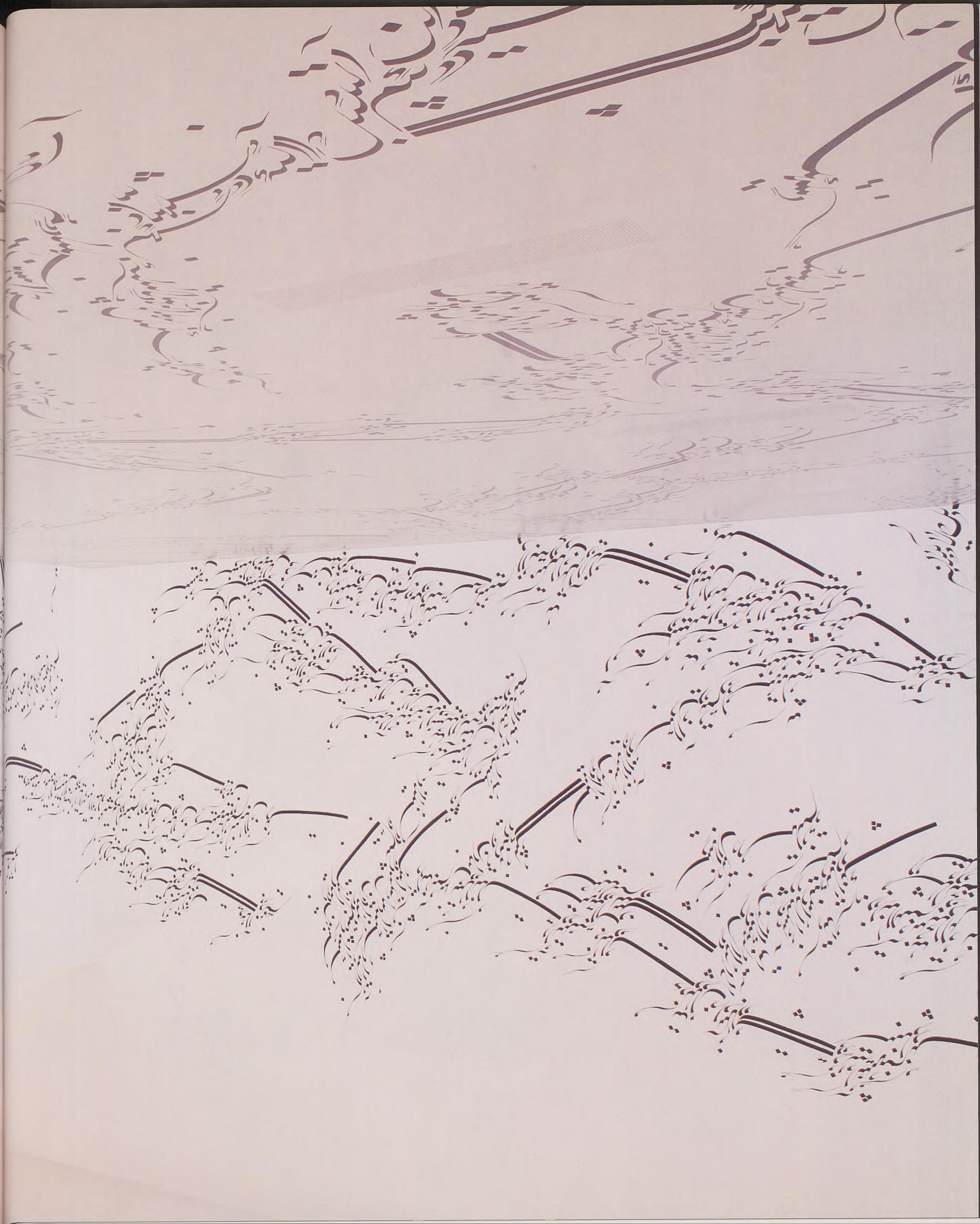
Parastou Forouhar's most recent work, *Kiss me*, 2013, is a black cloth banner with the title's Farsi phrase enshrined at its centre among frenzied neon patterning. To unfamiliar viewers, the work is a vivid if somewhat garish patchwork of vaguely Islamic designs. But to many Iranians it is immediately legible as a highly cheeky appropriation. *Kiss me* is a collage of the banners that typically decorate the walls of Iranian cities during the mourning ceremonies of Ashura, a day that commemorates the death of Hossein ibn Ali, a medieval Muslim martyr and grandson of the prophet Mohammad. Hossein, the story goes, was betrayed by the ruler of the time and murdered with most of his family. Ashura processions memorialise the day with elaborate props, religious chanting and mock (or real) self-flagellation – rituals of Shiite identification with the perpetual battle against tyranny. For the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ashura has long served as historic legitimation of its theocratic rule and a very public enactment of its principles.

But Iranian mourning, as with every other social ritual, likes to keep up with the Joneses. In recent years banner designers have turned to ever-wilder colour schemes, supplementing traditional designs with photo-collages of mosques and roses in bloom. The kitsch profusion might be an improbable contrast to the muted sentiment of the banners' phrases (a typical one might read 'Oh Martyred Hossein'), but few see it as a contradiction. For as the props have evolved, so has the post-revolutionary community of believers: in many urban centres, Ashura processions offer prime cruising ground for teenagers looking to mingle and flirt with members of the opposite sex.

Forouhar's *Kiss me* puts flirtation front and centre, rearranging the sacred iconography according to her playful sense of the decorative. (It also replaces a religious reference with a pop cultural one: *Kiss me* is the title of a beloved Iranian love song of the 1950s that also invokes political resistance in dark times.) The work touches on many aspects of the Frankfurt-based artist's two decades of artistic production: the appropriation of Islamic ornament, the subversion of Iranian calligraphy, and a longstanding involvement with the language of death, especially within the public rhetoric of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The murder of innocents, of course, is a whole other story.

There are always two entry points to Forouhar's body of work. There is the formal approach that might recognise her as an interdisciplinary artist working with sociopolitical themes, and there is the biographical reading that presents her as an activist for whom art is the weapon of choice. The reviews and profiles that have followed her many exhibitions of the past decade have tended to privilege the latter. What is often ignored is the contemporaneity of her formal means: Forouhar was trained at the Offenbach University of Art and Design as a fine artist, but the design elements of her education have clearly shaped her visual sensibility. She turns everyday objects into metaphoric statements, anticipating and emphasising the viewer's interaction and thought process – an attitude very much in keeping with a generation of European artists that emerged in the 1990s, for whom the question of medium was both secondary and a broad field of possibility.

Forouhar has made drawings and animations, wallpaper and flipbooks, billboards and public signs, and gloves and handbags. She opens the private onto the public and tips the domestic into the collective. Her work shows a rigorous apprenticeship of the logic of Islamic ornament, but is equally connected to the German pop tradition, from the repetitions of Thomas Bayrle's screen prints to the political pathos of Gerhard Richter's later paintings. Her understanding of ornament as a social metaphor speaks directly to the writings of Weimar-era critic Siegfried Kracauer, for whom 'mass



ornament' was an apt description of the shallow yet tightly woven social order of capitalism. For Forouhar, the language of pop and the metaphor of ornament are the perfect tools for rehearsing the terrors of totalitarian authority.

'A Thousand and One Days', a project begun in 2003, demonstrates the heterogeneity of Forouhar's approach. It has been realised as wallpaper, animations, drawings, balloons and flipbooks. All of them show faceless figures enacting minute scenes of torture: flesh-coloured bodies strung up by bound hands, beaten by elegantly calligraphic whips, beheaded, and pulled at the rack. They are coolly meticulous and excruciatingly clear representations of bodies in pain. The wallpaper version, first exhibited in 2003 at Berlin's Hamburger Bahnhof, looked disarmingly charming from afar – pink figures on white ground, like something you'd choose for a nursery. The balloon version is even more contradictory: balloons fill the gallery space like a party waiting to happen, until you pull one down and actually see the tortured figures. The shock is most acute in the flipbooks, where the violence comes alive in the viewer's own hands. The title – 'A Thousand and One Days' – is a reference to the classic story, *One Thousand and One Nights*; Forouhar draws us in with the promise of night-time stories, then turns on the cold light of day to show us the violence embedded in structures of power.

Forouhar was trained as an artist at the University of Tehran, leaving for Germany in the early 1990s to continue her studies. In November 1998 her parents were stabbed to death in their home in Tehran. The murders were brutal and obviously politically motivated. Her parents had been prominent political dissidents: before the revolution, her father had been an opposition activist who spent many years in the Shah's prisons. He had briefly served as Minister of Labour under the new Islamic Republic of Iran, but soon found himself marginalised once again under the new regime. Nationalist intellectuals were a liability for the theocratic state, especially those whose claims were founded, like Forouhar's, on the separation of religion and state.

The Forouhars' murder was never resolved. 'Rogue' government operatives were blamed (one committed suicide in prison under dubious circumstances), but wider government complicity in the crime was never acknowledged. Forouhar returns every year to Tehran on the anniversary of the event to hold a commemoration ceremony in their home (and, after several packed public vigils, has been consistently refused permission). She continues to pursue the case, writing open letters, giving interviews, and most recently publishing a biography of her parents' life and work.[1] In the years since the tragedy, her artwork has become inextricably woven into her activism.

Soon after her parents' death, Forouhar began preparing for an exhibition at the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt. The site-specific installation *Documentation*, 1999–, is a roomful of documents relating to the murders of her parents and of other Iranian dissidents. Letters, newspaper clippings, transcripts, translations, press releases and photographs are pinned to the walls and stacked in boxes; there is also a photocopier for viewers to take copies of any of the material with them. Forouhar's gesture of institutional critique translates a very personal grievance into a public demand for retribution and a collective document of resistance. While her subsequent projects would never be quite as information-heavy, *Documentation* is typical of Forouhar's preference for persuasive evidence over emotional entreaty.

'Take Off Your Shoes' (2001), a series of drawings that forms the basis of an animated video, was begun around the same time. The black-and-white sketches document the Kafkaesque tedium of Iran's labyrinthine justice system, which Forouhar experienced first-hand in pursuing her parents' case. Blank-faced and black-veiled women wait in line to be frisked, shepherded through various rooms, and talked down to from equally faceless, bearded clerics. The schematic, elongated figures of 'Take Off Your Shoes' provided the prototype for the pink bodies of 'A Thousand and One Days', as well as more recent series, including 'The Color of My Name' (2008–) and 'He Kills Me, He Kills Me Not' (2010–).

Nearly all of Forouhar's work is produced on a computer. The free-form bodies of her drawings are worked into the tight geometrical symmetries of medieval Islamic ornament; the scenes of aggression and cruelty become delicate patterns and expressive Rorschach blots. Digital design allows her to infiltrate the space of miniature painting, replacing its spiritual order with her own critique of traditional systems. *Black is my name, white is my name: Eyes*, 2010 – whose title is a reference to *My Name Is Red* (1998), Orhan Pamuk's tale of murder and intrigue among Ottoman miniature painters – has the dizzying texture of a Victor Vasarely or M.C. Escher print. On closer view, blindfolded faces emerge from a sea of unblinking eyes. The image has all the flatness of traditional Persian painting, the same lack of shadows and perspectival depth, but turns ornament against itself to speak of violence, loss and disorder.

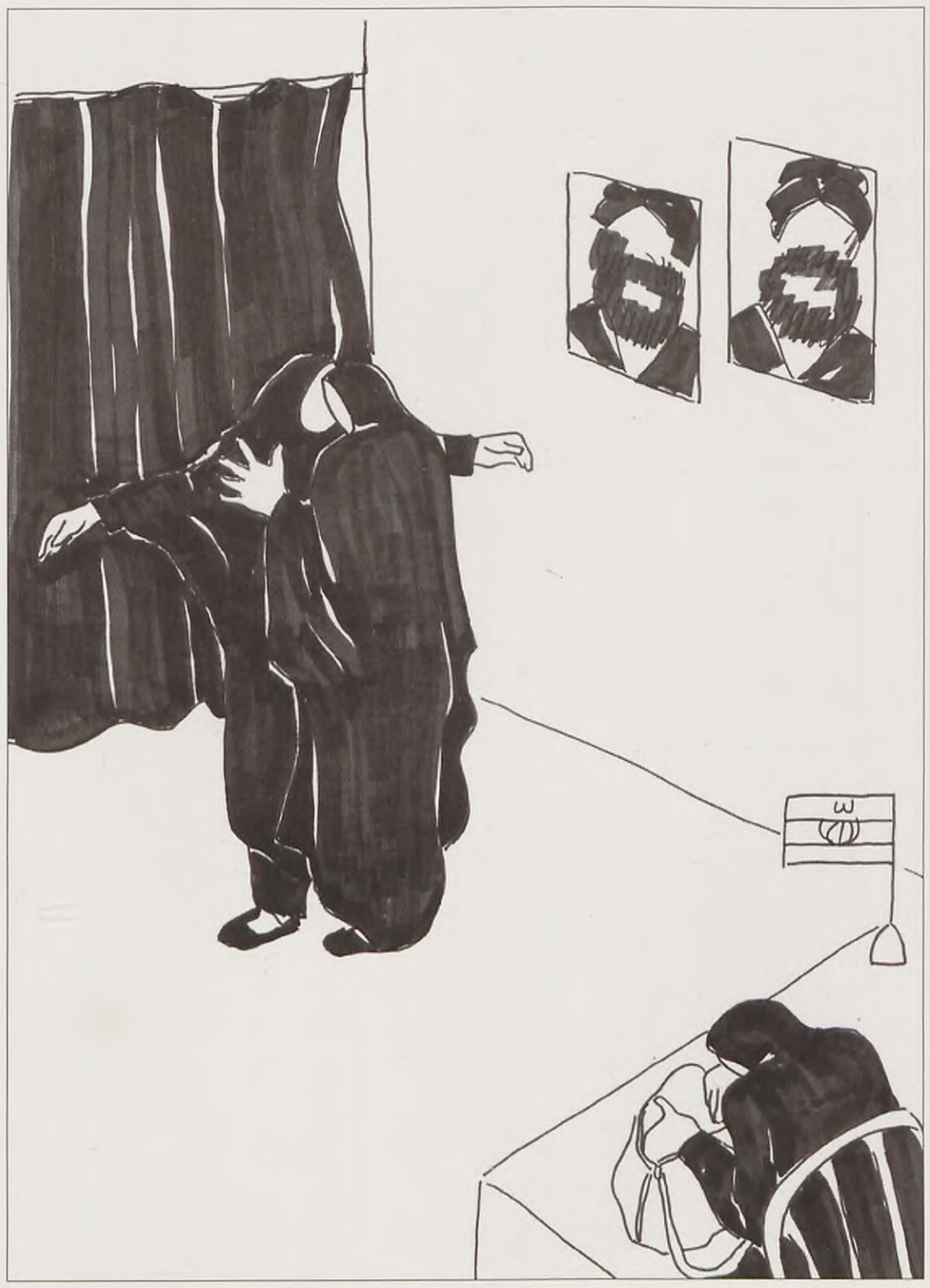
With all this pained critique, it's easy to forget the bold sense of humour that defines works such as *Kiss me*. Forouhar has used mourning banners before: her 2008 work *Countdown* is a group of beanbags, made from the banners, that resembles ornately veiled ladies gathered for afternoon tea. The beanbags were offered as actual seating for gallery visitors, who left them slouching and tottering at different angles. While perhaps a dark evocation of the objectification of women, their strong visual appeal came from the undeniable humour in their lopsided, highly anthropomorphic postures. Her most lively work to date may be *Persian for beginners,* 1997–, redesigned in 2012 for the Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, as *Persian for kids*, an online children's game that invites the player to build animals using the principles of zoomorphic Iranian calligraphy. Forouhar, herself the mother of two sons, brings a childlike glee to the letters, using animation to bring the ancient tradition to the present.

'My work is a critique of a familiar culture of ornament, which leaves so little room for individualism', Forouhar said. 'In ornamental design, an overall principle is forced on the components; what doesn't conform must be rejected and removed. I equate this with a totalitarian system, which also removes what damages the overall order.'[2] Forouhar's work makes it impossible to separate the formal from the conceptual or the biographical from the artistic. Its skill lies in the way the personal, with its deeply felt commitments, is presented to the viewer as a collective project. Her work draws us into the circle of violence, invites us to think with her, to be outraged with her, and to persist as she has persisted. Humour helps, as does unswerving commitment. Ultimately, Forouhar's work is a document of faith, not in any transcendental or divine system, but in the persuasive power of evidence – whether visual, textual or emotional – to transform the social order.

1 Parastou Forouhar, *Read in the Name of Iran: Dariush and Parvaneh Forouhar*, Forough Publications, Cologne, 2012.
2 Conversation with the artist, 29 October 2013.

OPPOSITE
Untitled, 2001
From the series 'Take off your shoes' (2001)
52 digital drawings
© and courtesy the artist

PAGES 440–1
Written room, 1999–
Synthetic polymer paint
Installation view, Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
© and courtesy the artist



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Unknown *Niel Black in Highland dress* (detail) c1850s hand coloured photograph. Private collection

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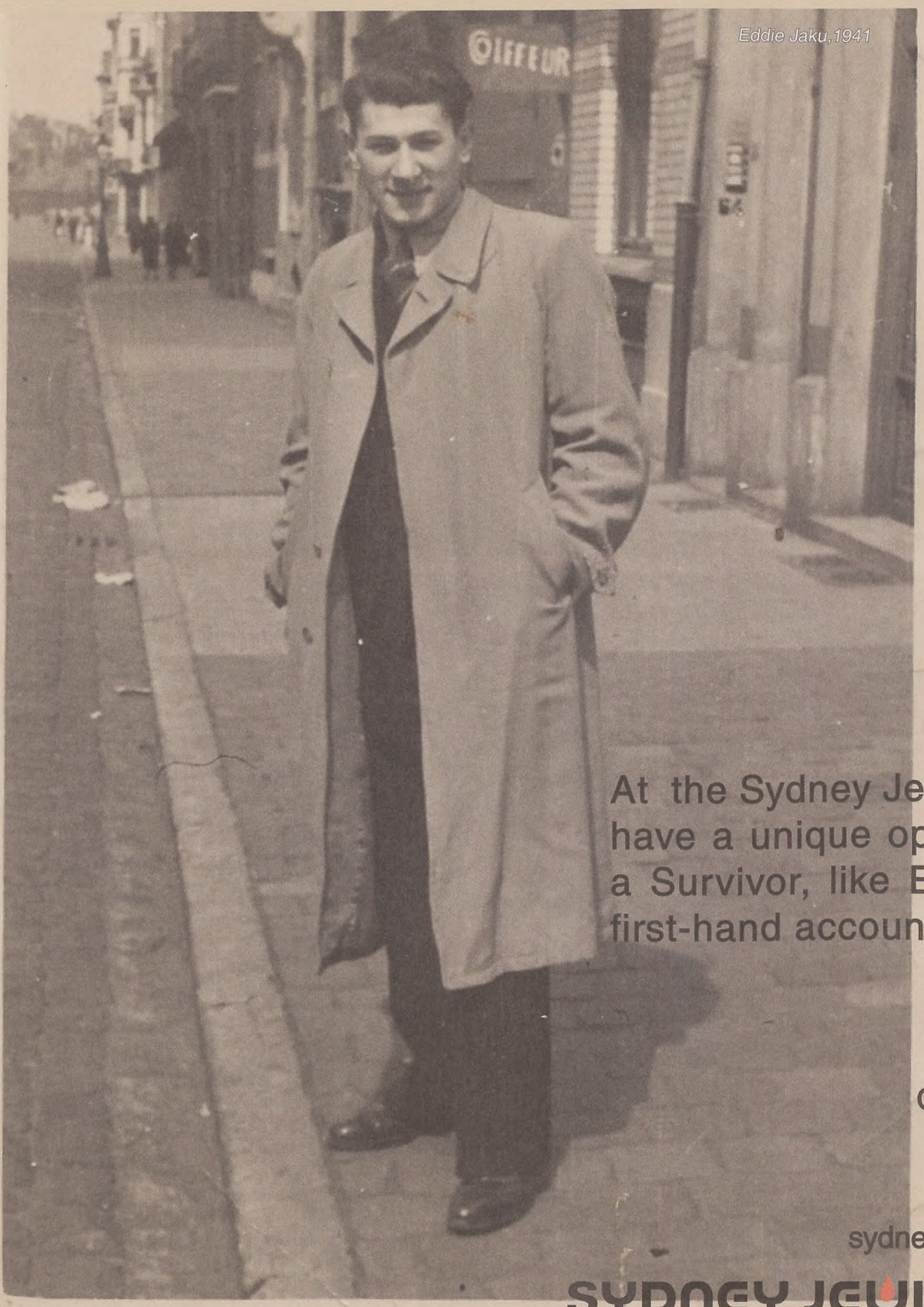
Rollin Schlicht (1937–2011), *The Shaman in Disguise*, 2004, acrylic on canvas
160.0 x 160.0 cm , Photography Effy Alexakis, Photowrite, © Estate of Rollin Schlicht

Holocaust Survivor Eddie Jaku was born in Leipzig, Germany in 1920. He was deported to Buchenwald in November 1938 and then incarcerated in camps in Belgium and France between 1939 - 1941. He escaped from the camps but was caught and deported to Auschwitz in 1942.



Eddie Jaku, 1941

At the Sydney Jewish Museum you have a unique opportunity to meet a Survivor, like Eddie, and hear a first-hand account of the Holocaust

Open Monday to Sunday
Closed Saturday

02 9360 7999
148 Darlinghurst Road
sydneyjewishmuseum.com.au

SYDNEY JEWISH MUSEUM
HOLOCAUST AND AUSTRALIAN JEWISH HISTORY

Free admission first Sunday of every month

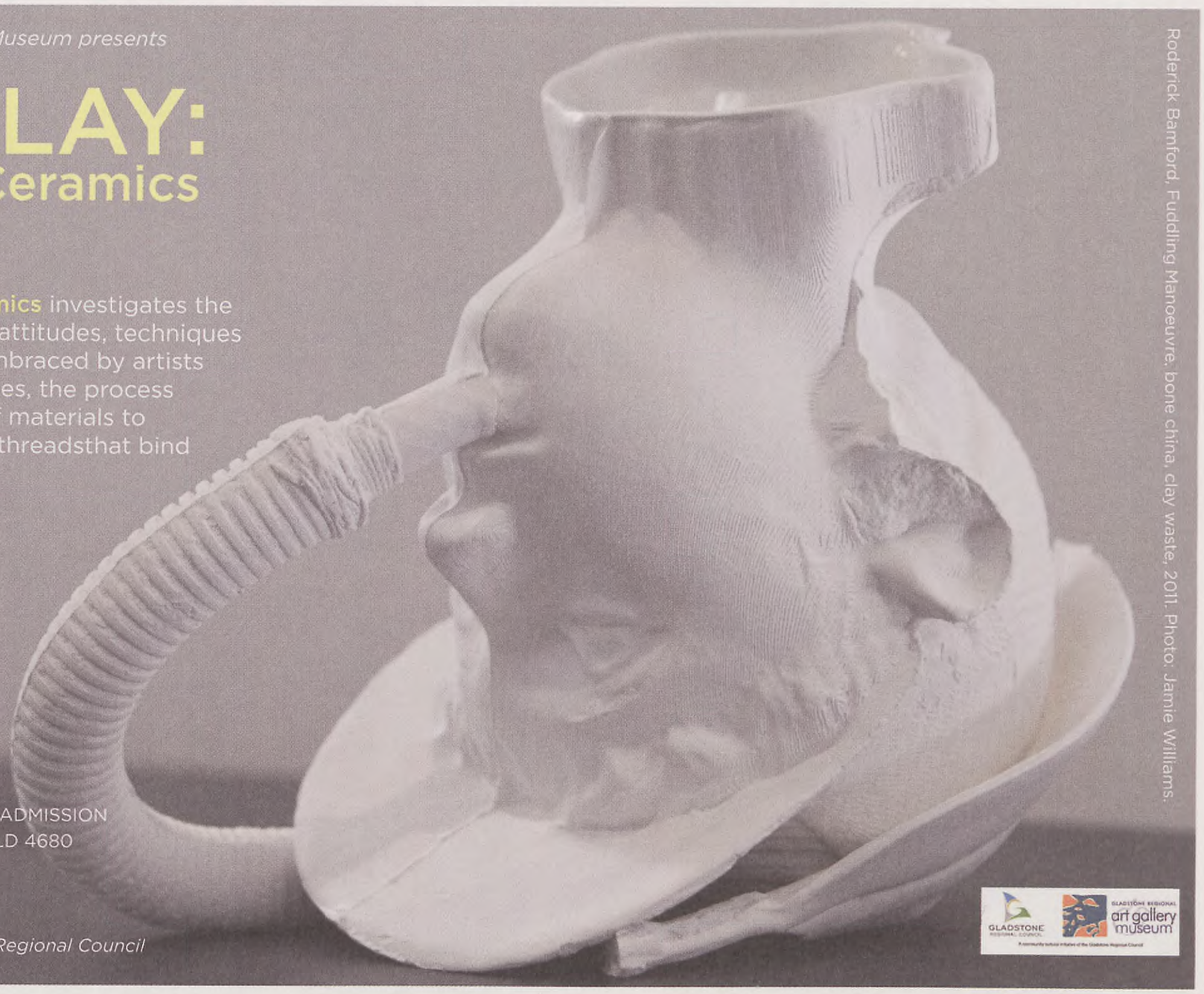
The Gladstone Regional Art Gallery & Museum presents

HYPERCLAY:
Contemporary Ceramics

13 December - 15 March 2014

HYPERCLAY: Contemporary Ceramics investigates the field of ceramics, focusing on new attitudes, techniques and technologies that are being embraced by artists in the 21st century. New technologies, the process of making, and the re-purposing of materials to create new forms, are the delicate threadsthat bind the works in **HYPERCLAY**.

HYPERCLAY: Contemporary Ceramics is an Object Gallery touring exhibition.



Roderick Bamford, Fuddling Manoeuvre, bone china, clay waste, 2011. Photo: Jamie Williams.

Open Monday – Saturday, 10am – 5pm FREE ADMISSION
Cnr Goondoon & Bramston Sts, Gladstone QLD 4680
P: (07) 4976 6766 F: (07) 4972 9097
E: gragm@gladstonerc.qld.gov.au
http://gallerymuseum.gladstonerc.qld.gov.au
A community cultural initiative of Gladstone Regional Council

GLADSTONE REGIONAL COUNCIL
GLADSTONE REGIONAL art gallery museum

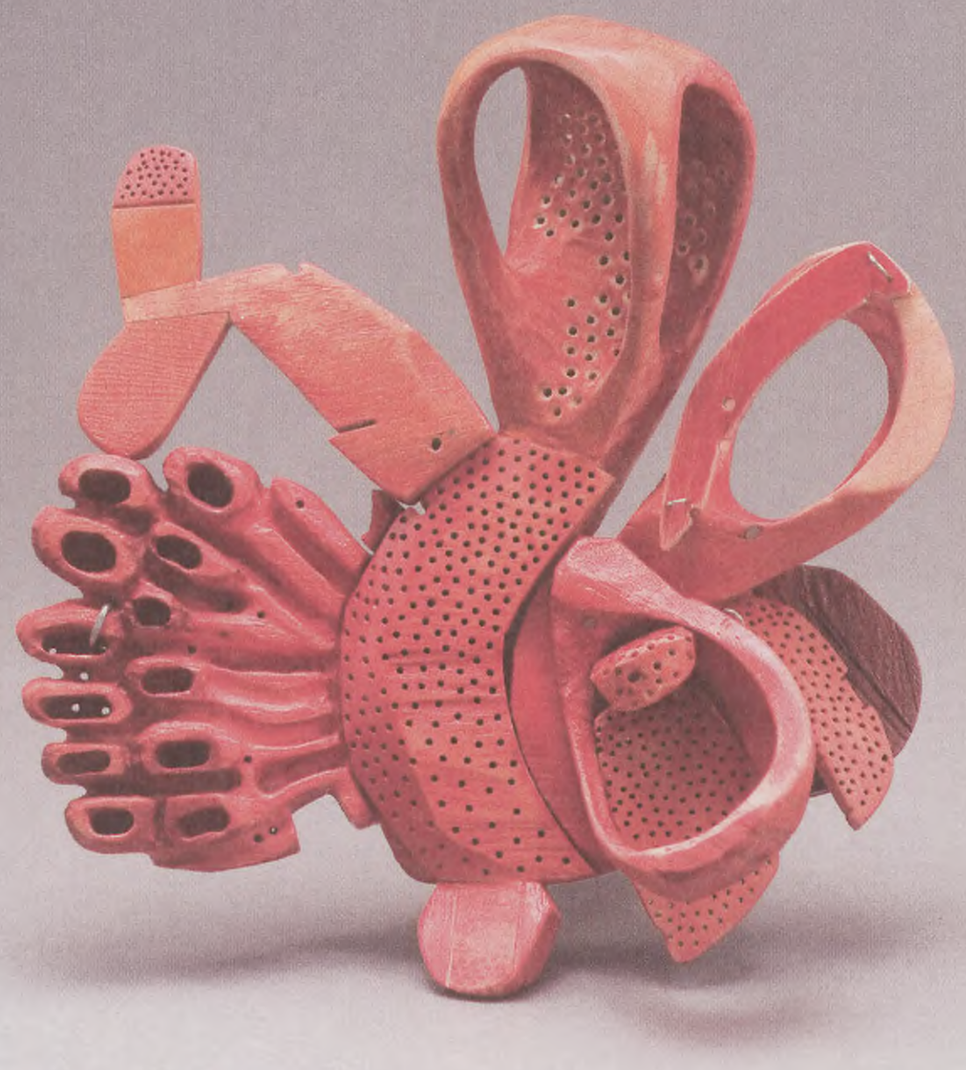


IMAGE Michelle Taylor, *From here to there*, 2011. Recycled timbers, stainless steel, timber stain, synthetic polymer paint, enamel paint and polyurethane varnish. 108 x 105 x 40mm.

tinker
TAILOR
soldier
SAILOR

.....
100 WOMEN
.....
100 BROOCHES
.....
100 STORIES

LATROBE REGIONAL ART GALLERY
8 FEBRUARY – 6 APRIL 2014
138 COMMERCIAL ROAD, MORWELL VIC 3840
TEL (03) 5128 5700

For more information on touring shows
visit www.artisan.org.au

TOURING NATIONALLY

Exhibition partner Brisbane Airport GREAT FOR QUEENSLAND
Exhibition furniture grain by grain furniture
Exhibition touring museum & gallery SERVICES QUEENSLAND
Australian Government Visions of Australia

This exhibition is supported by Visions of Australia, an Australian Government program supporting touring exhibitions by providing funding assistance for the development and touring of Australian cultural material across Australia.

artisan

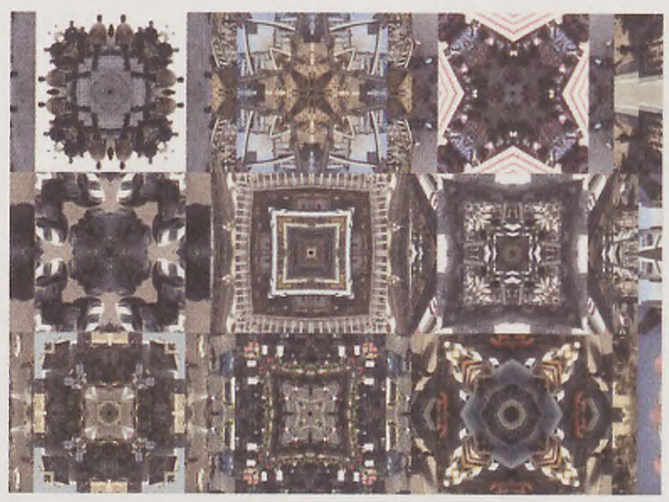
MOSMAN ART GALLERY

Artists of Mosman: 2088
8 February - 16 March

Suzanne Alexander, *Cockatoo Island,* 2013
Oil on canvas, 25 x 31cm

2014 Mosman Youth Art Prize
29 March - 27 April

Toby Manson, *Suspended in Serenity*
Senior-3rd Prize
2013 Mosman Youth Art Prize



Khaled Sabsabi: Syria
11 January - 20 April

Khaled Sabsabi, *Syria*

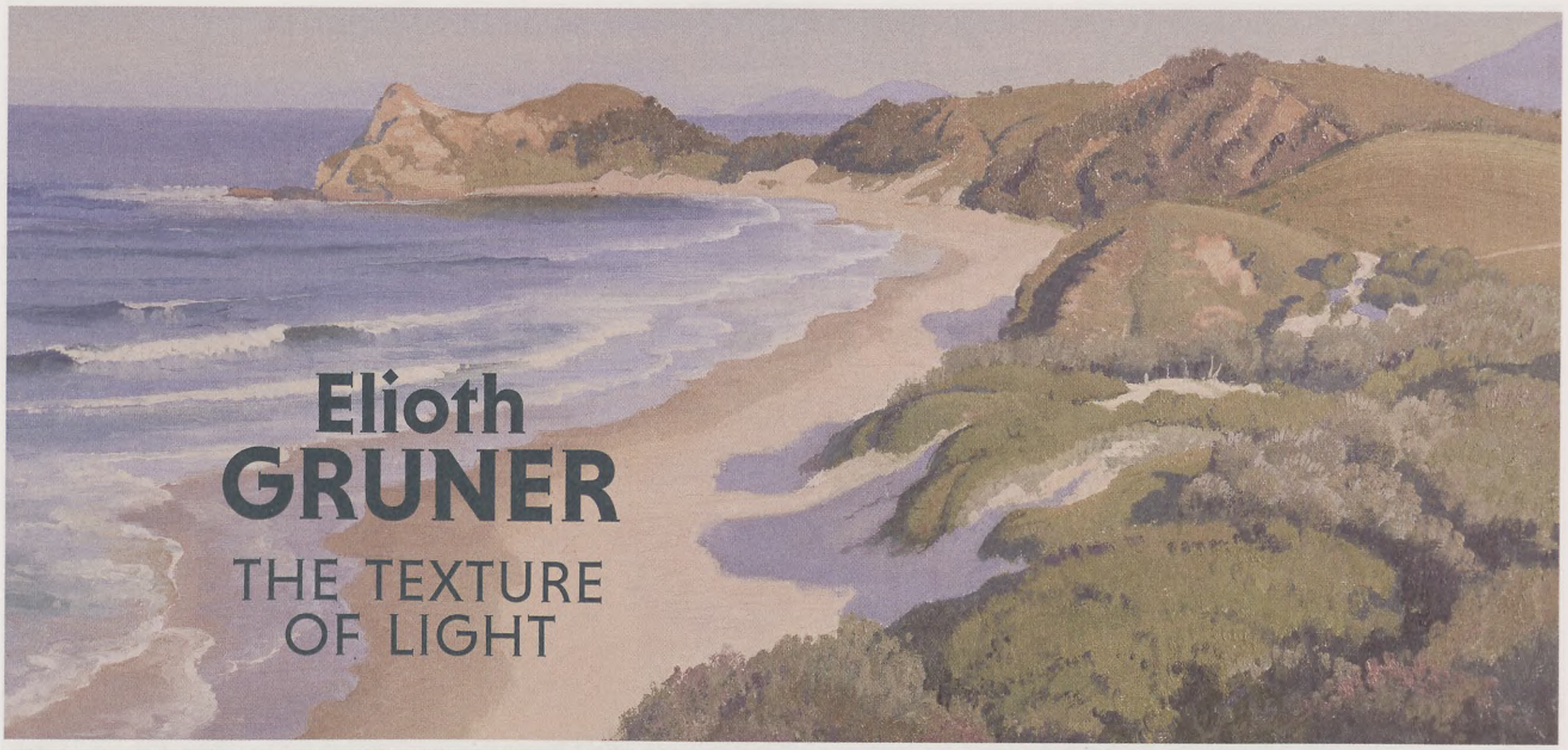
MOSMAN ART GALLERY

Cnr Art Gallery Way & Myahgah Rd
MOSMAN NSW 2088
www.mosmanratgallery.org.au

NSW GOVERNMENT Trade & Investment Arts NSW

Mosman COUNCIL

Mosman Art Gallery is a cultural service provided by Mosman Council



Canberra Museum and Gallery 8 March – 22 June 2014
Newcastle Art Gallery 26 July – 26 October 2014

www.museumsandgalleries.act.gov.au

ACT Government | CANBERRA MUSEUM +GALLERY

Canberra Museum and Gallery is is a part of the Cultural Facilities Corporation, an ACT Government enterprise.

NEWCASTLE ART GALLERY

GORDON DARLING FOUNDATION

GENIUS AND AMBITION

THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, LONDON 1768-1918

2 March – 9 June 2014

Image: John William Waterhouse, R.A. *A Mermaid* (detail), 1900, oil on canvas. Photo credit: © Royal Academy of Arts, London; Photographer: John Hammond

Exhibition organised by the Royal Academy of Arts, London and Bendigo Art Gallery

RA Royal Academy of Arts

Bendigo Art Gallery

CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO

ARTS VICTORIA

State Government Victoria

42 VIEW ST
BENDIGO
VICTORIA 3550
BENDIGOART
GALLERY.COM.AU

SCULPTURE
at SCENIC WORLD

EXHIBITION

24 APRIL / 18 MAY 2014

EXHIBITION PARTNERS

SCENIC WORLD
BLUE MOUNTAINS AUSTRALIA

Australian Government
Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism

THE CARRINGTON BLUE MOUNTAINS EST 1880

KFMmedia

BLUE MOUNTAINS CULTURAL CENTRE

SCENICWORLD.COM.AU/SCULPTURE

AN EXHIBITION SET AMONGST OUR ANCIENT RAINFOREST IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

LARA SCOLARI

AIR

Opening 13 February 2014

The Depot II Gallery
2 Danks St Waterloo NSW
2danksstreet.com.au

larascolari.com.au

Vibe, Mixed media on 640fsm Fabriano, 760 x 1030mm, 2013

ADELAIDE FESTIVAL 2014

Fr 28.02.14 – Su 16.03.14

Photo: Paul Laffoley, *The Zodiac Wheel* 1967, oil, acrylic and vinyl lettering on canvas, 126 x 126cm. Courtesy the artist and Kent Fine Art, New York.

Worlds in Collision

Adelaide International 2014
27 Feb – 30 Mar
CURATOR RICHARD GRAYSON

◆◆◆

Benedict Drew (UK)
Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige (LEB/FRA)
Susan Hiller (USA/UK) **Paul Laffoley** (USA)
Rä di Martino (ITA) **Katie Paterson** (UK)
Fred Tomaselli (USA) **Artur Żmijewski** (POL)

○

Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art
Australian Experimental Art Foundation
Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia
SASA Gallery

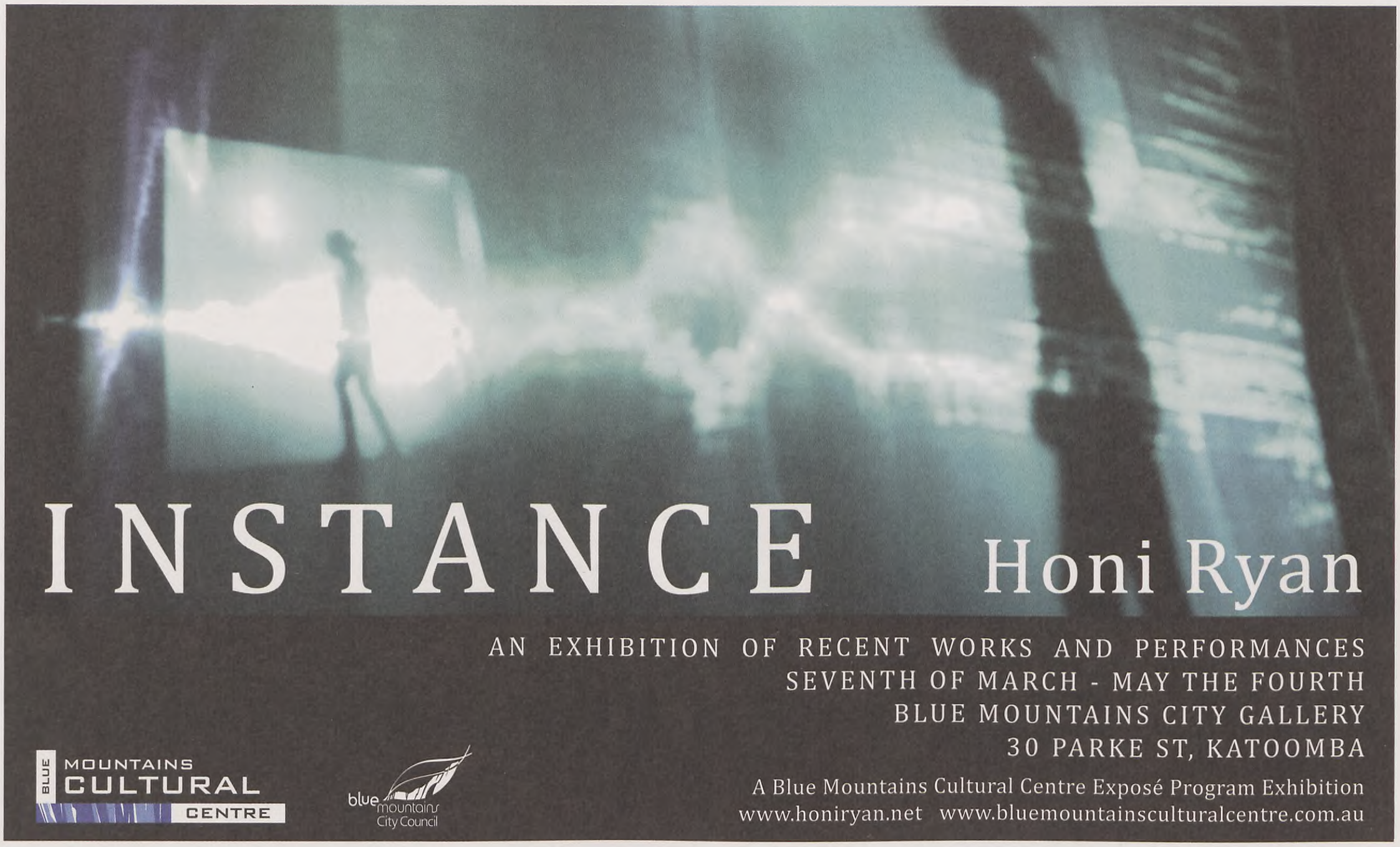
Artists' Week 2014

28 Feb – 2 Mar
Allan Scott Auditorium,
UniSA City West

◆◆◆

From visions of enlightenment to ways of imagining alternatives, subcultures and technological and psychedelic thinking, this free three-day forum includes presentations by Erik Davis, Colin Rhodes, William Yang, Gordon Hookey, Lynette Wallworth and Marco Fusinato, along with a specially-curated day from Lars Bang Larsen and the Radical Enlightenment project.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA · Government of South Australia Arts SA · ADELAIDE CITY COUNCIL · University of South Australia · SAMSTAG MUSEUM · Australian Government · Australia Council



INSTANCE

Honi Ryan

AN EXHIBITION OF RECENT WORKS AND PERFORMANCES
SEVENTH OF MARCH - MAY THE FOURTH
BLUE MOUNTAINS CITY GALLERY
30 PARKE ST, KATOOMBA

BLUE MOUNTAINS CULTURAL CENTRE

blue mountains City Council

A Blue Mountains Cultural Centre Exposé Program Exhibition
www.honiryan.net www.bluemountainsculturalcentre.com.au

PLC Sydney presents the

Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing 2014

Exhibition of Finalists

Judge: Mr Edmund Capon AM OBE

1 - 28 March 2014

Official opening:
7 pm Friday 28 February
Continues:
8.30 am - 4 pm weekdays
11 am - 4 pm Saturdays

Adelaide Perry Gallery
Corner Hennessy and College Streets
Croydon, NSW.
T: (02) 9704 5693
AdelaidePerryGallery@plc.nsw.edu.au

Susan J. White *Hawkesbury*
Winning entry 2013

PLC PRESBYTERIAN LADIES' COLLEGE SYDNEY 1888

Queensland

Andrew Baker Art Dealer
26 Brookes Street, Bowen Hills 4006
Tel 07 3252 2292
info@andrew-baker.com
www.andrew-baker.com
Director: Andrew Baker
Paintings, photographs and sculptures by leading contemporary Australian, Melanesian and Polynesian artists including Lincoln Austin, Leonard Brown, Tony Coleing, Michael Cook, Fiona Foley, Rosella Namok, Dennis Nona, Michel Tuffery, Katarina Vesterberg and William Yang.
Wed–Sat 10–5, or by appointment

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 Street, Fortitude Valley 4006
Tel 07 3254 2849 Fax 07 3254 2859
bh@heisergallery.com.au
www.heisergallery.com.au
Director: Bruce Heiser
Tues–Fri 10.30–6, Sat 10.30–5
With a strong and burgeoning stockroom, Heiser Gallery represents the work of leading Australian artists, dealing in works dating from c1920 onwards.
18 Feb – 15 Mar: Michael Eather
18 Mar – 12 Apr: Lewis Miller
15 Apr – 10 May: Robert Moore

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: Aileen Burns and Johan Lundh
Tues–Sat 11–5, Thurs until 8

Jan Murphy Gallery
486 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley, 4006
Tel 07 3254 1855
jan@janmurphygallery.com.au
www.janmurphygallery.com.au
Director: Jan Murphy
Artists include: Kim Buck, Danie Mellor, Ben Quilty and Alex Seton
18 Feb – 15 Mar: Kirra Jamison
18 Mar – 12 April : Richard Dunlop
15 Apr – 10 May: Rhys Lee
Tues–Sat 10–5

Logan Art Gallery
cnr Wembley Road and Jacaranda Avenue, Logan Central 4114
Tel 07 3412 5519 Fax 07 3412 5350
artgallery@logan.qld.gov.au
www.logan.qld.gov.au/artgallery
Director: Michael Wardell
21 Feb – 29 March: No added sugar: Australian Muslim women artists; Mana Nowbar
4 Apr – 10 May: Ever Present: Photographs from the QAGOMA Collection 1850–1875; Marty Pouwelse
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 Crooke, 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 2 Mar: Traversing Borders: Art from the Kimberley
15 Mar – 25 Apr: Arthur Boyd: An active witness
Tues–Fri 10–5, Sat–Sun 12–4, 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
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, Darlington 2008
PO Box 1926, Strawberry Hills 2012
Tel 02 8580 7002
mail@annaschwartzgallery.com
www.annaschwartzgallery.com
Located in the historic Carriageworks, Anna Schwartz Gallery Sydney presents ambitious projects by leading international and Australian artists. The artistic program focuses on large-scale installations and curated exhibitions.
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

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

Blue Mountains Cultural Centre
30 Parke Street, Katoomba 2780
Tel 02 4780 5410
info@bluemountainsculturalcentre.com.au
www.bluemountainsculturalcentre.com.au
Located in the heart of Katoomba, Blue Mountains Cultural Centre encompasses the Blue Mountains City Art Gallery, World Heritage Interpretive Centre and a viewing platform that takes in the stunning panoramic vistas of Katoomba and the Jamison Valley.
Open daily, see website for hours and admission fees

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
29 Jan – 1 Mar 2014: Group exhibition: Mira Gojak, Andrew Hazewinkel, Susan Jacobs, Tara Marynowsky
7 Mar – 12 Apr 2014: Dani Marti: Notes for Bob
25 Apr – 17 May 2014 : Emma White

Christopher Day Gallery
Cnr Elizabeth and Windsor Streets
Paddington 2021
Tel 9326 1952 Mob 0418 403 928
cdaygallery@bigpond.com.au
www.cdaygallery.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

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 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

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

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

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

Hazelhurst Regional Gallery & Arts Centre
782 Kingsway, Gymea 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, theatrette, gallery shop, café and artist-in-residence space.
Daily 10–5, closed Good Friday, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day

The Ken Done Gallery
1 Hickson Road, The Rocks,
Sydney 2000
Tel 02 8274 4599 Fax 02 8274 4545
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

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

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
3 Feb – 7 Mar: Transplantation British and Australian Narrative Jewellery curated by Norman Cherry
14 March – 18 April: Affinities 7 Museums – 50 Objects: An assembled array of objects from each of the University's museums and collections stretching from the ancient world to the contemporary landscape.
Mon–Fri 10–5, Free admission

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
14 Feb – 27 Apr: Mark Tedeschi: Shooting around corners
Until 6 Apr: Showcase: Artwork by local highschool students; International Salon of Photography
28 Feb – 4 May: Tallulah Cunningham, Brett Alexander: DomiKNITor
27 Mar – 25 May: Groovin the Moo
Tues–Sun 10–5

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
21 Feb – 16 Mar: Express Yourself Selected Artworks by 2013 HSC Visual Arts Students
27 Mar – 27 Apr: The Three O's: Orban, Olsen, Ogburn
This touring exhibition focuses on three interconnected artists.
Ongoing: Art from the Vault
Tues–Sun 10–5, closed public holidays, Free admission

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

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

Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation
16–20 Goodhope Street, Paddington 2021
Tel 02 9331 1112
info@sherman-scaf.org.au
www.sherman-scaf.org.au
21 Mar – 20 Sep: In association with BVN Donovan Hill, SCAF presents Fugitive Structures 2014: AR-MA, SCAF Project 20
21 Mar – 3 May: Fugitive Structures 2014: Archer Breakspear
SCAF Project 21
Wed–Sat 11–5, Free admission

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, Merilyn Fairskye, 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.
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

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

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

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
5 Feb – 22 Feb: Richard Larter: Paintings from 1970; Patricia Moylan: New work; Steve Harrison: Ceramics
26 Feb – 15 March: Ruth Waller: Paintings; Tony Tuckson: Abstract paintings from the mid 1950s; 19 March; Derek O'Connor: Paintings; John Peart: Collages

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

Wollongong Art Gallery
cnr Kembla and Burelli Streets, Wollongong 2500
Tel 02 4227 8500 Fax 02 4226 5530
gallery@wollongong.nsw.gov.au
www.wollongongcitygallery.com
8 Feb – 11 May: Malcolm Benham: Scrap Culture 1980 – 2014
1 Mar – 25 May: Mai Nguyen-Long: Beyogmos
1 Mar – 4 May: Michele Elliot: Whitewash
15 Mar – 20 Jul: Mann-Tatlow Collection of Asian Art
5 Apr – 4 May: Robert S Liddicoat: An artist and his colours
Tues–Fri 10–5, Sat–Sun 12–4, Closed public holidays, Free admission

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

Australian Capital Territory

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
20 Feb – 6 Apr: Philip Wolfhagen: A retrospective by Newcastle Regional Art Gallery
10 Apr – 18 May: The Dobell Drawing Prize: A survey of past winners and participants, plus a selection of drawings by the prize's originator William Dobell
Wed–Sun 12–5, Free admission

Beaver Galleries
81 Denison Street, Deakin, Canberra 2600
Tel 02 6282 5294 Fax 02 6281 1315
mail@beavergalleries.com.au
www.beavergalleries.com.au
Directors: Martin and Susie Beaver (ACGA)
Canberra's largest private gallery. Regular exhibitions of paintings, prints, sculpture, glass and ceramics. Artists exhibiting this quarter include Judy Holding, Victory Greenaway, David Frazer, Andrew Baldwin, Graham Fransella and Avital Sheffer.
Tues–Fri 10–5, Sat–Sun 9–5

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 21 Apr: Gold and the Incas: Lost Worlds of Peru reveals the splendour, drama and beauty of ancient Peru and the famous empire of the Incas, featuring more than 220 including scintillating jewellery created thousands of years ago to decorate nobility in life and in death.
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 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 in 1938, C.A.S. is a non-profit organisation run by and for artists across Australia.
22 Feb – 10 Mar: Contemporary By Nature
5 Apr – 21 Apr: A4 Art: Herring Island Summer Arts Festival
Changing exhibitions, 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
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. New exhibitions every three weeks.
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

Gallerysmith
170–174 Abbotsford Street,
North Melbourne 3051
Tel 03 9329 1860 Mob 0425 809 328
marita@gallerysmith.com.au
www.gallerysmith.com.au
Director: Marita Smith
Gallerysmith 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

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.vicgov.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

Monash University Museum of Art | MUMA
Ground Floor, Building F, Caulfield Campus
900 Dandenong Road, Caulfield East, 3145
Tel 03 9905 4217
muma@monash.edu
www.monash.edu.au/muma
14 Feb – 14 Apr: Stuart Ringholt
The centrepiece – Stuart Ringholt's monumental, functional but errant clock, provokes a new reading of his earlier works. 'Club Purple' sees the gallery transformed into a nude daytime disco.
Tues–Fri 10–5, Sat 12–5, Free admission

Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery
Civic Reserve, Mornington-Tyabb Road, Mornington 3931
Tel 03 5975 4395
mprg@mornpen.vic.gov.au
www.mprg.mornpen.vic.gov.au
Director: Jane Alexander
MPRG is the region's major public art gallery. It presents a dynamic program of exhibitions and events.
Tues–Sun 10–5

Mossgreen Gallery
310 Toorak Road, South Yarra 3141
Tel 03 9826 0822 Fax 03 9826 1255
mail@mossgreen.com.au
www.mossgreen.com.au
Directors: Paul Sumner, Amanda Swanson
Mossgreen Gallery represents emerging, mid-career and established Australian painters, ceramicists and sculptors with exhibitions changing monthly. The Gallery also stages retrospective selling exhibitions for Australian and international artists.
Mon–Fri 10–5.30, Sat 10–4

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
From 11 Apr – 20 Jul: Top Arts 2014
From 17 Apr – 24 Aug: Sue Ford
Until 23 Mar: Melbourne Now
Daily 10–5, closed Mondays and Christmas Day

National Gallery of Victoria
NGV International
180 St Kilda Road, Melbourne 3004
Tel 03 8620 2222
www.ngv.vic.gov.au
Director: Tony Ellwood
28 Feb – 31 Dec: Art of the Table
4 Apr – 31 Aug: William Blake
11 Apr – 28 Sep: Wang Gongxin: Video Artist
Until 2 Mar: Edward Steichen & Art Deco Fashion
Until 23 Mar: Melbourne Now
Daily 10–5, closed Tuesdays and Christmas Day

Niagara Galleries
245 Punt Road, Richmond 3121
Tel 03 9429 3666 Fax 03 9428 3571
mail@niagara-galleries.com.au
www.niagara-galleries.com.au
Director: William Nuttall (ACGA)
Committed to the exhibition and sale of modern and contemporary Australian art. Offers an extensive stockroom and advice on creating a rewarding art collection. Nuttall is an approved valuer under the Cultural Gifts Program.
Feb: Paul Boston
Mar: Blue Chip XVI: The Collectors' Exhibition
Apr: Bradd Westmoreland
Tues–Sat 11–6 or by appointment

TarraWarra Museum of Art
311 Healesville–Yarra Glen Road, Healesville 3777
Tel 03 5957 3100 Fax 03 5957 3120
museum@twma.com.au
www.twma.com.au
Director: Victoria Lynn
Did you know that the TarraWarra Museum is only one hour from Melbourne? Located in the Yarra Valley in Victoria, the Museum presents vibrant modern and contemporary exhibitions of Australian and international art.
Admission $5 (pensioners, students, children free)
Tues–Sun 11–5

Ten Cubed Collection
1489 Malvern Road, Glen Iris, 3146
Tel 03 9822 0833
info@tencubed.com.au
www.tencubed.com.au
A private collection of contemporary art, open to the general public
Tues–Sat 10–4, free admission

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

South Australia

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
Director: Erica Green
28 Feb – 28 Mar: Worlds in Collision: Adelaide International 2014
Curated by Richard Grayson, featuring the work of nine international artists, across four sites. As a collaborator, the Samstag Museum is proud to present Susan Hiller, Paul Laffoley, Ra di Martino and Katie Paterson.
Tues–Fri 11–5, Sat 2–5, Free admission

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
From 1 Mar: The Adelaide Biennial is the country's longest running survey of contemporary Australian art. The 2014 Adelaide Biennial: Dark Heart presents work by more than twenty-five contemporary Australian artists.
Daily 10–5, Bookshop and Art Gallery Food + Wine, daily 8–4.45, Closed 25 Dec, Free admission, charges may apply to special exhibitions

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
Located in the heart of Adelaide's cultural precinct, the City Gallery presents historic and contemporary art, craft and design through collection-based shows, commissioned projects and exhibitions drawn from the national touring network.
Until 4 May: Testing Ground, Curator Julie Gough
Tues–Fri 11–4, Sat–Sun 12–4, Free admission

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
Established 1992 as Greenaway Art Gallery. Spaces in Adelaide & Berlin running regular exhibitions of Australian and international artists, 22 years of Art Fairs. Offering advice / valuations to collectors. Artists include Sierra, Collishaw, Rentmeister, Tillers, Valamanesh, Smart, Watson, Bezor, Paauwe, Kimber, Hassan, Kitson.
Tues–Sun 11–6

Peter Walker Fine Art
101 Walkerville Terrace
Walkerville, 5081
Tel 08 8344 4607 Fax 08 8364 5817
info@peterwalker.com.au
www.peterwalker.com.au
Director: Peter R. Walker
Specialising in rare Australian and international art.
Thurs–Sat 11–5, and by appointment

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

Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (PICA)
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

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

Northern Territory

Muk Muk Fine Art
14 Lindsay Ave, Alice Springs, 0871
51 Smith Street, Darwin, 0800
Tel 08 8953 6333 Fax 08 8953 1941
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
Darwin: Mon–Fri 9–5 and by appointment

Book Shops

The Gallery Shop
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Art Gallery Road, Sydney 2000
Tel 02 9225 1718 Fax 02 9233 5184
galleryshop@ag.nsw.gov.au
www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/shop
If you love art, this is the place to shop. You'll find the most comprehensive range of fine art books in Australia along with a carefully curated selection of the best literary and non-fiction titles and children's books. We also stock posters, postcards and a broad range of creative gifts to delight all ages and suit all budgets – many of them inspired by the Gallery's collection. Daily 10–5

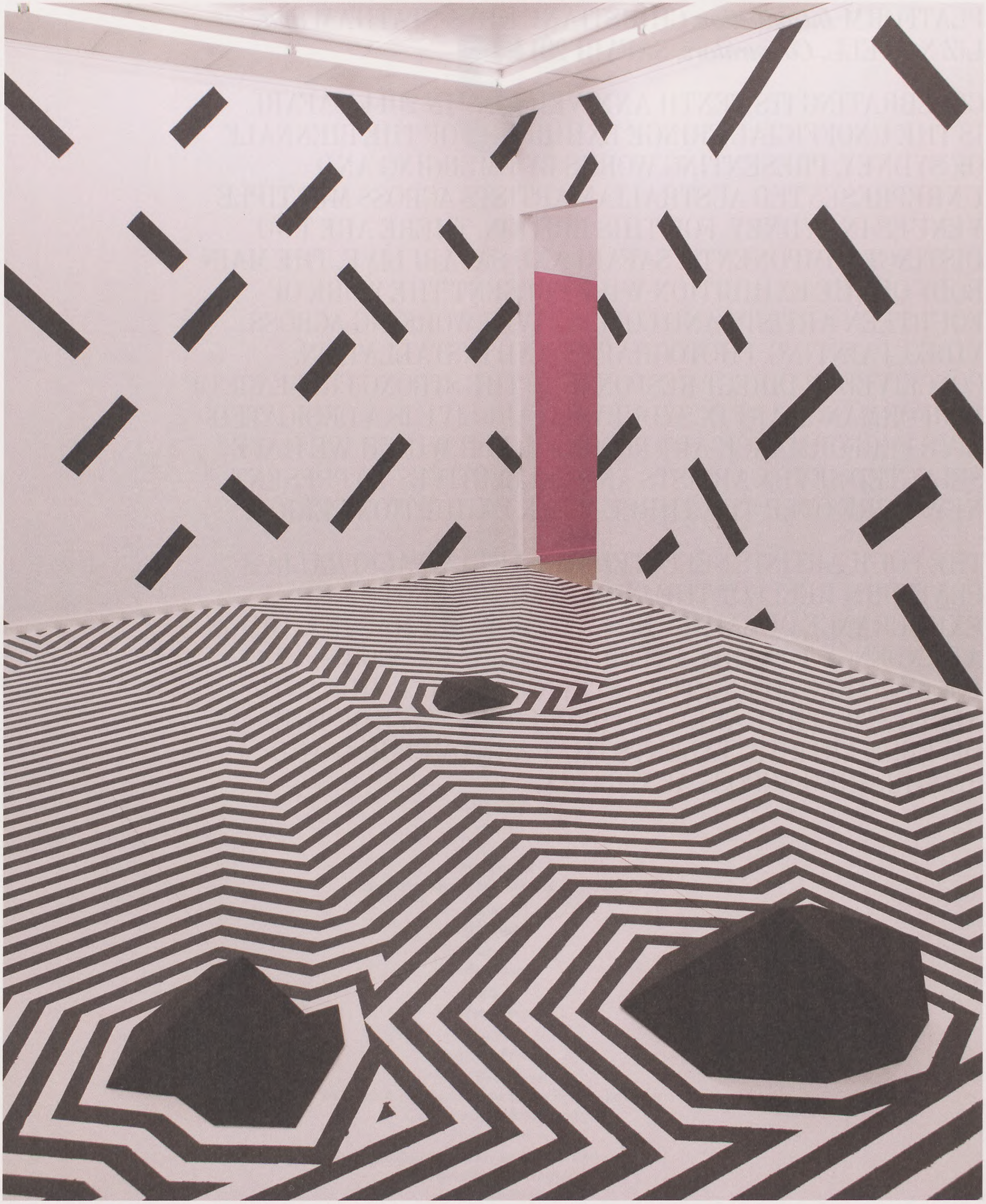
5

PLATFORM

PLATFORM *Introduction.* CHRISTIANE KEYS-STATHAM *and* LIZ NOWELL, *Co-curators*, SAFARI 2014.

CELEBRATING ITS TENTH ANNIVERSARY IN 2014, SAFARI IS THE UNOFFICIAL FRINGE EXHIBITION OF THE BIENNALE OF SYDNEY, PRESENTING WORKS BY EMERGING AND UNREPRESENTED AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS ACROSS MULTIPLE VENUES IN SYDNEY. FOR THIS EDITION, THERE ARE TWO DISTINCT COMPONENTS: SAFARI AND SAFARI LIVE. THE MAIN BODY OF THE EXHIBITION WILL PRESENT THE WORK OF FOURTEEN ARTISTS AND COLLECTIVES WORKING ACROSS VIDEO, PAINTING, PHOTOGRAPHY AND INSTALLATION. CONCEIVED IN DIRECT RESPONSE TO THE STRONG PRESENCE OF PERFORMANCE ART IN SYDNEY, SAFARI LIVE IS A DEDICATED LIVE PERFORMANCE-ART PROGRAM, FOR WHICH WE HAVE SELECTED SEVEN ARTISTS AND COLLECTIVES TO PRESENT NEW WORK OVER THE THREE-WEEK EXHIBITION PERIOD.

THE FOUR ARTISTS SELECTED FOR *ARTAND AUSTRALIA*'S PLATFORM REFLECT THE DYNAMISM, STRENGTH AND EXUBERANCE OF SAFARI 2014. THEIR WORK HAS IN COMMON A TENDENCY TOWARDS INTERDISCIPLINARY CROSS-POLLINATION, CONCEPTUAL STRENGTH AND A VIBRANT AESTHETIC. THEY ARE ALSO REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DIVERSE ARTISTIC TALENTS THAT ARE EMERGING AND FLOURISHING ACROSS AUSTRALIA.



SAM SONGAILO

Born 1979, Townsville
Lives and works in Melbourne

Serene yet precise, a traditional Japanese Zen garden promotes a sense of natural order. But Sam Songailo's recent op art manifestation at Adelaide's Fontanelle Gallery turns tradition on its head, imbuing the Zen garden with a dazzling, futuristic quality. The entire gallery, a former industrial warehouse, was rendered in black and white, with lines zig-zagging the floor to resemble raked stone and severe black geometric shapes in place of islands and mountains. While the forms echo those drawn from nature, the overall effect is far removed from traditional inspirations and more closely relates to Bridget Riley's work.

The Melbourne-based Songailo refers to this work as 'three-dimensional painting'. He had been drawing Zen rock gardens for a year prior to this exhibition, and was interested particularly in those gardens with sparser designs, that 'move beyond mere representation of nature into an ambiguous space somewhat open to interpretation. There is no concept to be grasped, just an invitation to meditation'. [1] Under Songailo's hand the beauty and serenity of *zen garden*, 2013, is forgotten and the emptiness and dynamism of the former warehouse is magnified.

Creating complex grid-like patterns is something Songailo is drawn to and his work in the 2012 exhibition 'Art, Pattern and Complexity' at Adelaide's RiAus FutureSpace Gallery presented another all-encompassing environment where painting extends beyond the canvas. Surrounded by surfaces covered with painted and screen-printed fluorescent panels, viewers found themselves entering a claustrophobic, alien setting. Although the link to technology and the world of microchips and circuit boards might be obvious, for Songailo the project sought 'to temporarily break the cycle of walking around ignoring most of what we see. Like going to a foreign place, everything is amazing, sparkly and new for a while, until we become used to it'.[2]

Outside the gallery Songailo has employed his brightly coloured geometric patterns to transform public areas, such as a street intersection (*Bank Street*, 2013) and a pedestrian underpass (*Bowden train station*, 2013). These works activate their surrounds, 'proving a theatrical or fictional quality to the coming landscape'.[3] The experience of working on these projects has informed his paintings. In contrast to the earlier series of tight, hard-edge abstractions, Songailo's 2013 acrylic on canvas works display the larger grids of outdoor installations with more gestural markings, as seen in *ballad for space lovers* and *trip in the center head*, both 2013. As Songailo explained: 'I came to think of paintings as concepts for materials and light. One colour of paint is spilled over another, creating a third. Yet the colour is unexpected and not like anything we would see in nature'.[4]

zen garden, 2013
Installation view, Fontanelle Gallery, Adelaide
Courtesy the artist
Photograph Emily Taylor

WHAT STRUCK ME MOST ABOUT SAM SONGAILO'S ENORMOUS GEOMETRIC INSTALLATIONS IS HOW LOADED THEY ARE. SEEMINGLY AMBIVALENT, HIS FUTURISTIC LANDSCAPES ARE AS FOREBODING AS THEY ARE OPTIMISTIC. – LIZ NOWELL

Songailo was a graphic designer before he turned to his own art practice in 2001, and in terms of aesthetics, a connection with the day job is easy to make. According to Roy Ananda, Songailo's approach to art can be seen as 'a reaction against the conventions and expectations of design [rather] than an extrapolation from it'. Freed from the straightforward prescriptions of a design brief, Songailo is able to 'open up more nuanced and mutable fields of meaning and interpretation' in his work.[5] J.S.

SafARI 2014, ALASKA Projects, DNA Projects, The Cross Arts Projects and other Sydney venues, 14 March – 4 April 2014.

1 Taken from email correspondence with the author, October 2013.
2 Sam Songailo, '2012 opening', *http://songailo.net/_-_-_-_-_/opening-2012/*.
3 Email correspondence with the author, October 2013.
4 ibid.
5 Roy Ananda, '2011 overkill', written for the publication *FELTspace Gold*, 2011, *http://songailo.net/_-_-_-_-_/overkill-2011/*.

LINDA BRESCIA

Born 1962, Sydney
Lives and works in Sydney

Linda Brescia's multidisciplinary practice draws on her own experiences living in Western Sydney and her roles as mother, teacher and community worker.

Central to Brescia's photographic and performance works are her uncannily expressive 'dolls'. Made by silk-screen printing on fabric, the dolls are used as proxies to explore a range of human experiences, challenging both social preoccupations and artistic conventions. They inhabit a variety of stage-like spaces in Brescia's work, and the fraught positions and emotionally charged situations in which they find themselves can be gruesome, amusing or baffling. One image from the 2012 photographic series 'A Dutiful Daughter' depicts a uniformed schoolgirl being held (or groped?) by an adult male. The title, *You little bitch ... we know you know you made it happen ...*, 2012, resolves the ambiguity of this skinship with brutal clarity, and recalls the savage passions described in Thomas Keneally's novel *A Dutiful Daughter* (1971), the series' namesake.

In an earlier series, 'Artists As Boys' (2007), Brescia shifts from the anonymous and oppressed to the specific and celebrated. These silk-screen mono prints depict the 'art gods' of modernism. Referred to by their first names – *Henri, Max, Pablo, Paul, Roy* and *Vincent* – these venerated artists appear as cherub-cheeked children set against the reassuringly blue skies and green fields of preschool paintings. While the boys' faces appear unique and expressive, what makes the series wry is the sense of sameness: the ubiquitous happy childhood is likened to the uniform 'white male' of European art history. 'I believed it was easier for men to be professional artists', Brescia said. And so 'Male artists became little boys in my work'. 'Artists As Boys' demonstrates the tension that exists for Brescia as she moves between the roles of artist and mother.[1]

For SafARI LIVE Brescia will present a new performance piece where she trades places with her doll subjects. Outfitting herself as an interactive, moving portrait in this performance, Brescia becomes an object for the public gaze. Her costumes both conceal and expose – one is the archetypal female nude, while another depicts a female figure in a green dress, complete with cleavage. Brescia refers to these characters as 'personas' that 'can't be readily pigeonholed or judged'.

For Brescia these personas are a 'more confident version of [her]self'. She takes them into the public realm, travelling on trains and buses, going to the beach or to an exhibition opening. The performances are documented by everyday people as a 'more confident' Brescia poses for photos. As power relations flip – the artist becomes subject, while the viewer engineers representation – these performances destabilise assumptions about the relationship between femininity, representation and the nude.

> LINDA BRESCIA'S SAFARI LIVE PROPOSAL WAS UNUSUAL IN ITS FORTHRIGHTNESS AND CLARITY OF EMOTION. THIS IS ALSO AN ATTRIBUTE OF HER WORK THAT CUTS STRAIGHT TO THE VIEWER'S HEART. WORKING ACROSS PAINTING, PRINTMAKING, PERFORMANCE AND PHOTOGRAPHY, LINDA'S WORK IS IN A GENRE OF ITS OWN.
> – CHRISTIANE KEYS-STATHAM

Shock, surprise, laughter, confusion: the reactions vary. In creating a disjuncture within audiences' visual perceptions, Brescia's performances may be seen in terms of rebellion against the invisibility in public space experienced by many women, and, on a personal level, relate to how Brescia initially felt about her position in the art world.

During a 2013 residency at Parramatta Artists Studios in Sydney, Brescia used performance to critically examine the role of faith and religion in everyday life. Located opposite the studio, the Parramatta Mission billboard features weekly messages of religious inspiration, and Brescia responded to these by standing in costume with a placard carrying messages of response. While the series, entitled 'God Knows' (2013), may automatically be read as political because of the use of a placard, for Brescia the reaction was personal and spontaneous: 'If the weekly message bothers me, I respond'. B.P.

SafARI LIVE 2014, ALASKA Projects, DNA Projects, The Cross Arts Projects and other Sydney venues, 14 March – 4 April 2014.

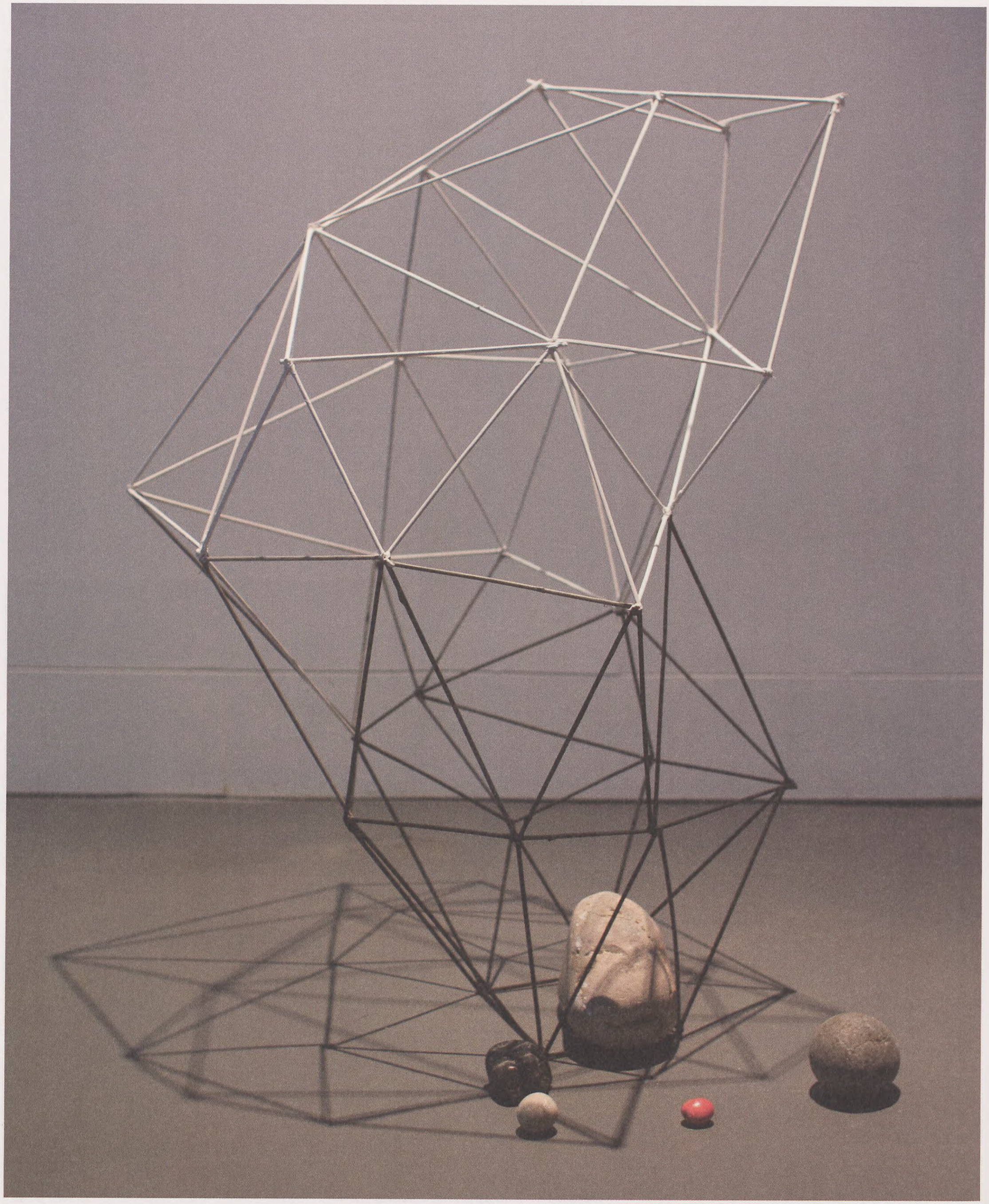
1 All quotes are taken from email correspondence with the author on 15 October 2013.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
God knows, 2013
Digital image
Courtesy the artist

Out, 2013
Performance, Parramatta
Courtesy the artist

Love, 2011
Digital image
Courtesy the artist


PARRAMATTA MISSION
LOST?
GOD IS LOOKING FOR YOU.
YOU ARE HERE
GOD KNOWS
Lifeline
TRAINING CENTRE
Hüttel
JOB futures



MADISON BYCROFT

Born 1987, Adelaide
Lives and works in New York

In the 2013 exhibition 'It Division' at Adelaide's Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Madison Bycroft presented a number of works that examine the notion of 'self' and what it is to be human. These ideas form the basis of Bycroft's practice, which more broadly considers the relationships between humans, animals and inanimate objects and the concept of 'animism'.

An anthropological term, animism describes the belief that all animals, plants and objects, animate and inanimate, possess a 'spiritual essence'.[1] Bycroft's interest in the subject was sparked when, working on a reforestation project in Tamil Nadu, India, she was introduced to veganism. Further research into philosophy, Jacques Derrida's ideas of suffering and the violence in how we speak of animals, and Jakob von Uexküll's notion of animal phenomenology, for example, have led Bycroft to experiment artistically with 'processes of relational knowing and becoming ... and undoing our socialised way of being with others and our "civilised" ontological hierarchies'.[2]

At times these 'experiments' appear as short films and performances where Bycroft positions herself in the same immediate environment as a non-human 'other', as seen in the 2013 video *Becoming still*. Here, an underwater Bycroft swims to pick up a huge stone, which she then rests in her lap as she sits on the ocean floor. While the rock weighs her down, working against the body's buoyancy, it is not an oppressive force and the atmosphere is serene. Staring at the rock, caressing the rock, her non-human 'other', Bycroft's intent is to challenge the perceptions of human relations and interactions with objects. As Dr Katrina Simmons suggested in an essay on *Becoming still*, the stone could be seen as 'a metaphor for another human or as a psychic manifestation of our spirit self, or soul'. In this search for meaning 'Bycroft's work serves to remind us of psychological connections to objects as well as raising the question of responsibility to inanimate and living things, and ultimately to each other and our planet'.[3] As the video continues, we see Bycroft relinquish the stone in order to return to the surface to breathe, her connection to the object not sufficient for an indefinite underwater existence, as Simmons submits.

Alongside Bycroft's performances, her sculptures – forms that are neither human nor animal – assume otherworldly qualities. Bycroft toys with the potential of her painted rocks, geodesic dome structures and upside-down cone shapes to evoke humanistic attributes, with some pieces incorporating hair and fur and others painted in fleshy tones.

MADISON BYCROFT'S VIDEOS AND INSTALLATIONS ARE IMBUED WITH A HUMANITY AND COMPASSION RARELY SEEN IN CONTEMPORARY ART. HER GENUINE EFFORT TO EMPATHISE WITH HER SUBJECTS MAKES FOR INCREDIBLY REFLECTIVE AND REDEMPTIVE WORK.
– LIZ NOWELL

Through the idiosyncratic combination of objects, Bycroft seeks to interrogate notions of loneliness and connectedness, to suggest perhaps that these emotions are not restricted to the experiences of people. In the exhibition space Bycroft's objects and performance documentations create a state of harmony; they 'flow across the audience's field of vision more readily than holding the gaze', as Jasmin Stephens wrote.[4]

A recipient of the 2014 Anne & Gordon Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarship, Bycroft is currently undertaking an artist residency in Brooklyn, New York, where she is further developing her performance works: *I have been considering the variations of 'audience'. My past video work has primarily been performance to camera, which is a method I will continue practising, but I do have some questions about reducing the presentation of the performances to the gallery and gallery-goers. I think the context and art community that I have found here in New York will encourage bravery within my work and definitely push my boundaries.*[5] S.T.

SafARI 2014, ALASKA Projects, DNA Projects, The Cross Arts Projects and other Sydney venues, 14 March – 4 April 2014.

1 Dr Katrina Simmons, *In the Heart of a Stone*, exhibition catalogue, 2013, see *http://www.madisonbycroft.com/About.*
2 Taken from email correspondence with the author on 18 October 2013.
3 Simmons, op. cit.
4 Jasmin Stephens, 'The 2014 Anne & Gordon Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarships: Madison Bycroft', University of South Australia website 2013, *http://w3.unisa.edu.au/samstag/scholars/scholars14/bycroft.asp.*
5 Email correspondence with the author on 18 October 2013.

Everything in its proper place, 2013, installation detail
Bamboo, enamel, stones, coral, 120 x 50 x 50 cm
Courtesy the artist

BENJAMIN FORSTER

Born 1985, Sydney
Lives and works in Sydney

The conceptual vernacular of Sydney/Perth-based artist Benjamin Forster is complex, to say the least. A Printmaking and Drawing Alumnus from the Australian National University in Canberra, Forster works across drawing, print and installation. Reprogramming everyday technologies to demonstrate new interpretations, his practice poses a wide range of questions about art, machines and the slippages of language.

One such question is Forster's mind-muddling rumination 'what is drawing?', examined in his ongoing drawing-machine project, *Drawing machine (output = plotter)*, 2008–12, which has been shown in a number of exhibitions, including the 2009 International Symposium on Computational Aesthetics in Graphics, Visualisation and Imaging in Victoria, Canada; 'Primavera 2012' at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; and the 2013 group exhibition 'Foundation's Edge: Artists and Technology' at QUT Art Museum, Brisbane. In this work Forster programmed a computer to draw by creating an algorithm that communicates with a plotter (a vinyl cutter modified to hold a pen). It produces an endless torrent of unique marks or doodles on a roll of paper that accumulates on the gallery floor – machine-made 'drawings' created as if by the artist's hand. Is drawing, and art in general, distinctly human? Can computer systems stand in for humans? With *Drawing machine (output = plotter)* Forster intends not to collapse the ontological border between humans and machine, but to reveal the inadequacies of his drawing machine in capturing the infinite detail of the world, to expose 'the inability of rationality and logic to capture what is essentially human'.[1]

Not quite finished products, the objects that Forster creates are 'thought experiments', the detritus from thinking through ideas. *Notes on the particulates*, 2012, comprises a dot-matrix printer controlled by a microchip that has been hacked to print tiny fragments of text on an endless loop of paper. The text is taken from French philosopher Gilles Deleuze's writings on language in the English translations of *Difference and Repetition* (1968) and *The Logic of Sense* (1969). It begins with blank paper, the printed text slowly building up, the words and their groupings shifting from fragmentary to legible to nonsensical. As the machine prints, words form constellations until the pulverised, ink-soaked paper gives way. Forster describes this work as an 'essay' that demonstrates the 'struggle to understand language through language in language'.[2] In deconstructing and collapsing the philosopher's words, he tackles the formation, accumulation, transformation and disintegration of 'meaning'. We are left to ponder whether fixed meanings truly exist, and to question the conventional divide between the textual and pictorial.

> BENJAMIN FORSTER'S FASCINATION WITH LANGUAGE AND TEXT RESONATES WITH ME, AND HIS USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL WIZARDRY TO DEMONSTRATE THE PARALLELS BETWEEN CODES AND THE ALPHABETS OF ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS IS AN INTRIGUING TECHNIQUE. HIS SCULPTURES HAVE A GLITCHY BEAUTY THAT HOOKS THE EYE AND ENTHRALS THE MIND.
> — CHRISTIANE KEYS-STATHAM

Forster endeavours to make objects that function on multiple levels of meaning. Recently he presented a series of works for 'NEW13' (2013) at Melbourne's Australian Centre for Contemporary Art examining Noam Chomsky's idea of a universal language and the various linkages between language, technology and materiality. For Forster, 'language is a technology, technology is language', and the process 'by which something comes to mean something' is of endless fascination.[3] E.W.

Alter-narrative in bold by Benjamin Forster.

My Brain Is in My Inkstand: Drawing as Thinking and Process, Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, 16 November 2013 – 30 March 2014; **SafARI 2014**, ALASKA Projects, DNA Projects, The Cross Arts Projects and other Sydney venues, 14 March – 4 April 2014.

1 'Focus on Primavera 2012 artist Benjamin Forster', Museum of Contemporary Art website, *http://www.mca.com.au/news/2012/10/10/focus-primavera-2012-artist-benjamin-forster/.*
2 ibid.
3 'Benjamin Forster, NEW13 artist interview, ACCA 2013', *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ch2dpeOGncA.*

Drawing machine (output = plotter), 2008–12
Computer, custom software, modified cutting plotter, paper and pen, dimensions variable
Installation view, 'Primavera 2012', Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Sydney
Courtesy MCA
Photograph Alex Davies
© the artist

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Fibre-based,
32 x 28 cm

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From the ser
Fibre-based,
21.5 x 17.5 cm

All courtesy

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JANE BROWN

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CHLOÉ WOLIFSON

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Jane Brown's black-and-white photographs hold their subjects in a state of melancholy. The once extravagant is depicted in a latter-day condition of decrepitude, while in some images time appears to have stopped.

In *Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra*, 2011–13, the lake's iconic jet fountain rises from the horizon framed by banks of trees. The shimmering water in the lower half of the frame mirrors the varied translucence of dramatic cloud formations, which in turn mingle with the branches of a tree draping gently from above in the foreground. The symmetry Brown has conjured from such organic elements is striking, but what is more intriguing is how the human-made water jet sitting centrally within the image is dwarfed by the majesty of nature surrounding it.

The material qualities of the analogue photographic process are important to Brown, who describes her chosen technique of making silver gelatin prints on fibre-based papers with palpable affection: 'The paper has a lovely weight and I love how it curls up on the corners when it dries ... It feels special'.[1] Brown's admiration for contemporary artists working in analogue photography extends from those striving steadily to perfect a technology in parallel to its supercession, such as Laurence Aberhart and Hiroshi Sugimoto, to those interrogating this decline materially and conceptually, including Zoe Leonard and Tacita Dean.

The body of work comprising 'Not Before Time' (2013), which is included in the landmark exhibition 'Melbourne Now' (2013–14) at the National Gallery of Victoria, represents a shift in scale for Brown, whose work is nonetheless limited in size because of home-studio practicalities. Photographs such as the recent suite 'Island of the Colourblind' (2013) are as invitingly small as the images in the photography books that Brown collects. 'The current work [although employing the same medium-format cameras] is a little larger as I wanted the mottled effect, due to the deterioration of the film, to be obvious to the viewer.'

Decommissioned Art History Library, University of Melbourne, 2012–13, depicts Brown's former workplace, but could equally depict a library a century earlier. Her use of aged film stock has created an effect of stippled light, which causes the photograph to appear as an object from another time, while also suggesting the library itself to be somewhat mildewed and dusty. A neat connection exists between the deterioration of film stock leading to the beautiful effects in Brown's works (initially accidental, now deliberate but still experimental) and the sense of urgency the artist feels in documenting what is sometimes rapidly disappearing subject matter:

I am attracted to the places I have visited in my work usually by some historical curiosity, and these can be as wide and varied as the mining history of small town Australia or the colonial histories of Belgium. More often than not there's a sense of urgency to document a moment in time or a place in history before it disappears. These places often seem to be forgotten or are on the edge of destruction.

The Elizabeth Towers Hotel, Melbourne, 2011–13, is photographed from the perspective of an awe-struck pedestrian peering up at the imposing structure. The hotel's glass-clad spiral staircase forms the central focus of the image, appearing simultaneously futuristic and outdated. Brown's manipulation of the film gives the sky a galaxy-like effect, making the building, shabby around the edges, appear as though it is about to ascend into outer space to live out its dotage. And perhaps this is a kinder way to imagine the structure's demise, as the 1950s heritage building was in fact demolished not long after Brown captured this image in 2011.

The grander a thing is to begin with, the more tragic its eventual decay.

Chloé Wolifson was mentored by Kathy Bail, Chief Executive, UNSW Press, Sydney.

1 All quotes are taken from email correspondence between the author and Jane Brown, October 2013.

OPPOSITE
Decommissioned Art History Library, University of Melbourne, 2012–13
From the series 'Not Before Time' (2011–13)
Fibre-based, gelatin silver print, 27 x 33 cm

BACK COVER, LEFT TO RIGHT
Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra, 2011–13
From the series 'Not Before Time' (2011–13)
Fibre-based, selenium-toned, gelatin silver print, 32 x 28 cm

Captain's Flat Hotel, New South Wales, 2012
From the series 'Island of the Colourblind' (2012)
Fibre-based, selenium-toned, gelatin silver print, 21.5 x 17.5 cm

All courtesy the artist

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