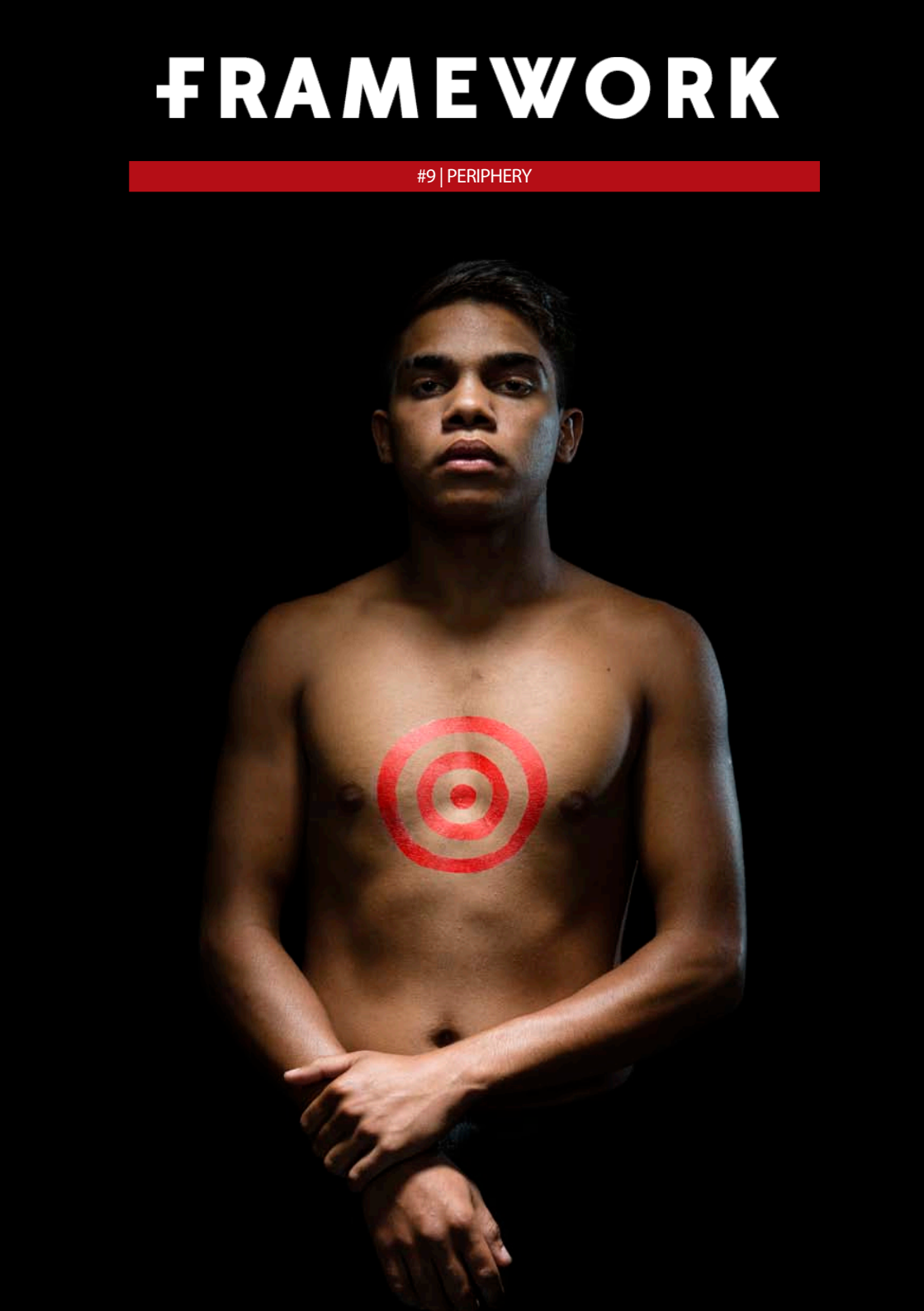
# FRAMEWORK

#9 | PERIPHERY



# EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first edition of Framework for 2015. Framework has and will continue to be a platform to encourage arts writing and critical dialogue at UNSW Art & Design.

This issue, Periphery, is examining what the periphery is within the arts, who is practicing there and why are they on the periphery? The team of all female contributors investigate people, practices, places and profits that shape the periphery or our understanding of what it means to be on the outside of the art world.

In this issue we have profiled emerging artist Johanna Gilbert about her practice, experiences and how her health has effected her art. This is followed by a review of the Boomalli exhibition "Our A-Gender" which ran along side the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras and showed works by Aboriginal artists from the LGBTI community.

We also interview Tony Albert about his multi-dimensional practice and his experiences with a traditionally white art world, the importance of history and culture.

The 'out there' first feature discusses art in western Sydney and its relation to Sydney's art hub. Finally we investigate the way art markets and the ideas of the exotic other create and maintain a periphery for one specific purpose; the cash.

I would like to thank the team at Arc UNSW Art & Design. Ramesh, Ella, Kieran. Thank you for the help, advice, support and encouragement. Thank you to Penelope for the kind words and support. You are such a wonderful team.

Finally, thank you to the contributors. You make it all happen.

Our next issue of Framework is Provocation and if you would like to be involved, contact me: l.davison@arc.unsw.edu.au.

We are so excited and proud to present Periphery.

Enjoy,

- Lucinda Davison

Cover. Tony Albert Brother (Our Present). Collection: Pat Corrigan and the University of Queensland.Courtesy of the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney
01. Sokari Douglas Camp 2009, image courtesy of the artist

# PERIPH-
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# ARTIST PROFILE

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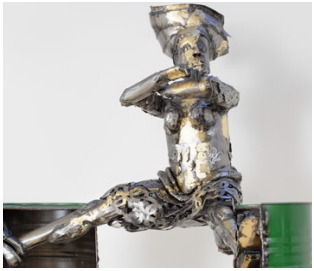

# THE PROFIT, DEAR FRIENDS, IS IN THE PERIPHERY

by Lucinda Davison

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

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Front cover image:

Tony Albert, Brother (Our Present). Collection: Pat Corrigan and the University of Queensland.

Courtesy of the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney


01. Johanna Gilbert, The Removal Of Unnecessary Body Organs, Courtesy


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# Johanna Gilbert

By Annaliese Alexakis

Self-professed hoarder, emerging female artist and recent UNSW Art & Design graduate, Johanna Gilbert, boasts a highly intimate body of work stemming from her unexpected individual experiences. Gilbert accredits her suffering from chronic tonsillitis and the subsequent removal of her tonsils as impacting most on her art. By collecting dysfunctional objects and arranging them in an improvisational state, her works gain a naïve quality, claiming a space for beauty in the mundane.

Her most recent work, The Removal Of Unnecessary Body Organs, involved the gathering of over 10,000 beer bottle caps. Gilbert says, "I started dreaming of bottle caps towards the end, but the endurance of a process is what determines the nature of the result." Reminiscent of Kahlo, her works stand as shrine-like tributes to the pain endured throughout her illness. She viscerally presents herself as a slave to her condition. Entangled in garlands that have been painstakingly fashioned from bottle tops, her sense of frustration and entrapment is palpable while the serrated edges of the caps conjure the raw agony of her ulcerated tonsils.

Originating through photography, Gilbert's multidisciplinary practice has evolved as a fusion of photo media, installation, sculpture and performance. Triggered by her dissatisfaction with the photographic medium and its inability to allow her to fully engage with her deeply personal subject matter, Gilbert began to explore sculpture and the incorporation of her body within her work.

Gilbert acknowledges the challenges that arise from her physical participation in her art. "There are so many connotations associated with the female body. I had to be clear how I intended on using the body in relation to my work and that it was used to heighten my original intentions."

Having recently returned to Sydney from a year spent in London, Gilbert promises a radical change in artistic direction in an upcoming project inspired by her surroundings and interactions abroad. In between departing for London and completing her Bachelor of Fine Arts, Gilbert exhibited in the COFA annual, Bodily Reflections at Kaleidoscope Gallery and Young Artist Initiative at M. Contemporary where she won the people's choice award.

02. Artist in studio. Courtesy of the Artist.
03. Johanna Gilbert, The Removal Of Unnecessary Body Organs, Courtesy of the artist, 2014

# THIS IS 'OUR A-GENDER'

by Georgia Windrum

01. Budju Brooch's, Jessica Johnson Photographed by Sharon Hickey 2015


SAME
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AUSTRALIA NOW
EQUALITY
HUMAN RIGHTS

THE FOUNDATION OF SYDNEY'S BOOMALLI ABORIGINAL ARTISTS CO-OPERATIVE IN 1987 AS A SPACE OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ABORIGINAL ARTISTS CONTINUES TO BE PIVOTAL IN THE FORMATION OF A BROADENED INDIGENOUS VOICE IN THE AUSTRALIAN ARTS: ONE NO LONGER CONSTRAINED BY COLONIAL DEFINITIONS OF ETHNIC 'AUTHENTICITY', OR DIRECTED BY THE FINANCIAL AGENDAS OF NON-INDIGENOUS STAKEHOLDERS.

Curated by emerging artist Jasmin Sarin, Boomalli's most recent exhibition, Our A-Gender was presented alongside Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. Aboriginal artists from the LGBTI community were invited to present their works dealing with diverse themes concerning gender, sexuality, health and human rights as well as celebrations of identity and difference. Founding member Jeffrey Samuels explains Boomalli's commitment to accepting the identities of all Indigenous people, as he himself experienced the "double-whammy" of growing up with the judgement that being both gay and Aboriginal was "something quite terrible" .

Samuels' eloquent mixed media work Untitled (Two Guys), is both a self-portrait and a sharp political statement. In the foreground, a figure of blind justice kicks away the keys to the imprisoned faces of two young Indigenous men, whose captivating eyes are deeply sad yet hopeful. The concern for marriage equality to be considered a human rights issue is even more directly expressed in Samuels' series of three paintings Same Sex Marriage Choice. The intricate combinations of traditional fauna designs and gender symbols within a triangle is intended to represent a slice of wedding cake; one filled with layers of diverse identities, under the banner 'Same Sex Marriage: Australia Now Equality'.

This invigorated tone is echoed in Stephen Morgan's Pre-Indigenous Logo for Sydney HIV Conference, which envisions an interconnectedness and support system for Indigenous people living with HIV/AIDS. While this work deals specifically with health, the broader subject of the gendered body and it's perception in society is raised in Morgan's Warrior Dancing, a vivid representation of the masculine figure in bright purples and yellows; capturing the striking duality of strength and tenderness. Willurei Kirkbright's Here in the Shadow Lands is comprised of compelling depictions of an almost androgynous body dancing against a bright sky. The overlaid black ink patterns suggest a connectedness between the body and space: a suggestion of identity and experience expanding beyond the constraints of the physical body.

This treatment of identity as fluid and multiple is similarly evident in Ella Bancroft's film Destiny in the Dirt. She employs traditional dance and scenes of youth, attraction, domesticity and urban environments to present a rich collage of lived experience. Conversely, the concept of lost identity is communicated in Jai Walker's Mabung series of six drawings of Indigenous elders with hauntingly blackened eyes. Arone Meek's Read Between the Lines series also engages with a sense of fragmentation and searching. The viewer is invited to decipher the text concealed behind and amongst the painted read streaks and floating shell-like forms, most potently in No. 3, reading, "hunting...hunting, hunting, for lost pieces of myself".

Clinton Nain's large and expressive graffiti inspired painting Love-Hate, evokes a sense of struggle and confrontation both within oneself and within society. These pertinent issues of black and white relations in

02. Same Sex Marriage Choice, Jeffrey Samuels. Photographed by Sharon Hickey 2015

Australia are raised in Megan Byrnes' traditional yet confronting painting, Black Deaths in Custody, with horizontal strokes reminiscent of the medical flatline. Positioned on either side of this, Byrnes' paintings Rainbow Dreaming, a utopian vision of bright energy and creation, and Turtle Dreaming, a tranquil scene of peace, offer optimistic alternatives to the current situation of inequality within Australia's legal system. Many of the works in the exhibition share this tone of optimism and celebration, such as Jenny Fraser's Higher Love installation of brightly coloured feather dusters and jewellery, and Jessica Johnson's Wet Season prints and Budju Brooches, which employ fluorescent colourways in feminine, geometric designs.

The diversity of the works in Our A-Gender reflects the complexity of the debates concerning the Aboriginal LGBTI community. Most importantly, the pieces presented in this exhibition operate together to form a dialogue between past injustices, an engagement with present political issues, and a desire for the celebration and greater acceptance of identity differences within our communities.

Exhibition 18th February – 28th March 2015

Sources: NITV News March 4, Interview with Jeffrey Samuels https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7CepsFDwzM

03. Same Sex Marriage Choice, Jeffrey Samuels. Photographed by Sharon Hickey 2015


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01. Pay Attention, Tony Albert 2009-10. Courtesy of artist.


Q&A WITH

# TONY ALBERT

by Eleanor Holden

SYDNEY-BASED ARTIST TONY ALBERT IS GAINING INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION, BEING EXHIBITED OVERSEAS IN PLACES LIKE TEL AVIV AND BEIJING, WHILST ALSO CONTINUING TO INTERROGATE THE ERASURE OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE FROM OUR AUSTRALIAN HISTORY – MOST RECENTLY WITH THE WINNING DESIGN FOR THE HYDE PARK MEMORIAL TO INDIGENOUS SERVICE PERSONNEL. ALBERT INTERTWINES PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL IMAGERY IN HIS PRACTICE.

ALBERT'S PRACTICE IS COMPLEX AND SPEAKS TO EXPERIENCES ON THE PERIPHERY. HE PRESENTS WORKS THAT CHALLENGE THE PERCEPTION OF HOW WE CONSTRUCT THE PERIPHERY AND RESISTS BEING VIEWED SOLELY AS AN INDIGENOUS ARTIST. HIS WORKS REFLECT THE NUMEROUS DIMENSIONS OF HIS EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICE.

TONY ALBERT DISCUSSES HIS EXPERIENCES WITH A TRADITIONALLY WESTERN ART WORLD, THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY AND HIS THOUGHTS ON COLLECTIVES.

EH: WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE FOR YOU ENTERING INTO AN ART WORLD THAT HAS HISTORICALLY CATERED TO WEALTHY, WHITE MALES?

TA: It's definitely an ongoing challenge. I feel that any artist working on the periphery of the art historical canon struggles to be heard at times, and I see it as a major failure when curators omit the voices of minority groups and women – who despite making up half our global population, continue to be ignored by institutions, collectors, galleries and curators.

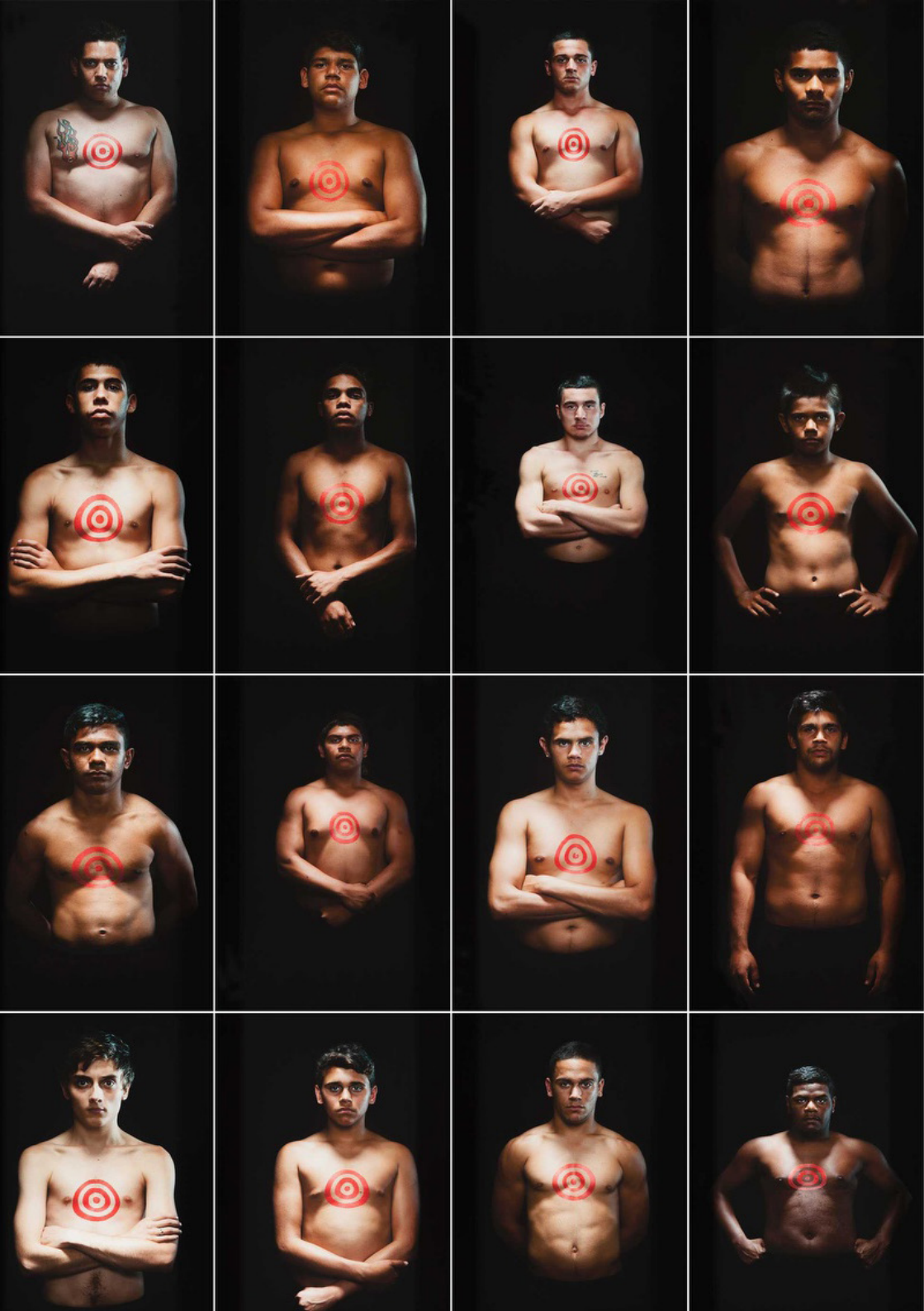
EH: WHAT HAS INSPIRED YOU TO MAKE WORKS ADDRESSING ISSUES OF RACIAL MARGINALISATION AND COMMODIFICATION?

TA: Often my work is seen as overtly political, and whilst I can I understand how it may be viewed this way, it is not particularly my intention. I make work about my life, my family and my community and although I hope it resonates globally, it is really informed by my own personal experiences. That said, I think it is interesting that a lot of my work speaks to a universal human condition; to me racism and suffering is very much a shared experience. Despite the fact that a lot of my work addresses rather uncomfortable issues, it is always underpinned by a sense of positivity, hope and resilience.

EH: HOW DO ABORIGINALIA AND OTHER REFERENCES TO POP CULTURE AND HISTORY INFORM YOUR PRACTICE?

TA: I've always believed that the greatest gift we can offer our children is historical truth. It is not until we reconcile and acknowledge our wrongdoings that we can truly move forward as a more progressive society. Through my practice I often recall the past and attempt to either reimagine or rewrite it, because in many instances Aboriginal people have been completely erased from history: I really want to rectify this. The faces that feature on Aborginalia are exoticised and objectified – I see my work as an opportunity to give a voice to those who have and continue to be

02. Brother (Our Present), 2013, pigment print on paper, 150 x 100 cm, edition of 3 + 2APs. Collection: Pat Corrigan and the University of Queensland.Courtesy of the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney



03. Projecting Our Future, 2002-2013, Installation made up of reworked objects, sculptures, and paintings; original painting ins, drawings and photographs; and three unique artworks by Daniel Boyd, Dale Harding and TextaQueen, Dimensions variable, approximately 280 x 1200 cm. Private Collection. Courtesy of the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney.

silenced. The pop references in my work also speak to this objectification. Black culture has undergone a process of Disneyfication, to the point where the only representations of Aboriginal people, or other people of colour are complete caricatures.

EH: HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES, EITHER WITHIN THE ART WORLD OR SOCIETY AT LARGE, TOWARDS MARGINALISED ARTISTS AND PEOPLE DURING YOUR TIME AS AN ARTIST?

TA: Overall, I think very little has changed in the past 10 years. Whilst there are particular artists who are soaring to new heights, for example Daniel Boyd, overall the industry continues to celebrate, emphasise and support white, heterosexual males. Institutions are becoming increasingly conservative and I see less and less Indigenous content every year. I think Australia is in the midst of a very conservative period, particularly in relation to migrants, refugees and Indigenous Australians, and I really feel this is reflected in our nation's public institutions. Personally, I'd love to see more women in directorial positions, and more marginalised communities on our television screens.

EH:WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON LABELLING WITHIN THE ART WORLD, PARTICULARLY ISSUES WITH BEING COINED AN 'INDIGENOUS/ ABORIGINAL ARTIST' AS OPPOSED TO JUST AN ARTIST?

TA: I feel it is a very complex issue and is up to the individual as to how they identify. Personally for me, I want my work to be viewed and critiqued through the lens of contemporary art. Although my work often stems from an Aboriginal experience, I really believe and hope that the themes resonate more broadly. Having said that, my family, my culture and my community is an incredibly important part of who I am and how I identify myself. I guess I would hope that these 'labels' can exist together, and that one does not negate the other.

EH: YOU'VE SPENT A LOT OF TIME WITH OTHER ARTISTS, FOR INSTANCE WORKING CLOSELY WITH RICHARD BELL AS HIS STUDIO ASSISTANT AND BEING A PART OF THE PROPPANOW COLLECTIVE. HOW HAS THAT SHAPED YOUR OUTLOOK AS AN ARTIST?

TA: Being mentored by people such as Richard and the other members of proppaNOW has fundamentally shaped both my career and worldview. Working so closely at such a young age with these incredibly accomplished senior artists provided me with a solid foundation to build my career on. Not only did I learn about technique and the art industry, but I also was able to talk through the conceptual framework of my practice. proppaNOW challenged me, critiqued my ideas and supported me when I was on to a good thing. This experience was crucial to my development, and I now try to do the same for younger artists.

01. . FUNPARK festival ,2014. Image credit

# YOUR PERIPHERY IS MY CENTRE

by Natalie Wadwell

YES, I LIVE OUT THERE.

YES, I WAS BORN AND RAISED OUT THERE.

YES, I TRAVEL INTO THE CITY MOST DAYS FROM OUT THERE TO STUDY

(THEY SHUT DOWN OUR ART SCHOOL).

NO, IT DOES NOT TAKE LONG TO GET OUT THERE.

A colleague and I have decided the word 'out' is overused when talking about western Sydney. It needs to stop. When engaging in a discussion concerning peripheries we refer to something other than ourselves. Binaries of self and other, centre and periphery, insider and outsider are heavily discussed and written about in theory and history. We are aware of them, yet these binaries remain prevalent in everyday identity politics.

All you need to witness is the mini-bus(es) of inner city art enthusiasts rolling into town for hyped up events or exhibitions. Daring and sometimes rowdy, I cannot shake the likeness to a safari Contiki tour. For the most part, the gaze still positions the west and all it encompasses as other. A genuine visit occurs beyond these organised mini buses at times when exhibitions are not hyped up, but generally spark curiosity. The way in which I as an art theory student am expected to immerse myself in the inner city art scene is not extended to visiting regional art centres.

Australia's arts ecology is a network of multiple centres which shape and reflect the communities in which they operate – or at least they should. The vastness of west and south west Sydney alone reflects this. One need only look at the dispersed locations of art centres across the region – Penrith, Blacktown, Casula, Campbelltown, Bankstown – and Pop Up Parramatta complete with artist studios and shop fronts. These facilities were set up with allocated resources from local and state governments. However, for the most part cultural and arts initiatives remain largely underfunded in west and south west Sydney. If it is not attached to an institution, it is probably not funded at all.

I do not resent growing up in the 'burbs, I endorse it. For its diversity, vastness, proportionate distance to other places, for the sense of locality, it is made up of multiple centres and ultimately I can get the best salad wrap at my local mall for five dollars.

Whether organised by formal (council) or informal (community groups) means, cultural activation projects raise important questions about space and power. Whose space is it and who has the right to determine its function? What role does community, economics and social capital play in the revitalisation process? The list goes on.

There is a trend appearing across the region of rundown, abandoned, commercial spaces being injected with cultural activation initiatives (or left vacant). This is not uncommon in the arts, with temporary and alternative means of display going back to the early twentieth century with the first artist-run-initiatives. However it is all too common that the top down decision makers are at odds with bottom-up solutions.

It is a common scenario: develop an urban area for small families, include small businesses and in time impose a large shopping complex (think Westfields and Lend Lease). We gradually watch the main streets, central business districts and malls become eerie ghost towns whilst the major retailers cash in. You have now become a spectator in your own backyard.

A year ago my local mall was closed down. The suburbs on either side of us had reopened newly refurbished town centres, leaving mine to be a ghost town. Every March the Ingleburn Alive Festival takes place down the main street, activating civic pride as stalls line the street, local bands perform on the stage and culminating in the bang of fireworks. Will the recently shut down Ingleburn Fair (Campbelltown LGA) be turned into an alternative arts initiative before it is redeveloped, if it is redeveloped?

02. FUNPARK festival ,2014. Image credit Heidron Lohr

The decade long debate about what to do with Queen Street, the main thoroughfare of Campbelltown is not far removed. The only time life is injected into the deserted main street is during the annual Fisher's Ghost Festival. Held annually in November, this festival celebrates the Campbelltown community and its history with a street parade of social groups. At any other time of the year, I presume it is placed in the 'too hard' basket of urban development.

Change does not happen in an instance. It is a process of time reached in milestones after numerous experiments. How many letters to the editor and campaigns by local residents does it take for council to commit to real change? Stay tuned, figure to be determined.

Prior to its refurbishment, Minto Mall was visited by the Sydney Festival in 2011. Minto: Live started in the carpark before pulling out into nearby residential streets. An assortment of contemporary theatre, dance, film, music and song explored notions of community and personal history. Not to dissimilar from the curatorial premise of Bankstown: Live (Sydney Festival, 2015) and Funpark (Bidwill, 2011), Minto: Live was a means to restore civic pride in a disenfranchised community undergoing gentrification.

Situated across the road from Westfields, Pop Up Parramatta occupies the Connection Arcade near Darcy and Church Street. An initiative by Parramatta Council, with the support of Arts NSW, has enabled a cluster of vacant shops to be activated by artists and small retailers. The common strategy of temporarily using the arts to activate commercial spaces to attract large retailers is problematic. Why is the arts component always ephemeral? Why cannot this approach to building a creative city establish permanence?

A common thread is that these suburbs have or once had an industrial purpose. As is the case with Pop Up Parramatta and Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, cultural activation is utilised as a tool to rebuild a city experiencing post-industrialisation. When jobs and civic pride are lost, the arts are seen as the way forward. If there is an underlying acceptance that creative engagement is the foundation to moving forward, why then is it not considered a permanent factor in urban planning?

Whilst this happens, the west will still be positioning itself as operating on the periphery of the Sydney arts ecology; the west will still be a spectacle of otherness to those external to it. Whilst the input of resources from the 1980s started to shift the perception of western Sydney from "other," it remains the cultural alternative (from some). With the current momentum of resources and funding being offered to the west, I hope long term change is upon us.

So come out, come out from where ever you are. Oh, but don't forget your passport.

# THE PROFIT, D
# IS IN THE P

by Lucinda

01. The Last Supper, Zhen Fanzi, Oil painting, Image courtesy Sotheby's Hong Kong 2001

# EAR FRIENDS, ERIPHERY

Davison

I HEAR A LOT OF PEOPLE CHUCKLING SAYING THAT ART OF THE PERIPHERY ISN'T PERIPHERY ANYMORE, WHAT WITH THE INCREASED MARKETABILITY AND PROFITABILITY OF ASIAN, LATIN AMERICAN AND AFRICAN ART WORKS. BUT SHOULD WE ALL BE STANDING AROUND, WINE IN HAND, LAUGHING ABOUT THE IDEA OF PERIPHERY ARTISTS STILL BEING THERE BASED ON THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS OR ETHNO-CULTURAL HERITAGE?

The international art market, which is the greatest predictor for the bulk of contemporary art criticism, art historical writing and the eventual acceptance into The Canon, is undeniably responsible for the creation and maintenance of The Periphery.

While art is obviously a commodity, the commodification of The Periphery for the distinct benefits of the art market, is a highly problematic phenomenon. It is arguably responsible for the narrowed understanding of not only the art being produced in art centres outside of the Euro-American sphere, but also radically restricts the ability for these artists to operate autonomously without the ideological specificity of their ethno-cultural context.

Most recently, and maybe most starkly, this is seen with 'African Art' entering the market. African Art I here you ask. Yes! All 54 nations homogenised into one simple package for the easiest consumption by Western markets. Of course, the injection of interest and funds into art centres in Africa, namely Nigeria, helps support contemporary art production. This art is often pitched to collectors as a "good investment" which urges them to get-in-quick while the prices are low and the potential for profit skyrockets. This model has been seen before with art from China. The value of a "traditional Chinese work", according to a Telegraph finance article from 2014, rose 163% in just eight years. For contemporary art from China a similar trend is seen with a record sale of $23.1 million for the single work, The Last Supper by Zeng Fanzhi in 2013, which only twelve years prior, was purchased for just $20,000.

But for what reason is The Canon looking abroad for The Next Great Thing? Giles Peppiatt, director of Bonhams' African Art department, in a 2013 BBC report stated that "people are much more interested in Africa commercially. The continent is seen as the next big thing, and there is an enormous amount of wealth among Africans." This same report continues saying that "compared to contemporary art from other parts of the world, the prices for African art are still quite modest, and investors are seeing it increasingly as a good investment."

This drive for investment is, of course, reflected in shows like Sudanese painter Ibrahim El-Salahi's 2013 retrospective at the Tate Modern and the inclusion of over seven pan-African artists in London's Art15 Fair.

As for the art historical positioning of these artists, they are centrally 'highlighted' or worse 'spotlighted' as Partha Mitter, in The Art Bulletin argues, "primarily on account of their compatibility with the avant-garde discourse in the West" with the result of these artists becoming merely a "bit player in the master narrative" of a pre-existing Euro-American model of art.

The highly notable Nigerian female sculptor, Sokari Douglas Camp's 2015 work All That Glitters, sees her use her preferred material; steel, twisted into the shape of a woman with her dress "hitched up" in a "powerful but vulnerable" stance. Her dress and gele enrich the work and add to the specification of the works and artists Nigerian context. The woman is balanced, or emerging, out of split oil canisters. The materials metaphoric resonance to the resource rich Nigeria as well as the rise of industry in the country allude to a hopeful but critical examination of the value of art and the artist within western discourse. The reference to oil production is especially cutting as Nigeria is the largest oil producer on the African continent. With this

there is the well-publicised turmoil that is associated with the vast profits from international interests in oil production; which are conveniently overlooked in much of the international art markets interest in the acquisition of Nigerian works. The woman's gaze is elevated and confidant, as she is "not only glittering... [but] being invincible". She is a strong, defiant symbol of the nation and Nigeria's arts industry, precariously balances or emerges out of the fractured oil canisters.

The international art market, constantly searching for the new exotic flavour of the month, relies on the Euro-American sphere maintaining normative dominance. This dominance is maintained through market influence, the sheer scale of European co-lonialisation, art historical writing and importantly; language. The most transparent example of how language is used is the subtle, but ever present epi-thet. To call a work 'art' is to assume it is produced in the western tradition, anything with 'flavour' or difference is affixed with the cheeky dash. We've all seen it. They're not a contemporary artist, they're a disabled- artist, they're a female dash African dash Gay dash artist. But by positioning difference as the primary ideological means of understanding these works, the art market has its shtick, its selling point. These artists now have a group they 'represent' a scary mass that through their work can be homo-genised, assimilated and, vitally, purchased.

By their difference they are now the token of the art world.

Producing works and points of conversation for the art elite and literate from London to New York to Sydney often evokes the response of Why, haven't you heard about this new African artist? They're just sensational! Discontent with the appearance of the normative Euro-American art scene, these collectors and investors set their sights on the 'frontier' for new acquisitions. Looking for the most exotic, the most experimental, the very edge of The Periphery. And all for a bargain basement price, with the promise of profit.

I put to you, for these reasons, The Periphery is still very real. And for very specific reasons. Ultimately it isn't going to be us, or Periphery artists who get the last laugh. It's investors, collectors and the international art market; and they will be laughing all the way to the bank.

And remember; the profit, dear friends, is in The Periphery.

02. Sokari Douglad Camp, All that Glitters, installation. Image courtesy of the artist. 2015

FRAMEWORK