

FRAMEWORK

#12 | PROMISE





EDITORIAL

Welcome, everyone to the final issue of Framework for 2015.

This issue is the last of four issues which explored distinctive and poignant facets of critical art writing from UNSW Art & Design students.

This issue investigates how art connects, invigorates and empowers artists and communities. Our contributors have contemplated how promising Sydney Contemporary and Fugitive Structures were. Have investigated what is problematic and what is promising for public art in Australia, and how hope is offered and captured in press and art images.

As this is my last issue as editor I would firstly like to say thank you, to Arc @ UNSW Art & Design for the opportunities this experience has given me, allowing me to grow, learn and work with an amazing team. Secondly to Kieran, Ella, Ramesh, Tess, Doug, Amy and Caoife thank you for being the most wonderful colleagues and friends.

Finally, thank you to the contributors and aspiring art writers on campus. You are the reason this wonderful journal exists and you make it the creative, critical, (sometimes) controversial outlet that is it.

It has been a privilege to work with you all.

Please, enjoy the final issue of Framework for this year.

I *promise* you won't be disappointed.

- Lucinda Davison

PROMISE

FUGITIVE STRUCTURES

Emma Kate Wilson



SYDNEY CONTEMPORARY

Review
by Jaclyn French



FRAMEWORK

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COVER IMAGE

Shirin Neshat

2013

The House Is On Fire. (Waffa)

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UNSW Art & Design

LET'S TALK ABOUT PUBLIC ART

by Natalie Wadwell



THERE ARE NO VICTORS HERE

by Lucinda Davison







Fugitive Structures

By Emma Kate Wilson



02. Sack and Reicher + Muller with Eyal Zur: Sway, 2015 Aluminium, HDPE, Polyester

Project 28 and 27, exhibited at the Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation (SCAF) use the notion of promise to explore the housing situation many people face, specifically in Australia and, though this, globally. The artists investigate the temporary housing situation by creating temporary structures that appear to promise comfort and safety through the cosy atmosphere the structures create.

This exhibition and the lack of support for people seeking safe refuge, made me feel like we all have a responsibility to help where we can.

Every time the discussion of housing arises we hear the usual rhetoric of: what would we do about letting more people in the country, where would we put them; where would the jobs come from; who would pay for their education and health support? I think of it like this. If you heard someone outside your front door crying for help would you not help them and let them in to seek safety?

Okay, so soon your house would be full of people but your house would grow. You would have more people to help you build a bigger house, more minds to outwit the very scary and very real problems happening outside our zones we were fortunately born into?

The artists of Project 28, Hugo Motine and Heidi Axelsen, transcend this idea into their 'Owner Occupy' (2015). The structures can easily grow and are designed to be built upon, the cotton duck fabric walls and down pipe fixings are easily reconfigured to create a unique space to the unique situation. As you walk into SCAF, Project 28 immediately greets you; the structures offer a return to a childlike state of mind. The walls are a sunny yellow, reminding me of a child's habitat, the lights dimmed for a nap time just around the corner.

The promise of being protected, in a protected space.

I have to duck to walk into the structures, which are raised high above me, I feel engulfed in my own personal play den reminding me of being an infant. The structures are moveable but have

been organised to snake round the gallery, turning in on each other but never shutting off an area. The walls are soft organic duck cotton in beiges, whites and black. Small circle windows are offered to view the outside yellow walls, with little stools placed by the window and you can enjoy your view out of your nest egg. After walking out of the den, I'm faced with a map: "Terra Nullius Ad Infinitum" here this colonial map of Sydney is remembering the offer of the biggest rehousing promise made.

Up the northern beaches: "The perfect start", the inner west: "rough gem"; Sydney's CBD: "lightness and tranquility"; "giant sunlight courtyards"; "peaceful tree lined streets".. and on the promises continue. Now Australia faces a new promise the addition: "Ad Infinitum." The promise of safe housing being inside these canvas dens, placed onto vacant lots; golf course, backyards and traffic islands. Forget the original promise of land and space and instead: "you own what you occupy."

The second space occupied with Fugitive Structures at SCAF, is the zen garden. Perfectly matched up Sway (2015), the eerie, temporary structures are literally allowed to sway out in the natural environment. The tent like structures "will weather and transform" throughout the exhibition. Sam Spurr shares that this reflexivity reflects the sukkah which offered hospitality to the Jews from the Old Testament as they escaped slavery to freedom in the Promised Land, which directly influences the team behind Sway. The architectural collective based in Tel Aviv, consisting of Matanya Sack, Uri Reicher, Liat Muller, and Eyal Zur, offer this open, dream like temporary housing structure and with it the promise of refuge for those who need it.

Dr Gene Sherman has recognised "the human need for shelter is an ever increasingly a problem both locally and globally." In commissioning these projects she accepts this responsibility, using art that has a mission to inform and highlight our own personal promise to the rest of humanity.



03. Hugo Motine and Heidi Axelsen, 2015. Owner Occupy, Timber dowel, Downy pipe fixings, copper saddles, cotton duck fabric

REVIEW: SYDNEY CONTEMPORARY

by Jaclyn French





SYDNEY CONTEMPORARY, AUSTRALASIA'S INTERNATIONAL ART FAIR BROUGHT TOGETHER THE LARGEST AND MOST DIVERSE GATHERING OF AUSTRALIAN AND INTERNATIONAL GALLERIES TO CARRIAGEWORKS DURING SEPTEMBER. IT OFFERED ACCESS TO PIONEERING ART FROM SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST RESPECTED ARTISTS AS WELL AS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCOVER THE NEXT GENERATION OF EMERGING TALENT.

Involving a range of thematic exhibitions including; Current Contemporary, Future Contemporary, Artist Run Initiative Platform, Installation Contemporary, Performance Contemporary, Print Contemporary and Video Contemporary, it celebrated the vibrancy and diversity of contemporary art in Australia and from around the world.

The second edition of Sydney Contemporary presented new galleries to new audiences. For the 1st time young galleries that have been operating for less than five years were provided a specific platform to present curated dual or solo exhibitions. Seven large scale exhibition spaces were devoted to Future Contemporary and the Artist Run Initiative Program, fulfilling Sydney Contemporary's promise of providing a range of both emerging and young galleries and artists, creating opportunities for exposure on a national and international level.

The fair provided a new platform for some of the most significant emerging and unrepresented talent together with the chance for these galleries to work with some of the world's leading commercial galleries and their artists, offering a snapshot of emerging practice today. The Artist Run Initiative Program in particular, allowed artists who are regular exhibitors in Australia's not-for-profit spaces, who are possibly less familiar to mainstream audiences and collectors, to engage in dialogue with more recognised local and international contributions and galleries.

ALASKA Projects, established in 2011 in Sydney, was one such gallery exhibiting in the Artist Run Initiative Program, a space with a key ethos of supporting diverse and dynamic emerging artist practice.

"ARIs (Artist Run Initiatives) are essential to the functioning of the arts eco system and provide a valuable training ground that has experimentation at its core. For a gallery like ALASKA it's a great opportunity to be exposed to so many galleries under one roof. We made connections and friendships with several galleries during the fair and it was great to get an insight into artistic practice beyond Sydney" says gallery director Sebastian

Goldspink after the fair "We were proud to be there representing the ARI sector".

This year's edition of Sydney Contemporary gave audiences a change to engage with individual artists and discover what's new or emerging with the chance to support artists and galleries while contributing to the long term sustainability of the Australian art scene.

"We were really excited that so many of our regular visitors caught us at the fair but were also very enthused with the number of new people we met that weren't necessarily familiar with the work of ALASKA Projects" says Goldspink "We were also very enthused that works went to new collectors that hadn't had relationship with the individual artist or the gallery"

With Sydney Contemporary's participation with Art Money, the world's first art loan scheme, owning works from the fair became immediate and affordable. The scheme facilitates Artist Run Initiatives to support their practice combined with enabling audiences to make discoveries and support artists whose work will potentially shape what we will call Australian art culture.

Sydney Contemporary opened up space between the art museum and the art market, where adventurous

galleries could present exhibitions and projects aimed at international curators and exhibition markets, as well as collectors. This objective of the fair, as well as the priority of showcasing emerging talent and enabling their financial gain will continue to produce new artists and sustain Sydney as a premier destination for contemporary art.



Yves Klein





A photograph of three Black women sitting outdoors in front of a stone building. They are all wearing black clothing and bright yellow scarves. The woman on the left is looking towards the right, the woman in the middle is looking slightly away from the camera, and the woman on the right is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background shows a stone wall and a window with a black metal grille.

LET'S TALK ABOUT PUBLIC ART A REVIEW OF CIVIC ACTIONS: ARTISTS' PRACTICES BEYOND THE MUSEUM

by Natalie Wadwell



01. Suzanne Lacy's 'Between the Door and the Street' (2013)

PUBLIC ART IN AUSTRALIA HAS EVOLVED OVER THE LAST FORTY YEARS TO INCLUDE A SHIFT FROM OBJECT TO TIME-BASED PRACTICE. ISSUES ABOUT PUBLIC SPACE, CITIZENSHIP, POWER DYNAMICS AND ISSUES THAT ARE PREVALENT IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY ARE OFTEN PROBED THROUGH THESE WORKS. DESPITE THE LARGE NUMBER OF ART PROJECTS PRODUCED IN PUBLIC SPACES OVER THE PAST DECADE, THERE HAVE BEEN FEW OPPORTUNITIES TO DISCUSS SOME OF THE KEY ISSUES. CIVIC ACTIONS: ARTISTS PRACTICES BEYOND THE MUSEUM SOUGHT TO START THIS CONVERSATION ACROSS TWO DAYS IN SEPTEMBER 2015.

Organised by the Museum of Contemporary Art in partnership with Information Cultural Exchange (ICE, Parramatta) and Parramatta City Council, this forum took place at the MCA and the University of New England Future Campus in Parramatta. The two locations reflected the MCA's commitment to geographically expanding their programs since 2006 through the C3West program.

Inspired by Jock McQueenie's three c's model of community, culture and commerce, Elizabeth Ann McGregor OBE pioneered C3West. Chief curated by Anne Loxely, the three c's came to stand for community, commerce and contemporary art and (for the most part) is dedicated to developing public art projects across Western Sydney. These projects are developed in partnership with art organisations in the region and commercial entities.

Civic Actions brought together national and international curators, artists and writers to discuss the intersections of art, social strategies and public space. Issues around commissioning models, corporate and business sponsorship, respectful community engagement and artistic integrity were on the table for scrutiny.

The conference kicked off with the Lloyd Rees Memorial Lecture, presented by Creative Time (New York) chief curator, Nato Thompson. A charismatic speaker, Thompson probed ideas of space, culture, the distribution of power and issues pertaining to minority groups, race and ethnicity. These issues were considered in relation to projects such as Kara Walkers 'The Subtly' (2014), Suzanne Lacy's 'Between the Door and the Street' (2013), Paul Ramirez Jonas 'Key to the City' (2010) and Paul Chan's 'Waiting for Godot in New Orleans' (2007).








Thompson referred to ideas of what constitutes a public space, public behaviour, a citizen – issues that are all pertinent to the discussion of socially and community engaged art. However, Thompson stresses, the current arts discourse and arts aesthetics are not sufficient to address the array of issues raised by contemporary art in public spaces. Art in the public sphere is a complex intertwining of economics, urbanism, identity and power – a skill set that art historical knowledge does not solely offer.

Thompson reminded the audience that civic actions are about people encountering the world and the need for cities to ‘produce spaces to have conversations about the things that we hide from,’ not solely relying on the arts to carry the burden. It was fitting that Thompson’s recently released book ‘Seeing Power: Art and Activism in the Twentieth Century’ was on hand. The book further expands on Thompson’s professional experience in an attempt to explain these practices. His charisma seamlessly translates into his writing style. This is a recommended read for artists, curators and art enthusiasts alike.

Across two days keynote presentations were given by director of Situations in Bristol, Claire Doherty, artist Hector Zamora (Mexico and Brazil based), artist Jun Yang (Austria, Taiwan and Japan) and two video lectures by Tony Albert and Hetti Perkins, who unfortunately could not attend in person. Summaries of these presentations were liveblogged by tertiary students and can be located via the MCA’s website, along with a recording of Thompson’s presentation.

Uncharacteristic of panel discussions and Q&As, attendees were quick to delve into the big issues. Ideas about artistic excellence and working with community, qualities for ethical engagement and the role of the artist in urban and social planning were considered amongst panellists. Discussions on day two spilled into the final Q&A when artist and writer Zanny Beggs probed the ethics around corporate sponsorship for the arts, whilst artist and writer David Cross raised concerns for short term approaches to community engaged art. The sensitivity of these issues was evident when the panel was quick to concur and close out conversation. The conclusions: decisions around corporate sponsorship are subjective and thus individual artists or organisations decide on their position; and

A person is standing in the foreground, their back to the camera, looking out over a vast, open landscape. The sky is a deep, dark blue, suggesting dusk or dawn. The horizon is lined with a dense row of trees. The ground is a mix of dry grass and patches of green. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

that the institution is responsible for building long term relationships with communities, not the artist. Both are interesting conclusions, complex in their positions and worthy of much more scrutiny.

The next instalment of Civic Actions is not a question of if but when, according to final comments from attendees. It is impossible for conferences of this nature to really dig deep into the array of issues that could be addressed. The common failing of conversations and writing about community engaged art is that the emphasis is placed on the art and the artist. Attendees were not ignorant to this, pushing for the subject to be better reflected on the next agenda. For the past twenty years, arts discourse has raised concern for the negation of discussion around community in community engaged art (see Grant H. Kester and Miwon Kwon). If C3West is about community, contemporary art and commerce, why isn't community given greater consideration in discussions? How should we be talking about community in relation to public art projects? What locational specificity needs to be provided when writing, interpreting or talking about community engaged art? Whilst communities are imagined during art projects, formed with the intention of being temporary, should we be more interested in existing communities as they use the spaces every day?

It is anticipated that the next instalment of Civic Actions will build on the last. Perhaps consideration for recent bottom-up public interventions, such as those produced by Western Sydney based organisations, Urban Theatre Projects and Powerhouse Youth Theatre will feature. These organisations are causing waves in Western Sydney, with a distinct approach to art in public spaces and community engagement. The approach of these organisations demonstrates that speaking to locality can still have a global message.



04. HEATHER AND IVAN MORISON, 2014, SLEEPERS AWAKE Sleepers Awake was a C3West project commissioned by the MCA and the Western Sydney Parklands Trust.

THERE ARE NO VICTORS HERE

by Lucinda Davison





01. Italian navy rescues asylum seekers traveling by boat off the coast of Africa on the Mediterranean, June 7, 2014.

THERE ARE NO VICTORS HERE.

THERE WERE NO VICTORS WITH THE DEATHS OF REZA BARATI,
HAMID KHAZAEI IN AUSTRALIAN DETENTION.

THERE WERE NO VICTORS IN THE BODY OF AYLAN KURDI BEING
PULLED FROM TURKISH WATERS.

Images of the worlds most vulnerable and displaced people have received a lot of media attention in 2015 as they capture a dire humanitarian situation. We've all seen these images, Syrians, Somalis, Sudanese people seeking safety and a chance in life scrambling for buses, trains, being overcrowded in small barely seaworthy vessels.

The established discourse of power and portraiture explores how portraits raise fundamental questions of gender, status, class and identity. This is central in understanding how images from press photos to fine art are crucial for understanding the scope of humanitarian situations we are faced with today.

Iranian artist, Shirin Neshat in her 2013 series *The House Is On Fire*, captured the result of unimaginable grief in the fallout of the Egyptian Revolution. The series of portraits capture the faces, hands and feet of Egyptians left behind. Inscribed in microscopic detail across the folds, wrinkles and lines of the subjects skin are the words of the Iranian poet Mehdi Akhavan Sales:

My house is on fire, soul burning,
Ablaze in every direction.
Carpets and curtains threaded to dust.
Within the smoke of this raging fire
I sob, run to each corner
Shout, scream, yelp
With the voice of a sad howl and bitter laughter.

...And the fire keeps on raging,
burning all memories, books and manuscripts,
all landscapes and views.
Putting out the fire with my blistering hands,
I pass out with its roar.
As the fire rages from yet another
direction circled in smoke.
Who will ever know as my being turns into the non
being by the sunrise.







These series of portraits, framed in darkness explore the utter devastation and loss that shadow individual's experiences of revolution. Neshat notes there was a euphoria that coincided with the Egyptian Revolution, a promise encapsulated in the revolutionary zeal of the banners and chanting that filled the streets.

The social function of portraits are accompanied by the problematic aspects of likeness, voyeurism and the gaze but also allow for a consideration of alternative narratives and histories to be explored. There is promise in the problematic.

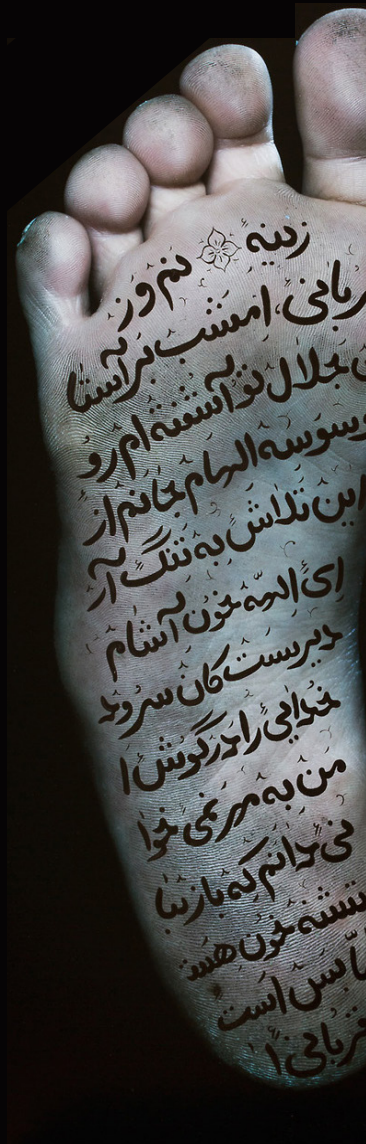
In no way would I argue that intensely racist, sexist, Orientalist images are promising, rather that portraiture itself forces the viewer to question the social, political, environmental and economic realities that have been captured.


Neshat's images, refined, powerful and stoic represent a means for us to interpret the devastation, grief and loss experienced from the Egyptian Revolution. Art here promises to invigorate, alter and challenge the public imagination in regards to what has been captured. Neshat's muted saturation in her images capture the morbid reality of social unrest in an entirely different way from press images. Wafaa determined gaze, breaking from the darkness will confront the viewer in a considered, critical and complex manner.

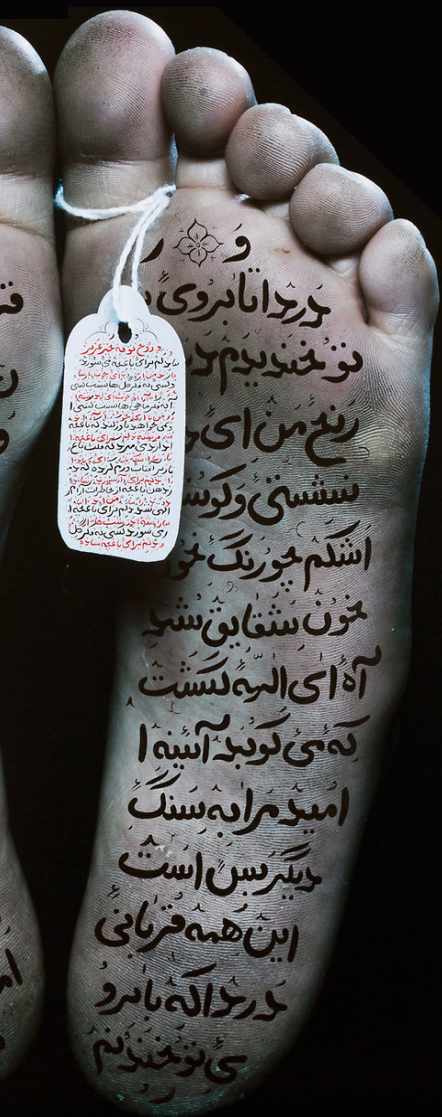
The image of Aylan Kurdi being carried from the beach, a portrait of his short life, effected viewers in a visceral heartbreaking and no less complex manner than Neshat's images. Similarly, it was portraits of the two young men who died in Australian detention that sparked increased pressure to close these camps and end the horrific treatment of these vulnerable people in Australia.

In these portraits we equate the devastation to the faces we see. The faces of Aylan Kurdi, Reza Barati, Hamid Khazaei and Wafaa all indicate that more action, more empathy is required. What's reflected in these portraits, art and press alike, is that there are no victors here.





زینہ  نم و ز
ریای امشب بر آستان
جلال تو آشفته ام رو
سوسه الهام بخاتم از
ابن تلاش به تنگ آ
ای الهه خون آشفام
دیرست کان سرود
خداپی را در گوش
من به هر بی خوا
نی دامن که باز با
تنش خون هست
بایس است
قریای ا



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