It's a bit of an active mix in this issue of COFAtopia.

Beth Dillon, your SRC @ COFA President handed over the Dear Dean letters at the SRC’s ‘Half a Desk’ exhibition at Kudos (see cover), there was a mixed reaction to the Dean’s reply to the show at the opening - read all about it on p4-5.

We hear from Kyle and Sophie about their trip with SPI to Smiths Lake earlier this year, an exhibition of works produced up there opens at Kudos on 28 August.

We encourage you to support UNSW student volunteers in Arc’s Walama Muru program; they have a big fundraiser planned in week 6 for their visit to Palm Island next month.

We recap on the amazingness that is Ron and George from Mop and Pom Pom, so amazing was the first HOT TIPS session!! A new fortnightly program of hot tips from external gallery directors in the common room not to be missed, p16.

Lastly we hear from Angela, the SRC @ COFA Disability Officer about campaigns and actions she’s working on.

Don’t miss the upcoming BAD JUMPERS party in the common room on Wed 29 Aug, your last chance to show off some real doozies before Spring hits.

Also soccer still on every week - who cares that we lost that ugly mirror balled trophy anyway - let's play!

Oh and send Kate a caption for awesome Spice Girls pic below and you could win a DYMO labelmaker! yess!

Love, Arc at COFA xx
Dear Dean,

On behalf of the COFA SRC, I would like to present you with the following constructive criticisms written by COFA students over the past 6 months. Although these letters of concern vary in format, tone and legibility, they share a common thread: COFA students are not happy with the state of their art school education. They have endured three years of scaffolding, dust and noise pollution, disillusioned teaching and support staff, a campus stricken by a lack of student community and severely depleted in studio space and resources. Others have spent the majority of their COFA education in a state of relocation, temporarily housed in scattered sites largely unsuitable for artistic production. All of them have paid for the privilege of studying in a construction zone.

In the maze of scaffarded corridors at COFA the atmosphere is polluted with an air of frustration as thick as the concrete dust that drifts from the building site to settle on every studio surface. These letters, written in various states of annoyance, anger, confusion and slightly inebriated self-righteousness, express the numerous difficulties students have encountered in their semesterly struggle to study, create, graduate and move on to postgraduate existence. For many students, recollections of their art school experience will be tainted by the aural assault of daily jackhammering, visions of fluoro-vested workmen and the various odours of excavated debris. Few will look back on the COFA Redevelopment Project as having been anything but a breach of contract. This has led to a generation of COFA students of COFA.

I would seek financial compensation for those that have endured COFA’s ‘remarkable transformation’ but I am aware the UNSW coffers haven’t the coin to shut down this alleviation of student dissatisfaction. I would ask for the reimbursement of SSAF charges, paid by COFA students who already commit to considerable course fees to study in a campus with the most rudimentary of student services, but understand this is a futile claim. I would ask that the COFA Annual be housed in a venue that is in a less embarrassing state of decrepitude than the Squarehouse and Roundhouse, but know this too is an unattainable demand.

In lieu of any potential for financial compensation, I seek a formal acknowledgement that the educational experience provided to COFA students over the past three years has been of less than ideal, and frankly not comparable to a past or, as they say, a past or present comparable to a past or present standard. If this was going to happen to a generation of COFA students then to charge them full fees, a Student Amenities (ha!) fee and make them pay for the privilege of completing an experience that they have already paid for in the shape of the Annual Exhibition, is pretty insulting.

Reluctance to acknowledge this might have something to do with the idea that by doing so, there might be an opening for litigation. If you think about enrolment as a type of contract for a specific service, deviation or unsatisfactory delivery of that service can be considered a breach of contract. This has been put forward as a taste of the real world when a breach of contract occurs. Make of that what you will.

After a panel discussion last Thursday, where these issues were discussed, the Dean is planning to continue the Half a Desk campaign. If you wish to participate in future action, please get in touch with the SRC via deardean2012@gmail.com

Prof Ian Howard has conveyed to me and the SRC that he understands, and expressed his gratitude, he will officially respond to the Dear Dean letters later this session - stay tuned!

Regards,
Beth Dillon
COFA Representative for the SRC
During the first week of May, 2nd and 3rd year Sculpture Performance and Installation majors travelled to UNSW’s Smith’s Lake Research Station for a week of intensive art practice. We caught up with Kyle Morgan and Sophie Harvey to find out about the trip and their upcoming exhibition, Leeches and Beaches.

What made you interested in going out bush to make art?

Kyle: Well, initially it was lecturer Emma Price telling us about going to a ‘Sculpture Camp’ when she was studying at COFA and telling us the fun crazy experiences she had there. We had pestered her for quite a few semesters about organising one for the current SPI students. And, finally it came to be. So both 2nd and 3rd year SPI majors, and a handful of Masters students made the journey up to the UNSW research station at Smiths Lake, for a week of intense art making, and quite a bit of socialising.

But for me personally, I thought it would be a great chance to try something different to my usual practice and have the backdrop of nature and a lake to work with, rather than gallery and the white cube!

Sophie: After being cooped up in the studio for the last few years going bush seemed like a great chance to let loose. I knew that I would get a well needed rest from the noise and movement of the construction. Spending a whole week making art without worrying about other every day life issues seemed like an exciting break from reality.

What makes Smiths Lake so special?

S: When you wake up in the morning all you hear is birds of different species singing to the sun. Everyone eats and cooks together, taking turns at every meal. Bonfires every night. And most importantly, the lake, sunrise and sunset, swimming and exploring, there was never a dull moment at camp.

K: Like Sophie said, it was great to just take in what the camp had to offer and work with nature. And was a completely different experience to making art in the confines of a studio. In particular, I found the lake to be a unique backdrop to present works, with the reflections from the water and both dusk & dawn providing an interesting atmosphere for art works to be made.

Anything crazy happen while you were out there?

To paraphrase the old cliché, “What happens at Sculpture Camp, stays at Sculpture Camp” Truthfully, I am unsure on how much I would be able to talk about. But, there seemed to be a lot of people getting naked (for art of course!). The second year were doing their performance workshops during camp, performing out bush makes people get naked we guess. I don’t want to get anyone in trouble, but it was quite liberating not having to abide by a lot of COFA’s strict OHS restrictions on campus.

Oh, and there was a girl that was drinking out of a pink children’s gum boot, part of a tradition she had with some childhood friends.

Did you find being in nature beneficial for your creative process? Was it a fruitful time?

K: I found it to be amazing experience. I was great to just unplug from normal life, leaving prior engagements like work responsibilities and just concentrate on art making. Because there were no distractions and you were surrounded by fellow students all the time there seemed to be a hive of creative activity, taking place day and night!

S: There is a lot of time to meditate and sit and think about what your making, we had all the tools we needed there and because I work with found objects it was a very exciting place, driving around picking up objects off the road, on the local beach around the corner. A hoarders paradise.

How can other students get involved and apply to go to Smith Lake?

S: We were privilege to have it all organised for us by Bonita and Emma, our sculpture lecturers. There was some pretty amazing old biology equipment in one of the rooms and insects collections in boxes. Smiths Lake Research Station is run by the Faculty of Science School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences (BEES), and is open to all UNSW staff & students. You can contact the station directly to arrange a study visit.

“Leeches and Beaches” an exhibition of works made during this trip opens at Kudos Gallery, 6 Napier Street Paddington, 5-7pm Tuesday 28 August and runs to Saturday 1 September.
SPI students at Smiths Lake
**WHAT’S ON**

**WEEK 6**

**MON 20 AUGUST**
@UNSW
2-4 pm
Queer Collective meeting
Room 9.20, Level 9, Chemical Science

**TUE 21 August**
@COFA
11am-12pm
SOCER
Meet in the Arc Office or meet us at Moore Park. To join the group you can also find us on FB. COFA SOCER 2012

**THU 23 AUGUST**
@COFA
9-9.45am
ROCKET Collective and COFA SRC present The Thursday Blender Bender! Free liquid breakfasts COFA Common Room, Level 1 E Block.

**WEEK 7**

**MON 27 AUGUST**
@UNSW
1-3pm
Women’s Collective Meeting
Womens Room, Blockhouse
Room 334 Robert Webster
12-1
Women’s Collective Meeting
Womens Room, Blockhouse

**THU 30 AUGUST**
@COFA
1pm
Film screening: Small Change
Sofies Truffaut EG02, COFA
3-4pm
Stich n’ Bitch
Bringing a needles and your gossip
COFA Common Room, Level 1 E Block.

**WEEK 8**

**SUN 2 SEPTEMBER**
FATHER’S DAY

**MON 3 SEPTEMBER**
Queer Art Exhibition and Zine entries due - see below email
unsqueerweek@gmail.com
ALL OF E BLOCK, INCLUDING THE COMMON ROOM IS CLOSED MON AND TUES THIS WEEK DUE TO BUILDING WORKS.

**TUE 4 SEPTEMBER**
@COFA
Exhibition opening at Kudos Gallery:
Freedman Foundation
Traveling Arts Scholarship

**WEEKS END**

**WHAT’S ON**

**WEEK 8**
The term means ‘a return of road or path’ and that’s exactly what Walama Muru does by forging new connections and reinforcing old ones between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. And what better way for Walama Muru to get this done than to offer an opportunity for UNSW students to travel to a regional Aboriginal community in order to learn and share in the local Aboriginal culture.

At its core, Walama Muru represents an opportunity for students to be a part of a real and practical demonstration of true reconciliation - one that incites real and lasting change.

The program is run in partnership with the UNSW Nura Gili Indigenous Resource Centre, and volunteers undertake community development projects, utilising funds they raise for their travel arrangements, accommodation, and required materials while in the community.

Call-out to be part of the program are early in session 1 each year. There is a student coordinator, a paid position with Arc (this job for next year will be advertised later this session - stay tuned!), working with 25 UNSW students across a number of faculties.

Each year, the team choose a location. In early September 2012 the group are travelling to a community the program has not previously engaged with. Student volunteers will travel to Palm Island in far north Queensland to aid in community development projects determined by the community members and the Indigenous Council of Palm Island, in this case they’ll be working on the community centre run by the PCYC. Palm Island is further away than any community the program has visited in previous years, and as such, the expenses incurred for this trip are substantially high. Volunteers aspire to raise a $30,000 for this project! Their upcoming Trivia Night on Thurs 23 August is crucial to their fundraising efforts. The Trivia Night is the program’s biggest fundraising event of the year, show your support for Walama volunteers by coming along for a great night of trivia, prizes, games and auctions for an excellent cause.

Tickets are $15 per person, or $12 for Arc Members.

Each table seats 8 - 10 people, so recruit a team and book yourselves a table by contacting walamamuru@arc.unsw.edu.au or Arc Student Development 9385 9840

Join the open group page on facebook by searching Walama Muru @ UNSW
On Wednesday 22 August, Arc, in collaboration with STA Travel and ISIC present the UNSW Travel Expo. The event, this year coordinated by the Arc Interns, will feature more than 50 information stands in The Roundhouse with information about travel adventures, tips for trips and amazing holidays!

We caught up with Bachelor of Media (PR & Advertising) student Lauren McCracken, who is the 2012 Arc @ UNSW Communications Intern to find out more...

**What is the Travel Expo?**
The Travel Expo is an event that brings together a whole heap of student friendly travel options.

**So is it just about holidays or will there be info about exchange and residency opportunities too?**
We have a really interesting mix of exhibitors on board. There will be information on group tours, volunteer programs, adventure travel, exchange opportunities, working holidays and safe travel.

**Will there be any info about how to pay for holidays on a uni student budget?**
We’ve aimed to keep it as student friendly as possible, and many exhibitors will be offering special deals throughout the day.

**What are some of the presentations that are scheduled for the day?**
Topdeck, On The Go Tours and Backpacker World Travel will be talking about their huge range of tours and destinations. We’ll also have MSC Cruises in to talk about their cruise packages, and Antipodeans Abroad will be telling us about their overseas volunteer programs. STA Travel will also be there to talk about their student friendly deals and services.

**What role do you have in the event?**
My role is to get the word out about the Expo to as many people as possible. I’ve been working on our social media and contacting local media. I’ll also be MC-ing the event and posting photos throughout the day.

**What’s it like being an Arc Intern? What do you do in the Communications role?**
It’s been a really fun experience. There’s always so much happening at Arc so you get to work on a lot of different projects. I mainly monitor our social media pages and post up news and pictures. I also get the chance to work on communications plans and write up press releases. I’ve also helped organise the Travel Expo along with the rest of the Arc Interns. It’s been really exciting to be part of such a big event!

For more info on the Travel Expo visit unsroundhouse.com/travelexpo or go to the event - Wed 22 Aug

To find out more about the Arc Internship program, keep your eye on www.arc.unsw.edu.au/jobs for the application call out in October.
Arc presents
HOT TIPS

Come and join Artist Run Initiative and Commercial Gallery directors who will be there to answer all your questions and give priceless advice...

Wednesday 4pm
Fortnightly from Wk 5
COFA Common Room
Level 1 E Block

15th Aug
MOP Projects co-director and founder George Adams

29th Aug
Amelia Wallin, Firstdraft Gallery

19th Sep
Kind of Gallery director

3rd Oct
ALASKA director Sebastian Goldspink

Not sure where to go after your degree? Confused about how to approach galleries?

Last week at Hot Tips we heard from Ron and George Adams, co-founders and co-directors of artist run space MOP Projects. They have been running for over ten years and have really made a mark in the ARI gallery scene and it is a space to always watch for the next hot up and coming thing. They were so super helpful and generous with their time and answered heaps of questions students had about how to apply for exhibitions, where to apply and what they are looking for.

In a nutshell they basically said to keep your applications simple and concise with a few key images to explain your idea/approach. They also made it quite clear that to get a show at MOP and at most places you need to be out and about and meet the people whose gallery you are interested in and get involved in the community. They outlined a number of ways that you can do this as a student. One of the key ones being SHOW UP TO THEIR OPENINGS! So easy! Cheap drinks and conversation! They also suggested volunteering as a great way to meet people and get involved. MOP Projects are always looking for vollies to help on the bar and mind the gallery. They also said most of their volunteers have then gone on to join their Board of Directors or some other official position within the gallery. Send them an email at mop@mop.org.au if you are interested and be sure to check out their next exhibition opening at 6pm Thurs 23 August.

MOP Projects
2 / 39 Abercrombie Street
Chippendale. mop.org.au

Come check out the next HOT TIPS in Week 7, Wed 29 Aug from 4pm in the COFA Common Room. Learn some more tips on how to survive in the artworld, this time from Firstdraft Gallery directors, and stick around for drinks afterwards.

In Week 9, we’ll hear from Kind - Of gallery directors http://kindofgallery.com and in Week 11 we have Sebastian Goldspink from ALASKA.
This year COFAtopia is giving over it’s naughty back page to the COFA Student Representative Council (SRC). The SRC @ COFA are a bunch of students who represent YOU! They are there to campaign for your needs to the larger university body as well as make sure your student voice is heard when it comes to national affairs.

In this issue we hear from SRC @ COFA Disabilities Officer Angela. If you want to get involved in the conversation, friend them on FB at COFA Src.

Hello COFAtopians.

As the COFA SRC Disability Officer my role is to make sure that learning and participation at COFA is equally accessible to everyone who comes here.

Firstly, I’d like to acknowledge the dreadful campus conditions that we all endure, and have endured for the past two to three years. There is an apparent refusal by the University to acknowledge that there is anything wrong, i.e. that the ‘workaround’ during the redevelopment has adversely affected the experience of going to university for many COFA students. Even the Dean of COFA has got it all wrong (if you heard the Dean speak on opening night of the Half a Desk exhibition at Kudos, you’ll probably still remember the dismissive remarks disguised as humour and the patronising political rhetoric). The SRC COFA Rep, Beth Dillon, presented him with the ‘Dear Dean’ letters that night. Let’s hope he hears what we have said.

Further on the redevelopment, and integral to Disability issues, I was recently advised that an Accessibility Map for COFA will not be available until the project is completed. This is still more than 6 months away. As the campus is still in operation, this is not acceptable. I am doubly outraged that there was not an accessibility map for the campus pre-redevelopment!

However, in spite of all this, there are some GREAT things that happen here, which everyone can be involved in. Things like Mindfulness Meditation sessions every Thursday from 12-1pm in F408 and Yoga afterwards from 1-2pm in E101. There is FREE Breakfast that R.O.C.K.E.T and the SRC put on every Thursday morning at 9am and one on one appointments with The COFA Learning Centre to help with essay troubles.

We are also going to start up a choir! Yes! With a name like ‘Achoired Taste’, or some such witty pun. I’m in the process of finding a choir leader. Stay tuned to the SRC Facebook page to find out more, search COFA Src.

If you need information or need to raise issues about disability (including mental health) services, please feel welcome to contact me via the SRC Facebook page or at angela.butler@unsw.edu.au.

Cheers,
Angela
COFA MID SESSION JUMPER PARTY!

WEEK 7, WED 29 AUGUST FROM 5PM IN THE COFA COMMON ROOM

COFA Kids come and get it!
Free drinks a plenty
heaps of chow
and DJ DOLLY all night long
Get sweaty!
Bad Jumper a must!

Arc@COFA ACTIVITIES
UNSW Student Life
@COFA