

FRAMEWORK

#26 | spaces



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FRAMEWORK acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the Bedegal people of the Dharug Nation, and Ngunnawal people as the sovereign owners of the land on which UNSW is situated.

This land was never ceded.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

FRAMEWORK

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SPACES
#26

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A protester walks past a wall outside
the police headquarters with eggs
thrown by protestors and a banner
reading "Never Give In". Hong Kong,
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Back cover image:

Joan Shin, (Repercussions II),
installation, Parasitic Structures, Down /
Under Space, 2019.

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Editorial

Stella Maynard

A few days before launching this issue, I'm walking in shorts on an overgrown track. My legs get grazed and covered in scratches from all the sticks and when I get home that night, I find a tick on my knee. It's left a bite and I gently pull it out with tweezers. It's still alive, and I watch it crawl across the sink for a moment. Then, I wash it down the drain. Nothing feels particularly remarkable about my encounter with the tick – it had happened before and it will happen again. But I did pause, watching that tick on the sink.

The next day at work I sit down to write this and my knee is still itchy from the tick's bite and my legs sting from the scrapes. Which is to say, the spatial resonances of that walk yesterday are still being held by my body. The sticks I broke while I was walking will still be broken and that tick is now living in a drain. As Astrid Lorange [writes](#), "bodies resist capture by being nowhere and everywhere at once: a room can feel a body after it has left, a body can carry a room as it goes". I'm not sure I know the difference between a body and a space.

I'm writing this editorial and procrastinating. I open Instagram and, just by chance, an artist I follow has posted an article about ticks and trans bodies. It's about disposable lives, parasites and toxicity; shared encounters and unloved

others. Straube – the author – [suggests](#):

in a society in which trans bodies are routinely dismissed, killed, and uncared for, the tick's response might be an invitation into a new, toxic sociality. This is not a cozy intimacy with a furry animal companion but a queer sociality between two unloved Others. According to Haraway, response happens between kin. The relationality between two toxic bodies draws attention to the lack of care for unloved Others and the potential to change this.

The article itself is interesting but the thing I really can't stop thinking about is: what are the odds of two people, in the same city, thinking about transness and bodies and ticks on the same day? Even smaller: what are the odds of those two people voicing, or sharing, those resonances? Even if it's never acknowledged aloud, spatial synchronicity can be so beautiful. It can also be terrifying.

The articles in this issue move between various spaces: the club, the beach, mining sites, the streets of Hong Kong, the cars in Fast and the Furious, Google Maps, white-walled galleries, parasitic infrastructures and the mosh pit of hard-core gigs. An atmosphere of violence, whether explicitly named or latent, permeate many of these contributions. These range from technological abstractions (the leaching

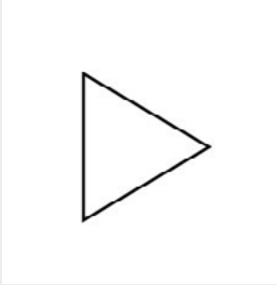
of information from our phones by data-miners) to visceral, embodied experiences (police brutality, white-supremacist riots, the non-consensual touches of cis-men at the gig). Under riding all of these contributions is a context and condition for spatial experiences: settler-colonialism. Settler colonialism is, to quote Patrick Wolfe, "a structure, not an event", meaning the expropriation of Indigenous lands, waters and atmospheres is ongoing, actively maintained. To quote [Tuck and Yang](#), in this process "land is what is most valuable, contested, required". This is an immeasurable violence that is re-asserted everyday. As Aneshka Mora writes in her review-essay, "Art institutions are certainly not perfect. Like banks, courthouses, prisons and schools, they too are built on the exploitation of Indigenous land and life".

And yet, there are bubbles. Even in spite of this (seemingly-totalised) structural sequestration of space, life and care and love and ways of living otherwise persist. Whether it is Vernon Ah Kee's bold assertion "NOT A WILLING PARTICIPANT", the solidarity that ripples through a chanting crowd at an Invasion Day protest, the fugitive re-direction of an art institution's capital, the confidence found in subcultural and DIY communities, or the understated importance of listening and just hanging out with friends. The articles in this issue are a testament to the fact that space isn't purely about the violence of overlaid, imposed meanings. It is also the complex micro and macro ways spaces are re-organised, built together, contested, defied and loved through, around and in. As Keg de Souza [says](#), "These are places where people can find

solidarity fighting injustice. This is where they can create alternative communities; this is where they can come together to topple power structures. These are the spaces where change is instigated".

How can we measure an air pocket?

Eleanor Zurowski



listen to the sound work [here](#)

Listening is an act where we make space.

Space is always contentious, contested.

In listening we share in the voices, sounds and experiences of others.

We become aware of the space we occupy, the conditions that produce this and how they can be renegotiated.

Listening creates space amongst and between bodies.

Listening commands a certain type of intimacy.

As Moten so eloquently puts, “writing alone, by and as oneself, leads to brokenness. Writing together can generate incompleteness.”

So, “we should write together to incomplete each other...our care, can never be of the self, but only of that touch, that rub, that press” as voices, sounds and experiences intermingle, rewrite each other and hold each other in the careful act of listening, the considered act of space making.

tracklist

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[Aurélié Nyirabikali Lierman - She Was A Visitor by Robert Ashley arr Yannis Kyriakides](#)

[Pelican Daughters - Cradle](#)

[ALWAYS WAS, ALWAYS WILL BE ABORIGINAL LAND RALLIES ACROSS AUSTRALIA ON SURVIVAL DAY 2015](#)

[Alva Noto & Ryuichi Sakamoto - Moon](#)

[Jules Gimbrone - Language until it Doesn't](#)

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[CORIN - Elevate](#)

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[aamin - lovin and livin and lovin and livin and lovin and livin](#)

[Tomoko Sauvage - Pacific Pacific](#)

[Milkfish - Urduja in Cyberspace](#)

[Тальник - Ваза Вечерняя](#)

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[Tragic Selector \(Terre Thaemlitz, Daisuke Tadokoro\) - A Dialogue With Gravity](#)

Material place: reconsidering Australian landscapes

Aneshka Mora



Image: Material Place at UNSW Galleries installation view. Available at: <https://thisisnofantasy.com/exhibition/unsw-gallery-material-place/#&gid=1&pid=5>

Caught in a time where information is increasingly fragmented and footage of the earth's demise is absorbed in social media algorithms; where our resources are so abstracted and their controllers so expansive that we cannot comprehend the full extent to which we are complicit in our own destruction; where the very places that we gather information, organise and strategise also enact and reproduce neo-liberalism; how do we navigate the tricky terrain of coloniality¹ and its institutions? How do we continue the struggle for a future different from one where processes of "progress" and "development", insatiable economic growth, excess and accumulation currently threaten to lead us?

Disguised behind what seems to be a cool, easily-consumable, curatorial style, the latest exhibition at UNSW Galleries, 'Material Place: Reconsidering Australian Landscapes', is a container of seething urgency that attempts to navigate these issues. It does so by facilitating transversal dialogues about how the earth's survival is intrinsically tied to delinking from colonial and 'extractive'² ways of thinking about the land. Each work is an examination of the position of the artist within coloniality and challenges the audience to take account of their own locations – softly but firmly offering the onus of futurity and of survival to the viewer. This self-reflexive criticality, evident in the works and the show at large, does not attempt to absolve any party – the institution, the gallery, the curator, or

the artists – of complicity, but instead asks: how can we individually use the tools at hand to start chipping away at the systems of coloniality?

How do we continue the struggle for a future different from one where processes of "progress" and "development", insatiable economic growth, excess and accumulation currently threaten to lead us?

Lu Forsberg's work, *Downstream* (Mount Morgan and Mount Oxide), demonstrates that Google Earth can be one such tool. Forsberg's digital exploration of open cut mining sites not only examines the literal toxification of land, but also reveals a toxic politics of digital opacity hidden under a fiction of transparency. Projected on screens in the gallery foyer, the careful investigation of the cursor over the land – pausing and zooming in on a particular section, clicking on and off specific functions – conveys a sense of real-time and control. However, in reality these satellite images are outdated by about 5 years, during which time conditions have not improved.³ This information throws into question the democracy of readily available data and the illusion of control, bridging the immateriality of technology and the tangibility of the environmental

1 Aníbal Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality," *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2–3 (March 2007): 168–78, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601164353>.

2 Macarena Gómez-Barris, "The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives." Presented at the UNSW Art & Design Research Forum. UNSW Art & Design, July 16, 2019.

3 Lu Forsberg, LU FORSBERG on Transboundaries: Art + Connection, 7 April to 3 June 2018 at QUT Art Museum (QUT Art Museum, 2018), <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=10156129687481885>.

consequences of mining. However, there is an implicit tension in Forsberg's use of familiar technology to make accessible 'true' representations of Australian land. This tension is balanced on the global economic and ecological devastation necessary to feed our naturalised use of technology – our laptops and smart devices,⁴ that make tools such as Google Earth easily available. The tension that Forsberg evokes between the beauty and horror of post-mining landscapes is not only aesthetic but deeply permeates and subtly defines the work.

Similarly, the delicate Risograph prints in Rachel O'Reilly's *Gas Imaginary Series 2* (Gladstone Post-pastoral) are almost disturbingly understated. O'Reilly's work is a response to the horrific poisoning of marine life that saw masses of fish, dugongs and turtles dead and diseased in Gooreng Gooreng waters in and around her hometown of Gladstone, in Queensland. The toxification of the water, which was a result of the dredging of the harbor for the installation of LNG's unconventional gas extraction (fracking) facilities, severely impacted her community's livelihood and wellbeing. Going to meetings with members of the Gooreng Gooreng people and local fishing industries, revealed a severe privatisation of water monitoring and a detrimental opacity in the officially documented 'scientific' reasons behind the toxic water. The aesthetics of the printed and filmic elements of O'Reilly's series mimic the optics of official documents, engineering diagrams, geological

stratification mapping and corporate advertising, in order to rupture their illusion of transparency. By adding handwritten poetic language, sometimes crossed-out, often rough, O'Reilly both intervenes in the aesthetic of officiality and reveals the farce of its authoritative impenetrability and finality.

It is important to note that the research for this work, like the water monitoring of Gooreng Gooreng waters, is conducted at the expense of various institutions. However, as a means of countering the privatisation and opacity of information, the data accumulated from *The Gas Imaginary Series* does not simply stay in the art institution but is shared with the communities it benefits – that is, in Gladstone and in other areas around Australia effected by fracking. The *Gas Imaginary Series*, then, is not simply a pedagogical exercise for art-goers or a gratuitous means of interrogating official procedures of collecting and publishing information. Rather, it is a medium with which to assist real decolonial resistance.

'Material Place' does not prioritise art as an institution, but as a vehicle for doing and disseminating important decolonial research.

As O'Reilly and Forsberg's work indicate, the presentation of work in a way visually palatable to contemporary art trends in 'Material Place' does not prioritise art as an institution, but as a vehicle for doing

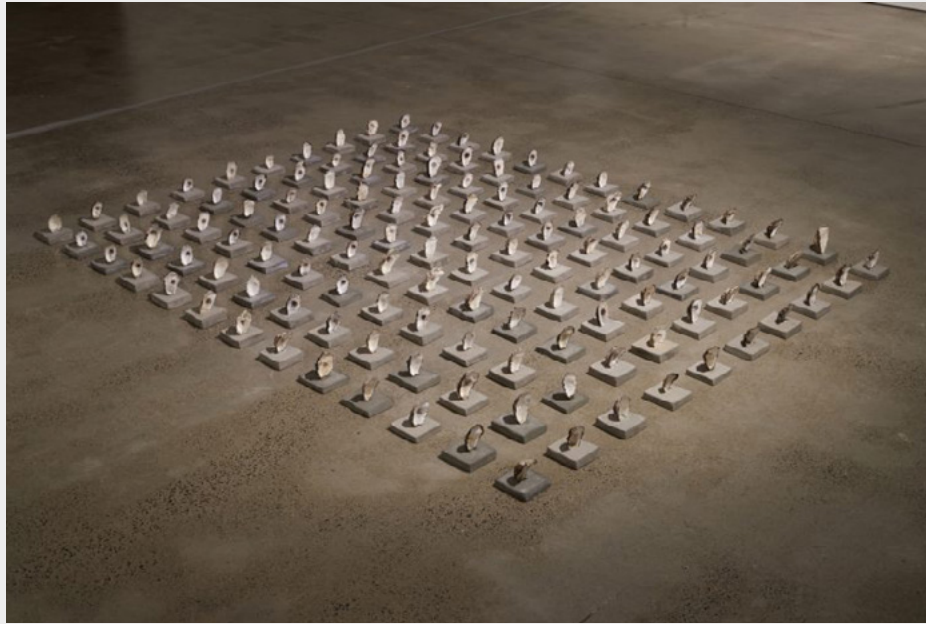
⁴ John Vidal, "How Developing Countries Are Paying a High Price for the Global Mineral Boom," *The Guardian*, August 15, 2015, sec. Global development, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/aug/15/developing-countries-high-price-global-mineral-boom>.



Rachel O'Reilly, with Pa.La.C.E (Valle Medina and Benjamin Reynolds) and Rodrigo Hernandez, *Drawing Rights*, 2018. Installation view, 'The Gas Imaginary', UNSW Galleries, 2019. Photo: Zan Wimberley.



Lu Forsberg, *Downstream (Mount Morgan and Mount Oxide)*, 2018. Installation view, 'Material Place: Reconsidering Australian Landscapes', UNSW Galleries, 2019. Photo: Zan Wimberley.



Megan Cope, *Foundations II*, 2016. Installation view, 'Material Place: Reconsidering Australian Landscapes', UNSW Galleries, 2019. Photo: Zan Wimberley.



Installation view, 'Material Place: Reconsidering Australian Landscapes', UNSW Galleries, 2019. Pictured: Yukultji Napangati, *Untitled*, 2011, Tully Arnot, *Holobiont*, 2019 and Robert Andrew, *Touching Pindan*, 2016. Photo: Zan Wimberley.

and disseminating important decolonial research. In Megan Cope's *Foundations II*, a diverse range of oyster shells are embedded in small concrete blocks neatly gridded on the gallery floor. The work critiques the conditions of the 'concrete city' that imposes itself on Country, only making a perfunctory allowance for the irregularities of the land and life contained within it. The information and action embedded in *Foundations II* predominantly derives from, belongs to, and serves Quandamooka peoples. However, well-developed Indigenous systems of knowing the land, without 'fetishising' or 'abstracting' its resources,⁵ remove the need for 'contemporary art' to convey this information. The necessity of restoring and regenerating native oyster reefs for the survival of waterways, recognising middens as important Indigenous infrastructures (rather than lime deposits for mortar), and understanding the damaging effects of silica mining on land and life is not theoretical knowledge to be acquired through contemplating art. Rather, it is gained from lived experience.

Cope's work, then, uses the language of post-minimalism, informed by Indigenous genealogies, to infiltrate the top tiers of cultural value and educate a predominantly settler audience.⁶ The way in which the concrete blocks seamlessly blend with the concrete floor of the gallery does not seem accidental. Instead, it seems to imply a degree of complicity – the gallery, too, reproduces coloniality and is made of the very materials mined from

Indigenous lands. However, although art as an institution remains deeply embedded in the systems of colonial-capitalism, Cope's work reminds us that prevailing art historical frames, while essentialising and neutralising on one hand, also allow potent works of continued resistance to hide in plain sight.

although art as an institution remains deeply embedded in the systems of colonial-capitalism, Cope's work reminds us that prevailing art historical frames, while essentialising and neutralising on one hand, also allow potent works of continued resistance to hide in plain sight.

As the presence of Yukultji Napangati's untitled portrait of the Gibson Desert rendered in intricate Pintupi style reminds us, this mode of strategising has not developed in a vacuum, but rather, follows a legacy fugitive work. In art, settler representations of Australian landscape were and remain weapons of epistemological violence as a means of both 'art-washing' the violences of settler colonialism and erasing Indigenous presence, management and sovereignty over the land. Landscapes are iconically "Australian". They are the images we export to the world and attach to the nation-state identity – a move to 'settler

⁵ Joe Collins in "Panel Discussion with Rachel O'Reilly, Lu Forsberg, Jo Collins, and Livia Rezende." Presented at From Site to Place Symposium. UNSW Galleries, 2019.

⁶ Andy Butler, "Safe White Spaces," *Runway*, no. 35 (December 3, 2017), <http://runway.org.au/safe-white-spaces/>.

nativism;⁷ making a claim to the land through entirely different (neo-liberal) value systems and the (ongoing) logic of terra nullius.⁸

The materialisation of visual culture at Papunya Tula in the early 1970s using mediums associated with Western art was a political act. It was a deliberate and strategic move to insert Indigenous presence and sovereignty into a nation systematically trying to erase Indigenous peoples. Further, the popularity of these works was not accidental but rather a result of an aggressive national and international marketing campaign instigated by the Aboriginal Arts Board (chaired by Charles Chicka Dixon and directed by Gary Foley in 1983).⁹ Though this momentum was quickly shut down and Papunya Tula work was appropriated and exploited by ‘carpet-bagging’, unsolicited appropriation and undercutting, it ensured that Aboriginal presence was woven into the fabric of Australian culture. While the settler-state continues to hang these legacies of resistance in the foyers of banks and corporations built on the exploitation of Indigenous lands,¹⁰ as the activation of Napangati’s work in the context of this exhibition testifies, it is important to

remember that they never signify complicity or assimilation. The intimate knowledge of the Gibson Desert contained in each horizontal stripe of colour – blood-red ochre, black and sandy yellow – is an assertion of sovereignty. Each precise, pointed, application of paint is a labour of care, resistance and history-making.

Art institutions can also be fugitive spaces to (re) appropriate and redirect economic, social and cultural capital

Art institutions are certainly not perfect. Like banks, courthouses, prisons and schools, they too are built on the exploitation of Indigenous land and life. Like social media algorithms, they too obscure environmental devastation and (re)produce idealised narratives of Australian land. They are also funded by government and (often harmful) corporations who attempt to exchange a small percentage of profit for a certain superficial cultural absolution.¹¹ It is no wonder, then, why the arts can often feel like just another cog in the machine of colonial-capitalism. However, as this exhibition reminds us, art institutions can

also be fugitive spaces to (re)appropriate and redirect economic, social and cultural capital. As the curator Ellie Buttrose, the artists in the exhibition, and the participants in the associated public programs demonstrate, people in the arts have a wide reach, the means with which to gather diverse knowledge and the tools to make important information accessible. ‘Material Places’ is not only a refreshingly radical, necessary and relevant re-reading of “Australian landscape” it is call to organise, strategise and prioritise; to utilise the tools at hand in order to dismantle coloniality and ensure a future for our world.

This essay was first published on Runway Conversations. Aneshka Mora was the recipient of the 2019 Kudos Gallery Emerging Critics Award. The Emerging Critics Award is supported by the Art & Design Student Council, in collaboration with Arc @ UNSW Art and Design. ‘Material Place: Reconsidering Australian Landscapes’ is at UNSW Galleries 21st June – 7th September.

7 Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor.” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–40.

8 Irene Watson, “From Site to Place Symposium: Keynote Address.” Presented at the From Site to Place Symposium. UNSW Galleries, July 22, 2019.

9 Ian McLean, ed., *How Aborigines Invented the Idea of Contemporary Art: Writings on Aboriginal Contemporary Art*, 1. ed, Australian Studies in Art and Art Theory (Brisbane: IMA, Institute of Modern Art, 2011).

10 This can also be read as a ‘settler move toward innocence’. See: Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor.”

11 Gabrielle de Vietri and Will Foster, “MAPS OF GRATITUDE,” A Centre for Everything, 2019, <http://www.acentreforeverything.com/maps-of-gratitude>; Mel Evans, *Artwash: Big Oil and the Arts* (London: PlutoPress, 2015).

The beach in Australia: a 'white' space?

Gemma Anderson



Vernon Ah Kee, *CantChant*, 2009, Installation at CAST Gallery. Image source: contemporaryarttasmania.org

“[It is] a popular perception that Aboriginal people are desert people, remote from the coast and from the mainstream.”

- Garry Jones, citing an argument by Vernon Ah Kee (2010).

Since Captain Cook's Invasion in the late eighteenth century, the beach has been claimed as a "white possession" in Australia, despite the fact that Aboriginal people were, and always will be, the sovereign owners of this land.¹ Sovereignty, as stated by Angela Pratt, is understood to mean "a people's ability and authority to govern themselves," and indeed Aboriginal people are the continent's sovereign owners, as at no point was their sovereignty ever ceded.² However, the beach has existed as a largely 'white' space for the last two and a half centuries, with little mainstream acknowledgement of the right for Indigenous Australians to exist here. A clear example of this lack of acknowledgement was during the 2005 Cronulla riots, when a conflict between Australians of "Anglo-Celtic background" and those of "Middle Eastern background" erupted, and the

former claimed their right to access the beach over the latter.³ Indeed, in this claim of white possession during the riots, there was complete silence in regards to the acknowledgement of Indigenous Australians and their sovereign right to inhabit this "stretch of coastline."⁴ Artists Vernon Ah Kee and Fiona Foley have both created works in response to this claim of white possession during the Cronulla riots and the blatant disregard of Indigenous sovereignty displayed. This essay will consequently discuss Ah Kee's installation work, *CantChant* (2009), and Foley's photographic series, *Nulla 4 Eva* (2009), examining how these works sophisticatedly reinsert Indigenous Australians into the beach space. These works vehemently challenge the fiction of the beach as a 'white' space and instead highlight Indigenous sovereignty – as the beach was and always will be Aboriginal land.

1 Aileen Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press, 2015, p.35.

2 Angela Pratt, 'Indigenous sovereignty-never ceded: sovereignty, nationhood and whiteness in Australia', PhD thesis, Faculty of Arts, University of Wollongong, 2003, <http://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/271> p.3., 'Aboriginal sovereignty - never ceded', *Australian Historical Studies*, no. 91 1988, <https://www.tandfonline-com.wwwproxy1.library.unsw.edu.au/doi/pdf/10.1080/10314618808595786?needAccess=true> p.1.

3 Michele Heimrich, 'Looking At You Looking At Me: Performance and Ethnography in Fiona Foley's Photographs', in Helmich, M., Morrow, C., Kent, R. (eds.), *Fiona Foley: Forbidden*, Sydney, NSW, Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009, p. 39.

4 Tess Allas, 'History is a Weapon: Fiona Foley History Teacher', *Artlink: Blak in Blak*, Vol. 30, No.1, 2010, p. 61.

These works vehemently challenge the fiction of the beach as a 'white' space and instead highlight Indigenous sovereignty – as the beach was and always will be Aboriginal land.

The beach was first "appropriated as a white possession" in 1770, in an inlet on the continent's east coast now referred to as Botany Bay. It was here that Captain Cook and his crew landed on the beach currently known as Kurnell, despite being met with resistance by two Gweagal warriors whose land they were trespassing on.⁵ Moreton-Robinson proclaims that the Gweagal warriors threw spears and shouted "go away" in a language foreign to Cook and his crew, who instead fired their guns at the Gweagal people, forcing them to retreat, with such resistance failing to be interpreted as "an act of Indigenous sovereignty."⁶ Moreton-Robinson states that Cook instead "rescripted [Aboriginal people] as living in a state of nature with no knowledge of, or possession of, property rights."⁷ Consequently, no treaties were made with the Aboriginal people and thus their sovereignty was never ceded.⁸ This space was appropriated as a white possession and "ceremoniously marked by firing guns and raising the British flag" under Cook's declaration of the "legal lie"

that it was "terra nullius – a wasteland and unoccupied."⁹

This act of white possession was cemented eight years later with the arrival of the First Fleet under the command of Governor Phillip, a voyage in which one of my own ancestors was a part of. A British flag was planted on the continent's east coast, a little further north of Botany Bay, in an area now referred to as Sydney Cove, likewise appropriating the land belonging to the Eora and Gadigal people as a white possession.¹⁰ As sensitively declared by Pratt, I must also acknowledge that I too am "a direct beneficiary of [Governor] Phillip's proclamation of sovereignty over the continent of Australia... [And] the white race privilege from which I benefit every day of my life is therefore the result of [this claim of white possession and the subsequent] racism, dispossession, and violence visited upon Indigenous people."¹¹ Indeed, it was through methods including containment, the deliberate infliction of disease, and shootings, that Aboriginal people were intentionally "displaced by colonists" in the following centuries and the white possession of this space was cemented.¹²

The beach thus became a largely white space, with claims of white possession strengthened in the nineteenth, twentieth, and current twenty-first century. In the nineteenth century, white settlers would

socialize on the beach and engage in "the British custom of promenading along the shore."¹³ Then in the early twentieth century "surf bathing" became an integral part of "beach culture" and the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia was founded.¹⁴ With this, the image of the white male on the beach changed, as while "picnicking and promenading defined masculinity in terms of an emphasis on the respectability and moral authority of colonialism, surf bathing and lifesaving defined masculinity in terms of a strong, fit, well muscled and racially pure white body," as articulated by Cameron White.¹⁵

This body came to represent an ideal of white-Australian masculinity, and together with the establishment of a surf scene in the mid twentieth century, Australian beach culture was born – extensively captured by artists such as Max Dupain and Brett Whiteley in their portraits of white bodies on the beach.¹⁶ As declared by Moreton-Robinson, by the 1980s, the "blonde-haired," "suntanned," "white" body, wearing "board shorts and thongs," had become "the icon of beach culture," one that would last into the twenty-first century and was evidently present during the 2005 Cronulla riots.¹⁷

The Cronulla riots took place on Sunday December 11, 2005, and saw the beach again appropriated as a white possession in an act not dissimilar to those of the eighteenth century. The riots saw a large crowd of Australians of Anglo-Celtic descent assemble at Cronulla beach, "wearing and waving the Australian flag" in a "rearticulation of... the beach as their sovereign ground."¹⁸ The riots were in response to an altercation that took place the previous Sunday, which saw three Cronulla lifesavers "[confront] four young Lebanese men about their behavior on Cronulla beach [resulting] in insults and punches being exchanged."¹⁹ As stated by Shaw, the riots that followed reflected a "highly territorial" mindset which has "long been" present in Cronulla, with slogans such as "We Grew Here: You Flew Here" and "We're full, fuck off" consequently chanted during the riots, as well as written on torsos and placards.²⁰ Indeed, Shaw states that "the Sutherland Shire area, in which Cronulla sits, is one of the most ethnically homogeneous, 'white', parts of Sydney."²¹ Although I have grown up in the north side of Sydney, I have a parent who grew up in the Shire – one whom is at times guilty of possessing such a "territorial" mindset when it comes to Cronulla beach.

5 Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive*, p. 35.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 'Aboriginal sovereignty - never ceded' p.1.

9 Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive*, p. 36.

10 Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive*, p. 36.

11 Pratt, 'Indigenous sovereignty-never ceded', p. 8-9.

12 Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive*, p. 36.

13 Ibid. p. 37.

14 Ibid.

15 Cameron White, "Representing the Nation: Australian Masculinity on the Beach at Cronulla," in *Everyday Multiculturalism*, Conference Proceedings, Macquarie University, September 28–29, 2006, Sydney, NSW, Centre for Research on Social Inclusion, Macquarie University, 2007, p. 2.

16 Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive*, pp. 38 – 42.

17 Ibid., p.41.

18 Heimrich, 'Looking At You Looking At Me', p.39., Ibid., 43.

19 Caroline Wake, 'The Politics and Poetics of Listening: Attending Headphone Verbatim Theatre in Post-Cronulla Australia', *Theatre Research International*, Vol. 39, No. 2, 2014, p. 85.

20 Wendy Shaw, 'After Nulla: Through the Lens of Aboriginal Art', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 3, 2017, p. 301., Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive*, p. 43., Ibid., p.86.

21 Shaw, 'After Nulla', p. 301.

Over the course of the day, the riots escalated to see “people of ethnic appearance attacked,” first on the beach and then at Cronulla train station, where an attack had to be broken up by police.²² Yet, as highlighted by Allas, what these actions displayed was an unjustified “land claim” by Australians of “European/ Anglo descent” over Australia’s “‘newer’ migrants... of Arabic heritage,” and a failure to consider the fact that this space was and always will be Aboriginal land.²³ In response to this blatant disregard of Indigenous sovereignty, Vernon Ah Kee produced an installation work, *CantChant* (2009), and Fiona Foley produced a photographic series, *Nulla 4 Eva* (2009), challenging the perception of the beach as a ‘white’ space and instead highlighting Indigenous sovereignty.

Ah Kee’s installation, *CantChant* (2009), reinserts Indigenous Australians into the beach space through a combination of sculpture, text, and video. Ah Kee is of the Kuku Yalandji, Waanji, Yidinji and Gugu Yimithirr peoples of North Queensland and has used his art practice to interrogate the white possession of Australia, causing Moreton-Robinson to bestow him with the title of “sovereign warrior.”²⁴ Ah Kee’s *CantChant* installation, produced for the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane and

selected for the 2009 Venice Biennale, is installed across two spaces. The first space sees five surfboards suspended, encased by large-scale text on the surrounding walls, and a looped video plays in the second space.

The surfboards hang vertically in the middle of the room and have been “custom made.”²⁵ Their decks face the audience as they enter the space and have been “painted like rainforest shields,” in the colours of red, yellow, and black – those of the Aboriginal flag.²⁶ As the audience walks around the space, the other sides of the surfboards are revealed, depicting “severely cropped large scale portraits” of “Aboriginal warriors” who stare intensely at the audience, or as stated by Jones, “those who have intruded.”²⁷ Here, Ah Kee uses the rainforest designs on the surfboard decks to reinsert the presence of Indigenous Australians into contemporary Australian beach culture, while including the intense stares of “Aboriginal warriors... surveying the coastline” on the underside of the boards references how the beach was the point of invasion onto Aboriginal land.²⁸

These surfboards are then encased by large-scale text on the surrounding walls, in a style distinct to Ah Kee and his other



Vernon Ah Kee, *CantChant*, 2009, Installation view at CAST Gallery, Image source: <http://www.contemporaryarttasmania.org>

22 Heimrich, 'Looking At You Looking At Me', p. 39., Wake, 'The Politics and Poetics of Listening,' p. 86.

23 Allas, 'History is a Weapon,' p. 61.

24 Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, "Artist profile: Vernon Ah Kee," Museum of Contemporary Art Limited, last accessed 15 July 2019, <https://www.mca.com.au/artists-works/artists/vernon-ah-kee/>, Garry Jones, 'Vernon Ah Kee: Sovereign Warrior', *Artlink: Blak in Blak* Vol. 30, No.1, 2010, p. 46., Aileen Moreton-Robinson, 'CantChant', *Born In This Skin*, Exhibition Catalogue, Brisbane, QLD, Institute of Modern Art, 2009 p. 66.

25 Jones, 'Vernon Ah Kee,' p. 48.

26 Moreton-Robinson, 'CantChant,' p. 66.

27 Jones, 'Vernon Ah Kee,' p. 48.

28 Moreton-Robinson, 'CantChant,' p. 66.

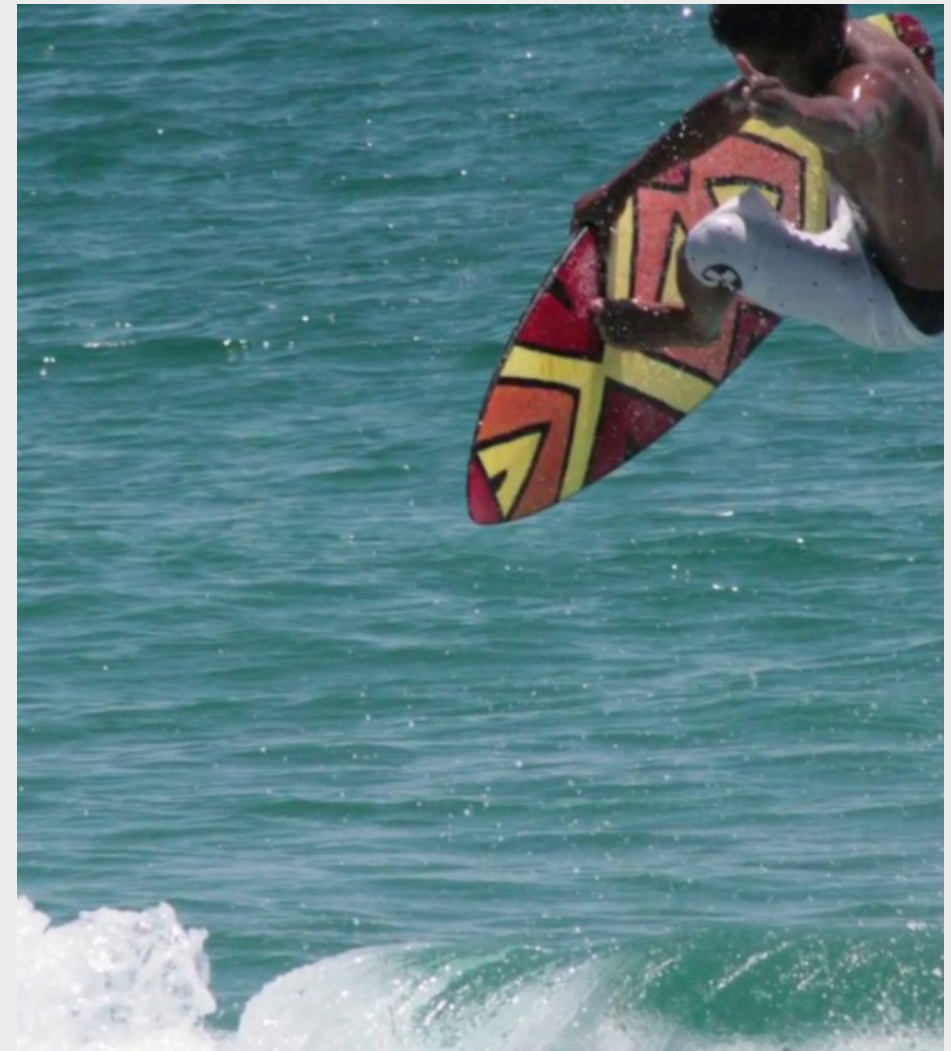
text-based works. The text is therefore written all in lowercase, bolded, and without spaces. As stated by Leonard, Ah Kee also employs the “familiar, no-nonsense, sans-serif, Swiss typeface, Helvetica,” creating an effect that is “at once aggressively declamatory yet chic; anonymous yet signature.”²⁹ Examples of the text include hang/ten, a reference to “popular surf culture,” yet also a more “sinister” reference to the massacres of Aboriginal people and the horrifying fact that their bodies were at times hung from trees “as a warning to any survivors.”³⁰ Another example of the text includes we/grew/here, which Jones claims is “a direct reference to the chanting of the Cronulla rioters” which Ah Kee thus appropriates as a “correction” to such claims.³¹ Additionally, as stated by Gardner, the effect of Ah Kee’s choice to omit the spaces between words denies the audience a chance to pause – “to catch their breath,” and together with the overwhelming scale of the text, the resultant “churning sense of being” felt by audiences “may well be the closet that many people get to the unromanticised state of powerlessness that Ah Kee cites [in his works] as the basis of the ‘black man’s world.’”³²

Finally, as the audience moves through to the installation’s second space, they

see a looped video consisting of “three separate but integrated scenes; the bush scene, the beach scene, and the surfing [scene].”³³ The ‘bush scene’ depicts surfboards “entangled in rusted barb wire” in an “unremarkable” bush landscape.³⁴ One surfboard hangs from a tree while another is tied to a “burnt out tree stump” and guns are suddenly fired at them – “a metaphor for colonial violence against Aboriginal people.”³⁵ The ‘beach scene’ then features three Aboriginal men on the beach wearing bright coloured t-shirts, board shorts, and sunglasses, holding Ah Kee’s ‘rainforest shield’ painted surfboards. This scene reinserts Indigenous Australians into the beach space and “[invites] us to bear witness to a seeming anomaly; Aboriginal surfers at the beach,” an abnormality Ah Kee argues is “because of a popular perception that Aboriginal people are desert people, remote from the coast and from the mainstream.”³⁶ Finally, the ‘surf scene’ then features Aboriginal pro-surfer Dale Richards surfing skillfully on one of Ah Kee’s painted surfboards. As eloquently stated by Jones, “[this] surf scene is a sublime declaration of the *in-placeness* of Indigenous people on the beach and in the mainstream, maintaining their sovereignty while participating in the twenty-first century.”³⁷ Thus through the multifaceted nature of Ah Kee’s installation,

CantChant, the presence of Aboriginal people is reinserted into the beach space and Indigenous sovereignty is highlighted, challenging the perception of the beach as a ‘white’ space following the 2005 Cronulla riots.

Likewise, Foley’s photographic series, *Nulla 4 Eva*, skillfully reinserts Indigenous Australians into the beach space in response to the disregard of Indigenous sovereignty displayed during the riots. Foley is of the Wondunna clan of



Vernon Ah Kee ‘Wegrewhere #3’ digital prints on Fujiflex, UTS ART Collection. Image copyright: the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane. Image source: <http://art.uts.edu.au/index.php/vernon-ah-kee/>

29 Robert Leonard, ‘Your Call’, *Born In This Skin*, Exhibition Catalogue, Brisbane, QLD, Institute of Modern Art, 2009 p. 7

30 Jones, ‘Vernon Ah Kee,’ p. 48., Miriam Kelly, “Art & massacre: the necessary memory of loss,” *RealTime*, Issue No. 133 (2016), <http://www.realtimearts.net/article/issue133/12310>

31 Jones, ‘Vernon Ah Kee,’ p. 48 - 50.

32 Anthony Gardner, ‘without a pause, without a breath’, *Born In This Skin*, Exhibition Catalogue, Brisbane, QLD, Institute of Modern Art, 2009 p. 58.

33 Jones, ‘Vernon Ah Kee,’ p. 50.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid., Moreton-Robinson, ‘CantChant,’ p. 67.

36 Moreton-Robinson, ‘CantChant,’ p. 67., Jones, ‘Vernon Ah Kee,’ p. 50.

37 Jones, ‘Vernon Ah Kee,’ p. 50.



Fiona Foley, *Nulla 4 Eva VII*, 2009, Ultrachrome print on Hahnemühle paper, 80 x 120cm



the Badtjala people of Fraser Island, Queensland, and uses her signature "staging" techniques to create the performative photographs in this series.³⁸ Foley's photograph, *Nulla 4 Eva III*, is a direct response to the Cronulla riots and the lack of acknowledgement of Indigenous sovereignty displayed.³⁹ Consequently, Foley has staged this photograph to reflect scenes from the riots, however she has ironically depicted Indigenous Australians in place of Australians of Arabic heritage.⁴⁰ This photograph is set in an "old style café," typically found along the beach, and depicts young Aboriginal men being "taunted" by a group of Anglo/European

Australians who wear singlets printed with the Australian flag and appear to have just come from the beach.⁴¹ As stated by Shaw, although "ironic," and an obvious act to highlight the absence of an acknowledgement of Indigenous sovereignty during the riots, these images are "more than 'just a joke,'" as they hint at the "non belonging" felt by other marginalized groups in "contemporary multicultural Australia," not just those targeted during the Cronulla riots.⁴² In a subsequent photograph titled, *Nulla 4 Eva V*, Foley depicts "a group of young Aboriginal males alongside a group of Arabic females" on Cronulla beach.⁴³

38 Allas, 'History is a Weapon,' p. 59., Heimrich, 'Looking At You Looking At Me, p. 34.

39 Heimrich, 'Looking At You Looking At Me, p. 39.

40 Shaw, 'After Nulla,' p.308.

41 Ibid., p. 307 – 308.

42 Ibid., p.308

43 Allas, 'History is a Weapon,' p. 61.



As stated by Allas, by doing so, Foley gives these groups “the freedom to be Australian” and enjoy this space together, a space that was wrongly appropriated as a white possession and respectively dispelled both groups of Australians.⁴⁴ This photograph also features Foley herself, as she is “the figure wearing the black burqa.”⁴⁵ As stated by Helmrich, Foley thus “aligns herself” with the Arabic women in this photograph, furthering referencing the need to break down divides in contemporary Australia, accept that we are all Australian, and in this case – the fact that we all have access to Cronulla beach.⁴⁶ Finally, much like in Ah Kee’s installation, *CantChant*, Foley’s final photograph in this series, titled *Nulla 4 Eva VII*, depicts a young Indigenous man at the

beach, standing shirtless and observing the coastline. Like the portraits on the underside of Ah Kee’s surfboards, this image can be interpreted as an act of surveying the coastline for invaders. This reasserts that the beach was the place of unjustified invasion, and is a space that will always belong to Aboriginal people.

This reasserts that the beach was the place of unjustified invasion, and is a space that will always belong to Aboriginal people.

44 Ibid.

45 Helmrich, ‘Looking At You Looking At Me’, p. 39.

46 Ibid.

Today, the beach is still very much “appropriated as a white possession” in Australia, despite the fact that this space was and always will be Aboriginal land.⁴⁷ Indeed, the appropriation of this space as a white possession extends to the twenty-first century decisions to process refugees offshore, “well beyond the gaze of the insular [white] nation.”⁴⁸ Here, the beach comes to mark a “border” between the island continent and the sea. As stated by Stratton, “the coastline, localized in the beach [is]... the symbolic site of the differentiation between ‘us,’ the white people within Australia, and ‘them,’ the non-white people to be kept out of Australia.”⁴⁹

as “a different kind of violence... it is more surgical, bureaucratic,” and “hidden” away from Australia’s shores.⁵¹ Thus we see that not only the Cronulla race riots and the displacement of Aboriginal people, but also the “brutal dispatch of refugees,” are issues and events “complexly enmeshed” in the past and current appropriation of the beach as a white possession in Australia.⁵² This is why the work of artists such as Vernon Ah Kee and Fiona Foley is so significant in contemporary Australia; they challenge this widely held perception that the beach is a ‘white’ space, and thus the continued exposure of their work and those alike is of colossal importance in today’s climate.

the appropriation of this space as a white possession extends to the twenty-first century decisions to process refugees offshore

Indeed, Australia exiles refugees “beyond” the nation’s “gaze” to Manus and Nauru, a phenomenon that Manus Island detainee Behrouz Boochani describes as “surreal,” stating “it remains unbelievable that the Australian people are still indifferent towards this issue.”⁵⁰ These prison camps are “modern examples of a model that has appeared [throughout history]” yet, they take form in what Afshar describes

47 Aileen Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive*, p.35.

48 Joseph Pugliese, “Australia and the insular imagination: Beaches, borders, boats, and bodies,” in *Continuum Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, Vol. 25, Issue 1, 2011, p. 136.

49 Jon Stratton, “Dying to Come to Australia” in *Our Patch: Enacting Australian Sovereignty Post – 2001*, ed. Suvendrini Perea Perth, WA, Network Books, 2007, p. 171.

50 Hoda Afshar, “Beyond Human: Artists in Conversation” in *UN Magazine*, Vol. 13, Issue 1, 2019, <http://unprojects.org.au/magazine/issues/issue-13-1/behrouz-boochani-hoda-afshar/>

51 Ibid.

52 Pugliese, “Australia and the insular imagination,” p. 136.



Hoda Afshar, still from the video, *Remain*, 2018. Image Source: <https://artguide.com.au/ beholden-to-images>



Hoda Afshar, still from the video, *Remain*, 2018. Image Source: <https://art-museum.uq.edu.au/hoda-afshar-remain>

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Dirty Nails

Carmen Mercedes Gago Schieb

A few years back, I really wanted to go to Hardcore Fest but my parents wouldn't let me, because the name of the festival had "hardcore" in it. It was mostly because my parents associated hardcore with violent men. I had been to hardcore shows before that – usually I was one of the few non-males, and also usually one of the youngest ones there.

I wasn't a stranger to mosh pits either. And hardcore definitely doesn't intend to be violent. It just happened to be loud and fast, with a lot of pretty fucking thick, beefy riffs, and for some reason people enjoy it by colliding with each other in the crowd. I partook in moshing as a teenager – back then everyone just kinda bounced off each other like pinballs.

It started getting uncomfortable when I was at shows enjoying myself, and men would carry me away from the crowd, thinking they were doing me a service by keeping me away from the pit, because getting completely lifted off the ground suddenly without any consent whatsoever is totally acceptable and made me feel safe. And then crowds started getting more drunk, unruly and violent as years went by, and more instances of non-consensual touching and groping came to light.

It got to a point where I got sick of hardcore and hardcore shows: sick of being the only non-male, or one of the few non-male punters, sick of feeling alienated at shows full of men chanting "boys boys boys". In 2014 I was introduced to a band called Outright from Melbourne, and their show at Jura Books was the first show I'd been to where the entire lineup had bands with non-males in them. It was inspiring and I felt so welcome at that show.

Representation is absolutely crucial and it's great that bands like Outright, Arafura, Pagan, High Tension and She's The Band exist, just to name a few.

~

I have always been mystified by hardcore. Mystified, and scared.

Let me preface this by saying that I have never truly a part of the hardcore community, while in recent years I have gained friendships and relationships with those who had grown up in that scene, I found myself wondering why it was I had never participated, despite my evident interest (ie, I'm writing a whole piece on it). This being said, despite my inaction in hardcore, I am an active member of my local DIY community. So, I understand how these communities function, and what they mean.

DIY communities shaped my life during my early formative years, and as a young woman helped me gain the confidence to be unafraid to exist at shows – to take up space, being aided by the presence of bands that exist outside of heteronormativity, who were unpacking social experiences outside those of generally white, cisgendered males, which I am not.

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my life...helped me gain the
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space.

In 2018 gender and racial diversity is the central point of discourse within many alt

communities, with not only independent publications but also mainstream and 'real' forms of media, ie. 'music news' websites and news outlets joining in on the conversation. These conversations are well overdue and *are working*, this is a fact not to be ignored. However, it always seems there are some dickheads who just don't get the point.

As a woman within alt communities you often find yourself in a myriad of situations where you may feel tug of war inside your brain or body. You're on the edge of the pit, the riffs are banging, it's been a long night, and maybe you wanna get a bit rowdy. Then you see men twice your size or age absolutely demolishing each other, in mostly consensual exchanges.

You want to join in. But you *can't*.

But the reality is not that you *can't*, it is that you feel like you are not allowed. You are not safe. Not welcome.

Speaking from my limited outsider experiences within hardcore, I find a maximum of 3-4 women at every hardcore show I attend, including myself. This is a cycle of exclusion – women don't go to hardcore shows, then women don't join hardcore bands, and then women don't go to hardcore shows. The presence of other women, whether that be on stage or in the crowd, in a male dominated space that celebrates and encourages aggressive bodies makes other women feel safe to do the same.

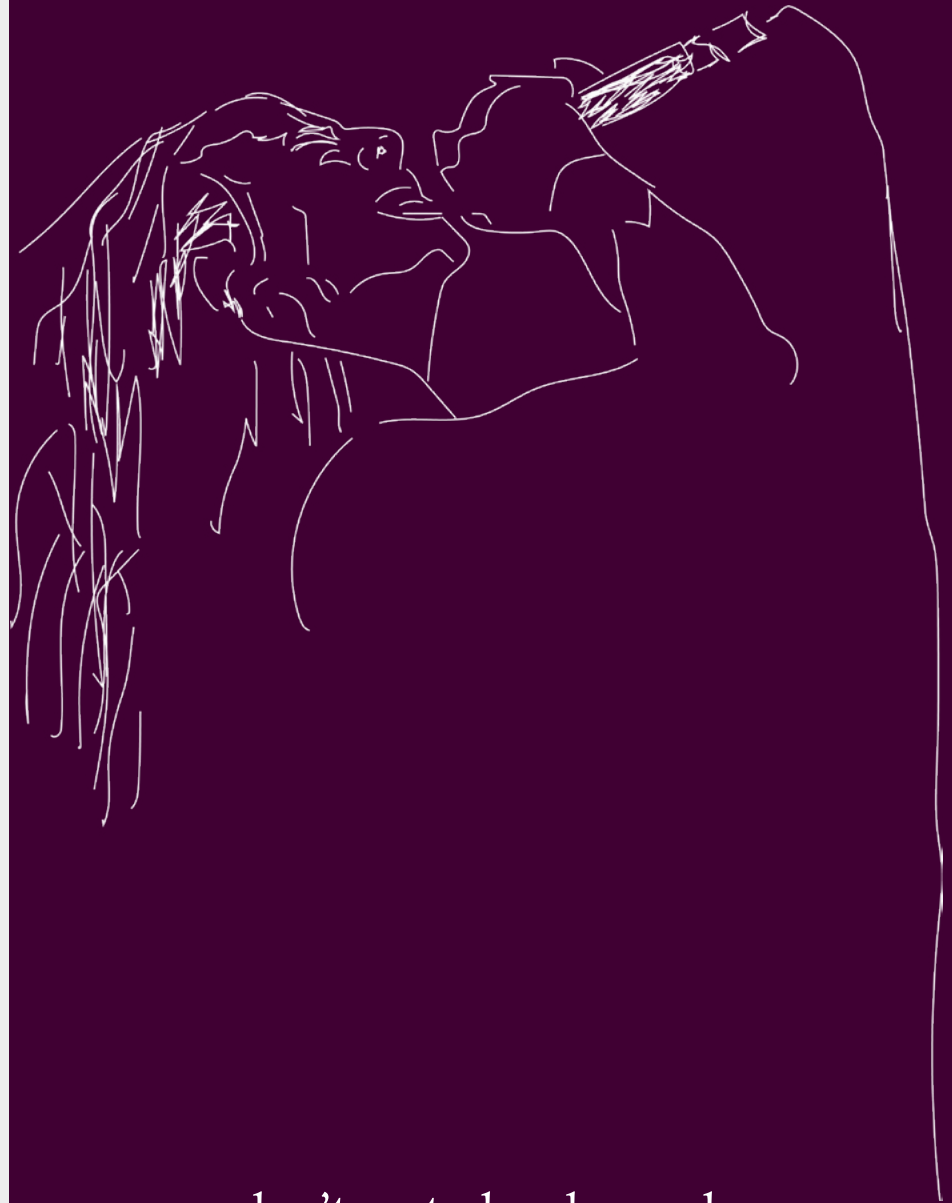
One of the greatest threats to women and non-males, in varying degrees, are men. Violence against women is so potent in our daily lives that most learn to filter it out of their consciousness. At times, violence against women is, like many feminist issues, boiled down to buzzwords and clickbait for faux socially aware Facebook pages and the Twitter woke. But to exercise empathy for one second, for the cis males reading, imagine if your childhood was riddled with men your age and older *screaming at you in the street*, your adolescence was stained with boys making gross remarks about your physical appearance, *men touching you without consent* when you are *alone* on the train late at night.

Now think about the last show you've been to, and imagine if you had been a young woman in that space, possessing a lifetime of violence against you, being someone who may have been *afraid for their lives* or ostracised over and over— then apply that to every single show you have ever been to, since the age that you started attending them. This is the reality for women in alternative communities. Women don't go to hardcore shows, women don't join hardcore bands, women don't go to hardcore shows.

Women are not encouraged to engage with their anger, at least not in healthy ways. Men face these issues too, however when creative communities who centre their culture around aggression are male dominated, it pushes women out and leaves them outletless.

The engagement with aggression is largely erased when discussing women's experiences, which I find to be an

This is a cycle of exclusion –



women don't go to hardcore shows,
then women don't join hardcore bands,
and then women don't go to hardcore shows.

Do not wait for your turn to speak.

Listen.



Do not cut her off at any point during the conversation.

extremely selective version of the truth - some of the angriest people I know are women. Women are capable of being angry, aggressive, violent, ruthless—but the issue arises when, by enlarge we are not given a space where those emotions are encouraged, where there is no physical or emotional catharsis.

This is where hardcore comes in. So many of the people involved in the community are people who grew up with it: men who went to Blacktown Masonic Centre shows at the age of sixteen, and became accustomed to the nuances and behaviours expected and tolerated at shows. Hardcore enables you to *take up space*, to allow your physical being to be dangerous, to 'fight'. These are luxuries women are rarely afforded, and as a woman of colour specifically, I haven't felt that I've been allowed.

The oversaturation of ugly dudes in the pit is reflective not just of societal problems with women, but also with males. All-male hardcore shows exist because of misogyny, but also because of the expectations put on men by contemporary society, to not deal with your emotions, to be strong, to be alpha, to be a dickhead. Then these dickheads grow up, and use these shows as excuses to be, well, dickheads. *Crowdsurfing. Stage diving. Pitting.*

Perhaps the reason women are generally less likely to engage with these activities is not because they are afraid or physically unable to, but perhaps it is a lack of feeling like she is entitled to the same space as her cis male counterparts. To take up space is to exist, and women are generally not given the opportunity to do so unapologetically.

So, where do we go from here? It seems any time a woman expresses dissatisfaction with the world around her she is forced to give concrete answers. So here they are. I do not claim to know them all, but I have some ideas.

Listen to the women in your life next time they express anger, passion, sadness, or fear. Do not wait for your turn to speak. Listen. Do not cut her off at any point during the conversation. Imagine having a lifetime worth of conversations on topics you know closely, and only being able to voice 30% of your opinions before your male friends interrupt you. Then think about how angry that would make you feel.

Welcome your female and non-binary friends to attend hardcore shows with you, give them the space they deserve and pit with them if they feel inclined to do so.

Encourage hardcore bands that feature female and non-binary members. This seems like the most obvious point, however I feel this is often treated as a commodity for people to boast how socially aware and not-misogynist they are.

Not only should this be visible through the bands you book, but also by encouraging the women in your life who enjoy hardcore to start playing it.

Women join hardcore bands, women go to hardcore shows, and therefore women join hardcore bands.

This being said, all hope is not lost, positive changes in our communities are being undertaken now. In April of 2018, I attended what is to be considered my first

'real' hardcore show. It was an Outright/In Trenches show, at Sydney's The Burdekin.

Now, prior to this show I'd felt an extreme apprehension to engaging with hardcore, as discussed through the entirety of this piece. However, at this show I found myself having a great time, and wanting to engage with the music, yet it wasn't until Outright started, which was the first time I'd ever felt like I had the right to be at a hardcore show. It was the first time I'd felt safe, and welcome. This experience meant a lot to me, as I'd finally felt like a space that was closed off to me for so many years was finally unlocked.

I have a vivid memory of vocalist Jelena's onstage banter, "This song is for every woman in the crowd tonight, your struggles are my struggles". She went on to plug their matinee show that was to take place the day following, "Introduce your little brother or sister to hardcore, change their lives". These words really stuck in my mind, and made me realise that the presence of a female fronted band made me feel safe in a space that I had previously been afraid of.

Outright's emphasis on love and not hate, care and empathy is one I feel is the key to change. They engage with under age audiences by putting on shows that are not exclusive in age or economic status, they are providing opportunities for young people to engage with hardcore in a way that is welcoming to them—one that I, as an adolescent did not feel welcome to. This is how change begins, through time and consistent effort.

It was then that I realised I wanted to be a part of something, and it was then that I realised I'd felt excluded all these years.

And then I knew something needed to change.

The catch is, change does not happen overnight, it is the consistent efforts of every single show you put on, every show you attend, and every show you play.

"I won't be afraid of today", and neither should you.



"I won't be afraid of today",
and neither should you.

Make and Model: Representations of (Healthy) Masculinity in the Fast and Furious Movies

Rebecca Hall and Tim Busuttill



In April 2019, Tim and Bec watched all eight Fast and Furious movies in less than a week and became completely obsessed with it. This conversation is one of many they've been having about gender and sexuality in the world of FnF. In this dialogue, Tim -- a non-binary person -- discusses with Bec -- a cis woman -- how they read a kind of healthy masculinity in the films.

Bec: So, toxic masculinity has a really huge presence in the Fast and Furious franchise. Aside from the devotion to car culture...

Tim: There's also the treatment of women throughout. Plus all the disembodied dolly shots of legs and boobs as we enter the spaces of racing...

Bec: Yeah, aside from those things you can point to, there's also the basic aesthetic commitment to these very rigid, cisheteronormative representations of gender and sexuality built into everything, even as the franchise moves away from car culture and into technofantasy stuff from the fourth film onwards. Like, with Brian O'Connor [Paul Walker] as a hero...

Tim: He stands for everything a man 'should be,' like the girls-want-him-guys-want-to-be-him thing. You're Brian O'Connor, or you're Paul Walker, which means you're a cishet dude, you're blonde, white, but tanned, and blue-eyed, and ripped, but not too ripped, like maybe you surf...

Bec: Effortless.

Tim: You're also a cop, but you're not just any cop, you're a fed. But you're also a criminal, or a gangster, which you know

is legit because all the other gangsters love you, and you're fucking the main gangster's sister. And you're a driver, and you're a mechanic, and a problem solver...

Bec: And at various stages, a bachelor, and a husband, and a father, and a saint.

Tim: Yeah!

Bec: You're an everyman and also The Everyman.

Tim: Yeah. The ultimate cishet masculine power fantasy.

Bec: But there's also a healthy kind of masculinity modelled in the films, right?

Tim: Vin Diesel has the voice of someone with a huge chest and a small mouth, but also his character...

Bec: Dominic Toretto...

Tim: Is this relatively complex hypermasculine figure. He's the best street racer in the world...

Bec: Which we can trust, because he ends up racing a hacked nuclear submarine on an ice shelf in Russia to stop a nuclear war...

Tim: But he's got a complex and painful family history that has led him to this position where his crew is effectively his family and he would do anything for them. He'd find a way to meet any need, heal any heartache, forgive any wrongdoing...

Bec: He accepts and overlooks Brian's past as a cop, and he forgives his childhood best friend Vince [Matt Schulze] who

betrays him...

Tim: Even though Vince nearly gets him killed! He basically is entirely governed by this code of care and love, and nothing can corrupt that.

Bec: I read an interview with Vin Diesel where he said 'caretaker' is the most central aspect of Dom's characterisation.

Tim: Of course you read an interview with Vin Diesel. But that's totally right. And everything about the films is fantasy, including the characters, but what that ends up developing is this hypermasculine fantasy space where the 'alpha' character who everyone else revolves around is 100% committed to living his life through an ethics of care.

Bec: So, effectively, there are these very pervasive elements of toxic masculinity, best represented through Brian O'Connor, but at the same time the glue that holds everything together is Dominic Toretto, this giant, extremely manly man, whose whole motivation is care and love.

Tim: And so the extended world of the Fast and Furious movies becomes this space where, to the core, masculinity and care are intertwined. Dom always wins, even against Brian. So he's simultaneously the archetype of masculinity and the archetype of care.

After submitting this dialogue, Stella raised enormously valuable questions about the 'vexed and complicated' nature of care, especially care as uncompromising as Dom's. The following is a continuation of this dialogue, but can be considered an after-editorial aside spurred on by Stella's extremely thoughtful line of questioning.

Bec: How do you think Dom's expression of care figures amongst broader moral obligations?

Tim: Well, I think there's an implicit expectation that Dom's commitment to the family is morally good...

Bec: In itself, that's a very cishet understanding of the world, and I'm thinking of Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner's argument that the cishet family unit, the family home etc. prop up the state in various ways...

Tim: Yeah, I'm not going to defend that. But then that does mean that when Dom seemingly joins the dark side in F8: Fate of the Furious we feel really betrayed as an audience. We learn that he did it for family, because a cyberterrorist [Charlize Theron] kidnapped his baby, but that actually doesn't make amends for the betrayal. It's preventing a nuclear war that does that.

Bec: That's not too convincing, though, because it leans on a grand-scale Right and Wrong that I don't think either of us want to commit to. Plus, he still wins because he's the hero.

Tim: No, but it does point to a broader moral expectation.

Bec: Yeah. So, what do you think care is doing for Dom, generally? Stella raised the point of a fraternity mentality...

Tim: I see Brian as the frat boy, to be honest. He could help save the world in F8 but he doesn't because he doesn't want to disturb his nice life anymore.

Bec: But we should mention that's a narrative arc that was created because Paul Walker had died.

Tim: Of course, but Brian didn't. But I actually see Dom's way of caring as a thing of vulnerability. Charlize Theron's character calls his caring a weakness that will prevent him from being truly powerful.

Bec: Right, so when we say that masculinity and care are intertwined for Dom, we're talking about masculinity and vulnerability, or a loving embrace of vulnerability?

Tim: It's not that care and vulnerability are the same, it's that care here is a vulnerable thing, and Dom lets it lead him anyway.

Bec: For me, the fact that we're saying that these things are quite tied up in Vin Diesel and Paul Walker...

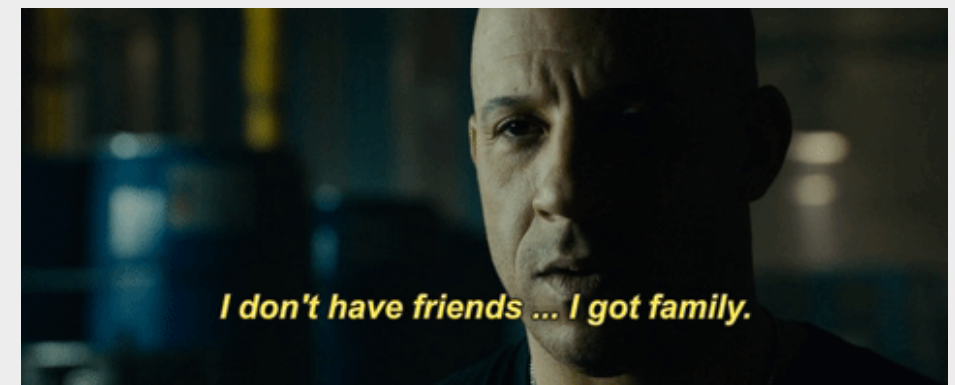
Tim: Dom and Brian.

Bec: Those two. The fact that this is where we've come to makes me think of that very erotic fight scene that Dom and Brian have in the fourth movie where they destroy Dom's whole workshop and then lie spent on the floor for considerable time with Paul Walker's thighs wrapped around Vin Diesel's face.

Tim: You're looking for an excuse to bring it up.

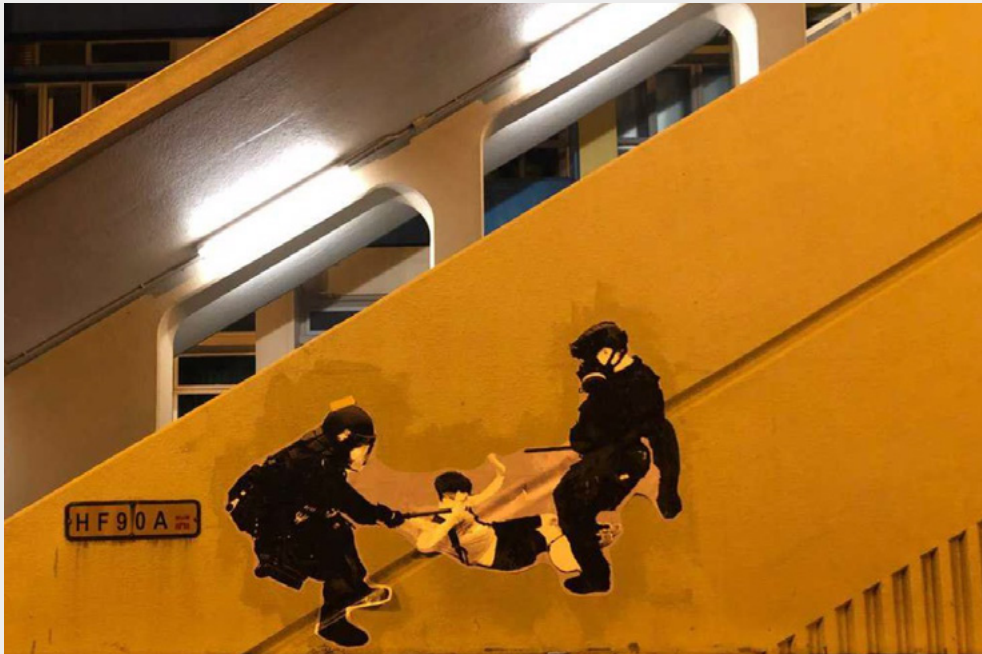
Bec: You're right, I don't know how to make it fit.

Tim: It's your favourite thing.



Political protest in Hong Kong: art and contested public space

Roni Kwan



Street art portraying police violence, by a group of anonymous streets artists. Hong Kong, 2019. Available at: <https://www.dimsumdaily.hk/street-art-portraying-police-violence-on-12th-june-spotted-in-multiple-locations-in-hong-kong/>

"Happy Father's Day! Let's go to a really good restaurant....."

"Withdraw the bill!"

"This is Hong Kong!"

On the same day, the 9th of June, serious and ongoing protests happened in Hong Kong. Over a million protesters, including professionals, teenagers and even children, stood up to fight against the Extradition Law proposed by the government.

12th June: violence and violent clashes, tear gas, rubber bullets fired to the peaceful protesters.

16th June: around two million of protesters stood out and sing in anger. It's not the first, but it's the largest.

21st June: the government headquarters are encircled by protesters.

It all started with a case of suspected homicide, stemming from the killing of a Hong Kong woman in Taiwan; authorities in Hong Kong have failed to charge the woman's boyfriend, who is suspected of murder. And, since there is no extradition agreement between Taiwan, Macau, Hong Kong and mainland China, he won't be extradited for his crime. Yet, passing the law will also put every citizen at risk of being extradited to mainland China regardless of being found guilty or not, as the justice system in China is not transparent enough, and the political environment is very different compared to Hong Kong. Today, Hong Kong citizens are now fighting against the law as they believe there's a high risk that political opponents or any other suspects may be unfairly

convicted, and end up being sent to jail under the judicial system in China.

~

Hong Kong, where I'm from, is colloquially referred to as an "Art Desert", because the busy lifestyle means people have less time to appreciate the arts. Yet in this new series of protests, en masse people have started to draw pictures and create handmade banners; photography and even animation are created by anonymous local artists as political tools, to raise awareness around the world. Art and social media are being mobilized to spread the news about the protests in Hong Kong. On the other hand, an increasing number of anonymous artists have started to graffiti political slogans, and this art works as a kind of spatial support for protesters whenever they walk through Hong Kong streets.

Institutionally, hundreds of Hong Kong Arts Organizations are organizing to strike against the extradition law. In an open letter to the cultural institutions of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Arts Union wrote:

'the tabled bill, if passed, risks seriously eroding the freedom of expression on which the work of artists and cultural workers of all disciplines depend [...] At this critical juncture, we, the undersigned artists and cultural workers, call upon the cultural institutions of Hong Kong to stand in solidarity with the city, and to respond to the Hong Kong Artist Union's call-for-strike.'

As Robert Rauschenberg stated, "the artist's job is to be a witness to his time in history". Today, in Hong Kong, there is

a lot of evidence that anonymous artists are expending great effort to record and impact every moment of the protests.

...an increasing number of anonymous artists have started to graffiti political slogans, and this art works as a kind of spatial support for protesters whenever they walk through Hong Kong streets.

This protest raised international attention, even though Hong Kong is only a city. Protesters in Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, Japan, Korea, Taiwan – all countries around the world – also held rallies, in spite of their spatial distance from Hong Kong. This movement of protests shows us that, as artist Keg de Souza states, “space is not just physical: while we can work to determine how space is traversed by the placement of objects, bodies and buildings, space is always political, personal and social”. Now, the Extradition Law has been suspended but not withdrawn. What has happened is that Hong Kong people haven’t lost their faith.



A protester walks past a wall outside the police headquarters with eggs thrown by protestors and a banner reading “Never Give In”. Hong Kong, Friday, June 21, 2019. Photographer: Vincent Yu.

Parasitic Structures

Mija Healey and Joan Shin

How did the exhibition come about and how did you come across 'Parasitic Structures' for the conceptualisation of the exhibition?

JS: Originally it started out as a casual chat between Mija and I, when she was still in Berlin on exchange and I was finishing my last semester at COFA. At the time I was in a restless headspace (probably because I was approaching the end of my degree) and felt driven to engage with more creative projects and push our art community. I was offloading my thoughts to Mija one day to realise we were on the same page. It was pretty much those conversations from then on which snowballed into Parasitic Structures.

When we were conceptualising the exhibition, we tossed up a couple ideas but eventually landed on Parasitic Structures. Before I came to COFA, I had a try at architecture back at UTS and encountered the theory during my time there. I found the polarity of perspectives surrounding parasites intriguing. Parasites have an infamous reputation as irritable pests, but in fact, they feed off a larger entity to benefit in survival. Some kill and others contribute their portion to a larger ecosystem's survival. Parasites blur the dichotomy of destruction and contribution.

Amongst the built environment discourse though, it's a lot less rabid. Parasitic structures are built/unbuilt forms that reappropriate underutilised or disused areas of larger dwellings and built environments - clinging onto blank building facades, under bridges, on the roof. Parasitic structures aim to inject design solutions to global crises, such as

homelessness and energy consumption and make it adaptable to its environment. I like to think of parasitic architecture as social prosthetics, creating additional parts that have been lost through trauma and restoring the body to optimal conditions.

MH: When we chatted about the theme Parasitic Structures was something that had a lasting imprint on my mind. I'd had some discussions with Joan about what I wanted from the exhibition. These were initially focused on topics that we found current and conceptually appropriate to emerging artists in our community. I remember mentioning one exhibition I was impressed by, which was [Metahaven: EARTH](#). It had an acute way of discussing the prospective future of technological infrastructures in both an artistic and social context. We talked about a similar aim for our own exhibition whereby we could use a theme that was broad enough that artists from all contexts could apply it to their practice. We felt with the aid of the Parasitic Structures theme the artists would be able to comment and challenge structures within society.

What was it about Down / Under Space that drew you to it as a site for the Parasitic Structures exhibition?

MH: Down / Under Space poses as a bridge between informal and formal galleries in Sydney. It's an easily accessible, off-campus space that provides a somewhat unique location underneath a popular bar. For this reason it was a fitting choice to host the theme of 'Parasitic Structures'. Like the architectural theory, this space was made using the pre existing structure of another.

Down / Under Space inherently operates through Freda's bar upstairs and cannot be accessed without the aid of the existing space. Perhaps by chance, we were able to mould the theme to directly reference the location we'd be exhibiting in. An opportunity which is pretty rare when you think about traditional gallery spaces in our city.

How did you go about your first curating experience?

MH: The vision approaching the show was initially to focus on artists whose practice interacted with media art mediums. This was a conscious choice as personally I feel more compelled by works within this field. Technology is at the core of how we communicate and move about the Western world. It largely affects Western culture and coincides with heavy surveillance. When looking through this lens, the theme Parasitic Structures immediately comments on the social capital that is intertwined with technology consumption and usage in the everyday.

I think most people can agree on the symbiotic relationship we have with our chosen technologies. We look into our phones who look into us. I personally see the parasitic nature of my phone or laptop, we coexist but each leeches information and resources from the other. Works that bring these somewhat adverse relationships to the forefront of conversation is what I was envisioning for the Parasitic Structures exhibition. Within the theme Joan and I wanted to ask the artists to question the parasites within their own lives, whether they be technological, behavioural, social etc. Through an understanding of the

relationship between host and parasite each artist was able to find an individual perspective on their own structural parasites.

As far as the curating experience goes, it was a valuable learning curve. I never decisively chose to start curating, instead it formed out of the desire to facilitate an exhibition for my peers. Now that more than a month has passed since the event I feel it was quite successful and I'm now feeling more rested and excited to continue working on curation.

How did you approach different artists in the midst of the exhibition conceptualisation process?

MH: As this was to be the first exhibition I was organising and curating I felt most comfortable to approach artists within my community. These were my peers from studying at uni and friends and extension of friends from the last few years.

The process of selecting artists wasn't too precise but it was directed to those who interacted with media art mediums. I also tried to be conscious of the fact that many of my friends, myself included haven't had much exhibition experience. I wanted to particularly encourage those without these opportunities to contribute a piece of work.

Speaking with one person led to conversations with another and together we formed an idea of who was interested. In a way, this is how it blossomed to include ten artists from varying practices. I was particularly excited to invite people I hadn't had much contact with in the past. As a group we then formed friendships off



I think most people can agree on the symbiotic relationship we have with our chosen technologies.

We look into our phones, who look into *us*.

We coexist but each leeches information and resources from the other.

the back of the experience too, something I value as by-product of these events.

There is an abundance of knowledge to share amongst one another but it usually must first be sparked by a question.

Reflecting on this curatorial debut, do you have any advice for fellow student or emerging curators?

MH: The most valuable piece of advice I have for myself and to others is 'don't be afraid to ask'. Almost always will you need help with resources in order to materialise larger projects. There is an abundance of knowledge to share amongst one another but it usually must first be sparked by a question.

To extend my last answer, I would also suggest having a close friend or collaborator to support you during the process. Having a trustworthy ear and opinion on side is invaluable and for me Joan's help was integral to the success of the exhibition.

Yes! Friendship is so important in the collaborative process. Fred Moten [has written](#) about his books - but in this case, we could say an exhibition - as "the material form of thoughtful and playful hanging out, which is another way of talking about friendship". How did you two begin collaborating with one another?

JS: We first met in our second year Interactive Media course, where we

bonded quite quickly as soon as we noticed we had similar tastes in music. I'd say that our previous experience of working together in a group laid the foundation for our future collab. Our personalities really mesh well and we're willing to listen and help fulfil each others' ideas. Now Mija and I continue to hang and have a great blossoming ~friendship~ where we have each others' backs whilst we offer our brutal, honest thoughts.

MH: Exactly, I always feel we make time to hear each other's ideas and grievances. It helps that we have a strong friendship and a lot of trust at the base of it too. I recently heard a comment that the quality of relationships represents the quality of life. Which in our case I think is absolutely true, Joan and I treat each other with respect and offer support that has cemented our long lasting friendship.

We asked the artists in the exhibition: how did you engage with the theme Parasitic Structures?

Leika Frijat: As we recall our oldest memories, we move further away from the reality of the event. The parasitic process of memory recollection sees to the entropic distortion and destruction of these host experiences. The growing intangibility and futility of recalling host experiences compels us to capture and immortalise new experiences by collecting.

I wanted to explore the decaying effects of memory through the process of cyanotype photography and constructing an installation using found objects from my home. The process to create these cyanotype photographs required scanning, editing, and printing negatives of pre-existing photographs and then the manual exposure of these negatives to UV light. The photographs in a sense mimicking the process of memory recollection as the image gradually changes with each step in the process.

Monisha Chippada: parasite: an organism that lives in or on an organism of another species (its host) and benefits by deriving nutrients at the other's expense.

When looking at the definition of a parasite my mind instantly drew to historical social structures that exist in our contemporary world. A parasitic structure that has particularly affected my life is that of colourism – both in South Asian communities and in the general POC community in Sydney. The nature of those with lighter skin having more power in most communities and benefitting off the oppression and discrimination against

those with darker skin is prevalent. I felt it was important for me to address. I decided to create a photography series to empower and redefine how dark skinned South Asian women are in an immortal way and create a work that I needed to have when I was growing up.

Sarri Talhami: 'Al Mutafarej' or 'The Watcher', is an installation interrogating Israel's use of algorithmic policing, surveillance and control against Palestinians. Gaza – coined "The Lab" – is a testing ground for experimental surveillance technology and algorithms designed to automate policing and ensure "security". Once tested, these technologies are marketed as "battle tested", and sold to other countries and organisations.

'Al Mutafarej' utilises neural networks, virtual reality and generative audio to create a dissonant space designed to generate feelings of anxiety, fear and discomfort. Its aim is to facilitate an understanding of what it's like to exist in one of the most surveyed and controlled regions in the world. A series of 49 clips sourced from "Ruptly" – a video news agency – were put through a neural network that performs object detection to identify various objects within the footage – i.e. people.

The purpose was not to show footage that reduces people to the situation but rather highlight that these are people subject to that situation. The eye of algorithmic surveillance is biased, it's exclusionary and turned toward a people. An algorithm is aimed, it looks at what it's told to look at. Israel has told it to look at the Palestinian people, and now they exist as suspects inside a panopticon.



Sarri Talhami

Al Mutaferaj (المتفارج)
 2019, audio-visual installation, website,
 webcam, dimensions variable.

Leila Frijat
Entropic Recollections
 2019, cyanotype
 photography &
 installation, dimensions
 variable.

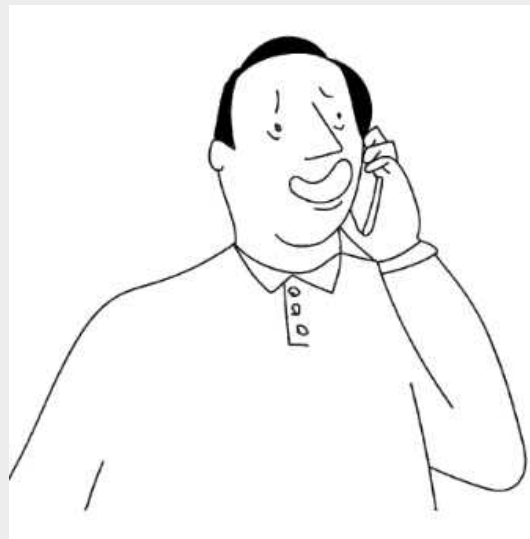


Monisha Chippada

धूसर 'dhūsara (dusk)'
 2019, photographs in acrylic frame, video.



Stella Palmer
Just Hook it to my Veins
 2019, 2 Illustrated Prints / Animated AR,
 dimensions vary.



Stella Palmer: Coming to the final form of the work presented for *Parasitic Structures*, I looked at both the nature of parasitic relationships and its various forms in our every day. After initially given the brief, I looked at the definition of the word parasite, which is “an organism that lives in or on an organism of another species (its host) and benefits by deriving nutrients at the other’s expense”. From this a lot of my initial ideas were very literal, ideas like growing bacteria in a petri dish or drawing a parasite. But rereading the brief and highlighting key ideas, I attempted to push beyond my comfort zone. I wanted to explore the different forms of parasitic structures in our every day. At the time I was having conversations with different people about their relationships with technology. One of my close friends had decided to ‘take a break’ from social media after recognising the negative impact it was having on her mental health. My colleague is also suffering the effects of technology use and has limited use of her wrists due to over typing. I then started to think about the dependency of this relationship, how embedded these technologies are in our daily lives, as well as how it survives and continues to advance because of this high demand. Although I felt conflicted by the nature of the topic (kinda ‘first world problem’) it was a topic which existed in my immediate context. With further reflection on the concept I would loved to have done a work around water.

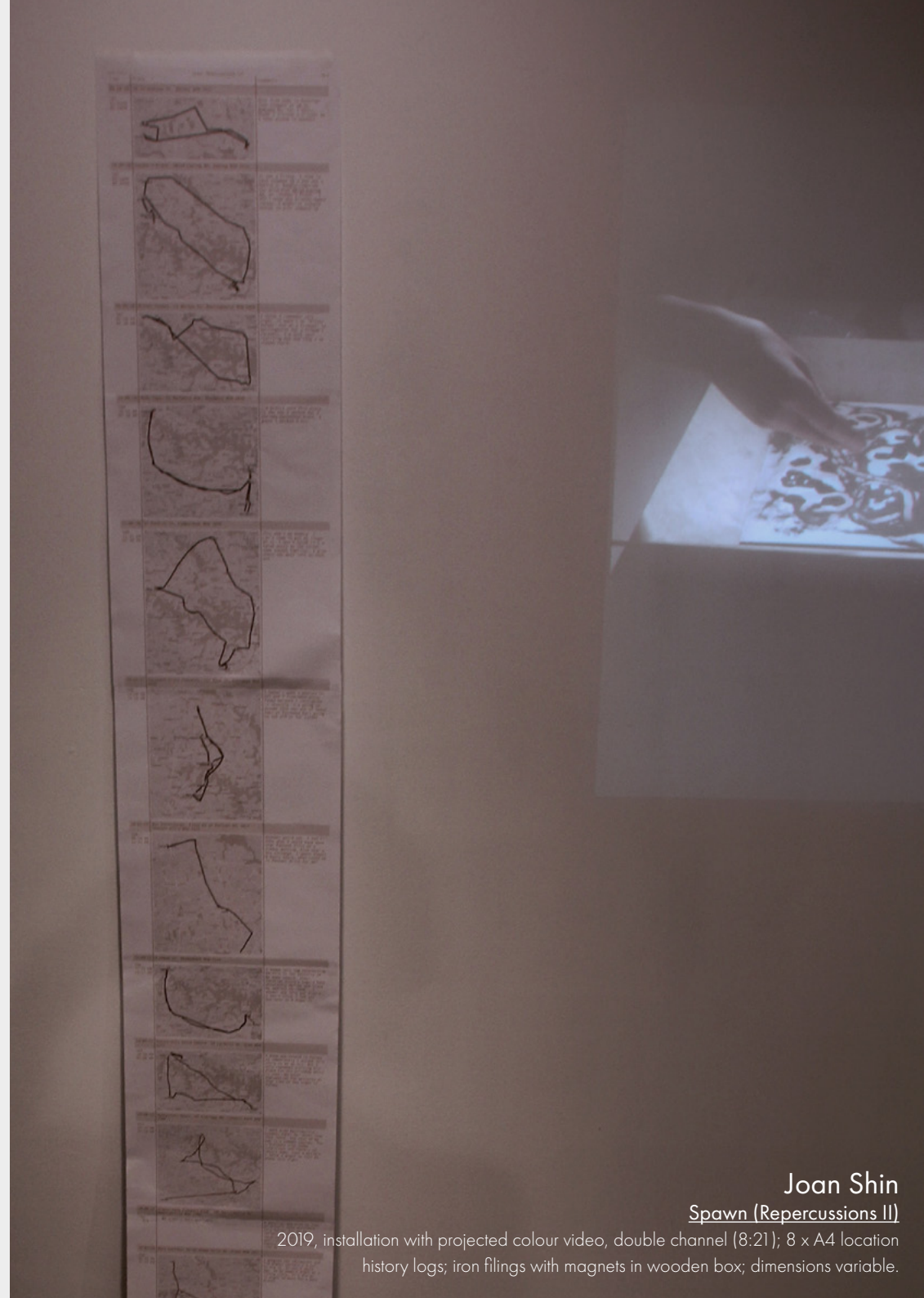
My final work was two illustrations with animation overlaid using the AR app, Artivive. The final concept statement was: “both illustrations explore our relationships with our devices and mass media. Like

the relationship of parasite/host, when we engage with our smartphones we exchange our personal data and constant surveillance. While our phones are not inherently “parasitic”, the first illustration imagines our growing dependence on them, eventuating in our bodies and devices becoming one.

The second print depicts how our brains code what we see on our screens for real experiences. Popularity of a show can be measured by the level of “identification” of the characters, i.e. the more we can identify with the characters, the stronger we build “parasocial” relationships and become emotionally invested. By building these bonds we spend countless hours dedicated to a program.”

Joan Shin: ‘Spawn (Repercussions II)’ (2019) is the second iteration of the ‘Repercussions’ (2015 -) series where I attempt to reconstitute places and memories, using iron filings and magnets to materialise the ambivalent digital memories that have invisibly spawned. As the iron filings are poured over the blank canvas, fuzzy entities attract at locations to gradually form cemented parasitic mounds.

Having to revisit a project four years later, I found myself applying multiple facets of the parasite-host relationship to differing circumstances of my work. In *Repercussions* (2015), the first part of my series, I encounter moments of my memory in destructive decay as the computer intervenes with my reminiscing rituals. Revisiting my excessive archive of compiled Google Timeline data from 2014-2018, I systematically audit 406 unconfirmed locations to find that I am unable to recall



Joan Shin
Spawn (Repercussions II)

2019, installation with projected colour video, double channel (8:21); 8 x A4 location history logs; iron filings with magnets in wooden box; dimensions variable.

21 locations in Sydney, Australia. I try to rediscover those places via Google Maps and Satellite to confirm my suspicions and identify parallels within my own memory. After vetting all this data, I deem Location Services as unreliable, producing an amalgam of pseudo electronic memories that have latched onto the trusted 'real' ones. I fall into a peril of questioning and undermine my own memory as the computers' disrupts with its parasitic creation of false location profiles.

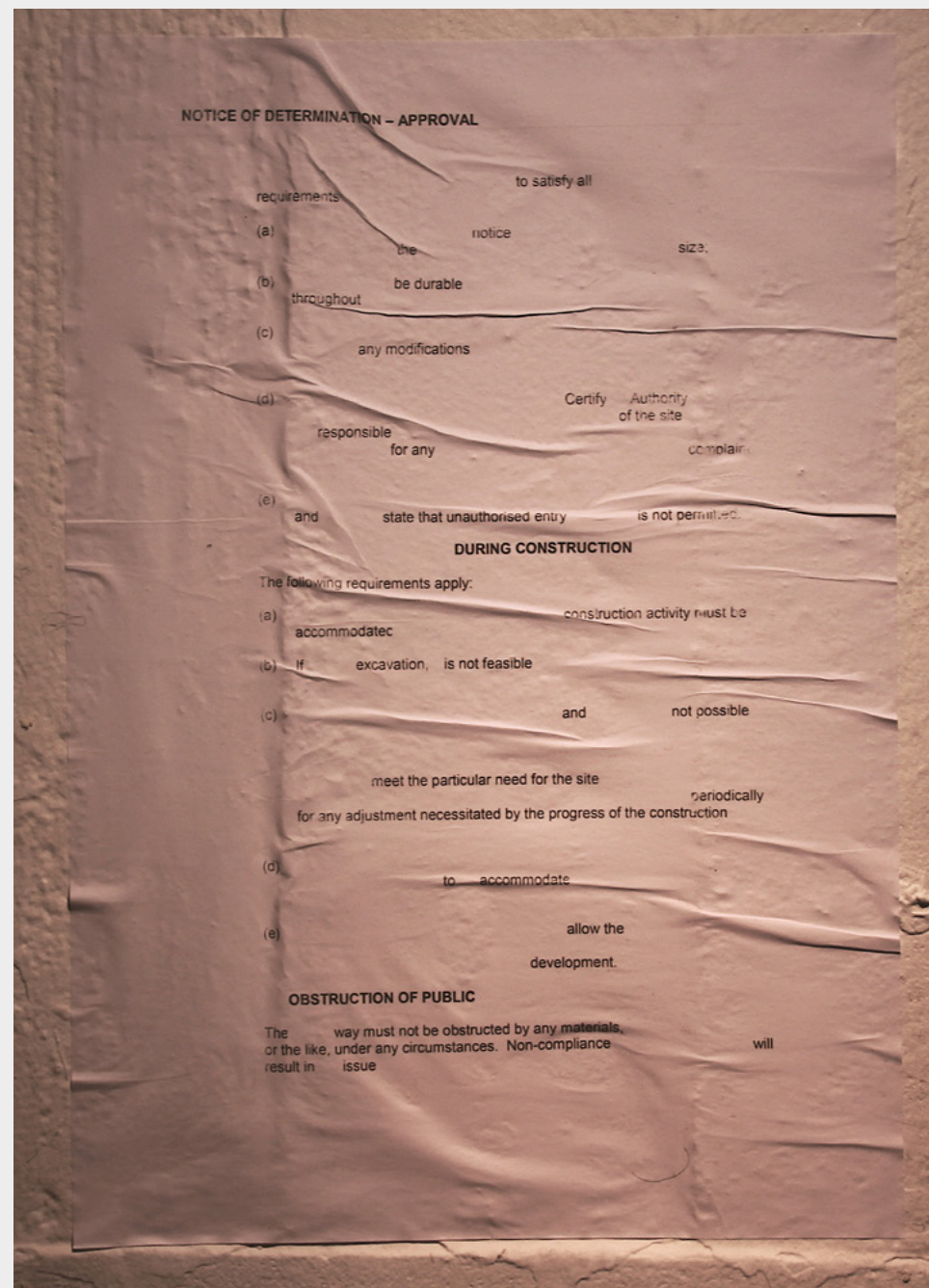
Now revisiting the reflection process with four more years of accumulated data, I find my behaviour in recollection amusing. As I review each log, the computer has become more automated, more accurate to the point where the computer's memory and my own are braided together to remember the past. My faith in it grows. Instead, I'm disappointed by the shortcomings and accuracy of human memory and question at what point do we give our trust to the computer. Altering the composition of memory and filling the discrepancies, I newly fathom mobile tracking devices as intimate instruments that connect us, making us feel more human. My previous conceptions of unwanted parasitic memories, created beyond my intentions, has now become an integral part of my reflection process. The sad thing is that the beautiful symbiotic relationship I now have with location services falls privy to Google in their acquisition and selling of our personal data profiles.

Ella Byrne: I approached the theme of parasites by asking what it means to share a body with another living thing. I was interested in how the 'separateness' of a parasite and its host becomes undermined.

When the same physical space is shared, and the two become entangled (knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly) via shared biological processes, it becomes harder to trace a boundary between them. The work references the constant molecular transformation and exchange that occurs at a microscopic level between bodies, through a live video feed which displays visible space as an assortment of shifting particles.

Eleanor Zurowski and Ryley Edwards: 'Subject To Attached Conditions' investigates the collected infrastructure of club environments. It makes visible the (often uneasy) interplay between culture, digital networks, waste and capital exchange on stolen land. Drawing links with parasite and host relationships – the state & citizen, DJ & dancer - it looks at the ways we are tangled up in the physical space we each move through.

We began by searching for materials and archives related to Down/Under. Sifting through digital documents of changing ownerships and signatures depicting occupation, we came across the City of Sydney licensing document for Down/Under (Freda's). The perfect document to fuck with. It's legal paperwork layout/ language and strict regulations offered a framework for editing text, in the same way that the physical space provided the acoustic guidelines for the sound piece. Field recordings from the venue overlaid with murky house kicks heard down a stairwell, vibrating in sympathy from the basement. In both, we attempted to make explicit the ways in which cities, and more acutely the city spaces of the 'club' or nightlife venue are governed and what they

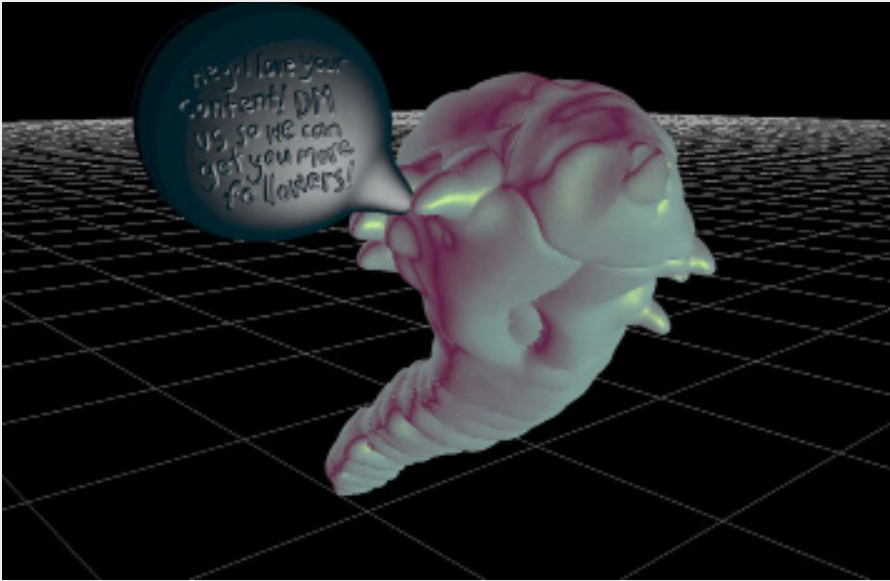


Eleanor Zurowski & Ryley Edwards

[Subject To Attached Conditions](#)

2019, soundscape, text composed from City of Sydney Notice of Determination 107-109 Regent Street CHIPPENDALE NSW 2008.





Zoe Ingerson

Check Your DMs!

2019, 3D model projected on fabric, 80 x 100 cm.

attempt to produce.

This work spurred from a shared preoccupation with music and technology and neoliberalism and shared spaces and both the joy and the ickiness that exist across all. Like a parasite, the project evolved from our direct interaction with these spaces - collapsing the understanding of a solitary experience into porous boundaries.

Zoe Ingerson: When approaching parasitic structures as a theme, I wanted to look at where we see these structures within the everyday. Particularly within the last 5 years our everyday environment has radically transformed to assimilate with our online space. These social platforms are where we as a creative and artistic community are constantly prodded and contacted by these parasites.

The aim of the work was to critique this freedom of parasite-to-host connection, and do so in a way that was humorous and nostalgic of 2000s digital aesthetics. This culminated in a 3D modelled and animated character suspended in cyberspace, begging us to engage.



Ella Byrne

[The Demarcation Problem](#)

2019, installation with mounted camera, television and software, dimensions variable.

Mixto

Carmen Mercedes Gago Schieb



mixto _ diverso _
mestizo _ diversificado
mixed diverse half blood diversified

being mixed race feels like
being created by blood
contents apart

warm conflicted



that scene in lilo and stitch,
where stitch pretends
to be a normal dog, and
hides the alien parts of
themselves.

so that lilo will fall in love
with and adopt them.

wearing foundation 3
shades too light for you,

for your whole
adult life

feeling like you're writing
this for clout

sometimes i wake up and feel
brown

sometimes i dont



i am the accumulation
of all things

messy ashamed
complex in development
proud

being mixed race, for me
feels like growing



The Drawing Center, SoHo

For Opacity: Elijah Burgher, Toyin Ojih Odutola, and Nathaniel Mary Quinn

Jennifer Wynne Reeves: All Right for Now

Nechama Bass



Toyin Ojih Odutola *The Bride*, 2016 charcoal, pastel and pencil on paper 24 x 19 inches (paper) 31 1/8 x 26 1/8 x 1 1/2 inches (framed) ©Toyin Ojih Odutola.

Recently I've been thinking a lot about spectacle. In a way, my time in New York City has been about spectacle, with experiences deeply connected to visuality and the ability to preserve otherwise fleeting moments through the reifying device of photography and social media. 'For Opacity' and 'Jennifer Wynne Reeves: All Right for Now' at The Drawing Center in SoHo are delightfully anti-spectacle, a welcome relief from such current blockbuster exhibitions as Bruce Nauman at MoMA PS1 and Andy Warhol at the Whitney.

'For Opacity' shows the work of three young artists - Elijah Burgher (b. 1978, Kingston, NY), Toyin Ojih Odutola (b. 1985, Ile-Ife, Nigeria) and Nathaniel Mary Quinn (b. 1977, Chicago, IL) - all of whom use the tactility of drawing to meditate on identity, self-presentation and subjectivity. The exhibition's title is an explicit reference to the philosophical school of thought attributed to the French-Martinican intellectual Edouard Glissant, whose postcolonial tradition includes defending the right to 'opacity' - that is, the right not to have to utterly explain or position oneself (in the Western tradition) in order to be accepted. Transparency of identity is not, in Glissant's way of thinking, a prerequisite for understanding and cross-cultural connection.

Recently I saw the exhibition 'Trembling Thinking' at The Americas Society uptown, whose curating principle was also to respond to Glissant's philosophy of opacity and the notion of 'archipelago' (implying a mode of thinking that embraces global creolisation rather than insularity). Somehow that exhibition felt more

scattered, more random, with Glissant's philosophy slapped on retrospectively to give some sense of conceptual unity to the artists exhibited. Not so in 'For Opacity', which is quite obviously more certain of what it is meant to be doing: it is as though Burgher, Odutola and Quinn have kneaded through the questions raised by Glissant, infusing their canvases with his concerns so that they practically radiate outwards. There can be something unfortunate about the space, the institution, eclipsing the work; not so at The Drawing Center, which recedes quietly into the background and lets the work speak (directly, but not loudly) for itself. Drawing, in comparison to the relatively more contemporary practices of sculpture, installation and photography preferred by larger institutions, has a whiff of tradition, a straightbacked Academy ethos, but in 'For Opacity' it is kept pleasingly modern and flexible. In fact there is something about the simplicity of the medium - along with the pastel mint walls - that contributes to the understated, breathable aura of the space.

Toyin Ojih Odutola, who currently also has a solo museum show at The Whitney, inhabits the tactility and psychic mark-making quality of drawing with an intuition that transcends technical skill. For Odutola "the skin narrates the work", as her canvases comprise a "thickly-laid, sculptural bounty of brushstrokes as flesh." In Odutola's enigmatic portrait *The Bride* (2016), her figure's face in profile is obscured by a white lace veil and, except for this detail, the portrait's nondescript background renders the woman without biography, position or place. Odutola's portraits are psychological and disconcerting, drawing us into their interior



Top: Nathaniel Mary Quinn, *Erica with the Pearl Earring*, 2015. Black charcoal, gouache, soft pastel, oil pastel, oil paint, paint stick, and silver oil pastel on Coventry vellum paper, 25 1/2 x 25 1/2 inches.
Bottom: Jennifer Wynne Reeves, *Bittersweet*, 2005. Gouache on paper, 11 x 14 inches.

space with their depthful layers of chalk pastel and charcoal.

Odutola's portraiture is complemented by Elijah Burgher's abstracted geometric creations, whose fantastical diagrams in pop and pastel colour evoke a Willy-Wonka-meets-Kandinsky-style collaboration. The curators have wisely chosen to hang Burgher's colour pencil on paper works together, enhancing their visual impact and making them a pleasure to gaze at. One might find oneself walking a few paces back and then forward again, to capture the overall effect and the detail.

Finally, Nathaniel Mary Quinn's charcoal and pastel works bring the exhibition's 'muscle' (sometimes literally - a veiny bicep bulges in *JB* and *Bobby*). In Quinn's collaged portraits, black faces rendered in charcoal are cut through with historical paintings in oil paint (as in *Erica with the Pearl Earring*) and cuttings from magazines. They appear gaudy, clownlike and deformed, and the machismo energy of his works complement the delicacy of Burgher's and Odutola's.

In a smaller backroom of The Drawing Center is housed 'Jennifer Wynne Reeves: All Right for Now'. An exhibition feels somehow transformed when one knows the artist is recently dead (Reeves died from brain cancer, in 2014), as though their last drops of vitality are contained in the works one sees before them. And Reeves had plenty of vitality. A quote from the artist reads: "thank, thank you very much, dear Paint-Maker in the sky, Wonderful-Clump-Slinger." Her works follow this same logic of whimsy. In *Abstract Guys Hand-Stuff a Mattress* (2005) a speech bubble protruding from

an angry black squiggle reads, "this wasn't in the sketchbook", while a highway sign advertises "Awkwardtown". Reeves' works feel like something you'd find in a Surrealist children's book, though with slightly more artistic flourish, as in *Rothko Decides to Give It Another Try* (2000), a moody lake landscape with thick storm-coloured blobs of gouache protruding from the sky. Despite the childlike fancy of Reeves' creations there's a sense of pathos that is difficult to pinpoint - perhaps it's the awareness of Reeves' premature exit from the world. An older woman who moved through the small space with me uttered wistful "mmms" in front of each painting until I found myself doing the same.

The Drawing Center has chosen a complement of artists whose practice is developed, probing and technically sophisticated, and deserves praise for its own thoughtful curation. It is well worth disrupting your SoHo shopping jaunt to step into The Center's hushed atrium, to inhabit what its curators call the space between "insight and obscurity".

Anna May Kirk
Audrey Pfister
Libby Hyett
Dr Oliver Watts

Artists and galleries: four interviews on space

interviews by Sarah Josie

Recently, I have been noticing all the new infrastructure in New South Wales. Places that used to be more rural are becoming, and being built to become more city-like. This influx of infrastructural expansion has sparked my fascination about the opportunities that might become available for the arts.

When I last visited the Nepean river what was once just a riverside cafe has been built into a small eatery terrace. In the middle of this terrace I saw an empty space for lease between two cafes and I thought that a place like this would be an amazing opportunity for artists starting their own galleries, especially because the Penrith Regional Gallery is across the river. That would be the perfect art enthusiasts' weekend right there.

So, I decided to interview artists who have started their own galleries, or run gallery spaces, with the aim of inspiring the next generation of gallerists.

Anna May Kirk
Coordinator, AD Space

When did you start studying at UNSW and how long have you been working and studying at COFA?

I've been at UNSW Art & Design for about 5 years now. It feels like I'm perpetually doing my undergrad of Fine Art! I started studying here in 2014 before I left for a year to do a traineeship at the MCA, then I came back...then left again to work on Underbelly Arts Festival in 2017, so it's been pretty irregular!

What motivated you to get into a career in the arts?

Oddly it's something I've never really questioned, it's always been something I've been really drawn to, whether that's making art, curating or organising.

Did you draw a lot as a kid?

I used to draw all over any surface that was available to me. I used to draw a lot on the bathtub with permanent markers. I imagine my parents have painful memories of finding my small 3-year-old scribbles all over the house.

What is your role at AD space?

I am the Gallery Coordinator of AD Space. My role includes coordinating AD Space's exhibition program as well as the administrative duties that keep the gallery ticking. This year I've also founded three new programs at AD

Space that sit in parallel to the exhibition program. The first of these programs is a performance workshop series called Movement Lab. Movement Lab facilitates emerging and established performance artists to lead movement workshops and teach students strategies for incorporating performance into their practice. The second is an interstate gallery swap which gives opportunities to students to exhibit interstate within a supported structure. And the third is a secret, stay tuned!

What was your first experience working in AD Space?

I've been working at AD Space as the Gallery Coordinator since February 2018, and my first experience of AD Space has been in this role!

Did you work in other galleries before that?

I've been really lucky to have worked across an array of different arts organisations and galleries over the past few years. Currently I work as the Executive Producer of Arts and Culture at FBi Radio in conjunction to my role at AD Space. Prior to this I've worked at Underbelly Arts, Alaska Projects, the Museum of Contemporary Art and Down / Under Space.

What emerging artist do you admire and that you want to give an honorable

mention to?

I'm super obsessed with Lachlan Herd's practice. He really unpacks the idea of multispecies care in such a poetic way... I'm so nerdy for it! The utilisation of bacteria and microorganisms often features in his work. When you think about it, only 1/10 of our cells are our 'own', the rest are bacteria, fungi etc. If we think about the body as an ecosystem, or as a home for many, rather than being so individualistic. I think that's a really productive way of interacting with the world. With care.

What is your most memorable experience working in the arts?

I used to run an art party with Nerida Ross called 'After pARTY'. We had so much fun and I have so many memorable experiences... printing Claudia Nicholson and Caroline Garcia's face onto a cake then serving it in the middle of the dance floor, sourcing 30kgs of green goo for Angela Goh, staging a post-human photoshoot in my share house living room with Roslyn Helper, making a dance video with Rosie Deacon in Redfern Convenience Store... the list goes on.

What advice do you have for others looking into getting into the arts and working with gallery spaces?

I'd say be audacious! Do that thing you've been thinking about now! And embrace the friends, colleagues and community you have around you with love and care. They are your guiding lights, ask questions, give and receive advice, share skills and work together <3

How do you work with a gallery space? Do you have a specific formula in what

happens when it comes to organising an exhibition?

I think it should always be with the mentality of 'artists first'.

Is there a specific medium that you like to work with personally?

I've recently been exploring using scent in my practice. It necessarily needs to be inhaled and enter the audience's body to be experienced. So it opens up really interesting questions of what happens when art resides in the body? And can art affect us biologically?

So you have these performance art workshops that you've started this year. Tell us a bit more about them.

Yes! Movement Lab is a performance workshop that AD Space has started this year that invites an emerging or established performance artist to lead two hours of movement. The aim is to create an environment where individuals can engage their body and learn how they might apply this to their practice. It's been wonderful so far with workshops by Sarah Rodigari, Patricia Wood and Lizzie Thomson, and coming up this semester Ivey Wawn and Justin Shoulder will be leading classes.

Will you bring Sarah Rodagari back?

I'd love for her to come back. Maybe in term 3. The first two we did were experiments in how to structure it and I think one hour was too short. We will see how two hours goes. Maybe two hours is too short. You could really spend a whole day doing these things, really. These people

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have such a wealth of knowledge.

It's been amazing to see a little community form around these workshops, and I really hope that grows! You are learning and moving with one another, but perhaps these small groups will also grow into being support networks, places where ideas can be bounced around and works can be tested out.





Audrey Pfister
Coordinator, Kudos Gallery

What are you studying at the moment?

I'm wrapping up my Bachelor of Art Theory degree. It's taken me a few years as I initially started out doing Fine Arts, and I've also been studying part-time.

What was your first curating experience and how old were you?

You could say it was all the themed birthday party planning I so loved to do as a kid. Or you could say it was when I was 19 while I was volunteering at Gaffa Gallery. At Gaffa I co-curated a show with another volunteer (at the time), Kim, and I included some friends from my hometown; Nick Santoro and India Mark, alongside artists who I'd really admired at the time; Ebony Eden, Zabia Khan, and Noni Cragg.

What emerging artist do you admire that you want to give an honorable mention to?

Leo Tsao does great things, most recently he did 'Don't call it a lover's quarrell' for 'Intimate Circulations', a project I

co-curated with Em Size. Here was the description of Leo's video work that we distributed via email:

Haunted by the recent deaths of my relationships, this is ghost choreography exploring queer interracial intimacy. inspired by entangled polycules, synchronised transness, ancestry.com, bachata on uneven ground and more.

When did you start as the co-ordinator of Kudo's Gallery and what advice do you have for other aspiring curators?

Quite recently. I've been hanging around Art & Design for a long time. I started out volunteering for Kudos in my early years here, I then co-founded Fatal Crush reading nights with Astrid Lorange and Em, and then I was lucky enough to get the Kudos Gallery Internship a few years ago, and then Writers' Coordinator at Arc in 2018. It's different for everybody, and what is available to you, but my advice would be get involved where you can, volunteering is great, but not always a solid option for everybody, I also recommend just communicating and collaborating



I think it's important to see what the community is doing, and what it means or *how it feels to be a part of that.*

Attending exhibitions can be challenging and not always accessible, so if reading is your thing, you can see what people are writing about in relations to the arts.

with friends where you can, or helping out in small ways for events/projects (even just setting up something). Chat to people about your ideas, making yourself available for feedback is always daunting, but can be really beneficial.

Attend exhibitions and events, if you can, and snoop around other ARIs, see what peers are putting on. This doesn't mean you have to do exactly what they're doing, but I think it's important to see what the community is doing, and what it means or how it feels to be a part of that. Attending exhibitions can be challenging and not always accessible, so if reading is your thing, you can see what people are writing about in relations to arts via places like Runway Experimental Art Journal, and Runway Conversations platform, but also Running Dog, and Un Projects.

Is there a specific medium that you like to work with personally or curatorially?

I like text and I like sound. Working with text can be a bit of a love / hate relationship (for lack of a better expression right now). Text is so complex and powerful, but overwhelmingly so. I also love video but I never do it. Let's say I'm video-curious.

In terms of curating, for the last while I'd say I've been invested in facilitating and developing opportunities for emerging writers and artists to share work in inclusive, innovative, and relaxed spaces. I'm still figuring it all out.

For 'Intimate Circulations', in short, we commissioned five artists to produce works around the titular theme which we distributed via mail, and email (like bootleg PDF sharing really), for audiences that signed up. This was our response to being asked to curate 'Kudos Live'.

Libby Hyett Studio Gallery, Windsor

What was your defining moment as an artist?

My breakdown in 2012. I was 29 years old. I didn't do much art at the time but I was so distressed I abandoned my self-restraint. I found solace in art, music and creative writing, in contrast with trying to reason my way out of the muddle in my head.

Did you try other disciplines before you got into painting/drawing?

Yes. I completed a Bachelor of Music in 2007. I play the piano, clarinet and I sing. I also write fiction and have been working on a novel for young adults for eleven or twelve years! I'm on my fifth complete rewrite and I'm just starting to feel comfortable with my process. I've written and illustrated several picture books for preschool children.

What was your first exhibiting experience and how old were you?

As a teenager I entered the art competitions in the Hawkesbury Show.

How did you feel when you got your first commission?

I felt capable of making art my career. My friend Cat encouraged me to work for myself, because she said I was so talented I didn't need to work for anyone else. I'd drawn a portrait of her horse, which she loved so much she went looking on social media to see if she could find someone

who would commission me (as I refused to let her pay me)!

What emerging artist do you admire that you want to give an honorable mention to?

Melanie de Bohmer (I think that's how it's spelled). I found her art in the Elephant Bean in Katoomba and I fell in love with it. What artist have you been influenced by in your practise?

My favourite art was always the Australian Impressionists - Arthur Streeton, Tom Roberts et al. I do landscapes and I love hiking and the Australian bush - in fact my creative writing is often based in nature. Commercially I do portraits and my style is developing into its own... rather than try and pinpoint individual artists who influenced me, it's probably fairer to say that I've been inspired by movements such as expressionist, realistic and modernist.

How did you start your own gallery/studio? What advice do you have for those who aspire to start their own galleries/studio space?

For six months or so I ran a stall at the markets, then I was on Gumtree one day and saw my current space advertised to rent. No one could talk me out of it! The idea of upgrading from a market stall to a proper shop seemed a no-brainer! I could use it as a studio as well as a gallery, when I wasn't there the window displays would still be advertising my work (because it's



Libby Hyett in her Windsor studio gallery. Image: Geoff Jones, Hawkesbury Gazette.

located in Windsor Mall), and better still, it came with its own ceiling. I don't have advice for people who want to start their own gallery or studio space because I feel like that would be presumptuous of me. If something comes along that suits your circumstances and you can conceive of it working, then it's your choice.

Do you think that having an art event for artists who struggle with mental illness would be good for making the art industry more inclusive?

Yes. Isn't mental illness a pre-requisite to being an artist? (jokes)

What art exhibition have you seen recently that has really stuck with you?

I visited Julie Simmons' studio gallery when she was holding an open day recently. She is a watercolourist and by looking at her work up close I felt like trying watercolours

too! She frames her own artwork and I realised framing would be a good skill to acquire.

Libby is inviting other artists to share her space with her in Windsor Mall. Please contact her via her email libbyhyett@gmail.com if you are interested.

Dr Oliver Watts
Head curator, Artbank

What was your defining moment as an artist?

I think it's hard to define. I don't think there is a defining moment as an artist because it's an ongoing practise. I think you do just have to keep on going, really. If you say when did I start being an artist. If that's part of the question. I was quite serious about art history and painting or drawing when I was 12 or 13. I think I won my first prize when I was 11 which was with the daily telegraph with Parker's in the rocks. So Parker's gave me a voucher so that was a defining moment I guess. They thought that I was an artist at that point. I've always gone to Parker's after that but I think the major thing about art is that you have to keep going. Each show builds on the next show.

Having said that I think I did go to art school later. Because I did Art history and other things first. I only really did complete my MFA at SCA relatively recently. I do think that Art School is a good gateway to a practice and that you meet some new people and you see other professional artists in a different way in a very collegiate way and something that doesn't have the restraints of the commercial market. I think it's definitely worth doing and I wish I'd gone earlier, but I don't regret not going. I think doing a degree or doing an MFA, or whatever, can be a good moment to reassess your work and to move forward. Having taught in art schools too, they're very useful places to sort out your ideas and can create moments of growth that

you can be self-critical on. I think that research degrees whether that be MFA or Honours or a PHD can be good moments to reassess where you are.

Did you try other disciplines before you got into painting?

I definitely have always been a painter. I've always enjoyed painting and maybe also coming strongly through art history I was always looking at painting or looking at image making in that way, so I've always had a strong sense of painting. Towards the 2000's and late 90's, I did try other mediums such as photography, performance, narrative performance, and videos where I used lots of actors. They brought a lot towards the storytelling. I think storytelling has always been an important part of my practise but recently especially through the MFA I think I really focused back down on painting as the medium I like to use for storytelling and narrative and what I've learnt from the other mediums has come through to painting I think. I still use actors. I still collaborate in that way to set tableaux before I paint them, and I like the collaborative process of setting the scenes. But then I do also like to paint and work with that long tradition of painting and just recall things in that way.

The longer I've been painting the more peculiar the medium is and I am beginning to not be embarrassed about the long history that I am painting or drawing and I think that is part of contemporary painting



Oliver Watts, *House Model*, 2016, Chalk Horse Gallery. Image copyright: Document

and drawing. It reminds me of poetry. I think a lot of contemporary poetry is fantastic, but it really does draw on a long tradition and you are asking, in poetry's case, the reader. But in this case, painting, you are asking the viewer to bring quite a lot of knowledge to painting. Obviously, my paintings are not for everyone. I think you do have to have some kind of education in painting, but I am becoming less and less worried about that. I think it's a very peculiar thing to do to paint but I am happier with it.

What was your first exhibiting experience and how old were you?

I think the first real exhibiting experience I had was with Half Dozen which was an artist run initiative that I started with David Tae, Dougall Phillips and Jasper Knight in

about 2003.

Having taught in art schools too, they're very useful places to sort out your ideas and can create moments of growth that you can be self-critical on.

For me it was a very steep learning curve because at that time I wasn't at art school. This art history guy came and then the art school would come to view the work. I wasn't that stressed because I was so young but in hindsight it was quite a big thing to do. I probably showed too early. I think that's another reason why art school is good: you can test things with

If you're a curator you can show *anywhere*, be it in your kitchen, in your lounge room.

It's just that real estate prices are so expensive.

your peers before you go out. I think I did make some mistakes exhibiting. Then my first commercial gallery show was also a very supportive gallery that I am still with, which used to be called Helen Gorry Gallery and then it changed into This is No Fantasy in Melbourne. One of my first commercial gallery shows got reviewed in Art in America by a reviewer who had just happened to be in Sydney and Melbourne at that time. I was just talking to Locus Jones about that, because he was the other show. He was the Sydney show and I was the show in Melbourne that got reviewed so that was very positive for a commercial gallery, too. The big painting from that show got bought by Art Bank - where I am now working - which was great encouragement. So, it's sort of interesting, because I think the ARIs give you a lot of freedom and a lot of peer support. But, it is interesting that for painters, or if your artwork suits the commercial galleries, it is worth moving at some point. It can have different sorts of support and encouragement which is worth going through as a process of refining your work.

**How did you start your own gallery?
What advice do you have for those who
aspire to start their own galleries?**

I think there's different reasons to start a gallery, but I think you're asking about artist run spaces. We did start the gallery to show our work and our friends work. You start anywhere and that goes for all art forms. If you're a curator you can show anywhere, be it in your kitchen, in your lounge room. I think that a gallery can be started anywhere. It's just that real estate prices are so expensive. That's what we did at Half Dozen. Half Dozen was

more of a parasitical model, so we just used other people's places and actually UNSW is very supportive of that. So, we used Ivan Doherty's gallery during the summer holidays because no-one was using it. We'd use spaces that people weren't using over the break or whenever we could find a break and that ended up a point where Half Dozen helped for a gallery for six months while they were in between directors; we just put on shows just to keep things ticking over so that they could go for more philanthropy and things. So that was our model. We couldn't afford anything so we just waited until the space became available and put it in and that was quite successful. The interesting thing about ARIs is when to get out. When to say no, I'm not an artist...We ended up starting Chalk Horse. We were interested in supporting artists in that way. For others there are so many artist initiatives that I know that a lot of great artists have started and been involved with. You can spread the load, that's a way of doing it. Or the First Draft model where they change the directors every two years. I think there are good models where you keep on moving because if you are an artist, you don't want to be stuck as a director of a gallery necessarily.

**When you started Chalk Horse did you
have a bit more money behind you at that
time where you could start it? Did you
have help?**

We never used backers in those days. I guess the market was more buoyant as well. Before the Global Financial Crisis there was a lot more interest in art buying. So, a decade ago it was easier and then in 2010 it did slow down. Some work was

selling and there were patrons who would help by buying work. I mean the support came from people in the art world that knew. We did also get Australia Council funding because at the time they seemed to go back to a more project based model. But ARIs used to get more support from the Australia Council, the state government and City of Sydney. So that kept us going for a while too.

So you got sponsors on board.

Yeah. I guess in the end, the way to keep it going was to become properly commercial. And that is a sort of death of the Artist Run Initiative. Because now it's not an ARI anymore - it's more commercial. In a way Chalk Horse from the old days is not the same as the Chalk Horse now.

How did your zeal for the Harry Potter series originate and why did you choose to draw parallels between JK Rowling's world and art [in your lectures]?

I think you're responding to some of my lectures here where I would use Harry Potter as an example. The first reason I talked about Harry Potter was because I knew everyone would know it. When you're lecturing your trying to find a shared language that you can talk about. So, you always pick movies and books that people will know so that you can start a discussion and you can try to find things that you assume people would know. I guess 100 years ago people would discuss the Bible or things that everybody would know but in such a contemporary world it's harder to find things that unify people. Harry Potter was something that 90 percent of people sort of knew about but the other reason is

because I am very interested in images. I think I use Harry Potter and JK Rowling because I was trying to extend, especially in an art school context, where you're not just directly talking about art history: you're also talking about images and pictures. Especially in contemporary art, there's a lot of different sorts of image magic, or the power of images from a disciplinary point of view came out of visual studies as an extension of art history.

I think that JK Rowling is a very good visual theorist. She has paintings that move, photographs which are like videos. The way we relate to portraits is like we are talking to them, so she has these magical portraits. I think what she does is she takes our response to images that are actually real. I think it's true, the way we look at a portrait as somebody that you speak to for advice and support. In her magical universe she is able to show that that's how we deal with images. Another thing in art history that we don't really talk about is that magic or a soul being in an object, like a horcrux or something. But I think that people do think like that. So, someone like WJT Mitchell in Chicago, he had an exercise that he would give to his students at the beginning of a visual studies course which was to bring a photograph of your mother and everybody would bring a photograph of their mother and then he said cut out they eyes.

Oooh that's freaky.

His point was that on one level, it was just ink on a page. You know it's just ink on a page and you know it's just an image that you can print out gain on the printer if you needed to but people find it problematic to cut out the eyes of their mother. But



Domestic debris: still life painting, suburbia, and residential kerbside collections

Daniel Press

Domestic Debris explores still life paintings and the domestic space when brought into the framework of residential kerbside collections, or council clean-ups. Here, unwanted household items are left for collection by local governments across suburban kerbsides. Their arrangement, contents, and appearance as waste tie into ideas of *vibrant matter* by the American theorist, Jane Bennet, as they are curated

in the kerbsides. Bennet 'argues that discordant non-human materials assembled outside can create an uncanny presence through their semiotics. These "vivid entities" betoken human activity through their meanings, habits and projects. The discarded nature of the objects as paintings debase ideas typical to still life paintings that resemble absolute domestic order and the harmony of the household.



Here, interventionist practices can be discovered. In *Domestic Debris* I created still life paintings of these council clean up assemblages, using cardboard and grunge aesthetics. I then placed them back within the kerbside of the households and left them to their own devices. A strange and harrowing encounter for the household owners to discover.

Overall, it plays into tokenistic aspects of still life painting, showing trivial material having a significance we might not have expected. I observed the outcomes; some were thrown in the bin, some melted in the rain, and others disappeared without a noticeable trace. One neighbour found out I painted them and returned the painting to my doorstep.

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Where are you?

Eric Ahlstrom

We have truly transcended. We are now in the Anthropocene, the age of the human. We are geology. No longer of this earth, we are the earth. We are everywhere, our residue, our filth, our love, our art. We must look beyond ourselves, our civilisation and imagine our uncivilisation. The alternative is the end of our civilisation, an endless night of unspeakable violence and collapse. It's time to leave this Plato's cave and wordlessly start forming that which must be said. What we need to do has no artifice for it has not yet been conceived. Godspeed.

Where are you, dear reader?

-Where are you?
I say
-I'm here
You say
-We're all here
I say
You and me alike
Dear reader

-Where are you?
I say
-I'm at my house
You say
-I too am at my house
I say
Me and you alike
Dear reader

-Where are you?
I say
-My address is...
You say
You send a Google pin
To reassure me
I'm in a difficult spot
Dear reader

-I must assume that you're a moral person
Dear reader
I say
-I'm a moral person
You say

-I must assume that you're not misleading me
Dear reader
I say
-I'm not misleading you
You say

-I must assume that you're not protecting yourself
Dear reader
I say
-I'm not protecting myself
You say

However
If you are
Protecting yourself
I can't blame you
How can I blame you?
If the distance is too small for comfort
Dear reader

As of now
You're no closer than before
No closer than you've ever been
No closer than you ever will be
Too close to meet
Dear reader

As of now
I must drift further than before
Further apart than we've ever been
Further apart than we ever will be
Far enough to meet
Dear reader

I drift as a voyager
And I drift
I drift
Drift
Dear reader

I turn as a planet
And I turn
I turn
Turn
Dear reader

I witness and behold
And I witness
I witness
Witness
Dear reader

You

Dear

Reader

You

And what now?
We are everywhere.
We are where glaciers recede
We are in the deepest depths

And where to now?

We are no longer of the earth
We are the earth
You and I
Dear reader

Now, please take my hand
The sun is setting
No-one should be alone
On dark mountain

