

## What's On

02 Dec – 16 Dec **Alex Pye**  
MILS GALLERY  
15 Randle Street, Surry Hills, NSW

19 Nov – 19 Dec **Stephen Bram , Stieg Persson**  
ANNA SCHWARTZ GALLERY  
185 Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC

20 Nov – 20 Dec **Brad Miller, Simon Barney,  
James Charlton**  
ARTSPACE  
43-51 Cowper Wharf Road,  
Woolloomooloo NSW

26 Nov – 13 Dec **Extropian | Joanna Lamb –  
High Rise**  
SULLIVAN + STRUMPF FINE ART  
44 Gurner Street, Paddington NSW

Nov 26 – 19 Dec **John Warwicker**  
THE NARROWS  
2/141 Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC

27 Nov – 19 Dec **Tai Snaith, Jade Walsh**  
KINGS ARI  
Level 1/171 King Street Melbourne VIC

28 Nov – 13 Dec **“Now and When”  
Simon Harsent: “Melt”**  
AUSTRALIAN CENTRE  
FOR PHOTOGRAPHY  
257 Oxford Street, Paddington NSW

28 Nov – 14 Jan **Tuckson/Tomescu**  
LIVERPOOL STREET GALLERY  
243a Liverpool Street, East Sydney NSW

28 Nov – 23 Jan **Montalbetti and Campbell:  
The Sensualists**  
AUSTRALIAN CENTRE  
FOR PHOTOGRAPHY  
257 Oxford Street, Paddington NSW

02 Dec – 23 Dec **Group Show**  
STILLS GALLERY  
36 Gosbell Street, Paddington NSW

04 Dec – 19 Dec **Spooky Action at a Distance –  
Curated by Amelia Groom**  
BLACK AND BLUE GALLERY  
302/267-271 Cleveland Street,  
Redfern NSW

17 Dec – 21 Dec **Chalk Reindeer**  
CHALKHORSE  
94 Cooper Street, Surry Hills NSW

17 Dec – 28 Feb **Jenny Holzer**  
AUSTRALIAN CENTRE  
FOR CONTEMPORARY ART  
111 Sturt Street, Southbank VIC

12 Jan – 6 Feb **Ceramics**  
KING STREET GALLERY ON WILLIAM  
177 William Street, Darlinghurst NSW

13 Jan **Re-Opening | Program Launch**  
FIRSTDRAFT  
116-118 Chalmers Street,  
Surry Hills NSW

29 Jan – 06 Mar **Mind Games –  
Photography, Identity and Play  
Eniac Martínez –  
Camino Real de Tierra Adentro**  
AUSTRALIAN CENTRE  
FOR PHOTOGRAPHY  
257 Oxford Street, Paddington NSW

03 Feb – 20 Feb **Star Abstraction**  
GILLIGAN GRANT GALLERY  
1B Stanley Street, Collingwood VIC

03 Feb to 27 Feb **Group GBK**  
GALLERY BARRY KELDOULIS  
285 Young Street, Waterloo NSW

04 Feb – 06 Mar **Group Show**  
BREENSPACE  
289 Young Street, Waterloo NSW

09 Feb – 28 Feb **A State of Being**  
BUS PROJECTS  
Level 1, 117 Little Lonsdale Street,  
Melbourne VIC

11 Feb – 6 Mar **Patrick Pound, Mimi Tong  
and Bridget Currie**  
GRANTPIRRIE  
86 George Street, Redfern NSW

11 Feb – 06 Mar **Architecture 10  
10 In 10 – The Urban Islands Exhibition**  
BOUTWELL DRAPER GALLERY  
82 - 84 George Street, Redfern NSW

17 Feb – 03 Mar **Postcards From The North**  
HORUS AND DELORIS  
CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE  
102 Pyrmont Street, Pyrmont NSW  
[www.horusanddeloris.com.au](http://www.horusanddeloris.com.au)

25 Feb – 09 Mar **National Art School  
MFA Graduates 2005-2009**  
NATIONAL ART SCHOOL GALLERY  
Forbes Street, Darlinghurst NSW

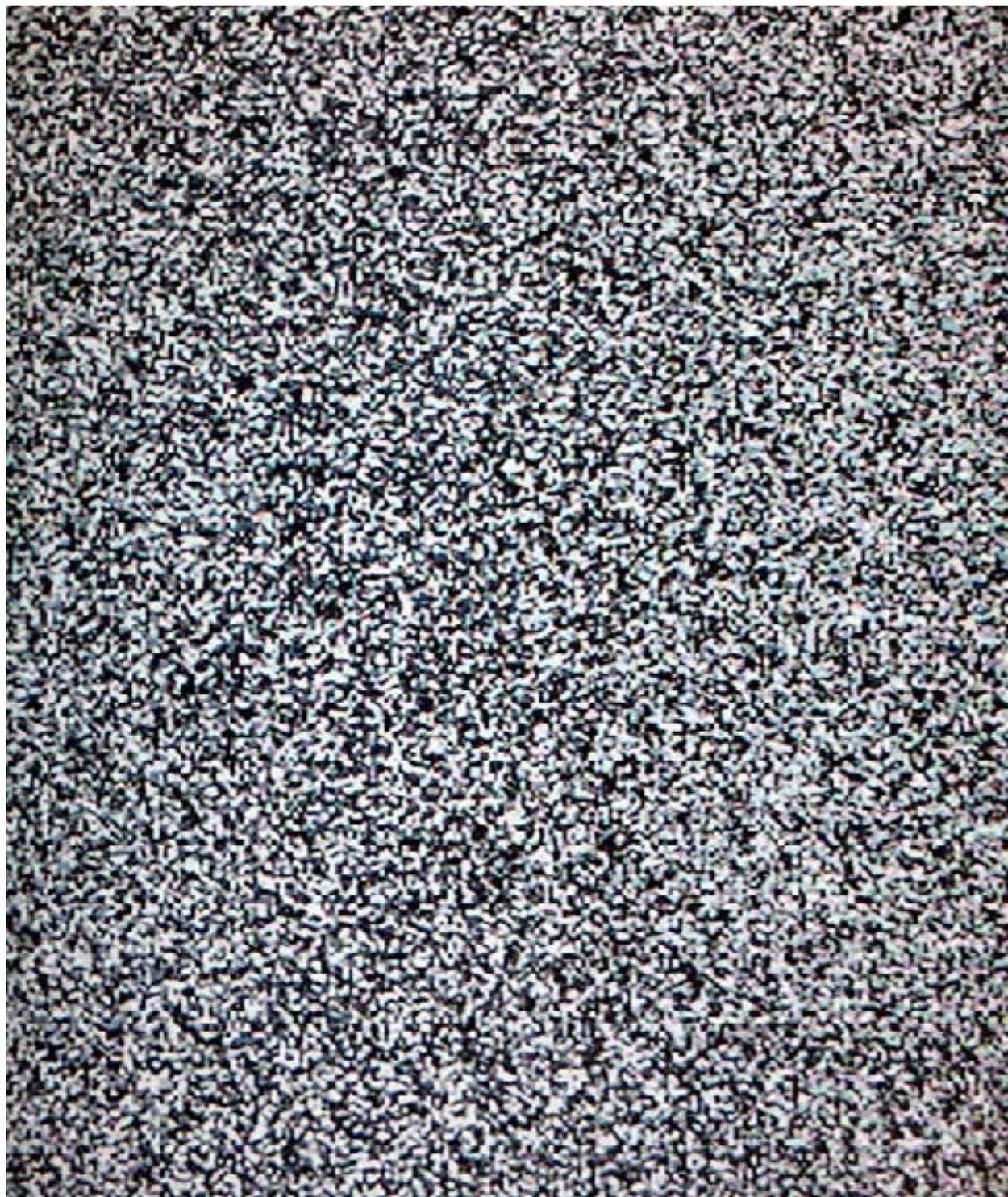
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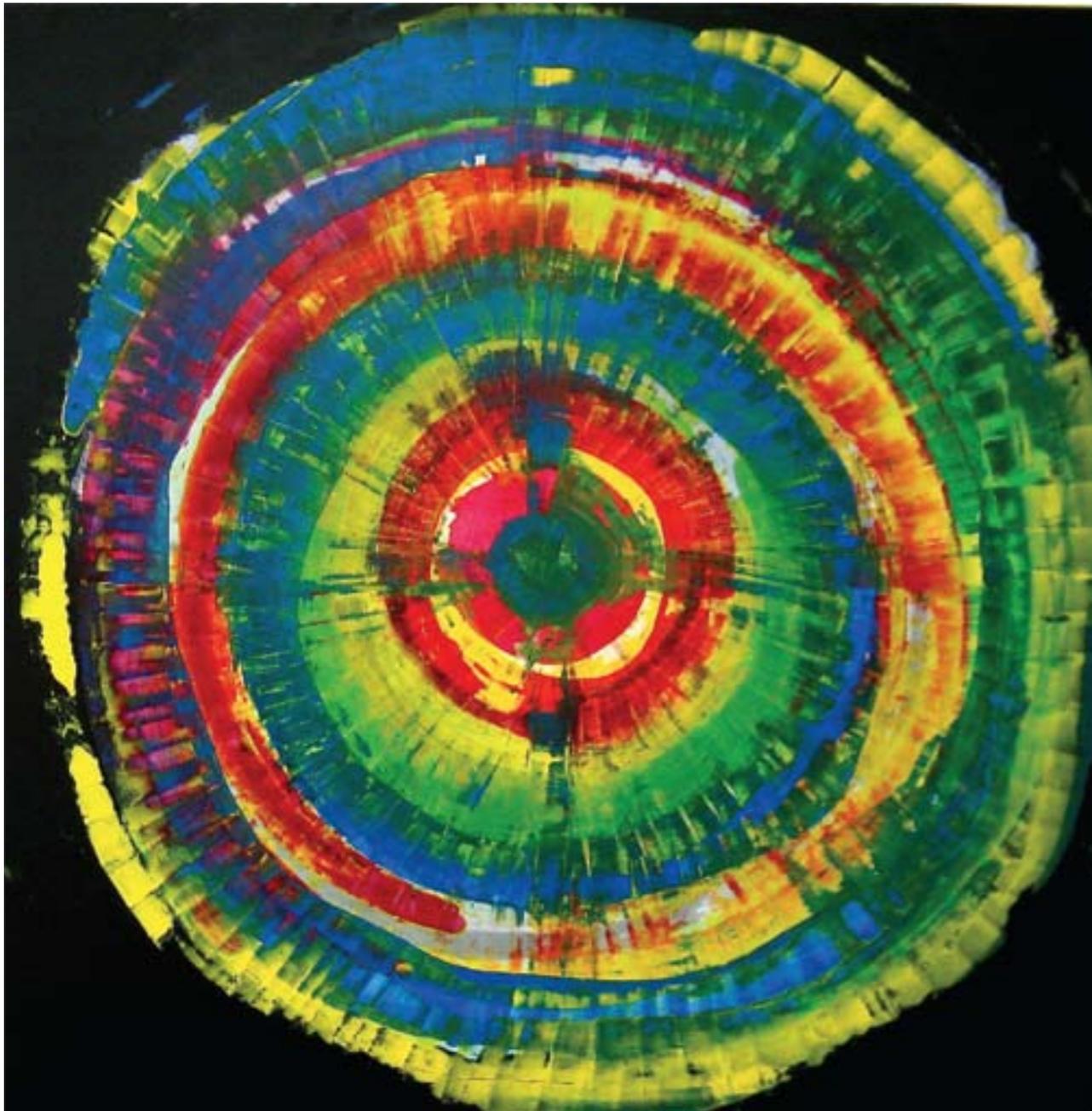
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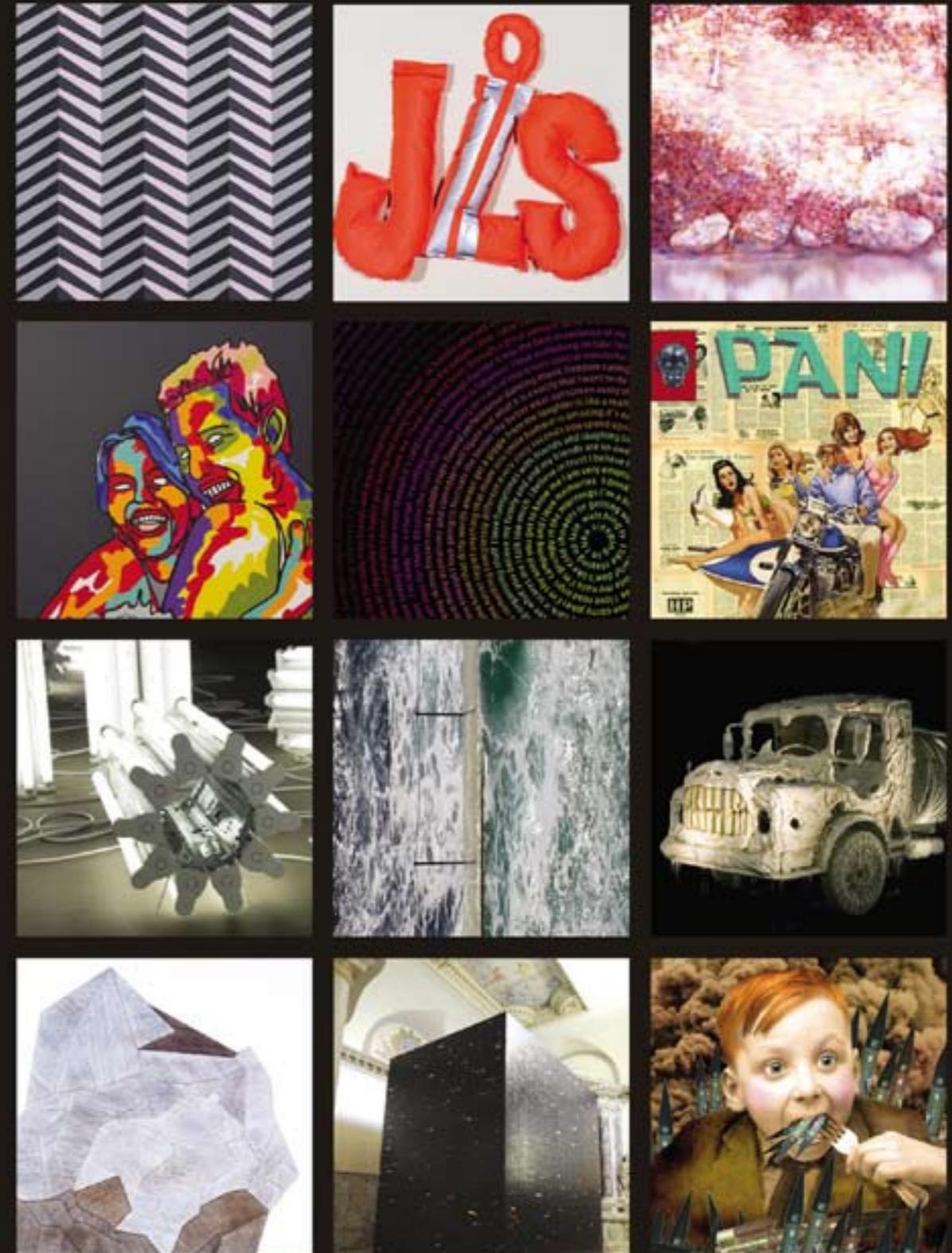
Alex Pye  
Recent Works



2 December - 16 December, 2009  
Opens Wednesday 2 December, 6pm

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WED - SUN, 11-4

**MILS**  
gallery



**Thukral & Tagra**  
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GBK will be closed for January  
Re-opening 3 February with an  
exhibition of GBK artists' work.



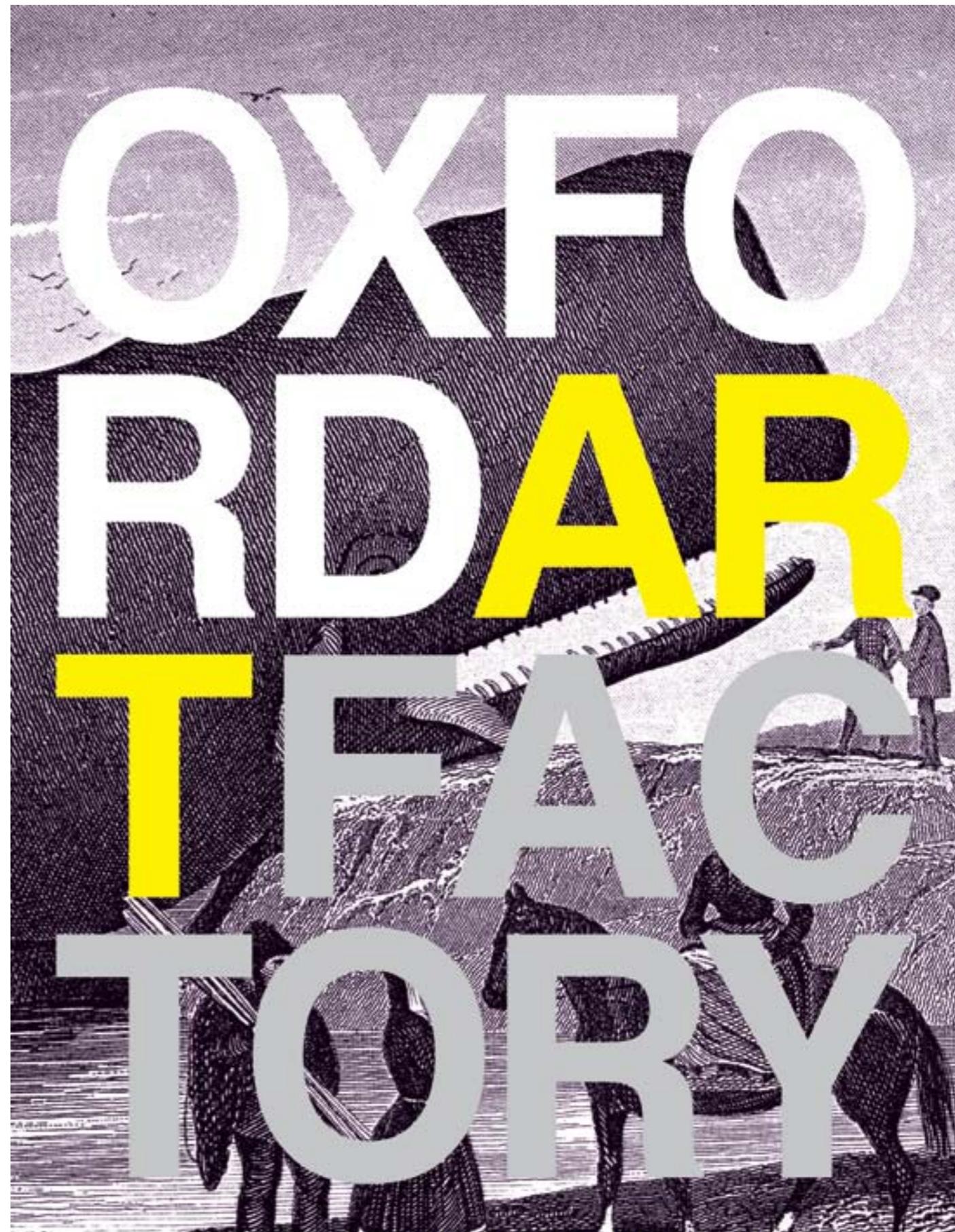
gallery barry keldoullis



image: david barker

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**COVER IMAGE**  
*Blue Nude (After Matisse)* by Will Loeng  
Ink on Paper  
59.4cm x 42cm



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## Alles Gute Zum Geburtstag (Happy Birthday)

Around an imaginary (perhaps cyber) glistening dinner table sits our readership, the interested, the artists, the writers, the curators, the ARIs and the hungry. Illusionary wine glasses are filled and refilled while clinking and splattering the editor presents her toast to the warm unfurling crowd...

‘What handsome faces surround me at this table of art and art lovers. I’ll begin by proclaiming a mighty Happy 1st Birthday Das Superpaper! We have made it to our first birthday and our 10th issue. Hoorah and do enjoy this meaty issue we present for your summer reading. On behalf of the Das team I make a very sincere thank you to all the artists, writers and givers of energy who have contributed to our first year of presenting contemporary and emerging art. Thank you to all those people who have supported us and found pleasure in our work. It has been an honour to become a part of the Australian arts scene in a meaningful way and to make a contribution back to that wonderful, meandering and meaningful beast we call The Arts. Please raise your glasses and shout *Alles Gute Zum Geburtstag Das Superpaper!*

As the tipsy speech comes to an end more sparkling wine pours vivaciously into empty glasses, summer has begun and we are now one year old. Bottoms up.

– Bronwyn Bailey-Charteris



Tolarno Galleries:  
Peter Atkins

- | *Welcome to L.A. / Readymade Abstraction*
- / (12 February - 14 March 2009)  
Image courtesy the artist and Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne  
[www.tolarnogalleries.com](http://www.tolarnogalleries.com)





- | *Wait For It* by Jake Walker  
Mixed media on paper  
42 x 29.75 cm  
Courtesy of the artist

## Tom Polo

### INTERVIEW

Chloé Wolifson

#### *I'm Worse At What I Do Best*

Curated by Tom Polo

Featuring Andrew Frost, Sarah Goffman, Anastasia Klose, Michael Lindeman, Simon Pericich, Joan Ross, Kate Smith, Charlie Sofo, Jake Walker, Emma White

Parramatta Artists Studios, Sydney

31 July – 9 October 2009

**Tell us about what drew you to the work of the particular artists in the show. Are these artists you feel an affinity with in your own art practice?**

I wanted to present the exhibition in alignment with my Masters of Fine Art at COFA. Gathering together artists that were influencing me in my practice at the moment, in an exhibition and publication was a valuable way of conducting research and extending my experience of curating. The publication helped to extend the idea beyond the means of this exhibition, 10 works by 10 artists, by allowing the artists to present images of their wider practice as well as presenting 25 stories by Andrew Frost on the idea of *I'm Worse At What I Do Best*.

I'm interested in artists working with text and exploring its playfulness and the way it becomes abstract, in form as well as the way we speak words, write them down or play with their typography. Text can get blurred by interpretation but it can also seem more direct than an image. They're also artists that bring a sense of humour to their work which is important to the themes of the show – success and failure, a defeatist attitude, and aspirations for the future.

**Tell us more about what you feel text achieves that isn't possible through other means. I feel there's a sort of bravery in using text the way it's used by these artists, simultaneously freeing and destructive as the unspoken is released into a realm of permanence. Speech would have floated off into the ether but text sticks around.**

There is a directness, however because the text is being played with it's open to interpretation. Text based artists often make bold statements because text is the only element in their work, whereas the works in *I'm Worse At What I Do Best* are more ambiguous because they contain other elements besides text.

For instance, Jake Walker's work *Wait For It* (2009), has the text *Ask for help* almost camouflaged by painterly qualities. It looks like it's contained within a shrubbery or landscape, so while being really direct and bold it's also hidden. That relates to the conceptual nature of the work. A lot of Jake's work is about unravelling colloquialisms and looking at sentences and how they're broken down into individual words and what those words can mean with different interpretations.

**How much do the works in the exhibition express a genuine lack of faith in ones self by the artist and how much is self-preservation or trying to avoid being seen as a tall poppy, by taking the Seinfeld-ian route of wallowing in and laughing at our own foibles?**

This self-deprecating humour lies in that weird space between fishing for compliments and actually being down on oneself. There is a sense of confidence within some of these statements – or is it a cry for help? I like that uncertainty because it's quite honest. For instance Joan Ross's work *JLS* (2008) uses the word *Jealous* in shorthand format and takes the form of a large, novelty, fluoro orange necklace charm. It makes you wonder if the work is a self portrait and why would someone wear something so revealing in public? It's got these contradictions and self-doubt which we like to see because it presents that humanness and vulnerability which is really nice ... humility can be nice too.

In Kate Smith's work the text *I'm not the phoney, you're the phoney* turned into *I'm Not the Phoney, You're the Honey* (2009). The phrase came from watching the Jackson Pollock film Pollock. An artist might feel like a phoney about what they're making, or whether it is to be considered high or low end art. So although some works relate specifically to art practice they also speak to us more generally as humans.



- | *Balls* (2009) by Charlie Sofo  
paper, PVA  
90 x 90 x 20 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney
- | *Decision Time* (2009) by Emma White  
Polymer clay, plastic clock, battery  
35 x 35 x 6 cm  
Courtesy of the artist



**What about materials and processes in the works?**

I see a focus on that in Kate Smith's work as well as in Charlie Sofo's work *Balls* (2009). He is looking at process and value as well. He would have started with these objects as paper and has taken them back into paper pulp as they would have originally started. So there's that level of process there.

**And Emma White's work, *Decision Time* (2009)?**

The ideas of the decisions in that clock are all things that we relate to. The funny thing is the work is different to how Emma first made it. The second hand on the clock has got stuck between *Maybe* and *Unsure*. It wasn't supposed to happen, but that idea of being stuck between two decisions, in a way strengthens the idea and the concept.

**It's also quite nice that her clock has stalled because it's now worse at what it does best as well.**

Emma had a lot of people coming up to her saying 'I really like what's happening with your work' and I'm not sure if she told them the story, but we spoke about it and she told us we could leave it because it works conceptually and it's funny as well, it really added a level of humour to it.

**It's nice that there can be that serendipity in shows as well where everything can come together without necessarily being pre-planned.**

That happened with Kate White's work as well in terms of display, because it fits almost awkwardly in the space. The piece includes a pole with text written on it which leans awkwardly against the wall. It works by being that mid point between success and failure on my part as a curator, so it might look like it's just slumped there or that it's slumped there for a reason.



- | *Jealous* (2008) by Joan Ross  
Polyester stuffed hi-vis safety material  
75 x 78 x 11 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Barry Keldoulis
- & *I'm Not the Phoney, You're the Honey* (2008)  
(props to Peta Bryant)  
Mixed media  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist

**Going back to text, do you have any thoughts on affirmations as used by the New Age and Self Help movements? I wondered whether the exhibition's use of text and ideas might be playing upon the idea or even embracing it in one way or the other?**

Because the exhibition focuses on ideas of aspiration, hope for the future and a can-do attitude, I think the ideas of people like Tony Robbins are really present. That motivational speaking genre is really big at the moment. We tell ourselves that we can do better but in this exhibition it's tongue in cheek, so we're kidding ourselves a little bit by saying 'I can do it, it can be done'.

**This might seem like a strange question but given all those themes, how did you feel curating this show? Do you find it heartening or dispiriting that there are a number of artists working across these themes?**

Even though I was familiar with all the artists in the exhibition, I had the chance to look at their practices a bit deeper. I realised people are working in similar strains to the way I am, as well as being reflective of what's going on in society so it was positive in that way. Some might see too much doubt in society these days as a bad thing, but it's honest doubt so I think in the end it's actually quite good.

We see this online in things like Fail Blog (<http://failblog.org/>) where people send in pictures of everyday failures, and the Museum of Bad Art (<http://www.museumofbadart.org/>) which celebrates 'art too bad to be ignored'. And in the art world there are people like the curator Biljana Ciric whose book 'Rejected Collection' documents rejected proposals by contemporary Chinese artists. So it's comforting as both an artist and a human to recognise people who are focusing on similar things.

What's also good is the location, in Parramatta, which isn't the art district of Sydney, so besides art people coming in to visit the exhibition there was also a lot of business people and other members of the public coming in and having an opportunity to see artists, the role of whom they may have been intimidated by, expressing ideas that people normally go through every day. I took people through the gallery and spoke to them about the work and at first they might have been intimidated but then they would come around and understand these elements of a defeatist attitude. People really related to 'I can't do this but I'm going to fake it anyway' because everyone goes through it. So it's been really positive to talk about negatives.

## Portuguese Street Art

### ARTICLE

Marissa Batemen



Portugal, the once-mighty nation of explorers, now nurtures the creative energies of Portuguese artists within its streets. Walking through the medina-like passages of the Alfama in the city of Lisbon an angry crowd of male and female workers run together in a fury of red, gun in arms with clenched fists. Collectively their voices are determined to be heard, mouths are a gape, they surge down the cobblestone laneway unified by their shared protest. Ordinarily such a riotous sight would cause onlookers to jump back in fear but here people stroll on by. The described scene is one of many of Lisbon's impressive street artworks, which use blank walls of buildings as a canvas to paint and create images.

Vibrantly coloured and large in scale Portuguese street art catapults art into the everyday. Here, art is not confined to the walls of white cubed art galleries and it is clear from the high quality and large quantity of works throughout Lisbon's streets that the city council is supporting and fostering this expressive yet, non-conventional practice. Perhaps, the City of Sydney could learn a lesson from this small European – not all images found on streets are the acts of vandalism. Only last year Sydney's 'graffiti police' embarrassingly hosed down 30 chalk designs, posters and stencil works that were a part of Sydney Design 08 an event run by the Powerhouse. Despite, one of the Powerhouse's staff member's best efforts to explain to the graffiti police that the works were in fact a part of an exhibition the pleas were ignored and works destroyed. Clearly, art appreciation was not included in the graffiti police training.

In recent years, public art festivals such as Art&About and the Sydney Biennale have scattered art throughout the streets of Sydney however quality commissioned street art is yet to make an entrance on our cityscape. The value of street art is highly contested largely due to the practice of territorial graffiti tagging by gangs and hooligans. One Lisbon artist incorporates such 'tags' within his/her large-scale portrait of an Afro-American policeman giving the order 'Go team' into a hand held two-way radio. The black smiley face on the man's shoulder (presumably graffiti which was originally on the wall) lacks the sophistication and quality execution of the final artwork, making a clear distinction between graffiti and street art. By raising the profile of street art in Sydney, Sydneysiders will hopefully get to share my experience encountering and discovering such images throughout Portugal – an overall positive experience, one of which captivates the imagination and encourages creativity.

**In loving memory of Paul Morrow –  
friend, street artist & free spirit  
28 March 1985 – 02 July 2009**





**Photography:** *Domestic Bliss* by Alex Davies, Linz

## Alex Davies: With A Little Glück (domestic Bliss)

**INTERVIEW**  
Sam Icklow

You climb up the stairs of a narrow old apartment building in Linz's historical centre. A door is ajar. 60s Austrian pop standards warble out with a soft flickering light, inviting you in. It looks like the original occu-pants left in a hurry. The place is scattered with domestic debris, and a fruit bowl lies forgotten, its contents quietly decomposing.

Something strange has happened to the little town of Linz. Not only is it invaded every year by Ars Electronica, a week-long electronic arts festival, but it also happens to be this year's European Capital of Culture. The last time that that happened, it was the cultural capital of the Third Reich.

Das Haus der Geschichten (The House of Stories) is one of the more endearing by-products of art event madness laying seige to a little old European town. The free project sees a dilapidated historical apartment block transformed into a gallery for a year. *Häusliches Glück* (Domestic Bliss) is an unsettling installation by Australian artist Alex Davies, in collaboration with local art organisation Times Up, that takes full advantage of the experience of wandering through dead people's houses.

The project is an exercise in 'augmented reality'. You take a seat on an unmade bed and watch as a narrative plays out. Simultaneously you can hear it, see it and even feel it, playing out in the next room. Lights flash, thunder rolls, and a cupboard shakes violently as a character is thrown against it. The installation is the apartment, and the story is that of a murder that took place in it. And you get to experience it unravel in front of, and around you.

I spoke to Alex, and his partner Alexandra Crosby, about the complex and unsettling work, over hamburgers in Linz' Hauptplatz, amidst the waddle of art glitterati that had been taken over the square around us all week.



**So let's start off with some background, tell me about the move to Linz and your involvement with Times Up.**

Well that was a pretty poor start to the whole thing. I came to Linz to work with Times Up on a project called Twixel, which is a really large installation, and it was cancelled in the middle of last year. So after that, Times Up have just been doing lots of random smaller projects really, as opposed to this monster project that was a few years in production.

**Is Domestic Bliss one of those smaller projects?**

Yeah pretty much a few projects I've been involved in since then came out of Times Up... well one was them being asked to do something at a festival in Lubliana called Hype, and this new project I actually discussed with the people who are running Haus der Geschichten, that I was interested in doing an installation there, and they were into it, so...

**And then did Times Up help you produce it?**

Yeah, this one was pretty collaborative with one member of Times Up in particular, Andy Meierhoffer, who did a lot of work on it with me.

**Had you seen the apartment first, or did you just imagine any apartment?**

Yeah, that apartment in particular I always liked. I was actually asked to photograph the whole building before all the artists came in over the year, so I knew the building very well and spent a lot of time in that apartment even when it was empty. It always had a nice resonance, it was kind of the strangest, weirdest little apartment in the whole building, so I always had my eye on that one for doing the project.

**So what was it like working with all of this... 'real' kind of stuff – a lot of your other work has been more about playing with virtual realities. I heard you call this work augmented reality.**

Or mixed reality – not totally virtual but not totally real.

**Yeah, it almost has these kind of haunted house elements...**

Yeah. It's still I guess augmented reality kind of stuff. Certainly a lot of the treatment, the sound in it, and also the illusion of the image attempt to give this impression that the narrator, or the characters, are behind the cupboard in the other room. And the physical stuff, that was really nice because I'm so used to simulating the sounds of those things, like the sound of a cupboard or something. It was very nice to be able to use the actual object itself to generate that.



**And it has a really creepy effect.**

Yeah I think people connect with physical objects obviously so much better anyway, so when the cupboard moves, it shifts it a lot more into reality. Because up to that point I think people are probably kind of ambiguously not sure what's happening there, and the second something physical or tangible happens like that...

**They're in. There are a lot of elements involved here: the film, the narrative, the technical stuff. What was it like bringing those elements together, and in German?**

Yeah, it was all conceived in English and the script was written in English and then we translated it for the actors to do in German. For the local audience, obviously, it makes more sense, and since it's very site specific and is meant to be about an individual who lived in the apartment and what happened there, obviously it made sense to be in German.

**What was it like directing in a foreign language?**

It was problematic. Because even though I knew roughly what the actors were saying, and where they were at with the script, I couldn't really comment specifically on how they were delivering their lines or any of the subtleties of directing. The biggest problem was that I was trying to manage a lot of other stuff live while it was being shot, like controlling all the lighting and all the other technical things, so I was distracted anyway. Thankfully as far as editing was concerned, it was effectively one take, so that wasn't so difficult in post, treating the video content in a different language.

**Did you have to synch up the effects afterwards to how you'd shot it?**

Yeah so that was what was a bit laborious afterwards, because the video pretty much drives the whole environment. It's all from the computer triggering particular events on particular frames.

**Is there anything you would have done differently?**

There were a lot of nice ideas for extra physical things... Like I bought these bead curtains on eBay, you know those kind of old curtains, and one of the ideas was when the killer walks through the apartment towards the room that you're in, turning the lights off slowly, as he passes through the curtains they flutter a bit. We were going to put solenoids on them so that they twitched with the sound moving through. But the curtains were just profoundly ugly and I couldn't bring myself to put them up. They weren't quite what I hoped, they were these awful plasticky things that just didn't fit in with the rest of the 'ambience' of the apartment. There were a few other ideas that weren't really implemented. The biggest thing that I would have liked, would be having more dramatic scenarios that would be randomly selected when the audience came in.

**Ah, because you were saying that you had had a few other story ideas in the works.**

Yeah and actually even adapting some other works. I really love some Roald Dahl stories, there are a couple that I really want to shoot in there that would be really fun.

**So do you think that you're going to be playing with this sort of format more?**

I'm definitely going to be playing with physical objects, and there were some other ideas for projects that I had before that. But this is pretty distinct in that it's not a gallery environment, so it's quite limiting. Simulating a lived-in space in a gallery is very different, obviously.

**Tell us something technical, like how many different... they're not sensors, they're like, what do you call them?**

[ominously] The actuators.

**Actuators and triggers and stuff.**

Not a lot. We ended up covering up all of the window boxes and putting shutters on the inside to hide all the technology. And we had speakers and lamps in there to flash for the lighting. That was a nightmare, actually, because all of the bulbs kept burning out. And then there are the speakers scattered through the whole apartment for different tracks of audio, the cupboard shaker (the mechanical thing that moves the cupboard when it happens on the screen) and there were some servos for the flashlight when a person comes in with the torch.

**Whats a servo?**

Like remote control aeroplanes or cars...

**Alexandra:** And you had to rewire the whole flat.

**Alex:** Yeah and all the lights in the flat we unwired and rewired, and that all goes into a dimmer rack...

**Alexandra:** And you had to do all that without damaging the apartment, because it's heritage listed so it has to go back to how it was...

**What an ordeal! But you must have had fun setting up the apartment.**

**Alex:** Yeah, it was pretty fun, but it was a bit rushed. Obviously if you have unlimited budgets you can find really well suited props, but we did pretty well, all things considered. And the television. We found this beautiful, big old black and white television, which I loved, and it was really perfect, and then that blew up after the first week.

**Oh no! You have to go in and fix something today don't you, something's broken again**

**Alexandra:** The idea is that there are so many things that if one thing breaks you still get the illusion. It's called a robust illusion

**Alex:** Sensory redundancy

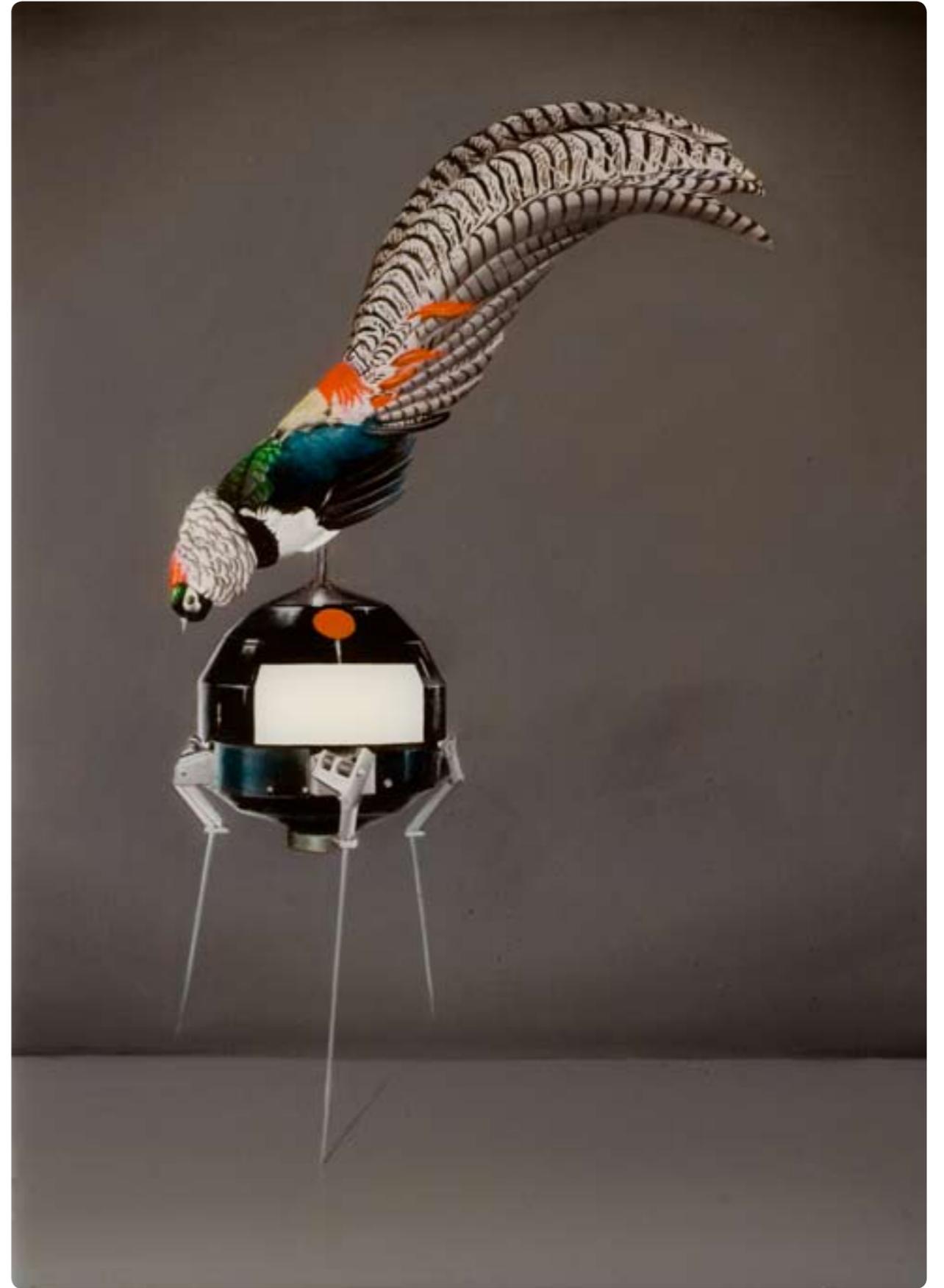




Sullivan & Strumpf:  
Sam Leach

- |• *Planet Contruction 2* (2009)  
oil and resin on linen and wood  
26cm x 16cm
- / *Rosellas* (2009)  
oil and resin on wood  
35cm x 25cm
- /• *Lady Amberst and Satellite* (2009)  
oil and resin on linen and wood  
35cm x 25cm
- // *Paradise Moderator* (2009)  
oil and resin on wood  
35cm x 25cm,
- //• *Bigger Incision* (2009)  
oil and resin on wood  
45cm x 35cm







- | *à la dérive* by Izabela Pluta
- /• *Chromophilia* by Mark Titmarsh  
Mixed Media  
Photography: Reina Tamagaki



## MOP Projects

### GALLERY PROFILE

Juliet Gauchat

2/39 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale.

[www.mop.org.au](http://www.mop.org.au)

Tucked away on a non-descript corner in inner city Chippendale stands MOP Projects, a sophisticated Sydney based Artist-Run-Initiative (ARI). Directed by George and Ron Adams and a committee of artists, MOP was established in 2003 with a view to promote emerging artists and build their profile in the contemporary art world. For those new to the Sydney art scene, one could be mistaken for thinking MOP is a commercial gallery from the outset. It inhabits a sort of shifting middle ground between ARI's and semi-commercial spaces with its clean white walls, concrete floors and purpose built track lighting system. However despite its commercial appearance, Artists who have shown at MOP have usually been those with an experimental practice relevant to the latest contemporary art trends. This has included rising names, such as David Griggs, Stephanie and Richard nova Milne (Ms & Mr), Todd McMillan, Newell Harry and Gemma Smith to name but a few.

MOP actively promote a number of artists through interstate group exhibitions, and are also involved in community based projects such as the current artist curated group exhibition, BIG PAINTING at Frazer Studios, Chippendale. This exhibition is the outcome of a three-week residency by artists Adam Cullen, Adam Norton, Mitch Cairns, Nigel Milsom and Ron Adams in the Frazer Studios. MOP is an ideal venue for emerging artists seeking recognition from their peers and some wider critical attention, rather than simply a venue for selling work to the public.

At the same time, MOP is a flexible space, willing to show work with a popular appeal and with commercial intentions. The latest show *Mongrel* in gallery 1 by Sydney artist Drew Bickford is a case in point. His intricate drawings in bold black ink and watercolour are powerful and energetic, depicting scenes of grotesque, hybrid creatures and dissembled artificial life forms slithering and oozing out on to the paper. Its 'street-cred' on the other hand is commodified by tasteful framing and the use of black backing sheets to enhance the works. Still, an artist must provide for himself and Bickford has sold a number of these impressive works.

In gallery 2, Nana Ohnesorge's exhibition *Global Roaming*, presents a colourful display of experimental sculptures, painting and a series of mixed media portraits. These works are inspired by Ohnesorge's travels between Australia and Europe, juxtaposing and recombining discarded and found materials that explore pop culture and kitsch. Ohnesorge's sculpture creations evoke a playful psychological and symbolic association relating to identity, mortality and collective memory in the guise of delicious desserts and menacing playthings.

In this observer's opinion, MOP Projects is definitely worth a visit or two.





**Photography:** *Desert Decadence* by Penelope Benton

## Penelope Benton: Desert Decadence

### INTERVIEW

Bronwyn Bailey-Charteris

**Your practice as an artist incorporates performance, costumes, photography and sometime baking how would you describe your practice?**

Yeah I'm really interested in the photograph as theatre. I think I probably spend more time setting the stage and storyline than writing the script, so when the curtains go up, a lot of the performance is improvised by the characters on the spot.

This interest in theatre and performance came about largely through my involvement in the Scooter Collective and Gurlisque where I found myself shooting portfolio shots and documenting live shows for performers as favours for friends for all sorts of things. I've been doing this regularly for about seven years now. It's had a significant effect on my work, my way of seeing, my aesthetic, my move to colour from black+white, the way I express and tell a story. My work was quite dark and moody in the beginning, I was really focussed on capturing a sense of classic French romance. Now everything I do is quite light, and saturated with thematic colour that has a camp cinematic, often comic quality.

**Tell us about these images, what are we looking at?**

Desert Decadence is a series of portraits I've just done depicting luxurious self-indulgence on drought-stricken Australia land. There are layers to this work that relate to bourgeois consumerism in this country, unaffected by sexism, climate change, and societal and economic inequality. Intemperance and oblivion is illustrated by a Marie-Antoinette like figure, representing the epitome of excess in a place of hardship.

The character in this work is also a reaction to the prevalent exploration of masculinity and gender performativity in contemporary art, the queer community, and on a broader scale, popular culture. Most notably, it's a parody of Shaun Gladwell's MADDESTMAXIMVS, mashed with references to Stephan Elliott's film *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. Not that I've ever had a personal reaction to either of these pieces of work, this series is in no way a criticism of Shaun or of Priscilla. In the spirit of vaudeville caricatures I just couldn't resist aligning the two visually, not only for their car/bus-surfing scenes, but for their examination of masculinity, extremes, and excess across our remote desert landscape.





**What are your main interests, conceptually, with the work you make?**

Everything I make is inspired by love and romanticised connections or disconnections. I'm particularly seduced by evoking a sense of desire and allure. After that I'm interested in the photograph as theatre, a concept that really emerged strongly in the 1980s with photographic artists like Cindy Sherman, Anne Zahalka, Bill Henson, Tracy Moffatt etc. I work on collapsing the artist/subject relationship and separating that experience further from the viewer often via the use of tools such as peepholes to exaggerate the voyeuristic act of looking. The underlying themes of sexuality obviously remain constant in my work but are not necessarily urgent like they used to be.

Desert Decadence comes out of a trip I've been on with solo tea parties for a few years now. Derived from my interest in feminine domesticity; I love baking, decorating, and preparing for entertaining, but socialising is not a skill or quality I possess. So whilst my work is conceptually about love and connection, it's also about loneliness. When a shoot I had planned with someone falls through, I tend to revert back to my solo tea party mode, preparing a photogenic sugary spread and longing for a companion. Subtle references are made to the presence of another; a telephone, an extra glass, an outward gaze.

**You have been involved with the Sydney ARI and queer scenes for the past decade, what have been some of the highlights?**

Some of the highlights have been being published regularly in Slit magazine. It's really pushed me to keep creating. I think my body of work would be nothing had I not been so active with that project, nor given the constant support of Meredith and Domino.

Similarly, Gurlesque has been total inspiration for my work. I have been working for Sex and Glitta for 6 or 7 years now and the process of documenting their shows has just had a natural influence on my own creative practice. They introduced me to colour and comedy amongst other things. I have such deep respect for that. And I see their direct influence on other photographers, filmmakers and performers in our scene. I think we are so lucky in Sydney to have such inspiration on our doorstep.

My term on the Board of Directors at Firstdraft another highlight. Such an incredible experience, not only for me as an arts administrator, but the contact and access to a gifted network of people, with so much support and respect for each other was really beautiful to be part of. I feel so grateful for that time.

**Your most recent and most demanding project has been the opening of a new space in Marrickville, The Red Rattler. This is such a massive undertaking. What inspired you and your collective to open the Rat?**

Yes. Such a massive undertaking is such a massive understatement! The driving force behind The Red Rattler was the shut down of a big list of artist run initiatives that have been forced to close in the last decade due to developers, landlord trouble, rental increases, neighbour complaints and other systematic shut downs including government and council regulations that make building compliance inaccessible and impossible for non-profit artist run spaces.

A group of us (five women: Meredith Williams, Patsy Black, Teresa Avila, Annette Moore and myself) got together and started talking seriously about ideas for a permanent space, a legal independent creative playground. We knew that the kind of budget and workload required to set up a legal space under today's legislation would be huge and investing that into a rental was risky, so we emptied our pockets, shelved our personal dreams, harnessed the security that comes from working full time for 10-15 years, and collectively bought a warehouse in industrial Marrickville.

We went through all the onerous legislations and compliance requirements and have been legally open since April 2009. It's been an incredible ride, and it's so great to see what it's brought to people and what people have brought to it. It's definitely a two way street, and has been since the beginning.

**Do you find it hard to keep up your own practice when you are so busy with other outputs?**

Yes I do. I have so much work I'd like to produce, but finding the time is tricky and finding energy levels to go with limited time is also hard. Working two full-time jobs is a bit crazy, I often wonder why and how that happened. But then I go to work, either day or night job really and see I am able to help other artists get projects off the ground, put on shows, or realise their dreams. It's such a privilege and rewarding experience to be part of that, I just have to trust my journey and continue to do what I can do.

“Tracey Moffatt’s *Something More* series which was bought for \$1,000 and resold for \$230,000 and Johnny Warrangkula Tjupurra’s *Water Dreaming at Kalipinyapa* which was bought for \$150 and resold for \$486,500.”

## Resale Royalty Rights

### ARTICLE

Marissa Batemen

If you are a working artist you may find yourself with extra cash in your pocket thanks to K.Rudd’s artist resale royalty scheme. The idea of the starving artist is so strongly ingrained in society that it has even become a work of art in itself – think – the opera *La Boheme*, which romanticises the wild, free yet poor lives of artists. While the poor economic situation for artists is widely recognised, artists are still expected to sell their artworks at minimal prices in order to establish themselves within the local and international art scene (and pay for pressing items such as food, materials and wine). Ten years down the line, in the secondary market, the same artist’s artworks come up for sale in a commercial gallery or auction house – imagine this – the sale room buzzes, prices continue to rise to the tens-of-thousand dollar mark, then to the hundred-of-thousand mark, dealers and collectors (who believe that they have taken all the risk in investing in an unknown artist) rub their hands with glee as the hammer goes down. All the while the artist celebrates the sale with a can of baked beans for dinner, never to see a penny of their artwork’s financial success. This bleak scenario of the starving artist is largely what fuel advocates in their fight for the introduction of an Australian artist resale royalty right. The right grants artists the ability to benefit from their creations as well as recognises an ongoing relationship between creator and the artwork. It is hard to argue with such admirable intentions however, thirty years of debate and research reveals that a resale scheme may not provide the best scope of support for all Australian artists.

First introduced in 1920 in France ‘droit de suite’ aka artist’s resale royalties (ARR) are now legislated in 54 different countries.<sup>1</sup> The question as to whether a resale royalty system should be introduced in Australia has engaged legislators, investors, galleries and artists for over three decades with calls for the adoption of ARR flaring sporadically (particularly at election time). Recently, the debate reached a pivotal point when the Labour Government announced its first Federal Budget and allocated \$1.5 million over three years to the establishment of an artist’s resale royalty scheme.

The beginnings of the droit de suit can be traced back to the early 1900s when the widow of impressionist painter Jean-Francois Millet (1814-75) was found living in extreme poverty just as the resale price Millet’s work was spiralling to new heights.<sup>2</sup> In reaction to Millet’s widow’s dire circumstance French artists began campaigning for an artist’s resale royalty right and used the central motif of two children dressed in rags standing before a gallery window and saying “*Look – one of Daddy’s paintings*”.<sup>3</sup> Recent

popular intrigue around rise in prices fetched in auction houses has also catalysed discussion about the extent to which artists reap the benefit of these record resale prices.

One of the main arguments in favour of an ARR scheme in the Australian art industry is that direct financial benefit will be available to artists, beyond the original sale. Proponents of the scheme continually cite two famous examples: the sale of Tracey Moffatt’s *Something More* series which was bought for \$1,000 and resold for \$230,000 and Johnny Warrangkula Tjupurra’s *Water Dreaming at Kalipinyapa* which was bought for \$150 and resold for \$486,500.<sup>4</sup> Although these examples are rare, they provide the best arguments for a resale royalty right.

The principle behind the resale royalty scheme is admirable but arguably flawed as not all works of art actually resell. The Labour Government announcement of a ‘non-retrospective’ caused mass outrage amongst stakeholders in the Australian art industry including advocates of the ARR scheme. One of the main concerns being that under the proposed law not all resale of works will generate a royalty. Instead, the right only applies to works of art that are *both* acquired and resold after the legislation comes into force. Research conducted by VISCOPY indicates that the average time between sales on the secondary market by Australian artists is longer than 10 years, meaning that it could take well over 20 years for an artist to receive any royalties.

In addition to the considerable delay in financial benefit to Australian artists, research indicates that only a minority of artists will benefit. Since the ARR was introduced in the UK in 2006, 80% of all ARR payments have gone to the top 100 artists.<sup>5</sup> The same trend was recognised in the French art market – between 1993-1995, 70% of royalties were collected by the estates of seven artists, including heirs of Picasso and Matisse.<sup>6</sup> Following this example, it is predicted that this trend will continue in the Australian market with 50% of royalties in Australia accruing to the deceased artist’s estates of Drysdale, Boyd, Whitley, Williams and Nolan.<sup>7</sup>

The reality is that by itself, a resale royalty legislation will not alleviate the poor economic conditions of all artists, it will not end the disadvantaged position of Indigenous artists nor will it empower artists by recognising their contribution to the life of the nation. Fundamentally the ARR is misguided as most artworks never actually resell however it does remain one means of rewarding excellence by allowing creators to benefit economically from the appreciation of their works.

<sup>1</sup> Davis, A, ‘Artist resale royalties’ (2000) *ART+law*  
<http://www.artslaw.com.au/ArtLaw/Archive/00ArtistResaleRoyalties.asp>

<sup>2</sup> Lewis, P, ‘The resale royalty and Australian visual artists: painting the full picture’ (2003) 8 *Media & Arts Law Review* 306 p2

<sup>3</sup> Lydiate, H, ‘Artists Resale Right: The Artists’ Campaign for Droit de Suite’ (1994) *Artslaw*  
<http://www.artquest.org.uk/artlaw/artists-resale-right/artists-campaign-for-droit-de-suite.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Commonwealth, *Report of the Contemporary Visual Arts and Craft Inquiry*, (2002)  
Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, 158.

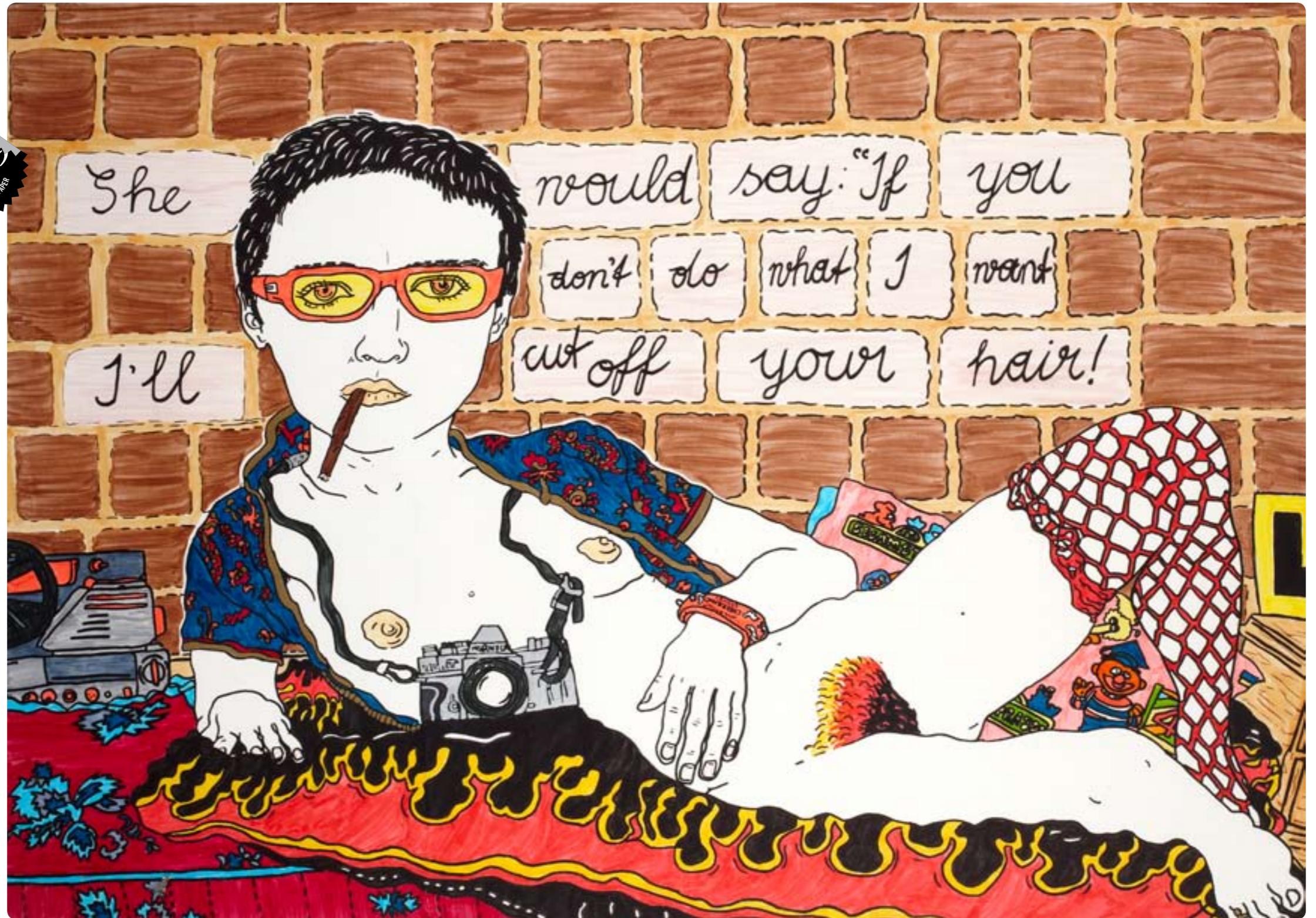
<sup>5</sup> Graddy et al, ‘A study into the effect on the UK art market of the introduction of the artist’s resale right’ (2008)  
*UK Intellectual Property Office* p2

<sup>6</sup> Paul Lewis, “The Resale Royalty and Australian Visual Artists: Painting the Full Picture” (2003) 8 *Media & Arts Law Review* 306, 313.

<sup>7</sup> Justin Miller, “Droite De Suite: A Flawed Concept” (2006) 6(18) *Indigenous Law Bulletin* 20.

BEST SHOT  
2005  
DAS SUPERHERO

Sullivan & Strumpf:  
Arlene Textaqueen



•• *She Would Say if You Don't Do What I Want  
I'll Cut Off Your Hair (Sabine), 2001*  
Felt tip to paper  
Courtesy of Sullivan & Strumpf  
[www.ssfa.com.au](http://www.ssfa.com.au)



Amber Valentine (New York, USA) is a style maestra with manners beyond measure. She paints profound oil portraits of the lucky and lovely, creates great mixes for DJ sets and friends' stereos.



- | *Comfortable Would Be...*
- | *Some Things Never Change (Leah)*, 2007  
Felt tip on paper  
127cm x 97cm
- *I Shouldn't Have Put These On...*



**Dana** (Portland, Oregon, USA) is a saucy stylish Taurian temptress with a delicate deftness for graphic design.

“NAVA is a not-for-profit, membership-based organisation that represents the interests of the Australian visual arts, craft and design sector whose aim is to advocate for and help grow the sector as whole, as well as providing services and support for Australia’s emerging artists, designers and craftspeople.”

## NAVA

### ARTS ORGANISATION PROFILE

Bronwyn Bailey-Charteris

Say you are an artist or a designer or an artsworkeer, how do you know how to do your tax? Get a grant? Or just get a fair deal when dealing with galleries? Well, there is a place that is terribly multi-faceted and with its octopus like legs dipping into many pies provides quality services and opportunities to emerging and established artists and designers. Welcome to NAVA – The National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) which is the peak body representing and advancing the professional interests of the Australian visual arts, craft and design sector.

NAVA provides a large range of services for emerging artists, craftspeople and designers. NAVA is a not-for-profit, membership-based organisation that represents the interests of the Australian visual arts, craft and design sector whose aim is to advocate for and help grow the sector as whole, as well as providing services and support for Australia’s emerging artists, designers and craftspeople.

The three main stems of this national organisation are;

**Grants program:** NAVA administers a range of quick-response grants and prizes that provide great opportunities for emerging artists who sometimes find it more difficult to access funding. The grants provide funds to help artists extend their practice through activities such as the exhibition and promotion of their work, and travelling overseas.

**Professional Advice:** NAVA provides a range of free and low-cost services and publications that help artists and designers with issues that come up in professional life, such as tax, gallery agreements, copyright information and much more. NAVA publishes a Code of Practice for the sector and helps artists who have may not been treated fairly under the Code.

**Artist Opportunities:** Being a NAVA member keeps you up-to-date on the large – but sometimes hard to find – selection of opportunities out there for artists, designers and craftspeople. This includes a monthly e-bulletin of residencies, funds, exposure opportunities and more. NAVA also publishes a low-cost publication, Money for Visual Artists, which lists all the major awards, prizes and professional development opportunities for Australian visual artists, craftspeople and designers.

**www.artistcareer.com.au:** artistcareer is a completely free online service run by NAVA that keeps you regularly updated on the latest professional development information and training. This includes updates on relevant seminars and workshops, links to online artist business resources, access to further training and advice on how to grow your art practice through professionalism, networking, marketing and innovative thinking.

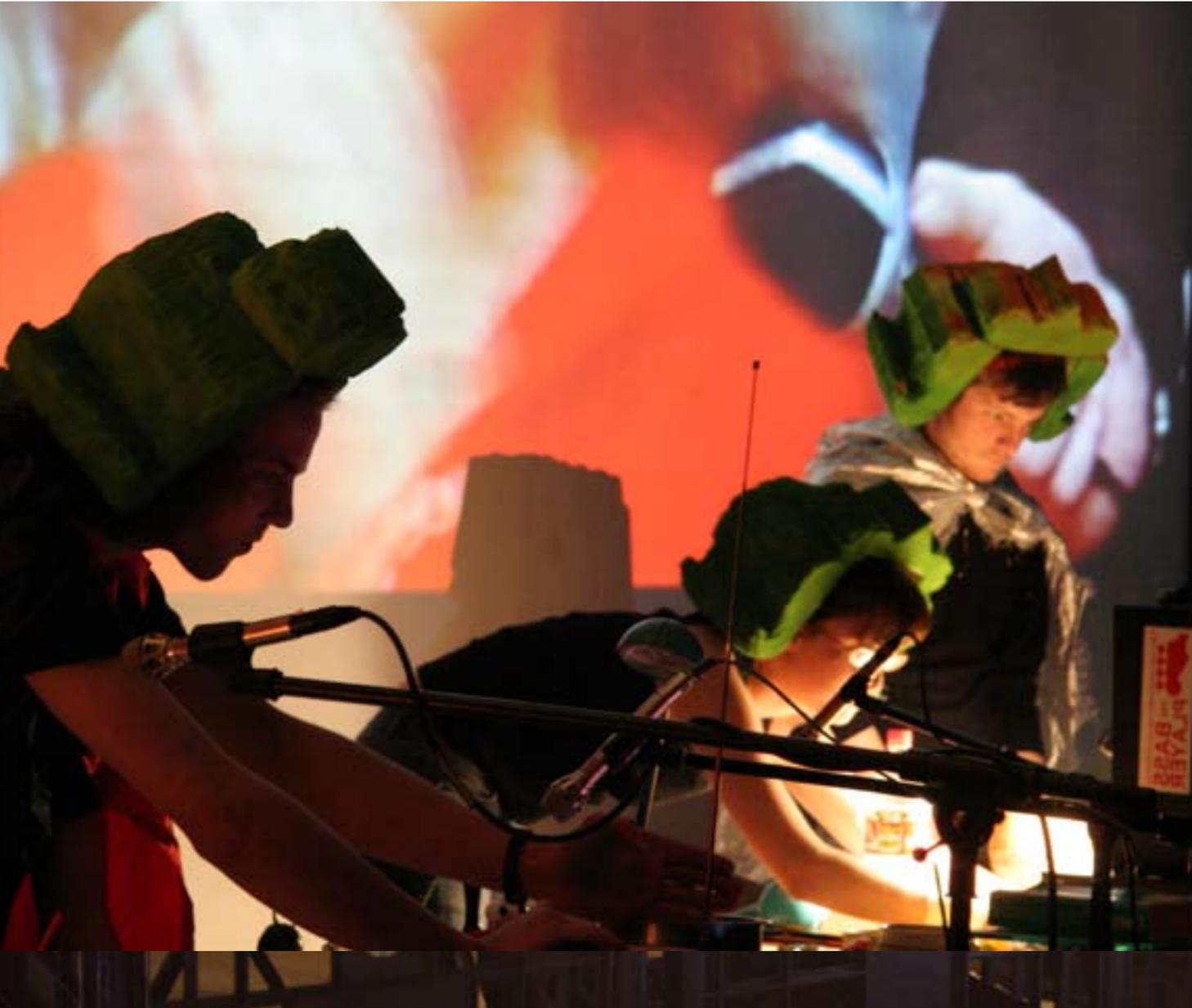
You can give NAVA a ring or access a lot of info on the website: <http://www.visualarts.net.au/> where you can also read about or purchase NAVA publications too.



Tolarno Galleries:  
Anastasia Klose

- *The Order of the Universe* (2009)  
Modular pink staircase with mural made from mdf and acrylic with *As if on a Cloud* DVD and *True Love* DVD, *The Happy Artist* bound book and heart shaped plinth, three lamps, blanket, owl, lamb, three stools and plants  
2.5m x 9m x 5.6 m  
Photo by Christian Capurro  
Image courtesy the artist and Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne  
[www.tolarnogalleries.com](http://www.tolarnogalleries.com)





## Eddie Sharp

### INTERVIEW

Bronwyn Bailey-Charteris

#### **What led you to the world of fine arts? Was it the fame/glory/money/instant celebrity status?**

I've always made art but, honestly, I started my art-making career out of desperation. I tried a million other things and I actually wasn't really that good at anything else.

#### **Because of you I can't watch "At the Movies" with Margaret and David anymore, well I can but I get horrid flashbacks. How did your dirty mind get so dirty as to perceive some underlying sexual tensions in their weekly chit chat?**

Erotic Fan Fiction Readings were an event I started in 2006. Rosie Fisher started to co-curate them with me, as part of The Imperial Panda Festival, in 2008 and they've kind of taken off since. It's a simple premise: we ask writers we like to write a short piece of filth about a celebrity or fictional character, which they then read in public.

I wrote the David & Margaret story because I love that show and I've always felt that the sexual tension between those two is goddamn electric.

A lot of people really like the story but I've also been told it's a little sexist. I never meant it to be sexist. It was honestly done out of respect. I wanted Margaret to be this liberated, feminist, sexual aggressor. But then I made some jokes about menopause and her sagging breasts that may have tipped it over the edge.

Jennifer Byrne performed at an Erotic Fan Fiction recently and afterward I asked her if she thought my story was offensive to women over 40 and she was like 'A little bit, yes'. I've written another one about Bill Henson and Robert Hughes that I hope evens the balance somewhat.

#### **Is all your work based around comedy?**

With our theatre group, Rhubarb Rhubarb, we try not to make work based solely around comedy. I prefer to think that the work we make is based around the mechanics of cinema, or pastiche, or the interaction between live performance and the recorded image or something equally as lofty. That being said we are all pretty obsessed with comedy. I have a love/hate relationship with the comedy thing. People disregard your work as frivolous if it has jokes in it. Comedy is a dirty word in contemporary art. But some of the best artists – Godard, Bruce Nauman, Douglas Gordon – make art that is really funny. People just don't think of them that way.

And as performers there's something gratifying about laughter when you're in front of a live audience. It's an instant reaction. You can get addicted to it and start to seek it out and that can be dangerous. We are now trying to find a happy medium. With our previous shows *Wonka!* and *The Mad Max Remix* it was about joke-stacking and trying to see how many jokes you can cram into a minute. The new show we are working on – a theatre show for the 2010 Nextwave Festival called *Some Film Museums I Have Known* – is way more ambitious and artistic than anything we've done before. We are trying our hardest to be serious but jokes keep creeping in anyway.

Ideally we'd like to be able to do both. Make funny theatre shows for fringe festivals and also shows that are more subtle and prosaic for arts festivals. *Suitcase Royale* are theatre-makers from Melbourne who do that and I really respect them for it.



**You obviously move between mediums and genres quite easily. What kind of artist do you see yourself as?**

I've never felt any pressure to define my role. I guess I'm primarily a writer. My role within Rhubarb Rhubarb is director but I'm actually more like a curator. Most of the things we've done previously have been about organising talented people around a project or an idea. We've been very lucky with the people we've gotten. People like Cecily Hardy, Charlie Garber, John Leary, Kenzie McKenzie or Xannon Shirley. If someone has a good idea I think the best thing to do is to try and stay out their way and see how it fits with the whole piece.

**The Wonka Remix is somewhat of a living legend in Sydney. That show kind of sums up Lan Francies space for me too, with a bit of utopian rose glasses I remember how everyone was working so hard making foley and costumes and comedy and the crowd was just packed in and loving it every night. That was such an exciting time when we had all just finished art school, so much creative energy and excitement about. How did Wonka come about and how did you pull it off?**

Wonka was the first show we ever did. We were very young and naïve. It came from just being surrounded by extremely talented people and focusing all that energy and excitement on to one project. The success of it was truly shocking because we really had no idea what we were doing and then suddenly there were lines around the block. That is the best way to do things I think, you make better and more unusual choices when you don't know any better.

**What are the conceptual parameters that interest you in the art of remix?**

What interests me in making remixes is how culturally loaded the footage you are using is. For example if you take Mel Gibson in Mad Max you've got the idea of a Macho Action Hero and all the cultural baggage that comes with it plus you've also got Anti-Semitism, Hollywood, Alcoholism and a million other ideas to play with. It's rich material to mine. Also, when we do live-remixes, we create all the audio live on stage and that aspect is endlessly fascinating to me.

That being said we are putting the breaks on making any more remixes because it can be a very uncreative way of working. Most of the work is sourcing and archiving. It gets very stifling. The new work we are making is more loose and live. Which is a little scary but in a good way.

**Did the Mad Max Remix come as easily or did you suffer any typical 'second book' anxiety?**

Total second book anxiety. We all went off and made a lot of other shows with other people in the meantime but there was always that follow up hanging over our heads. Zoe Coombs Marr and I eventually wrote most of it in only a couple of months but we just kept delaying it, for about three years. The problem was we never had a deadline. In the end you just have to set a date and get on with it or else it stretches on forever and you slowly lose your mind. Look at Axel Rose.

**Your show at Serial Space in August, 'Scenes from Paramount Mountain' was a collaboration with William Mansfield, have you guys worked together before?**

Most of the projects I've made have been collaborations with Will. We compliment each other really well. I have very ambitious and complicated ideas but my execution is quite sloppy, whereas Will is a painstaking perfectionist. That exhibition was a series of sketches for the new theatre show we are making. Will made a model plane for the exhibition. It took him about a month and it looked awesome. Everything was to scale and finely detailed. I made a model city, which was supposed to look like New York but it looks more like a slum village. We have a live tracking shot in the exhibition where you come out of this perfect pristine aeroplane and into a sort of cardboard shantytown. It works somehow, like a master craftsman and a precocious ten year old have put on an exhibition together. Which, in a way, is the truth.

**I loved the electric train in that show, can you tell us how it all worked?**

The train set was just a means to an end. We wanted to use tiny cameras and models to simulate complicated cinematic tracking shots and the only way to get a steady shot was to use model trains. I'm glad we did it because it's pushed the show in a whole other direction. It's also an example of the serendipity of collaboration. Neither of us would have thought of it alone.

**What do you think the importance of art is?**

Art is just self-expression. It's a natural impulse to re-order the world. Its human and unavoidable, but it isn't important. It's useless. It's amazing to think that people make a living from it.

**The Sydney emerging and contemporary art scene, is in my opinion pretty incredible. There's so much great work being made and ideas being explored. How do you find it and your place within it?**

I feel honoured to be a part of it. There are a lot of genuinely amazing artists in Sydney at the moment. I get very excited about other promoting other people's work.

I feel like my place within the Sydney art scene is very niche though. I inhabit this odd space between theatre and contemporary art with a handful of other people in Sydney. In some ways it's insular but it also creates an intensity of focus that propels everyone along and makes the work better.

**Do you think you'll stay in Sydney or will you do the traditional arts exodus?**

I love Sydney. There are more and more opportunities to tour work coming out of the woodwork these days and the nature of contemporary theatre means you have to be a little bit like nomadic carnie folk, but I feel I will always be Sydney based.

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The members of "Rhubarb Rhubarb" are Eddie Sharp, William Mansfield, Zoe Coombs Marr, Dom Broadhurst and Kali Reid. Beyond this collective Eddie is also the FBI radio resident art critic and co-directs the Imperial Panda Festival and Erotic Fan Ficton Readings. Rhubarb Rhubarb's next show Some Film Museums I Have Known is debuting at the 2010 Nextwave festival. It is supported by Nextwave, Australia Council and the Australian Centre for the Moving Image.

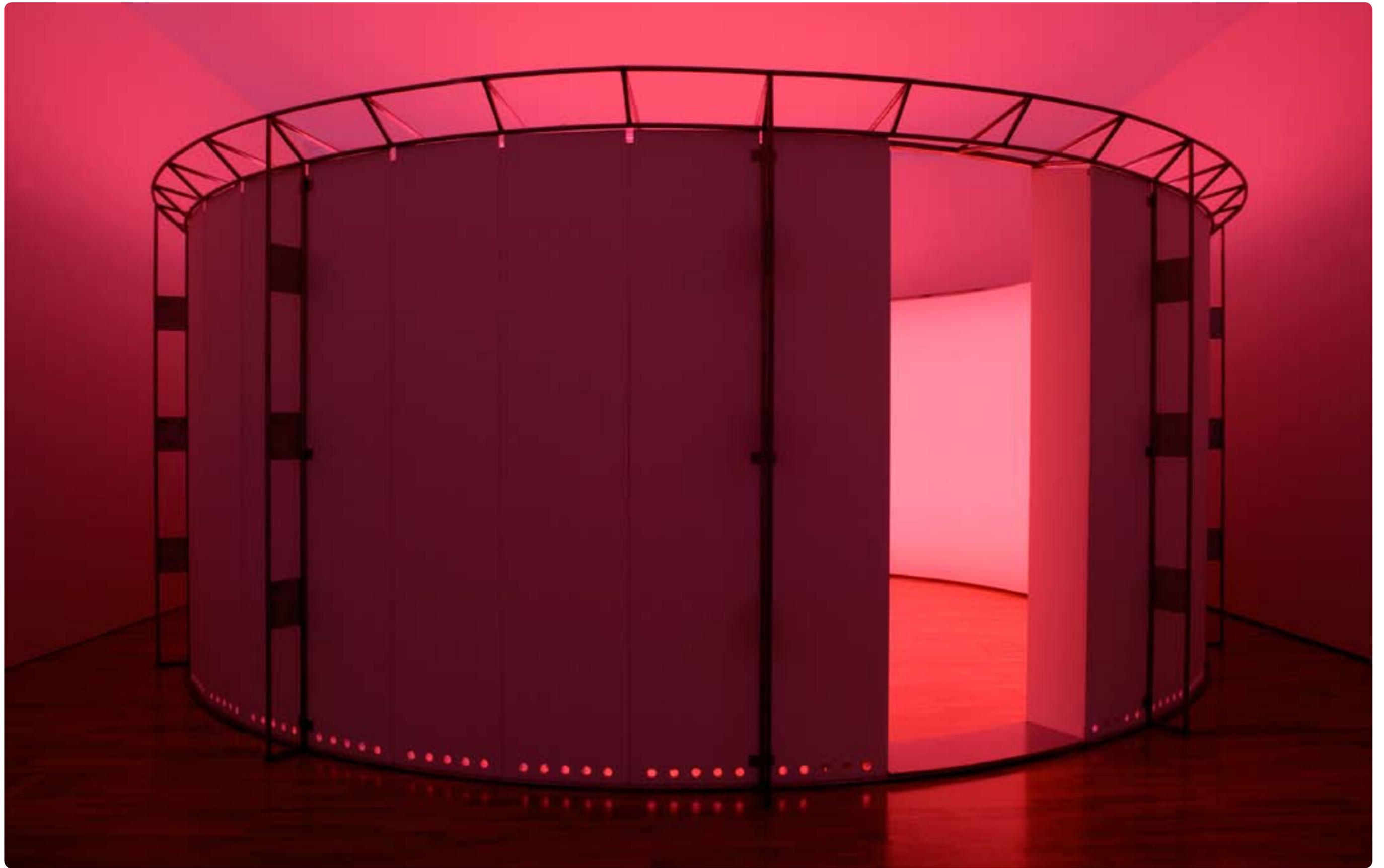




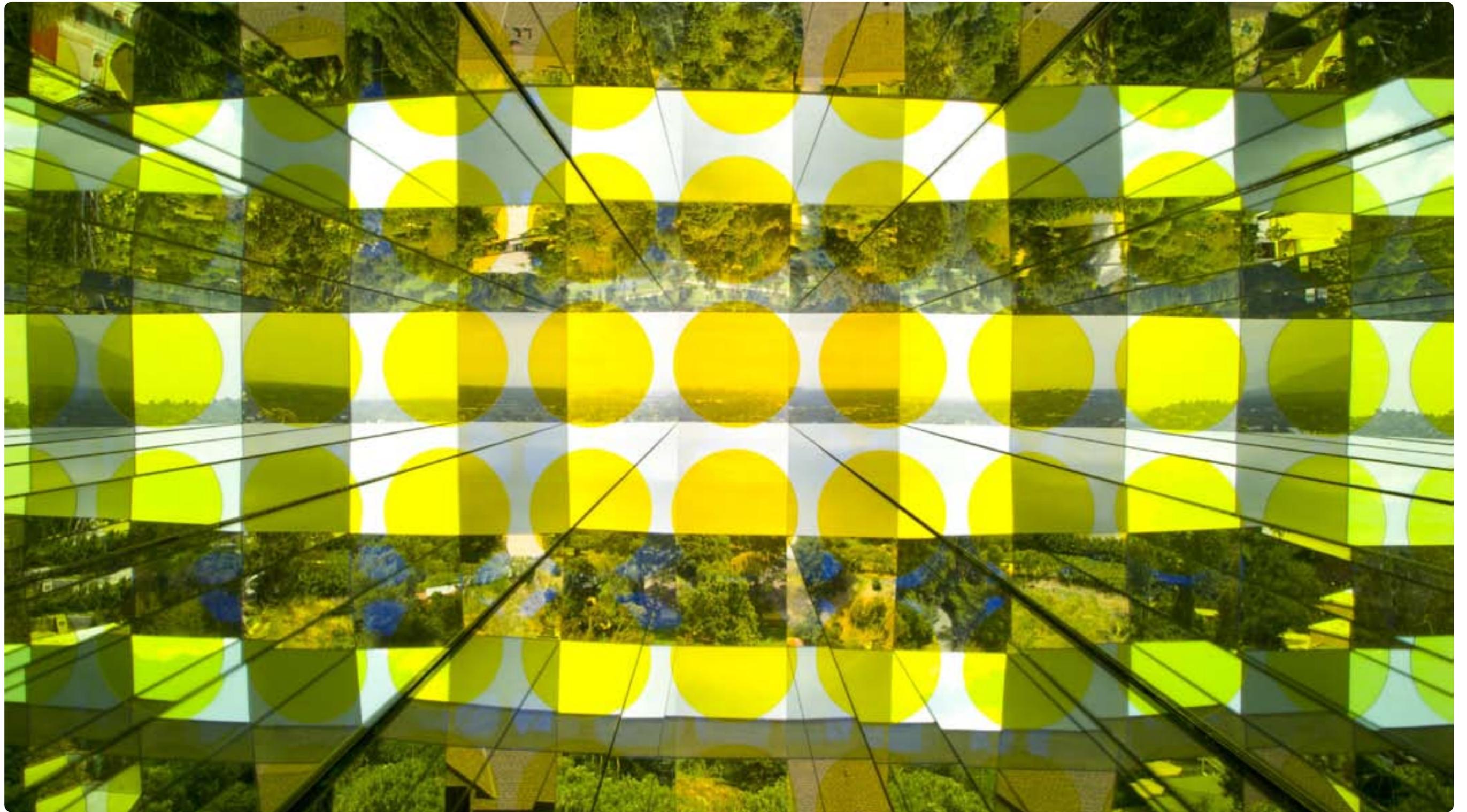
Museum of Contemporary Arts:  
Olafur Eliasson

- |• *Room for one colour* (1997)  
monofrequency lights  
dimensions variable  
installation view at Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, 2005  
Image courtesy the artist, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery,  
New York, and neugerriemschneider, Berlin © the artist  
Photography: Jens Ziehe

- |• *360° room for all colours* (2002)  
stainless steel, projection foil, fluorescent lights,  
wood, control unit 320 x 815.3 x 815.3 cm.  
installation view Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg,  
Wolfsburg, 2004 Private collection  
Image courtesy the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery,  
New York © the artist  
Photography: Jens Ziehe; © 2007 Olafur Eliasson







- *Sunset kaleidoscope* (2005)  
wood, color-effect filter glass, mirrors, motor  
45.7 x 45.7 x 177.8 cm  
installation view at Jamie Residence, Emi Fontana  
West of Rome, Los Angeles, 2005  
Collection of John and Phyllis Kleinberg  
courtesy Galleria Emi Fontana, Milan  
Image courtesy and © the artist  
Photography: Fredrik Nilsen



## Costume Dramas

### INTERVIEW

Jasmine O'Loughlin-Glover

### PHOTOGRAPHY

Fred Kroh

[www.fred.net.au](http://www.fred.net.au)

Mia Veur is the stunning buyer behind cult Melbourne boutique, Left. Often managing to look like a walking sculpture, her structured, tailored suits and sharp haircuts, mean there's never a dull day in her wardrobe department. We caught up with her to talk all things jumpsuit and Japanese.

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**Hi Mia. How are things with you at the moment?**

Things are really busy at the moment, I've hardly got time to do anything but I wouldn't have it any other way. I've just come back from Paris, where I was previewing the Spring Summer 2010 collections. Mostly, I have been doing lots of research into new fashion labels, while half-heartedly attempting to create an accessories line. This completely fell to shit in Paris when I saw a British guy do the same thing but a billion times better. Better to leave it to the professionals I guess. Other than that things are great.

**I'm very pleased to be featuring you this issue, in particular because your dress sense is quite different from anyone else who I've spoken with so far. Your style, to me, is beautifully structural, with careful attention given to silhouette and texture. It is less flamboyant, I guess, than many of my previous interviewees, but certainly no less interesting. How would you describe the way you dress?**

Thankyou! I'm definitely a little less flamboyant than I used to be. I guess that is an age thing. I used to wear so much colour, anything synthetic and with a crazy shape – lots of jumpsuits. I would wear too much all at once.

But now, I feel like I am starting to wear less vintage and more new labels. I mean, my job is to discover new things for people to wear, so I now have to represent that in a way that isn't too blatant – not head-to-toe in one label. I don't like that look.

My style is getting more masculine and more Japanese now. I love Yohji Yamamoto, Comme des Garçons and Issey Miyake. I love clothes that quietly shout.

**What influences your style? Does it come from within the fashion world, or from other sources too?**

I would have to say that my influences come from other places rather than just fashion. Your personal style should have a little more depth than just looking at a magazine for inspiration. I get my influences from travel, films, a fragrance and what it reminds me of, novels, record sleeves, club scenes in London in the 80s and 90s, partners, and my family. We all have a very particular style.

**What are you thinking about as you put an outfit together in the morning? Is there an icon or style in the back of your mind?**

Getting ready in the morning isn't that painful, as I have a pretty fair idea of what I like and what I'm in the mood for. There's a lot of Grace Jones inspired things in my wardrobe at the moment. I have a Lagerfeld catsuit from the height of that period. It's pretty epic. I hope Grace never leaves my wardrobe! She is my ultimate icon for style.

**There is such a strong, coherent, but idiosyncratic, sense of style conveyed in these three outfits. Can you tell me a bit about each one?**

These are, for the moment, my favourite items. They all have something sentimental for me.

So the first is my white jumpsuit. It reminds me of a scrunched up tissue. Very Japanese. I love wearing this with a white seahorse earring. The shoes are Giuseppe Zanotti and they remind me of Bladerunner. I wore this to a party in Paris and the reaction was pretty intense. Paris is pretty conservative. However, Jeremy Scott came up to me and said it was great. And he is great so I like it even more. Haha.

The second is a plaid men's current Y's Yohji Yamamoto linen suit, worn with my favourite boots. I really love wearing suits in general, they're so staunch, and Yohji's suits are cut so well. All that collections was re-editions of archive pieces from the 80s and early 90s. I briefly bought the menswear for the store – it was from my first ever Paris fashion week, so it has nice memories for me.

The third has my favourite leather gloves in it. I love these so much because of the designers who made them. They're by Maurizio Amadei of M.A+. This man is amazing. We are really honoured to stock his leather pieces in our store. The pants are Comme des Garçons and I love their shape, I hardly take them off. The jacket is vintage Issey Miyake. It's from a swap I did with my friend Andrew Moller (previously featured in Costume Dramas). I still think he got the short end of the stick. Haha.



**You're the buyer for Melbourne boutique, Left, and the way you dress very much reflects the essence of this store – odd, sculptural, and quite monochromatic. What is the motive behind the way you buy for the boutique?**

My style is definitely becoming more influenced by the store and vice versa. At the moment, I am trying to take the store's look and feel in a slightly different direction.

We're very blessed by having great collections to work with from Yohji Yamamoto, M.A+, Comme, Arielle de Pinto... and going to Paris and being asked to view new collections from very talented people is incredible. We are now making a solid effort to balance the store with up-and-coming designers from around the world.

During my last trip, I viewed Three as Four, who used to be As Four, from New York. These people work so hard and had just collaborated with Yoko Ono to produce a pattern she had been working on for 20 years to perfect. I am very spoilt in this way, when I can speak to designers one on one and talk to them about their ideas. It's very rewarding, especially knowing that I can bring something back for the store that no-one else has...yet.

**Does the same motive inspire your personal sense of style?**

I suppose there is a similar motive; I want them both to be new and different without being ridiculous. I'm still not sure if I have got that yet.

**How would you describe the boutique?**

The boutique is changing so it's hard to define exactly what the style is. I do know that our aesthetic is more Japanese with European influences. I wouldn't say androgenous, but it does have a certain masculinity to the womenswear, especially the Yohji Yamamoto label. We have clients who have been wearing Yohji since the early 80s when it was debuted in Paris and Tokyo. These clients, particularly the women, always look immaculate and never toe the line of what women should wear. The store pushes boundaries for menswear too, having Maurizio Amadei's leather pieces for men, with references to the 'Arte Povera' movement, a style that Australian men hadn't been exposed to before, but which is huge in Japan and Europe. I guess it's all style that looks back to look forward, that's what the store represents to me.

**What does your role as the buyer involve?**

Buying is hard, but I love it so much. It's up to me to attend the Paris fashion week collections, usually on my own. I then meet with designers and agents, deciding on key pieces from each collection to create a strong story for the label in the store. My job also involves researching new designers all the time, meeting with them, working with budgets, and lots of networking. I realise how far Australia is when I am there and how I have to work twice as hard to convince people that their labels will be successful here.

**Who, in your opinion, are the major fashion avant gardes, and why?**

I don't think I can really think of anyone at present who is a fashion avant garde. I believe that the only fashion avant gardes these days are people who wear some sort of religious uniform, as it seems to be the only fashion that really makes people uneasy or irate. These are clothes that inspire so much conflict.

I'm talking about nuns, African Zionists or someone wearing a full Hijab. Not worn in an ironic way but by people who are completely religious and spend everyday wearing a uniform of sorts. I'm not at all religious. I am always mesmerised by it because it is the polar opposite to me, so I find it fascinating.

**Finally, why is it important to you to assert such a strong identity through what you wear?**

I don't try to be anything other than what I am. I have always been this way, highly experimental since I can remember. It's just evolved. Though it is only going to get stranger from here on in...