

# *runway*

an australian contemporary art magazine

ISSUE 9 CHANGE



# runway

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To have change, one must first not spend  
change.



Metachian Change  
Elizabeth Reidy

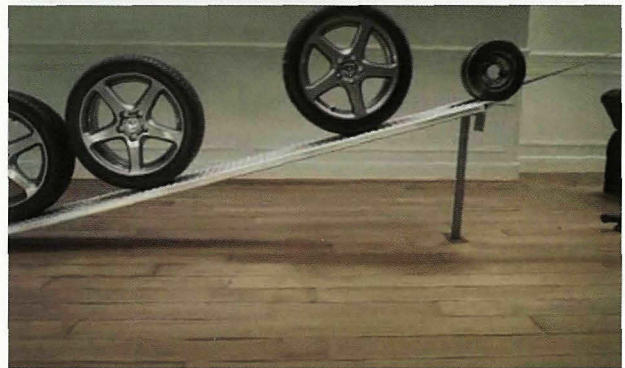
# Editorial

DAVID LAWREY

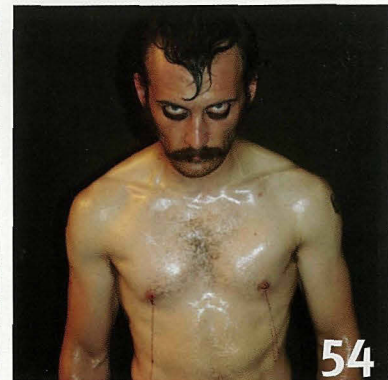
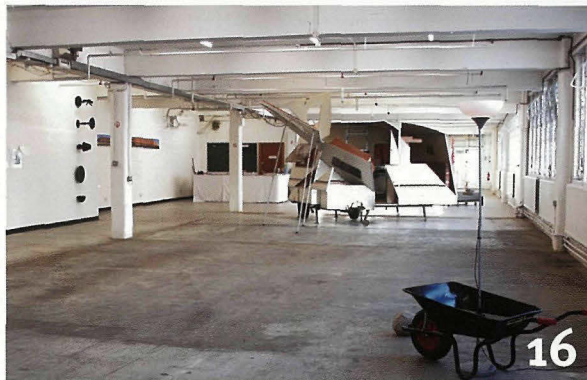
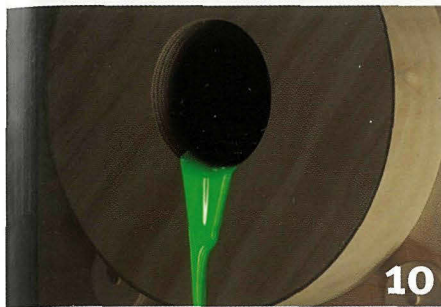
In *The Way Things Go* (1987) Swiss artists Peter Fischli & David Weiss film a chain reaction in which motion is passed from one object to another like a series of toppling dominos. The objects in this sequence are a wide range of carefully placed things, which, with the aid of gravity, melting plastic, spewing chemical reactions, explosions and fire are ready to fall, spin or fly forward passing their momentum onto the next object. The film opens with the action already in motion and continues forward, through a variety of both unique and reappearing set-ups, until the film stops while the activity continues. As the film tracks the movement, it designates the action as the present along a line of objects that represent a cyclical path from past to future. In this work, change is presented as time itself, a process without beginning, end, point or purpose; as a viewer posted on IMDB: "I see it as a metaphor for life sometimes... I go to work day in and day out and perform some meaningless tasks that relate to other people's meaningless tasks over and over again to do what? NOTHING."

Using the same filmic premise, Wieden+Kennedy's television advertisement for Honda, *Cog* (2003) presents a very different view of change and time. In this video, parts from the advertised car were used as the objects. Beginning with a small cog, the movement progresses as the objects each glide across the space to delicately activate the next set-up object. It is as if each part was simply drawn to its greater conclusion: a completed car ready for purchase. Since capital's existence is reliant on perpetual growth, it is compelled to perceive change as a positive progression in which fluctuations create either opportunities or threats, and destruction and decomposition are forces that fertilise advancement. The view that overall change is moving us forward is the persuasive message the individual needs to hear in order to participate in consumer activity - new products are always better, cheaper and more exciting.

The contributors to this issue of *runway* present a number of views on change. Dougal Phillips' interview with Sam Smith reveals the evolving nature of artistic practice, while Zanny Begg's article *Smells Like Teen Spirit: Art and Change Since Seattle* examines the ability of art to affect change in wider social contexts. In Jason De Haan's *Crystal Day*, the artist spends an entire day with his pockets filled with crystals said to possess various beneficial properties. This pseudo-experiment reveals a cynicism towards new age philosophy, while also indulging in the optimism generated by the seed of possibility. De Haan's work presents a fundamentally similar attitude to change as is presented in Fischli & Weiss' *The Way Things Go* - as a largely circular function. However, like many of the other submissions herein, De Haan's work also illustrates a characteristic longing to discover a positive progression, however improbable this may be. *runway*, too has changed much over the course of its life, this issue reveals the latest shift to a larger and more structured format. Whether this change is a symbol of progress, or simply another shift in the ongoing turn of events; only time will tell.



Above: Peter Fischli & David Weiss *The Way Things Go* (1987) video still.  
Bottom: Wieden+Kennedy *Cog* (2003) video still.



## FEATURES

**5 SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT: ART AND CHANGE SINCE SEATTLE**  
ZANNY BEGG

**10 ACROSS THE UNIVERSE(S)**  
DOUGAL PHILLIPS interviews SAM SMITH

**16 PROFILE: THREE LONDON ARTIST-RUN INITIATIVES**  
KAREN D'AMICO

**20 ARTVADER & THE ATTACK OF THE WHITE CUBE**  
JESS JOHNSON

**24 TEMPELHOF: FUNCTIONALITY IN PAINTING, FUNCTIONALITY IN AIRSPACES**  
ALEX LAWLER

## CHANGE

**31 SHADOW SERIES**  
HELENA LESLIE

**36 CHRISSIE LIGHTS**  
ANDREW FROST

**40 SOJOURN SPACE**  
MIMI TONG

**44 CRYSTAL DAY**  
JASON DE HAAN

**46 GROWING UP WITH PARKER**  
PAUL DONALD

**50 ASSIGNMENT**  
AMANDA ROWELL

**52 AUSTRALIAN VALUES DECLARATION**  
JESSE STEIN

**54 THERE ARE MANY GERMAN WORDS IN POLISH, THERE ARE NOT MANY GERMAN WORDS**  
KUBA DORABIALSKI

**58 VARIATIONS**  
KATHRYN GRAY

**62 SEX AND PRETTY BABIES**  
EMILY HUNT & RAQUEL WELCH

**66 MOUNTAIN**  
MARITA FRASER

## REVIEWS & INTERVIEWS

**71 JAMES AVERY & ELEANOR AVERY - OUR DAY OUT YOURSPACE**  
CLARE LEWIS, MICHAEL LLOYD, JAMES AVERY & ELEANOR AVERY

**74 REDFERN-WATERLOO TOUR OF BEAUTY**  
ANNEKE JASPERS interviews SQUATSPACE

**78 OUR LUCKY COUNTRY (DIFFERENCE)**  
ELISE ROUTLEDGE

**80 HAUNTED WEATHER: THE NERVE IN THE FACTORY**  
MARK BROWN

**82 MOP**  
JAKI MIDDLETON interviews RON & GEORGE ADAMS

## PREVIEWS

**85 FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS**  
A LIST OF EXHIBITIONS FOR THE DIARY

FEATURES



## Smells like teen spirit: art and change since Seattle

ZANNY BEGG

Almost ten years ago, in November 1999, several thousand demonstrators in Seattle rioted and, in conjunction with a walkout of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting by delegates from the Third World, shut down that round of trade talks. The implication of this moment is something the financial elites have been trying to reverse ever since. This is both directly—as they have been trying to restart a new round of trade talks—and indirectly, as they have struggled to contain the ‘summit fever’ which has faced almost every subsequent global meeting, be it the WTO, the IMF, the World Economic Forum or APEC.

While Seattle had previously been known as the birthplace of indie grunge bands such as Nirvana, Hole and Pearl Jam, supplying the necessary angst, boredom and rebellion for a generation who grew up in the nineties, since this moment it has also become known as the birthplace of the anti-capitalist movement, which has supplied the necessary angst, boredom and rebellion for a generation who became politically active since 2000.

This has been an apt double birthplace. As Naomi Klein documents so well in *No Logo*, the indie culture which swept across the world in the nineties was, in many ways, a victim of its own success, transforming consumer capitalism into ‘alt.everything’ as the big brands suddenly woke up and noticed the buying power of the youth market.<sup>1</sup> Desperate to cash in, they began to see a marketing opportunity in oppositional, alternative, punk, grunge and street culture. Employing ‘cool hunters’ and understanding sneakers as a ‘paradigm shift’ these corporations pilfered the cultural production of ironic, disaffected young people—selling their rebellion and disaffection right back at them.

Above: Contra Filé, *The Program for the deTurnstilisation of Life Itself* 2005-2007 public intervention.

The hype that surrounded the 'Seattle sound' was a microcosm of this whole process. What began as a rejection of corporate music culture at the beginning of the nineties, however ill-theorized or thought through, ended up as the marketing phenomenon of the decade. It is no wonder then, as Klein explains, that the 'voracity of the corporate cool hunt did much to provoke the rise of brand based activism'.<sup>2</sup> As Klein discusses, what this process inadvertently revealed was that any form of activism, acting out, or alternative lifestyle, was just as likely to be co-opted unless it targeted the actual cause of the process itself—the big brands and corporate capitalism. That Seattle, at the end of the nineties, should be the site for a violent confrontation with the international capitalist elite, was a small whiff of poetic justice for a community which had been marketed to the profit of major corporations as Indie Inc. for the previous decade.

The demonstrations against the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Seattle in November 1999 were thus both a product of the process of globalisation and its most serious critique. On the one hand, the protests were a result of globalisation: its 'one world' rhetoric, de-territorialized economic flows, hyper-capitalised markets, exponential growth in communication and information technology, and sophisticated consumer-marketing strategies. However, on the other hand they sought to undo the precarity of life in underdeveloped economies and the alienated and meaningless consumption in the developed ones, which was part and parcel of this process. Seattle marked a moment where the triumphalism of the capitalists, which had accompanied the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Block, faltered. It was a moment when activists could seriously conceptualise an anti-capitalist political process without the dead-weight of Stalinism and its legacies. It was an event which had a profound impact on how culture was expressed and understood and would change how artists would make work as the new millennium began.

The 13th edition of the newspaper *ChtoDelat?*, put out by the Russian art collective of the same name and distributed as part of the *If You See Something, Say Something* exhibition in Sydney in 2007, re-printed a short essay by Maurizio Lazzarato entitled *Struggle, Event, Media*.<sup>3</sup> This essay made the proposition that Seattle was a 'political event', which has generated a transformation of subjectivity and created its own mode of sensibility. This event, according to Lazzarato, has allowed both a new potentiality to emerge, and contributed to its realisation.

According to Alain Badiou, an 'event' can be defined as 'what-is-not-being-qua-being', or a rare occurrence, with no assignable cause, which ruptures everyday life changing the established order of things. A fundamental proposition underlying Badiou's philosophy is the idea that 'the new happens in being, under the name of the event'.<sup>4</sup> An event is thus a moment of innovation, change, revolution, or dynamism, which cannot be reduced or explained by what is already 'there' in any given situation.

There are four arenas, according to Badiou, where an event can manifest: art, love, science and politics (the first of course being the primary concern here). If an 'event' occurs in any one of these areas it brings into being an individual or collective 'subject'. For Badiou, the event manifests politically when the material of the event is 'collective'.<sup>5</sup> This collective is not a numerical factor but an indicator of the extent to which the event provides the 'vehicle for a virtual summoning of all'.<sup>6</sup> Political upheavals such as the French Revolution, the Paris Commune or Russia 1917, function by the way of 'political truth procedures', which create 'fidelity' to the 'event'.

Lazzarato's use of the term 'political event' to describe the days of Seattle cannot be ignorant of this context provided by Badiou. One can only imagine that he deliberately places Seattle within the idea of the event *a la* Badiou (something Badiou himself was reluctant to do over the arguably more volatile and deep rebellion of Paris May/June 1968).<sup>7</sup> But while Lazzarato may stretch the term, he also does not pull it out of shape altogether. Seattle has transformed politics across the globe and while its impact may appear to pale before the radicalisation of 1968 or dim even further beside the 'last political event' (Badiou) of 1917, its depth and impact has also allowed the reconfiguration of the 'new'. As Lazzarato points out 'before Seattle a different world was merely virtual. Now it is actual or possible'.<sup>8</sup>

The rupture, which Seattle and the anti-capitalist movement represented from the political point of view, was also an artistic rupture, which affected how artists created and realised their works. This rupture has enabled a series of shifts in the troubled and troubling relationship between art and politics. As Jill Bennet observes 'world events, it seems, are now back on the agenda of contemporary art. Major exhibitions, biennials and art publishers have, for a moment, turned their attention to global politics'.<sup>9</sup>

This shift can best be understood by first looking at the significance of the previous upsurge of struggle: 1968. Despite Badiou's reservations, 1968 was an event which was responsible for the birth of the anti-colonial, feminist, counter cultural and other social movements which have indelibly altered the political landscape. A whole series of artistic responses can be regarded as related to this event—the Situationists, conceptual art, postmodernism, identity based and post-colonial art. This event, however, was also widely regarded as a failure or defeat. The inability of the French students and radical workers to complete the revolution they had joyously begun left many intellectuals disillusioned with Marxism—a feeling so aptly captured in Jean-Luc Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin's 1972 film *Tu va bien*. The turn to post-structuralism and postmodernism in the seventies and eighties could be viewed as a response to the tumult of new social agents who found their voice through the radicalisation of the sixties and a rejection of The Revolution which seemed unable to hear them.

While 1968 was an 'event', it was not a revolution. As its dynamism and impact petered out it fell back on the previous revolutionary event of 1917, which was already saturated and unable to generate the new. The result of this, in a cultural sphere, was that politics and art entered into a period of deep friction. There have been a legion of cultural rejections of Stalinism and they have been able to relate to as many political



rejections through identity politics, gender, anti-colonial projects and so on. Where they could not meet was over the vexed question of praxis, a project which from the political perspective seemed over-determined or saturated and from the cultural perspective, foreclosed.

In a different context, British art writer John Roberts also makes this point when he writes 'in broad terms Raul Vaneigem and the SI represent the last great moment of exchange between cultural critique and the philosophy of praxis. They define a point where the connection between philosophy of consciousness and class politics begins to unravel under the deconstruction of the subject and the rise of post-structuralism'.<sup>10</sup> After the Situationists there have been many artists who have made 'political art' but there has not been a moment when cultural and revolutionary praxis were able to coalesce in such an influential way.

What the anti-capitalist movement has allowed is a window where this exchange has again become possible. The complete cessation of the event of 1917, sealed in the dustbin of history forever by the collapse of the Soviet system, has freed political praxis—for better and worse—from its grip. The activists involved in the anti-capitalist movement have been forced to create anew what the Left will look like in these circumstances and with a new social subject forged from the experiences of post-Fordism. A range of artists have been attracted to this project finding fertile ground for works which again aim at the centre of the relationship between politics and art: the issue of praxis.

The exhibition *If You See Something, Say Something* was an experiment in linking these two fields together by bringing together eight international and local artists whose work has crossed between aesthetic and social spheres. While not harbouring any grandiose ideas about being a new international movement, this exhibition aimed to experiment with creating a new audience for art, which exists both within the activist and artistic world. This exhibition aimed to create a flow of movement between the gallery environment and the social sphere, generating new understandings and possibilities within both.

One example of this could be the work from the exhibition by the Brazilian art collective Contra Filé *The Program for the deTurnstilisation of Life Itself* (2005-2007). This work was first exhibited in São Paulo when Contra Filé placed a turnstile on a plinth in a local park with a plaque underneath with the work's title. On one level this work could be read as part of the historical continuum of the avant-garde and gestures such as Duchamp's placement of a readymade object—the *pissoir*—in the gallery. But Contra Filé added some essential new elements to this historical gesture by placing this work in the public domain, thus taking art from the reified environment of the museum into the public context where it was seen by non-art journalists and the public. Secondly, they chose not just any readymade object but an object which had strong metaphoric potential. The turnstile is a symbol of administered life in Brazil regulating the entrance to schools, public transport and public buildings such as hospitals, to those with the ability to pay. This particular 'readymade' thus spoke of particular social and political experiences.

The combination of these factors made Contra Filé's work resonate within Brazil. It was picked up by local newspapers that ran a series of cartoons and articles on the 'turnstilisation' of life in Brazil. These discussions gathered momentum and a major university decided to set an essay for its entrance exam on 'turnstilisation' thus acknowledging a new word had entered acceptable academic language. This was then followed by protests by university students who set fire to turnstiles as a gesture of anger against the university administration and a regulated and controlled society.

Contra Filé gathered photographs and press clippings of the controversy which were then re-exhibited as part of *If You See Something, Say Something* at Mori Gallery. The project was thus returned to the gallery context but filled out by the extra-museumified experience of 'real life'. Contra Filé's work shows how art can still both challenge and threaten to destroy the traditions of *art* by breathing 'new' content into an historical avant-garde gesture and social existence; connecting this to profound feelings of anger and exclusion and sparking genuine protests. This work exists as a work of art but also as a detonator of social protest and provides an example of some of the potential still contained within the notion of art today.

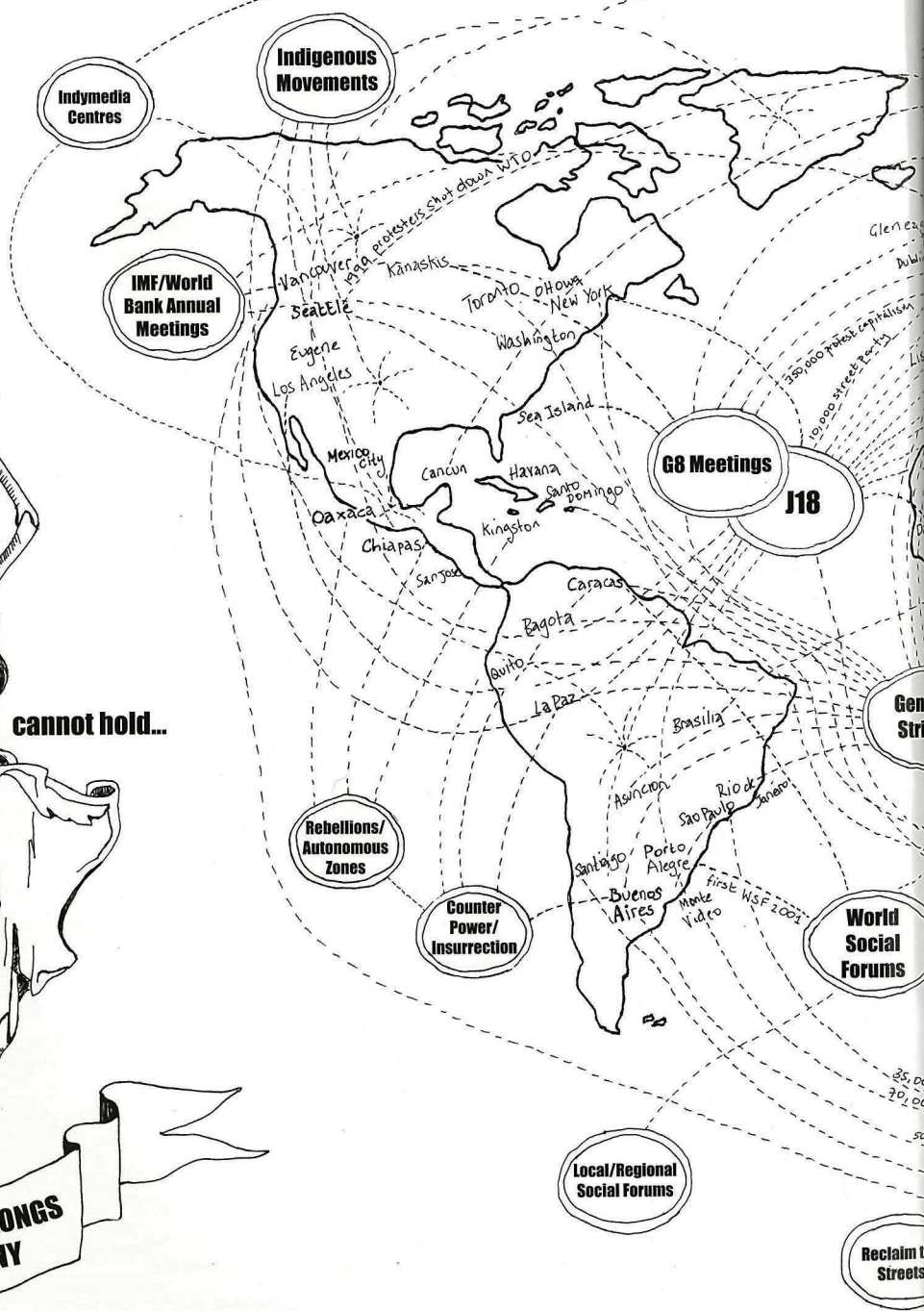
*If You See Something, Say Something* was jointly initiated by Keg de Souza and Zanny Begg (Participating artists: Dmitry Vilensky and Chto Delat? (Russia), Oliver Ressler (Austria) and Dario Azzellini (Italy/Germany), Etcetéra (Argentina), Contra Filé (Brazil), Al Fadhil (Iraq), Richard DeDomenici (UK), Hito Steyerl (Germany), Taring Padi (Indonesia), Arelene TextaQueen, David Griggs, pvi collective, Astra Howard, Daniel Boyd, Keg de Souza and Zanny Begg (Australia). The project was funded by NAVA, The Australia Council for the Arts and Marrickville Council.

[www.ifyouseesomethingsaysomething.net](http://www.ifyouseesomethingsaysomething.net)

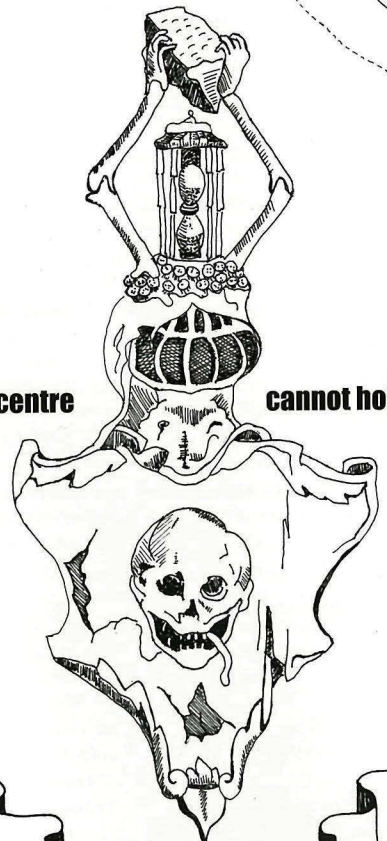
1. Naomi Klein, *No Logo* (London: Flamingo, 2001) 63.
2. Klein 81.
3. Mauricio Lazzarato, *Struggle, Event, Media* [www.chtodelat.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=251&Itemid=128](http://www.chtodelat.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=251&Itemid=128) (accessed August 31, 2006).
4. Alain Badiou, "preface" in *Being and Event*, trans. Oliver Feltham (London: Continuum, 2005).
5. Alain Badiou, *Metapolitics*, trans. Jason Barker, (London: Verso, 2005), 141.
6. Badiou, *Metapolitics*, 141.
7. Lauren Sedofsky, "Being by numbers - interview with artists and philosopher, Alain Badiou", *Artforum*, 1994, [www.artforum.com](http://www.artforum.com).
8. Lazzarato, *Struggle, Event, Media*.
9. Jill Bennett, "The Dynamic of Resonance: Art, Politics and the Event", *ANZJA*, Vol 6, No. 2, 2005 and Vol 7 No.1, 2006, 67.
10. John Roberts, *Philosophising the Everyday: Revolutionary Praxis and the Fate of Cultural Theory* (Pluto Press: London, 2006) 86.

Selected Highlights

# MULTITUDE



the centre cannot hold...



THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THE MANY



# Across the Universe(s)

DOUGAL PHILLIPS interviews SAM SMITH

**Dougal Phillips:** Having become familiar with your work over the last few years let me start with a basic question: who would you cite as influencing your work? I'm interested in whether they come from contemporary or modern art or from other fields.

Sam Smith: I wouldn't say there are any concrete names that I go back to again and again. The most important influences for me come from cinema. Richard Kelly's *Donnie Darko* (the original version only) is something I like very much. Last year I saw *2001: A Space Odyssey* on a new 70mm print and it was perfection.

**DP:** I thought *Donnie Darko* was a very interesting outing for a mainstream release. What specifically hooks you into that film and its little universe? Personally, I like the interaction between Darko and the rabbit, specifically the exchange:

**Donnie:** Why do you wear that stupid bunny suit?

**Frank:** Why are you wearing that stupid man suit?

SS: Those are my favourite lines in the movie. And the shot of the cloud formation hovering over Donnie's house is my favourite shot.

**DP:** I'm thinking that the more *transformative-trans-spatial-trans-temporal* elements of the film appealed to you—the way he's sitting watching TV and then follows that blob, the people's future trajectories being mapped out, him trying to stab through the transparent wall between the universes and so on. I see quite a bit of that sort of trans-materiality across your work.

SS: Yes, in particular the idea that there are multiple parallel

universes or tangent universes that potentially can be crossed. I'm interested in what can happen to objects in the real world if you were to introduce a tangent video universe—if the universes were to collide together. The site of a green screen film set is like a doorway between two universes and the video camera, a wormhole. But what if it were a two-way street...

**DP:** So you're saying that you don't dwell too much on 'High Art' video practices, either historical or contemporary? What sort of work generally appeals to you when you go to a big contemporary art institution? Are you a fan of, for instance, any contemporary painters?

SS: Nothing in particular, anything could appeal to me.

**DP:** More specifically, what do you think of the work of the Australian artist Daniel Crooks, who uses software to transform ordinary video footage into sci-fi tripout vistas? I'm thinking that the extended colour-swirl sequence towards the end of *2001* is sort of similar. Some people have said that it goes on too long, but I think that's the point—it, like a lot of video work, goes on well past the standard attention span and ventures into the territory of immersion, hypnosis etc. What is your approach to duration, and what you expect from the viewer?

SS: I remember seeing Daniel Crooks' video on three enormous projections stitched together at ACMI, and at that scale, in combination with the rhythmic train soundtrack, it becomes very hypnotic.

Facing Page: Sam Smith *Video Camera* [HDW-F900/3], 2007, plywood, pine, acrylic.



I think that there are a few different types of video that are quite separate and can be viewed differently. You've got Matthew Barney style cinematic long-form video-operas—and viewers are prepared to sit through them because they have been trained by watching movies. You've also got what I would call 'video exercises', where a single idea is explored in a shorter time frame. Crooks sits nearer to the exercises camp, with a little added duration and a dash of new media thrown in.

The discoloured landscapes in *2001* near the end are probably my least favourite part of the movie. It's funny how everything else has managed not to date except those shots.

**DP: Let's talk spatiality. Your work seems to me to be about a set of relationships—between the lens and the body in front of it, between the lens and the body behind it, and between the weird kind of cinema-gel that surrounds the body like aspic, allowing movement and leaking out of objects, screens and lenses. When you are thinking about the work or making it, what would you say are the key relationships that go through your head, if indeed they do so?**

SS: I like the image of everything we can see held together by a viscous ooze. It might look something like green ectoplasm—everything is a little unstable and objects are just like little bits of meat stuck in aspic, as you say. It's as if Slimer from *Ghostbusters* was to expand and connect everything. Wikipedia says that technically, Slimer is a 'focused, non-terminal repeating phantasm', or a 'class-five full-roaming vapor' (by the way, the scene in which Slimer flies through Peter Venkman is the first place where slime was used as a verb—as in Bill Murray's line "He slimed me"). The jelly, or green ooze, itself then might become the means by which the realities inside my work shift and are disassembled. This, in fact, is very similar to the way a green or blue screen functions on a film set.

**DP: I like that phrase 'focused, non-terminal repeating phantasm'—sounds like a description of screen-based art to me (but then again I have a degree in Art Theory so forgive me that). I think that's right, there is a real resonance between those fluorescent green slime effects from the 1980s and the development of green screen technology; it all seems part of the same milieu. When I was young, my cousin had a picture book called SPFX, which explained how models were made and blue and green screen were used. These days kids wouldn't even know what 'special effects' were, let alone think of them as a minor, craft-based annex of the movie-making industry. A friend of my Dad's did the effects on *The Last Starfighter*, and he was telling me they programmed code for months in order to get the starship to just turn around once in outer space. That commitment to process seems to still be around, as I understand, they still work on one shot for weeks and weeks. So, a question amongst all this: Do you think visual effects are getting better or worse as they become ever more sophisticated and seamless?**

SS: It seems nowadays we've lost the 'special' in special effects. The effects are becoming more proficient in accurately portraying what a director wants but as they become more seamless they lose their own specific aesthetic, or become overly 'digital' and glossy. I don't have a problem with that happening, but I'd like it if it were treated as a stylistic choice. At least a few movies recently have been using technology to try to do something new—*Sin City* is an example of this.

**DP: In my head I feel like there is one main axis in your work, which flows from the world in front of the camera right through the lens into the eye of the operator-viewer. Further, I imagine this axis to be like a strange sort of enclosed channel or pipe filled with digital jelly in which images come to presence and the proximity and fixity of bodies is completely malleable. That's me as a viewer, though—how does that sit with you as the maker?**

SS: This is something that is very specific to digital video, as opposed to film. It is the extra step that is available with digital technologies, where pixels get ripped apart in a non-linear way that interests me. The lens is a place where images (light rays) are distorted and focused. If you expand the pipeline to include a computer then the actual process that takes place when capturing digital data is very close to your imaginary axis.

**DP: What would you say have been the most significant milestones in your 'training' as an artist? I'm interested in both the technical and conceptual. For instance, could you talk a bit about your relationship—growing up—to video, film and the computer as distinct technologies?**

SS: I remember getting my first computer, an Atari, and it taking at least a week to figure out how to get it to run programs. We had a whole box of games on floppy. And I spent ages trying to finish a *Dungeons and Dragons* style game that I forget the name of. When it was about consoles you were either a Nintendo person or a Sega person. I was always a Sega person. But I have in my later years embraced the Nintendo. Were you in any particular camp?

Speaking of Nintendo, a lot of *Super Mario Bros* games have brilliant 'Big/Small World' levels where Mario is either ridiculously oversized or minutely proportioned to his surroundings.

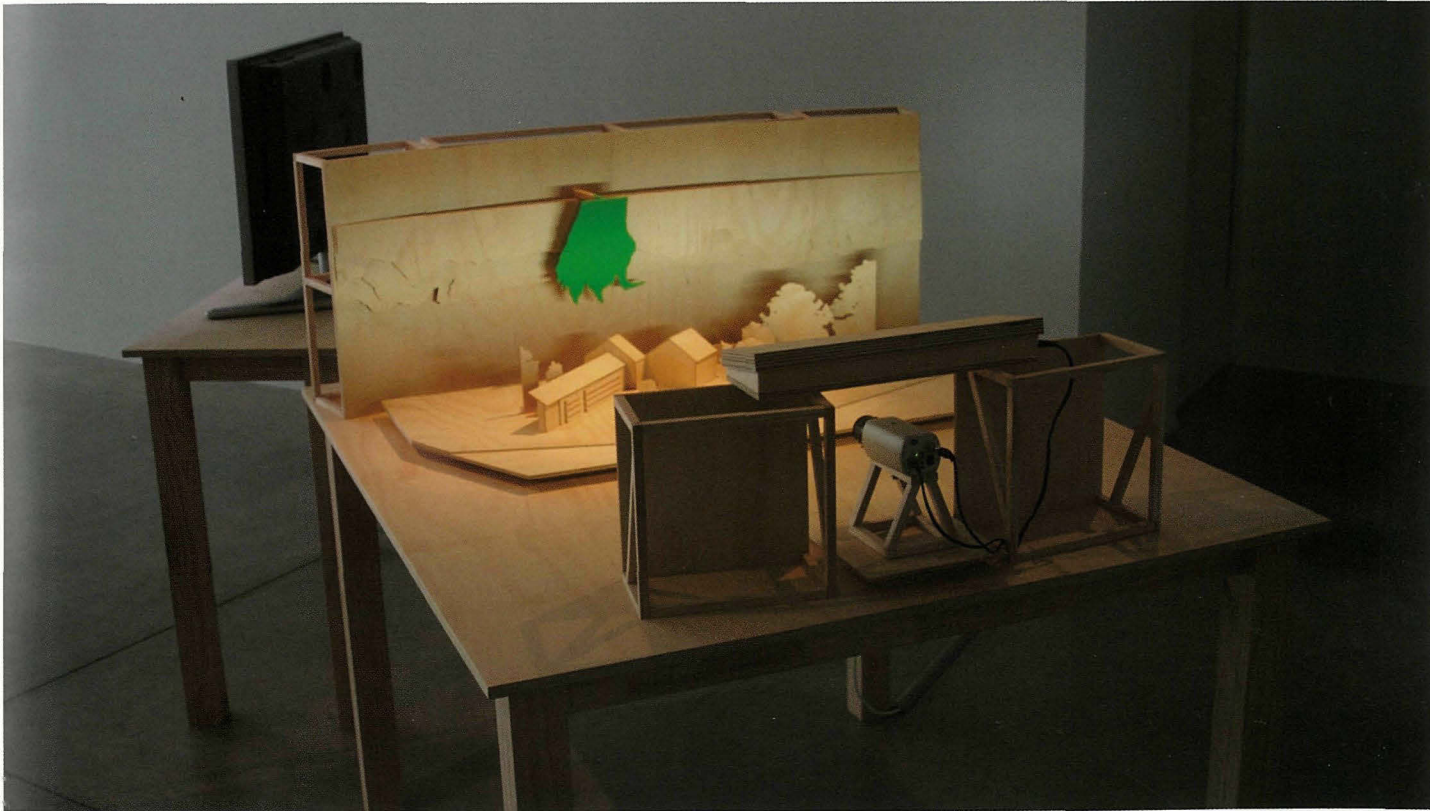
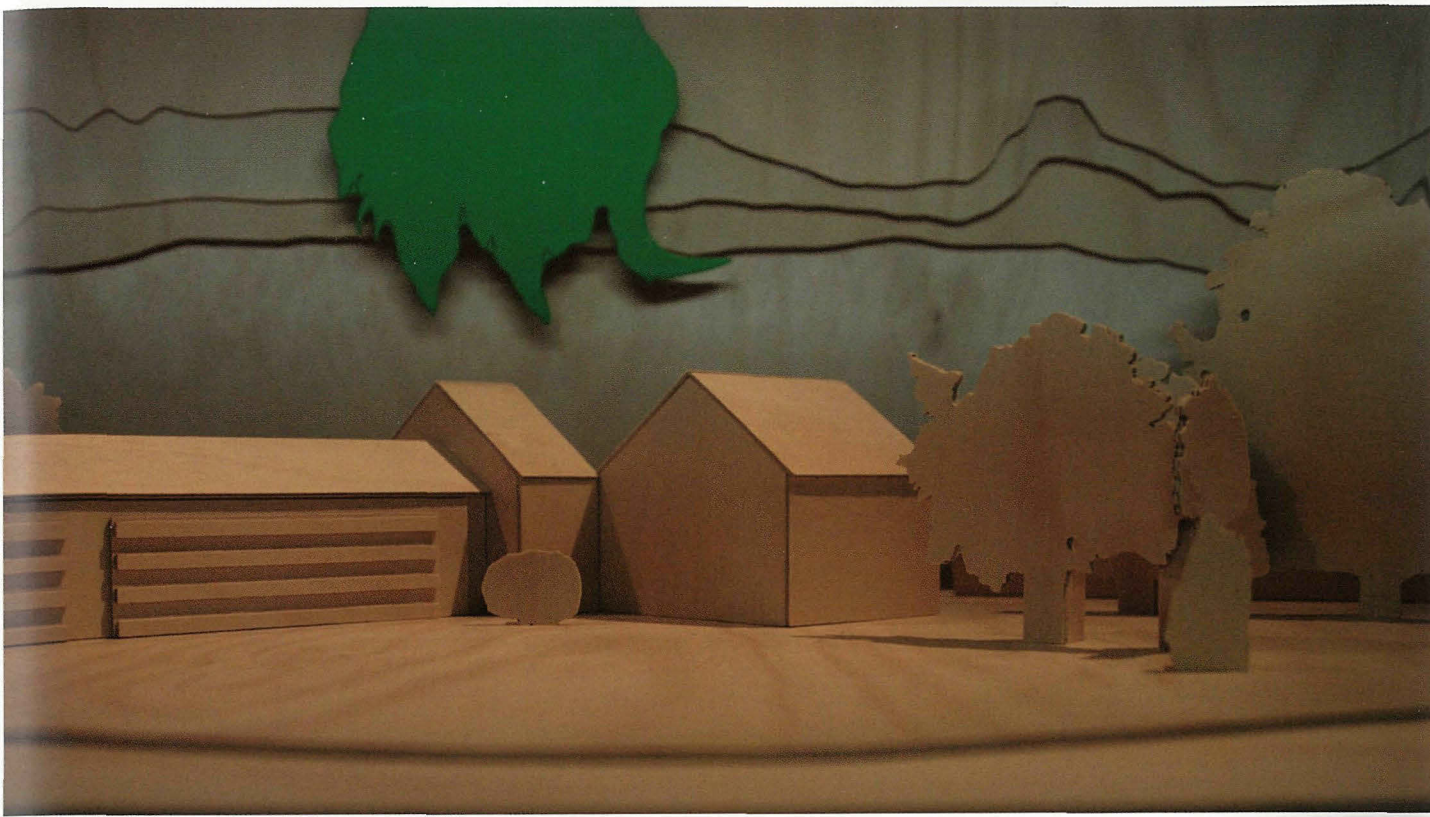
**DP: I only ever played *Mario Kart*, but you could also squash other racer's bodies in that.**

SS: My earliest cinema memory is of *The Labyrinth*. I especially remember being very, very disturbed by the scene with the red shaggy creatures who remove their limbs and play basketball with their own heads.

**DP: Ron Mueck made those creatures, didn't he? Do you like his work? Could you ever see yourself getting more into the constructive element in that sort of hyper-detail?**

SS: I'm not so much interested in producing objects in mind-boggling detail *no*, but rather referencing certain things and showing them in an altered state—as artifacts. But you never know.

**DP: I was never a console guy, and my brother and I were originally on an Atari PC (not console) with some great games, and then he got an Amiga, which was much more a gaming PC, with *Lemmings* and a great game called *North and South* where you played American Civil War battles. I've never been a big fan of playing games endlessly, with the exception of a brief foray into high-level counterterrorism online shoot-em-ups and *FIFA* on the Playstation. I think they are dangerous and seductive, those consoles, they are awesome but entirely unproductive—I'd much rather play with Pro Tools or Final Cut and end up with something built rather than just expend time on gaming with zero gain. Do you play games at all these days? Does the engineering of them, or for that matter of virtual spaces like *Second Life*, interest you at all? I'm sure it's a very complicated world that I have no idea about.**



Above top: Sam Smith, *Film Still Portal* (detail), 2007, plywood, pine, acrylic, fluorescent tube, video camera, monitor with real time feed.

Above bottom: Sam Smith, *Film Still Portal* (installation view), 2007, plywood, pine, acrylic, fluorescent tube, video camera, monitor with real time feed.

SS: I have to disagree about the merit of games, I'd wouldn't go so far as to say there was 'zero gain' from spending the better part of a day entrenched playing *Halo*, you can learn many things, such as:

1. Support for your friends (when playing in teams), and
2. How to drive an armoured tank off a cliff whilst jumping out to launch a well placed rocket-propelled missile.

I find it relaxing.

Virtual spaces like *Second Life* are still small children at the moment. From what I've seen they are blocky and a bit ugly—and not in a good way. It's not something I have looked into a lot but the idea of those spaces is very cool. It is about as close to a physical parallel universe as we've got.

**DP: When did you first start getting involved with video? What sort of equipment did you first mess around with—Dad's shoulder-held VHS camera?**

SS: We had a big shoulder camera but it was Hi-8 not VHS. I don't remember using it much.

**DP: I heard the oversize plywood camera in your recent exhibition *Scale Set* at GrantPirrie was a replica of George Lucas' first camera. Is this true? What are your thoughts on the second-era of *Star Wars* with the CGI additions, new Yoda etc.? Were you an obsessive *Star Wars* geek as a kid?**

SS: The plywood camera is an HDW-F900/3, which in it's first incarnation (the HDW-F900) was the original digital cinema camera. George Lucas used it on *Attack of the Clones*. I was actually never much of a film geek when I was younger—not until my later teenage years. I definitely don't have a problem with CG being used for the new movies—it's just a shame about the scripts, acting and direction. It isn't all that exciting any more to see jazzy special effects, don't you think? Film was (and is) always self aware in a way that video (or at least mainstream video) definitely is not. Film can be filmic. I like video that is videoic.

**DP: I'm wondering—why do you specifically use plywood in your works?**

SS: Plywood is structural, and so it's not so much a statement about the material but more about the form it takes.

**DP: Interesting. There is very much a 1980s aesthetic sensibility (for want of a better term) that's been going around for a while now—Ricky Swallow etc. I want to expand more on this in relation to your work—what I detect is a throwback to a particular kind of *Constructionism* that runs through the 80s cinema and TV. For instance, the traps, proto packs, PKE meters etc. in *Ghostbusters* (which were designed by Dan Ackroyd) and the hands-on approach of *MacGyver* and *The A-Team*—it's like it was a pre-hacker pre-digital era when model-making and live SPFX were magical. Do you think there is a legacy of this in contemporary object and video art these days?**

SS: The thing I like about that era is how transparent the technology and materials were. That hands-on magic is something that has been almost lost in big budget cinema, but it's something that remains a vital part of art making. Of the two movies I mentioned at the beginning, one has all digital effects and the other is optical. The thing that I think would be interesting is a melding of the two. I

dream of a world in which video learns of its inherent comedy. Being a digital particle would be like slipping into a black hole where all of you gets instantly dispersed in different directions, and that's pretty funny.

**DP: Ok, so we're sort of talking about a digital slapstick? At university they teach you about the importance of slapstick in modernism—that Chaplin reveals the new stresses and shocks and machinic impulses that the human body under modernism suffered, Chaplin *becoming* the machine etc. Is that what you mean—video embracing and playing with its own flaws and being susceptible and open to outside influences?**

SS: I see it as more that the natural state of digital data is chaotic and unordered—an external structure must be placed on it in order for it to resemble something. Imagine if you could watch a cube of jelly falling through a butterfly net in reverse—that's what the process might be like.

**DP: I'm imagining that now and my brain is melting. How do you feel about the term video art versus new media? Do you care at all? Is your work in one camp or another?**

SS: People can call things what they will. Personally I have always thought of new media as based more in technology with intent to progress the way it's used. Also, video is not very new.

**DP: One of the videos in *Scale Set* is a slow walk through the backstreets of Surry Hills. Why did you choose these particular blocks?**

SS: The video could have been made probably anywhere; underwater would have been interesting. But I was looking for a block that was visually interesting and had a few different looks. That block is excellent in this way. It's got the industrial energy station, terraces, a park, a small laneway, surveillance cameras and had a construction site on it.

**DP: Were you attracted to the giant rollerdoor on the electricity building?**

SS: Absolutely, it's probably the one thing I specifically had in mind when looking for a location. A doorway is, after all, a portal. And the larger the doorway (portal) the greater the amount of junk (data) you can shift (transfer) through it. That rollerdoor has some serious bandwidth.

**DP: And is there any significance that you walk through Albion Lane and onto Ann Street, heading to *Smith Street*, but you never get there? It remains down the end of the field of vision, visible, but forever out of reach? Can I read some eponymous psychoanalytical blockage into this?**

SS: And you know what's parallel to Smith Street, Samuel Street.

**DP: Parallel self-splitting universe channels. Awesome.**

Sam Smith's solo exhibition *Scale Set* was held at GrantPirrie in Redfern from the 9th January – 3rd February 2007.





Above top: Sam Smith, *Street Shift*, 2007, video still.

Above bottom: Sam Smith, *Street Shiftz*, 2007 video still.



Above left: Andrew Bracey, *Freianlage*, 2006.

Above right: Annabel Dover, *Oriole: The Birds of the British Isles*, 2006, Drawing Workshop.

Bottom: Annabel Dover, *Oriole: The Birds of the British Isles*, (detail) from the SuperNature Series, 2006, Installation.

# Profile: Three London Artist-Run Initiatives

KAREN D'AMICO

## TRANSITION GALLERY

The brainchild of artist Cathy Lomax, London's Transition Gallery began in a small garage near Victoria Park in the autumn of 2002. No stranger to self-initiated projects, Lomax began publishing the fanzine *Arty* while still in art college well over a year before the gallery opened. Recently relocated to Regent Studios, near Hackney's Broadway Market, the gallery is in good company. Chris Hammond's MOT is housed in the same complex, Flaca and SevenSeven Contemporary are literally around the corner and the Keith Talent Gallery, along with a host of other Vyner Street galleries are within spitting distance.

Like many, her motivation for opening the space stemmed from the desire to gain exposure for her own work and that of other artists she knew. "When I was finishing my MA at Central St Martins, I started to think about showing my work and it occurred to me that unless I was proactive there wouldn't be a whole lot on the horizon." So when the opportunity to occupy an old, unheated garage near London's Victoria Park presented itself, Lomax took it on. Transition's first show, *Colouring In*, soon followed, featuring a group of painters from her MA course as well as her own work.

Since that time, and in a span of just over four years, Transition has established itself as a solid and well respected artist-run space on the London art scene. So much so, in fact, that it now encompasses not only the gallery but other projects, such as *Transition Editions*, the publishing imprint of the gallery, which produces books, numbered editions to accompany selected shows, three original magazines—*Arty*, *The Critical Friend* and *Garageland*—and *Show Sees*, which offers artist-led gallery visits in the East End of London.

Although Lomax's own art practice has been centered around painting, Transition's track record encompasses work from a variety of artists, both known (Stella Vine for example) and emerging. Exhibitions are curated around specific ideas and projects, and have included both solo and group shows. Delaine LeBas' site-specific *Room*, for instance, transformed the gallery space into a replica of her own room with the artist in situ, making work in a corner of the gallery as if she were in her own, private space. The performative element also incorporated live video feeds, broadcast over the net for the duration of the show. More recently, the *SuperNature Series* spanned a time frame of 5 months and included solo shows by 7 artists, workshops, artist talks and a tandem issue of *Garageland*, titled *Nature*.

Lomax sees the gallery space and its related offshoots as an integral part of her own practice, and looking over its history, there are common threads that run throughout. "I don't see why the role of artist or curator should be binary opposites; surely an artist can have an idea for an exhibition. When I am working on a project as an artist I naturally start to think about how I will present it to an audience. I then often think about other work that might complement mine and strengthen the idea. I also have ideas for shows which I don't want to make work for—it is like that age old thing where, as an artist, often the idea is enough and you don't want to bother making the work—I can find other artists to realise the idea."

She is also committed to the idea of artist-led initiatives. "I think that the more there are the better. Everyone should open their own space. Establishing a reputation is another matter and this is where the commitment comes in. The whole idea of running a space changes over time. At first it is exciting and fun and mistakes can be made in putting shows on (there have been some shows at Transition that I have hated) but as time goes on, the work reaches a higher standard, press and sales are more common and bad shows should not happen. The existence of lots of artist-run spaces is a sign that the art scene is thriving and that artists are taking the initiative, and this is a very positive thing."

**Transition Gallery**  
**Unit 25a Regent Studios**  
**8 Andrews Road**  
**London E8**

**Tel: 020 7254 4202 / 07941 208566**

**opening times (during exhibition): Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 12pm – 6pm**

**[www.transitiongallery.co.uk](http://www.transitiongallery.co.uk)**



## FIELDGATE GALLERY

In view of his own art practice, it makes sense that Richard Ducker took on a space that had, in a very real sense, its own planned obsolescence. From its inception, the Fieldgate Gallery was intended as a temporary project. There isn't a fixed timescale – it could exist for a few years or a few months – and that existence is entirely dependant on unrelated circumstances that could change at a moment's notice. This temporality has certainly influenced Richard's choices in terms of what's shown, and it's also contributed to the sense of excitement and urgency that he conveys when we talk. It's apparent that he is wholly committed to making the most of this opportunity, making each show worthwhile and, frankly, worth the effort.

Located in the heart of Whitechapel, the former mail distribution company building that now houses the Fieldgate Gallery is One Hell of a Big Space. So big, in fact, that one could be forgiven for thinking it's perhaps a tad ambitious in terms of sustaining a not-for-profit, artist-run initiative for any length of time, temporary or not. Measuring a whopping 10,000 square feet, this is the sort of space many artists dream about, if for no other reason than to have the opportunity to make big work. But it *is* vast, and the prospect of trying to fill it with a respectable amount of people for private view after private view (never mind filling it with work) would send many screaming in the opposite direction. Yet fill it he does.

Richard and his partner, Sonya Park, took the space on with the intention of creating an artist-run, not-for-profit gallery and project space. From a curatorial standpoint, he says, "Sure, it was a bit daunting at first, but that kind of space also offered a wonderful opportunity and challenge. We're able to show large-scale work comfortably—Stewart Gough and Tom Ormond's *European Vacation*, which was in the recent show, *Houses in Motion* is a great example. But I've also found that smaller work is given the opportunity to sit comfortably with itself and breathe."

Fieldgate's success, it seems, is largely due to word of mouth. Ducker maintains a rigorous selection criteria to guard against becoming 'just another artist-run space that has group shows'. The gallery is not a hire space, and shows tend to evolve organically out of a common interest or idea. There is a good mixture of internally and externally curated shows, most recently The Centre of Attention's *My Dead Gallery* and the international touring show *Latitude*. The gallery is funded largely by bar contributions from private views, though when outside curators are involved, they share the costs. "Not having to rely on sales in order to finance the shows is a privileged position to be in. It's given us the freedom to play and experiment and the ongoing exchange of support and ideas is rewarding. The gallery has attracted collectors without the pressure of having to sell work. They've come because the work was strong, and when all is said and done, I'd like to look back on the experience and say that we put on interesting shows."

Not to worry there, then.

**Fieldgate Gallery contemporary art and project space**

**14 Fieldgate Street**

**London E1 1ES**

**Tel: 07957 228351**

**Opening Hours (during exhibition): Friday, Saturday and Sunday 1 – 6 pm or by appointment**

**[www.fieldgategallery.com](http://www.fieldgategallery.com)**

Above: *Houses in Motion* (installation view), 2006, curated by Richard Ducker, Fieldgate Gallery.



## TANGENT

Tangent began, like so many artist-run initiatives, as a means of becoming more visible in the vast landscape of the London art scene. It was a natural progression in terms of my art practice, since much of my work incorporates the use of text in one form or another and, having worked in design before art school, putting together a zine brought a sense of cohesion.

Initially distributed for free through various art spaces in London, the first issue was a mere eight pages and consisted mainly of show reviews and arts listings, its ethos was to put forth interesting and engaging work, often by artists who might otherwise go under the radar. It quickly grew to encompass contributions from other artists, an increased page count (averaging twenty four to thirty two pages) and a structure whereby each issue is loosely themed around a word or idea. After issue five, I decided that a nominal amount needed to be charged, both to finance it and to see if people really were interested in what I was doing. Now on its tenth issue, the distribution has expanded to include subscriptions as well as an international presence in Canada, New York, Melbourne, Kathmandu and soon Manila.

Though not inhabiting the same sort of physical space as a gallery, the day-to-day experience of maintaining the zine shares many similarities. It takes a lot of time and requires a strong degree of commitment. I choose themes and map out production schedules months in advance, liaise with artists and contributors, and vet submissions.

I see the zine as malleable, but I'm always concerned with continuity, both overall and within each issue. So it's a curatorial exercise in a strange sort of way, but the end result is the zine instead of a show. But like any show, the choices that are made in terms of what goes in, where it's placed and so on, are as much a reflection of the curator as they are of the work that's chosen.

To me, one of the most important features of tangent is that it is independently produced and self-funded. It doesn't have advertising, isn't sponsored and answers to no one but me. I have been approached a few times with offers of sponsorship, and though an increased budget would be nice, it's not worth the loss of control. I see the zine as an integral part of my art practice, much like Cathy Lomax or Richard Ducker see running a gallery as elemental to theirs. It's a creative act and a natural form of expression for me. And whilst there is a degree of collaboration and interplay with those that contribute, the zine is ultimately my voice.

Tangent is published 4 times a year.  
[www.tangent.org.uk](http://www.tangent.org.uk)

# Artvader & The Attack Of The White Cube

JESS JOHNSON

# ARTVADER!

AND THE ATTACK OF THE WHITE CUBE

AT YET ANOTHER EXHIBITION OPENING  
THE ART CROWD IS GETTING DRUNK  
AND TYPICALLY RESTLESS...



MY KIDS NAPPY IS  
MORE INTERESTING THAN  
THIS. WHY AREN'T I  
AT HOME WITH  
MY FAMILY?

UNGH...  
ZZZZ

INTRODUCTIONS ARE BEING  
MADE AND FORGOTTEN  
ALL OVER THE ROOM...

HI JESS, THIS IS  
BJØRN FROM NORWAY. HE'S  
AN ARTIST WORKING WITH  
WHITE NOISE AND  
STATIC VIDEO.

SO JESS...  
ARE YOU AN ARTIST  
AS WELL?

YEAH!  
I DRAW PICTURES,  
COMICS MOSTLY...

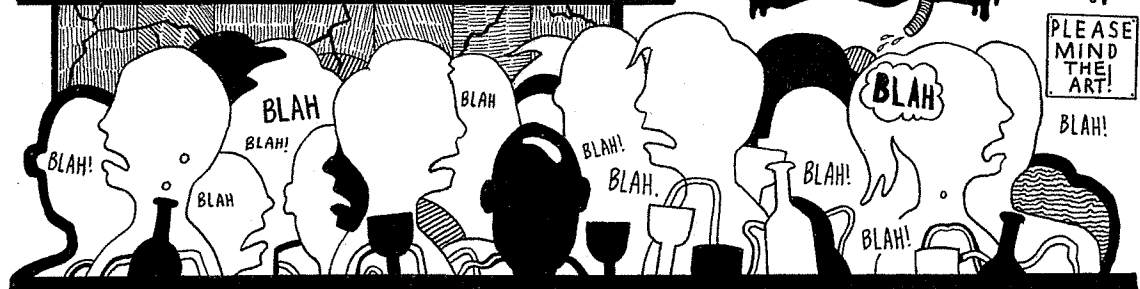
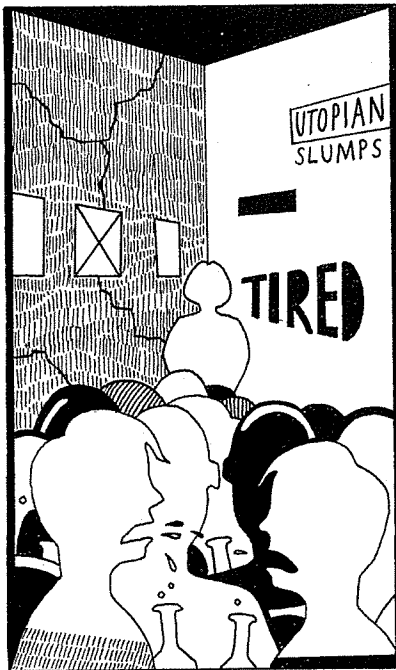
NAH

OH. HOW... CUTE.

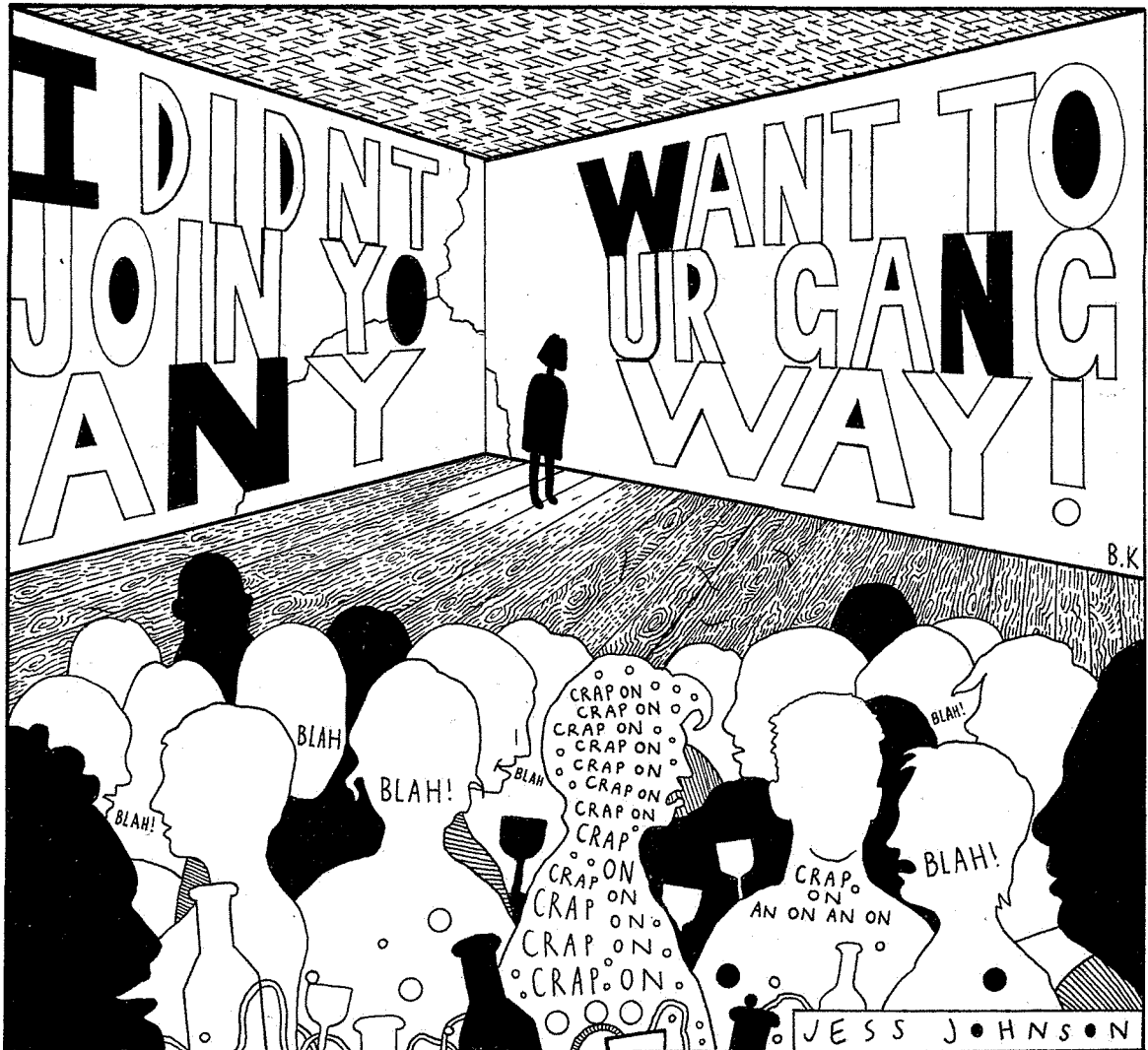


UMM, PLEASE EXCUSE ME  
BUT THERES SOMEONE I  
KNOW... OVER THERE...  
Soo ah. GOOD LUCK  
WITH... THAT!











## Tempelhof: Functionality in Painting, Functionality in Airspaces

ALEX LAWLER

It would have been neat and tidy to make Vienna the starting point for this piece of writing considering the journey it will be taking the reader on. However, a better point of departure might be painting, in particular Geometric Abstraction, and how I have come to think of my paintings as paintings that respond to some idea of function. I don't want to spend too long in the sub-cultural bowels of Geometric Abstraction, believing that this project will succeed if the reader simply gains a greater understanding of Tempelhof International Airport, but I do hope to go further.

It occurred to me that it might be helpful to make some diagrammatic reference to the state of mind of the artist as they encounter things in the world, so as to encourage the reader to gain a sympathetic understanding of why I came to think of Tempelhof as having a significant relationship to my own practice, and also to art in a broader sense.

This diagram can be imagined as an eye, encountering the world, between which lies different filters of differing transparencies depending on their relevance to what is being seen. These filters include Geometric Abstraction, Conceptual Art, Minimalism, Kantian aesthetics, Postmodern painting, and Baudrillard's theory of simulation and discussions on Pop Art. This can serve as a rough sketch of my mental orientation as I encountered Tempelhof; it was through these ideas that I viewed its physical being and its dominating historical presence.

I'd like to briefly mention Sarah Morris' video *Capital* in this context. In this video Morris filmed various scenes in and around Washington DC, capturing everyday people, transport, shops and the aesthetics of the American political machine as a way of explaining the systems through which she arrives at the abstract motifs for her paintings.<sup>1</sup> The significance here is that after experiencing the work of Morris, one sees her video through the filter of her painting, as I came to think of Tempelhof through some of the contextual filters of my own practice.

This could help explain why I felt compelled to go to Berlin's Tempelhof. I felt that the airport, when viewed through a series of filters of contextual knowledge, seemed to have a certain resonance that demanded a sharper focus. My practice repeatedly internalises the outside

Above: *View of Tempelhof Airport from above, TCA Open House, May 1989.* Photo: Wolfgang Chodan.



world in metaphor, these metaphors then function to demonstrate the flow of the practice as a whole. In other words, I saw something in the airport that could serve to partly explain the nature of my art practice.

I first encountered Tempelhof in David Pascoe's *Airspaces*<sup>2</sup>, a book that investigates the evolution of the airport and the space immediately above it, suggesting its existence is a discrete, autonomous zone unlike other spaces. This book regards Tempelhof as having a particularly unique role in the development of airports, one that has been a flashpoint for some of the most fundamentally important political dramas of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## THE AIRPORT

Tempelhof, one of the world's oldest airports and Europe's largest connected building<sup>3</sup>, came into being over the period 1936–1941, and was designed and built by Prof. Ernst Sagebiel. Its design was part of Hitler's plans to redesign Berlin as Germania, centre of the Third Reich. *Tempelhof, serving as the gateway to the new centre of Europe, would sit on the east of a major east-west axis, which intersected the major north-south axis characterizing his design and providing a major boulevard for the new city.*

Tempelhof serves a trace of this master plan. The Platz in front of the main reception hall—what is now the *Platz der Luftbrücke*—has a grand circular formation that was to be mirrored again a few kilometres to the east on the east-west axis. One of the twined office complexes to the south of the *Platz* and the obelisks memorializing the Napoleonic wars were not completed, but one can still see how the airport was intended to extend into Berlin's urban space.

Tempelhof Airport has two distinct aesthetics. Firstly, there is the exterior and *Abfertigungshalle*, the main reception area from which one enters the complex, and secondly, the 170ft-cantilevered hangar from which all passengers depart. The interior of the hall takes full advantage of the building's scale and is a logical extension of the exterior, with *Muschelkalk* pillars and ceiling.

Whilst the *Muschelkalk* structures are, in part, a stern refusal of radical modernism, the steel canopy of the aircraft hanger utterly exposes its means of construction. It too has a highly dramatic scale and internal volume, but aesthetically it is much more pragmatic. Whilst standing inside the hangar itself, one might lose all sense of the neo-classicist facade.

The curvature of this building is also radical, the series of connected hangars facing the airfield measures 1,152m. Its design was to provide multiple entry points for arrivals and departures but also to serve as political spectacle; here Sagebiel envisaged stands for 65,000 spectators during air shows and Nazi rallies.<sup>4</sup>

Above : A model of what is now the *Platz der Luftbrücke*, the Airport's main entrance in background, obelisks in foreground. Photo: Hans Steinmetz, Courtesy Archiv Berliner Flughäfen.

## HISTORY

Tempelhof was designated as an airport in 1923, although Orville Wright had made a flight demonstration there as early as 1909<sup>5</sup>. The existing Engle Brothers airfield construction—where Lufthansa was founded—was ordered to be replaced by the new Sagebiel designed terminal in 1934. After construction began in 1936, shortages in labour and building materials slowed the completion of the airport, so much so that parts were still unfinished when war broke out in 1939. Tempelhof was also the site for the KZ Columbia, one of Germany's first concentration camps from 1934 to 1936<sup>6</sup>.

After the war the Soviets handed power of the airport over to the Americans. Tempelhof then became the stage for a major confrontation between the Russians and Americans: the *Luftbrücke*. During this airlift which broke the stalemate over the fate of West Berlin (1948–1949), Tempelhof became world famous, with the Allies landing cargo planes filled with supplies for West Germany at a rate of one plane every five minutes, around the clock<sup>7</sup>.

The Americans occupied Tempelhof until the 1990's. Commercial flights operated by American and British airliners began in 1946 and continued until the mid seventies when larger aircraft were moved to Tegel. With the end of the Cold War, non-allied air traffic was allowed through the airport, but the developments in aviation meant that an airport in the centre of a huge metropolis that was designed for aircraft of the 1930's couldn't expand and was therefore unsustainable.

## MAIN RECEPTION AREA

The airport had, up until October 2006, been used by DBA, a carrier partnered with Air Berlin. The impending termination of this service, meant that only small expensive business class carriers would continue to use Tempelhof. So, in mid-2006 I realised that if I wanted to experience Tempelhof as a commercial passenger, I had to act fast.

Upon arriving in Berlin, I took the U-Bahn to *Platz der Luftbrücke* and walked past the large office buildings circling the *Platz*. I felt like I was moving in slow motion, as their sheer size seems to deaden the pace of the pedestrian. I passed through the double doors to enter the main reception area. It was at this point that I entered the main hall and saw the penultimate site of the Airport itself. From the instant one enters the mezzanine level, the expanse of the hall can be seen. This is the moment when painting seemed to become present. The hall, containing a newspaper shop, ticketing outlets, check-in counters, baggage carousels, café, passport control and a waiting area, are all laid out in front of you. I came to think of this, the crux of the Tempelhof passenger experience (paralleled with the sight of the Airport as one touches down at Tempelhof), as being a circular visual experience: like viewing a painting. Everything is laid out in front of the viewer, from the moment one's gaze hits the canvas, everything is revealed, the longer one holds their gaze the more one travels within that same view.

Traveling through contemporary or 'functional' airports (of which I would name Frankfurt Airport as being typical) is entirely different. One's visual experience is dependant on one's passage through the space as one navigates from check-in to departure lounge and toward boarding the aircraft. I would suggest that traveling through airports such as these is more like experiencing video art; its visuality is continually in flux. That which hits the eye is dependent on a point in time and this initial exposure does not constitute a universal beginning from person to person.

Passing through a 'functioning' airport is a subjective and extremely detached experience. One has little idea of where the real event of the airport lies, one keeps one's eyes open, trying to catch a glimpse of how the space is really operating. Quite often upon finding a window, one cannot, without further research, be sure which view they are looking at in relation to the airport as a whole.

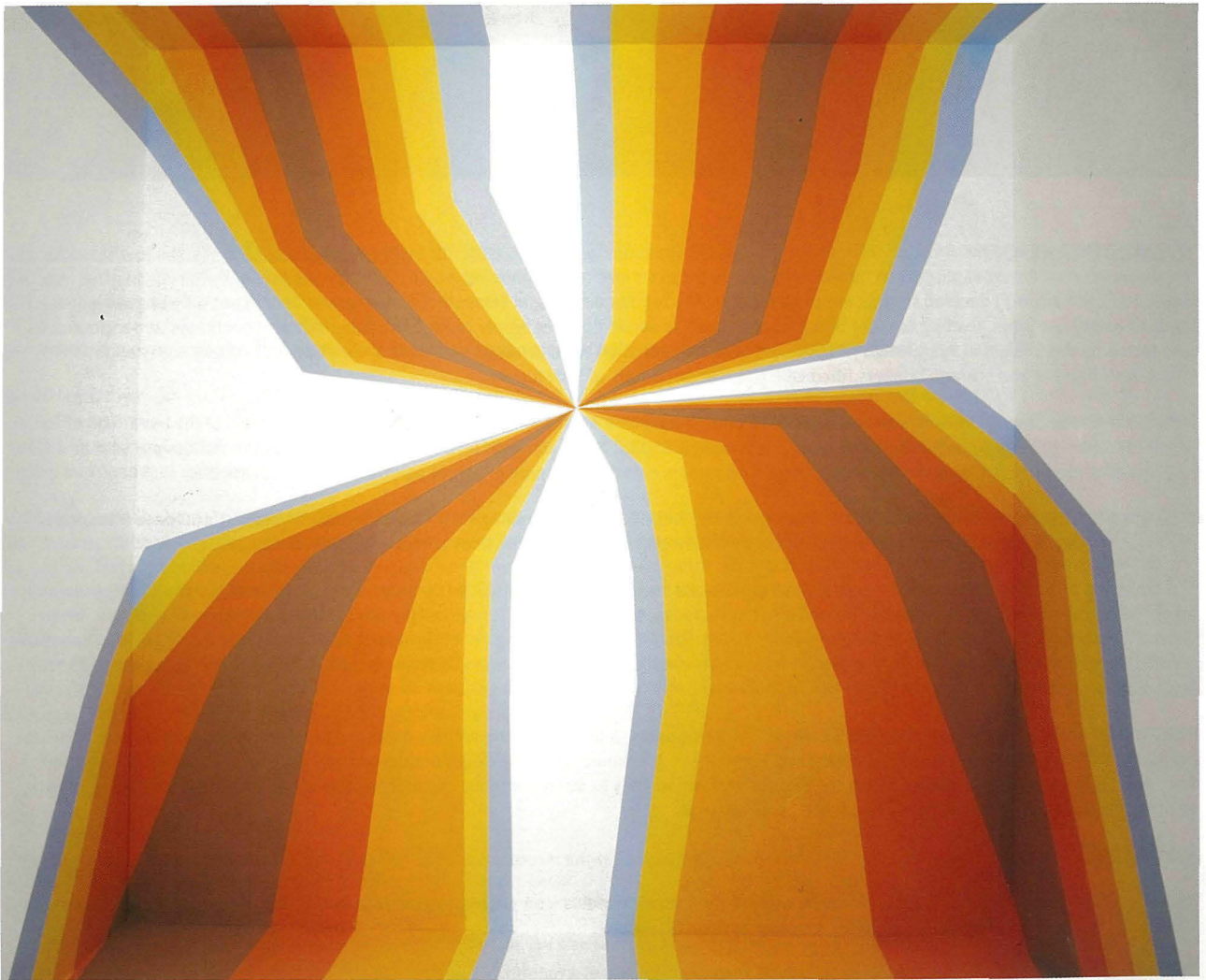
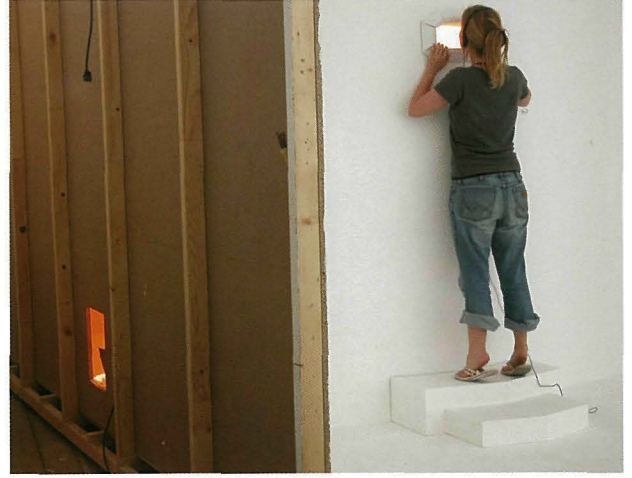
## TEMPELHOF TODAY

It seemed to me that Tempelhof has a heightened sense of unreality about it, its condition is such that although when you are inside it Tempelhof seems the most archetypal of all airports, it also seems it has never *entirely* been there. Its real significance has never been present during its existence.

During its construction Tempelhof was part of the future; the utopian German Reich at the heart of a new Europe. During the American occupation, Tempelhof was an unreal spectacle, the hysteria of the *Luftbrücke* was a gamble that paid off brilliantly well, yet it was a tense operation that was impossible to maintain indefinitely. I would suggest that even then, the real function, or presence of Tempelhof had not yet been played out, that its 'real place' was both behind (with the dystopic dreams of Hitler's Germania) and ahead (the struggle to return the airport to the people of Berlin).

Any research into Tempelhof quickly leads to Sir Norman Foster's description of Tempelhof as the 'mother of all airports'<sup>8</sup>. Tempelhof's real presence today is buried somewhere with memories of *Casablanca*; its references are tangled and stretched everywhere. Today when walking through the airport, there is something so classic about it in an immediate sense that it is more part of the past than of the present. Yet its uncanny likeness to an 'idea' of an airport means it has more realness than any other airport in the world.

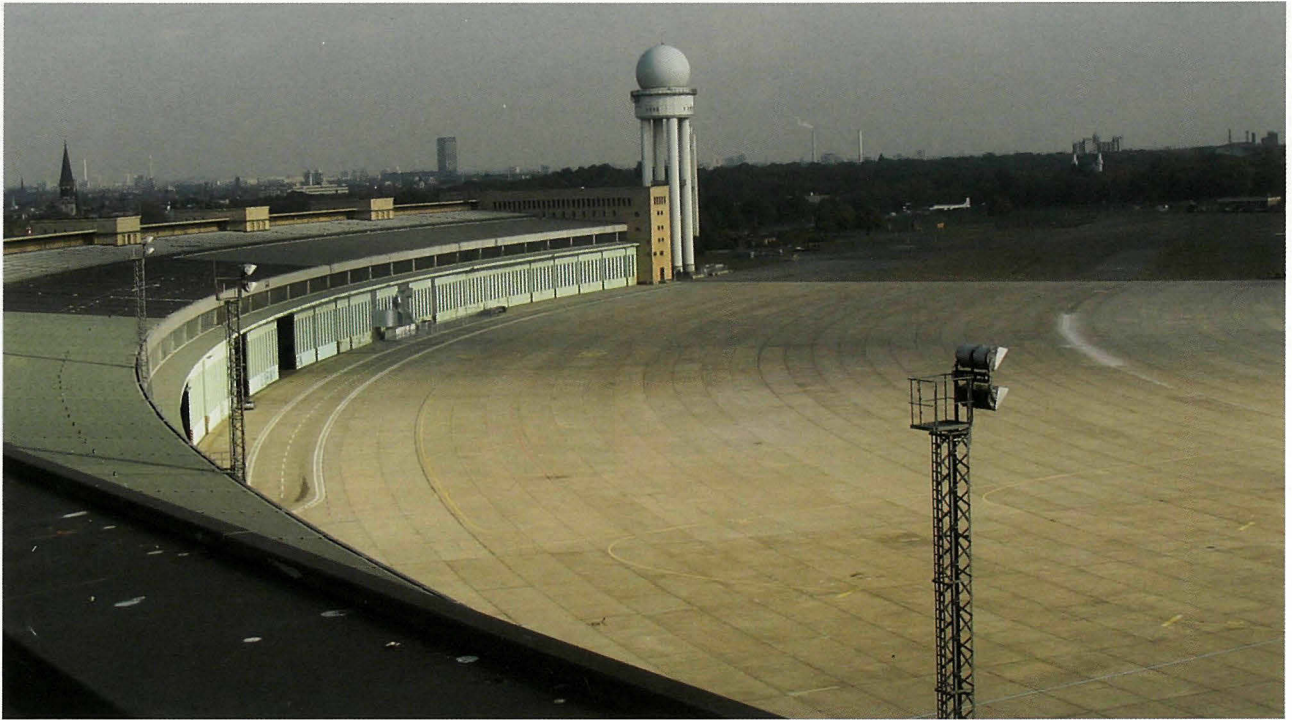
Like all good things we love, it must be said that 'Tempelhof' does not exist, and all its life it never has existed.



Above left: Inside the airport's offices. Photo: Alex Lawler.

Above right: Alex Lawler, *The Orgasmatron Painting* (exterior view), 2006, acrylic on wall, room installation. Photo: Alex Lawler.

Bottom: Alex Lawler, *The Orgasmatron Painting* (interior view), 2006, acrylic on wall, room installation. Photo: Nicola Brunnhube.



## TOWARDS TAKE-OFF

Once inside the airport I decided to walk around a little. Unlike regular airports, in Tempelhof an unmarked door is not only unguarded, but leads to empty corridors, leading to more doors, to stairs and to whole floors of empty rooms. This labyrinth also continues underground, as discovered by the Soviets in 1945, when whole floors of accommodation were unveiled as well as a secret aircraft factory with half finished Focke-Wulf fighters and storage bunkers filled with thousands of reels of Nazi films<sup>9</sup>.

Tempelhof was built with the ambition of service until 2000 but also as a symbol of Nazi power, so it is oversized to say the least. The office space connecting the 15 towers behind the runway has been occupied from time to time, but with only half a million visitors per year and an under funded Berlin state government, these rooms now remain empty, containing only broken-down old office furniture.

So I explored the expanse inside the Airport, photographing the spaces and searching for a way onto the viewing platform once intended to hold 65,000 people. Eventually I found a set of stairs that seemed to lead up further than others I had seen before.

The stairs led to a door left open, then onto a smaller set of stairs and from there, out into the huge open expanse of the roof. I was then on large balcony area quite close to the centre of the complex, facing the runway. The Tempelhof design is such that the whole complex, when viewed from above, appears as a giant eagle poised to land. I could now see the eagle's wings stretched out to my left and right. The space in front of the hangars, intended for waiting planes was mostly empty, with the exception of a few jets that, dwarfed by the space around them screamed into the sky.

Two German Air force officers stood ahead of me with large cameras, looking over the runway. I was greeted with curiosity and some minutes passed before they asked me how it was that I had found them. It seemed that they weren't really supposed to be there either. We decided to keep each other's secret and talked about the airport for a while. They pointed out to me the air corridors above Germany and told me where each of the planes were headed as they passed 9kms above us.

## AIRPLANES

In making this journey to Tempelhof I wanted to witness the unreality of this icon of airports, but it came about through an identification with the aircraft itself, which I'll briefly explain as it seems to me a fitting exit.

I would put forward that there is, inevitably, a critical anxiety at the site of a painting's function. Function in terms of the relationship of meaning and reception taking place between the artist and the viewer: of an artwork 'making sense', but also in the proliferation of painting in general.

Above: The view of hangars from roof, facing east. Photo: Alex Lawler.

Facing page: Alex Lawler, *Sitting & Thinking about Planes & Painting* (with) *The Sai Baba Painting*, 2006, mixed media, room installation. Photo: Gregor Titze.



This critical site of anxiety is, for a painter, perhaps the most lingering of modernist ghosts. It concerns the practicality in continuing to create hypothetically solvable problems through which painting serves as a metaphoric tool, simulating the coming to terms with the world surrounding the painter.

An aircraft, however, is not primarily a speculative article, it can simply 'be'. I came to think of planes as standing in for painting.

The aircraft, the mass-produced metallic canvas, visually indifferent to place and culture as it flies around, has many attributes to stir the envy of the painted canvas. Crucially, it is primarily invested with an economic rather than a symbolic value. That is to say that its existence as painted form hinges not on its aesthetic and conceptual values but rather its existence as functional article. Its role is to transport people and is judged by speed and economy.

A painted plane is shown everywhere, at night its tail is lit; it is an identical part of a series of reproductions. Its colours are exhibited for their *brand-association value*, but through the filter of the painter's mind it also advertises the proliferation of geometric painting itself. The colours we see on the tails of planes partly owe their existence to the genealogy of Geometric Abstraction. Through this filter we can see geometric painting leading its clandestine existence, living out the modernist dream of perpetual movement.

I returned to the airport early in the morning a few days later, having had little sleep, which gave the day an unreal, hazy quality. I waited, watching the runway, ticket in hand. At the sign from the attendant we were allowed to board. I walked for the first time through the enormous hangar. I approached the Fokker 100, DBA flight DI 7065 (a now terminated service), found my seat and settled down with some in-flight reading material. I looked back to the hangars and soon drifted away from the world.

1. Caroline Douglas, Catalogue printed for the Exhibition *Supernova* (London: British council, 2005) 44.

2. David Pascoe, *Airspaces "Theatres of War"*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2004).

3. Air Service Berlin, <http://www.air-service-berlin.de/?page=106-57-0-1-2-2-3&lang=2> (accessed February 5, 2007).

4. Pascoe, 159.

5. Wikipedia contributors, "Tempelhof International Airport," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Tempelhof\\_International\\_Airport&oldid=103446388](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Tempelhof_International_Airport&oldid=103446388) (accessed February 5, 2007).

6. Pascoe, 177.

7. Pascoe, 162.

8. Elke Dittrich, *Der Flughafen Tempelhof: in Entwurfszeichnungen und Modellen 1935 - 1944*, (Berlin: Lukas Verlag für Kunst- und Geistesgeschichte, 2005). 4.

9. Dittrich, 161.

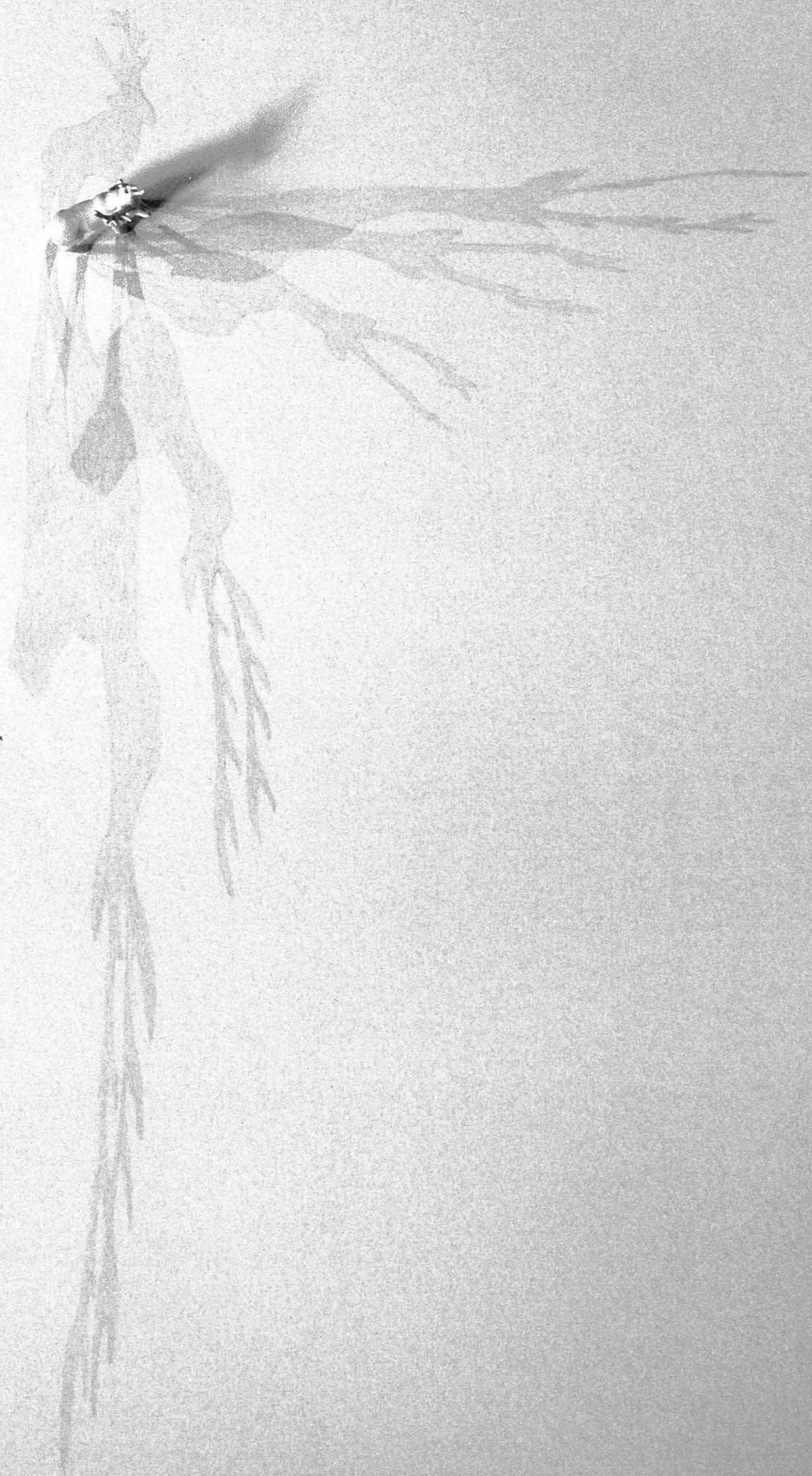




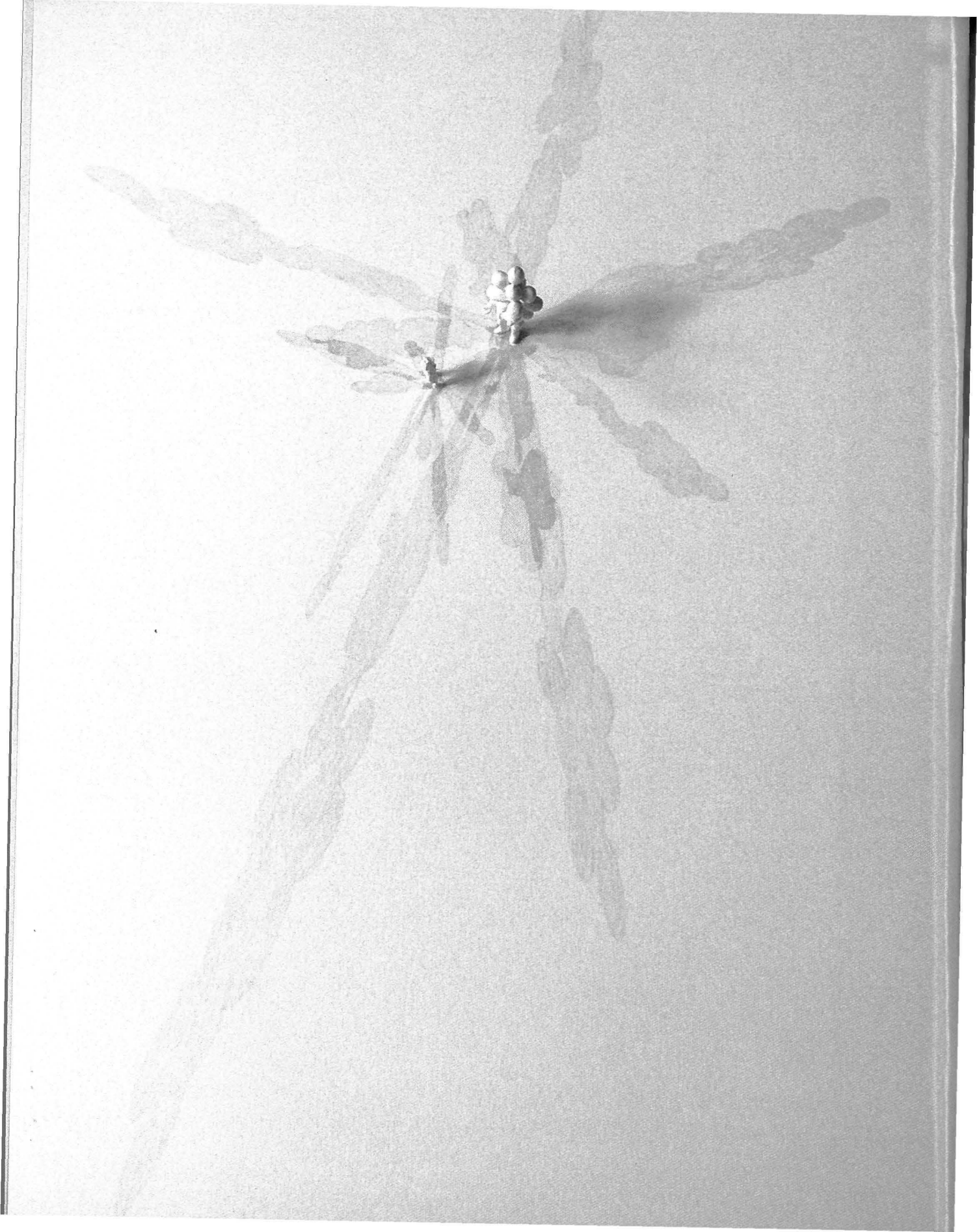


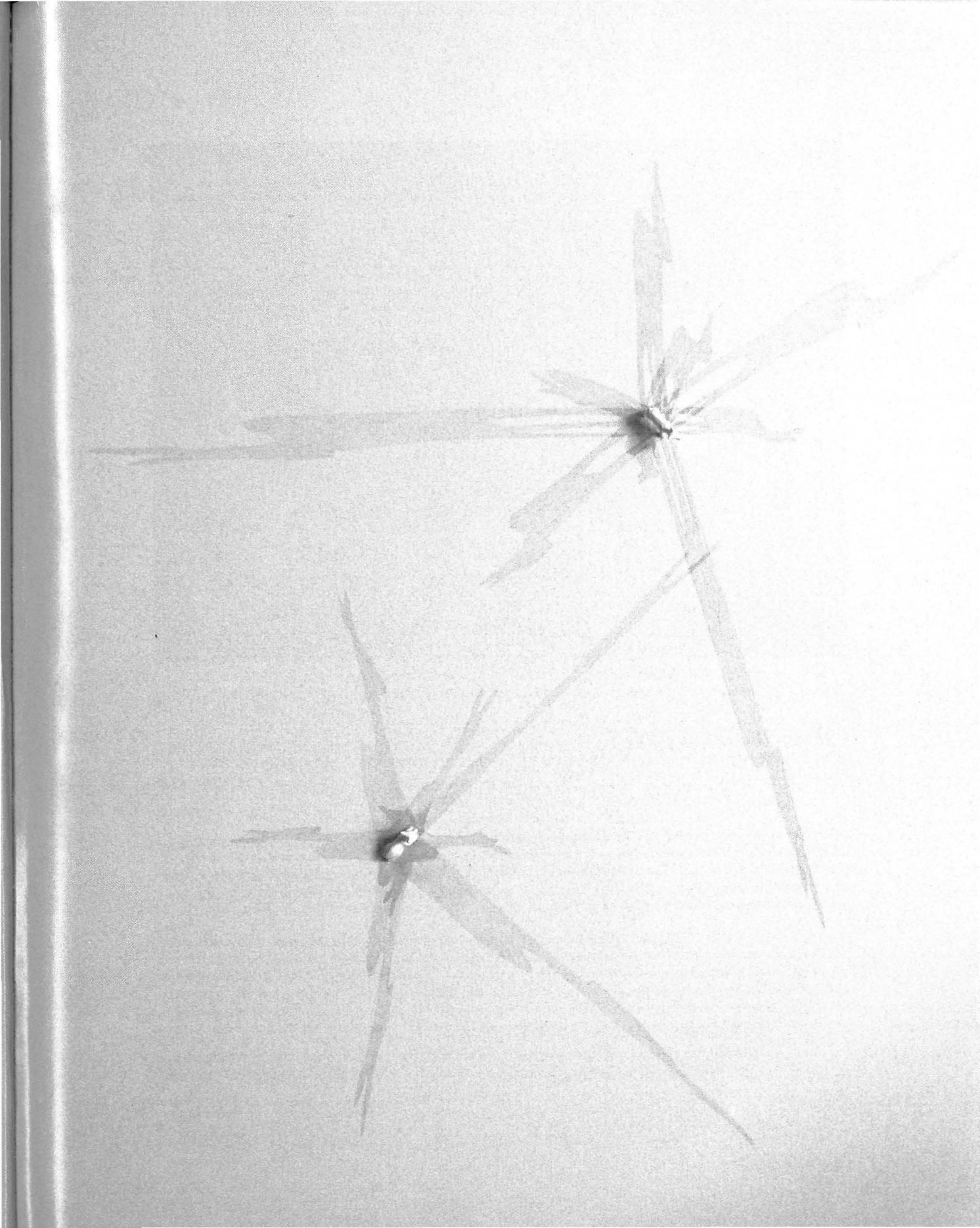
# Shadow Series

HELENA LESLIE











## Chrissie Lights

ANDREW FROST

It's not like anyone around here actually celebrates Christmas all that much. John across the road doesn't even put up a tree and old Mr. Cameron next door puts a few decorations on a pot plant. The kids always want it to be a big Christmassy kind of thing but I just couldn't be fucked bothering with the lights. So we usually don't. And I never have any money at the end of the year. Centrelink gives you an extra cheque early and then you have to get all the way to January before the next one. It's a tough stretch.

Anyway, Lorrie's kid Mylah is so much like her mother it really gives me the shits sometimes. She's fourteen and looks just like a younger version of Lorrie and acts just like her too. Example. I'm sitting in the kitchen reading the guide and Mylah comes in and says 'morning' with a big grin on her face. It's 2:30 in the afternoon. She's got blonde hair in a ponytail and she swishes it around like a horse, her face thin and spotty. I say to her, "It's 'afternoon' you mean". She says no, she means *morning* because she says 'morning' instead of 'hello'. You could see how that kind of thing would really shit you off after a while but she's a pretty good kid and kind of funny. Like her mum. So I just nod and she smiles a big smile.

Mylah pulls out a chair at the kitchen table, sits down and fidgets, picking at her fingernails. I put the guide down.

What? She tells me she and her step brother Bryce want us to go into the Star FM Xmas Lights Competition. I say no straight off but she breathes in deep, leans back in the chair as she puts her hands flat on the table. She's ready with an argument. *The prize is \$5,000 she says for the best overall lights, and all you have to do is have a good design. The winner gets announced on the radio too. I tell her, look, there's no way we could win against those St. Hubert's Island people who just go fucking ape with all sorts of lights and reindeers and dummies made up like Jesus H. Fucking Christ. One year they even had a Santa that went up and down on a parachute. You can't win against that.*

Mylah smiles, she says there's \$2,000 for the best in your neighbourhood which means you only have to beat people in your street. Round Mt. Ettalong there's nothing much really. John across the road usually just has Sigma parts in the yard and Mr. Cameron next door hasn't been feeling that great and hasn't been seen for a while so maybe we could do a clean sweep... We'd need money for the lights, I say. Mylah has the whole thing planned out. Go-Lo in Umina has a special on lights, like \$19.99 for 500 lights on a string or something crazy like that. All we'd need is a couple of strings and lights and we'd be a dead cert. I start thinking of what we could do with \$2,000 – pay off some debts, get the kids down to Sydney to see their mothers, maybe go on a holiday to Movie World – and the whole idea of the competition becomes very appealing indeed. Alright, I tell her. I'll stop by Go-Lo have a look and no promises, but she's already bouncing around the kitchen clapping her hands and screaming. It's great to see kids like that – you know, happy for a change, instead of crying and punching holes in the wall and shit.

...

I should have known that Mylah wanting to put up lights wasn't what it appeared to be. Like they say on *Law & Order*, she had an 'ulterior motive'. She kept bugging me. *Kevin*, when are we putting up the lights? *Kevin*, did you get the lights? We've only got three weeks left *Kevin*.

What happened was I was up at Lassiter's and twosies turned into twelvesies and then I had a winning mystery trifecta and \$550 in the hand and I was walking down West Street and Go-Lo was open and *then* I remembered the Chrissie lights, so I went in and they had all these lights so I just kind of went mad and bought up a whole lot and came home. As soon as I woke up Mylah was on to me... Anyway, I'm up a ladder hammering up the Chrissie lights with a vicious hangover and a can of UDL on the go to try and soften the blow.

Mylah and Bryce are down on the ground yelling at me. Put one there Kevin, put another one over there Kevin. Even Bryce calls me Kevin now and he *is* my own kid. Mylah has a diagram on a piece of paper with her lighting design but it's pretty hard to follow. Eventually I just start putting the strings of lights up anywhere and eventually the whole front of the house is festooned with twinklers.

I get down pretty pleased but Mylah and Bryce aren't looking so happy. "What's up?" I say, "It looks good and it'll be even better at night. Believe me." Bryce shrugs and goes off down to the creek. Mylah sits on the front step. She looks like she's going to cry.

"What's up sweetie?" I ask her.

She folds her arms across her stomach and leans forward. I rub her back.

"Do you think if we're a winner Mum will hear it on the radio?"

"I don't know", I say. Honesty is the best policy with kids. "I don't know if they even have Star FM in Sydney."

Mylah doesn't say anything and just goes inside the house.

Fuck a fucking duck.

...

The lights are so bright at night that John's house is lit up. It's so bright you could read a magazine. It's so bright that the Volunteer Fire Fighters use out the front of our place as a prime spot for collecting donations from passing traffic. But Mylah isn't happy. It's just a bunch of lights she says. Although I tell her the front of the house looks like

the universe at night she's not convinced. What's more the Star FM car hasn't been around to interview us. During the *Nights with Alice Cooper on Star 104.5* show they play interviews with people who've entered the comp. Like I thought, people from St. Hubert's Island get a big play, going totally overboard with decorations, and some guy from around the corner in Umina gets a spot as well. But not us. Mylah is devastated.

They'll come around, you'll see, I say to her as we watch TV one night a week before Xmas but I realise at that point that we probably won't get interviewed and probably won't win either.

I get depressed about the whole situation and spend too many nights at Lassiter's. The kids have a lot on this and it weighs on me. My spirits are lifted for a bit when I hear from John across the road that vandals have struck all over the Peninsula, thoughtlessly wrecking people's decorations that they've worked so hard to put up for other people's pleasure. That's what John says to me anyway, but I'm secretly thinking, you *fucking beauty*, now maybe we have a chance, while I'm saying "Oh, that's fucking terrible, if those vandals come around here..." etc. etc.

But nothing changes and Christmas comes and the winner is announced. It's the guy around the corner in Umina who won for making his house look like an ocean liner. What that has to do with fucking Christmas I don't know – maybe it was under the command of Captain Santa?

Mylah gets depressed and not even the paint and canvas set I bought at the Go-Lo spending spree cheers her up on Christmas morning. Bryce is happy enough with his Russell Crowe plastic *Gladiator* sword kit which he takes down to the creek to attack some ducks – he's a resilient kid – but Mylah is just like her mother in so many ways. She gets black and just sinks in there. I hate Christmas.

...

Have you ever had that thing where you have to do something and you just can't do it? Every time I thought about taking the lights down I'd get a pain somewhere and have to lie down on the couch. I just didn't want to think about it. After New Year came and went Mylah never mentioned them either. John stopped complaining about them too and the lights being on all the time became just a regular part of the neighbourhood.

They added a festive air to other events in the year. Bryce's birthday in March seemed to have something a little extra thanks to the illumination, and drinks sessions on the street could go on well into the night as you could see perfectly well. Even though by April only about half of the original lights had survived it was an impressive sight and getting a cab back from the pub was easy – just go to the house with the lights on it I'd say to the cabbie and they'd know where you meant.

Despite all this, the bit that happened next was a surprise. I came home from shopping one afternoon and the Star FM car was parked outside the house. A bloke from the station wanted to talk to me because we had set some sort of record for leaving up our Chrissie lights longer than anyone else. It was great getting on the radio and then it all snowballed. *The Central Coast Advocate* ran a photo of us three with the lights and Mylah cheered up, and then fuck me dead if the story doesn't run in *The Daily Telegraph*, the big Sydney newspaper. There's a knock on the door and its dodderly old Mr. Cameron who I was sure had maybe died but turns out was just on holiday at his sister's and he has the Telegraph. I open the screen door and he shuffles in with the paper pointing at the photo and story on page 12 with his big shaky finger that looks more like a sausage than a finger. We all have a good laugh.

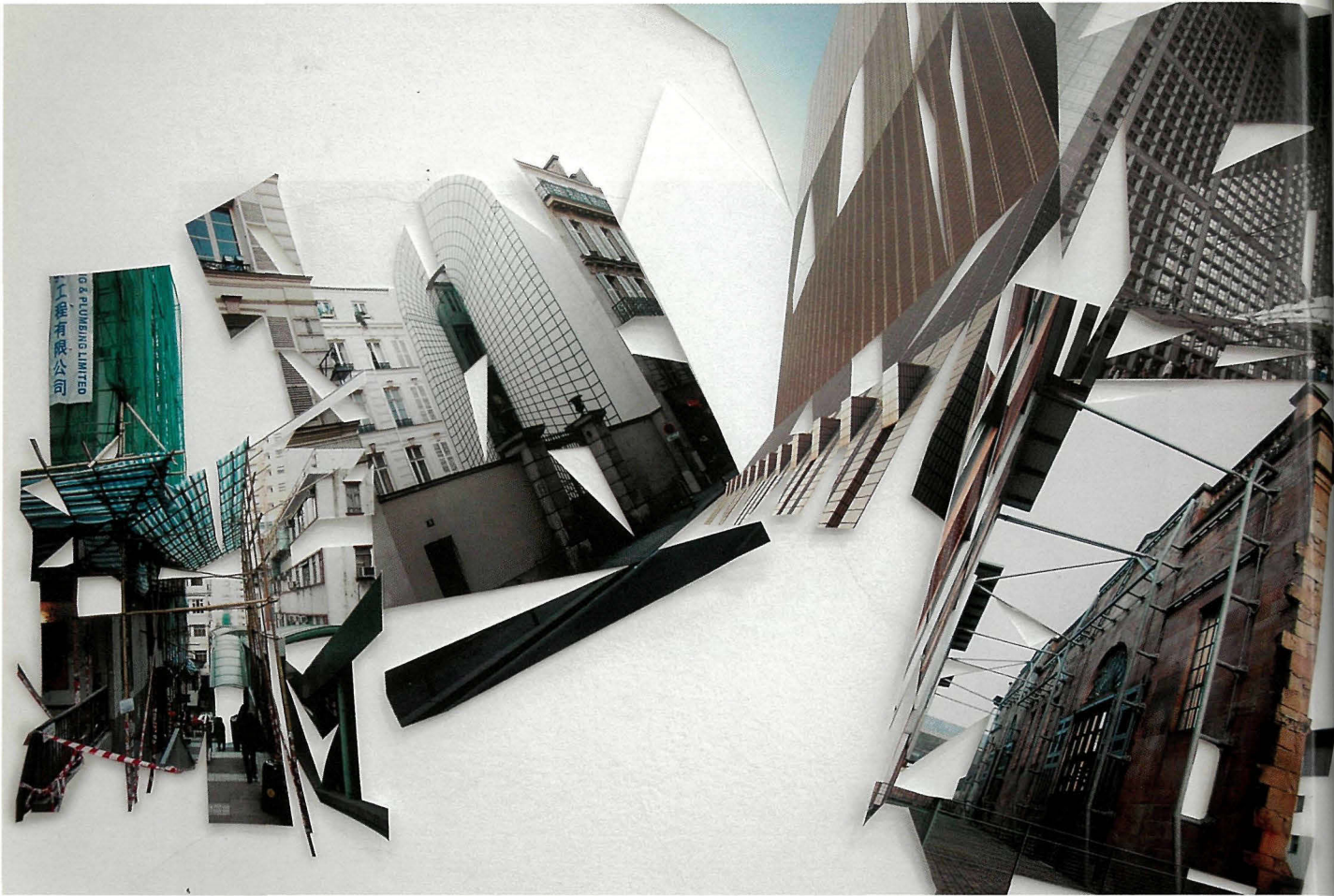
So it's around the beginning of May. The phone rings one night at dinner time. I know the voice straight away. She barely says hi or anything, she just wants to talk to Mylah. Hey Mylah, it's for you, I say, and you can tell from the look on her face she already knows who it is. It must have been the tone of my voice or something. She jumps up from the table and grabs the phone.

So I just sit there eating pizza with Bryce. I let him take the pieces with the most ham on them and keep the pineapple rich slices for myself. Bryce is talking to me about soccer or something and I'm nodding and smiling at him but what I'm really doing is listening to the kid talk to her mother.

I can tell from what's being said that they're talking about me, about how I couldn't be bothered taking down the lights and what a joke I am, but that's all ok. It's nice for a change that everyone is happy.







# Sojourn Space

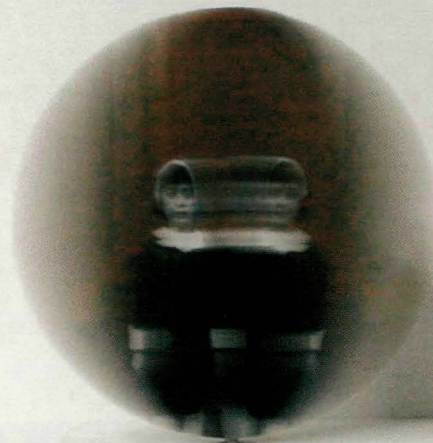
MIMI TONG





# VERTIGO

ELEANOR AVERY  
CHRISTOPHER HANRAHAN  
REBECCA ANN HOBBS  
JAKI MIDDLETON & DAVID LAWREY  
MS & MR  
HOLLY WILLIAMS  
SIMON YATES



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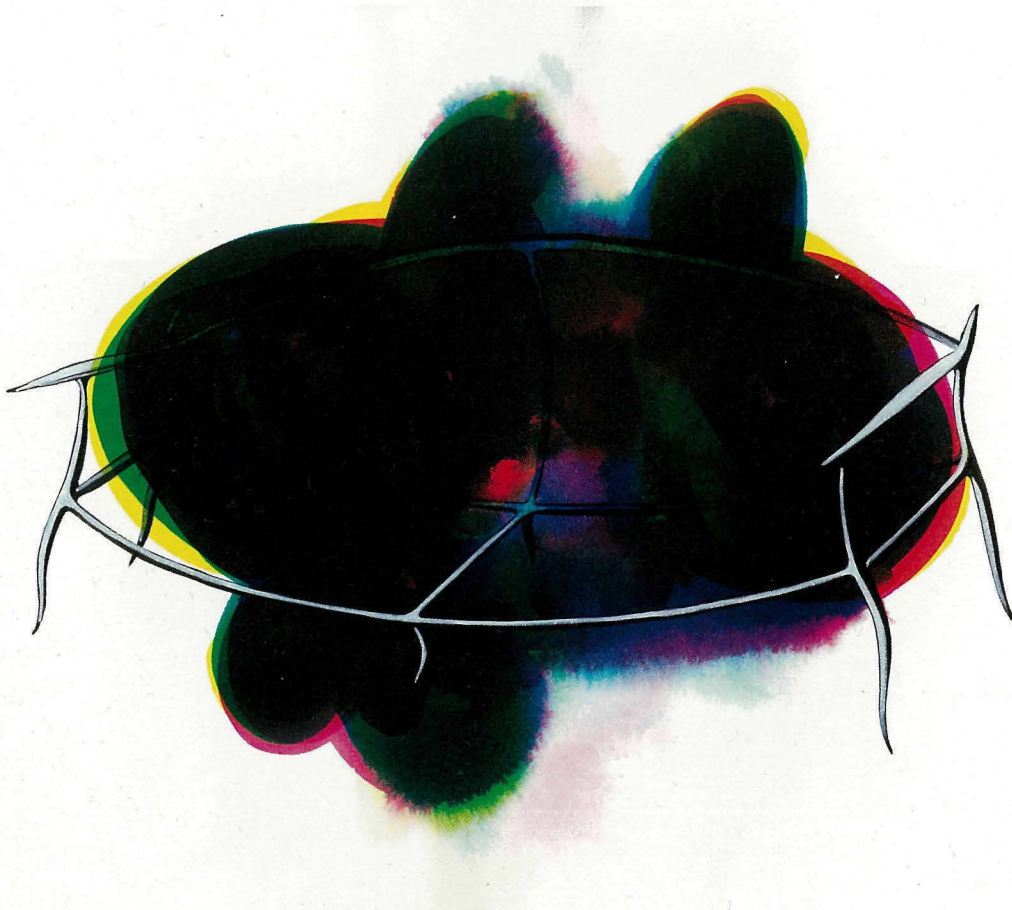
This project was initiated by The Invisible Inc. and is supported by Arts NSW.

# Crystal Day

JASON DE HAAN

On January 25, 2007 the artist spent an entire day in Calgary, Alberta, Canada with his pockets filled with 18 different crystals and minerals. According to crystal therapy practitioners each specimen possesses specific beneficial properties, among them the ability to attract love, encourage peace, and promote generosity. The crystals were selected based on these properties and carried with the hope that they would positively affect the various activities and encounters of that day.

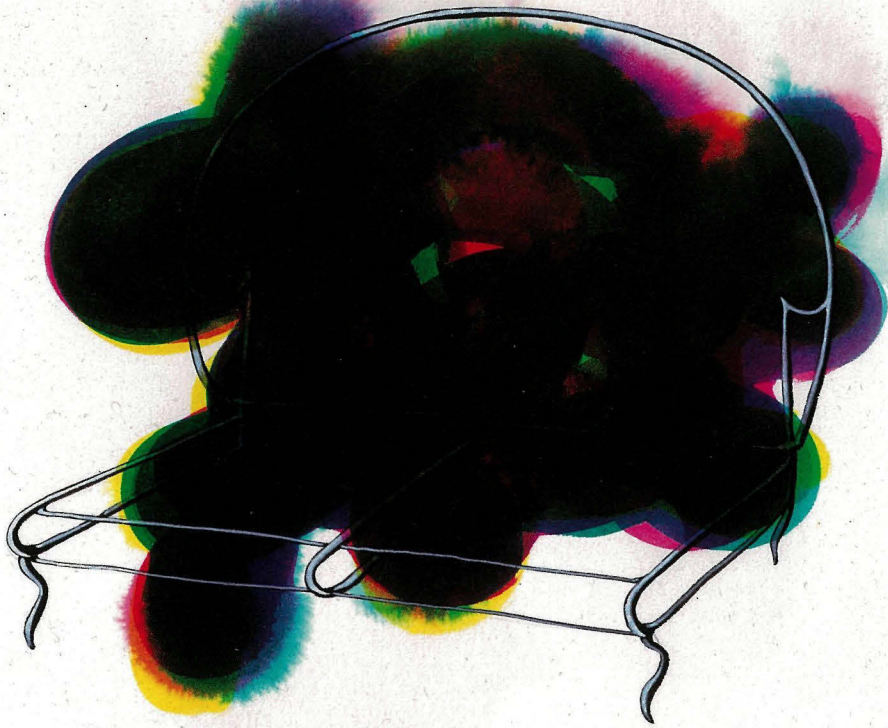


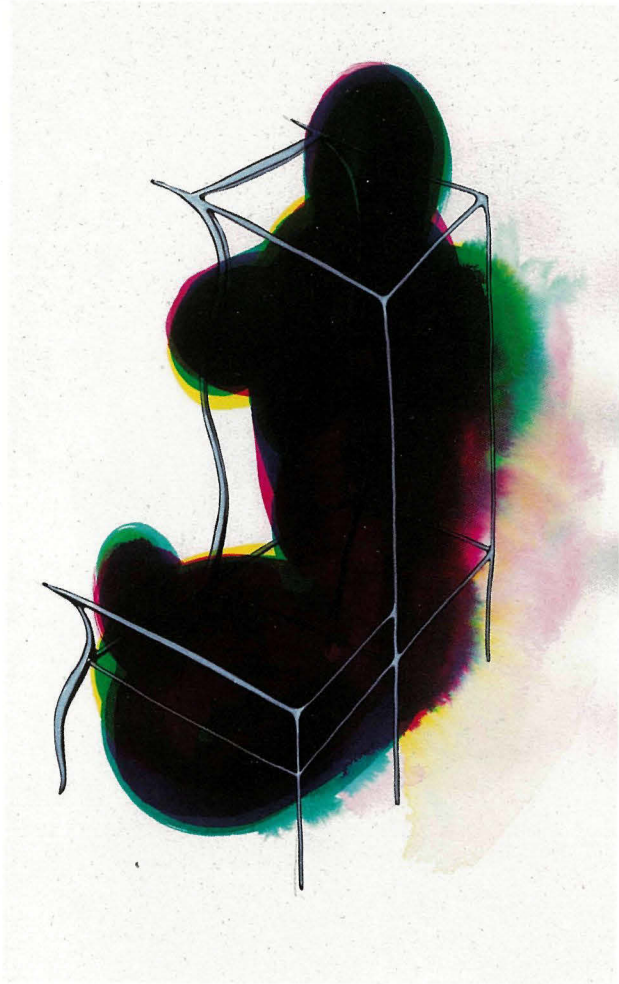


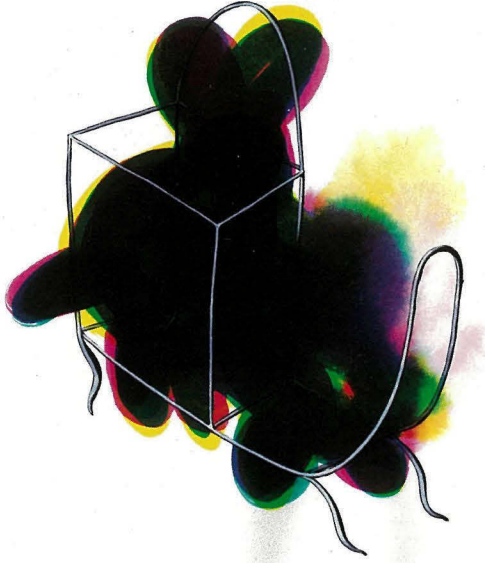
## Growing up with Parker

PAUL DONALD









# Assignment

AMANDA ROWELL

Names serve as handles on things. Things and people we know almost nothing about can figure large in our minds, having captured or having been captured by the imagination. Such is the case with the planet Pluto. In the second half of 2006 the definition of a planet was changed. Previously, two criteria had determined the status of an astronomical object: to be a planet, an object had to be in orbit around the sun and it had to be large enough that its own gravitational forces overcame the influence of its peers and pulled it into a spherical form. Planets need to exhibit a certain integrity as objects. But a third criterion was added which stipulated that to be recognised as a planet by its dominant and influential nature, an object must have cleared other objects out of the way in its orbital neighbourhood. One consequence of this was that Pluto was demoted from the status of planet, where it had enjoyed the mythic companionship of Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, to dwarf planet, where it joined a more obscure association with Ceres and Eris. Press coverage in the *New York Times* praised the decision as 'a triumph of science over sentiment'. The decision also seemed to confirm my father's favourite truism: that you can be sure of only two things in this world.

Pluto had been the most distant planet in our solar system. It was the ultimate in a group of objects that we learnt the names of as children – somewhat like the letter zed in the alphabet. It was part of a small, well-defined system of physical objects within whose limits we located ourselves and whose difficult-to-comprehend dimensions largely informed our concept of scale and the relative significance or insignificance of the things and events around us. It was part of the bigger picture. At the same time, as a conceptual group, the nine planets were easily grasped – a caricature, by illustration, of the infinitely more awesome number of things out there in space. In our lay understanding of the team dynamics of the solar system, Pluto was the mascot, the furthest wanderer, the littlest and youngest as well as the most shy. Our relationship to it was not without emotion. We developed a mental image of it. And its demotion from planethood was for many of us a small and private devastation.

Still, almost nothing is known about Pluto. Discovered in 1930 during a search for the red herring Planet X, Pluto is an enigma in both its physical makeup and in its name. Observational techniques are yet to perceive it in any scientifically satisfactory way. It is beyond knowledge. Further, the name 'Pluto', Roman word for 'Hades' or 'abode of the dead', also carries the meaning of 'the unseen'. By synecdoche, Pluto is both the dead and the unknown. Along with its moon Charon, 'ferryman of the dead', all anyone has seen of it when viewed through the most advanced telescope are two dull points of light. Together they are a vague but persistent beacon glimpsed through the fog of all other things to which we irresistibly advance. It is, as yet, out of reach of science, but imagination's curiosity has got there before the more empirical methods and has planted its flag in the brownish smudge – the moribund aesthetic object – that is Pluto.

In its seventy-six year lifetime as a planet, Pluto had various names, some proposed, some science-fictional: Zeus, Cronos, Minerva, Yuggoth, the Event Horizon. But last year it was assigned a new name: 134340. By contrast, the names of the craters on the planet Mercury include: Botticelli, Brunelleschi, Degas, Delacroix, Dürer, Gauguin, Goya, Holbein, Matisse, Michelangelo, Monet, Renoir, Rodin, Rubens, Tintoretto, Titian, van Dyck, van Eyck, van Gogh and Velázquez.

In January 2006, eight months before Pluto's demotion, NASA launched New Horizons, a one-way spaceship mission to Pluto. At the time of writing, New Horizons had all but reached Jupiter from where it will be catapulted by Jupiter's gravity in the direction of Pluto, which it will reach in July 2015.



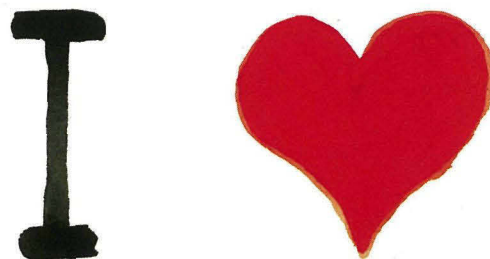
# Australian Values Declaration

JESSE STEIN

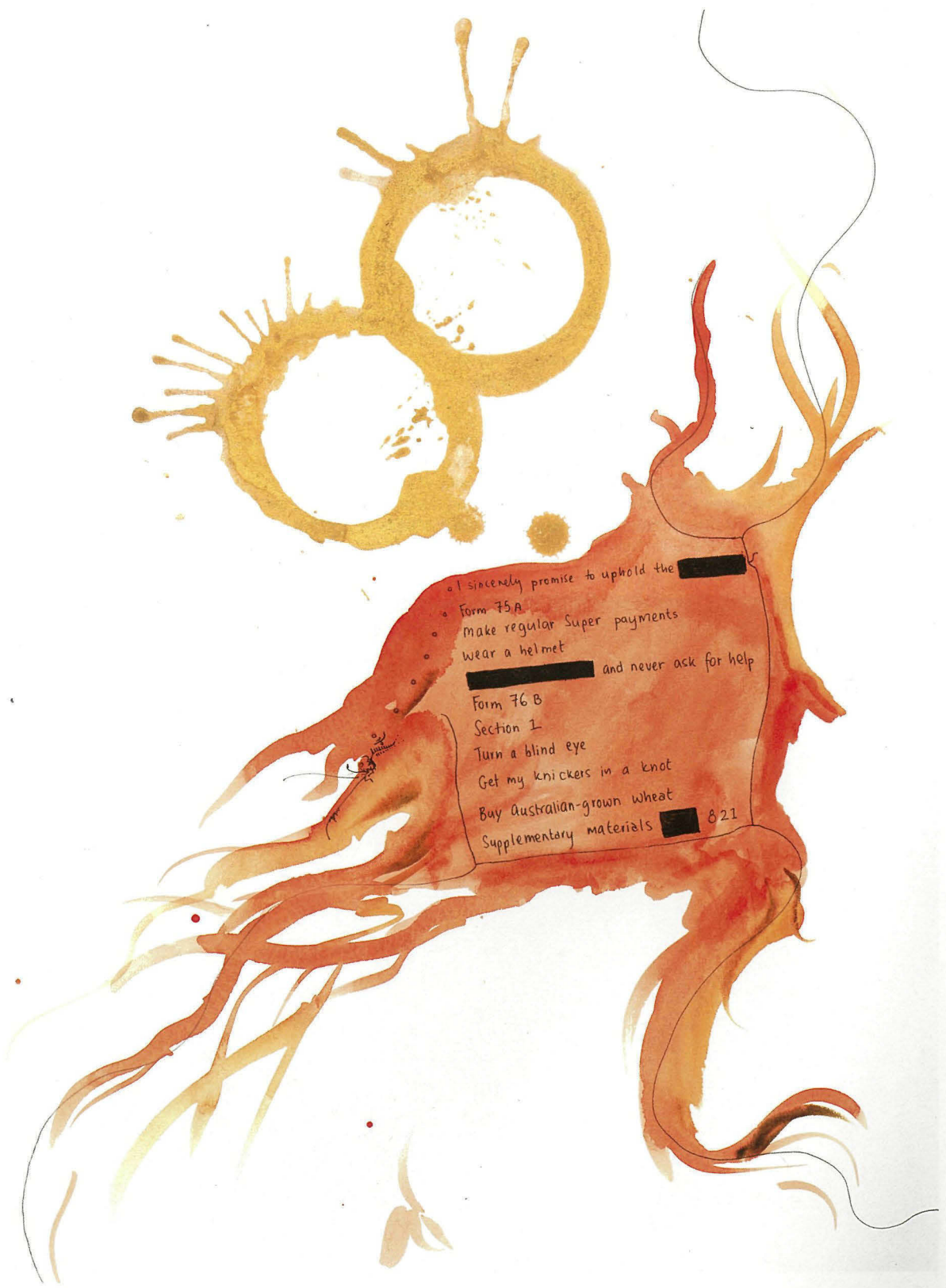


Application for gra.  
Australian citizenship.

Yorlshlan, from 1927. How to apply for grant of Australian citizenship a  
and write neatly in English using BLOCK LETTERS. Tick where require  
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ural Affairs (the department) citizenship website at [www.citizenship.g](http://www.citizenship.g)  
cant



MY IWA



I sincerely promise to uphold the [redacted]  
Form 75A  
Make regular Super payments  
wear a helmet  
[redacted] and never ask for help  
Form 76 B  
Section 1  
Turn a blind eye  
Get my knickers in a knot  
Buy Australian-grown wheat  
Supplementary materials [redacted] 821

# There Are Many German Words in Polish, There Are Not Many German Words.

KUBA DORABIALSKI

Two years ago I was approached by a Polish publisher to write a biography of the Polish/German actor Volker Głowiak. Głowiak has a sizable cult following in Poland but in the English-speaking world, he's entirely unknown. With his kinky hair and horrid teeth and eagerness to present his tiny member at any opportunity, he fulfils all the criteria of the demented German actor. According to Werner Herzog, Głowiak's obscurity outside Poland and Germany is due to the deep, dark shadows cast by the other two great German lunatic actors: Bruno S. and Klaus Kinski. Głowiak, Herzog believes, is much more intimidating than these two.

Not much is known about Volker Głowiak's life. Just a few *biographemes*: he was aggressive, he was manic-depressive, he never married, had no kids, and lost his family (father, mother, sister, aunt and both paternal grandparents) to a Soviet POW camp during the war. He seldom gave interviews and had no true friends. All this, and the fact that he had died in 1986, made my job extremely difficult. Eventually, this absence of information, combined with a few dull income tax issues related to my Polish citizenship, forced me to break my contract (with the publisher giving me, unbelievably, the old 'you'll never work in this town again' line to my whimpering, laughing face). The biography was never written.

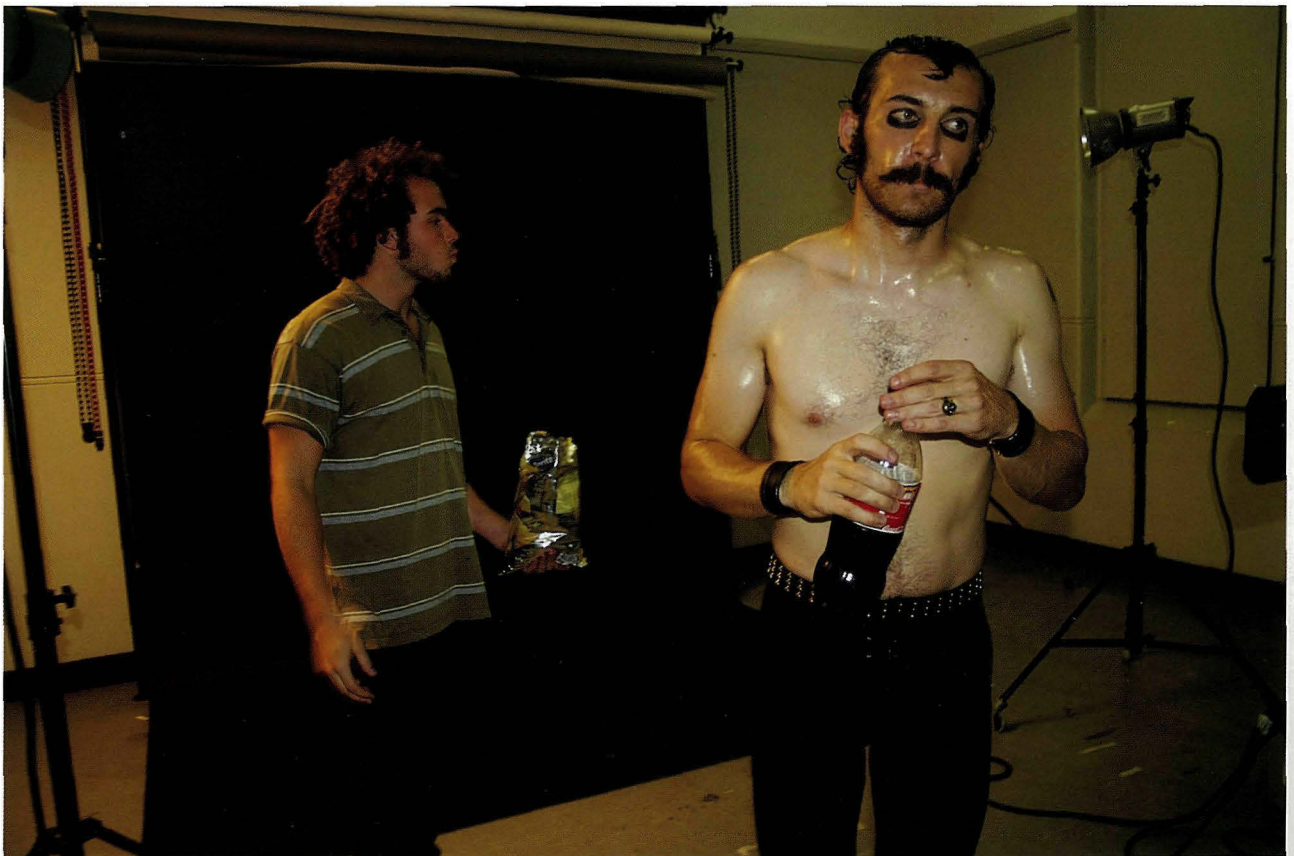


Above: Middle row, last on the right, a six-year-old Volker Głowiak at school in pre-war Poland.



However, before I ditched the commission, I made a research trip to Głowiak's birth town of Lublin, in Poland's east. There I met a university librarian named Grażyna who had a small personal archive of Głowiak collectables, which she graciously allowed me to copy. There were VHS cassettes of Głowiak's movies and a few audio recordings of the actor in his student days reading Hölderlin, but mostly this suitcase museum was made up of photographs. Sepia photographs of a little Volker in a school play. In the military, holding a sub-machine gun. With a girlfriend in a field of wheat. Goofing around with some ragged children in a 60's Berlin courtyard.

What is remarkable though, and I couldn't at first identify it, is that his face never changes. I looked through all the images a few times and I was quite horrified to see the same features in all of them. And I don't mean that you can recognise the same person in various stages of life, but that, quite literally, the face *never* changes. Głowiak's face as a toddler looks too old, like he has Hutchinson-Gilford Progeria Syndrome or something. A photo of him playing soccer, which I assumed was taken when he was in his forties, on closer inspection turns out to be Głowiak as a teen, just after the war (there are two US soldiers in the background). Then, going on, I found that the images from late life are sickeningly unnatural as well. A magazine photo from the last year of his life shows him in bed reading *Der Spiegel* with his tired and bloated body

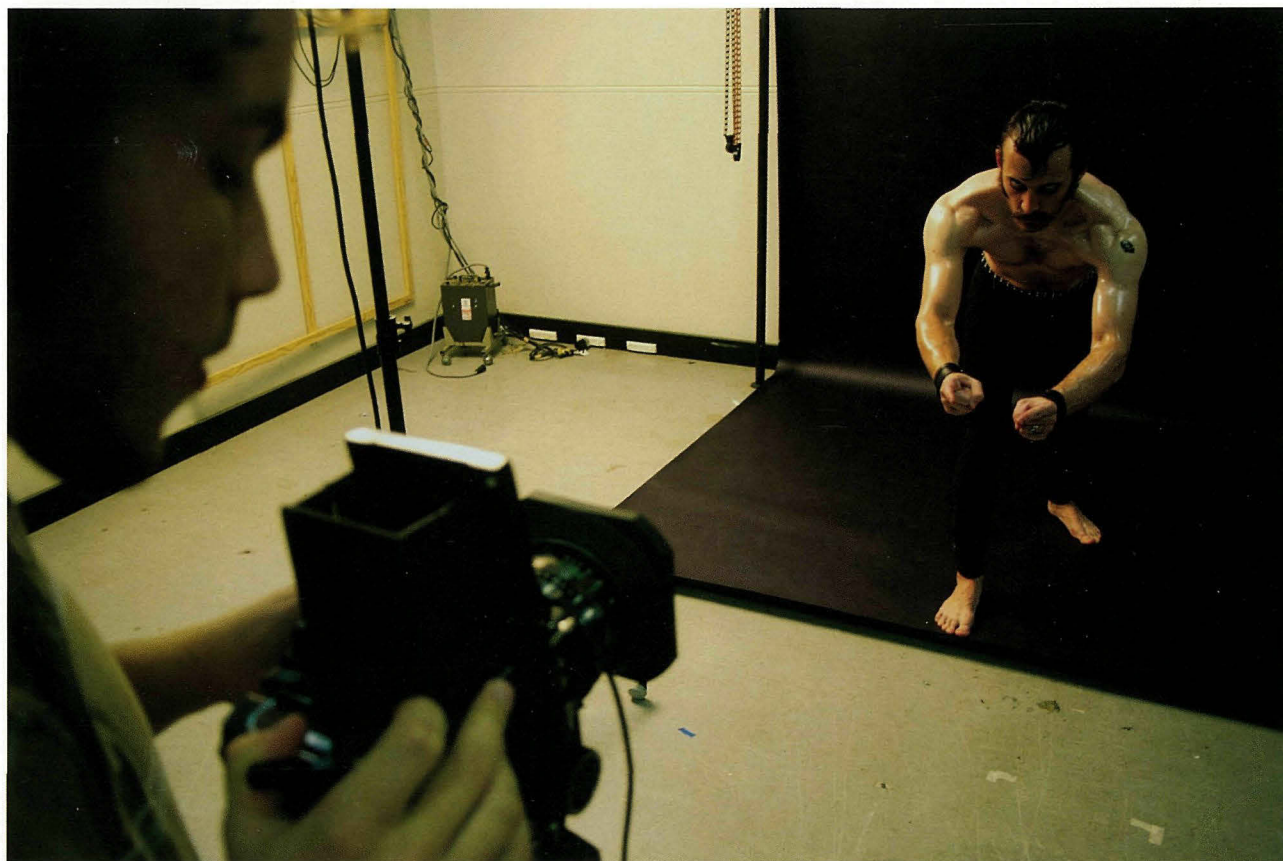


Above: Głowiak's baptism, 1926.

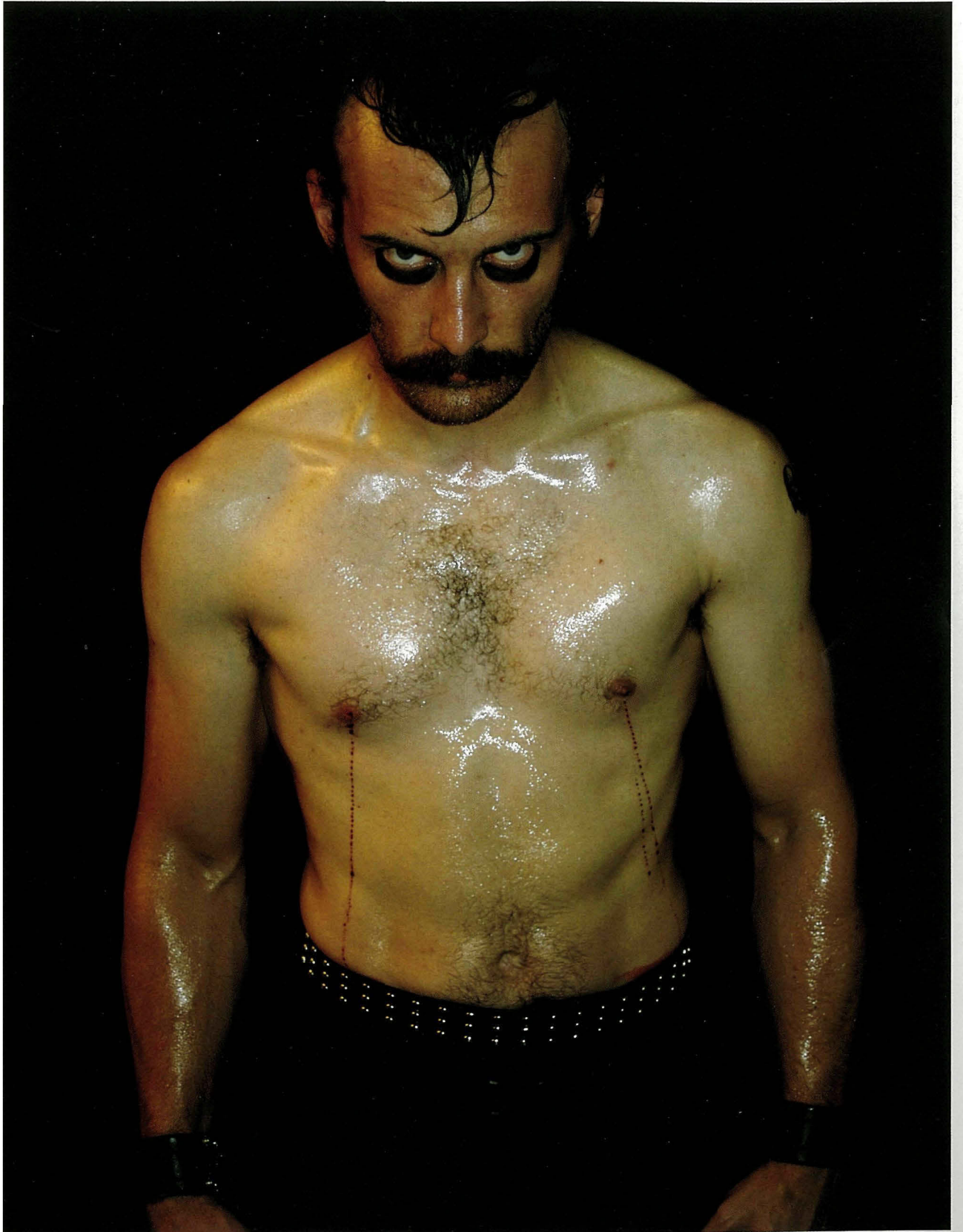
supporting a mismatched baby-face. But the bulk of the images in the archive are Głowiak as he is remembered (by the few who remember him). It's in these images that he looks his age; his perennially middle-aged face for a brief time corresponding to his biological age.

I remember that at the time, looking through this little archive, I was quite ashamed that I hadn't noticed Głowiak's unchanging visage earlier. I think of myself as a visual person and a gaffe like this challenges my self-perception. I asked Grażyna if she had ever noticed this marvel. She smiled and quickly looked at a few of the images and admitted that she didn't know what I was talking about. As proof, she pointed out his various hairstyles over the years. It seemed she couldn't see past this aspect of his appearance. I persisted and started going through the images, one by one, masking out Głowiak's hair with my hands. She finally half-admitted, "Yes, there is maybe something". I still don't know if she was truly unaware of the strangeness of Głowiak's stasis or if she was pretending (what is there to hide?) or even if she was simply mocking me (it happens).

When I got back to Sydney, I went for a surf at Cronulla and was attacked by a two-metre shark and had my hand sliced right the fuck off.



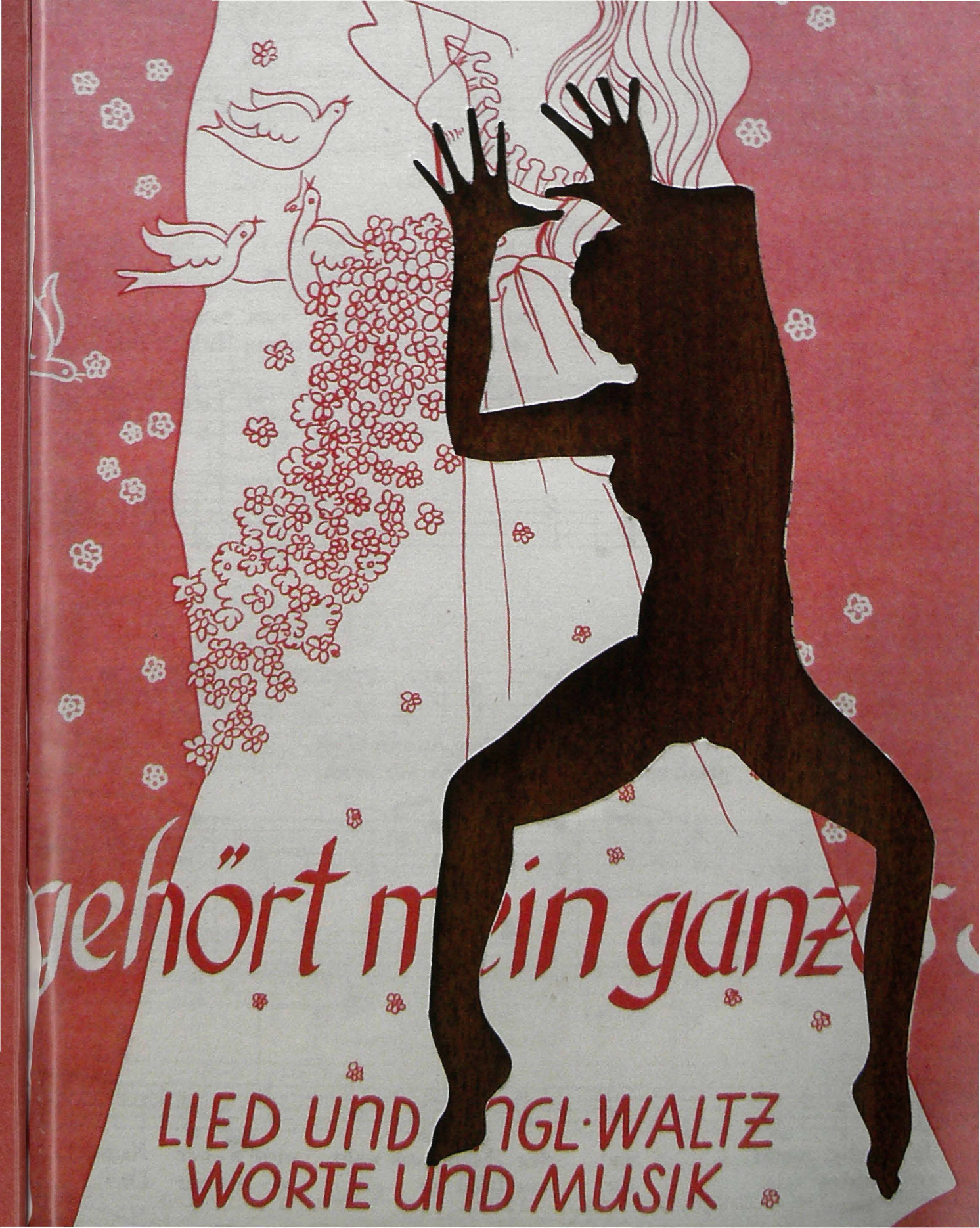
Above: From 1954, cover of *Pack My Bags, Woman (I'm Leaving You)*, Głowiak's only musical release.  
Facing page: Głowiak feeding ducks in Hamburg, aged 64.



# Variations

KATHRYN GRAY





gehört mein ganzes

LIED UND ENGL-WALTZ  
WORTE UND MUSIK



8.....: 1. Oft ich  
2. Wf Dich  
p

n-gen und V-lan-gen nach  
und al - lein, ich lie - be

se  
kl:







# Sex and Pretty Babies

WORDS BY RAQUEL WELCH

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EMILY HUNT

The most intensely awkward and confusing period of one's development is at the cusp of adolescence. This abrupt moment when childhood forcibly surrenders unformed identity to an uncertain future ushers in a period of bewildering upheaval. It is a time when, ideally, we choose the role we will play, the character we will be, and the life we will lead. In a perfect world we would plan our brilliant future, and effortlessly glide through to the end. Unfortunately, since we are neither God, nor Ed Harris directing reality TV, it would be impossible to create for oneself this ideal existence; time travel aside. And so it is that we all endure this transitional period, replete with embarrassing and uncomfortable hormonal imbalances and rapid growth spurts, as well as experimentation of almost every kind.

Pre-pubescence and a child's coming-of-age is both voyeuristic in nature and humiliating to recall, and has been the subject of countless novels, films and works of art; most often focusing on sex and drugs and the subsequent loss of innocence.

*Go Ask Alice*, written by 'Anonymous' is the fictional diary of a teenage drug abuser. It is considered a classic of American young adult literature and so controversial in its explicit references to drugs and sex, that parents and conservatives sought to remove it from school libraries after it was first published in 1971. Purporting to be an honest account of a young girl's slide into drug addiction and eventual death, it was written as an almost cautionary tale of the dangers of a child's need for peer acceptance, the lengths to which they will go to 'fit in' and the disastrous consequences. The book's premise though, is greatly undermined by factual inconsistencies in relation to the types of drugs she was taking and their effects, as well as the flowery descriptions of these instances. The book seduces the reader into wanting to experience Alice's wild drug abandon, while at the same time condemning it. This seems to be the unintentional result in almost every medium dealing with the subject.

*In H: The autobiography of a child prostitute and heroin addict*, later adapted into the film *Christiane F*, the account of drug abuse

and underage prostitution is much more realistic and frank in its portrayal. As with Alice, Christiane's sordid decline at the tender age of twelve was an almost direct result of her need for peer approval and disillusionment as a result of her parents' divorce. This desire to be 'cool' came at the expense of individual character. She didn't want to be different; she wanted to be accepted and therefore safe. It is ironic that this belief causes just the opposite outcome, and in fact puts Christiane into physical and mental danger. The narration is brutally honest and disturbing in its graphic description of sexual encounters and heroin overdoses. Despite this, the book still manages to promote the glamour of the junkie lifestyle quite effortlessly and makes it almost an aspiration. This can at once lead to finger pointing in all directions: to the media, to fashion's 'heroin chic' of the 1990's, to the altar of purported musical geniuses, poets, writers and artists who championed drug-taking as a means of expanding their minds and reaching new levels of sexual and emotional states. In the film adaptation, a pre-pubescent Natja Brunckhorst plays Christiane, made-up like a painted doll and wearing tight high-waisted jeans, heels and denim jackets. She is tall and waifish and her long tousled hair and pure baby face betray her true age. Even at the peak of her heroin addiction, when she propositions clients alongside her rent boy lover, she is still beautiful, fragile, innocent and painfully unaware of her allure.

The youthful ideal, as portrayed in film, has always been one with sexual tones, whether subtle or blatantly so. Louis Malle's *Pretty Baby* is the story of a child prostitute in New Orleans' red-light district in 1917, and stars a twelve year-old Brooke Shields in her first film role. The film featured explicit scenes of a completely nude Shields being photographed by her mother's client, Ernest J. Bellocq. Both mother and daughter sell their bodies for money, but soon Shields falls in love with the older man and plans marriage. Although many people will label this movie as perverted, it is not. There is no suggestion of condoning or promoting such behaviour, and the viewers are left to gather their own conclusions.

There is, of course, material specifically aimed at pre-adolescents, which, while not being entirely graphic in its sexual content, is so blatant and nonchalant in its delivery that the reader does not fully consider its impact. A classic example is the writing of Virginia Andrews, whose novels combine Gothic horror and family saga revolving around family secrets and forbidden love. *Flowers In The Attic* is the first book in the Dollanganger Series, and was followed by *Petals on the Wind*, *If There Be Thorns* and *Seeds of Yesterday*. *Flowers in the Attic* is a tale of four children locked in the attic for four years by their fanatically, religious grandmother. The novel was deeply controversial because of its themes of incest, child abuse, neglect, and other taboo subjects. The author wrote in such effortlessly romantic prose and carefully veiled indecency, that young readers would not even stop to reflect on heavy scenes of underage incest, child abuse and enforced incarceration.

These films and novels all date back to the 1970s, but what of the present popular culture, which is still fascinated by pre-pubesence? The fleeting essence of youth is the ever-growing obsession of stressed out middle-aged hags; whose frazzled and fading beauty line the already bulging wallets of cosmetic giants and fashion houses. The ideal of youth they are being sold is brazenly sexual; twelve year old nymphs are now spruiking everything from low-priced lipstick to high-end fragrances and they're selling faster than ever. Moreover, it's not only the beauty and fashion industries who are preying on these insecurities, but the greatest catalyst, the entertainment industry, which continues to fuel this all-consuming desire for youthful beauty at all costs. They make women want to be child-like and they make children want to be women, confusing and blurring social order and throwing ethics into the mix.

While at once denouncing the sexed-up teen image in moralistic films of alienated, drug-abusing and sexually irresponsible kids, the entertainment industry is nevertheless cashing in on these damaged goods. They are still making the look and lifestyle attractive and their sexuality all the more perverse. Recent films such as *Thirteen* is a fairly straightforward coming-of-age story with the usual dramas; sex, drugs and school truancy. *The Virgin Suicides* romanticised teen suicide and promiscuity, and Larry Clark took it all to the next level with his nineties classic, the AIDS-riddled *Kids*.

Pre-adolescence is still a regurgitated muse, which inspires those with artistic intent. These children are so fascinating because of their reckless and often misguided exploration of self and their unashamed sexual appeal, which is at once naïve yet strangely palpable and triggers guilty thoughts even in harmless observations. It seems as though this trend is becoming worse as we 'progress', but is it? Have children always been idolised as these pure beings by a society that so strenuously denies their sexual allure and chastises itself for such ill thoughts?

There is no denying the attractiveness of pre-pubesence. To renounce this notion would be to renounce human history, our inborn pattern of behavioural characteristics and the powerful impulses that feel natural rather than reasoned. Of course, the exploitation of youth is quite sickening in its predatory endorsement, but it's also this very exploitation that is forcing us to see youth for what it is. Pre-pubesence is confronting, confusing and at times unbearable.





Berchtesgaden mit dem Watzmann • Ernst Baumann, Reichenhall • Isopon-Film • Juni • 11 Uhr • F/5,6 • 1/100 Sek. •  
Camera: Karat (Solinar-Objektiv F/3,5 50 mm Brennweite)

## Mountain

Marita Fraser

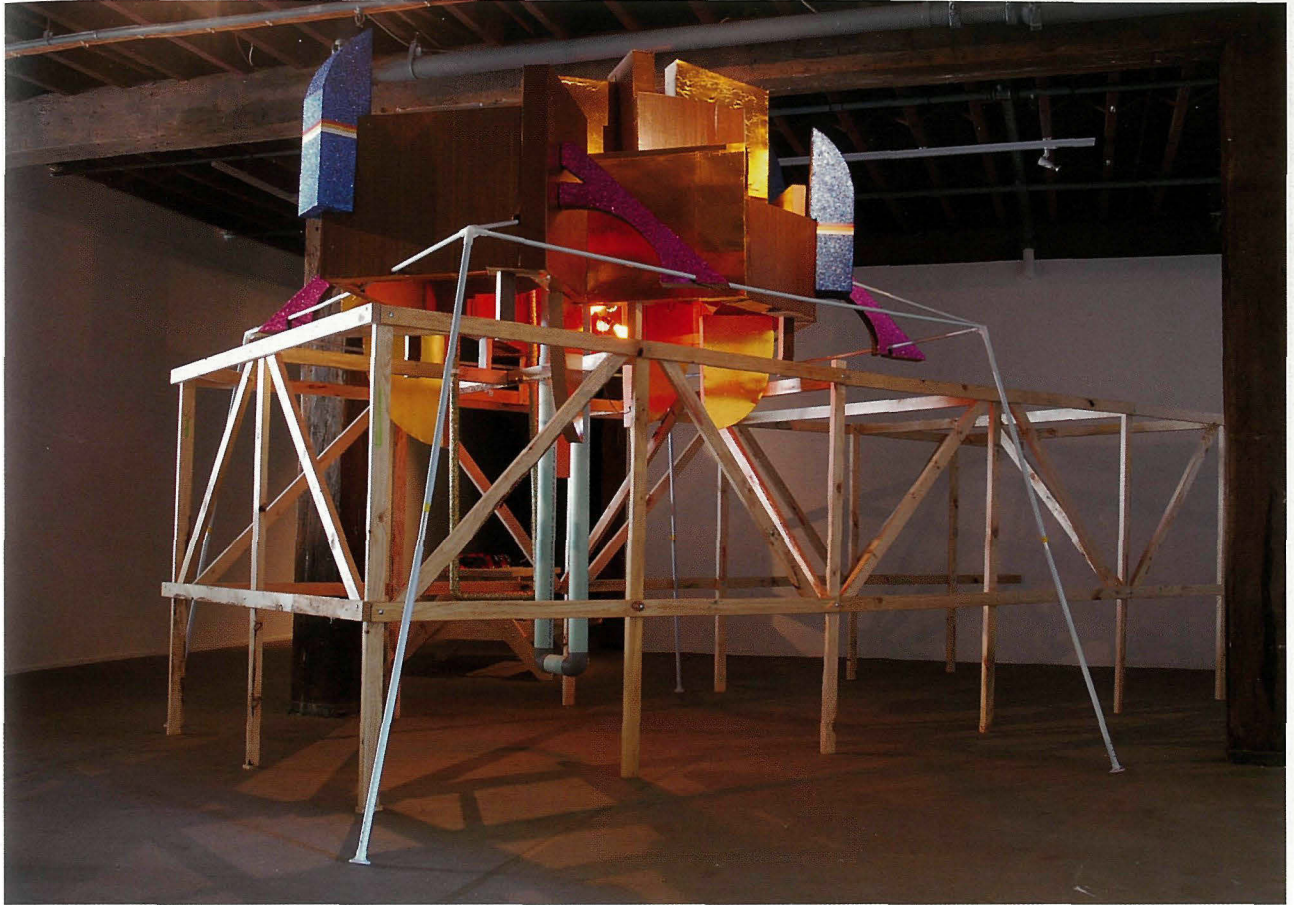






REVIEWS & INTERVIEWS





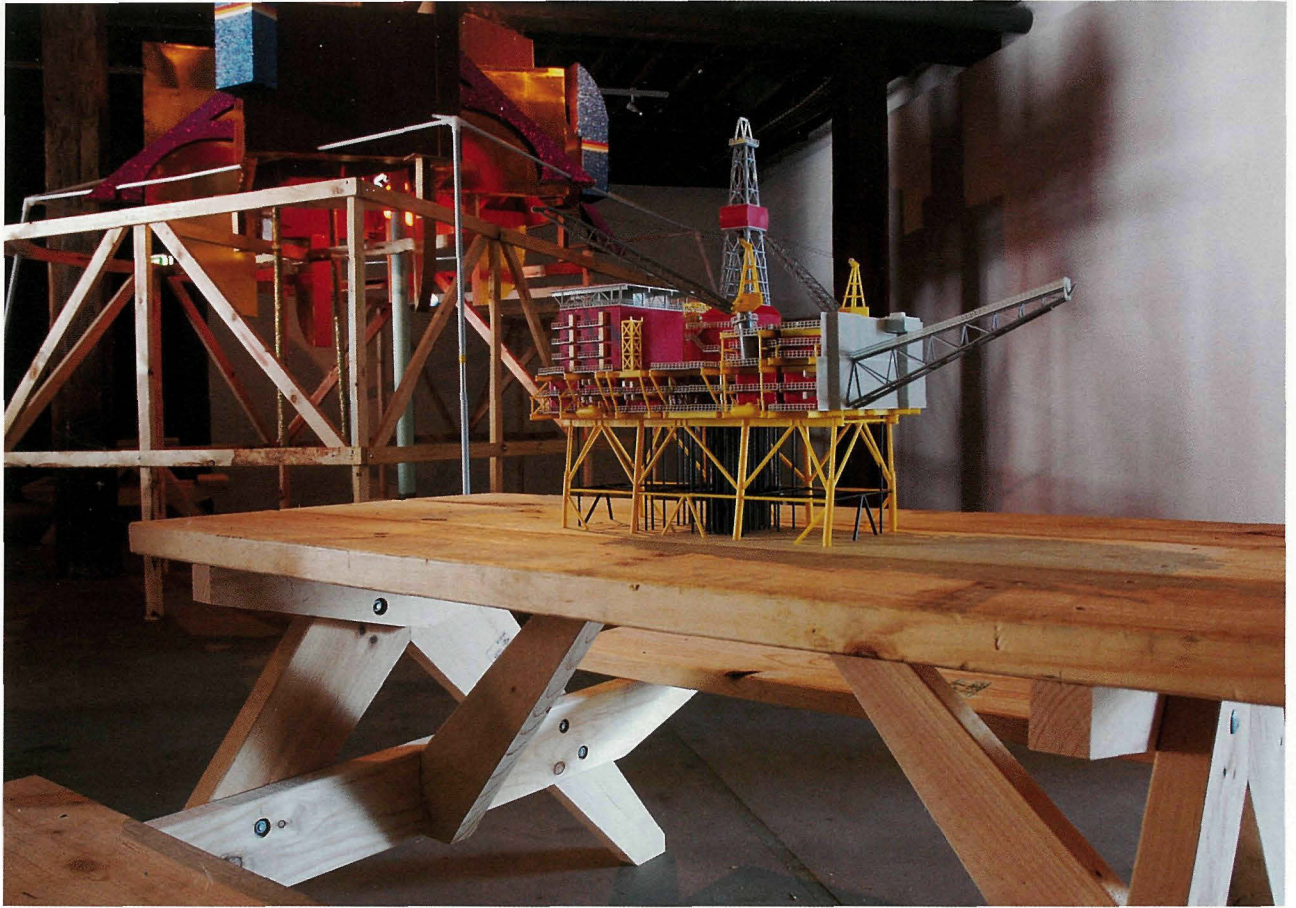
## James Avery & Eleanor Avery - OUR DAY OUT *yourspace*

CLARE LEWIS, MICHAEL LLOYD, JAMES AVERY & ELEANOR AVERY

James Avery & Eleanor Avery recently completed an artist residency at Artspace, Sydney. The resulting installation, *OUR DAY OUT yourspace* (2007) has a number of components which allude to a teetering human playground. The pair collaborated over the course of five weeks and built a structure which resembles both a pier and an Apollo Lunar Module. The installation continues their investigations into the idea of the human in transit, the perpetual creation and underlying fragility of the machines which control and explore our environment, and the human quest for pleasure and discovery; from days out, to outer space.

The Averys see the pier as a loaded construction. To them it is a non-place, in between industry and pleasure-seeking, both terrestrial and aquatic but not quite either. Historically the wealthy went to them; the sea was a partially tamed frontier and these follies evoked the narratives of conquest and discovery that so fascinated the upper classes. Today the demographic has changed; they are somewhat tacky, holiday curiosities on which to waste time and money, tinged with the sadness of lost grandeur. There is also a vulnerability to them. Influenced by images of Brighton's crumbling West Pier, the installation is deliberately tumbledown as a result. Similarly, Woolloomooloo's finger wharf, the biggest timber wharf in the world, has influenced the scale of the sculptural approach with the artists pushing their structure to be as big and

Above: James Avery & Eleanor Avery, *OUR DAY OUT yourspace* (detail), 2007, installation.

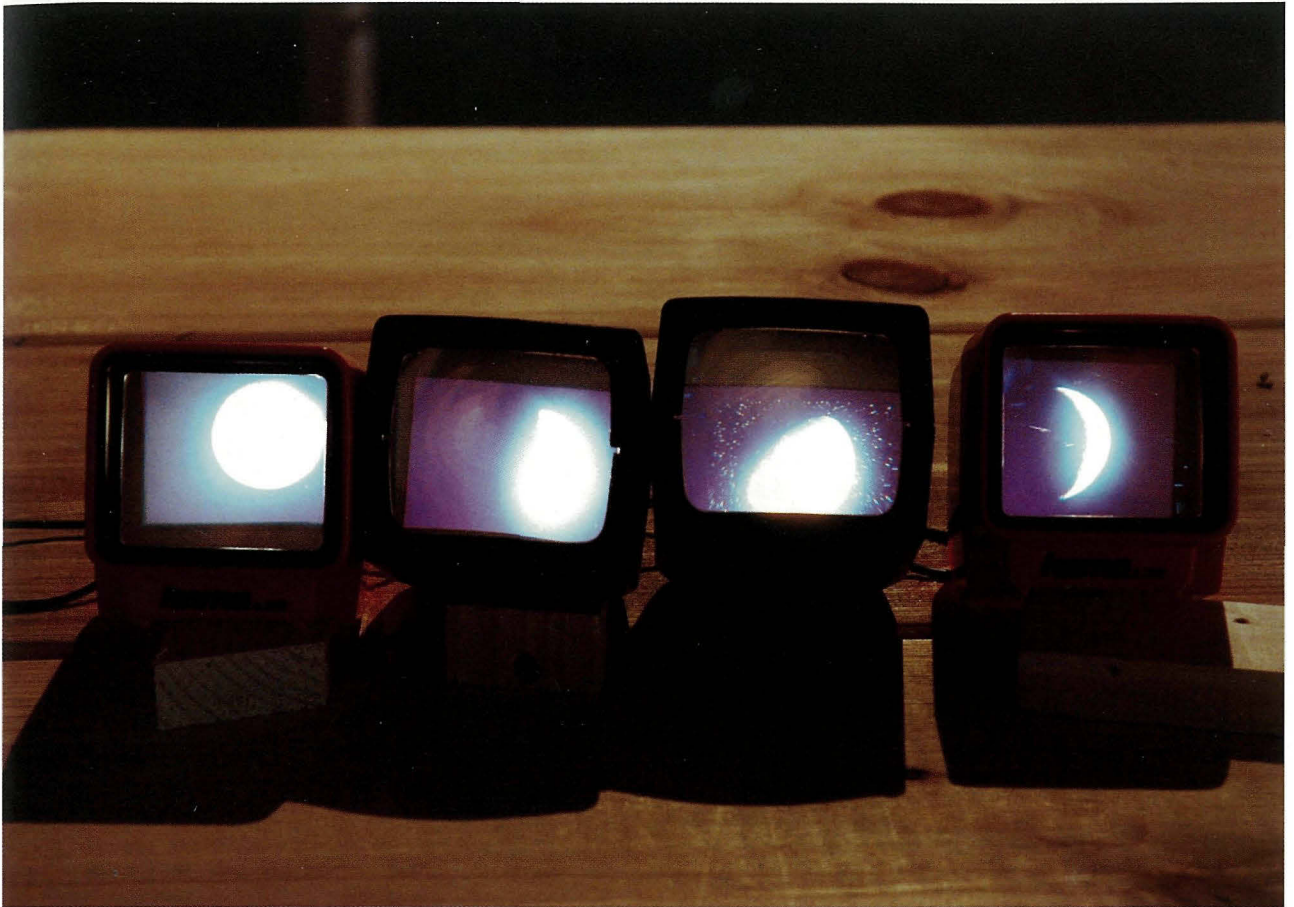


high and teetering as possible. This sense of fragility is also derived from the structural uncertainty of piers. The Averys associate piers with icebergs; the activity and attention is given to the sideshows and distractions on top, while the foundation beams and struts remain largely forgotten underwater.

The investigation of half-forgotten and hidden structures is an important element of their practice. The pipes, which sprawl out from under the sculpture, refer to the idea of connectivity, an unseen functionality which underpins the human world. We have a tendency to gloss over the technical aspects of existence, concealing circuitry and mechanics alike beneath a carapace of curved plastic. However, when buildings are in the process of being demolished, the pipes and conduit are often all that is left standing. It is in this moment of decay that the motive force of society is revealed.

This is no demystification or debunking session though. The Averys' journey into the mechanical psyche of our world re-energizes these artefacts with a lost magic. They have created slightly absurd, poetic structures, drawing inspiration from their close proximity to the industrial area of Woolloomooloo. Using models like the oil rig, perched on one of the picnic tables, they reveal a whimsical elegance in the brutish scaffolding of a crane arm. The use of the slide-viewer imagery of the various phases of the moon, which were all taken from the internet, represents the relationship of space travel to the process of flattening and taming our environment by taking a picture. It also refers to a moon which was not an object of observation but one of worship, a magical cyclical feminine symbol, here tamed and rearranged into a kind of linear Stonehenge.

Above: James Avery & Eleanor Avery, OUR DAY OUT *yourspace* (detail), 2007, installation



*James Avery & Eleanor Avery in conversation, Artspace studios, February 2007:*

We also have an ongoing fascination with the 'power' of man through invention. Our work often responds to the possibilities and processes of the man-made; transporter bridges, castles and helicopters—the machines we invent, the motifs of space and travel—it makes us feel small and alive. The incorporation of the iconic Apollo Lunar Module shape into the gazebo skeleton represents the 'ultimate day out': a trip to the moon. We are interested in getting under the skin of these technologies, exposing how these things work; their processes. Old technology is particularly interesting, as it was so much less mediated by computer control, and the contraptions seem so badly made and fragile. The Apollo Lunar Module for instance, had this fantastic shiny material underneath it. It looks far too fragile to be scaling outer space, so we've adopted that in the glitter of our installation.

Despite the fact that these space shuttles look so retro now, by going to the moon, NASA essentially reached their developmental ceiling, since then there have just been different shapes and surfaces, making the same journey.

Eleanor Avery & James Avery undertook their residency and exhibition at Artspace, Woolloomooloo, from 16 February – 10 March 2007.

Above: James Avery & Eleanor Avery, *OUR DAY OUT yourspace* (detail), 2007, installation.



## Redfern-Waterloo Tour of Beauty

ANNEKE JASPERS interviews SQUATSPACE

Since 2005, the artist collective SquatSpace has been running a site-specific, performative art project called the *Redfern-Waterloo Tour of Beauty*. The tour is a multi-platform, iterative work that responds to the changes currently taking place in Redfern and Waterloo under the jurisdiction of the Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA). As an ongoing process of consultation and exchange, the tours provide a platform for the discussion of these changes from a variety of perspectives, providing participants with a first-hand experience of the local area and of the conflicting community interests the RWA's intervention both amplifies and overcomes.

The most recent tour was staged in conjunction with the project *If You See Something, Say Something*, which took place in Sydney and Melbourne throughout January and February.<sup>1</sup> *If You See Something, Say Something* examined relationships between art and social action, and was grounded in the issue of art's capacity to generate change. The *Tour of Beauty* likewise shares these concerns. In addition to tracing, revealing and publicising the environmental changes taking place in a local community, the tour also strives to generate a social and discursive space in which changes on many other levels might occur, for example: shifts in personal perspective; in the dynamic between different community stakeholders; in the

way people (both local and otherwise) might understand their relationship to place; and in attitudes towards, and understandings of, the work of artists.

The following are extracts from a longer conversation in which members of SquatSpace speak about the *Tour of Beauty* in more depth.

**AJ: The tour seems to interrogate the conventional manner in which 'artists-in-residence' engage with their local community, given many members of SquatSpace live in the Redfern-Waterloo area. How has this aspect of personal implication informed the development of the project?**

Nobody: It gives a purpose to the project, and the whole project feeds from our direct relationship with the place. The fact we live in the area means we get to see the developments and the changes firsthand. Our opinion is not a third-person opinion; we have a first person relationship with the project.

If you do a socially engaging work in your own neighbourhood then you care how people respond to it because you have to live in that neighbourhood. You're doing something that you actually have to live with. The tour is about getting involved with the locals in a lot of ways.

Keq: A lot of us have lived in Redfern for a while and so we have a strong, ongoing connection and we're drawing from what we know already, rather than going to a new place where you're only just learning about the area and where those initial reactions are what shape the residency. It allows you think about it in a long-term way.

<sup>1</sup> Above left: The Tour Minibus. Photo: Ali Blogg.

Above right: The *Tour of Beauty* project in *If You See Something, Say Something*. Photo: Peetsa Invamoto.



Mickie Quick: It's about an artist-in-residence that's not an exotic one. For SquatSpace, the important thing is that the 'artist' bit disappears and it's just 'in residence'. We're doing the kinds of things local residents do anyway, like making observations about changes to the local environment.

**AJ: Could you describe some of the ways the tour has evolved in relation to your own objectives for the work?**

Mickie Quick: Strangely I think the tour doesn't evolve in some ways, or it doesn't seem to on the surface. In some strange way we almost got the formula really good really early on, and we kind of repeat it, though there are all these slight changes... We have definitely learnt that some people are better than others at telling their story and including visitors in the story.

Lucazoid: I suppose an immediate response would be that we began the tours out of complete ignorance. We actually began them because we didn't know what the hell else to do. We were so fearful of making a definitive statement in an art gallery (even though most of us live in the area)—it's such a complex thing, how do you make an artwork out of it?

On the most recent tour, we missed having Michael<sup>2</sup> at the last site and that was interesting because instead of having a speaker we had no speaker. So that meant that we were left to our own devices to have a discussion, rather than relying on the authoritative voice of the speaker. Which I think is a really good thing. After that, we talked about how we should keep that element of being left to our own devices.

This brought us in, which is important. Although we quite like the idea of being facilitators or DJs who just kind of put on the discs rather than actually take an active role, it is good to put ourselves out there sometimes. Eventually, after a year and half, we have

become a bit like authorities ourselves in a way and it's nice to be forced to...

Nobody: ...to take a position, to voice an individual presence. When we had the 'no speaker' stop on the tour we actually talked *ourselves* and it was very interesting when we got comments from our tourists that were questioning our underlying way of running the tours: the perception that the tours basically present developers as a *bunch of fuckers*.

Mickie Quick: Well, it's certainly more complex than that... To a point the tour allows you to come to that opinion yourself, but I certainly understand how it could seem like it's set up to be very anti-developer, because that's what our own individual opinions happen to be.

**AJ: One of the things I've been thinking about lately is the relationship between some types of socially engaged art practices and the idea of the parasite, particularly in terms of the process of co-occupying, and correspondingly the creation of an alternative 'position'. In this sense the parasite can act as an agent of disruption in existing systems. The other aspect of parasitism that springs to mind is mimesis, and mimicry as a subversive strategy, which seems pertinent to SquatSpace's parody of the tour format. Is the idea of the parasite an appropriate model for thinking through the way the tour functions?**

Keg: It's symbiosis in a way. Maybe it's not so essential, but the project does feed back into the local community, for example, we've made friends with our speakers over the tours and the information we gather is shared so that other people can get involved with other little struggles happening in Redfern.

Sr Joan: It widens their networks and ours too.

Mickie Quick: There's definitely similar mimicry in a way. Like this mapping project (SquatSpace's contribution to *If You See Something, Say Something*) could be an RWA project to try and get something for their Annual Report or something like that—a few images to splash around. There's definitely a similar style, a social research thing... I don't know if it's obvious that it's different, but one of the things Ross Smith (a regular speaker on the tour) always goes on about is that one of the features of Redfern-Waterloo is that it has been prodded at by all manner of anthropologists and social workers. We seem to be doing a similar thing, but it hasn't got that icky agenda. Definitely, well hopefully, we have a more clearly beneficial agenda.

Lucazoid: But we don't really know what that agenda is, do we.

Keg: Maybe that's the point. Maybe we're not doing it for a particular reason.

Lucazoid: I think the point is that the parasite is something that comes from the outside and latches on to something, and this links into the question about being an artist-in-residence. Arlene TextaQueen talks about this in her article in the *If You See Something, Say Something* newspaper. Her clearest point is that she regards the portraits that she does of people as '...a whole special lucky experience of knowing the people I draw and I share. I don't feel like we are finally shouting our voices to the world. I mean, haven't we been shouting to each other? And we are the world.'

So it's not this separate idea that there's this artist standing aside



from the world and then yelling at the world that it should change. What she's saying is 'we take responsibility for the fact that we actually are part of that world', that we're just as much part of it as everybody else. And I think that's something that artists struggle with a lot, because we see ourselves as separate, and as subaltern and marginalised. But at the same time we're privileged. There's something pretty humble about the *Tour of Beauty* project, because it has no clear outcome, it's constantly evolving and we don't really have a clear idea of where it's going—it's a bit woolly in that way.

**AJ: How does SquatSpace reflect on and evaluate the outcomes of the project?**

Mickie Quick: At the end of a tour I feel on a real high, and the day is full of a new set of histories and stories that keep enriching the project. We end up at the pub reflecting on what new, magic thing has happened. Every tour seems to have something new and interesting that ends up generating great conversation at the pub afterwards.

Sr Joan: Which is why it's so much better than those organised types of tours, because they usually follow a formula in order to be successful, whereas ours is unscripted. The format is more open, not so much to criticism, but to feedback. In a gallery it's just so hard to achieve this.

Nobody: In galleries feedback is often masked by the 'aura' of the artwork. People think 'maybe I didn't understand it'.

Lucazoid: We have had feedback that we've acted upon. Like one person said 'it's a really amazing tour but you're over-representing one particular point of view'. What led us to finding Jenny Munroe

Above: Ross Smith on the *Tour of Beauty*. Photo: Mickie Quick.

Facing page: Jack Barton speaking on the *Tour of Beauty*. Photo: Ali Blogg.

was that someone said 'well, you know, you need a woman's voice down at The Block' and then we actively went out looking for one. It's not as if you ever come with a perfect final model.

I think the thing that Keg said about feedback is interesting because part of the reason we were so trepidatious about working with Redfern as the subject of an art project, is that it's such a contentious area—how can you possibly have something to say about it? But one way that you can is by owning your own personal experiences in relation to it, and this tour actually gives all the people that come on it their own personal experience that they own that they can talk about with authority and don't have to tiptoe around.

**AJ: If *You See Something, Say Something* was specifically focused on researching, archiving and publishing as key methodologies for artists—processes that are clearly linked to the concept of pedagogy. In what way does the *Tour of Beauty* examine ideas about the hierarchies inherent in pedagogic practices? And how does it aim to reconfigure the approach to pedagogy that's pervasive in museums and galleries?**

Nobody: We try not to actually 'teach' anything, but rather have the people teach themselves. The whole idea is to present the situation as it is via the voice of other speakers, and let the tour participants make up their own minds. So we try not to be teachers.

Mickie Quick: Absolutely. I feel that when it comes to politics and 'wicked problems' like Redfern, people are uneasy about being preached at by any particular group with an agenda, and somehow our way of learning—of learning *with* our guests—doesn't have the objective of us wanting them to learn a particular thing. There's so much that's open-ended about the tour; we really do allow people to learn for themselves.



Nobody: We do act as facilitators to keep the content of the tour on track in terms of addressing the issues, which could be seen as pedagogical in that it is directing the conversation, trying to maintain a tight narrative.

Lucazoid: And I do think we have somewhat increasing confidence to be able to intervene in those ways with our speakers as we go along. We also hope that our 'tourists' feel free to do this at any time anyway, which they often do. So we're learning—in a pedagogical sense—about what people want to hear about as well. It's not just completely passive, like a curriculum that is already set. The learning part of the tour is not actually just about the information presented, it's about being present and experiencing these intense moments of exchange in a real place. Also, because it's amateurish, it gives a sense of accessibility, and sometimes the tourists end up contributing as speakers because it's not so intimidating and doesn't position the teacher as some sort of special person; they're just a normal person who is fallible and human and so on.

**AJ: The project seems to articulate quite a unique point of convergence between current discourses concerning public art, relational aesthetics, and the relationship between art and politics. How does the tour navigate between these frameworks?**

Keg: It's definitely possible to talk about the work in this way, but I don't feel the need to go into that, or to speak about it in that 'art language' because the tour is not an art tour per se. We don't pitch it as an art project.

Mickie Quick: In a way I do think about it. The work is so public, we really are aware of what the tour bus looks like and we know that it's operating in an open public space as a kind of performance... We just hate talking about it as art, don't we! I mean, the word that I like in that question is 'public', public spectacle, public activity...

Lucazoid: But I think from the point of view of art people, the tour does have something to contribute. Definitely there is an implicit critique of the way that art objects are dumped and left to fend for themselves in public space, that aren't site specific.

**AJ: For *If You See Something, Say Something* SquatSpace also contributed a map project to the exhibition at Mori Gallery. Could you talk a little about the relationship between the map project and the *Tour of Beauty*?**

Lucazoid: The mapping project grew out of the *Tour of Beauty*. We were looking for a way that people could do their own tours, utilising the network of local connections we've been developing. So we had a notion to make a customised map and podcast you could walk around with. But we wanted to make the map a bit richer than just the individual nine or ten sites we visit on the tour, which is why we decided to open it up for wider contributions. We have no idea how we might collate and incorporate the maps people have completed so far, but in any case, this mapping project seems to have taken on a life of its own, beyond the DIY tour idea.

1. [www.ifyouseesomethingsaysomething.net](http://www.ifyouseesomethingsaysomething.net)

2. Michael King, who often speaks on the tour at Crystal Waters, a new private housing development on the eastern edge of Waterloo. Michael's particular focus is on civic space, citizenship, urban aesthetics, gay politics, and gentrification.



Above: *Our Lucky Country* (installation view, works from left to right): Ron Adams *Truth is Stranger Than Fiction*, 2006, acrylic on canvas, Ruark Lewis *Banalties for the Barricades I–XII*, 2005, timber, acrylic, metal frames, Nuha Saad *Soft Landing*, 2006, upholstered pressed metal, George Tillianakis *Always a Blank Fucking Canvas & The Ghetto Jesus of Blacktown*, 2006, 13 minute video, Nana Ohnesorge *Beware*, 2006, mixed media.

Bottom left: Michelle Hanlin *Run to the Hills*, 2006, painting on canvas. Photo: Silversalt Photography.

Bottom right: Liam Benson & Manizé Abedin *Ned and Fatima*, 2006, Photo: Munchies Photography.



# Our Lucky Country (difference)

ELISE ROUTLEDGE

Beer and art can be similar things. They each offer relief from mundane daily life, encourage debate, and fuel our imagination—but it's best accepted that neither helps change the world.

*Our Lucky Country (difference)* at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery was an exhibition timed to correspond with the one-year anniversary of the Cronulla race riots. The show explored the concept of difference, and just like beer can facilitate heated arguments or a game of silly buggers, this exhibition was the catalyst for the creation of some incisive and wickedly funny work by the seventeen artists involved.

Few works in the exhibition referred directly to the riots, while the exhibition as a whole covered issues related to migration, family, physical appearance, race relations and violence. Curators Ron and George Adams allowed for diverse perspectives and avoided earnest political statements. Instead, they took the position that humour and play allow space for an audience to engage meaningfully with the issues and perhaps experience a sense of catharsis.

Soda\_Jerk's contribution to the exhibition, a video remix called *Picnic at Wolf Creek* (2006) epitomised this idea. The artists have carefully placed moments from Australian films beside each other to form a new narrative, with their own blacker-than-black humour thrown in for good measure; Skippy imploring Mel Gibson as Mad Max to rescue a girl in trouble—"She's Catholic" says Skippy to encourage him—is a highlight. The inclusion of footage from *Romper Stomper*, *Rabbit Proof Fence*, *Wolf Creek* and *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* raises an awareness of the racism, violence and fierce fear of difference in Australia's history, and leaves a lingering question about their current place in our national psyche.

Liam Benson and Manizé Abedin collaborated in a series of bold photographic self-portraits that play with perceptions of cultural identity and its commodification. In their series of glamour-photography portraits (with blank backgrounds, and blanker smiles), *Try Hard Indian* (2006) shows the pair teasing out possibilities of being 'Indian', while *Ned and Fatima* (2006) draws a clever, if unobvious comparison between Australia's most revered under-dog, outlaw and battler, and a contemporary Islamic woman.

The more playful, pop-based work of Soda\_Jerk and Liam Benson & Manizé Abedin was installed next to *Of the earth* (2006) by Elizabeth Day and Margaret Day, complementing each other beautifully. Simple and poetic, the Day mother and daughter duo grew grass in concrete moulds spelling out the place-names where different artists in the exhibition were born, and displayed the results—an entanglement of interconnected roots that will inevitably disintegrate.

Taking a broader view on difference, artists Mimi Tong and Michelle Hanlin approached the subject through the experience of architecture and hair-colour discrimination. In the latter, Hanlin's two paintings *Run to the hills* (2006) and *Run for your life* (2006) depict grand battles between blonde and brunette hair, the alternative winners in each flitting off into a background of idyllic hills as a tongue in cheek reflection on the shallowness and absurdity of discrimination.

Sarah Goffman's fantastic installation was just as playful, yet carried a greater sense of pathos. A patchwork of plastic bags (including one delightfully appropriate to Goffman's practice that reads 'Material Pleasures') hung behind her cardboard 'Polite' car, and a self-portrait with facial hair humorously hints at the disturbing and widespread practice of racial and image-based targeting by police.

Curating an exhibition that is not 'about' the Cronulla riots, yet coincides with its anniversary, and explores some of the issues through humour is a difficult task, and overall the curators did extremely well. The exhibition was non-threatening and accessible, with much wit and insight. It could be criticised as not being strong enough, and certainly a handful of works didn't have much to say. However, in recognising that it isn't the role of art to enforce change, and being sensitive to the location of the exhibition within a community space in the Sutherland Shire, the exhibition succeeded in being appropriate for its audience and striking a balance between serious comment and light relief.

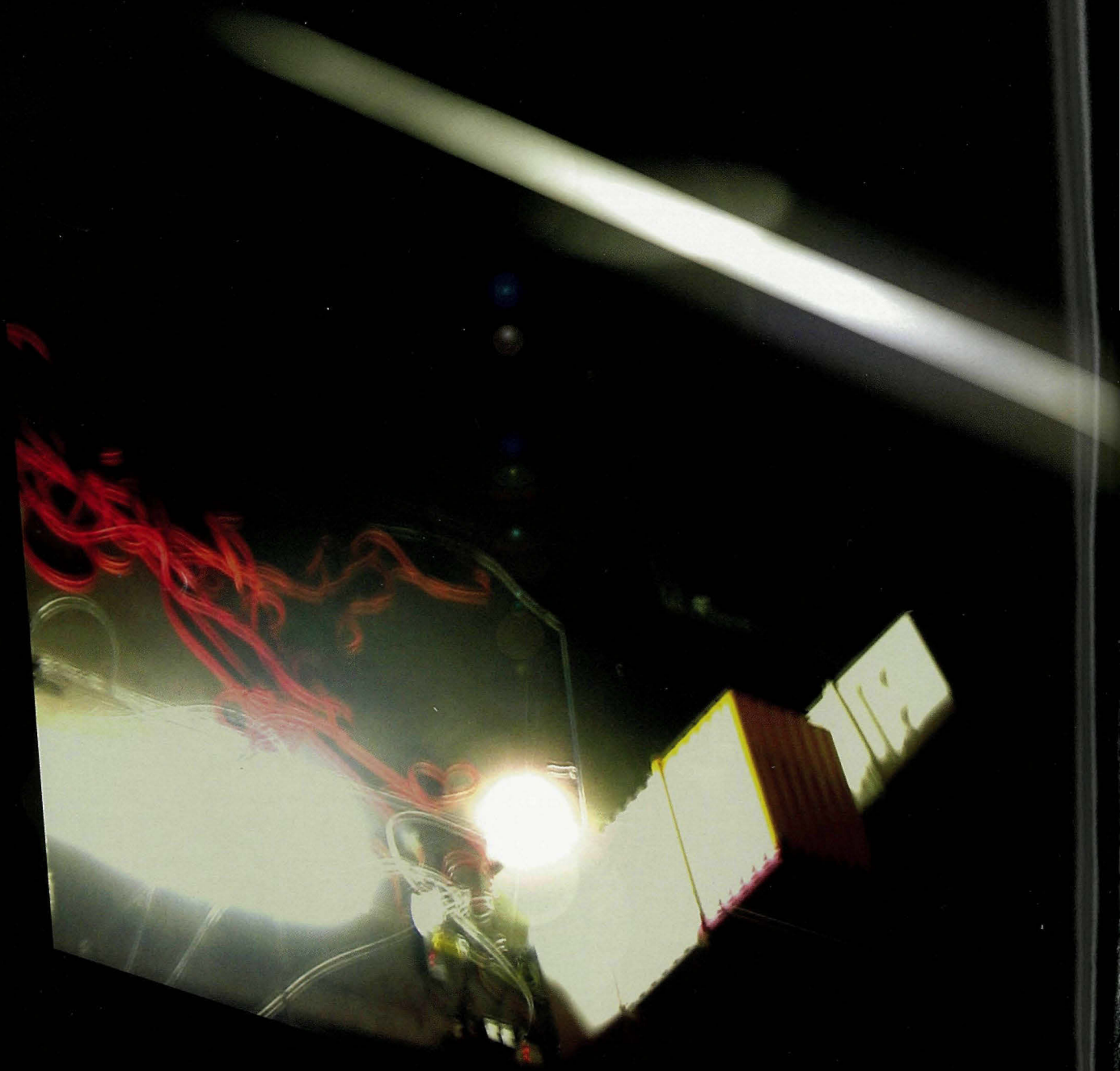
The artists who didn't quite hit the mark will have a chance to deepen their understanding of the idiosyncrasies of the Sutherland Shire in a series of community-based residencies at the gallery throughout the year. A second exhibition will then be held, this time in the entire gallery, offering much needed space to accommodate so many artists. Installed in only half the gallery, this exhibition felt a little crowded. Newell Harry's neon installation, *The Natives are Restless* (2006) was by far one of the strongest works in the exhibition, starkly resonating the menace and irony of the racial violence that occurred in Cronulla, yet installed in a corner of the gallery it suffered for lack of space.

Matching the strength of Newell Harry's work, were Anna Peter's series of audaciously funny and gentle cartoon drawings. Using cheeky deadpan humour her work makes light of deeply felt concerns and complicated issues without passing judgement.

So if beer is like art, then this exhibition might be a Coopers Red—it's refreshing but gritty, and enjoys a bit of stirring.

*Our Lucky Country (difference)* curated by Ron & George Adams was held at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery from 9 December 2006 – 4 February 2007.

The artists involved were Ron Adams, Liam Benson, Maria Cruz, Elizabeth Day, Sarah Goffman, Michelle Hanlin, Newell Harry, Ruark Lewis, Adam Norton, Nana Ohnesorge, Anna Peters, Nuha Saad, Huseyin Sami, Soda\_Jerk, George Tillianakis and Mimi Tong.



# Haunted Weather: The Nerve in the Factory

MARK BROWN

I have always enjoyed thunder and lightning, Mother Nature's display of beauty and power, activating the very fabric of the atmosphere. Every time the machine/device/instrument is alive and running, I hope that the collaboration of the re-fabricated with nature's grand spectacle can continue, leaving the residue of a truly haunting event.

David O'Donoghue, January 2007

The location: a gutted factory deployed on the banks of a silted over and congested river, where bird calls mixed with the roar of the ingress and egress of goods trains and the occasional crack and echo of gunfire. Beyond the river a tract of grader-ravished brown soil, felled trees and diesel engine roar. An endless re-coagulation and fortification of the earth was daily executed across the riverbank from the factory.

Inside, veins and tendons that once fed and actuated industrial organs remained now cauterised. Platforms, gantries and promontories jutted and floated inside the monumental concrete shell. This awesome empty edifice was, during the time that I spent there, the architectural 'host' of a complex audio entity. An entity that slept, awoke, breathed and seemed to assimilate invisible phenomena; harnessing and harvesting this quantity and, in turn, converting it into the potential energy it required to catalyse a tangible, though temporal, 'atmosphere'— excreting an alchemised precipitation, an auditory meteorology. *The Nerve Meter's* sonic circadian rhythms were, however, prone to agitation by certain electro-magnetic infections and inflections of its nervous system.

*The Nerve Meter's* morning calibration, and thus the onset of its particular mood, depended on the tinkering of its creator/conductor/architect. Slippages and delays in 'booting' it into life and interference from within the concrete stratosphere at times seemed to leave the entity suffering from some form of jet lag.

I worked day to day inside the vast cement cathedral bathed in frequencies found, foreign and fractured, engulfed by a weather machine whose pressure systems filled the space and clung to all who resided and toiled within. I speculated as to its ability to effect a sudden teleportation of myself and all loose matter—tools and detritus inside the factory—to a previous time when the mechanised hum it now amplified through a matrix of distributed modular sound emitting units, would have oscillated with the vibration of the machines and furnaces that once were the organs of this facility.

One day we gathered outside the threshold of the concrete resonance chamber under cover from a heavy rainstorm. Looking out across the river and churned up earth of the nearby artillery range, we saw a flash of distant light, with a measurable delay preceding a loud thunder clap. *The Nerve Meter*, already on edge in the storm, responded with a sonic shiver that fed back and in turn infected the 'haunted weather' it had generated inside the gutted factory. Like a fight-flight response to a sudden airborne strafing of its outer shell.

Far off, in the midst of this crescendo of weather, electricity and sound, in some sodden entrenchment, field guns glistening in the rain turned slowly on their base plates towards the factory. A barrage of shells seared the air as they arced invisible but audible across the sky, penetrating the outer shell of the building, they stopped dead in mid air inside the edifice. *The Nerve Meter* held the foreign projectiles suspended as it scrutinised them, trying to define their function. They dropped harmlessly to the floor, rolling in concentric circles with a syncopation tapped out by the still steaming hot rifling engraved on their shafts before coming to rest.

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Reference to 'Haunted Weather' in the title of this piece is inspired by David Toop's seminal text on sound art and music. D Toop, *Haunted Weather: Music, Silence and Memory*, Serpent's Tail, London, 2004.

Facing Page: *Foreign Body*, 2006-7, digital image. Original documentation image: David O'Donoghue, reworked by Mark Brown.

**Jaki Middleton: The artist-run space, MOP has been around for almost four years now, what were the original motivations behind starting the project, and how have your objectives changed over time?**

Ron & George Adams: The prime objective for us as artists was to have as much involvement with the art community as possible and by opening MOP we instantly had access to a lot of people who we hadn't been involved with previously... a sort of giant networking of like-minded individuals in every area: artists, writers, curators, designers and printers and so on. After four years of MOP we feel we have only just begun, there are endless possibilities for the future. Immediate plans include moving to a larger, slicker new gallery to carry on showing local, interstate and overseas artists, exchange programs with other galleries and institutions and guest curated exhibitions. Another significant part of MOP is the publication of catalogues, which we feel is one of the most valuable parts of what we do, it is of the utmost importance to document and record the shows. This is a large part of what we spend our funding on – to establish a permanent record of events. This also includes our web site which has been created with the wonderful assistance of the Registry.

**JM: Who are the individuals currently involved with MOP, and what are their roles?**

R&GA: George Adams - Director, Curator, Program Manager, Publishing Coordinator; Ron Adams - Artist, Curator, Documentation/Archives, Publishing Coordinator; Daniel Mudie Cunningham - Curator, Writer, Educator, Administration; Drew Bickford - Artist, Curator, Publicity & Promotion; Nana Ohnesorge - Artist, Curator, Administration; and Mitch Cairns - Artist, Curator, Gallery Preparator.

**JM: What is the focus of the gallery? What type of work does MOP typically exhibit?**

R&GA: The focus of MOP is pretty general, an overview of the contemporary art scene including artists from all of the different universities and art schools. We show a fairly wide variety of work, including photography, sculpture, painting, multi-media and installation. But if there is to be one strong focus, it would have to be painting, the majority of the group involved in running the space are painters and that includes our previous MOP members as well. The painting styles though are broad, from formalism right through to figurative and realism and everywhere in between!

**JM: One of the major MOP projects for the year is the *Our Lucky Country (difference)* exhibitions and residencies. Can you describe the project and how it came about?**

R&GA: Michael Rolfe, the Director of Hazelhurst Regional Gallery approached MOP as a result of the reputation that MOP had established for itself. We were asked to do a very large project for them over a period of two years, based loosely on the riots that occurred on Conulla beach in December 2005. We weren't that interested in doing a show with a specific political agenda, so we decided to do a show examining differences in our community. We asked seventeen artists to be in the show from many different backgrounds and walks of life.

The first part of the project opened in December 2006, and was an exhibition introducing the artists and their personal interpretations of difference. The show was accompanied by a substantial catalogue with an essay by Daniel Mudie Cunningham. Part two of the project will involve a residency program for the seventeen artists running over eight months, with a two-week stay per artist. During their residency period we have asked each artist to become involved in the Sutherland Shire community to explore, in a positive way what differences there may be. The results will be collected, then edited and made into a book as well as a video documentary.

**JM: There are a number of different artist-run initiative models, with every ARI operating in different ways. What is the organisational structure of MOP?**

R&GA: Mop has a very loose structure, we curate the majority of the shows based on our interaction and knowledge of local artists and through our involvement with artist groups further a field. Most of the shows at MOP are the result of conversations with artists and curators, so we don't usually need to use proposals.

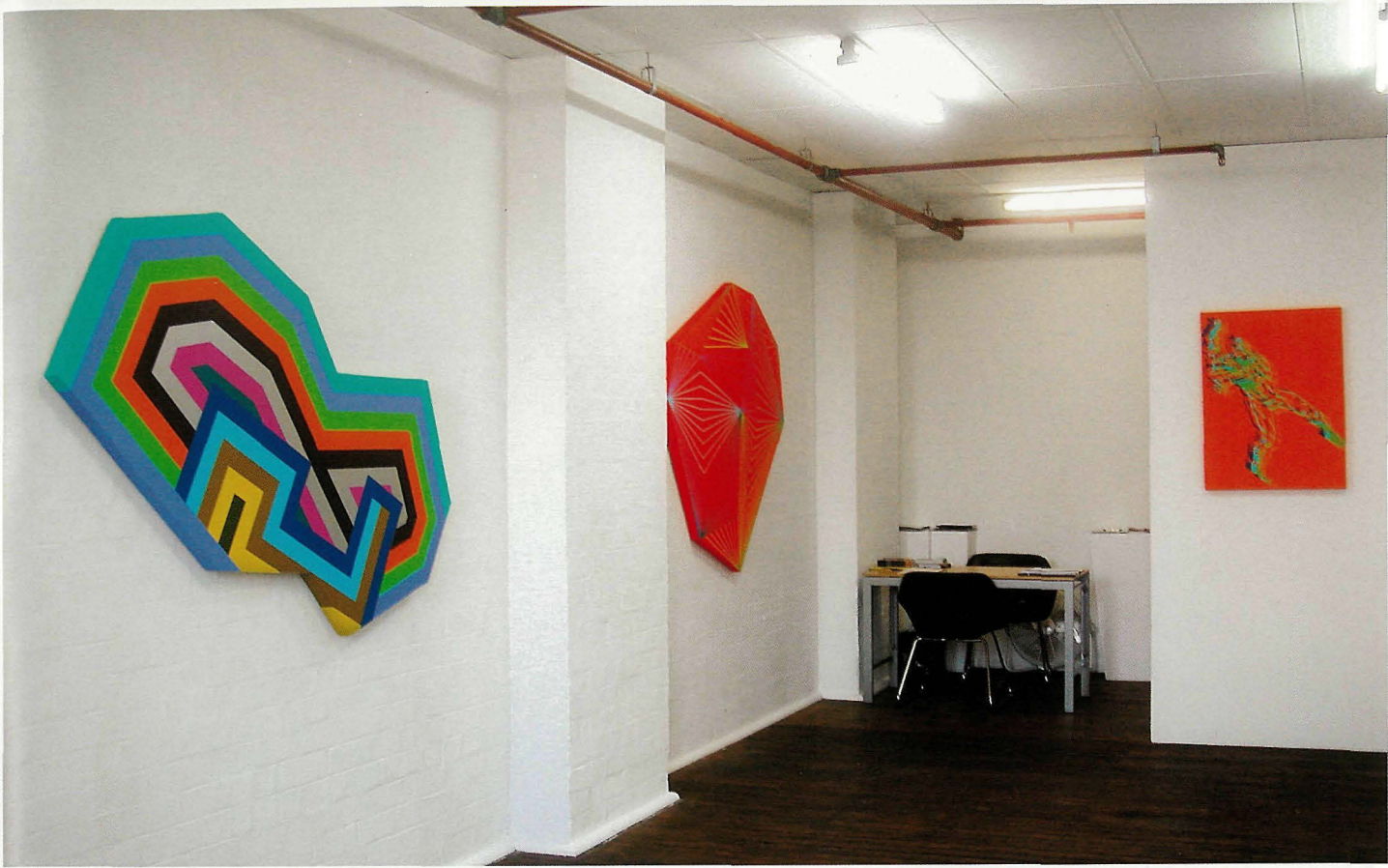
**JM: What are some of the anticipated highlights of the MOP program this year?**

R&GA: The most exciting thing is that MOP is moving to new premises very soon. MOP needs an office, a store/stock room and a larger space for future projects. The MOP calendar has a wide variety of shows coming up, including local emerging artists, interstate artists, an exchange program with Japan, England and the Philippines, guest curators and of course our big Hazelhurst show in December.

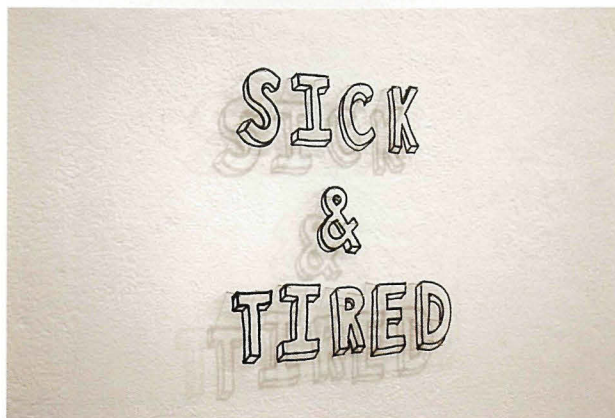
MOP's new premises can be found at 2/27-39 Abercrombie Street Chippendale NSW and will open with exhibitions by Halinka Orszulok & Rachel Scott on the 28th June.  
[www.mop.org.au](http://www.mop.org.au)

Facing page top: Alex Gereg *Galactic Adventures* (installation view), March 2007.

Facing page bottom: Vicky Browne *A sound installation* (installation view), August 2005.



PREVIEWS



## Forthcoming Exhibitions

### NSW

#### NEWELL HARRY: VIEWS FROM THE COUCH

Roslyn Oxley 9 Gallery

24 May – 30 June

8 Soudan Lane, Paddington

[www.roslynoxley9.com.au](http://www.roslynoxley9.com.au)

#### LOOSE ENDS: A FINAL GROUP SHOW

6 – 16 June

Loose

2nd floor, 168 Day Street, Sydney

[www.looseprojects.net](http://www.looseprojects.net)

#### ON THE MULTIPLICITY OF WOLVES: TEO TRELOAR

6 – 23 June

Firstdraft

116-118 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills

[www.firstdraftgallery.com](http://www.firstdraftgallery.com)

#### QUARTERBRED

18 – 25 June

Pact

107 Railway Parade, Erskinville

[www.myspace.com/quarterbred](http://www.myspace.com/quarterbred)

#### LIONEL BAWDEN, MARIA FERNANDA CARDOSO, TODD MCMILLAN, BEN QUILTY, CAROLINE ROTHWELL, TIM SILVER and JUDITH WRIGHT

21 June – 28 July

GrantPirrie

86 George Street, Redfern

[www.grantpirrie.com](http://www.grantpirrie.com)

#### CONSTRUCTING SPACE: EXPERIMENTS IN LIGHT: MICHAELA GLEAVE

23 June – 14 July

Tin Sheds Gallery

148 City Road, The University of Sydney

[www.faculty.arch.usyd.edu.au/art\\_workshop](http://www.faculty.arch.usyd.edu.au/art_workshop)

#### SAM SMITH

28 June – 22 July

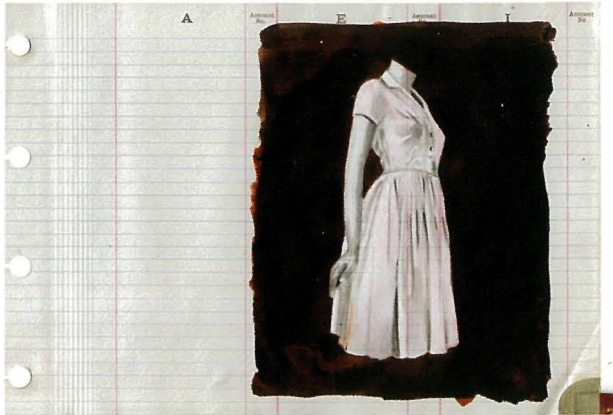
Chalk Horse

56 Cooper Street, Surry Hills

[www.chalkhorse.com.au](http://www.chalkhorse.com.au)

Above left: Michaela Gleave *Cloud Field* (interior view) 2007. Photo: Silversalt Photography.

Above right: Emma White *The Way of a Pilgrim* (detail) 2006, fimo, pins.



RACHEL SCOTT  
28 June – 15 July  
MOP  
2/27-39 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale  
[www.mop.org.au](http://www.mop.org.au)

HERE + BEYOND curated by LISA SLADE  
30 June – 19 August  
Newcastle Region Gallery  
Laman Street, Newcastle  
[www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/discover\\_newcastle/region\\_art\\_gallery](http://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/discover_newcastle/region_art_gallery)

## ACT

TERRITORIAL: BERNIE SLATER, SILVIA VELEZ, RAQUEL ORMELLA,  
FRANK GOHIER, GARY LEE and CATRIONA STANTO  
1 – 30 June  
Canberra Contemporary Art Space  
Gorman House Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon  
[www.ccas.com.au](http://www.ccas.com.au)

Sarah crowEST  
13 July – 25 August  
Cube Gallery  
Canberra Contemporary Art Space  
Gorman House Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon  
[www.ccas.com.au](http://www.ccas.com.au)

## VICTORIA

FLOATS LIKE A BRICK DOESN'T: KEL GLAISTER, TAMSIN GREEN, ARDI  
GUNAWAN and CARL SCRASE  
22 May – 9 June  
Bus  
117 Lt Lonsdale Street, Melbourne  
[www.bus117.com](http://www.bus117.com)

ANDREW ATCHISON  
6 – 23 June  
TCB art.inc.  
Level 1/12 Waratah Place, Melbourne  
[tcbincart@yahoo.com](mailto:tcbincart@yahoo.com)

Above left: Teo Treloar *Faith Collapsing*, 2007, watercolour, pencil, acrylic, ink on paper.  
Above right: Steven Morgana *Allegory of Youth*, 2007.  
Opposite: Rachel Scott, *Strip for me* (detail), 2007, acrylic on masking tape.



GEOFF NEWMAN  
15 Jun – 7 Jul  
Kings ARI  
Level 1 1/171 King Street, Melbourne  
[www.kingsartistrun.com.au](http://www.kingsartistrun.com.au)

MADELEINE DONOVAN, EMMA WHITE AND PENNY CAIN  
22 June – 14 July  
West Space  
1st Floor, 15-19 Anthony Street, Melbourne  
[www.westspace.org.au](http://www.westspace.org.au)

OCTOPUS 7: DON'T SHOW ME YOUR POETRY: ALIN HUMA, GEOFF  
NEWTON, JOSH PETHERICK, PAUL KNIGHT, ISNOTMAGAZINE  
curated by ROBERT COOK.  
3 August – 1 September  
200 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy  
[www.gertrude.org.au](http://www.gertrude.org.au)

## TASMANIA

ROOM: KATHRYN FALUDI-BALL, MATT WARREN, KYLIE STILLMAN,  
CATRIONA STANTON, KATRINA SIMMONS, STEPHEN GARRET and  
SIMON HORSBURGH.  
curated by DEREK HART  
26 May – 17 June  
CAST  
27 Tasma Street, North Hobart  
[www.castgallery.org](http://www.castgallery.org)

DAMON BIRD  
1 – 23 June  
Inflight Art  
237 Elizabeth Street, Hobart  
[www.inflightart.com.au](http://www.inflightart.com.au)

## SA

ROY ANDANDA and NAOMI WILLIAMS  
6 – 22 June  
Downtown Art Space  
233 Waymouth Street, Adelaide  
[www.downtownartspace.org](http://www.downtownartspace.org)



UBERMORGEN.COM: JAMES DODD

13 July – 1 August  
Experimental Art Foundation  
The Lion Arts Centre, North Terrace (West End) Adelaide  
[www.eaf.asn.au](http://www.eaf.asn.au)

MENTOR MENTORED III curated by FULVIA MANTELLI

20 July – 26 August  
The Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia  
14 Porter Street, Parkside, Adelaide

## WA

VERTIGO: MS & MR, REBECCA ANN HOBBS, HOLLY WILLIAMS,  
ELEANOR AVERY, SIMON YATES, CHRISTOPHER HANRAHAN and  
DAVID LAWREY & JAKI MIDDLETON

5 July – 2 September  
Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts  
Perth Cultural Centre, James Street, Northbridge  
[www.pica.org.au](http://www.pica.org.au)

TYRANTS: STEVEN MORGANA

29th August – 17th September  
Breadbox Gallery  
233 James Street, Northbridge  
[www.breadbox.com.au](http://www.breadbox.com.au)

## NT

RECONFIGURED: JUDE WALTON

11 May – 16 June  
24HR Art: Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art  
Vimy Lane, Parap Shopping Village, Darwin  
[www.24hart.org.au](http://www.24hart.org.au)

## QUEENSLAND

OWEN LEONG

20 July – August 9  
Ryan Renshaw  
137 Warry Street, Fortitude Valley, Brisbane  
[www.ryanrenshaw.com.au](http://www.ryanrenshaw.com.au)

GREY WATER: BILL CULBERT, ROLAND FISCHER, PETER GREENAWAY,  
RONI HORN, ZHANG HUAN, ABIE JANGALA, ROSEMARY LAING,  
STEPHEN BIRCH, JUN NGUYEN-HATSUSHIBA and LAWRENCE  
WEINER

6 August – 7 October  
Institute of Modern Art  
420 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley  
[www.ima.org.au](http://www.ima.org.au)

OUR DAY OUT FAILED SPACE MISSION:

JAMES AVERY & ELEANOR AVERY  
8 – 25 August  
Metro Arts  
Level 1, 109 Edward Street, Brisbane  
[www.metroarts.com.au](http://www.metroarts.com.au)

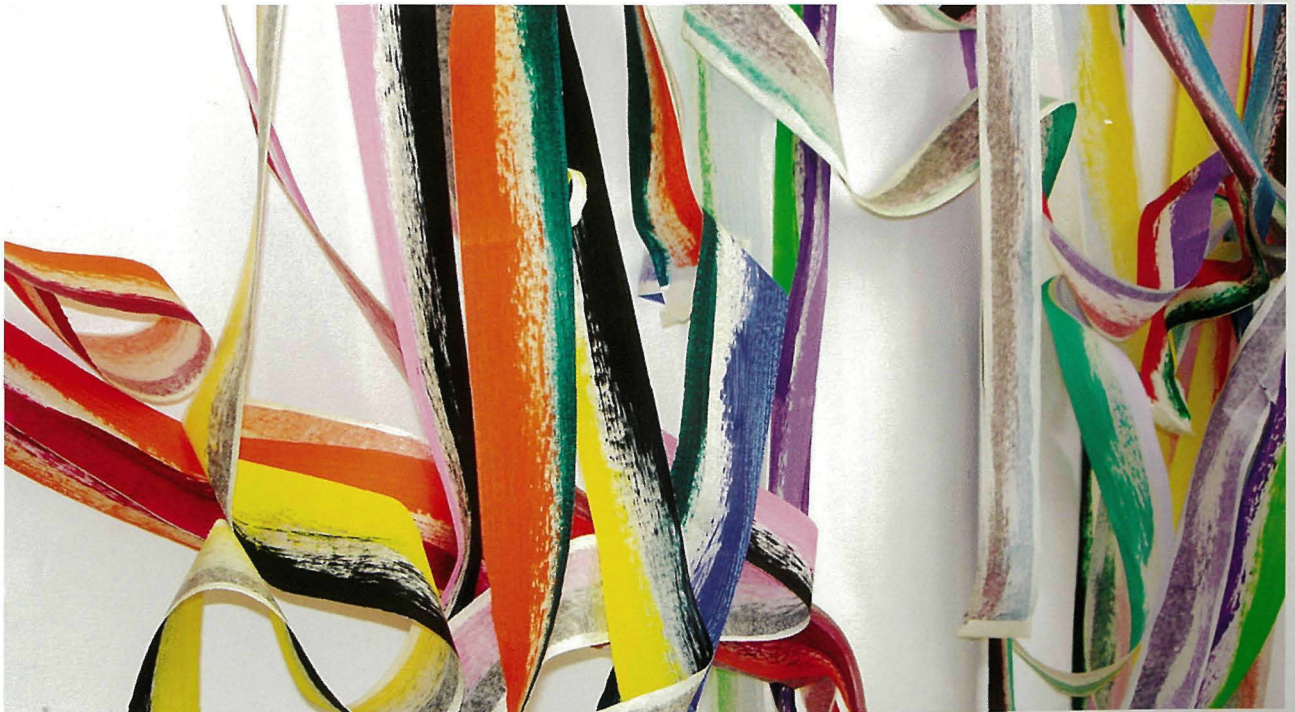
## UNITED KINGDOM

DRIVEN curated by SARAH SPARKES

Fieldgate  
30 June – 29 July  
14 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES  
[www.fieldgategallery.com](http://www.fieldgategallery.com)

BORROW AND BURN: PETER LAMB & JOBY WILLIAMSON

21 July – 12 August  
Transition  
Unit 25a Regent Studios, 8 Andrews Road, London E8  
[www.transitiongallery.co.uk](http://www.transitiongallery.co.uk)



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# PERSONALS



Mr,

Seeking to surprise you by cheating on our submission and covertly publishing this personal ad in Runway. This space is a dedication to you, however as I write this I have begun to feel the effects of separation anxiety...

Surprise!

'til death,

Ms.

&



ISSUE 10 ROMANCE  
...coming September 2007

