

2012

INVITATION ART
AWARD

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Mayor's Welcome



It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 15th annual City of Joondalup Invitation Art Award.

This prestigious Award recognises the artistic, creative and innovative skills of WA artists and the importance of their contribution to evolving, innovative and creative communities like Joondalup.

Each year the Award showcases challenging, Western Australian art at its very best and it is this commitment to contemporary art that elevates the Invitation Art Award as a prestigious and recognised exhibition that is a leader in its field.

The City is pleased to continue to host this popular event which showcases the enormous diversity of artistic talent in our State and reflects Joondalup's identity as a place where the arts are nurtured and celebrated.

Thanks to premier partner HSBC, key partner West Coast Institute of Training, media partner Joondalup Weekender and venue partner Lakeside Joondalup – this event would not be the success it is without the support of these City stakeholders.

I hope you all enjoy this exhibition of work from some of WA's most outstanding contemporary artists

Mayor Troy Pickard
City of Joondalup

Selection Panel

Marie Bonnal

Director Bureau of Ideas, fiction and art writer, artist, art event co-ordinator

Susanna Castleden

Winner of the 2011 Invitation Art Award Acquisitive Award

Bevan Honey

Residency Co-ordinator Fremantle Art Centre

Judging Panel

Dr Robert Cook

Curator of Contemporary Art, Art Gallery of Western Australia

Dr Perdita Phillips

Artist, art writer, founder and co-editor of Lethologica Press

Mark Stewart

Curator, Murdoch University

Introduction



Francis Bacon's Studio at 7, Reece Mews, South Kensington, London UK.

Photographic credit: Perry Ogden

Copyright: The Estate of Francis Bacon and DACS

Collection: Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane

“A studio is a sanctuary where the artist should be everyday as long as possible,” John Baldessari.

In the autumn of 1961 the British artist Francis Bacon (1909 – 1992) moved to 7 Reece Mews, a modest three-room dwelling in South Kensington, London, which served as his principal studio and residence until his death in 1992. In 1998, the studio was presented to the Hugh Lane Gallery in Dublin, the city of his birth where it was reconstructed and opened to the public in 2001. It is now, along with Constantin Brancusi's studio at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, one of the best known examples of a studio displayed in a museum. Over the course of thirty years, Bacon accumulated almost 7,500 items in this small space and the contents lay bare many of the artist's materials, methods and sources. Bacon, although a loquacious extrovert personality, was intensely private about his studio and very few people had access to this space. He was a portrait painter who preferred not to paint from life but rather in the seclusion of his studio, using fragments of photographs of friends and lovers, magazines, illustrated books and catalogues, as aide-mémoires to prompt his

fertile imagination. When the Australian artist Brett Whiteley (1939-92) painted his triptych portrait entitled, *Francis Bacon at 75*, photographs show that Whiteley worked in Bacon's kitchen rather than painting the artist in his studio. Although Bacon had studios in Paris and also in Battersea, London he claimed that he found it difficult to paint in other locations and said of his cluttered Reece Mews studio, “*I feel at home here in this chaos because chaos suggests images to me.*”

Bacon never intended or wished that his workplace be displayed in a museum. Perhaps for this very reason, Bacon's studio has become an attraction and taken on a posthumous significance, because it fulfils the notion of what a studio should be – a private fortress, a creative environment, a place to amass material that may prove useful, a space to think and act uninterrupted by the distractions of modern life, a place to survey one's own artistic production and either reject it or accept it, and possibly a magical, mythical space that may provide the clue to artistic genius. The Western notion of the artist's studio historically conveys a sense of creativity tinged with mystery. Francis Bacon himself made the analogy between the artist's studio and a chemist's laboratory. His studio contents provide us with a strong sense of the artist's personality and his modus operandi. Even the most oblique source could be absorbed by the artist and reconstituted to make an appearance in his paintings. Whilst no palette was found in the studio - the artist preferring to use the walls, doors and even china plates to mix his paints - there were all the other facets of a painter's studio; used paintbrushes, tubes of paint and jars of pigment provide a showcase of his methods and artistic creativity. On Bacon's death, resting on the artist's easel was a final unfinished self-portrait, a statement that even though his health was in decline, towards the end of his life his priority was to continue to paint his own image.

By preferring to work in isolation, Bacon differed significantly from artists such as Courbet who perpetuated the romantic notion of the artist's studio as a place of significance. Courbet wrote in 1848, “*The world comes to be painted at my studio*” and his iconic painting, *The Painter's Studio, a real allegory summing up seven years of my artistic and moral life*, 1855 is the apogee of this idea of the studio as a place where a multitude of colleagues, friends and contemporaries congregate. Ten years later, Whistler painted his work, *The Artist's Studio*. Whistler earned a significant portion of his income through portrait commissions and he maintained an elegant studio where his sitters could pose. He too welcomed many international visitors to his Paris studio, including art critics, and fellow artists such as Toulouse-Lautrec. In the twentieth century, the artist Ben Nicholson visited the Dutch artist Piet Mondrian's Paris studio and was so struck by the mood of serenity that he had to repair to a local café to digest not only the geometric paintings he had seen but the whole ambience of the studio. Later on in the twentieth century, one notes the industrialisation of the concept of the studio with Andy Warhol's *The Factory* which ran counter to fellow American artist John Baldessari's statement that “*To do art one must choose self-imposed exile*”. Warhol's *Factory* was a teeming hive of multiple activities, a meeting place as well as the place where Warhol and his art workers mass-produced images. Warhol broke completely with the idea of the artist working alone and one of his main innovations was that the artist would be only one of a team of people producing art - successful artists who have adopted this model include Jeff Koons and Damien Hirst.

In the 1960s artists such as Daniel Buren, Bruce Nauman and John Baldessari, along with Warhol, questioned, albeit in very different ways, the traditional notion of the studio and began to actively search for and present alternative models for artistic production. The artist, Daniel Buren, in his seminal essay *The Function of the Studio* in 1970-71 wrote about the main problem he perceived with an artist's studio being that the artist is making work in one place but that work will be exhibited in an entirely different context and whether this changes the eventual meaning of the work. As a result, Buren relinquished his studio and decided to work *in situ* and the works became dependent on their location. This brings us to the question, what is the role and function of the studio for contemporary artists in the 21st century? Certainly, a re-evaluation of the role of the studio had its genesis in the early years of the twentieth century. Questions regarding the role of the studio have now become more pertinent with temporary installations, site-specific works, the use of film-based media, artist residencies, shared studio spaces and the temporary nature of much artistic practice more the norm. Can the studio remain a place of creativity where the artist physically produces a work of art? The US artist Martha Rosler's studio functions more like an office than a traditional artist studio and she herself described it as "a cockpit of reception and production". During a recent lecture the conceptual artist Hans Haacke was asked what a typical day in the studio was like and he responded, "I answer e-mail all day". The studio may now function as a place to organise one's exhibitions, to plan works that may be produced in an entirely different location. Given the peripatetic nature of many contemporary artists perhaps the most apposite definition of the studio rests with Buren who succinctly says, "My studio is, in fact, the place where I am working".

Dr. Margarita Cappock
Head of Collections
Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane
www.hughlane.ie
August 2012

ARTISTS

Pia Bennett and Joshua Fitzpatrick



Perth collaborative duo Pia Bennett and Joshua Fitzpatrick place together fragments of found imagery to evoke the foreboding beauty of a bygone world. Their expansive practice explores the slippage between the beautiful and the grotesque through the language of paint, sculpture and site specific installation.

Bennett and Fitzpatrick create darkly romantic spaces that evoke a sense of disquiet or trepidation; often collapsing the beautiful and the traumatic. The artists approach historic images and motifs as a literary analyst would come to a text, deconstructing and reconstructing imagery for a different reading. Parts of the original image are distorted, repeated and reassembled to create a new pictorial experience. This process creates an experience of narrative that is characterised by cycle and discontinuity, similar to the internal ruminations of the near subconscious mind as it considers dreams and imaginings.

Their exhibitions include *Small Objects, Small Works*, Passage Gallery, Perth, 2008; *Marker*, Fremantle Arts Centre, Perth, 2007; *Revelations*, Fremantle Arts Centre, Perth, 2009, and *A Magnificent World*, Venn Gallery, 2012.

www.bennett-fitzpatrick.com

Penny Bovell



“My latest work explores conditions of reverie whereby I attempt to make the quality of air itself come alive through the materiality of paint. My research interests concern phenomena such as air, sky and space because I believe this subject allows for many imaginative possibilities and is socially and culturally important. Air is something and nothing, we are immersed in it, it is within us. Most importantly we share it.”

Christophe Canato



French-Australian Christophe Canato has lived and worked in Perth since 2005. As an early drawer and painter, he successfully entered the Beaux-Arts school at seventeen years of age.

After receiving his DNSEP in 1989 (comparable to a Master Degree in Fine Arts) and in 1993 a Diploma of Fashion from the prestigious Institut Français de la Mode, Canato has drawn on his background in the Paris Fashion industry, and photography became his first tool to express himself as an artist.

Canato's work articulates perception and interpretation of our social, cultural and material affiliation.

In Canato's most recent series the object holds an important place. It is the witness of a human presence and transcribes the private life, the feelings or the social behaviour of individuals.

Peteris Ciemitis



“As I see it, in contemporary portraiture the closer you can get to your subjects, the more you can find some truth in them.

The paintings and drawings I produce often engage in themes of human psyche, human emotion and ephemerality. This is where the proximity, cropping and abstraction I use in paintings become valuable devices to strip away props and context, and to try to stir ideas of identity and condition. It wouldn't be correct to say the paintings examine spirituality, and it would be thought pretentious if I claimed that they explore the metaphysical condition, but they are certainly an attempt to think about people as complex, internal and transient creatures. Perhaps its truer to say that they are self examinations; after all, we really can't know other people except through the filter of our own lives, values and experiences.

So there it is, my paintings might all actually be self portraits, or at least self-projections.

Perhaps this in part arises from my family history. My Latvian parents were post WWII 'displaced persons'. Their refugee experience often brings me to think about what gives us a sense of meaning, belonging and identity, especially when we are geographically and culturally dislodged. Identity without context?

A major challenge for me is how to develop a painting or drawing technique which helps me to present some of these considerations. My work frequently adapts transparent glazing borne of a watercolour method, but applied using thin acrylic painting on canvas and hardboard, in loose multiple layers. In this regard, these techniques involving transparent and luminescent layering have provided an appropriate vehicle to reflect to idea of transience. Naturally, one's techniques continually evolve, as do one's thoughts and reflections over time.

My visual influences derive from many traditions including Latvian watercolour, through Austrian Expressionism to Dumas' abstracted figures. However, one of my strongest inspirational wellsprings at present is music, particularly free jazz. I am fascinated by the process of improvisation and the ability of musicians to disconnect their psyches from 'self monitoring' their performance and I often seek ways I can use to apply it to my own practice.”

Olga Cironis



Olga Cironis' current practice encompasses 3D wall works and installation art, often with a multimedia and/or sculptural component. Cironis is an award-winning artist with a practice that spans over 20 years, exhibiting nationally and internationally. In her art practice Cironis explores how identity is linked to notions of place and how personal narrative/s can deconstruct the collective history of nations and the ideological frameworks in which they exist.

"History as our identity creates a binding link to the body. Memory can be the catalyst in which our identity is reaffirmed or recreated. Our corporeality is linked to private and public space of our identity. In my art practice I explore how easily certain history has been manipulated and identity of people and nations erased or recreated".

Penny Coss



"I am interested in the endurance of nature over time, and its connection to memory and the imagination.

My work is about those important moments of exchange within the landscape and with the possibility of being simultaneously in there and out there, where in imagining nature and the imagination and nature are inextricably linked.

The transient green blur on the roadside I drive hurriedly past or the changing camber of the bush track as I walk is not only a vertical association I have with the earth.

My paintings do not offer a literal depiction of the landscape but sit somewhere between something like a straight fall of paint and something we may recognise. The indexical trace of formless watery colour that I pour soaks into large scale canvases then dries into resultant new and unexpected shapes. Other vertical and horizontal forms are painted quickly onto smaller surfaces as the blurred spectacle of nature that lines the streets speeds past as I drive. In other circumstances when I take long walks in the landscape the trees take on portraits, their random positioning in fugues of a type of rhythm or a rhythm.

In the creative realm of nature, imagination takes flight. Gravity gives way to fluidity, the floating colour and form of paint reveals doubt through the material and bodily processes which in turn reflect the mutability and indeterminacy of contemporary life."

Rebecca Dagnall



“For the last ten years my work has been an ongoing exploration of Australian suburbia. It deals with the relationships of people to their immediate surroundings, investigating ordinary life in an attempt to see this lived experience for what it is, rather than what it is not. My navigation through this space has been both lived and observed. It is from this perspective that I find no need for criticism or judgement of life’s engagement as for me my work is more about life and how it is lived rather than how one should or shouldn’t live it.

The process of getting to this point has been a life long journey. The realisation that life is ordinary and that what we have in common, as people, is that we are all common, has fuelled my investigation. When we strip away the glitz and the glam that sometimes conceals our ordinariness, what we are left with is the reality of our own existence. There is nothing pessimistic in this view as it is within this notion that I find the beauty in life.

My current work has taken the form of portraiture as a means to engage artistically with the people that have made up my community in the particular suburb I have been living in for the last 10 years. The photographic tradition of documentation lends itself perfectly to my artistic intentions. Its approach brings the work, which is essentially my experience of my surroundings, in direct relation to the audience on a very ‘real’ level.”

David Egan



David Egan processes the uncomfortable mysteries of small scale, vernacular pop culture theories and histories into a considered set of beguiling, mysterious objects. Egan’s painting, textile and sculptural works hint at an unnamed energy coursing beneath a known surface, defying attempts at understanding and organisation. Oscillating between a sceptical irony and a romantic optimism, Egan knowingly participates in and interrogates the role of the contemporary artist by exploring novel ways of sustaining and exploiting this position.

Egan also makes up one half of *The Museum of Natural Mystery*, a collaboration dedicated to considering and implementing alternative avenues for the presentation and dispersion of local contemporary practice.

George Egerton-Warburton



“My practice is the result of an investigation into the philosophical notion of the good life and autonomy. These themes become apparent in networks of previously unrelated things, ideas, and occurrences realised during case studies that involve precarious encounters and chain reactions. Issues, questions, and proposals stemming from case studies are presented in various formats that fit loosely under the phrase: sculpture informed by the vocabularies of self-actualisation.”

Caspar Fairhall



Caspar Fairhall is a visual artist working across various media, from painting to video and interactive art. Fairhall recently completed a Master of Fine Arts at the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales. Video works from his Masters project are currently showing on the French and German cable TV network Souvenirs from Earth.

Fairhall's work is represented in the collections of the Art Gallery of Western Australia, University of Western Australia, Edith Cowan University, KPMG, Chamber of Commerce and Industry and BankWest.

Caspar Fairhall is currently represented by Galerie Düsseldorf, Perth.

Susan Flavell



“Developing the ‘presence’ of a work has always been important for me and is the reason that I focus on 3D as it occupies the same space as the viewer.

Agency is the effective or instrumental force exerted by a source of energy or action upon a recipient. We have agency as subjects, but it can be exercised not only by individuals but also by objects.

1. Most objects exert their holding power because of the particular moment and circumstance in which they come into a person's life;
2. Some are intrinsically evocative / uncanny objects that draw and repel us;
3. Some belong to childhood and the blurry line between self and objects;
4. And some objects have power because of their provenance (who may have touched or owned them).”

Benjamin Forster



“If you were visiting my studio, I would begin by confessing a deep guilt that my studio practice does not conform to a romantic notion of an artist's studio. An idealistic location filled with the aesthetic detritus of a dedicated pursuit into visual language. A space neatly disorganized with finished artworks to one side, accompanied by thoughtful titles, and works in progress, revealing their own construction, to the other. Unfortunately my conceptually driven practice always struggles against my childhood romanticism of what it means to be an artist. Where is my beret?”

I have been told my studio practice in no way resembles my aesthetic production. Unlike my artworks, it is a mess. Not that it is scattered with the expected dirty brushes or charcoal, but rather with the banal evidence of a disorganised life - empty coffee cups, spare change, computer cables, blank cds, office paper, half read books, bills and stray receipts. My artworks are present, but dissembled into their core components. Computers, microcontrollers, printers, and projectors are returned to their commonplace status. As a visitor, I would offer you a cup of tea or coffee and open up my laptop to guide you through images of my works, highlighting components from the surrounding mess.

I feel like the disparity between my studio practice and my exhibited artworks, as well as that between the value of artworks and the banality of their foundation, reflects my overarching artistic interests. In my work I attempt to construct logical processes and systems that undermine their own foundations, in order to reveal the groundless ground of reason, language and meaning. It is possible to simply categorise my practice broadly within the context of contemporary visual arts, and more narrowly within the subcategories of new media and contemporary drawing, however my practice often bleeds between demarcations. It slips from drawing, projection and installations, to interactive theatre and more recently contemporary dance. Ultimately at the heart of my practice is a healthy contempt for any logic of classification and order.

This is my practice to the resolution of three hundred and fifty one words.”

www.emptybook.net

Thomas Heidt



“My art is about the power and potential of materials and space.

I am interested in the techniques and thinking processes to transform them.

My ideas develop through this process.

It is like a dialogue.

The artwork is finished when this dialogue is exhausted and the piece achieves a sense of conceptual and emotional clarity.”

Christopher Hopewell



“My painting is process orientated, incorporating gestured marks, tones and textures with photographic collage. These woven dimensions of randomly connected environments evoke a model for how layered thoughts, memories, and dreams might integrate and be recorded.

Each part of the process leads to the next and the outcome of the finished work is unknown. It is a spontaneous progress that creates its own logic and direction.

This idea was initially conceived in the New York City subways; waiting for the train while looking at the graffiti-worn billboards and surfaces-juxtapositions that suggest an “urban cubism”.

An aesthetic I strive for in my work is that a painting object has the quality of continuously representing itself to the viewer with a randomness similar to that employed in the evolution of the artwork.”

Harry Hummerston



Harry Hummerston's work threatens the viewer's experience of the world with a new relation to the familiar and the everyday. Hummerston does this through a systematic process of opposition. He opposes our sense of ease with representational imagery and in doing so destabilizes our condition of wellbeing. His work unsettles and rattles our sense of comfort and familiarity.

Hummerston's creative thinking is founded on a refusal to constrain his imagination to convention, and in particular a hostility to the operation of any kind of visual stasis. His images remain virulent and active within a field of possibility where he refuses all material constraint in order to set new forms to flight.

In an important sense the physical presence, Hummerston acts upon the viewer as a visual trap and our wandering perusal is brought into an abrupt and confrontational closure. Hummerston uses colour as one of his oppositional polarities. Deeply saturated hues are made to crash against dark silhouettes of a space occupying and occupied by matter. A multilayered space of great compression squeezing the light out of the intensities of images caught within its apparatus.

Jeremy Kirwan Ward



Jeremy Kirwan-Ward's work is represented in many private and public collections including the National Gallery of Australia, the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Kerry Stokes Collection, Artbank, National Gallery of Scotland, Australian National University, Wesfarmers, Bankwest and all Western Australian universities, as well as corporate and private collections in Australia, the U.K., USA and India.

Benjamin Kovacsy



“My practice becomes a way of developing and collating processes, traditions and histories inherent to wood. I am interested in uncovering histories that reveal notions of the metaphysical in aspects of woodcraft tradition. The illusionist and geometric qualities of Islamic style motifs have been historically described as having symbolic reference to a higher mystical power. Many of my works explore the potential of the physical manifestation of this intangible notion. By using a synthesis of contradictory production methods, of traditional and contemporary origin, I have integrated these geometric motifs into two-dimensional work, sculpture and installation. The works present a point of unification where geographically and chronologically distant understandings crossover.

Although I am interested in the minimalist qualities of traditional wooden designs as much as the romantic notions of craftsmanship, it is a challenge to unlearn or undo what it is predictable in the visual language of traditional handicrafts. I have found that there is no reason to completely deny traditional labor-intensive handmade aspects of craft in order to reinvent them. I would rather glorify these labor rich processes as a pure base to apply to new manipulative measures. By amalgamating these handmade elements with computer cutting and mechanical manufacturing process there is a shift toward a new aesthetic. The notion that something such as software or programming is used to create an object is powerfully immaterial in itself. The metaphysical could be adopted to describe the parallels between physical geometry of Islamic patterning and the geometry of computer language. This relationship between the actual method of production of an object and the produced object's physical structure has become of central importance to my practice.”

Andre Lipscombe



“In recent years my art making has centred upon constructing paintings that carry elements of drawing, collage, text, photography and stencilled graphic forms appropriated from print media.

My working strategy is to adapt an eclectic range of painting methodologies to achieve a distilled or restrained balance of representational and formal elements. Drivers for new work are often connected to concepts associated with the rhetoric of visual language, mass communication and consumer ideology.

I place emphasis upon making painted works that appear to have an incomplete, industrial or archaeological appearance. Recycled and found painted surfaces, printed ephemera, spray can and domestic paints are integrated to fabricate works without a point of resolution and subsequently, projects seem to remain in a constant flux or transition from one unfinished state to another. Painted surfaces typically undergo erasure or are abraded to reveal collage, multiple decorative or commercially produced decals, slogans or jingles, which may lie beneath.

In a recent series of works about Fremantle maritime architecture, painted panels were imbedded with schematised advertising motifs and outlines of urban landscapes in combination with stencilled text and layers of impasto. Scale and format of artworks on paper and plywood are configured to fit within a predetermined dimension identical to commercial standard paper aspect ratios A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5.

I am a visual artist based in Fremantle who graduated from Curtin University in 1983. I conduct a practice from a studio at Artsource Fremantle. I have exhibited both nationally and internationally. My work is currently represented in numerous private and public collections in Western Australia.”

Shannon Lyons



“My work attempts to visually ‘unpack’ the complex relationships that exist between artistic content and context. I continually adapt, draw from and respond to specifically located environments, producing works which directly reference the site where they are made or exhibited.

Artworks, for me, come into being as a consequence of the places that I know they will be experienced and exhibited in. I have developed an art practice that re-interprets materials and forms that are known to exist in places where art is produced or exhibited. Ubiquitous plinths, shelves, stretchers and standardised timber products along with primers, fillers, paints, materials used for storage or installation purposes and casting materials constitute my formal and material vocabulary.

My current interests are in re-connecting the content of artworks with their context by investigating site-specific, in-situ modes of art production, installation and presentation within specific architectural spaces.”

Clare McFarlane



“For over a decade now my work has been inspired by patterns; using them as metaphors for a romanticised past. Into these patterns I would incorporate elements of fragility and femininity from the past and the present, using detailed studies of Australian flora and fauna to signify the creation of a new Australian identity, as well as referencing the histories of scientific inquiry. Yet over the last three years I have seen a lot of changes for me personally. These changes have expressed themselves through a looser, freer approach to painting.

The new direction I have taken has been heavily influenced by street art. I was asked to design and execute a piece for a laneway and creating a work on such a large scale and in the public eye was an amazing experience. I had to design the work differently and I had to use different mediums. And both these new ways of working have found their way back into my studio practice. These included the looser way of painting and incorporating a different medium – aerosol paint. As part of the laneway work I started using stencils and aerosols to get patterns on to the wall and I have continued this method, within this body of work. It provides a far quicker way of working, more immediate.

Within the laneway the patterns were representative of wallpaper, layers of wallpaper being ripped away, revealing history and memory, nostalgia for the past, for what has been lost, what has been hidden. I have continued using symbology and aesthetic of this ripped wallpaper in my work as it fitted within my previous interest in remnants and fragments, of history and curiosity.

I still focus mainly on birds as I think they are the most expressive and challenging of my subjects. They are such beautiful creatures in life and in death their bodies, crushed and broken, are so filled with poetics of loss, fleeting life and realities of death.

The pain of fleeting joy...”

Angela McHarrie



"If absolute certainty is extremely elusive, the same cannot be said about its opposite. Uncertainty manifests itself in many forms; confusion, ambiguity, inconclusiveness, perplexity, unpredictability and scepticism to name but a few. It motivates us to examine what we see, hear and read against our experience as we strive to make sense of the world around us. It also opens up an array of creative possibilities in the form of imaginative concepts that rely for meaning on preconceived ideas about the way things should be and raise questions about our reliance on rules, categorisation, measurement and systems.

In Lewis Carroll's 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland', Alice's preconceptions are put to the test as she encounters games without rules, unanswerable questions, distortions of scale and is advised to practice believing impossible things. To Alice's credit she adjusts to this new world and displays a readiness to acknowledge an alternative reality on its own terms.

Through my work, I attempt to take the viewer to a similar place. I try to use what we know and test its limits or shift it to another less predictable dimension. The aim is to create something that isn't fixed but instead offers a duality to the viewer. By presenting something that balances on the tipping point between being sensible and nonsensical, the viewer is asked to use the accepted as a means to open their mind to other possibilities.

My works take many forms; large, seemingly unstable or improbable structures with their associated perplexity; photographs where scale is used to perceptually challenge the viewer; painted and constructed codes with ambiguity of meaning; sculptures which highlight the arbitrariness of measurement and text based works where words rely on each other for their meaning. All of them ask the viewer to cross a threshold, not unlike Alice stepping through the looking glass, into uncertain territory.

The influences on my practice are diverse. They include among other things, poststructural theories with their emphasis on the uncertainty of meaning, an interest in the capacity and limitations of systems, scientific theories, literature, poetry, words, numbers and my hoard of random, often useless information."

Kate McMillan



McMillan's current practice is evidenced by a dark and moody palette where the combination of figurative and abstract works encourages an interplay between landscape, memory, forgetting and history. Working across a diverse range of mediums including painting, collage, photography, film and sculpture, her works examine the complex and sustaining residue of these overarching themes.

In recent times McMillan's works covered a large range of specific landscapes including Wadjemup/Rottnest Island, Western Australia, the Black Forest in Germany and the winter landscapes of Switzerland. With a focus on island sites and places that exist in isolation, McMillan's work attempts to draw parallels between physical landscapes and the psychological landscapes of the artist's own memories and broader cultural histories and stories.

The island becomes a void space, dark and abyss-like. It is clearly something more in depth than only geographical location. These spaces are often things we try to forget, things we carry around inside us; memories and holes for things that are lost. By demarcating this empty place, McMillan's practice pays homage to a kind of un-forgetting.

McMillan's work is often both beautiful and disturbing. It is often this interplay that makes her work so compelling. We are seduced by these landscapes, temporarily overlooking what these dark atmospheres might conceal.

McMillan's films are like moving paintings, heavily referencing the romantic tradition of Germanic landscape painting. Unsurprisingly then the work of artists such as Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901) and Casper David Friedrich (1774-1840) become distant cousins to her oeuvre. The artist acknowledges and even embraces these quotations but she also holds them in a critical eye as part of an enlightenment ideology that has helped us to forget. The beauty and burden of European history is never far away in McMillan's re-understanding of contemporary Australian culture.

Through engaging with the viewing process we participate in a re-remembering, acknowledging the shady edges of things, but also bearing witness to the beauty of sadness that is so at odds with the horrors of forgetting history. So whilst the history of Wadjemup/Rottnest Island is a core component of what drives her work currently, it can also be seen much more broadly as a reading on landscape and memory. McMillan's work becomes part of a sunny disquiet that is so central to her ongoing thesis.

Pilar Mata Dupont



“I am a multidisciplinary visual artist born in Australia to Argentinean parents. I graduated from Curtin University of Technology with a Bachelor of Arts (Art) in 2001 and obtained a Certificate of Music Theatre from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2007. I have worked on an extended practice encompassing photography, film, design and performance (including some theatrical performance) for over 11 years. Recently I returned to my solo practice, after a six year period where I focused primarily on my collaborations with Tarryn Gill and Hold Your Horses.

I have exhibited my collaborative and solo work at galleries such as Centre Pompidou, Paris; The Akademie der Künste, Berlin; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane; the Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney; on Cockatoo Island for the Biennale of Sydney 2010 and in film and art festivals like Art Basel, Miami; the Berwick Film and Media Arts festival (UK), the 9th NÄKYMÄ public art exhibition (Finland) and the CineB Film Festival (Chile).

I have co-produced a full-length work of music theatre, *Heart of Gold*, as part of Hold Your Horses in 2009, and was nominated for a WA Equity Guild Award for my set design for the show. In 2010 Tarryn Gill and I won the prestigious Basil Sellers Art Prize and, in 2011, had our survey show, *STADIUM* at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts. At present I am on a year-long research trip during which I am developing projects around Europe and Asia, including visits to the Netherlands, Germany, Finland, United Kingdom, China and North Korea.

Through my solo practice I am interested in re-creating or re-imagining memories or histories based on fragments of texts, photographs or people's stories; exploring how memory/history can be disfigured or glorified. At present I am experimenting with creating narratives, through film and photography, as hybrids of various mythologies and the memories relayed to me by people I meet while traveling. I am doing this in order to create a sort of new world mythology, stripped of the grandeur of the original myth, but bestowing a heightened reality and meaning to an ordinary memory. These experiments further my interest in engaging with and subverting tropes used in storytelling, and resume my investigations into the genre of magic realism as a device to explore the effects of colonialism, nationalism, and militarised societies.”

Tom Müller



In a number of senses Tom Müller is a big picture artist. Globalisation, the environment, space and time all fascinate him. Müller seems to prefer vast data sets, expansive geographies, sweeping timeframes and sequences of history. And yet, at the same time, he is attentive to fine detail, to the specificities of things local, to the poetry of small, momentary and fleeting things that resonate. He understands the universe as an infinitely complex network of endlessly interconnected systems. In the natural world these systems manifest everywhere, from the minutest forms of matter through to the grand architecture of the cosmos. In the corresponding human realm these dynamics are expressed through information, communication technologies and other network infrastructures.

Tony Nathan



Tony Nathan has worked as a professional photographer for 25 years. He investigates the urban landscape of Perth, a city whose physical fabric appears to be in a state of continual and often radical transition. His images range from straight photography (an almost clinical and documentary approach) to the highly stylised and conceptual. Recent projects include photography in Kawah Ijen an active volcano in eastern Java and documenting the workers of the sulphur mine at the bottom of the volcano crater. As well as running Imagelab he is also interested in astrophotography and is constantly testing technology, resolution and high-end printing to execute his fine, detailed and arresting photographs.

Anna Nazzari



Anna Nazzari has a Doctorate of Philosophy (Art) and works at Curtin University, Western Australia. Nazzari's art practice examines real events from history in conjunction with mythological tales, superstitions and folklores that promote moral certainty and cultivate the absurd. Nazzari believes as an informal entity, the 'accuracy' of morality is speculative because society's perception of what is good and evil is always open to variables. As such, any truth derived from real or fictional narratives alleging moral certainty can only be speculative. The narratives that inform Nazzari's work often contain or allude to comforting illusions of hope, success and happiness. The absurd is privileged through an awareness and acceptance of these tales as illusions. Her art practice, which can take the form of sculpture, photography or film, is focused on the manipulation or reconstruction of these narratives to demonstrate moral escapism and illustrate the absurd, through the meaninglessness of such ventures.

Andy Quilty



"I am fascinated by the machinations of violence where brutality and aggression manifest predominantly in a masculine form. The desire to physically dominate.

Humanity has evolved rapidly through science, global connection and exchange, however it seems to me the need to dominate through violence has, to date, remained a constant.

Growing up in a suburban area south of Perth some might consider more prevalent to violence. I witnessed from a very young age countless acts of physical aggression involving males of all ages.

Most violence appears to be a means of achieving some form of higher 'respect', a kind of infamy known to both ones immediate peers and the wider community. I cannot think of any male friend of mine (myself included) who has not been the victim of violence. Some have walked away, others have spent days in hospital and even missed months of work recovering.

I am interested in the existence of acts of violence as voyeuristic and magnetic events, both on the streets and in the form of organised sport.

The appetite for violence within contemporary culture is most apparent in the popularity of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), one of the fastest growing sports in the world. Fighters engage in hand-to-hand combat where an entranced public appear seemingly intoxicated by the vicious brutality on display. Fearsome and ugly aggression is both celebrated and rewarded.

Living in suburban Perth I see violence regarded as commonplace and in many ways accepted as a part of the landscape. Brutality perpetrated on the streets is often watched as eagerly and with as much fascination as any UFC bout.

I aim to document this raging sickness, to gain an understanding of what drives the male desire for self-destruction and aggression. I wish to examine both perpetrator, and the role of the voyeur implicit in the existence of this violence."

www.andyquilty.com

Nein Schwarz



“I have had a life-long passion for geography and Earth sciences. My artworks are intended to provoke dialogue about human relationships to ecology and Earth by exploring our collective dependence on natural resources – particularly minerals, water, and agricultural products - and the global quest to meet rising demand. For more than two decades, I have accompanied Canadian and Australian geological mapping expeditions while working as a bush cook. Wielding my pots and pans during forays through agricultural belts, abandoned mine sites, and prospective mineral fields, I continually reflect on the contents of each meal I make and the knowledge I would need to source all food and preparation equipment from scratch. This is expressed through my artworks that build on my longstanding geographical, material, and conceptual dialogue with land use practices.

Many of my sculptural works and paintings have been realised with the participation of individual Earth and biological scientists, or supported by research institutions. The choice of materials is considered carefully in relation to the context of the works. Most of the wall pieces are painted or prepared on doors, which, for me, allude to thresholds between domestic desires and future availability of natural resources. My paints are of the Earth, being pure unmixed colours collected directly from drill sites, mines, and bores across Australia.”

Bruce Slatter



“Through my sculptural practice I am interested in investigating human endeavour in all its various forms. Human endeavour can vary widely, from opening a difficult lid on a jar to digging the Suez Canal; sometimes the endeavour is the shared experience of a team or group but often it is experience of the individual that most interests me. This individual experience can be communicated through ideas of endeavour, anxiety, apprehension and empathy to place the viewer as a sympathetic ‘participant’, ideally reminding them of familiar or shared experiences.

In order to explore human endeavour I investigate the expectation and potential of commonplace objects. I have an ongoing interest in the historical, cultural, social, functional and personal information embedded within commonplace objects. In particular I am interested in objects found in the domestic sphere, from both inside and outside the home. These include objects of sport and recreation as well as everyday household objects.

With these existing objects I construct and adapt new sculptural objects and scenarios. This process questions ideas of expectation, potential, resourcefulness, common usage and familiar and shared experience inherent in human endeavour.

Sometimes my work has a figurative element of trophy figures or those used in model railways. Sometimes the viewer becomes the figurative element through a visual association with the altered commonplace objects or through the manipulation of scale, usually in miniature, to position the viewer as witness and providing an all seeing perspective and greater understanding of context. By diminishing the scale, the work attempts to intensify focus, to distil the essence and meaning of an object, while still retaining a reference to the original form.”

Nicole Slatter



"I want to make landscape paintings that evoke the impermanence of place through the consideration of time.

When making paintings I acknowledge the cross pollination of thoughts from global to local to personal. I think about what exists as place and what it's potential is while considering past histories. Mixing fact, experience and the imagined.

For several years I have been interested in meanings within particular urban landscapes. The landscapes I paint are unpopulated, yet are defined by how they have been and will or have been used and populated. They are places such as sporting fields, industrial areas, car parking lots, building sites and parks. I would like the paintings to test the possibilities of urban spaces to hold meanings and histories of past interactions and social usage.

I want the paintings to be a response to experiences of narrative, time and space through a conceptual integration of a variety of image and information sources that describe a place. These information sources vary from the related media imagery to times of the day the areas are frequented or used; how the space is used or misused and what the past, present and future intended uses are for this space. The paintings work with additions and subtractions to emphasise and reveal ideas and experiences that engage narratives within these landscape paintings.

The outcomes are an investigation into picturing locality, this constant development of the urban environment that affects our connection and experience to place. The familiarity of place built through time and shared narrative becomes temporary. These paintings attempt to depict the temporary and record transitions as the essence of landscape and place."

Justin Spiers



"Three eyed, yellow, spotted and talking—this is how I remember some of the first creatures of my childhood. They were of course in books but later appeared equally mutated, colourful and fantastical on television shows, in films and in advertising. Hardly a day would pass without another Dr Seuss character or Disney animation to make life more enjoyable by removing me from the every day. These odd portrayals of animals also continue to inform and affect my attitudes towards other living creatures. We are then, perhaps, more inclined to accept the Franken-creatures of tomorrow.

It seems that when it comes to animals we enter a state of mixed reality. We don't want to know what form of hell their lives might really be like on factory farms or in polluted waters. Even the zoo can be a disappointing place in relation to our expectations of animals. 'Why aren't they moving?' is a common question a child will ask when at the zoo.

I am interested in the ways our perception of animals is altered and how our encounters with animals are often mediated through a context of entertainment and leisure. My photography and video practice is rooted in documentary and thus with historical links to photography's place as a tool of the real. This positioning of photography, despite the unveiling that has occurred with the profusion of digital technologies, is (paradoxically) what allows photography to explore fictional elements more freely. The work often underlines the frequently unnoticed artifice of photography and the staggeringly asymmetrical division of power that accompanies it. My most recent work is interested in exposing the screens we build to cushion our objectification, oppression and reimagining of the natural world."

Colin Story



Colin Story works with waste materials sourced from the building sites he administers. He offers the re-presentation of these materials in a gallery context as a reflection on consumerism and the potential for materials to have "another life" between use and disposal. Referencing aspects of western art history from the 20th century, particularly abstraction and minimalism, Story's work draws parallels with known histories through this "cultural tuning".

Story bases his inquiry around the interactions of the building site, and his understanding of the pathways of the "trade route" that is established in the construction industry. In this forum ideas are met with and challenged, materials considered and reformatted. This interactivity, the shuffling of materials by other hands, initiates his response and provides the setting for creative work outside of a formal studio context. In fact Story considers his work place and studio to be two intertwined aspects of his process driven inquiry, both located at source with the materials.

The aesthetic power of his work is perhaps enhanced by the site specificity of its exhibition destination which "conditions" the response; Story considers an available venue, then looks for "work" that fits. This process of discovery and installation in large measure precludes the studio as a necessary arbiter of that response, but rather brings the reality of the work place, the construction site, into central focus.

Whereas physical properties of texture, material, colour, line and balance contribute in his works to a consideration of the formal aspects of the art world, there are "no finely crafted objects, no stories being told, and nothing with obvious meaning....The art is not in the making, because the artist has done no making; the art is in informed selection and careful arrangement and presentation" ⁽¹⁾. So although new values are ascribed to these found objects, there are no right answers except perhaps the context of their social history.

Story's re-presented objects generate a "sense of wonder akin to that experienced while examining archaeological fragments or mysterious cultural artefacts" ⁽²⁾, yet there is a balance between their implied humour as "worthless objects", and the serious intent of their re-interpretation as a modern code of our times. As materials familiar to many people, they are approachable to a broad social milieu, suggesting the accessibility of the creative process as part of, rather than separate from, our daily lives.

Story "brings to the conversation a range of aesthetic thoughts that open up the possibilities about where art is placed among other things in life, not necessarily just an out rider that supplements our human condition or a collection of activities that create an industry for itself to exist" ⁽³⁾

The dialogue between the viewer and the arranged materials creates a dynamic that Story describes as "social making". At the core of his practice he acknowledges the centrality of our shared perceptions of materials and processes in the world.

1. Chris Hill, writer and collector, at his opening speech for "inconstruction", Moores Building Contemporary Art gallery, Fremantle April 2011
2. Louise Morrison, writer and Artist, Artlink vol. 31, no. 3, pg. 87 2011
3. Bevan Honey, writer and Artist, catalogue essay for "the painters chair", free range Gallery, Perth April 2012

Previous Invitation Art Award Winners

Year	Work	Artist
2011	<i>Guide to the Other Side of the World</i>	Susanna Castleden
2010	<i>Totem for a Herd with Branded Hide, Swearing at the Sun</i>	Graeme Burge
2009	<i>Yellow Composition #1</i>	Brenden Van Hek
2008	<i>Microeconomics (Paradise Spent)</i>	Erin Coates
2007	<i>Journey from the Stars</i>	Nicole Andrijevic
2006	<i>The Arriving of Muguroos Rain Clouds</i>	Shane Pickett
2005	<i>Portrait of a Boy I and II</i>	Concetta Petrillo
2004	<i>A Separate Fiction</i>	Paul Hinchliffe
2003	<i>Night Continuous</i>	Gosia Wlodarczak-Sarneka
2002	<i>Parallels</i>	Bevan Honey
2001	<i>Garages and Numbers</i>	Rodney Glick and Lynette Voevodin
2000	<i>Woman in Red</i>	Richie Kuhaupt
1999	<i>Liminal Spaces</i>	Jon Tarry
1998	<i>Field Map 1</i>	Trevor Richards



Susanna Castleden
Guide to the Other Side of the World
 (image detail)
 Winner of the 2011 Invitation Art Award



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