

**MAKING TRACKS** 

## **MAKING TRACKS**

an exhibition by alumni from the ANU School of Art Sculpture Workshop

11 MAY-1 JUNE 2013

ANU SCHOOL OF ART GALLERY



#### **CONTENTS**

CONTENTS	3
FOREWORD	5
MAKING TRACKS	7
ARTISTS	
MICHELE BEEVORS	18
JOEL BLISS	20
RACHEL BOWAK	22
JACQUELINE BRADLEY	24
MELANIE FITZMAURICE	26
JAY KOCHEL	28
OWEN LEWIS	30
PAMELA LOFTS	32
NOELENE LUCAS	34
ANNE NEIL	36
LOUIS PRATT	38
SIMON SCHEUERLE	40
CAMILLE SERISIER	42
ANNA SIMIC & CRISTY GILBERT	44
AMANDA STUART	46
PETER VANDERMARK	48
ABOUT THE SCHOOL	50
CONTACT INFORMATION	51
CREDITS	52

#### **FOREWORD**

Sculpture is everywhere. In recent years the emergence of sculpture as a major part of the urban landscape has accelerated and colonised shopping centres and become geographic and historical markers, advertising logos and accessories of public and corporate cool.

The breadth of sculpture practice incorporates discrete objects, installation, public art, temporal work including video, sound and performance and has hybridised with fields as diverse as medical science and engineering. This is reflected by the plurality of approaches in sculpture education within the Sculpture Workshop at the Australian National University.

Sculptors who are alumni from the School of Art Sculpture Workshop are active in the national and international art scene. They demonstrate individual approaches to sculpture that reflect current cultural, political and environmental concerns and are working within traditions of sculpture by pushing material and conceptual boundaries. This exhibition gives us a taste of some of this activity.

Making Tracks is not a historical overview or the 'Greatest Hits of the Sculpture Workshop' but is a sampler of current practice by alumni who are continuing to expand the field of sculpture.

This exhibition is part of the Centenary of Canberra Celebrations and I hope the exhibition acts as encouragement to our current sculpture students and to secondary and college students who are considering the Sculpture Workshop at ANU as a place to continue their education.

Particular thanks to Assistant Curator, Clare Thackway, for her efficient organisation, to David Broker for his essay and to James Holland, Jay Kochel, Julie Cuerden-Clifford and Barbara McConchie for their valuable advice and management.

Thank you to the alumni artists who have made this exhibition possible and to Wendy Teakel, Nick Stranks, Gordon Bull, David Williams and all staff and students of the Sculpture Workshop, past and present.

I would like to acknowledge ArtsACT for their generous support of this exhibition.

Paul Hay 2013

Lecturer, Sculpture Workshop, School of Art

#### MAKING TRACKS

Making Tracks traces the progress of a number of graduates of the sculpture workshop at ANU School of Art. As the nation's art schools continue to educate increasing numbers of highly skilled graduate artists, competition intensifies in an environment of limited opportunity. Making Tracks is an exhibition that provides an opportunity for artists to show what tracks they have made while audiences are able to sample the depth and diversity of alumni practices. Through a process of application 16 artists were selected whose work represents the broad sweep of current sculptural activity and some of the changes that have happened over the last 23 or so years. Each of the participating artists has developed highly refined techniques using media that might not always be considered within the conventions of traditional sculpture. In all cases they are exemplars of experimental practices with a critical edge that addresses not only current art historical questions but also take on some of the pressing global issues that weigh heavily on contemporary artists.

It would be unfortunate if space were the final frontier. For sculptors, space has always been an expanding universe in which exploration has infinite possibilities and in modern times the practice of sculpture has continually broadened its horizons looking to space rather than form as its artistic directive. Throughout the 20th century sculpture might be seen as an "embattled" discipline as modernist practices challenged the classical tradition with its emphasis on form and allegory. Cubists, Surrealists, Constructivists, Abstract Expressionists, Minimalists and Conceptualists (to name but a few) have looked to new materials and ideas, reinventing previous notions of form. The increasing presence of women during the latter part of the century also brought about significant changes. While Joseph Beuys may have paved the way for many women, it was artists such as Yayoi Kusama, Eva Hesse and Annette Messager who reset the course. If the heavy metal traditionalists were to find the rise of 'soft sculpture' with domestic focus (for instance) difficult to digest, the die was cast. Significantly, over 50% of the artists in Making Tracks are women and it is worth noting that 10 -20 years ago this would have been unheard of.

Michele Beevors quasi-erotic naked dwarves generated a great deal of attention when they were evicted from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery in 2008, however, she has moved on from her *Debbie Does Disney* days. In the context of the introduction *The Anatomy Lesson : Extinct* is an appropriate selection for *Making Tracks*. Ostensibly a work about death, this finely knotted human skeleton addresses ideas of identity/identification and evidence. Beevors speaks of a myth that Cornish sailors wore knitted jumpers sporting patterns that would identify their bodies should they become shipwrecked and drown. The skeletons are a variation on this idea, serving as enduring evidence of the body and ultimately the existence of species. Skeletons, like the jumpers, provide clues to identification and Beevors knitted anatomy lesson is therefore is also work about the living. Signaling "the un-countable" in a way that does more that simply transform one material for another – bone to wool, it represents the inconceivable numbers of extant skeletons that characterize the breadth of our planetary inheritance.

Whether intended or not, there is something macabre about Beevors' work and this introduces another thread that binds the exhibition. Anne Neil's White Flotilla (2012) consisting of hundreds of miniature cast resin sheep seemingly set adrift on flimsy boats, references the scale of Australia's controversial live sheep trade. Her installation is evocative of a graveyard as each sheep faces certain death either on route or at its end. Living close to the port of Fremantle it has been impossible for Neil to ignore the trade and the treatment of the animals that sustain life. A recurring issue for Australia in recent times her "carpet" of sheep is essentially a funereal rug that should remind the viewer of the costs, both physical and ethical, incurred by the 'pitiless, brutal and painful' industries of death.

Animals, misunderstood and mistreated are also prominent in the work of Amanda Stuart. Once a park ranger, Stuart developed a strong interest in human relationships with the natural Australian environment, which supports some of the meanest critters on the planet. Her practice is concerned with 'outsider species', those fauna that are feared and reviled by humans. While dingoes can't compete with the box jellyfish, the Taipan and Funnel Web they have nonetheless achieved mythological status for infanticide and the occasional sensationalized attack. the bed I lie in (2013) extends upon Stuart's explorations of human/dingo relations in regional South East Australia using objects from a farm that were arranged to include the form of a dissolving dingo. A homage perhaps, to the survival of this hardy animal and its ability to unsettle what Stuart calls the 'rural subconscious' and ultimately through media reportage, the urban psyche.

Environmental issues also loom large for Owen Lewis who has developed a practice notable for saying a lot with little. Working with found objects and materials Lewis' modest means pack maximum punch. Death and survival again are central issues in a contribution that imagines the "transporting of ecologies on a human scale". What, he asks, might refugees carry with them as they escape the effects of climate change. His *Untitled* (2013) leaps beyond the futile ongoing climate debate and immerses the audience into a tragicomical future of flight from the inevitable, where refugees carry insignificant plants and soil in the cheap carry bags that have become an emblem of the homeless. For Lewis this absurd scenario is both serious and deadly, and with the most banal of materials he challenges his audience with the follies of incorrigible greed and begs the question as to where we can actually go with our ecological survival packs.

Survival in a hostile place was a recurring theme in the work of Pamela Lofts. Throughout her career Lofts was resident in Alice Springs and a proud citizen of central Australia. Turning the Tables employs the table as a gathering place, a central place upon which can be written our histories. Two tables represent the complexity of her ambivalent relationship with the desert, "culturally coded and yet sensual and experiential". Upon the tables Lofts inscribes views that represent her own experience, as well as that of the broad population whose experience is diverse. The word DYSTOPOTHESIA is written on one table that refers to "the incompatibility of bodies to the space they inhabit", a potent reference to her feelings of attraction and displacement when confronted with an infinite and hostile space. The other table is seemingly an empty space, terra nullius, referencing the view of settlers who believed the land was unoccupied in spite of its habitation by Aboriginal cultures for thousands of years. Lofts' work questions how we could be so blind and if one looks closely at the texture of the table the marks of production can be seen. Turning the Tables is a perfect metaphor, an emblematic work that represents the insightful nature of her career and an epic poem of human existence on a land that is as difficult as it is seductive.

From the exquisite desiccation of deserts to an inventory of global waterways, Noelene Lucas' *Atlas of Water* is the result of an ongoing video project that tells the story of great rivers. Like maps, Lucas' moving images provide precise yet ill-defined information about their subject matter, containing the unseen details of "water quality, the transient nature of weather in the light of climate change." In this multimedia installation using video, sound, image and text Lucas focuses on water as a universal (global) concern while isolating certain waterways in the same way that maps and atlases partition the world into tiny scaled segments. She requires that the viewer look closely at each video and consider the possibility of a narrative of difference, or how each river might be assessed visually by the quality and flow. Many of the rivers are famous, the

Seine, the Hudson, Rio Bravo and Chao Phayra; each with its familiar legend of sustenance to the people who rely on its continuing flow. *Atlas of Water* interconnects planetary 'streams' and critiques their current treatment, or lack thereof.

What is most striking about Noelene Lucas' inexact images of water is their ability exist outside the material, to become psychological phenomena that inhabit the minds of people far away when every river is seen as one.

Melanie Fitzmaurice's *Navigation Helmet* 2010, *Explorer's Pillow* 2009 and *Explorer's Pack* 2009 might be the attire for exploration of this psychological landscape.

Her works are metaphors that highlight the connections she sees, "between geographical expeditions and a more internalized experience of navigations." Each piece is an imaginary tool for a psychological rescue mission using a comprehensive list of common materials such as tracksuit fleece and ribbing, foam, wood and fibreglass in the style of the storybook clichés of explorer wear. Importantly, actual bodies are absent from these works, however, they are present in an imaginary sense. Fitzmaurice considers her work through the idea of transit and all that it implies – of directions, disorientation, exploration of both familiar territory and the unknown.

Jacqueline Bradley is another artist who has explored ideas of 'clothing for the mind'. Her costumes for culturally coded occasions provide ongoing commentary on how, for instance, we approach or respond to the mythologies that frame both our natural and constructed environments. Bradley uses common materials to parody everyday situations and imbues them with a sense of significance. A floatable dress to avoid drowning in Australia's swift rivers, or shoes on stilts to avoid snakes, are among her inventive solutions for modern encounters with nature. Bradley's installations might be seen as an amusing safety manual for familiar events.

Inflight (2013), brings together two sculptural elements, one employing wooden chairs, carpets and papers. The other part of the installation contains curtain rods, hat rack, windsock, ropes and buckets of water. The chairs are lined up in flight formation and transfer ideas of domestic comfort onto the common modern experience of travel (and vice versa). Small glass screens on the back of each dining chair, showing an animation of fading sun in far off place, are an absurd addition to a work that displaces and disrupts everyday experience. Bradley describes Inflight as a gentle reminder of "our ability to construct our own journeys, to make do using that which we already have."

Delusion and illusion are the psycho-materials of Rachael Bowak's explorations into what are for her, the interchangeable zones of drawing and sculpture. Her works are line representations of useful domestic objects, ladders and a gas bottle that make oblique reference to the 'society of renovation' escalated by TV shows like The Block and 60 Minute Makeover, to name but a few. Part hobby, part the 'new religion', the renovation revolution appears to have become the stairway to paradise - accessible to all if only in the phosphorescent imagination of TV screens. Bowak's works are based on the Bunnings concept of 'secular dreams' and transform common household objects into 2D stainless drawings with 3D aspirations. It is the nature of Bowak's practice that her work is almost believable, that we are looking at something solid rather than an outline with perspective. She will often find a way to add a hint of the real, for example, a burn mark on the wall above her gas bottle in OOMPH (2012) provides a touch of pathos, highlighting what a gas bottle actually does while pointing out what the work can never do. Similarly, Bowak's ladder will never provide access to that air vent in the ceiling and her brooms will not sweep away the pink fluff that lies at their base - just as many people will never fully renovate their lives via their homes.

Having done time as a scenic with Opera Australia Camille Serisier's practice is significantly informed by set building. Exploring the ways that culture drives human responses to nature, Serisier brings together elements of photography (tableaux vivant), drawing, painting and performance. Her deliberately artificial environments demonstrate how factors such as early childhood education and cultural mythologies actually dislocate the possibility of an authentic engagement with nature. On a small raised stage in the gallery a performer costumed, on one side only, plays the role of anthropomorphized koala rolling out a Ken Done tea towel; endangered cultural icons set against a neat vision of the tamed "wild". While producing a consistent atmosphere of fantasy she uses the diminished koala suit to contrast flesh from canvas backdrop. heightening the language of the lie that often frames encounters with a socially constructed wilderness. The use of an accessible 'set' or installation enables the audience to engage with the work from different views - seeing all sides of the argument as it were. As the theatrical set assists audiences with suspension of disbelief for a short time. Serisier extends this idea to deal with a greater delusion formed over hundreds of years. Her sculpture pits art and artifice against the realities of human relations with the natural world that she sees as becoming increasingly distanced.

Sculpture departments in art schools seemed to embrace performance art because it didn't quite fit anywhere else. Although photography and film would eventually become the media to which performance artists played, first and foremost performance was an exploration of new areas that marked an object free encounter between artist and audience. In the mid 1990s Anna Simic and

Cristy Gilbert emerged from the Sculpture Workshop with extreme views on the domestic spaces that women (in particular) must negotiate. Noted for their over-the-top humour, Simic and Gilbert employed excess to fuel their biting commentary. Sunny side up 2013, is to some extent a catch up or an update, as they continue to explore the old adage that a woman's work is never done. In spite of labour saving devices the chores just become more and ever more complex.

Nearly two decades later they have the shared experience of motherhood to work with and thus they focus on an unrelenting routine of chores and rituals that are associated with raising young children. Sunny side up takes the jolly breakfast metaphor of the poached or fried egg to look at a world reduced to the household and how the clash of desires to be artist and mother takes place with in this confined space. Adept piss takers, Simic and Gilbert have added the complexities and pressures of 'informed parenting' to their repertoire of targets satirizing 'first world anxieties' regarding nutrition, education and of course ethical shopping. Their performance is based on the idea of a 'new woman' who "has it all wants it all and worries about it all" and they present this paradox in a way that encompasses both public and private situations that place the audience in an uncomfortable position of voyeur.

Since his graduation in 2005 Simon Scheuerle has worked with a vast palette of manufactured materials. It does not matter so much what these materials are or how they look, but rather, how they make the audience feel. He exploits a direct line between tactility and emotion suggesting through his objects that somewhere within their physical properties lies the potential for extreme reactions channeled through a compendium of – often unpleasant - experiences. He is a Post-Modern Surrealist who effectively attempts to occupy our subconscious and while Scheuerle is well aware of the close relationship between revulsion and fascination he aims for much more than mere nausea. Shame and embarrassment are among his ambitious aims for the viewer. Like Hitchcock, he exploits the familiar, 'images' gleaned from popular culture to be distorted and twisted - not guite beyond recognition. I got you Babe (2013) is one such work that draws upon a classic ballad of love and typically seduces the audience into a state of soporific wellbeing before the monstrosity is unleashed. "Nostalgia", he says, "permeates his work like mould". Ultimately materials/media are central to Scheuerle's practice for without them nothing is felt, however, the symbolic function of his sculptures also translates as an often, hideous reality.

If Freudian concepts like the subconscious are a driving force behind Scheuerle's practice, Jay Kochel gives them solid form in *Votive's for Little Hans* (2012). Essentially this work visualises a case study that is replete with archetypal Freudian symbolism, so rich it almost becomes cliché. Little Hans fear of horses is the result of an Oedipal complex or his desire to sexually

possess his mother for fear of castration by his father. Kochel, whose work has often dwelled on the darker side of the psyche with a focus on magic-inducing artifacts, attempts to create an Oedipal tableau that addresses the child's deep-set problems with horses. The problem is represented by a central saddle that Kochel refers to as an 'interface between man and animal, id (unconscious) and ego (pragmatic reality). Like an abandoned chrysalis, it is endowed with the prominence of an altar by its central positioning and as such it becomes a sad relic, a worn religious idol and 'shabby' demi-deity. The stallion is a potent symbol and if Little Hans was to have a phobia that is related to castration then he can do no better than the equine, whose symbolic functions are interchangeable with masculinity itself. Bone coloured wax shoes surround the ambiguous saddle, like the votive candles lit to honour the saints and the dead. These are fetishistic objects that, with tongue in cheek, Kochel uses to overplay and overlay the story's religious, sexual, psychological, symbolic and narrative significances.

Louis Pratt is an artist whose practice wavers between the second and third dimensions. Situated firmly within the contemporary culture of high velocity technological change he notes, "We live in a world that is being digitised, our lives increasingly integrated with digital spaces " and asks "What does this mean for us"? Having reached a point where vast numbers people are almost entirely dependent on computers and mobile phones, for example, bodies become as ergonomically adapted to the use of machines, as machines do to bodies. While the experience of the digital world remains largely 2D, when seen as an interface, dimensions begin to overlap. It is this point of interaction that Pratt's *Whatever* 2012 activates. His process begins with "organic data" or real world objects that are scanned and thus transported into cyberspace where they become malleable digital replicants.

In digital form original objects become visual ideas that can be manipulated, changed and reorganised; made ready for their return to the organic world from whence they came. The return is via a process widely referred to as rapid prototyping, the first techniques were available in the 1980s to make models and prototype parts. As sophisticated 3D printing techniques become available to artists, and sculpture and printmedia begin to form a new alliance, Pratt sees new horizons for a sculptural future. Whatever, is a model of distorted youth, a wryly humorous figure that evokes the fashioned, manipulated teenager slouching in jeans and hoodie. It is a work that includes incisive commentary upon contemporary youth culture through the digital eyes of the world they inhabit.

Non Stop Erotic Cabaret was an album released in 1981 by British duo Soft Cell. Produced on a very low budget with songs like *Tainted Love* and *Sex Dwarf*, many argue that the sleazy brilliance of Marc Almond created one of the great albums of the century, low art and high pop. If the punk subculture

was born in the mid 70s it had taken hold by the early 80s and it has been an enduring influence in the work of Joel Bliss who borrowed the Soft Cell title for his contribution to Making Tracks. He speaks of producing sculptures that relate to recordings made by his band The Bigots in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The songs; fast, raw, loud and unpolished inspire his sculptural aesthetic. Along with music, rat bikes, those beat up scarcely road worthy cult motorcycles, zines and the culture of DIY have also played a part in generating the aesthetic that runs through Bliss' work. It is unlikely, however, that Bliss has ever simply wanted to give form to music. Rather, the influence of punk enters his work by a process of osmosis, it is intuitive and what he makes absorbs the trappings of a culture that is known for rebellion, aggressive grunge and fetishistic fashion. His materials include steel, timber, rope, chains, and the works are dark, moody, and resolutely masculine. The striking contrast between sensual smooth curves and treacherous sharp edges in Non Stop Erotic Cabaret (2013), point to a dark fetishistic presence that pervades Bliss' practice as he continues to transform 'low fi' musical ideas into threedimensional objects of high carnal corporeality.

Peter Vandermark also has the ability to breathe life into inanimate objects and this is intensified and reinforced in his Articulation series (2011). Initially, however, his attentions are an ostensibly unassuming attempt to explore the interplay between function and form, recycling and subverting common industrial materials in order to create an ambiguous form of sculpture. With aircon ducting and lighting spheres riveted together in a believable coalescence he is able to produce works that might be mistaken for what they actually appear to be, that is, functional industrial design. The deliberate ambiguity of Vandermark's work leaves it open to interpretation and context becomes an important element as audiences meet with sculptural statements of flexible meaning in differing situations. He seems happy when the viewer is confused as to whether they are looking at an artwork or some product sample from a trade fair catalogue. Depending on the nature of the space in which it is shown, galleries can extend the contextualization of work, underpinned by the interplay or crossover between private domestic design and the wider world of architecture. It is here that the works are ironically most out of place and here they come to life, like robotic creatures that might be activated after closing time. In the architectural space of a gallery that might also contain ducting and lighting they are a paradox; where they belong artistically and yet formed from the same materials used by architects and builders. In a narrative rush that evokes science fiction classics of Fritz Lang or the imaginative machinery of Doctor Who. Vandermark demonstrates the ways in which audiences are dependent on a mix of personal knowledge, collective memory and past experience to facilitate the interpretation of new ideas.

Making Tracks is an exhibition that focuses on post ANU School of Art activity but reaches far beyond the University. It addresses current developments in contemporary sculptural practice, both conceptual and technical, across the globe. Throughout the 20th century change has been continual and often radical, at times difficult to understand and certainly difficult to keep up with. At the end of the century, the introduction of new technologies and speed of change has opened up many new areas into which 'sculptors' might enter. Notwithstanding the collapse of traditional disciplinary boundaries it is sculpture's essential relationship with the third dimension that has enabled it to absorb other media and incorporate new ideas with greater flexibility than other disciplines. All works selected for this exhibition have robust conceptual foundations and although environmental issues appear to be pervasive; feminism, popular culture, identity, art history, society and culture are also prevalent. If sculpture has become topical it is less the topic that we judge and more the artist's approach. In a media saturated world, audiences hunger for ground-breaking ideas offering different ways of seeing critical issues that become prosaic with astonishing speed. In a contemporary context even the notion of innovation is a cliché and testimony to the pressure on contemporary artists to continually revise and reinterpret the world as we have never seen it. Making Tracks, reflects this struggle and is a small sample of the ways artists employ materials and technologies to express ideas in three dimensions. In doing so Making Tracks highlights not only the tracks followed by ANU School of Art graduates but also the current paths of modern sculpture.

David Broker 2013

Director, Canberra Contemporary Art Space

#### **ARTISTS**

Michele Beevors

Joel Bliss

Rachel Bowak

Jacqueline Bradley

Melanie Fitzmaurice

Jay Kochel

Owen Lewis

Pamela Lofts

Noelene Lucas

Anne Neil

Louis Pratt

Simon Scheuerle

Camille Serisier

Anna Simic & Cristy Gilbert

Amanda Stuart

Peter Vandermark

#### MICHELE BEEVORS

MASTER OF VISUAL ARTS 1993

Michele Beevors holds a Master of Visual Arts from Australian National University and Master of Fine Arts from Columbia University, New York.

She has exhibited in the United States, Australia and New Zealand and is Studio Coordinator: Sculpture at Dunedin School of Art, Otago Polytechnic, New Zealand.

There is a myth about the jerseys ("jumpers," here in the antipodes) worn by Cornish sailors. The patterns on a jersey could reveal the identity of a dead sailor's bloated corpse, as might a fingerprint or a trace of DNA. Knitting carries with it the legacy of care, for it takes time to knit by hand. Patterns were passed down through generations or so the legend goes; cable, bobble, pearl, plain and moss stitch in hundreds of combinations to depict the identity of the fallen.

Each sculpture has been meticulously knitted by hand in bone-coloured yarn. The stitches are tiny, the convoluted invention of the three dimensional pattern hidden through the ingenuity of the knitter. Knitted skeletons representing long dead animals and a lone human sink into the woolly surface. At present there are over ten thousand seven hundred animals waiting extinction too; many to name or knit. David Attenborough has said that, 'we are a plague on the planet', and you have to look at the history lesson of evolution to find that the evidence for this is overwhelming, even to an eight year old.

Whether we believe that the world is 4.5 billion years old or 6 thousand, skeletons are proof of life having been recently lived. Take a minute to imagine all of the dead, a number which far exceeds the living. On the 4th October 2012, Science magazine reported that scientist, Paul C. Serena, uncovered a small birdlike dinosaur, Pegomastax, in a drawer of a long dead Harvard Professor who had found and catalogued it 50 years prior. The animal itself was dated from 200 million years ago and had a beak and quill-like protrusions of spines all over it. It was at once catalogued again and popped back into a draw. The knitted sculptures in the series The Anatomy Lesson seem to signal the un-countable, it is not simply a question of translation, from one material (bone) to the next, but of labour and time and care that is outside the realm of what is possible in one lifetime.



The Anatomy Lesson: After Stubbs, 2011 wool and mixed media dimensions variable

### JOEL BLISS BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS (HONOURS) 2009

Joel Bliss works primarily with steel but has incorporated timber, concrete, rope, leather and fiberglass into his sculpture. He gets inspiration for his work by exploring rundown, abandoned buildings, old heavy industrial machinery and investigating hand-formed metal fabricating techniques.

Bliss graduated with Honours in Sculpture at the ANU School of Art in 2009. Since then he has had solo exhibitions and participated in Sculpture by the Sea and Swell Sculpture Festival. Joel won the 2008 Moreland Sculpture Prize in Melbourne.



Non Stop Erotic Cabaret, 2013, mild steel, paint 125 x 50 x 40 cm

#### **RACHEL BOWAK**

MASTER OF VISUAL ARTS SCULPTURE 2001 BACHELOR OF ARTS (VISUAL) GOLD AND SILVERSMITHING 1993

In 1993 Rachel completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts in Gold and Silversmithing and in 2001 a Master of Visual Arts in Sculpture at the ANU School of Art. She has taught and participated in blacksmithing workshops from 1992 to 2003 in America, India and Australia, and has worked for Fink & Co. and Thylacine Exhibition Preparation where she has developed product designs and specialist object mounts. Rachel is a lecturer in art and design at Canberra Institute of Technology and has taught at the ANU School of Art and Enmore TAFE in Sydney.

Since 1993 Rachel has exhibited across Australia and has work in collections of National Gallery Australia, Canberra Museum and Gallery and private collections. Rachel has participated in residencies and desert trips with Kim Mahood and Pamela Lofts and has won numerous awards including the Canberra Critics Circle for her 2012 solo exhibition 'Reside' at Canberra Contemporary Art Space.

The works in Making Tracks are intended to operate as metaphors of the felt experiences that underlie the human condition. We in the affluent west are currently in the grip of a renovation revolution escalated by TV programs such as The Block, 60 Minute Makeover, The Renovators, Homes Under the Hammer, Escape to the Country and Grand Designs. The Bunnings catalogue is the catalogue of secular dreams, where the home handyperson can imagine changing and improving their homes and, by implication, their lives.

The stainless steel line drawings occupy a space between drawing and sculpture – crafted objects that replicate the illusion of perspectival drawing. What appear to be drawings of functional objects turn out to be non-functional objects that look like drawings. It is in this playful dislocation of reality that the object can be both a highly crafted illusion and an expression of ordinary human aspirations.

Withdraw is a playful appropriation of the works (Untitled Stack) by minimalist sculptor Donald Judd. Judd refined form with the intention of erasing function altogether. This configuration of modernist form is popular in contemporary furniture and made functional. Withdraw has function only implied, though functions on a psychological level.

Oomph alludes to energy and combustion, a combination of chemistry that inspires action and creation, the gut drive that fuels the intellect into action and feeds our need to create.



#### JACQUELINE BRADLEY

BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS (FIRST CLASS HONOURS) 2007

Jacqueline Bradley is a Canberra based artist working from Australian National Capital Artists (ANCA) studios. Since graduating from ANU School of Art in 2007 her work has been exhibited in ACT, NSW, SA, VIC, UK and Canada, and she has recently presented a solo exhibition at Craft Victoria. In 2012 Jacqueline undertook a residency in Newfoundland, Canada, was a finalist in the John Fries Memorial Art Prize and has been invited to participate in the French touring exhibition, *Futurotextiles* 12/14. Jacqueline lectures and tutors in the Sculpture Workshop at the ANU School of Art.

Jacqueline Bradley makes sculptural and performative objects, installations and costumes using building materials, household items, fabric and wallpaper. These works investigate interactions with her surroundings; constructed and natural environments in both Australia and abroad, By creating, wearing, using and documenting her objects, Bradley makes the wild her home; the unfamiliar her own, creating a space for the uncomfortable and unskilled when faced with the great outdoors. The inherent humour and absurdity of her work offers a way of connecting for the viewer, a window into a broader discourse on the nature of wild places and human engagement with the landscape. Her work for the 2013 Alumni exhibition is a segment of the work she began on a recent residency in Newfoundland. The work Inflight comprises of two separate sculptural elements made from an assortment of wooden furniture, carpets and papers. A tall pole assembled from curtain rods and hat racks is topped with a long windsock. Along a runner of carpet, five chairs are lined up as if awaiting passengers. The back of each chair is set with a small image of a far away place. Bradley's use of familiar domestic objects and materials to create elements of a plane, just enough parts to imply the whole, is at once futile and comforting. This work is a gentle reminder of our ability to construct our own journeys, to make do using that which we already have.



Inflight, 2013 wooden furniture, carpets, buckets, rope, glass and card, timber, paper and steel Work size in two components: Part 1: 600 x 180 x 180 cm; Part 2: 90 x 100 x 250 cm

#### MELANIE FITZMAURICE

BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS (FIRST CLASS HONOURS) 2007

Following her graduation in 2007 from the Australian National University, School of Art, Canberra, Melanie Fitzmaurice has exhibited throughout Australia and abroad.

Melanie's most recent body of work, *Head Above Water*, was featured as a Project Stage Exhibition at *Art Stage Singapore*, 2013.

Melanie is a recipient of a number of awards, including travelling scholarships and residencies offered by the Royal Over-Seas League, London and Edinburgh, 2008-09, Saksala Art Radius Art Centre Haukivuori, Finland, 2011, and the Freedman Foundation, Sydney, 2010.

Melanie Fitzmaurice currently lives and works in regional Victoria, Australia and is represented exclusively by Catherine Asquith Gallery, Melbourne.

My sculptures take the form of unlikely combinations of everyday objects. Through adjusting the familiar, I work to create metaphors that highlight the connections that I see between geographical expeditions and a more internalised experience of navigation; constructing what I imagine to be the tools necessary for a psychological rescue mission.

As a sculptor I am fascinated by the fundamental role that our bodies play in our understanding of space, movement, communication and identity. The human body appears throughout my work, or is referred to through objects, garments and helmets. In my making, I reflect on the concept of locating oneself in transit; of moving forward and looking back. I consider themes such as direction, disorientation, the familiar and the unknown.



Navigation Helmet, 2010 Tracksuit fleece, ribbing, foam, wood, fibreglass 28 x 30 x 50cm Photography: Garry Smith

#### JAY KOCHEL

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY 2013 BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS (FIRST CLASS HONOURS) 2002

Jay Kochel is a Canberra based artist completing his PhD in Sculpture at the Australian National University in 2013. Jay has a multidisciplinary approach to his art practice and research methodology and prior to completing an undergraduate degree in sculpture and interactive media he studied a combined Bachelor of Anthropology and Law in 1996. He has won several awards, notably, the Neil Roberts Award (2008) and the Anthony Forge Prize for Anthropology (2004). His doctoral studies focused on the relationship between fetish, magic and contemporary art. The majority of his fieldwork was conducted at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford and the Musée du quai Branly, Paris, where he researched the artefactual history of fetishism.

Ranging across media, my work deals with the magical fetish artefact – reliquaries, voodoo dolls, votive objects, folk magic, juju – objects that incorporate human remains or a mimesis of the body. This process operates as a material and psychic strategy to harness a spiritual or magical affect – performing a transference of energy and power, heat or mana, between body and object – tuning the mind's perception to the superstitious and supernatural. Materially this approach focuses on combining contemporary technologies and artisan techniques, including materials of an alchemic and symbolic nature.

Recent sculptural work researches the relationship of fetish objects to the bodies of their adherents, by examining material metaphors of containment, boundaries and fluidity. Sculptural work incorporates perceptions of sympathetic magic through the affects of purity and contagion. These conditions of affect give rise to perceptions of personified qualities in the inanimate, placing the object in an intimate proximity to the boundary of the self.

Votives for Little Hans is an homage to Freud's concept of the fetish. Little Hans is afraid of horses—Freud tells us this because of Hans' Oedipal complex—Han's fear of castration is substituted for a phobia of horses. This seemingly arbitrary ascription of horse phobia for castration anxiety inspires an Oedipal tableau. The saddle acts as an interface, between man and animal, id and ego. The remains of the saddle, cast off as a chrysalis—a relic as carapace—sits atop a mound of wax shoes, white as bone or fat, both fetishistic and votive.



Votives for Little Hans, 2012 wax, polyurethane, epoxy resin, fabric, timber, shellac, copper 255 x 255 x 130 cm Photography: Brenton McGeachie

# OWEN LEWIS BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS 2007

Owen Lewis is a Sydney-based artist from central western N.S.W who graduated from ANU School of Art in Sculpture in 2008.

Owen works in small scale, mixed media sculptures and has exhibited across Australia.

These works explore the ideas of transporting ecologies on a human scale. As climates shift, weather becomes unpredictable and biodiversity collapses what would climate refugees carry with them. The human hand is present alongside cheap manufactured materials in these objects that are desperate in their need to nurture and survive.



#### PAMELA LOFTS

1949 — 2012 MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY 2007

Pamela Lofts was a visual artist living in Alice Springs where she moved in 1989 after completing her Bachelor of Arts at Sydney College of the Arts. She established Watch This Space Artist-Run Initiative in 1994 and the following year won the 26th Alice Prize. Pam exhibited and participated in residencies nationally and overseas. She is represented in public collections including the National Gallery of Australia. In 2007 she completed a Master of Philosophy, at the School of Art, ANU. She was awarded a number of Australia Council grants during her career. Much of her sculpture, photographic and video works in the last few years were concerned with perceptions, stories and lived experience of Australian deserts. Her most recent major exhibition, Obscured by Light was held with Kim Mahood at Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs in February to March 2012.

This work developed slowly from a meandering, opportunistic gathering, without a clear picture of what would emerge, but trusting in an eventual convergence of experience, material and form. I wanted to express an ambivalent and complex relationship to the desert as a culturally coded work and yet sensual and experiential.

The surface of each table signifies the land's topography, where features are inscribed. One table bears written language (a colonising text), the other is just itself (texture) devoid of marks, other than the accidental flares left as evidence of the production of the material itself. Here is not, as one might first think, the empty space of terra nullius, but a terrain where the inscriptions are of a different order. Where the tread on the land is light and leaves no trace.

The word DYSTOPOSTHESIA meaning 'the incompatibility of bodies to the space they inhabit' is a reference to my own ambivalent feelings of attraction to and displacement by the desert.

In both works absence resonates as a 'Requiem for another'.



#### NOELENE LUCAS

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY 2006

Noelene Lucas is a Sydney-based video installation artist with a background in sculpture. Noelene has been curated into major exhibitions at the Art Gallery of NSW, the Art Gallery of Western Australia and the National Gallery of Victoria and internationally in Japan, Thailand, USA, Germany and France.

For over 20 years Noelene's work has focused on spatial relations and embodied perception. The works link everyday objects or experience to the numinous, to the paradox that these can reveal awareness beyond the ordinary.

The Australia Council has awarded three major Development Grants to Noelene, the most recent supported this project, "Atlas of Water". She has undertaken two Australia Council Tokyo studio residencies which created the foundation for her PhD dissertation awarded by ANU in 2006. Noelene has been the recipient of Asialink residencies in Bangkok and Chiang Mai in Thailand and the Art Gallery of NSW Moyra Dyring studio residency at the Cite International des Arts, Paris.

Beyond her individual work, Noelene is involved with two artists groups that research and exhibit together.

The Atlas of Water, an ongoing project since 2000, seeks to be a methodically assembled inventory of the rivers of the world. Like maps, atlases aim for exactness and comprehensiveness, an effort that is often futile. An atlas allows for contemplation of details and of the universal, like maps they imply the act of cutting a place from a greater whole – such as the world, continent, island, or country. That act of cutting imposes a frame and a particular viewpoint.

Central to this work are environmental concerns: water quality and the transient nature of weather in the light of climate change. Rivers imply change, movement, wandering and dwelling. Rivers are used for transport, pleasure and as a life support. Water flows from mountains through valleys, farms and cities to the ocean, highlighting the ways that water, rivers and oceans are interconnected -- as is what we do to them.

This idea evolved and developed through the long standing focus on the changing nature of water, particularly clouds and weather conditions. The critical undercurrent in my work is the seemingly ordinary things, places and phenomena of everyday life.



Rivers (installation view), 2012
8 LED screens which show water from the following rivers: Hudson River in the USA, 2000; le Seine in France, 2002; Williams River, Australia, 2011; Melaka River in Malaysia, 2012; Chao Phraya, Thailand, 2011; Rio Bravo, Mexico, 2010; Skafta, Iceland, 2008; Niagara River, Canada, 2004.
Standard Definition and High Definition video dimensions various

### ANNE NEIL

POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA 1992

Originally a Queenslander, Anne Neil gained a BA with Distinction in Art and Design at Curtin University of Technology in Western Australia in 1985. In 1992, she completed her Post Graduate Diploma in sculpture at the Australian National University.

Anne has exhibited nationally and internationally and is represented in collections in Australia, Malaysia, South Korea, Hong Kong and Switzerland. Her witty, sometimes whimsical artworks belie strong political messages about environmental and ethical issues.

For anyone living close to the port of Fremantle, as Anne Neil does, the sight of sheep crammed one on top of the other into lorries ready for live export is a depressing and disturbing sight. 80% of live sheep exported from Australia go through this port in a trade that the Mayor of Fremantle, Brad Pettitt described as 'cruel and unnecessary'.\*

The live sheep trade has been the subject of several of Anne's works over the past 25 years. There is a ghost like, deathly pallor to these cast resin sheep, reminiscent of tombstones repeated throughout a large graveyard. Many sheep do die before getting to their final destinations. Sometimes entire shiploads endure prolonged deaths of dehydration when the receiving country refuses entry.

In this work the sheep are placed on the floor in a random pattern that references the protective, domestic, festive and religious symbols inherent in rugs and carpet design. The poignant dichotomy behind Anne's artwork is that the sheep will provide food to nurture and sustain, but only through means that are pitiless, brutal and painful.

<sup>\*</sup>Maggie Baxter, artist, curator, writer and public art coordinator



### LOUIS PRATT

BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS (FIRST CLASS HONOURS) 2000

Louis Pratt was lives and works in Sydney.

He studied sculpture at the ANU School of Art, graduating with 1st class honours. In 2002 the College of Fine Arts, UNSW, awarded him an Australian Post-Graduate Research scholarship for a Master's degree that he completed in 2004. From 2003 he began teaching in the COFA sculpture department.

His approach to sculpture is ground breaking. He 3D scans forms (people) from the real world into the digital world, then uses digital sculpture tools to manipulate the scanned data, using many types of algorithms. The data is then rapid prototyped back from cyber space into the real world. He makes the point that we have reached an historical moment in terms of technology's effects on humanity and its home; that we invest so much of our lives in digital spaces, wether by playing computer games, in the course of work or in using social media. Planet Earth is now mapped by *Google*, available for digital consumption. His approach is to examine and minic this global process in works of art. It has earned him many awards and a place in private collections. Most recently he won the inaugural Mt Buller Sculpture Prize, 2013. In 2012 he was a finalist with "Whatever" in the Wynne prize at the AGNSW. In 2011 he won the Blacktown sculpture prize. In 2006 he won the Woollahra Small Sculpture prize. In 2005 he won the Linden Postcard Award and received two highly commended awards, one from the Willoughby Council, the second from the Cromwell Art Prize. In 2004 he won the COFA Emerging Art Award.

We live in a world that is being digitised, our lives increasingly integrated with digital spaces. What does this mean for us?

It's a question I explore through sculpture. I do so by mimicking the process, by digitally scanning organic data into cyber space. Organic data, as I use the term, is data from real world objects, as distinct from inorganic data which is produced solely inside software.

With my organic data inserted into cyberspace I have digital tools with which to manipulate and re-sculpt it. Once satisfied with the digital work, I use various types of rapid prototyping equipment bring the data back into the real, the organic world. This process is one of taking something of the real world into the cyber world, manipulating it and returning it to the real world again---but changed by its sojourn in the digital realm.



Whatever, 2012 mixed media 160 x 78.9 x 50 cm

### SIMON SCHEUERLE

BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS (FIRST CLASS HONOURS) 2005

Simon graduated from ANU School of Art in 2005 with 1st class honours.

He has held solo exhibitions at Canberra Contemporary Artspace (A.C.T) and *DEATH BE KIND* (VIC) and his work has been shown in numerous group exhibitions including *Bloodlines: Art and the Horse* and *VideoKemp* in the Czech Republic. Simon's work is held in many private collections.

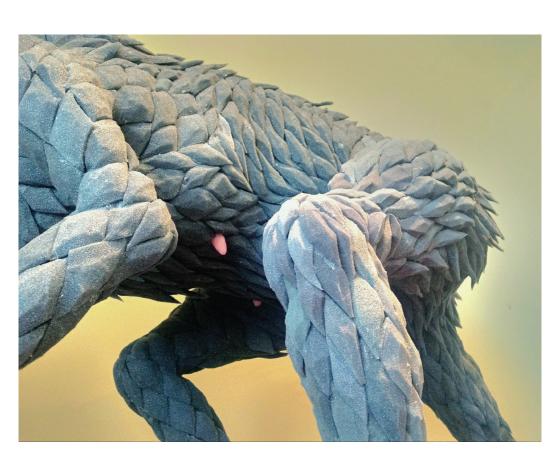
My father was a taxidermist and my childhood home was full of animals, none of them alive. From boxes of kangaroo feet and bits of birds, to a thorny devil that once lived behind the house, now mounted to a board; if it died near my Dad, it got stuffed.

Dead animals (or parts thereof) were my earliest objects of fascination and I was encouraged to play freely with them.

This play has continued into my adult life and sculptural practice where I use readily available synthetic materials in place of real skin and fur.

The work in this show 'I got you babe' explores my strange relationship with taxidermy, animals, objects, and my father.

Post script At age 11 I got my first living animal, a cat. It had a long, happy life, and was never stuffed as far as I am aware.



## **CAMILLE SERISIER**

BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS (FIRST CLASS HONOURS) 2003

Camille Serisier is an interdisciplinary artist based in Brisbane. Through her practice, Serisier investigates forms of feminine and environmental narrative construction in Australian cultural material. She received a Bachelor of Fine Art with First Class Honours from the Australian National University, where she was a National Undergraduate Scholarship holder.

She has received numerous grants and prizes, including the Neil Roberts Sculpture Prize, the NAVA Australian Artist Grant and the Arts Queensland Career Development Grant.

Ken Done It! is part of Camille Serisier's 'Calendar' series, which presents cascading interpretations of initial drawings and collages based on Australiana calendars of native flora and fauna. In this iteration Serisier reinterprets the preceding works on paper as a large-scale tableaux vivant, complete with costumed performer, in order to deconstruct the source images and emphasise their political valence.

By engaging multiple mediums and levels of interpretation, Serisier interrogates the processes through which some narratives come to appear natural and unproblematic, while others are rendered incredible. In doing so, she draws the various versions of each image into conversation, pointing to the multiple histories and ways of understanding that are obscured by dominant narratives.



Ken Done It! #4 (from the Calendar series), 2012 watercolour and pencil on paper 59.4 x 42.0 cm (image)

## **ANNA SIMIC & CRISTY GILBERT**

ANNA SIMIC | BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS (HONOURS) 1997 CHRISTY GILBERT | BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS (FIRST CLASS HONOURS) 1995

Cristy Gilbert and Anna Simic are visual artists who come together to make extraordinary and highly entertaining performance art. Their collaborations reflect personal experience and are generated from simple ideas, objects and actions that reference a wider cultural understanding of human behaviour.

Incorporating sculpture, installation, video and music, they explore aspects of women's relationships, including themes such as camaraderie and competition, food, sex and sport. Their often hilarious performances combine strong visuals with acute impressions of the absurd.

Gilbert and Simic met as performers in 1993 during the production *Flowers of Gold* by the renowned experimental theatre company, Splinters. Subsequently, while studying sculpture at the ANU School of Art, they developed a firm friendship. They became part of the ACME performance group, established by David Watt, former Head of the Sculpture Workshop. Their mutual concerns fed into their early collaborations as a duo in the mid-1990s. From 1996 to 2000, with significant support from Canberra Contemporary Art Space, they produced many memorable performances.

Since then, the artists have been pursuing separate careers as well as establishing families. They have worked independently on a range of projects, including solo performances, group exhibitions, travel, and further education.

Their current collaborative work, Sunny Side Up is informed by the shared experience of motherhood. Focusing on the unrelenting domestic activities, chores and rituals associated with caring for young children, often living in a world reduced to the space of the home, they explore how such realities clash with the desires and expectations of being an artist and modern woman. The work also pokes fun at the pressures of 'informed parenting', from the first-world anxieties regarding nutrition, education and ethical shopping, to the inevitably competitive conversations and behaviours that take place between mothers.

Sunny Side Up is an exploration of the universal woman who, comparatively 'has it all, wants it all and worries about it all'. They present this paradox through performance, revealing actions of private and public personae, their audience is placed as voyeur, observing the artists who are oblivious to the spotlight.



### **AMANDA STUART**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY 2013 BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS (FIRST CLASS HONOURS) 1999

Amanda Stuart's art practice explores human relationships with the Australian natural environment, with a particular focus on outsider species. A previous science degree and work as a park ranger has been crucial in developing her fascination with species that are reviled or perceived as dangerous by humans.

Since graduating from the ANU with a Bachelor of Visual Arts 1999 (1st class honours and University Medal), she has exhibited nationally and internationally. Amanda has also taught and researched in various capacities, with the Sculpture Workshop, School of Art, ANU.

In 2013, Amanda completed a PhD in Visual Arts and her current sculptural practice researches the tense relations between wild dogs, dingoes and humans in the South Fast of Australia.

the bed i lie in, extends themes developed in the final stages of my PhD candidacy, which looked at the terse historic and contemporary relations between regional communities of humans and dingoes, in southeast Australia. The final studio work was comprised of domestic quotidian objects selected from the farmer's private territory, that were sculpturally transformed to incorporate the dissolving dingo form. The ensuing poetic objects comprised the installation presented for examination, Lines of desire, which gestured towards a dreamscape and served as metaphors for the dingo's capacity to survive and unsettle the rural subconscious.



the bed i lie in, 2013 shearers bed, mild steel, torch, lanolin 200 x 77 x 95 cm Photography: David Paterson

# PETER VANDERMARK

BACHELOR OF VISUAL ARTS 1989

Peter Vandermark graduated from the Canberra School of Art in 1989 and has since maintained a studio-based practice in Canberra.

He has held solo exhibitions in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne and been included in numerous group exhibitions and prizes. His work is in collections including the National Gallery of Australia, Art Bank and Canberra Museum and Gallery.

His work explores the interplay between function and form, a sustained and often humorous engagement with the modernist desire to integrate art and life on both the domestic level (design) and the larger, more public level (architecture).

Peter is represented by Olsen Irwin Gallery, Sydney.

My work explores the interplay between function and form, the everyday and the universal, the intimate and the monumental. The Articulation works are part of a sustained - and (hopefully) often humorous engagement with the modernist desire to integrate art and life on both the domestic level (design) and the larger, more public level (architecture).



Articulation IV, 2011 galvanized metal ducting, acrylic spheres 80 x 100 x 100 cm Photography: Rob Little

### ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The School of Art has a reputation as one of Australia's premier visual art and design teaching institutions. This reputation has been developed and maintained through a hands-on teaching program that emphasises excellence in studio practice in combination with a critically informed approach to the field of art and design. The School has an excellent success rate in graduating highly skilled professionals who make a significant contribution as exhibiting artists, curators, writers, scholars and arts administrators. Graduates have achieved national and international recognition and are successful in gaining competitive scholarships and awards.

Undergraduate, combined degree, Honours and an extensive postgraduate program are offered, all taught in the School's specialised facilities by highly skilled staff. A highlight of all of our programs is the access provided to visiting artists and scholars both within the School of Art and through the University's broader teaching and research areas.

Programs are enhanced by the School's proximity to national cultural institutions, and a strong network of local and regional arts organisations. Close by are the National Gallery of Australia, the National Film and Sound Archives, the National Library of Australia, the National Museum of Australia, the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra Museum and Art Gallery and the Drill Hall Gallery; in addition the School has close bonds to Canberra's well established not for profit art and community organisations.

A special feature of the School of Art is the International Student Exchange Program. Through this program students in their second semester of second year or first semester of third year have the opportunity to study at university schools of art and design in Asia, Europe and North America.

# **CONTACT INFORMATION**

#### GENERAL ENQUIRIES

**T** +61 2 6125 2898

### SCHOOL OF ART OFFICE

**T** + 61 2 6125 5810

E enquiries.arts@anu.edu.au

W http://soa.anu.edu.au

#### COURSE INFORMATION

W http://info.anu.edu.au/studyat

### **ADDRESS**

School of Art ANU College of Arts & Social Sciences Bldg 105, Childers St The Australian National University Canberra, ACT, 0200, Australia

## **CREDITS**

Australian National University, College of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Art, 2013 http://soa.anu.edu.au/

All images © the artists

Exhibition Curator: Paul Hay
Assistant Curator: Clare Thackway
Gallery Program Co-ordinator: James Holland
Gallery Administrative Assistants: Julie Cuerden-Clifford & Jay Kochel
Catalogue design and layout: Jay Kochel

Printed by Whirlwind Print ISBN **978-0-7315-3078-6** The ANU CRICOS number is 00120C.

Cover Image: Roland Henderson

### Supported by









