

A SECOND SHADOW, PRELUDE AND TRAIL

27 MARCH - 3 MAY 2015

EXTENSIVE ARTIST STATEMENTS

A Second Shadow, Prelude and Trail includes the works of artists all responding within their various practices to the idea of “juxtaposition.” The exhibition brings together works that have a beginning and end point suggested. Through the meeting of each artist’s opposing works, the visual narrative and subplot endeavours to hold a heightened sense of play.

Featuring Davina Adamson, Boe-lin Bastian, Fiona Estelle Blandford, Jade Burstall, Beau Emmett, Doug Heslop, Elyss McCleary, Mark Reid, Brad Rusbridge and Mignon Steele.

Davina Adamson

Davina’s work consists of pseudo-scientific experiments, and biological comedies addressing the abstracted relationship with our ecology and the body within it.

Boe-lin Bastian & Mark Reid

Yangmingshan is a two channel video installation comprised from footage shot in the Yangmingshan National Park outside Taipei. It is a collaborative project between Boe-lin Bastian and Mark Reid. When the Republic of China Government moved from Nanking to Taiwan, Chiang Kai Shek took up residence in a traditional Japanese house in the Yangmingshan area.

Many years after his death, the residence was burnt down. The Mayor of Taipei did not wish to speculate on whether the fire was an act of political arson. He pointed out that historical buildings and monuments are blameless in times of conflict – that people are responsible for protecting these remnants of the past. The house was rebuilt in replica over the next few years.

Today the park is predominantly frequented by busloads of mainland Chinese tourists who visit its volcanos, hot springs and cherry blossoms. This work surveys the landscape,

considering the frictions and inconsistencies between past and present, within the context of this historical site.

Fiona Blandford

We Are Our Landscape investigates the stratification of place, and how we are formed by the land we inhabit. This body of work focuses on the competing histories of the lakes country of East Gippsland, a place of leisure and resource, but also of silence and grief – the site of Aboriginal massacres in the 1800s. *We Are Our Landscape* strives to offer insight into the interweaving of histories, concepts of ownership, relationships between culture and land, and the social and political implications, but is also an investigation into my own family's history as 'timberfellas', surveyors, and itinerant tradesman.

Born in Lithgow, Australia, 1973, Fiona Blandford lives and works in Melbourne. Blandford completed a Bachelor degree of Fine Art at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, (RMIT). Blandford's work is politically and historically driven; she is continually expanding and developing her approach that incorporates the mediums of photography, sound and video. Her consideration presents an environment that explores the relationship between art, place and culture. Blandford's intent is to create an understanding of a number of themes – for this show, understanding the implications of colonialism and present day human rights of Aboriginal Australians.

Jade Burstall

Jade Burstall's art practice enlists a broad range of hybrid media including experimental animation, videoart, photography, sculpture, and expanded painting. She also creates audiovisual sensory experiences, utilising live performance and installation art.

Her work experience includes curating multi-platform media art exhibitions for both gallery and public art spaces. Jade's personal aims and themes are to create (social) space through Art, exploring different kinds of public interventions and engaging in interactive and participatory projects, as well as making and researching solo works.

Central to her work are issues of Artificial Scarcity and how decisions are made in regards to these societal constructs. Questions of value, wealth distribution and trade are explored through artistic means.

Jade's site-specific works ask us to reflect on the dualities weighed up between measure of worth, when making both small and large life decisions. The economic way of thinking is

that every choice is a trade-off, an exchange, giving up one thing of value to get something else, which brings to light fundamental value systems – what to treasure and what to trash.

Beau Emmett

Beau Emmett is a multi-disciplinary artist from Melbourne, Australia. After graduating from The Victorian College of the Arts with First Class Honours in 2009, he has travelled extensively throughout North East Asia.

His drawings, photography and sculpture imbue a sense of dislocation and fragmentation from a psychological perspective. Exploring economic and social changes in post – millennial consciousness in Japan, he is preparing work for his first solo show in Melbourne in 2015.

A recurring theme in his practice is a human narrative that lay buried within the concept of ruination. His 3 works for A Second Shadow, Prelude and Trail all relate to the idea of the collapse of structure, be it physical or psychological. The motifs in Beau's work often involve elements of compromised infrastructure, catastrophism, pseudoscience, deviance and robust natural phenomena.

Doug Heslop

“This series of work is about the feeling of pleasurable disorientation, of snorkelling upside down whilst looking at the ceiling of water. I love that sensation, it's like everything connects and you are just another hurtling molecule in the wonder of life.”

Doug Heslop has exhibited in Galleries and Artist Run Spaces in Australia, the UK and France. He has attended the National Art school, Byam Shaw School of Art (Ba Hons), London (Recipient of the Byam Shaw Travelling Scholarship in 2000), and completed his masters at VCA in Melbourne in 2006.

Doug currently lives and works in Newcastle.

Elyss McCleary

“Imagery has always reconfigured itself, and with online access has now evolved into a continuous flood of captured moments of the everyday, leaving dialogues open ended and without conclusion. Many people are involved in sharing and observing imagery and interests through back-lit devices such as tablets, phones and computer screens, myself included.”

These paintings are part of ongoing research into how images are read. They are an attempt to capture and crop some familiar and possibly mundane places and situations and to romanticise the scene as an oil painting. However, most people will ultimately observe these paintings as digital images. By pairing the paintings an immediate dialogue can be imagined by the viewer. Two are based on photographs taken by the artist and two are sourced online.

Elyss McCleary lives and works in Melbourne, Australia. Her work is primarily about capturing the feeling of a space, the presence of a person or the sense of an environment, without necessarily exposing all the details. Light, colour and the emotions that they invoke and enhance serve to convey the presence and absence of people, the energy they put into a scene, the intimacy of an interior space or the isolation of urban environments. Primarily cinematic in the framing and use of light, Elyss' paintings, drawings and photographs range from the abstract though to more representational forms.

Her work is informed by the intricacies of her surrounding and investigated environments, involving both chance and considered compositions creating a visual history of continual movement in space. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts Drawing from RMIT University and Degree in Photography, National Art School, Sydney, Certificate of Welfare and Community Services University of Technology, Sydney and Certificate in Disabilities Studies Swinburne University, Melbourne. Elyss is currently working as an Artswoker at Arts Project Australia.

Brad Rusbridge

“As long as drones the size of mosquitoes continue to breach the borders of personal space and property; I don the rag. While robots work around the clock collating data received by motion-capture cenotaphs and CCTV cameras hiding in the cracks of stone cairns; I diligently and without hesitation, don the rag. While personal devices automatically upload the souls of their users, every minute of every hour of every day; I am sitting on a dirt floor at the bottom of an abandoned mineshaft, sporting a tin-foil akubra.

To the youth who asserts his or her individuality in a gesture of mind-numbing homogeneity - as the iphone camera captures the ubiquitous selfie - I am akin to the sound of the shutter: a haunting, hoarsely whispered and superfluous 'click', fated to fade inconsequentially from existence. And so I lower the veil on it all. In town, only when I absolutely must, I appear as a hollow shell of a man, a ghost without subjects, a rare and tragic vagabond. But my thoughts are rich, my project private yet profound. Beyond this khaki calico face-covering lies the eyes of a painter, the mouth of a poet and the mind of a pedagogue, of a use not yet known to these folk with their eyes averted and their mouths agape. For the moment at least, these folks, and all others throughout the world, walk determinedly away from the words and deeds of a true and humble prophet."

Mignon Steele

"I once thought a crow flying overhead was a hole in the sky."

Rennie Sparks, The Handsome Family

"I've always tried to paint to reflect the things that strike me in this world. Not objectively, but in essence: the weird beauties in nature, patterns disturbed, the cheeky spirit in kids' drawings, sorrow in music and suburban strangeness."

"In this body of work I've let the paintings run loose... up the walls and out the window even. The subjects have escaped."

"Shadows, bars and cells, it all started out pretty sombre but didn't stay there for too long. These paintings don't begin with an idea, they start with paint, and the painting is a scope into the world unseen. The world is too large and too small to be digested by eyesight alone. There's truth lurking in the periphery."