



ART BENDER
at **THE LOCK-UP CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE**

The Lock-Up has inimitable qualities. Identifying as a nineteenth-century Police Station reimagined as a contemporary art space, it is a labyrinth of discrete rooms – preserved cells and conventional galleries. A distinctive and desirable context for exhibitions, it is fast building a national profile. With this in mind, The Lock-Up conceived the Art Bender project to ensure Hunter-based creatives continue to have an equal and open opportunity to show their work in this most evocative of Newcastle's exhibition spaces. A call-out for submissions invited practitioners across all disciplines to propose work to a creative brief for one of two exhibitions over the second weekend in May. From a strong field, projects involving over 30 established and emerging makers were selected. These artists inhabit and respond to the cells and galleries throughout The Lock-Up space during the event, with each night manifesting a unique character. Through poetry, film, interactive and dramatic installations, Friday night asked Bender-goers to reflect on global politics, ethical issues and aspects of the human condition. While no less thought-provoking, tonight is more extroverted and opinionated with talk of revolution, street protests, word hurl, painting performance, dance, music and more. Across both nights, local culinary and vinous collaborations add to the mix. Celebrating the Hunter's creative spirit, Art Bender 2015 features the work of Michael Bell, Gillian Bencke, Deidre Brollo, Tim Buchanan, Jason Campbell, Rob Cleworth (with John Cleworth), Dale Collier, Lottie Consalvo, Ineke Dane, Rowena Foong & Brett McMahon, David Graham, Doug Heslop, Jodie Kell, Roje Ndayambaje, Lu Quade & Byron Williams, Ben Kenning, Cadi McCarthy, Jessica Coughlan, Zackari Watt & Raegan Williams, Jason Nelson, Emily Roberts, Andrew Styan, Clare Weeks, Martin Wilson, Damian Wright, The Reserve Wine Bar and Casa De Loco. Curated by Meryl Ryan and Michelle Corbett.

SATURDAY 9 MAY 2015

FOYER

MARTIN WILSON
Tony 2015
adhesive vinyl

Martin Wilson is well known for his political iconography and acerbic wit. Among his most prominent works is *The Fuzzy Prime Ministers*, a collection of individual latch-hook rug portraits of each of the Prime Ministers of Australia. Created to mark Australia's Centenary of Federation in 2001, the larger part of this spectacular series (up to Kevin Rudd) toured the country for several years. Wilson has since made the latch-hook rug a signature medium. *Tony* is part of a body of work created around portraits of Prime Minister Tony Abbott. It manages the fine balance between dignity and humour typical of Wilson, referencing digital media, dispensable poster art and the Newcastle Knights.

THE GALLERY

BEN KENNING
Drawing in space 2015
drawing performance

Ben Kenning's style of drawing employs a visual vocabulary of motifs, icons and symbols committed to memory and translated into a visual dialogue whereby narrative forms. This can be executed with intention and be literal or intuitive resulting in a more abstract narrative. Recently, Kenning has extended this style of drawing to specific sites or locations. Each site brings with it varying possibilities, audiences and contexts and has its own relationship to time, history and place. The drawing thus develops through observation, interpretation and interaction with varying sets of external subject matter.

THE GALLERY

MICHAEL BELL
The Shakes 2015
12 pieces, mixed media on cardboard

Nine Ways 2013
timber, reinforced pizza boxes, enamel

With an established national profile, Michael Bell is celebrated for his wry, irreverent observations of the everyday and foibles of human nature. *The Shakes* is a suite of twelve cardboard/mixed media constructions that have been made in Bell's studio in the last two months. The works function as drawings for Bell – trying out ideas and thoughts without any constraints. According to the artist, the nature of the works is deliberately 'raw, energetic and sort of funny'. The small sculpture *Nine Ways* shares some related and signature motifs.

CELL B

DALE COLLIER
No better shred than read 2015
performance installation
including paper shredder, digital photographs taken by the artist while working as a commercial photographer, and the text of Attorney-General Nicola Roxon's address on security in government and data retention.

In an attempt to raise concerns surrounding the implications of new metadata retention laws, Dale Collier's performance installation explores the fragility of digital ethics and the pervasive tendencies of domestic ritual. As part of a larger body of work investigating the consequences of throwaway culture, Collier's installation invites the audience to participate in a reconfiguration of the parallels between public and private spheres through the deconstruction of the materiality of memory.

CELL C (The padded cell)

ANDREW STYAN

Abbott explains coalition forestry policy... to the trees 2015
Potted eucalyptus tree, sound

In March of 2014 Prime Minister Abbott explained coalition forestry policy to the Forestry Products Association; flagging that a forest 'was a source of resources; of the ultimate renewable resource, of the ultimate biodegradable resource.' Politicians are well known for targeting their message to the audience. What would his message be to the actual "resource" he is referring to? Where does the truth lie?

CELL D

DAVID GRAHAM

Falling from the High Tower:
A poetic journey into the mind of David Graham
poetry performance

Falling from the High Tower is a series of poetry performances, each thematically or stylistically linked. The first deals with experiential themes, washed through a malaise of alcohol, embracing surrealistic moments until it borders on the absurd; the second takes a more spiritual and esoteric bent, exploring a romantic notion of poetry, and the last is a series of reactions to art and literature with pieces using both ekphrasis and appropriation to recreate artworks with words. Throughout the exhibition, David Graham will compose a final piece of poetry inspired by the Art Bender itself.

CELL E

INEKE DANE

(Im)Mobile State: A survey 2015
interactive performance

(Im)Mobile State is an investigation into causes and ideas that move and unite a people. By being asked the question 'What kind of revolution would you join?', participants are invited to nominate their chosen cause vote-style. The question doubles as a reflection on liberty. The project aims to examine egocentric causes of disquiet, but also how one anticipates and understands the disquiet of others. Part scientific, part anthropogenic, answers will be analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

CELL F

TIM BUCHANAN

Coalface 2015
digital video installation

Mountains of poisonous coal dust 'hide' behind tropical shower curtains as plants slowly slide into the viewing frame. These potted wonders scream "LOOK LOOK, IGNORE WHAT'S BEHIND THE CURTAIN" as the contrast between what we are directed to see and what we actually see becomes totally ridiculous. Exploring post-humanity, virtual disembodiment and the effect that integrated technology has on our lives, Buchanan's work is politically motivated and seeks to express the absurdity of recent political situations.

THE YARD ANTEROOM (small)

DOUG HESLOP

Apathy bores me 2015
protest workshop

'Come along and bring your slogans,' invites Heslop, 'whatever they may be. I'll write them on placards, then we can stage a protest. Or, if you're not that sort of person, you can join the "Riot Cops" and crack down on it. Who knows what will happen?'

www.thelockup.com

Using a personal experience at London May Day demonstration in 2000 as a starting point, Heslop re-interprets the machinations of protest in a bid to unite people, and allow them to voice their concerns. As the artist sees it, living in a Nanny State we have lost the ability to protest. 'Liking things on Facebook is not enough,' he insists, "get on the street and show what you believe in!"

THE YARD ANTEROOM (large)

CADI MCCARTHY (director/choreographer)

RAEGAN ASHLEY WILLIAMS (dancer)

JESSICA COUGHLAN (visual designer)

ZACKARI WATT (composer)

It....Girl? 2015

multidisciplinary performance

This work considers the excesses, the commodity and the degradation of Edie Sedgwick – a muse, or abused... Commercialism, capitalism, and shameless exploitation in the pursuit of fame – these concepts were personified in the short and fast life of Sedgwick. As the result of a chance encounter with Andy Warhol at a party, the young socialite was to become, for a moment in history, the subject and object of his films. Propelled to fame, she was marketed as The New Thing. Through a series of intimate personal interviews, the lens portrayed her as self-involved, dissolute and often drugged. Sedgwick's 'life' was dominated and manufactured by Warhol, produced at The Factory.

THE YARD

COLLECTOR / JASON CAMPBELL

sound art performance 2015

Collector is the solo project of artist Jason Campbell.

Equally informed by abstract electronics and cut-paste concrete composition, Collector presents a dense onslaught of rhythmic noise via modular synthesis and analog drum machine.

CASA De LOCO

Casa de Loco is a family-owned and -managed restaurant with a passionate team who are all about mixing time-tested truths with fresh new ideas. They specialise in modern Mexican food and source creative ideas from their travels, their young team's impressive collective experience and their well-worn family cookbook. With its feel-good vibe and high quality fare, Casa De Loco is becoming a sought-after local experience. Importantly, the Casa team is committed to supporting local growers and suppliers who love what they do and what they produce as much as Casa love putting it together.

ITINERATE MUSICIAN (and CELL G)

JASON NELSON

trombone

Jason Nelson has a Masters Degree in Interdisciplinary Arts and a passion for improvisation and performance. During 16 years in Victoria, he counted many great Australian jazz musicians and improvised-music performers as important influences. Nelson has also participated in workshops with German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen, known for his groundbreaking work with electronic music. Nelson is currently performing regularly in several bands throughout the Hunter region, including Half Nelson, Bakoomba and The Tooksie Collective. Styles range from traditional jazz and blues to Afro fusion and sexy jazz funk.