

MUNDARING  
ARTS CENTRE

# CONTINUITY AND CHANGE; FUTURE

40 YEARS OF NURTURING CREATIVE POTENTIAL

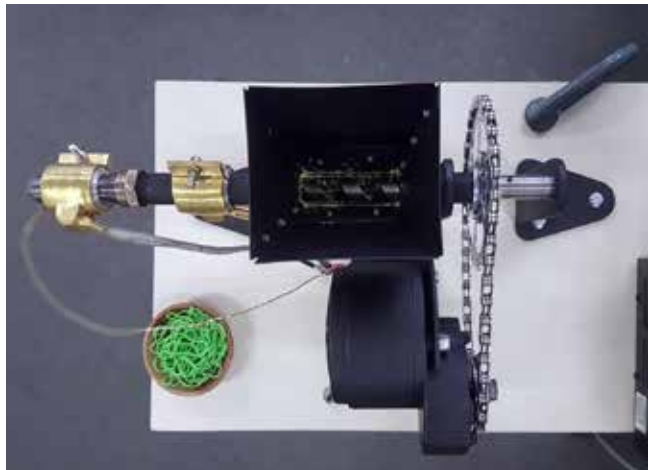
24 MAY - 7 JULY 2019 | GALLERY 1



### PETER DAILEY & STEPHANIE DE BIASI

Peter Dailey and Stephanie De Biasi's first connection for this project came as an email, a modern form of communication which stands in contrast to the current location of the Arts Centre in the old Mundaring Post Office. As an image, the door to an individual's post box was an opportunity for the artists to engage with the past life of the space they were presently connecting with. The 3D rubber stamp of the post box door solidifies or authenticates the conversations and collaboration Dailey and De Biasi undertook since their initial communication and speaks to the physicality of a process to get ideas from A to B. While an email may seem quick and easy, it still requires thought and technological infrastructure.

Image: Peter Dailey and Stephanie De Biasi, *Memorandum* (detail), 2019, coloured pencil on paper



### PHIL GAMBLÉN & JAMES NOLAN

Phil Gamblen and James Nolan have found common ground in a project that has opened up possibilities for an ongoing collaboration. Exhibiting a work in process for this exhibition, their goal is to develop a 'desktop' plastic recycling system from scratch. Growing from public debates around the production, consumption and disposal of plastic, Gamblen and Nolan are of the opinion that plastic should be valued as a resource rather than simply an environmental contaminant; recognising that if plastic was afforded more value, it would not be discarded so carelessly. Setting out to make a proof of concept model that tackles this problem in a practical manner, they have succeeded in building a functioning extruder which reconstitutes shredded plastic into filament for 3D printers, and are now directing their attention to creating a shredder and injection machine.

Image: Phil Gamblen and James Nolan, *Plastic Recycling Unit*, mixed media



### SUE STARCKEN & MARINA VAN LEEUWEN

Sue Starcken and Marina van Leeuwen explore the notion of a cyclical continuum by using unique state printing techniques worked back into with layers of drawing. This call and response between each other's processes has allowed the artists to work both in collaboration and individually. Starcken's meticulously detailed animal skeletons are juxtaposed with gestural and organic plant motifs by van Leeuwen. The residues of improvisation and unfinished marks in these works hint at time in motion and moments of change.

Image: Sue Starcken and Marina van Leeuwen, *Untitled* (detail), 2019, etching, drawing and mono print on paper



### PENNY COSS & BENJAMIN BANNAN

*Parallel States* by Benjamin Bannan and Penny Coss hinges on the arbitrary combination of their unique material language to draw out parallel interests in the conceptual development of the work.

Coss's colour palette and ash collected from a bushland site follow the trajectory of her practice that questions the idea of 'place' in the Australian landscape. The tiles are an extension of Bannan's continued interest in subjective experiences of public space through the motif of public toilets. The shared conceptual links of time, duration and place become evident through their interest in the remnants collected, and the restorative practices of staining (Coss) and retrieval (Bannan).

The dissonance of the formal combinations of tile and timber hint at a grout/tile relationship within a collaborative process contingent on the relinquishment of egos, but also maintains the integrity of the individual evident in the final work.

Image: Penny Coss and Ben Bannan, *Parallel States* (detail), 2019, ceramic tiles, wood, mica powder, graphite powder, ash and indigo pigment on aluminium



### GREG CROWE & JANE GRIERSON

Conducting this collaboration via Skype between Sydney and Perth, Greg Crowe and Jane Grierson have never actually met. Discussions exploring each artist's methodologies recognised their manipulation of different materials – clay, paper pulp and concrete – while finding similar interests in texture and surface treatments. Crowe presents ceramic vessels born of his trademark wood fired and salt-glazed techniques and honouring his connection to Hovea and the hills region. In response to the objects, Grierson has worked to map the vessels in a 2D format. Using paper, ink, acrylic, salt and wax, she has simulated the surfaces and rich earthy glazes of Crowe's ceramic work.

Image: Jane Grierson, *Mapping the Vessel 1* (detail), ink, acrylic, pigment and wax on Hahnemühle paper



### PHILIPPA O'BRIEN & YI XIAO CHEN

We create convincing narratives about our history that often mask other stories, realities and more challenging truths. From them we create a culture, an assemblage of stories and images, a framework of ideas and feelings in a particular time and place. Culture is the language of our lives and it gives us the tools to think and feel but also to question, to search and to see things that are hidden. Examining these ideas, Philippa O'Brien presents a suite of digital prints juxtaposing images of colonisation and the Australian bush.

Yi Xiao Chen has depicted scenes from the early Swan River colony in the style of traditional Chinese lacquer painting. Chinese market gardeners, Afghan cameleers, Malays and Indigenous Australians are shown in frequent interaction with characters from mythical stories of creation from China, South-East Asia and the Dreamtime, who appear to inhabit the banks of the Swan River.

Image: Yi Xiao Chen, *Creation Myths* (detail), 2019, red lacquer on Colonial style Victorian mirror, circa 1840s



### MELANIE DARE & MADELEINE BEECH

Melanie Dare and Madeleine Beech started their collaboration discussing pillars from a neighbour's vandalised fence. An old, worn, violated border which each artist explored within the parameters of their artistic and conceptual practices. Beech's work exists as a sculptural assemblage of elemental forms which classified, ordered and positioned next to each other, emerge as artefacts. Through a process of remodelling, these familiar found objects are transformed, allowing new meanings to emerge while reflecting their past. The arch represents a transition point, a passage through time.

Gauze covers the deteriorated and fragmented boundary of a stranger's home. Paint flaked with the touch of the needle as Dare stitched. At the start of this collaboration Dare had an operation, her wound packed with gauze. As she sewed, part of her mended.

Image: Madeleine Beech, *Transformed Artefact* (detail), 2019, found objects



### MERRICK BELYEA & JARRAD MARTYN

Through individual paintings Merrick Belyea and Jarrad Martyn have explored the scene of an abandoned quarry on the fringes of suburban Perth. Bringing their own sensibilities to landscape painting whilst discussing possible adjustments and evolutions in the developing work, the scene has drawn unique responses from the two painters. Belyea has focused on a human led landscape modification; a quarry being a scar and the absence of land. A more sinister aspect of human intervention is presented by Martyn, a quarry as a colonized space; the violence of the destructive act pivoting between a past and a future narrative.

For all the sharp colours and deep horizons of the Australian bush, both artists share a somewhat bleak view of human interaction with the land and depict a landscape under assault and in dis-repair.

Image: Merrick Belyea, *Mountain Quarry* (detail), 2019, oil on board



### CLAIRE BUSHBY & SOPHIE NIXON

Beginning by collecting together fabric samples from each of their practices, Claire Bushby and Sophie Nixon commenced their collaboration by reclaiming small pieces of experiments and offcuts from previous projects. This reflection and repurposing brings together the history from their respective practices, binding them together. Going back to basics, each patch of layered material becomes a small exercise of colour, composition, texture and line through various quilting stitches, a continuation of 'women's work' through their hands.

Image: Claire Bushby and Sophie Nixon, *Binding* (detail), 2019 cotton, silk and linen



### RICHARD WOLDENDORP & OLIVE LIPSCOMBE

Conscious of the photographic medium's inherent relationship to light, Richard Woldendorp and Olive Lipscombe share a curiosity for shadows. Both artists use photography to capture an absence and presence of light in urban and natural landscapes. Their works develop an interplay – a dialogue – between old and new technologies: SLR versus iPhone; analogue versus digital. From here, Woldendorp and Lipscombe navigate limits of time and place presenting encounters with light that signal the distinct parallels in their practices.

Image: Olive Lipscombe, *Shadow portrait #12* (detail), 2018-19, digital iPhone photograph

## MUNDARING ARTS CENTRE HISTORY

Developing from strong community lobbying and driven by dedicated volunteers and professional staff, Mundaring Arts Centre (MAC) began operation in 1979 from a dis-used petrol station on Great Eastern Highway. From this humble venue, MAC initiated artist-directed residencies, workshops and exhibitions, working to transform a greasy inspection pit into a light-filled and accessible gallery.

Always reaching out to include the broader community, MAC has instigated and managed numerous events and projects across the hills and eastern region. Appointing the first Community Arts Officer (1983), commissioning the Mundaring Sculpture Park (1984), establishing the Mundaring Hills Festival (1988), and the management of numerous public art projects since c. 1986 have all been milestones for MAC and the community.

Moving to the central location of the old Mundaring Post Office in 1997, the mission of MAC has remained constant. The organisation works to prioritise the production, presentation and interpretation of cultural life in this region by actively encouraging artists and audiences of all ages and backgrounds to openly enjoy, explore and engage with the arts in all its forms.

From facilitating one of the earliest community arts projects which saw Judy Kotai create a stained glass window for the Shire of Mundaring collaboratively with members of the public, to projects like Trek the Trail, Mine Own Executioner, The Environmental Art Project and Artists in Schools programs, MAC crosses boundaries of interest, art form, and location to contextualise art and artists within the hills and eastern region.

We find ourselves at a moment in time, able to capture the momentum of our founding members; nurture the skills of early-career artists who bring new perspectives on what they need from MAC; and assert the value of arts and creativity within our community.

## CONTINUITY AND CHANGE; FUTURE | FOREWORD

Collaboration allows play, an exchange of ideas, thoughtful listening and reflection, learning and growth. Working with combined strengths in order to achieve new outcomes and to be part of something bigger. In a collaboration all ideas are put the test - a back and forth journey negotiating each individual's unique perspective.

Over its forty year history, Mundaring Arts Centre has been a space for collaboration and the cultivation of new ideas. Beginning in 1979 as a small group of volunteers, the Arts Centre has been built on the strength of the many individuals who have contributed their time, passion, and expertise to the organisation. The ongoing dialogue between artists, community and other supporters has produced an enduring culture of sharing.

Many have been involved in Mundaring Arts Centre's story over the years as producers, advocates, regular visitors or friends. *Continuity and Change; Future* presents a selection of leading artists with an ongoing relationship to the Arts Centre as well as and those beginning to make their mark on the WA arts landscape. Working in pairs, established and emerging artists have worked side by side to produce new creative outcomes and share skills.

A unique opportunity for intergenerational skill sharing, the exchange between artists has been symbiotic; each artist offering a unique set of skills, perspectives and experiences. The artworks produced act as a conversation between practices; expressing similarities and differences whilst working towards a shared outcome.

Each collaboration has taken a different journey and a range of both joint and individual outcomes are presented. What each piece shares in common is the evident dialogue between

artists. Pairs have reflected on their common materials, values, theories or approaches to art making. Informed by one another, new directions have been pursued or past interests reignited.

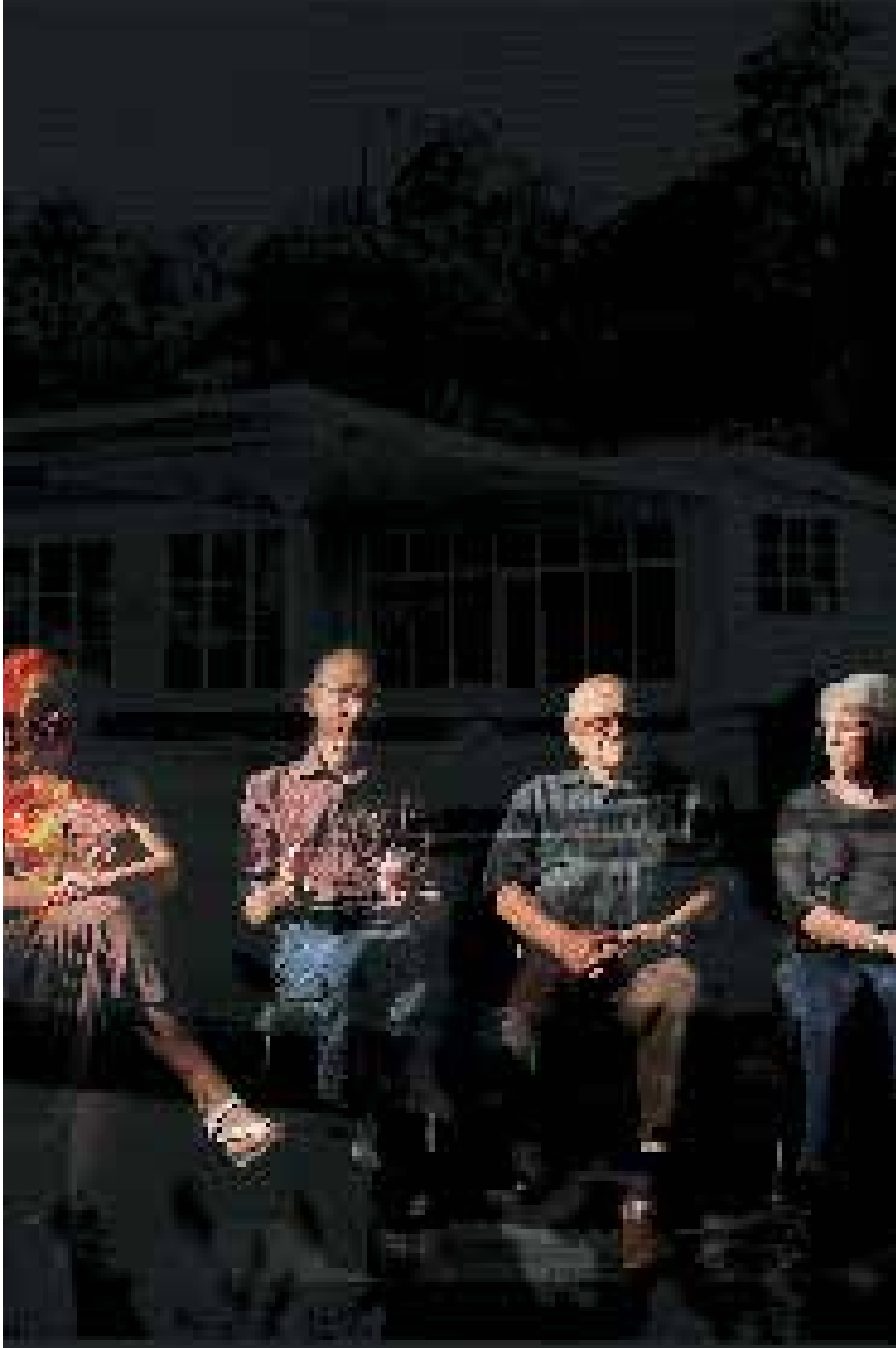
At the beginning of this project, the twenty artists were mostly no more than strangers to their partners. The quality of work in this exhibition is a great credit to each artist's openness to come together, engage with each other's practices and celebrate their diversities. What is not visible though is the conversations, friendships and plans to work together again in the future that have come as a result of being thrown in the deep end with another artist.

An openness for change and working collectively is key to evolution, yet art is often presented as a competitive and solitary process; an individual's struggle for self-expression and success. In Mundaring Arts Centre's 40th year, *Continuity and Change; Future* allows a reflection on what is possible when we work together.

Greg Sikich and Jess Boyce  
Curators

Image: Philippa O'Brien, *Creation Myths*, digital print on Arches paper





## THE FACE OF FINGERPRINTS

### GALLERY 2

Nearly 40 artists, arts workers, and community members have looked back at their connection to Mundaring Arts Centre, and towards the future of arts in the eastern region for *The Face of Fingerprints*. The short film provides a memory-space to reflect on the 40th anniversary of the arts centre's establishment creating an archive of the people and passion behind the organisation's success and looking forward to the future.

*The Face of Fingerprints* was filmed and directed by Steven Alyjian with assistance from André Lipscombe.

Thank you to everyone who took time to share their thoughts on film and to the countless others who have made an impact on Mundaring Arts Centre over the last 40 years.

Image: *The Face of Fingerprints* film still featuring Joan Johnson, Hans Arkeveld, Richard Woldendorp and Lyn Woldendorp



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Mundaring Arts Centre respectfully acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we operate, the Whadjuk people, as well as other First Australians connected with this land. We pay our respects to Elders both past and present.