



MIDDLE
GROUND

1st - 10th August

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Introduction

By Debra Porch

This exhibition catalogue documents *Middle Ground*, an exhibition of BFA Honours candidates from QCA, Griffith University.

The exhibition opened on 1 August 2013 and continued until 10 August 2013.

The title of this group exhibition, *Middle Ground*, is curious. The term 'middle' infers to what is an equal distance between the edges or end of something...the centre, the intermediate, or the halfway point. 'Ground' is more obtuse, denoting that which could be the earth's solid surface, or land, the surroundings, or the terrain. Yet if the term is taken further to 'groundless', it can infer the illusionary, the speculative, or the imaginary.

The current Bachelor of Fine Art Honours candidates in this exhibition have been investigating, debating, experimenting and sighing over their 'individual' grounding...their feet are touching, yet not touching the ground. The acute and significant differences in the current work exhibited in this exhibition are testimony to this. The works signify what may be the middle of the discovery to what could transpire as the real ground for each of these emerging artists.

There is a wonderful sense in these works of the speculative, and works that convey the imaginary, yet other works here are offering the opposite – reality conveyed through materiality. Difference is what isolates the works here, and the difference in individual messages and stories vibrate in what is experienced through the visuals.

The ground for these artists is laid, and it is the middle that will be shifting.



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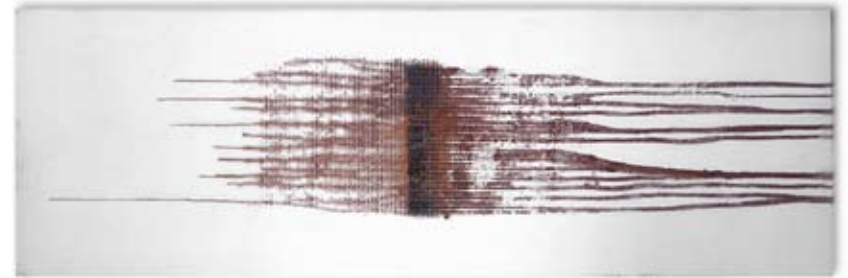


My inquiry into the Queensland artefact The John Watts Necklace, (1866-68), has developed from a desire to know more about my locality and its relationship to issues of Australian cultural identity as shaped by colonialism. Through this artwork I am exploring museological processes that are used to determine an object historical identity and inquiring if these processes can be utilised to re-present related and under illuminated histories of Queensland's past. Furthermore, my inquiry asks can the exposure of these alternative histories stories to have any affect a person's relationship with society today.

Robert Andrew

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As an urban artist with indigenous heritage, Robert works with historical erasure. His work is inspired by the uncovering of previously hidden and denied Australian and personal indigenous histories. *Re-right #1* addresses ideas of memory and un-forgetting through notions of erasure and re-inscription. It alludes to the creation of an in-between or third space that enables the introduction of new perspectives.



Carolyn Craig

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In this body of work the metaphor of the gaze is a vehicle to examine ideas of bio power, where the body is considered a pivotal site for the politics of power. The action of power regimes upon the body is considered within two central ideas, the gaze and the touch. Dresses as armor have been constructed as defenses against the gaze and articulations of the genealogies of self. Made within a regime of daily sketches that seek to deconstruct and reconstruct self, the works attempt to create a dialogue that interrogates ideas of social regimes of control and regulation.



Your Hands On Me (2013) Aluminium etched, mirror with screen printed text, three small sculptural works at 45 x 10 x 80cm, Three pieces of mirror at 38 x 38cm.

Freda Davies

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My paintings pursue an interest in our experience of landscape. I do not wish to create direct representations of nature, rather, images that suggest the human emotions that nature can evoke. These abstract works are dependant upon both observational drawings of the landscape and intuitive responses to stillness, beauty and innocence. It is my hope that all the formal qualities of the work, any expressive brushwork or layering, the choice of scale or colour, all work towards the communication of this subject.



Untitled (2013) Oil on Board, 19 x 22cm.



Simon Degroot

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Reflecting on the image making processes in contemporary visual culture, my honours research project is an exploration of the way fragments combine to create new images and form new meanings. I create paintings by manipulating and abstracting forms adopted from popular culture then crashing elements together in two-dimensional pictorial space. These new combinations of freshly abstracted fragments are then observed for their ability to retain a certain amount of familiarity or an echo of previous contexts.

Bridie Gillman

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Drawing from my experiences living in Indonesia and Australia, my practice uses found materials from both countries to articulate aspects of cross-cultural experience. Through studio experimentation I endeavour to see how complex experiences common to people who move between cultures such as dislocation, awkwardness or the experiences with and in the 'unknown' can be translated through materials to contribute towards a critically engaged cultural practice.



Untitled (2013) Found materials, photograph, plywood, 30 x 17 cm.



Rebecca Kinsey

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The process of artistic labour is a recurring concern in my art practice. My current work explores endurance through long durations of performed repetitive physical processes –

I will weave around my body.

I will use and recycle collected materials from my studio.

I will document the process with video.

I will take however long it takes.

Once physical discomfort is overcome, time suspends – I'm caught in the ongoing activity of weaving, the physical rhythm of 'doing', material thinking. The weaving process will most likely continue until the body has been cocooned, and may result in measuring the gestational period of my pregnancy.

Gestation (video still) (2013) digital video, 36hours to date, ongoing.
Looping. Dimensions variable.

Alicia Lane

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During my Honours Project I have sought engage with metal's possibilities to take on organic forms. Working through a series of experimental processes in copper, I have used techniques that utilize the metal's plasticity to transform from flat sheet into three-dimensional objects. Once a form is established I then alter the surface, intuitively adding texture, echoing both the order and chaos found in nature. A breakthrough occurred when I accidentally punctured the surface and I have found that affinities between the organic and inorganic become evident when the material is pushed to its limits and beyond. The ambiguous forms created provide a point where the relationship between material and maker can be explored as well as reflecting upon human connections with the natural world.



Carol McGregor

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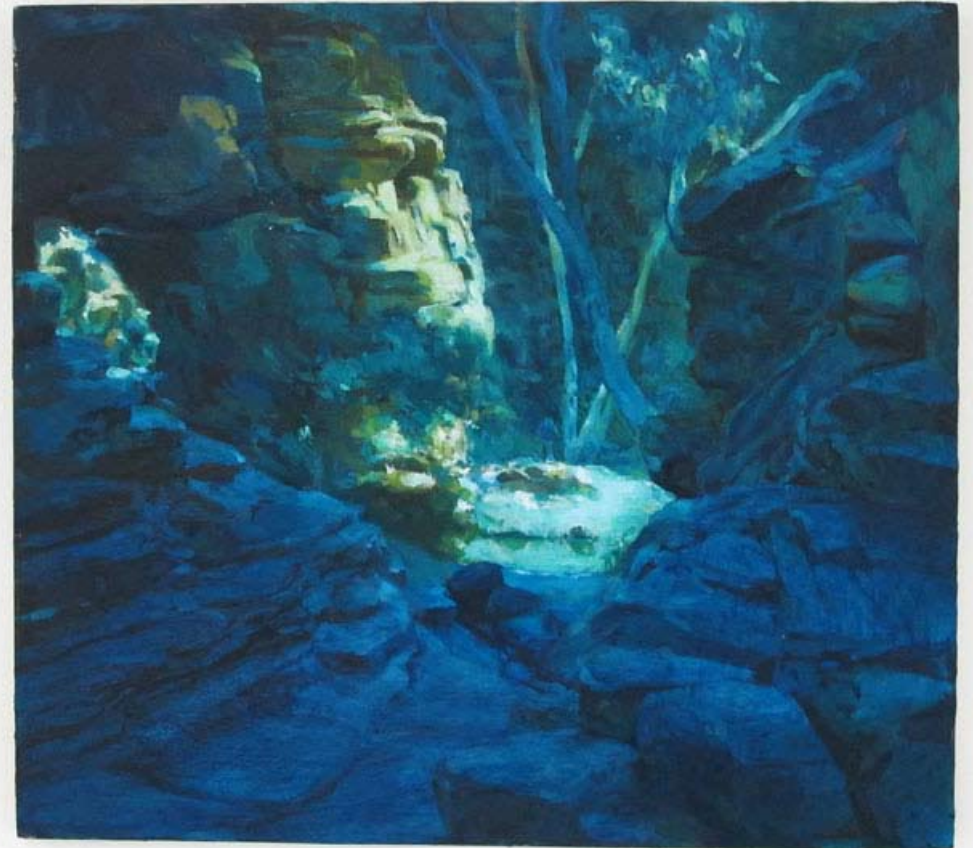
With the symbolic re-emergence of the possum skin cloak as part of my honours project, a significant expression of Indigenous identity is revealed, potentially emplacing people in their culture and on their land. Replacing possum skins with lambskins in cloaked mimics the colonisation process and expresses the resilience and adaptation of culture.



Kate McKay

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My practice reveals how self-representation isn't intrinsic to the portrayal of the physical body. Through the process of painting I reveal how the natural world can become permeated with thoughts, memories, fantasies and emotional states. In doing so, my paintings dissolve the perceived boundaries that divide the interior body from exterior environments, destroying the notion of a coherent or stable subjectivity. This can be seen in *Untitled* (2013), which features a natural rock formation inspired by my experience of a landscape in the Northern Territory. Saturated in intense blue, the ambient space immerses the viewer in an unreal vision of the natural environment, suggestive of an area on the threshold of consciousness.



Untitled (2013) Oil on board, 50 x 60cm.



Jamie Mumford

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Today's complex, highly visual culture has seen a renewed interest in popular culture of the past, which can be seen to provide an escape from the reality of the present everyday. Focusing on seductive images from the 1970's, my practice investigates the desire, allure and glamour that is embedded in these representations. Through appropriation and reinterpretation of the cultural stereotypes of the past I am reflecting on why contemporary society can be seen to be subscribing to nostalgic glamour.

I'm in the phone booth, It's the one across the hall (2013) Oil on board and LED lights, 54 x 122cm.

Caity Reynolds

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Structured upon contradiction and ambivalence, my current body of work explores the literary devices of the absurd and the ways in which absurdity operates to challenge dominant notions of the real. By referencing the nihilistic writings of Franz Kafka, Albert Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre I seek to contextualise past literary tropes of the absurd within contemporary discourses of painting via popular culture such as film and television. Through a juxtaposition of wordplay and visual oxymoron this body of work aims to engage with dichotomies between irrationality and rationality and question preconceptions about the nature of reality, the everyday and the human condition.

Goddamn Happiness Factory (2013) Oil on Board, Dimensions Variable.

Untitled (emotional outlet) (2013) Oil on Board, 30x 9.5cm.



It's a goddamn happiness factory.



Emotional
Outlet.



Angelica Roache- Wilson

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My current practice is concerned with visual perception, particularly how the painted image can create tension between pictorial space and physical object. In *Rainbow* a sense of pictorial space is created by an arched shape casting a shadow, alluding to depth, perspective and gravity. While these elements invite a rational understanding of *Rainbow's* pictorial space the agitated gestures, shifting textures and lazy draftsmanship draw the eye back to the flat constructed surface. Any attempt to understand the image as representational is put to rest in realising the impossibility of a rainbow casting a shadow. The conundrum of this situation is that what prompts a reading of representational space has been evoked by suggesting a logically impossible occurrence cementing the tension between what we see and what we interpret; between the surface and depth of an image.

Rainbow (2013) Oil on Board, 40 x 60cm.

Nara Walker

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Nara Walker creates a sense of pleasure through the use of oil paint. Using a colour palette like flesh and creating works with connotations of sensual liquids. The use of sexual imagery which can be depicted with similarities to pornographic film is mixed with the gestural abstract marks of the artist. The sensual brush strokes, drip marks and splatters engage the viewer to immerse oneself in the work to reconnect with the image. The work is primarily process based and the importance of the explicit image is so the concept of pleasure is met.



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