Postgraduate Research Conference

12–14 November 2014
UNSW Art & Design
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Director Postgraduate Research
Dr Petra Gemeinboeck

Program Coordinator
Masters by Research
Dr Katherine Moline

HDR Support Officer
Ellen Williams

Program Coordinator
Doctoral Research
Dr Michele Barker
# Wednesday, 12 November

9 – 9:30  Arrive and Welcome  | EG02

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<td>Carly Hush (MDes)</td>
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<td>Alexandra Byrne (MFA)</td>
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11am – 12pm Break for Audience | Confidential Candidate Reviews (15 mins each)

Featured Ancillary Event: Karen Kriss Dirty data: motion capture portraits | Black Box

Please see more events in the ancillary program on p6

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<th>12:00 – 1:30pm</th>
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<td>Chelsea Lehmann</td>
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1:30 – 2:30 Lunch break for Audience | Confidential Candidate Reviews (15 mins each)

| 2:30 – 4pm | |
| **Panel 4: PhD (2nd/3rd Year)** | **Panel 5: PhD Confirmation** |
| Panel Members: Uros Cvoro (chair), Diane Losche, Vaughan Rees | Panel Members: Petra Gemeinboeck (chair), Zanny Begg, John McGhee |
| **Candidates** | **Supervisors** | **Candidates** | **Supervisors** |
| r e a | Jennifer Biddle, Mari Velonaki (joint) | Vincent Wozniak-O’Connor | Caleb Kelly, Doug Kahn (co) |
| Diana Smith | Sue Best, John Gillies (co) | Bec Dean | Lizzie Muller, Lindsay Kelley (co) |
| John H. Martin | Wendy Parker, Leong Chan (joint) | Deborah Lawler-Dormer | Michele Barker (joint PhD program with NICAI, University of Auckland) |

4 – 5pm Break for Audience | Confidential Candidate Reviews (15 mins each)

Featured Ancillary Event: Elena Knox PG: Power Generator | Black Box (more ancillary events, p6)

5 – 6pm Drinks | UNSW Art & Design Courtyard

**6 – 7pm Keynote: Erin Manning | EG02 Lecture Theatre**
# Thursday, 13 November

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<td>Jeremy Smith</td>
<td>Paul Thomas, Peter Sharp (co)</td>
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<td>Miho Watanabe</td>
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<td>Scott Elphinston</td>
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11am – 12pm Break for Audience | Confidential Candidate Reviews (15 mins each) 
Featured Ancillary Event: Open Labs, Iteration 2 | Creative Robotics Lab (CRL) | G Block
Please see more events in the ancillary program on p6

| 12:00 – 1:30pm |  |
| **Panel 8: PhD (2nd/3rd Year)** | **Panel 9: MFA** |
| Panel Members: Anna Munster (chair), Sam Spurr, Lizzie Muller | Panel Members: Katherine Moline (chair), Paul Thomas |
| Candidates | Supervisors | Candidates | Supervisors |
| Simone Mandl | Petra Gemeinboeck, Michele Barker (co) | Jennie Holtsbaum | Peter Sharp, Gary Carsley (co) |
| Kusum Normoyle | Doug Kahn, Anna Munster (co) | Nathan Babet | Gary Carsley, Martin Sims (co) |
| Emily Morandini | Doug Kahn, Ross Harley (co) | Jack Stahel | Louise Fowler-Smith, Gary Carsley (co) |

1:30 – 2:30 Lunch break for Audience | Confidential Candidate Reviews (15 mins each) 
Featured Ancillary Event: Dawn-Joy Leong Little Sweets | F1 Balcony (more ancillary events, p6)

| 2:30 – 4pm |  |
| **Panel 11: PhD (Upgrade/3rd Year)** | **Panel 10: Masters by Research** |
| Panel Members: Jill Bennett (chair), Mari Velonaki | Panel Members: Wendy Parker (chair), Sue Best, Izabela Pluta |
| Candidates | Supervisors | Candidates | Supervisors |
| Belinda Dunstan | Jeffrey Koh, Petra Gemeinboeck (co) | Lauren Vassallo (MDes) | Katherine Moline, Liz Williamson (co) |
| Scott Brown | Petra Gemeinboeck, John McGhee (joint) | Emma Maye Gibson (MFA) | Gary Carsley, Emma Price |
| Lachlan Tsang | Petra Gemeinboeck, Astrid Lorange (joint) | Justin Shoulder (MFA) | Gary Carsley, Nicole Ellis |

4 – 5pm Break for Audience | Confidential Candidate Reviews (15 mins each) 
Featured Ancillary Event: David Manley Ambivalent Structures | EG02 Foyer (more ancillary events, p6)

5 – 7pm Exhibition and drinks: Paul Davies: Pastiche; a lens through which to view the present | IDG
Friday, 14 November

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11:30 – 12:30 Break for Audience | Confidential Candidate Reviews (15 mins each)
Featured Ancillary Event: Yvonne East & Michelle Cawthorn | 4th Floor, F Block (see program below)

2014 Dean’s Award
12:30 – 1pm Dean’s Award for Excellence in Postgraduate Research | UNSW Galleries
1 – 2pm Lunch break | Ancillary events open

2 – 3:30pm

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<td>Hamish Dunlop</td>
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3:30 – 4:30 Break for Audience | Confidential Candidate Reviews (15 mins each)
Featured Ancillary Event: Open Labs, Iteration 2 | 3D Visualisation Aesthetics Lab (3D-Vis AL)
Ancillary events open, see below

5 – 9pm **Party** | Postgraduate Lounge and Terrace F-Block | DJ Baby Swindle

Ancillary Program (details on page 32)

Black Box | Experiment **Elena Knox**: Video hula-interface experiments for PG: Power Generator Wed – Fri
Black Box | Experiment **Karen Kriss**: Dirty data: motion capture portraits Wed 11am – 12pm
EG02 Foyer | **David Manley**: Ambivalent Structures Wed – Fri
F1 Balcony, 1st floor F Block | **Dawn-Joy Leong**: Little Sweets Tue – Fri, 10am – 4pm
PGR Commons, 4th floor F Block | **Yvonne East**: Open Studio, and **Michelle Cawthorn**: Boy Wed – Fri
Erin Manning

Concordia Research Chair
Faculty of Fine Arts, Concordia University

Erin Manning holds a Canada Research Chair in Relational Art and Philosophy in the Faculty of Fine Arts at Concordia University (Montreal, Canada). She is also the founder and director of the SenseLab (www.senselab.ca), a laboratory that explores the intersections between art practice and philosophy through the matrix of the sensing body in movement. In her art practice she works between painting, dance, fabric and sculpture (http://www.erinmovement.com). Her writing addresses the senses, philosophy and politics, articulating the relation between experience, thought and politics in a transdisciplinary framework moving between dance and new technology, the political and micropolitics of sensation, performance art, and the current convergence of cinema, animation and new media. Erin’s publications include: Thought in the Act: Passages in the Ecology of Experience with Brian Massumi (Minnesota, 2013). Always More Than One: Individuation’s Dance (Duke University Press, 2012); Relationscapes: Movement, Art, Philosophy (MIT Press, 2009), Politics of Touch: Sense, Movement, Sovereignty (Minnesota University Press, 2007) and Ephemeral Territories: Representing Nation, Home and Identity in Canada (Minnesota University Press, 2003).

Wednesday 12 November, 6 – 7pm
EG02 Lecture Theatre
Monika Behrens

The Thinking Image:
Contemporary still life painting and politics

I am researching how objects relate to each other, and the world, in the painted space. I am uncovering modalities of sixteenth century still life painting overlooked by art history by reconfiguring the aesthetic of four diverse modes of traditional still life painting, including; Pronk, Floral, Breakfast and Bodegon. These sub-genres will be composed in a way that allows the painted objects to comprehend each other by investigating relationships between objects - beyond the narrative and semiotic readings and beyond the general aesthetic values that are conventionally ascribed to still life painting.

I suggest that each of these sub-genres ‘do’ something that is exclusive to their mode. Using the practice of painting alongside contemporary philosophical thought, in particular Tristan Garcia’s Object Oriented Ontology.

In the presentation, I will present the conceptual framework of my research focusing on the subgenre of Pronk still life alongside the concept of ‘intensity’. Intensity seems a more accurate description of the aesthetical process of Pronk painting than beauty or truth. I will discuss the intensity of objects within this subgenre and how variations of intensities can be used in the process of creating paintings.

Keywords: Painting, Still Life, Object Oriented Ontology
Supervisors: Jill Bennett, Astrid Lorange (joint)
Panel 12: Friday 14 November, 10am – 11:30am, UNSW Galleries
**Articulating thresholds: Becoming sensitive to intensities**

My praxis engages concepts and processes of the threshold to locate aesthetic techniques for opening onto - and holding open - the space of affective potential given in an artistic encounter; that rhythmic zone of indeterminacy which mobilizes an intuitive, extradiscursive mode of thinking/being.

I discuss my recent praxis in terms of this approach. This conception of threshold is informed by an anthropological (VanGessep/Turner) situating of liminal spaces which dissolve normative schema of knowing/being toward a transformative becoming other, which is thought alongside concepts of duration, intuition and intensity (Bergson, Deleuze), and in relation to the praxes of artists like Eliasson and Turrell. A conception of threshold space emerges as that which interrupts major schema (perceptual, temporal, cognitive) as a means of becoming sensitive to intensive threshold potentials resonating within them.

Early experiments attempted to spatially compose durational deceleration in order to open onto intuitive, liminal space. Recent experiments employed sculpture, performance and text to invite an attention to the already-given threshold field of sunset, as posited in anthropological (Taussig) and literary (Proust) accounts.

I discuss my experiments as modes of thickening threshold intensities, using rhythm and attention to pause within and hold open spaces of affective potential.

**Keywords:** Thresholds, Duration, Attention

**Supervisors:** Anna Munster, Michele Barker (joint)

**Panel 6:** Thursday 13 November, 9:30am – 11am, UNSW Galleries

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**The Personal is (Geo)Political:**

**Representing Agency and the Fijian Military Body**

Fijian military bodies have become a valuable commodity in the economy of war. My research is concerned with the ways the Fijian military body has been mythologised and constructed through colonial and neo-colonial representations. I am interested in Fijian agency, and the ways Fijian masculinity is performed in vernacular contexts.

The work produced at the beginning of my candidature was necessarily exploring colonial photographic representations of Fijian masculinity and the persistence of warrior mythology. I find myself at a juncture in my practice-based research, where the work needs to expand beyond static representation to one of bodily presence, movement and performance.

Drawing on my recent research into the implicit body and intersubjective spaces my presentation will address the challenge of acknowledging the limits of my earlier still-image work to explore issues of embodiment, corporeality and the geographic movement of bodies transnationally - what Pugliese calls ‘geocorpographies’.

I will trace my shift to moving image through the context of the work ‘Ecology/Economy’ (2013) and refer to the implications of audience and cross-cultural encounters with the work.

**Keywords:** Performing Masculinity, Race, Embodiment

**Supervisors:** Phil George, Uros Cvor (joint)

**Panel 12:** Friday 14 November, 10am – 11:30am, UNSW Galleries
Katherine Britton

*Rhetorical Visions/Affective Images: Participatory Video and the Aesthetic Event*

This thesis addresses an acknowledged dearth of sustained critical writing in the field of participatory video. Taking as its focus a participatory video project conducted in Papua New Guinea, Komuniti Tok Piksa (KTP), it proposes an expanded participatory video practice.

KTP sought to address stigma and discrimination around HIV and AIDS in PNG’s Highlands provinces. Originally conceived as a straightforward participatory, arts-based research project, it soon became apparent that there was a need for the research team to revise our notions of participation, consent, and the significance of the screening events.

Using the KTP screening events as in-depth case studies, this thesis argues for the potential of critical discourses from aesthetics and visual culture to enrich the way the field is understood and practiced. By incorporating elements of these fields, discursive binaries that exist within current literature are addressed.

Currently, process tends to foreground ‘product’; practice is lauded at the expense of theory; and socio-political or interpersonal outcomes valued over the aesthetic. By analysing the unfolding of KTP through the aesthetic event, this text proposes an expanded critical framework with which to plan, execute and evaluate participatory video.

Keywords: Aesthetics, Participatory Video
Supervisors: Jill Bennett, Jennifer Biddle (co)
Panel 6: Thursday 13 November, 9:30am – 11am, UNSW Galleries

Scott Brown

*Experiencing Environments*

Interactive Experience Design can help us to examine how others might sensorially engage with the world, presenting an opportunity to give voice to those unable to express themselves. Drawing on some of the pioneering work of Cybernetics and employing more contemporary methods found in Critical and Reflective Design, I will explore how a responsive Multi-Sensory Environment (MSE) might engage in conversation with children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), as well as presenting an artefact of reflection for neurotypical populations on what is a unique and individual way of experiencing the world.

Through a reflective practice-based approach, I aim to use Design to bring a critical eye to the ways in which ASD is generally defined, to challenge the positivist nature of the medical diagnosis/treatment relationship. Looking to the Conversation Theory of Pask, Pangaro et al. as a model for recognising interaction between system; child; and parent, the agnostic and emergent nature of the MSE created for these case studies allows each individual to engage in their own sensory ‘conversation’. Reflection on this process will open the study to debate on the success of design assumptions, realignment of marginalised values and recognition of different types of knowledge.

Keywords: Experience, Design, Autism
Supervisors: Petra Gemeinboeck, John McGhee (joint)
Panel 11: Thursday 13 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, COFA Space

PhD
Anthea Caddy

**Spatial Performance and the Violoncello**

The use of extra-musical or extended techniques for violoncello has largely been developed within 20th century composition and contemporary music contexts. Conversely, the use of sound phenomena and spatiality within the temporal arts has predominantly inhabited the electronic and digital domains, often through installation and multi-channel immersive works.

Using extended techniques in violoncello performance to develop greater spatiality through the use of sound phenomena has been unexplored within an arts context. I intend to explore this relationship by developing a set of techniques that are fully integrated within the performance space. This will allow for the investigation of greater spatiality of room and instrument, effectively fusing the performance space and violoncello into a heightened and immersive listening experience.

Through my research, I will create a series of performance works interrogating this interrelationship between acoustic phenomena, room and instrument. I intend to mediate these three aspects through the use of electro-acoustic techniques, in combination with hyper-directional speaker systems as a way to extend the instrument's sonic capacities. These speakers will enable the precise control and articulation of sound phenomena in space, effectively bridging the acoustic divide between instrument and room.

Keywords: Violoncello, Spatiality, Sonification

Supervisors: Doug Kahn, Caleb Kelly (co)

Panel 2: Wednesday 12 November, 9:30am – 11am, COFA Space

Heather Contant

**Constellations of Energy in the Arts**

Cultural and artistic energies flourished amid advancements in radio and film technology during the Weimar Republic. In 1929, this activity became the focal point of the German Chamber Music Festival in Baden-Baden. Composers and performers along with engineers and administrators from Germany’s national radio network explored the possibilities afforded by these new media technologies in the arts. A temporary radio studio broadcast some of this new work to the public, which included pieces by Hans Eisler, Bertolt Brecht, Kurt Weill, and many other stars of the avant-garde. The festival’s constellation-like arrangement of technology, artistic ideas and practices allowed the vibrant energy of this cultural sphere to simultaneously coalesce and disseminate.

Literary and cultural critic Walter Benjamin peripherally orbited the Chamber Music Festival as an old friend and collaborator to many of its attendees. He frequently used the term “constellation” to describe the structure of his thoughts, which juxtaposed objects, people and events to illuminate their shared connections and importance.

The German Chamber Music Festival of 1929 and the theoretical framework of Walter Benjamin create the groundwork for a much larger project that gazes into the expanse of history in order to search for additional “constellations” of energy in the arts.

Keywords: Radio, Benjamin, Art

Supervisors: Doug Kahn, Caleb Kelly (co)

Panel 2: Wednesday 12 November, 9:30am – 11am, COFA Space
Grant Corbishley

**Stewardship: an Ethico-aesthetic approach to uncertain futures in the Valley of the Wild**

Listening between Thought in the Valley of the Wild is an ethico-aesthetic method I deployed in my street, beginning with my neighbour five years ago and spreading to encompass 500 houses - aimed at building participatory community and establishing stewardship systems.

In this presentation, I will outline how the construction of entangled participation occurred via circumstantial and deliberate methodological operations. The overall project research aim incorporates a rethinking of aesthetics, which includes techniques, ethics, project outcomes, immersion of the researcher within the specific ecological context and how these ignite generation and regeneration of community, place and processes of care. Art then is considered more in terms of a philosophy of the event explained in ecological terms. How generating eventual conditions will be discussed as part of aesthetic processes and how the eventual conditions in the Valley of the Wild have gained focus underpinned by a shared participatory politic.

I will outline a major outcome of these ‘events’ - the development of a website. This can itself be understood as a part of this ecology and participant in events. The website, When the Creek Talks Back, encapsulates ecologies of listening and speaking in its design for both human and nonhuman participants.

Keywords: Listening, Participatory, Event
Supervisor: Anna Munster
Panel 14: Friday 14 November, 2pm – 3:30pm, UNSW Galleries

Susan Danta

**Animating Postmemory: Childhood, Migration and Exile in Animated Autobiographies**

My PhD examines the representations of childhood, migration and exile in animated autobiographical films. Despite the growing number of animated projects that experiment with the representations of childhood, trauma and memories of migration, my PhD will be the first full-length examination of autobiographies of transnational childhoods in animated films. The theoretical framework of postmemory underpins my research into the role of animation in transmitting the experience of childhood trauma and familial memory to a collective consciousness. I will argue that the genre of animation is a neglected area of research, which contributes significantly to the critical discourse of postmemory autobiographies. The creative component of my PhD will investigate how a sensorial experience of memory and migration (in the context of postmemory han - postmemory that is specific to Korean culture) can be created through the medium of animation. This work will focus on the childhoods (real and imagined) of three generations of Koreans that survived colonization, civil war and exilic life.

Keywords: Postmemory, Animation, Childhood
Supervisors: Jill Bennett, Ross Harley, Stephanie Donald (co)
Panel 12: Friday 14 November, 10am – 11:30am, UNSW Galleries
The Artist is Patient: Curating Collaboration in Biomedical Art

How can curatorial practice bring into contemporary art programming/contexts and to visiting publics, the profound collaborations between artists and scientists in the creation of biomedical art? This practice-based curatorial research proposal investigates through case study the practice of three key artists working at intersections of the Museum, the Laboratory and the Clinic. The program of research will include a thesis and a public outcome.

Central to the enquiry is: theory on the body, including feminist theory; a review of literature engaging with the connections between art and medicine, particularly bio-art; and recent discourse around curating and collaborating. The program aims to interpret and transform artistic and scientific reciprocity in clinical, laboratory and museum contexts, where curatorial presence is essential and involved through all stages of collaborative research & development and presentation.

This research addresses the atmosphere of openness between individuals and institutions across art and medicine, and the dismantling of institutional hierarchies that allow artistic biomedical collaboration to take place. As a curatorial project, it questions the hidden nature of experiences surrounding disease, illness and bodily transformation and experimentation within our culture, and attempts to shift paradigms around corporeal representation, exhibition design and public knowledge.

Keywords: Curation, Biomedical Art
Supervisors: Lizzie Muller, Lindsay Kelley (co)
Panel 5: Wednesday 12 November, 2:30 – 4pm, COFA Space

Becoming dingo, becoming human: a view from the in-between

Our conception and treatment of the animal is intimately connected to our treatment and understanding of the human. As Cary Wolfe suggests, while we maintain humanist discourses exemplified by anthropomorphism and “binary machines” such as human/animal, violence against the social other, of whatever species, will be morally palatable.

My project is to degrade the human/animal construct by revealing the dingo as a becoming-animal. Symbolically, dingo rests uncomfortably between human constructed opposites: pest or apex predator, native or introduced, cunning or cuddly, dingo or dog. In my thesis, I articulate what occupies this space as super-dingo-dog-hybrid-wilds.

In this presentation, I will propose that the dingo is not just an animal that one can look to become, but a becoming-animal. I will argue that by understanding the character of the super-dingo-dog-hybrid-wild, there is a chance to become dingo, where this becoming intrinsically gnaws at the fabric of the human/animal distinction.

I will trace the aesthetic, environmental, cultural and political position of the dingo and attempt to answer the question: How can a dingo-centric visual arts practice be used to become-animal with a becoming-animal, especially where the super-dingo-dog-hybrid-wild is not only a Frankenstein, but a physically tangible Chimera?

Keywords: Dingo, Becoming-Animal
Supervisors: Uros Cvoro, Michaelis Michael, Michele Barker
Panel 14: Friday 14 November, 2pm – 3:30pm, UNSW Galleries
Hayden Fowler

Nature and the Anthropocene: Romanticism, Nostalgia, Mourning and the Utopian Imagination in Anthropocenic Art Practice

This studio-based thesis proposes that responses to the current multifaceted environmental crisis, founded in rationalist ideology and the capitalist-industrial complex are prompting responses resonant of Romanticism. The crisis enacted by domination over the natural world, nature as economic resource. The thesis argues this crisis is perpetuated by an absence of language to envision realistic and viable futures, or articulate the fundamental transformations in this relationship. With the emerging delineation of an Anthropocene Era - its environmental destruction, mass extinctions and climate change - an emotional and psychological crisis of human loss, alienation and grief is emerging in response to this human-nature separation. The thesis draws together a genealogy of four structures of discourse - Romanticism, Utopianism, Nostalgia and Mourning, which have evolved as alternatives to the prevailing paradigm. This amalgamation is identified as a critical-poetic Anthropocenic discourse, reflecting growing desire for a remediated human-nature future. It demonstrably facilitates critical and reflective examinations of human-nature engagement; mourning for the loss of nature; a breakdown of ideological human-nature dualisms; re-establishment of non-hierarchical human-nature intimacies; the imagining of possible futures. This discourse is identified, defined and analysed as an emerging field in contemporary art practice, including artwork produced as part of this PhD.

Keywords: Nature, Anthropocene, Contemporary Art
Supervisors: Diane Losche, Bonita Ely (joint)
Panel 14: Friday 14 November, 2pm – 3:30pm, UNSW Galleries

Thomas Kearney

Hedged In; Cultivating mythology and identity through the forms and visual vernacular of suburban gardens and visionary environments

The garden has long been an arena through which social and cultural perspectives are projected. Sometimes creative urges lead people to craft significantly more unusual expressions around their home that push the boundaries of commonly conceived impressions of ‘good taste’.

At the hands of an ‘obsessive’ creator, monumental structures and forms may engulf their living space, taking on a life of their own, the result may be referred to as a ‘visionary environment’. Driven by “....idiosyncratic genius, tenacious faith, and unalienated labour”(Beardsley), these constructed anomalies merge architecture, sculpture and landscape as a means to achieving their goals.

I am creating my own garden environment primarily through sculptural forms using vernacular materials and a vernacular iconography drawn from field research and documentation of Australian suburban gardens and mythology, with an emphasis on outsider environments.

The work is underpinned by research into art historical and architectural discussions of contemporary outsider and visionary environments here and abroad, considering the contextual contrast from within the artistic establishment.

By examining symbolic forms, implicit codes, and the historical framework that defines garden design, and personal habitat shaping, a complex visual language emerges through which crafted meaning, both personal and cultural, may be realised.

Keywords: Outsider, Garden, Vernacular
Supervisors: Gabrielle Finnane, Peter Sharp (co)
Panel 3: Wednesday 12 November, 12pm – 1:30pm, COFA Space
Deborah Lawler-Dormer

Sensing Sites and States

Sensing Sites and States is a creative practice research led inquiry exploring cognition and perception in New Media Art and Mixed Reality installation. I am interested in engaging with the materiality in hybrid physical and digital practices in which engagement can lead to acts of co-constitution between the corporeal and non-corporeal. I am particularly interested in speculative forms of inquiry where, through practice, a range of perspectives come into ‘interference’ and construct an ‘experiment with the breach’ similar to the approach by Manning and Massumi outlined in Thought in the Act. However, in opposition to Manning and Massumi’s approach, I am deliberately not excluding the neurocomputational from the inquiry. In keeping with this position, I have formed a research connection to the Laboratory for Animate Technologies, School of Bioengineering at the University of Auckland. I will be re-skinning, re-utilizing and re-presenting Professor Mark Sagar’s Baby X autonomous animation neurocomputational programme, within a series of mixed reality installations. Sensing Sites and States is a transdisciplinary research inquiry designed to place, in some senses, oppositional practices together to deepen comprehension of complex issues within a contemporary art framework. This doctoral programme is a joint creative practice PhD with NICAI, University of Auckland.

Keywords: Embodied Cognition, Mixed Reality, New Media Art Installation
Supervisors: Michele Barker (joint PhD program with NICAI, University of Auckland)
Panel 5: Wednesday 12 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, COFA Space

Chelsea Lehmann

The painted surface as live field of data

In her book ‘Surface: Matters of Aesthetics, Materiality, and Media’ (2014), Giuliana Bruno states, “The visual text is fundamentally textural … It is made out of layers and tissues. It contains strata, sediments, and deposits … a visual text can even wear its own history, inscribed as an imprint onto its textural surface.” Consistent with this idea, my research proposes that the layers of a painting hold considerable aesthetic and conceptual potential in their capacity to reveal the processual and material nature of easel-based paintings. This practice-led project inquires into the materiality of surfaces by examining the relationship between two associated fields: painting and the science of painting conservation. Primarily, I am using scientific imaging techniques such as x-ray and infrared analysis to reveal ‘pentimenti’ and material characteristics inaccessible to the naked eye. Painting is commonly seen as a ‘creative process’ and the field of conservation is understood to ‘observe and protect’ - my research method reverses this conventional order by deploying scientific imaging techniques from conservation as ‘creative process’ and painting as observational and responsive. Using this approach, I aim to reveal the painted surface as a ‘live field of data’, a kind of painting backwards to paint forwards.

Keywords: Painting, Conservation, Surface
Supervisors: Astrid Lorange, Anna Munster (co)
Panel 3: Wednesday 12 November, 12pm – 1:30pm, COFA Space
Simone Mandl

In the hinterland of method: assemblage and the productive power of things

This research examines whether productive archival practices can transcend the static storage of the trace to cumulate in a generative translation and transformation of it. It seeks to un-anchor passive documentation by experimenting with hybrid digital and spatial publishing platforms spanning photography, curation, design and production to develop methods of “articulating a sense of the world as an unformed but generative flux of forces and relations” (Law, 2004). The presentation focuses on the second iteration of Assemblage, an active catalogue project made in collaboration with Kate Campbell, Esther Chung and Monica Monin which generated a productive record of the Underbelly Arts Lab 2013. The project activated participating artists’ discarded material within a recursive framework to generate new project outcomes culminating in a series of works by twelve new artists exhibited in August this year. In initiating an emergent system within a participatory-lab based methodology, Assemblage argues that by actively engaging the surfeit material of a project’s methods we are able to generate a productive ground for capturing the continuing narratives spawned by an events occurrence, a recursive self-assembling of the material traces discarded by the material immaterial and human agencies at play within a projects development.

Keywords: Material Exchange, Assemblage, Productive Archive
Supervisors: Petra Gemeinboeck, Michele Barker (co)
Panel 8: Thursday 13 November, 12pm – 1:30pm, UNSW Galleries

John H. Martin

Graphic Design and Colour Reproduction in Australia

In a mere century mass communication has evolved from hand-rendered street posters into the internet. Histories of graphic design focus on typography, illustration, and photography. Despite technology being integral to this profession its relationship with it is a neglected area of study. An early printers’ catch cry was “colour sells”, commensurate with this objective to sell to as many consumers as possible was a need for efficiency in production. My research proposes that colour reproduction defined the graphic design profession and contributes a new perspective to the scant histories of the graphic design in Australia. To achieve this, actor-network theory will be employed in the manner of Bruno Latour who examined the science profession’s networks of humans and non-humans instead of its outcomes. The tyranny of distance for leaders in the graphic arts and design was not a stumbling block for Australians, who maintained strong international relationships and transported technologies and ideas to Australia. Research methods revealing these networks include interviews with designers, photographers, teachers, printers and journalists and archival data from professional and trade journals, and personal diaries. Research and analysis of collected data suggest distance was a motivating force for local innovation and original thought.

Keywords: Graphic Design, Colour Reproduction, Communication
Supervisors: Wendy Parker, Leong Chan (joint)
Panel 4: Wednesday 12 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, UNSW Galleries
Emily Morandini

Modulating Between the Earth and the Sky

Electronics are, and are of environmental systems. Every electronic device consists of minerals such as copper, lead, silicon, mica, neodymium, lithium, and so forth, unearthed and reconfigured into their own system of individual components. Above the soil and in circuit, these components are responsive to each other. They modulate with pulsing current, seeking balance between the polarized forces of the power signal, and the ground. When a device is connected to the mains supply, the power originates from one of many semi-local harvestable energy sources, while the ground literally consists of a metal electrode buried deep in the earth - that is, back to the environment of minerals.

While most modern electronic devices obscure nearly all discernible connections to their source, they are always intertwined at multiple levels with the energies and materials of the environment. It is these relationships that my thesis and artworks seek to explore.

I will present work that examines the forces of ‘power’ and ‘ground’, ‘sky’ and ‘earth’, developing a circuit analysis that is both technical and poetic. This work probes the juncture of earthly and atmospheric influences, where distinctions between technology and the environment unravel.

Keywords: Electronics, Environment, Earth
Supervisors: Doug Kahn, Ross Harley (co)
Panel 8: Thursday 13 November, 12pm – 1:30pm, UNSW Galleries

Kusum Normoyle

Voice Material (tentative)
Not the Voice: Henri Chopin, tape, microphones and materials.

Pioneer of the poesie sonore (sound poem), the poet, musician and publisher, Henri Chopin is one of the first to focus on the radical voice mediated by audio-phonic technology. His recording practice is an early example of employing audio technology with the voice utilising the over-modulation of an audio signal as a positive strategy, one that in this case, produced what he coined the “micro-particulars” of the voice. His employment of the microphone as though it were a microscope to record these otherwise inaudible sounds, typifies a series of methods that he engaged with across mediums to unhinge the voice from its representative function, toward a material one.

In this presentation I will discuss Chopin’s work with the microphone, tape recorder, typography, and gesture as being productive ultimately of a materiality in sound and art practice that moves beyond matters of ‘the voice’, per se. This assertion will serve as the foundation for further explorations of mediatised and technologised radical voice practice as effecting potential material outcomes for a phenomena assumed predominantly immaterial.

Keywords: Voice, Feedback, Microphone
Supervisors: Doug Kahn, Anna Munster (co)
Panel 8: Thursday 13 November, 12pm – 1:30pm, UNSW Galleries

PhD
Patrick Quick

The 1950s Writings of Asger Jorn

This presentation is drawn from the first chapter of my thesis and it addresses Asger Jorn’s book “Luck and Chance”. The text occupies a peculiar place in Jorn’s development as both artist and theorist. Written during a bout of severe illness, it was first published in 1952 following the disbandment of COBRA. Over a decade later, and not long after he had withdrawn from the Situationist International, Jorn was to make a number of small revisions and provide a new foreword to the text, republishing it in 1963 as the third report of the Scandinavian Institute of Comparative Vandalism. The idea of extreme aesthetics that it formulates may be read as a kind of twice-effective antidote to a particular alienation: the artistic aesthete is the prophet, the seer who lacks the strength because he lacks the people. By first presenting an account of extreme aesthetics in terms of a despairing aesthetics, I will argue that the primary dilemma in the text consists in the nexus of nihilism and materialism. Through this, the peculiarity of Jorn’s concern for the social role of the artist will be made apparent.

Keywords: Aesthetics, Nihilism, Materialism
Supervisors: Sue Best, Toni Ross (co)
Panel 3: Wednesday 12 November, 12pm – 1:30pm, COFA Space

Thomas Retter

Subversion and Catharsis: Daojia in Contemporary Chinese Art

Philosophical concepts drawn from daojia (“philosophical Daoism”, as distinct from daojiao or “religious Daoism”) have enjoyed resurgence in experimental artistic practice in China in recent years. Daojia is an indigenous Chinese philosophy borne out of epistemological dissatisfaction with the capacity for language to yield truth. This thesis centres its analysis on a generation of experimental artists who came to the fore in late 1980’s and shared this dissatisfaction. These artists were old enough to have witnessed first-hand the destructive expressions of political radicalism during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). This thesis posits that these artists were implicitly united by a common desire to offer some relief to the vexation brought about by what Fredric Jameson dubs the “prison house of language” and that to achieve this, and for this reason, they worked to undermine the symbolic integrity and political authority of the written word.

Keywords: Daoism, Experimental Art
Supervisors: David McNeil, Jill Bennett (co)
Panel 13: Friday 14 November, 10am – 11:30am, COFA Space
The ‘Problematisation’ of Aboriginality and the mapping of identities, through exploring visual representations in a research based practice

There are many questions at the forefront of my current practice based research, where I examine and explore identity politics and the historical framing of the blak body. I am developing new cultural perimeters that have framed my creative work for over two and a half decades. How did I find myself positioned in a field of ethnographic exploration of Indigeneity? How is the positioning of visibility vs. invisibility located in my creative practice, how can I develop new ‘ways of seeing’? How has the ethnographic colonial construct of ‘Aboriginality’, become my identity; the ‘Aboriginal’ artist? How do I challenge current ideologies that construct cultural frameworks, which map my identity, gender and sexuality? The liminal space between the visible/invisible; offer new possibilities to explore the historical positioning of ‘identity’, Indigeneity, gender and sexuality. Through developing a new contemporary lens within experimental technologies in the arts, I have (if by necessity, a small and cramped space) of freedom and flexibility to create a space where I can explore the Intersections of an Australia colonial history and the (Indigenous Australian) blak body; as I deconstruct the ethnographic paradigms to create a new story, my story.

Keywords: Identities, Ethnographic, Art And Technology
Supervisors: Jennifer Biddle, Mari Velonaki (joint)
Panel 4: Wednesday 12 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, UNSW Galleries

Diana Smith

Imagining Other Histories: Performance Art and the Politics of the Archive

Recent debates in contemporary art have underlined the political importance of creative re-workings of the past, especially for those marginalised within canonical histories. This thesis examines the work of artists such as Mel Brimfield, Tania Bruguera and Andrea Fraser, who employ performative tactics of re-imagining and re-inventing past events and artworks. These artists use the archive as a means to create alternative epistemologies to those legitimised by institutions. Examining artistic re-imaginings of historical narratives draws our attention to the stories that are left out, forgotten and ignored. Research in this area has the capacity to highlight the power structures of the archive and the formation of art historical discourses.

In this presentation, I will focus on British artist Mel Brimfield who critiques the dominant histories of live art in her fictional performances and spoof documentary ‘This is Performance Art’. Brimfield takes us beyond the specialist histories of the genre and makes connections between radically different traditions, including comedy, burlesque and vaudeville. By incorporating narratives of performance cultures beyond the confines of elite art histories, Brimfield highlights the value judgements that shape the construction of such narratives. In doing so, she provides a framework for an alternative methodology.

Keywords: Performance, Histories, Archives
Supervisors: Sue Best, John Gillies (co)
Panel 4: Wednesday 12 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, UNSW Galleries
Rodney Swan

Resistance and resurgence; the cultural and political dynamic of the livre d’artiste and the Nazi-occupation of France

Far from taking its rightful place as a strategic instrument of cultural resistance during the Nazi Occupation of France in World War Two, the role played by the French illustrated book has gone unnoticed. Yet the illustrated book made a significant contribution to the cultural and political battle that raged throughout occupied France. Harnessing their creativity, a select network of artists and writers embedded hidden codes and symbols in their images and writings to protest the atrocities inflicted by the Nazis and the Vichy French Government and to give the French people hope for the survival of their culture. At times deploying a medieval aesthetic, itself a symbol of cultural resistance, these artists camouflaged their images within the texts they purported to illustrate. Cohabiting the same book space the images operated independent of the text. Consequently, the illustrated book mutated to new forms. These artists, later joined by the cultural exiles returning to France after the Occupation, fostered a resurgence of the illustrated book that lasted for many years. This presentation will focus on how artists Picasso, Fautrier and Matisse disguised images of the broken body and decapitated head in their illustrated books as a symbol of protest.

Keywords: Livre D’artiste, Resistance, Resurgence
Supervisors: Fay Brauer, Michael Kempson (co)
Panel 13: Friday 14 November, 10am – 11:30am, COFA Space

Nathan Thompson

Recalled to Life: Sonic Ecologies in Experimental Music

From the bird signatures of Olivier Messiaen to the composite desert ecologies of Chris Watson, music draws from the natural world. This fascination with the sounds of nature has tended to obscure the complex ecologies that compose the world. In the 1950s, cybernetic theorists began to highlight dynamic flows of matter and information. They showed how processes associated with natural systems could be modelled using simple electronic components. Ross Ashby’s homeostat (1948) modelled biological processes, W. Grey Walter’s Machina speculatrix (1948/49) demonstrated emergent behaviour, and Gordon Pask’s Musicolour (1948/49) facilitated adaptive behaviour. These object-based approaches enacted compositional processes that translate across disciplines. In musical contexts these cybernetic objects can provide models for new compositional strategies. Rather than mimicking nature directly, compositional strategies that redeploy cybernetic concepts can generate interacting ecologies of materials, people and environment. This paper identifies processes within the devices of Ashby, Walter and Pask whose influence can be seen in the more recent works of David Tudor and Alvin Lucier. It seeks to represent overlooked connections between artworks that self compose directly from their materials and environment.

Keywords: Experimental Music, Cybernetics, Ecology
Supervisors: Caleb Kelly, Anna Munster (co)
Panel 6: Thursday 13 November, 9:30am – 11am, UNSW Galleries
Lachlan Tsang

Strange Loops: Distributed Identity on Social Media

Lala-Chan: Free Associative Personality Projection (LCFAPP) is a performance led research project that investigates collaborative identity on the internet through a series of performances conducted on social media platforms. Using queer/performance theory as a methodological framework, my research expresses ways in which social media users and platform providers enforce the concept of personal identity as a unitary, stable and exclusive property of individual users. At the same time the research embraces social media platforms as sites of personal expression through fluid and playful resignification and recontextualisation. My research methodology embodies these ostensibly contradicting dynamics in a performance that draws from autobiographical elements, social theory and the cultural practices of internet sub-communities. LCFAPP explores the performative and collaborative processes that cultivate online identities, and how these processes can be exploited to generate new understandings of self-identity both in online and offline society.

This presentation will focus on collaborative myth-making in internet communities. Using several examples of self-reflexively queer online practices, I outline how online identities emerge and are sustained through co-operative and distributed world building. Finally I explain how my methodology incorporates a commentary on the ‘common lore’ that emerges from these techno-social rituals.

Keywords: Social Media, Identity, Performance
Supervisors: Petra Gemeinboeck, Astrid Lorange (joint)
Panel 11: Thursday 13 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, COFA Space

Pia van Gelder

Microcurrents: Achieving Altered States of Consciousness Through the Direct Application of Microcurrent To or From the Brain

Electroencephalography (EEG) measures tiny oscillations of electronic frequencies occurring in the brain, providing a reading to interpret mental states, feedback to control ones own mind using visual and sonic interpretations. Hans Berger developed EEG over 40 years in considerable secrecy; one of his private motivations was to reveal the scientific nature of telepathy¹. The practice of EEG has become an important method in the field of neuroscience and psychology and in recent years, more accessible digital EEG technologies have become available, providing an opportunity for independent research and experimentation. This presentation will discuss some distinct parallels that are forming between these instances of independent practice-based research including a group of consciousness hackers who build new tools for self exploration and an art project called Psychic Synth which explores DIY biofeedback and historical understandings of telepathy². I will discuss how these examples represent my broader body of research into esoteric electronic instrumentation in the arts, and creative, social and spiritual contributions along with some possibilities for integrated interdisciplinary approaches.


Keywords: Telepathy, Electroencephalography, Oscillation
Supervisors: Doug Kahn, Petra Gemeinboeck (co)
Panel 2: Wednesday 12 November, 9:30am – 11am, COFA Space

PhD
Cecilia White

**Towards renai(r)ssance:**

*Anxiety, emptiness and the remembering of breath*

This research project is an interpretation of Irigaray’s call for renaissance and the remembering of air in our becoming. The studio-based Breathing Space Projects combine performance, text and installation to engage the research question: In an era of increasing human anxiety and breathing related illnesses, can a focus on performative breath affect cathartic mindfulness and wonderment as counter points to the fragmented mind/body? This thesis examines the history and impact of modern anxiety and breathing related illnesses, noting recent popularity of Vedic and Buddhist practices, to build on Irigaray’s call to renegotiate a sense of autonomous self, other and the space in-between through a reconsidered engagement with modern Western living and Eastern breathing practices. Analysing self and emptiness through Western attention to definition, control and structure compels a broadening of Irigaray’s gender focus, arguing for more ‘lines of flight’ towards personal and, potentially, social ‘renai(r)ssance’: a dynamic, rhizomic space which remembers breath. In doing so, a new relationship between anxiety and wonder evolves. Supported by, and extending Irigaray’s call, this research aims to demonstrate the unique role of interdisciplinary art to release our fundamental, often forgotten life force to paradoxically control and transform our sense of self, other and the in(de)finite.

Keywords: Irigaray, Performative Breath, Anxiety
Supervisors: Lindsay Kelley, Fay Brauer (joint)
Panel 13: Friday 14 November, 10am – 11:30am, COFA Space

Vincent Wozniak-O’Connor

**Listening to Plants:**

*Biosynthesis and bioacoustics in Sound-installation*

Do plants make sound? Recently, plants have been found to produce sound in the form of acoustic emissions in the range from 10-240 Hz, which falls within part of the human hearing range. Attempts at analysing the relationships between sound, species and habitat, and crucially, human intervention have been made through previous soundscape projects and acoustic ecology. However, understandings around our desire to hear plants audify is a significant research gap, with connections to phytocentrism, sonification and field recording literature that shares a common concern with sound recording and ecological representation.

Listening to Plants examines how artists and researchers work at interrogating audio-spatial relationships with handmade electronic music and site-based sound works. This research project focuses on artists working in audification, plant based synthesis and sonification, following proprietary techniques rather than broader practices of field recording. Examining both emergent and established approaches to site-based sound, artists like Emptyset, Leslie Garcia, Christina Kubisch and Luke Jerram feature as complications to the development of sonic approaches. These artists demonstrate discrete practices for making generative sound and installations based on manipulating the connection between sound and site.

Keywords: Plant-acoustics, Biosynthesis, Sound
Supervisors: Caleb Kelly, Doug Kahn (co)
Panel 5: Wednesday 12 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, COFA Space
Lurking at the Threshold

“The Future is but the obsolete in reverse.” (Nabakov, V. ‘Lance’, 1952) The continuous present is a mash up of neo-feudal economics and nostalgia for a future that more and more resembles the past. I use my body as a tabula rasa onto which I project a sequence of folkloric entities each linked to the future though the past. My research and practice are informed by an engagement with the gothic and the uncanny both of which my work frames as ways of providing a cultural context for normalising the fantastic.

As part of Lurking at the Threshold I’ve used video and photography to create vignettes: images that are part composited panorama and part cosplay in which the artist is an evacuated body that hosts a cosmology of animist creatures and folkloric figures whose unnatural habitats have been erased. Vignettes in which nature passes for culture and culture passes for nature. Combine images that are concurrently pre and post industrial in which anthropomorphic/shamanistic figures wander a speculative wilderness before and after nature.

This presentation will explore the premise that the future is evermore overshadowed by its past, to return to an apparent yearning for nature, the material and gothic.

Keywords: The Uncanny, The Gothic, The Fantastic
Supervisors: Gary Carsley, Martin Sims (co)
Panel 9: Thursday 13 November, 12pm – 1:30pm, COFA Space
Alexandra Byrne (MFA)

21st Century Flintstones

Like many futuristic projections of human society, technology is venerated as the quintessential driving force of our continued prosperity, even salvation. This research examines how individuals respond to climate change [social, political and environmental], when exposed to a ‘scales of magnitude’ experience. Impacts from the local to the global are made clear.

21st Century Flintstones, takes from its comic namesake “the modern stone-age family” and observes cultural inversions of our present day in “the stone-age modern family”: which arguably, is technologically advantaged yet psychologically subjugated to its every consequence. The enquiry therefore asks:
- How do we perceive and react to climate science? How does the enigma of daily life sit with this?
- Can we look back from a future without fossil fuel dependence? What would that be like or tell us? How and why might great attitudinal changes have occurred?
- Could an eco-re/evolution result in desirable perceptual and behavioural shifts in human activity? And what role can artists and their work play in this?

Keywords: Energy e/Environment, Human Behaviour, Art
Supervisors: Ian Howard, Martin Sims (co)
Panel 1: Wednesday 12 November, 9:30am – 11am, UNSW Galleries

Daniel Chant (MFA)

Between Depth and Surface

There are no facts, only multiple interpretations. We cannot any longer have an objective knowledge of reality. There is no reality outside of the mind. How can one find meaning in a world where the virtual is replacing the ‘real’? Where surfaces are more important then depth. It is not about absence of meaning as such but about its uncontrollable proliferation.

The work I have produced for my Masters of Fine Art emphasises this continuous oscillation between order and chaos, presence and absence, meaning and insignificance. I use grids and screens to form a visual barrier blocking and concealing what lies behind, preventing disclosure of information whilst simultaneously offering partial glimpses. They initiate a play of revealing and concealing, where each successive layer negates the previous one and at the same time calls attention to it.

It is about a desire for signification and meaning yet framed by the constant presence of doubt.

Keywords: Liminality, Uncertainty, Concealment
Supervisors: Michael Kempson, Peter Sharp (co)
Panel 15: Friday 14 November, 2pm – 3:30pm, COFA Space
Belinda Dunstan (MFA)

A Framework for the Implementation of Aesthetics in the Design of Robot Morphology

Situated within Creative Robotics, my research looks to investigate the determinants of human willingness to engage with a social robot. Through an initial survey of robots developed by non-traditional roboticists, and by designing a cognitive model based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, I have surmised that these determinants are primarily governed by culture and visual aesthetics. My work aims to contribute to the knowledge on morphology not only within classical robotics research, but to also expand the cross-disciplinary application of robotics by creative practitioners. In addition, as a practice-based researcher, my artworks aim to contribute to the contemporary cultural dialogue surrounding robotics and their integration with humans, as seen with the increasing development of social and cultural robots.

My presentation will demonstrate a visual example of the incongruence I have identified between the appearance of some ‘social’ robots, and the application and motivation cited by the roboticist. In addressing this gap, I will establish the need for a comprehensive study into the implications and importance of aesthetic consideration in the design of social and collaborative robots.

Keywords: HRI, Creative Robotics, Morphology
Supervisors: Jeffrey Koh, Petra Gemeinboeck (co)
Panel 11: Thursday 13 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, COFA Space

Emma Maye Gibson (MFA)

Inventing Betty Grumble: Sacred Satirist Spectacle and The Feminist Clown

My research manifests through two bodies; the body of Emma Maye and the body of Betty Grumble. Betty Grumble was created from a place of outrage and feminist strategy, she is an avatar that has morphed and deepened since her birth in early 2011. My research aims to locate her ethos within feminist performance histories and problems, tracking her exploration and experimentation. She hopes to seep out of the boundaries of a hetero-normative matrix by displaying her ‘other’ body through a grotesque and abject burlesquing of the status quo and the expectations and assumptions it demands of the woman body. Here I aim to utilize the perceived seriousness of women’s stories and bodies presented through the explosive and obscene spectacle of Betty Grumble. By using Betty Grumble as a transmitter of facts, stories and experiences she becomes a mirror monster and ‘feminist clown’ her main ingredient being ridicule. This ridicule is executed through a radical public disclosure of personal humiliation, pain and injustice performed within the deliberate drag, camp and excessive forms of burlesque/vaudevillian/cabaret short works.

“There is a thin line that separates laughter and pain, comedy and tragedy, humor and hurt.” Erma Bombeck

Keywords: Feminism, Performance, Satire
Supervisors: Gary Carsley, Emma Price
Panel 10: Thursday 13 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, UNSW Galleries
Lyndal Hansby (MFA)

*Imbalanced Bodies: The Representation of Physical and Psychological Pain in Art*

Is it possible to represent physical and psychological pain in relation to illness (chronic or terminal) through Art? This research examines how the experience of pain can often be at odds with the verbal or textual languages we have at our disposal to communicate. The study also explores the possibility that pain escapes language. Given the internal nature of physical pain, strategies for visualising the invisible becomes apparent when working as an Artist.

This exploration interrogates further themes such as the Body Under Stress, which is defined here by the author as: the injured, stressed and chronically, terminally or non-terminally ill body. This investigation is also interested in discussing the theme of imbalanced bodies, which are defined as bodies out of balance physically, psychologically and emotionally.

In this presentation, I will talk through the video piece titled Floored, focusing on the theme of Imbalanced Bodies and the methodology that was engaged to create the Video and Photographic elements of my practice. I will highlight how the Video research in Floored contains an invisible, internal sensory imbalance (of pain and tension) in addition to an externally visible bodily imbalance.

Keywords: Pain, Body, Representation  
Supervisors: Debra Phillips, John Gillies (co)  
Panel 15: Friday 14 November, 2pm – 3:30pm, COFA Space

Jennie Holtsbaum (MFA)

*Traces of Wilderness*

When I viewed art in galleries worldwide I would think, I could do that, but I recognised that whatever I made would remain craft and not art or, more specifically, fine/high art. What is that quintessential property that transforms ‘craft’ into ‘fine art’?

In order to answer this question, I will explore the use of Australian nature as inspiration for processes of interior decoration in domestic spaces and resonant strategies for gallery-based installation. I will investigate three interrelated themes: the way that aspects of ‘home craft’ can become ‘fine art’; the relationship of early Western settlers in Australia with the ‘wilderness’ of their new landscape; and, the nexus between Australian nature and the Australian home.

I have captured these themes in calling this thesis Traces of Wilderness. First, my studio practice is based on a tracing technique and there is a metaphorical context in the word ‘tracing’ in the sense of uncovering the past. Secondly, to reflect the early colonial perception of the Australian environment as a ‘wilderness.’ I will demonstrate my conceptual framework by a presentation and discussion of my studio practice that I am preparing for exhibition in the Balmain Watch House in April 2015.

Keywords: Craft/Art, Home, Décor  
Supervisor: Peter Sharp, Gary Carsley (co)  
Panel 9: Thursday 13 November, 12pm – 1:30pm, COFA Space
**Carly Hush (MDes)**

*A New Visual Music: Employing Visual Communication Theory in the representation of Western Classical Music*

Audience numbers for performances of Western classical music in Australia are falling rapidly. This study proposes that the drop in audience numbers can be attributed to performance presentations failing to engage audiences who do not have a formal education in Western classical music. The inaccessible nature of these performances can be attributed to the narrow presentation formats which they employ, and the lack of visual stimulus for listening audiences. This study proposes a new performance presentation format, inclusive of a visual stimulus that is created for the benefit of the listening audience untrained in music analysis. Case studies on the Visual Music experiments of Oskar Fischinger (1900 - 1966) and the animated musical scores of Stephen Malinowski and his project the Music Animation Machine (1974 - continuing) contextualize my practice-based research in the visual presentation of Western classical music. Visual communication theory in design discourse provides the framework for my analysis of these case studies and assists in my development of a visual language for auditory information. The research shapes a series of studio experiments in visual stimuli to accompany classical music performances. The research thus offers a new visual language for the benefit of the listener in classical music performance scenarios.

**Keywords:** Visual Communication, Music Performance, Experimental Design  
**Supervisors:** Katherine Moline, Wendy Parker (co)  
**Panel 1:** Wednesday 12 November, 9:30am – 11am, UNSW Galleries

**Trent Jansen (MPhil)**

*Australian Mythology*

In recent history, influential groups of Italian, American, Scandinavian and Dutch designers have built innovative national furniture and object design movements, gaining global recognition for their contributions to the international design community. Conversely, Australian object designers have not found a cohesive vision for the creation of contemporary Australian artefacts, and have not experienced the same critical acclaim. What influences shape the creation of Australian artefacts, and how can contemporary Australian designers control these characteristics in the design of a cohesive collection of new Australian objects?

This research uses Jules D Prown’s material culture theory to survey a selection of pre and post-colonial Australian objects, made by Indigenous and non-indigenous Australians, to understand what the material culture of preceding Australian communities communicates about the values of those societies. This research also seeks to understand the way that Australian values are documented in the myths that proliferate the Indigenous and non-indigenous Australian verbal and written record.

Finally, a series of furniture objects will be designed to test the findings of this study. The resulting furniture collection will endeavour to embody contemporary Australian values in a collection of new Australian material culture.

**Keywords:** Australian, Mythology, Culture  
**Supervisors:** Vaughan Rees, Wendy Parker (co)  
**Panel 1:** Wednesday 12 November, 9:30am – 11am, UNSW Galleries

*Masters by Research*
Karen Kriss (MPhil)

Abject data: embodying artefacts using motion capture and lenticular imagery

The rapid and ongoing developments in the field of computer-generated imagery (CGI) have reached a point where the synthetic image strives to become indistinguishable from the real. This desire for realism has seen CGI thrive in mainstream popular culture: from Hollywood cinema through to advertising, often resulting in large Visual Effects (VFX) and CGI animation companies leading the way in terms of research and development. The potential for broad experimentation is erased as a result of investment in realistic imaging. What becomes apparent is the emergence of an aesthetic realism manifested as much by what is absent as what is seen, that is, the eradication of error.

My research explores how digital artefacts can be considered a meaningful part of a process of experimentation in CGI animation. What might be gained by accepting the place of ‘error’ in the synthetic image rather than eradicating it? By exploring these forms and processes I want to see if I can transform the existing commercial use of these technologies to allow for the exploration of an aesthetic that is prepared to accept that any trace of the CGI artist may be tantamount to the abject.

Keywords: Abject, Error, Motion Capture
Supervisors: Michele Barker, Paul Thomas (co)
Panel 15: Friday 14 November, 2pm – 3:30pm, COFA Space

Justin Shoulder (MFA)

Queer Ecosystems - Ecologies of Resistance

A queer ecosystem is a community of living organisms (fantastic creatures, witches, gaybies and pansies) in conjunction with the nonliving components of their environment (things like house music, MDMA and haute-couture), interacting as a system. These biotic and abiotic components are regarded as linked together through nutrient cycles and energy flows. Performance, spectacle, mythology and grease paint are other essential abiotic components of a queer ecosystem.

My research project schematizes the fauna and flora of my native queer ecosystem within a queer bestiary. Drawing from the form of the medieval bestiary I elaborate on the unnatural history, attributes and moral lessons of figures in this universe accompanied by illustrations and photographic reference.

The work positions queer as a conscious political and creative identity contingent on frameworks of resistance and co-option that resource contra-normative narratives disruptive to the patriarchal authority of capitalist systems.

In this presentation I will elaborate on the fantastic creatures from my native queer ecology. I will map the local and international historical continuum these beings are born from and describe my methodology of performance, craft narrative and mythmaking within the context of community nightclub and theatre events.

Keywords: Bestiary, Queer Ecosystem, FEManifesto
Supervisors: Gary Carsley, Nicole Ellis
Panel 10: Thursday 13 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, UNSW Galleries
Jeremy Smith (MFA)

Mapping The Self

My thesis research has been primarily a search for mapping the ‘self’, what it is, what is means. The research has uncovered a paradox namely: that the self finds and defines through the ‘other’ in a reflective and interpersonal way. This has lead me to explore empathy in art, an important aspect of the art is found in its ability to produce empathy, to allow us to inhabit the world of another.

In a continuation of the search for the ‘self’ my research involves using empathetic imagination to create psycho-geographic portraits of ‘others’, using drawing, narrative and mapping conventions as methodology. My work uses Freud Carl Jung’s ‘collective subconscious’ and ‘archetype theory’ to create a shared common language of images that tap into the collective unconscious. Thus by creating a series of portraits of other individuals I am ultimately creating a large self portrait and highlighting the shared nature of our humanity.

Keywords: Self, Psychology, Mapping
Supervisors: Paul Thomas, Peter Sharp (co)
Panel 7: Thursday 13 November, 9:30am – 11am, COFA Space

Jack Stahel (MFA)

In Process

A lifelong propensity for creative compulsions has led me to persistently consider the significance of psychological experience. It is curious that few would deny their existence, yet are rarely considered integral in the examining of consciousness experience and mind.

A cohesive understanding of these concepts cannot preclude our experience, both physiological and psychological. These most basic and familiar sources of knowledge must be the conceptual glue that holds together a patchwork of ideas and theories based in metaphysics, epistemology, neuroscience and psychology along with any other areas of research an individual considers appropriate to stick together.

Psychological experience so crucially illuminates for us that the content and process of our thoughts are in fact one and the same. To ignore this is to remarkably affect the understanding of both, as well as alter the processes and methodologies established in the attempt to understand them.

Unavoidably a personal approach based in experiential processes; a case study of an individual’s process of understanding emerges. An investigation into the implications of process, of accepting or ignoring ideas, and in a broader sense, the consequences of the fact that we determine whether to accept or ignore in the first place.

Keywords: Consciousness, Process, Psychology
Supervisors: Louise Fowler-Smith, Gary Carsley (co)
Panel 9: Thursday 13 November, 12pm – 1:30pm, COFA Space

Masters by Research
**Lauren Vassallo (MDes)**

**Burlesque: Redefining the Representation of Women**

This study explores the expressions of women’s social roles in Burlesque subculture in Sydney, Australia. Between 2010-2014 the analysis reflects on the roles available to women in Burlesque, via the concept of bricolage described by media theorist and sociologist Dick Hebdige in his book “Subculture; the Meaning of Style”. Hebdige’s theory of bricolage is supplemented with recent scholarly research that explores 21st Century subcultures, in particular, Theresa Winge’s book, “Body Style”. The resurgence of Burlesque in Sydney since 2005 has allowed for new questions to be asked concerning female gender roles they explore. I contribute to this debate in my study on textile designs and fashion silhouettes in use in Sydney’s Burlesque scene and how bricolage explains their adaptations of gender stereotypes in a contemporary context.

Keywords: Burlesque, Subcultural, Style
Supervisors: Katherine Moline, Liz Williamson (co)
Panel 10: Thursday 13 November, 2:30pm – 4pm, UNSW Galleries

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**Miho Watanabe (MFA)**

**Awareness of Between-ness: Materials and Immaterial, Katami: once a possession of the dead**

I have been interested in what exists between a subject and myself since taking photographs as a professional photographer. I believe this space in between a subject and a camera has an energy flow, because the most satisfactory outcome occurs when I connect with an organic or non organic subject while I am taking photographs. The photographs are a slice of time and are viewed as evidence of reality but it can also be said that the photographs are not reality. My focus on the connection in between subjects and myself became my obsession and it emerged as a topic that would drive my current research, which leads me to focus on what this Between-ness is. The aim of my research is to explore this ‘between-ness’ in relation to the material and the immaterial, and to make the invisible subject visible. The materials I chose for this research are the objects that were once possessions of now dead relatives or close friends. These objects are traditionally called “Katami” meaning a memento or remembrance of the dead. I am researching ‘in-between’ of the Katami (the material) and our perception (immaterial) which lays in between space and time.

Keywords: Between-ness/Ma, Katami, Space and Time
Supervisors: Paul Thomas, Louise Fowler-Smith (co)
Panel 7: Thursday 13 November, 9:30am – 11am, COFA Space
Scott Elphinstone (MFA)

The influence of flow on free design and fixed systems of expression

Flows are spatial, temporal, entropic, animate and inanimate. The world is in constant movement a space of vectors with objects, people, culture and theories in constant flux. Through a process that is equal parts archeological, excavating one layer to reveal what is underneath and comparative, comparing and contrasting layers for their indexical authority I aim to reveal a world in motion that acknowledges our moving positions and perspectives. The research explores current thinking of flows including material flow, constructal law and optimum experience to establish whether flow concepts, processes and principles are applicable to all areas of investigation. Hypothetically I propose as a theory it looks for pattern recognition within various systems to establish possible truths. In my practice I explore various understandings experiences and observations of the flow paradigm to deepen our understandings of self being. Through investigating flow concepts metaphorically and theoretically in painting, photography and digital media my work reveals its authoritative influence on our ideas and perceptions of contemporary culture. The artwork aims to unpack and see whether flow has its own principles and elements, universal nature or characteristics that are applicable to all areas of investigation.

Keywords: Material Flow, Constructal Law, Optimum Experience

Supervisors: Paul Thomas, Peter Sharp (co)

Panel 7: Thursday 13 November, 9:30am – 11am, COFA Space
Ancillary Program:
Open Labs, Exhibitions, Experiments & Showcases

Paul Davies: MFA Examination Show

Pastiche; a lens through which to view the present

The focus of my research is pastiche. I will propose that pastiche is not only a means of mimicking or referencing the past, it is a means of providing a lens through which the viewer can make sense of the present. I will investigate this with regard to the subject matter and methodology of my art-making practice that includes painting, stencilling, photography and sculpture. My work depicts scenes that comprise an amalgam of elements. This is achieved through digital and analogue technologies and includes stencils to juxtapose, repeat and mirror built and natural environments from a variety of contrasting locations. Although stencilling reiterates the ideals and anxieties associated with the subject, the relationship between the original and its reproduction is blurred through this process.

IDG: Thursday 5 – 7pm
Open Labs – Show & Tell

Two NIEA research labs open their doors to engage in conversations about past and ongoing research projects

The 3D Visualisation Aesthetics Lab (3D-Vis AL) is an interdisciplinary research lab that explores arts-led approaches to visualising data. The team uses creative methodologies and narrative approaches seen in the video games, film visual effects (VFX) and interaction design fields to challenge established aesthetics.

4th Floor F Block: Wednesday 11:30 – 12:45pm & Friday 3:30 – 4:30pm

The Creative Robotics Lab (CRL) is a cross-disciplinary research environment committed to exploring human interactions with robotic agents and embodied, responsive structures within the context of experimental arts and social robotics. The CRL engages in innovative practices, such as experimenting with novel robotic systems, human-machine configurations and presentations in public settings.

G Block: Wednesday 1 – 2:15pm & Thursday 11am – 12pm

Elena Knox (PhD): Participatory Experiment

PG: Power Generator

In video installation PG: Power Generator a cowgirl hoops on top of a windmill. This open studio experiment explores audience interfacing by building a custom sensor-fitted hula hoop by which people can drive the play of the video. It will also experiment with tracking cameras. Come and test out the interfaces and show us your hooping moves in preparation for Beyond Beyond the Valley of the Dolls, Elena’s PhD graduating exhibition in December/January.

Black Box: Wednesday – Friday
Karen Kriss (MPhil): Participatory Experiment

Dirty data: motion capture portraits

Come and be captured within the motion capture lab, see your data modified live on screen and be part of a PG open lab experiment. The artist will be exploring with audiences the capturing and manipulating of participant movements using motion capture technology and photographic texture maps. The data will be used to produce lenticular portraits using a distorted visual effects pipeline and will be shown as part of Karen Kriss’s graduating exhibition in 2015.

Black Box: Wednesday 11am – 12pm

Dawn-Joy Leong (PhD): Exhibition

Little Sweets


F1 Balcony, 1st Floor F Block: Tuesday – Friday
Exhibition Opening: Monday 10 November, 6 - 8pm
Yvonne East (PhD): Showcase

Open Studio

An opportunity to view works currently in production and talk to the artist in the UNSW Art + Design postgraduate studios.
Combining traditional methods of drawing and painting with projected and animated light the work embraces materiality in the virtual age, seeking to show how it manifests itself on the surface of media in our times.
Large scale charcoal drawings of the human figure on quotidian fabrics point to a shift in focus from the optic toward a haptic materiality. The drawing surface is a site of mediation and projection.
Participants interested in the methods and techniques used in the production of these works are invited to visit the studios on Level 4, F Block during the conference. To view previous work visit www.yvonneeast.com
PGR Commons, 4th Floor F Block: Wednesday – Friday

Michelle Cawthorn (MFA): Showcase

Boy

Why are no two artists work the same and what compels us to make the choices that we make when creating a work of art? Underpinning my MFA research is a desire to understand the complex nature of artmaking, particularly in relation to my own studio practice. My research therefore has led me to understand that memory plays a fundamental role in the inception and creation of works of art, in particular the function of triggers as pathways to memory recall.
The work presented for the Post Graduate Research Conference, Boy 2014, is a tactile and olfactory expression of this research. Made from 10 used mens and boys shirts from my immediate family, Boy is a large scale soft sculpture that evokes the idea of play, a crucial function in early brain development.
PGR Commons, 4th Floor F Block: Wednesday – Friday

Ancillary Program
David Manley (MFA): Showcase

Ambivalent Structures

“The spectacular view always made Laing aware of his ambivalent feelings for this concrete landscape. Part of its appeal lay all too clearly in the fact that this was an environment built, not for man, but for man’s absence.”

J.G Ballard, High Rise, 1975

David Manley’s exhibition Ambivalent Structures is a photographic exploration of Cold War architectural remnants, captured in a post-brutalist terrain. It deals with the built environment, urbanism and the psychological effects of architecture on the individual.

EG02 Foyer: Wednesday – Friday