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FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce *Twenty/20*, an exhibition that provides a snapshot of current Australian painting practice and continues UTS Gallery's commitment to the promotion of creativity and contemporary culture for community enrichment. I am especially pleased that a partnership with Museums and Galleries NSW has enabled *Twenty/20* to tour to regional audiences.

Twenty/20 presents a sampler of twenty artists with quite different practices and philosophies who have shown in MOP Projects over the past six years. MOP adds to the vibrancy of our neighbourhood and local cultural precinct and we are especially grateful to Directors, Ron & George Adams for bringing these paintings together for us to enjoy. This selection of works is a tribute to their ebullient passion and ongoing dedication to Sydney's art scene.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to our 2010 artist-in-residence Alex Gereg and to Tom Polo for his opening night performance at UTS Gallery. I would also like to thank Jay Ryves for her playful graphic design and Bronwyn Clark-Coollee for her insightful catalogue contribution. I take the opportunity to particularly thank Holly Williams for coordinating material for both exhibition and publication and finally, the artists for their generous enthusiasm and involvement.

Tania Creighton
Curator, UTS Gallery

TWENTY/20 IN 2010

Twenty/20 is about painting today.

20 contemporary painters have been assembled to demonstrate that the medium of painting, far from being conservative or outmoded is dynamic and flourishing. Vying for attention with new forms of art such as installation, video, and performance, this apparently traditional format has continued to attract young and emerging artists who have continually adapted it to tackle contemporary issues.

Twenty/20 includes artists who use a variety of challenging painting processes. Some of them have already had their works shown in museums: some are still unknown even to many of the most informed art experts. How do we define painting today? The meaning of the term may not be clear as it once was! More and more artists are mixing different media, blurring the limits between disciplines.

Some of those represented here would not regard themselves exclusively as painters and also work in sculpture, video, or installation. But all of them share, at some stage, the process of covering a surface with pigments. Experimenting with new materials, techniques, and processes, they amply demonstrate the diversity and resources of painting and its vital contribution to the contemporary art scene.

Ron & George Adams

MOP Projects

ONE OR TWO THINGS I KNOW ABOUT PAINTING

Tell me something about your love of painting. Sometimes paintings are the only way of getting a message across – seeing them.

From a conversation between Wim Wenders and Jean-Luc Godard¹

Before offering some observations, given the nature of this exhibition as a touring project and one which has as its initial venue a university exhibition space, I would like to consider some questions: What are we presented with here? What is being proposed? What claims are being made?

This exhibition presents the work of a selection of artists who have exhibited at MOP Projects, an artist-run initiative which was established in Sydney in 2003. MOP runs an annual exhibition program selected by its organizing committee, with three exhibition spaces available for each three-week exhibition period. Twenty artists are represented in this exhibition, each by a single work, along with a supplementary image of another in the catalogue documentation. In this instance while painting is the medium of focus, it can be noted that in its exhibition policy MOP is not overtly programmatic in its adherence to particular principles or to the specifics of a type of contemporary practice, certainly not in the strict sense that some previous generations of artists' run spaces have been. Rather, it would be fair to say that, while selective in its programming, MOP's policy is more inclusive than deliberately delimiting, presenting a cross-section of work from emerging and more established artists. It is, I would like to suggest,

this very mix of things, especially its ability to productively juxtapose practices that is one of MOP's distinguishing features, a characteristic also evident in the approach to its external or 'satellite' activities such as this.

Twenty/20 is the title. The figure twenty of course designates the number of artists in the exhibition, but what the exact relationship of one 'twenty' to the other might be – for example, how it is opposed or linked to a version of itself – is not entirely clear. From another perspective we could simply recognize 'twenty/20' as a word/number play. In its spoken form however we are immediately led somewhere else, conjuring associations with the 20/20 of perfect vision – or what sometimes more properly is referred to as normal visual acuity – giving rise to the query of the notion or place of perfect or 'normal' vision in what might be proposed here. It also suggests the '2020' sloganeering of political summits and policy announcements, an increasingly familiar marker in the illusory landscape of political ambitions, a future perfect date for the projection of big political thinking where the messy exigencies of present day realities apparently no longer exist. However, just as it might point towards ambitious future thinking, it might also indicate the pause of reflective hindsight where, after the fact, 20/20 becomes an agent in the clarification and deepening of understanding. It is precisely this backwards and forwards movement, the shifts and sometimes dislocations involved in the processes of assessment and re-assessment that come with a consideration of things that I would like

to bring into focus. For it is my understanding that it is here that the intentions of the exhibition might be located.

At this point I want to intersect these ideas with a brief overview of the selected work. The dynamic inherent, for example, in the configuration of the title is not dissimilar to the interplay of words and symbols predominant in Ron Adam's recent work. As one of the coordinators of this project, this coincidence is worthy of comment. Adams frequently draws on music originating from the late 1970s and early 1980s as a source, not only registering its affect through the use of lyrics or titles but also emphasizing and extending this experience, and at times its political attitude, through the critical language of painting. *Dondesstan* 2009 for example, references the later 1991 album by Robert Wyatt. Through the form of the 'I don't understand' inferred in the title and its almost complete indecipherability, Adams wryly alludes to the seemingly opaque complexity of the fraught and contested Central Asia region. Importantly, questions around this framing of identity are also raised through the reiterative and flag-like nature of the linear pattern.

From here various threads can be drawn: for example, to the sense of the reiterative in the repeated negative utterances in Maria Cruz's *No* 2003; to the underlying sense of the dissident in Angus Wood's humourously mocking portrait of the bearded *Climate Changer* 2009 or its guarded declarations in Anna Peters' abstractions; to the deployment

of the emblematic gesture in Mitch Cairns' *easy living/rhythm method (caretaker)* 2009/10 or its more heraldic form in Michelle Hanlin's work; to the historically embedded sense of feminine identity in Nana Ohnesorge's *Watch her disappear* 2009 the contemplation of a more connected presence in Nell's *ALL THE WAY* 2008 or to the grotesque amalgam of otherness depicted in Rob McHaffie's *Gloria* 2009. However, while such a linking of threads can be helpful in stepping one's way through the exhibition, given the evident contrast between one work and the next, it is to these very cuts and dislocations that our attention might be more meaningfully directed.

Here we might connect to the introductory quote and be reminded of the 'seeing' in the experience of painting. The great temptation in approaching any large group exhibition especially one where the common object is painting is to expect at least one grand pronouncement on its present/future state. *Twenty/20* makes no such announcements. Rather it is to the detail of these practices, and to the ambiguities of not knowing and the acknowledgment of contradictions that the space of painting allows, that we are directed.

Bronwyn Clark-Cooler 2010

1. 'On painters, montage and dustbins' in Wenders, Wim 1997, *The act of seeing: essay and conversations*, (trans. Hoffman, Michael), Faber and Faber, London, p.166.



GEMMA SMITH

Untitled # 2 2009
acrylic on board
34 x 27.5 cm

The Well 2008
acrylic on polyester
183 x 153 cm





JULIE FRAGAR

4 Inhabitants of St. Thomas 2009

oil on board
60 x 40 cm

Tell me what to do (man hovering over edge of an abyss) 2008

oil on board
60 x 40 cm





RON ADAMS

Dondestan 2010
acrylic and gesso on linen
105 x 75 cm

Raw Diamond 2007
acrylic and gesso on MDF
70 x 50 cm





DAVID GRIGGS

TWO BEARS AND ONE CUP 2008

oil on canvas
168 x 168 cm

ZOMBIE KISS 2009

acrylic on canvas
290 x 183 cm

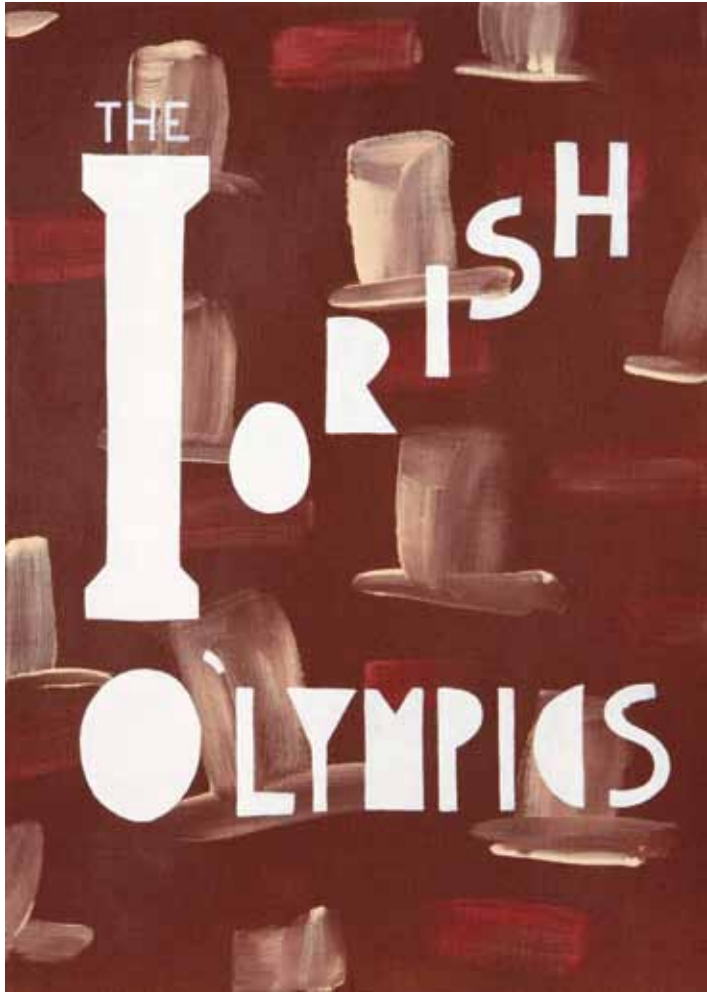




MICHELLE HANLIN

specific gestures 2008
acrylic on canvas
61 x 61 cm

I made 2008
acrylic on canvas
61 x 61 cm

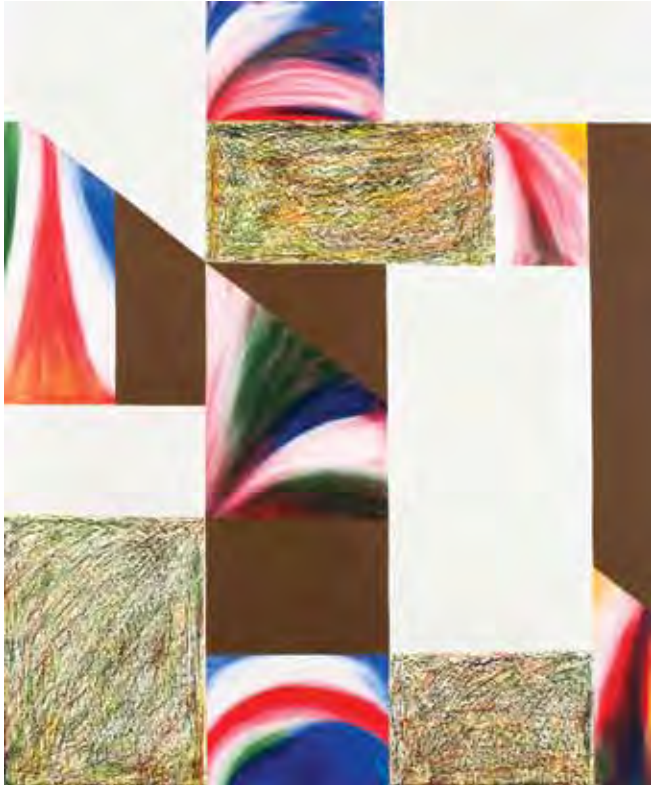


MITCH CAIRNS

Easy Living/Rhythm Method (Milligan) 2009
acrylic and ink on linen
71 x 51 cm

Easy Living/Rhythm Method (Caretaker) 2009/10
acrylic and ink on linen
168 x 112 cm





ELIZABETH PULIE

Foyer 2009
acrylic and oil stick on canvas
100 x 84 cm

Signature Painting (II) 2008
acrylic on linen
100 x 120 cm





JOHN SPITERI

Cubic county 2008
oil on canvas, artist frame
51 x 41 cm

Foreign Temples 2008
oil and enamel on linen
acrylic and enamel on glass
concrete, tile, wood
139 x 102 x 100 cm

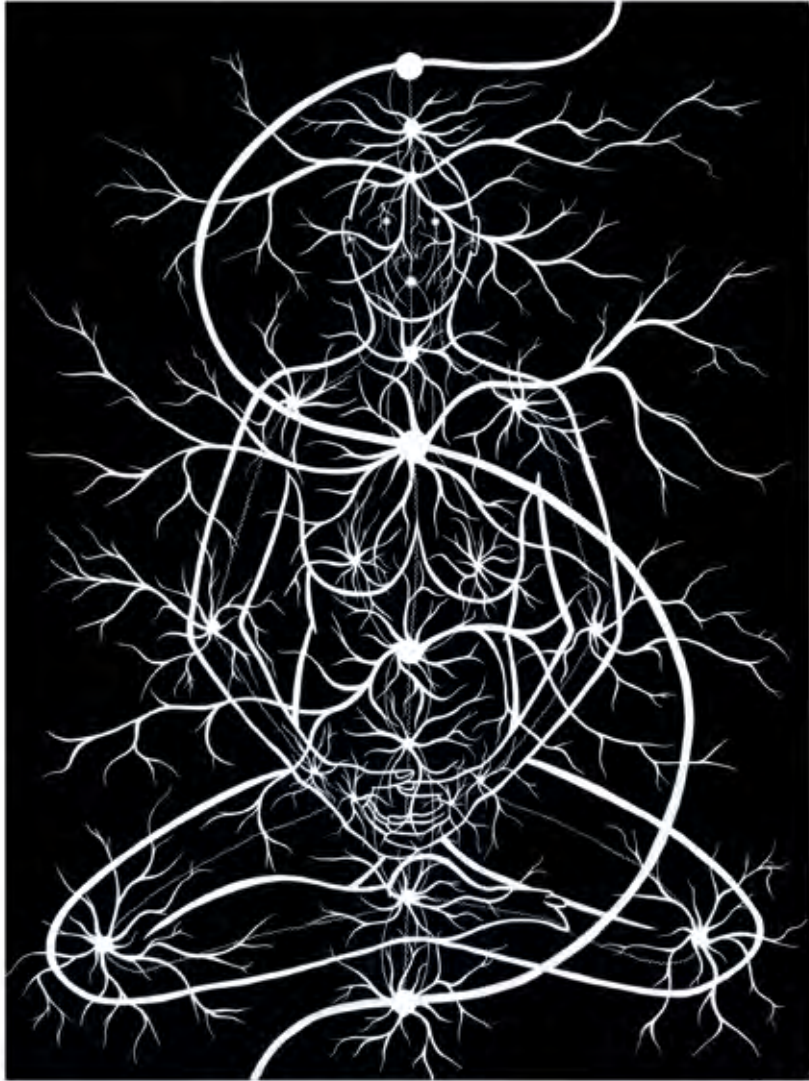




ANNA PETERS

Don't give a fuck 2009/10
acrylic on canvas
50.3 x 35.3 cm

*They believe I agree with them
but don't know it yet!* 2009
acrylic on canvas
100 x 100 cm



NELL

ALL THE WAY 2008
gouache on linen, 137 × 101.5 cm



Earthbound Infinity 2008
acrylic and Nepalese pigment, baby ostrich feathers and the
wings of Malaysian beetle on linen, 137 × 101.5 cm



HUSEYIN SAMI

Violent Dream 2009
household acrylic paint on canvas
100cm x 150 cm

Harvest 2007
household acrylic on canvas
51x 40.5 cm



ROB MCHAFFIE

Gloria 2009
oil on linen
56 x 46 cm

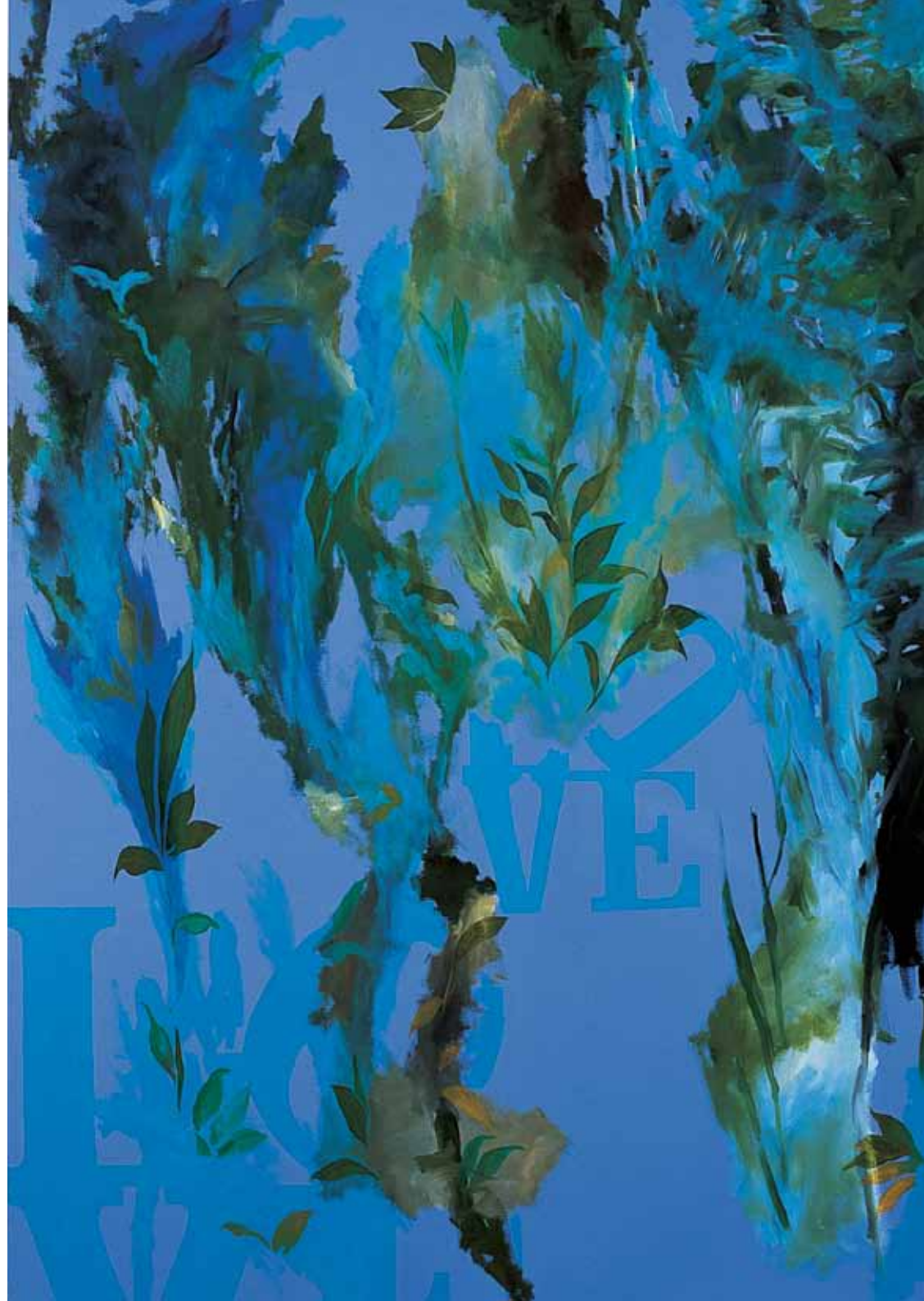
be quiet, it's perfect 2010
oil on linen
46 x 41 cm



MARIA CRUZ

No 2003
oil on canvas
71 x 55.5 cm

Love Forest 2004
oil on linen
197.5 x 152 cm

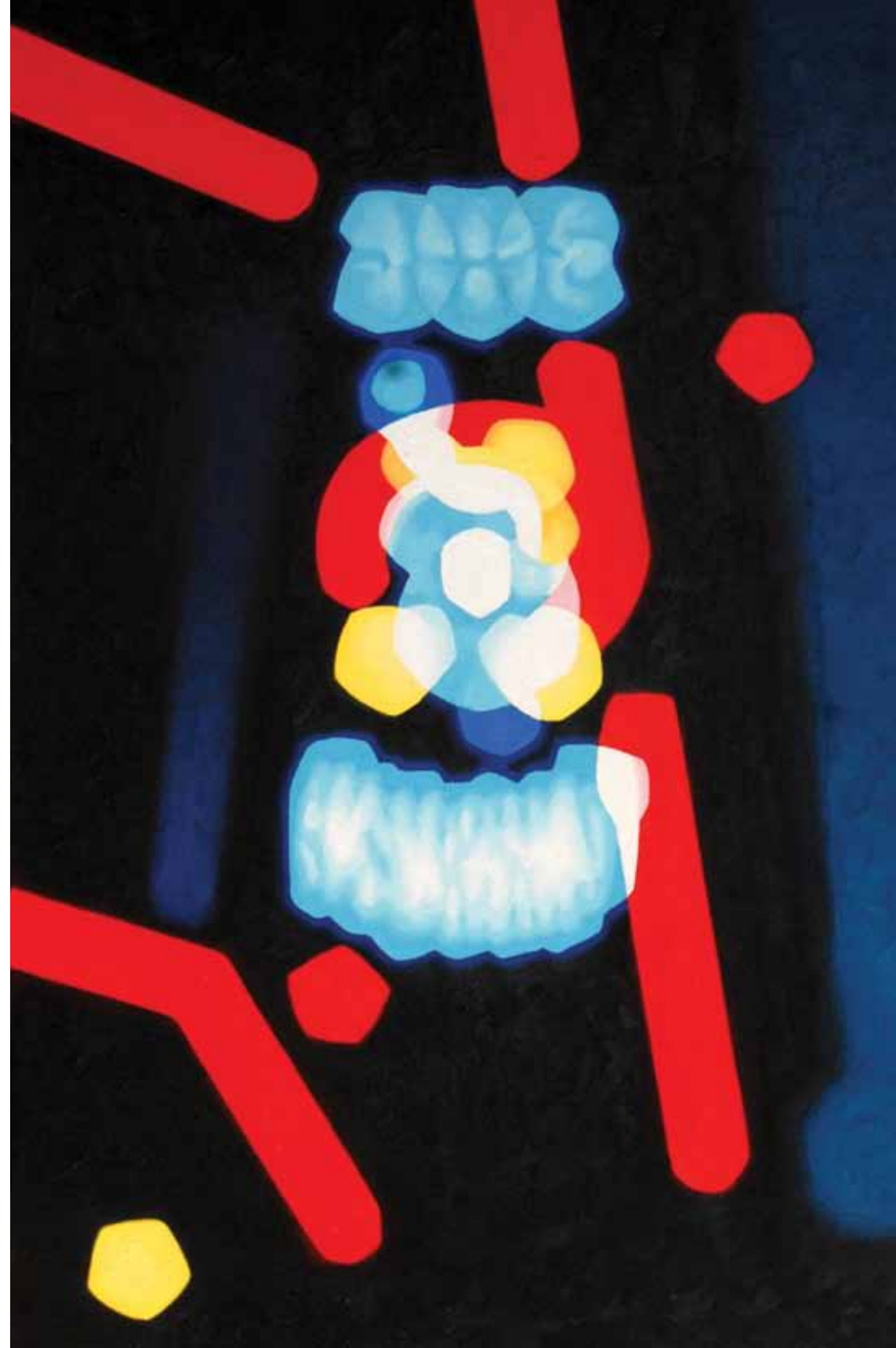




MARIUS JASTKOWIAK

Green Neon Arrow 2009
oil on canvas
61 x 76 cm

Neon Logo (Found Composition in Red, Yellow & Blue) 2007
oil on canvas
153 x 102 cm





NANA OHNESORGE

True Romance (Ms & Mr) 2009
acrylic and oil on canvas
76.2 x 61 cm

Watch Her Disappear 2009
acrylic, oil, aerosol and pigment on linen
76.2 x 61 cm





FIONA LOWRY

what i assume you shall assume 2007
acrylic on paper
120 x 85 cm

I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own 2008
acrylic on canvas
213 x 137 cm



ALEX GEREG

Galaxy N55.44 2009
acrylic on canvas
210 x 150 cm

Sinking Ancient City 2010
acrylic on canvas
152 x 152 cm

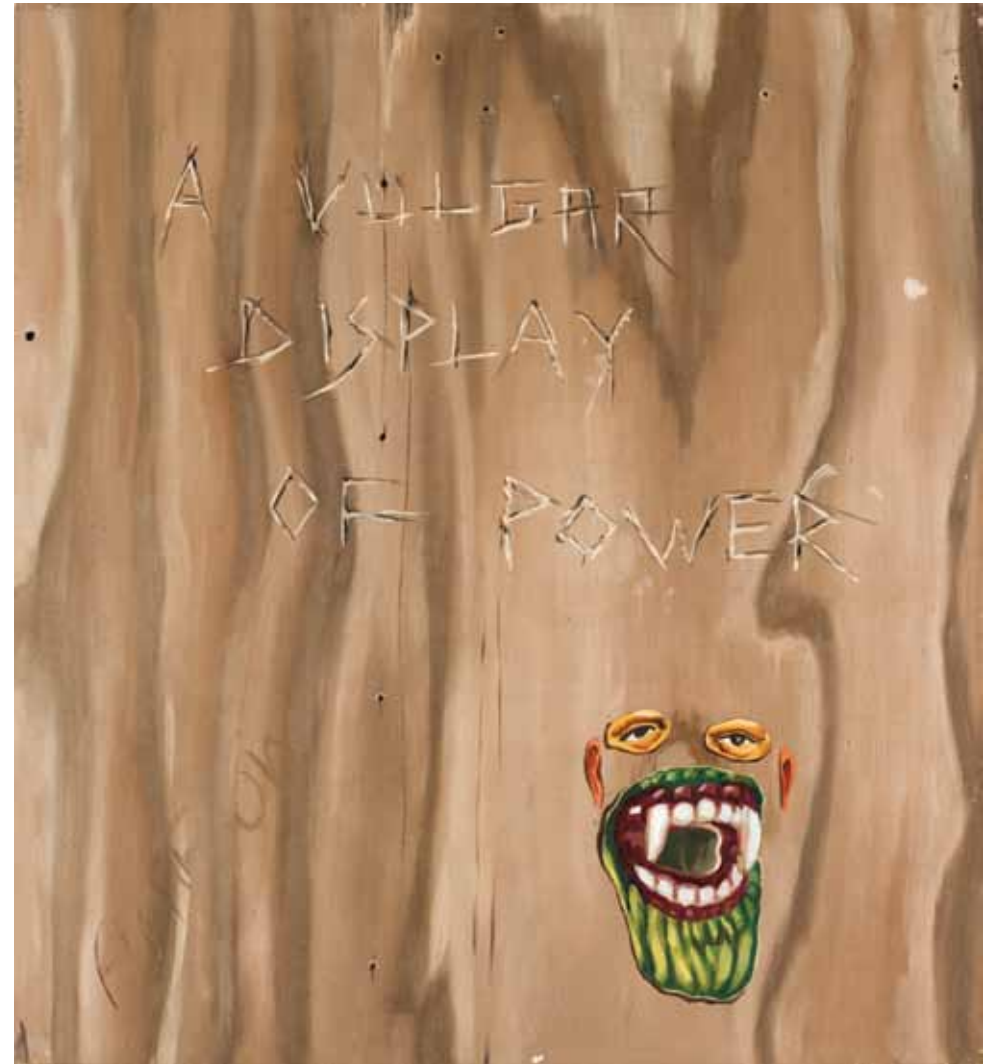


ADAM NORTON

Bunker Doors (South Head) 2009
acrylic on canvas
200 x 140 cm

Area 51 2008
acrylic on canvas
200 x 118 cm





LEO COYTE

No Fun 2010
oil on canvas
125 x 93 cm

A Vulgar Display of Power 2007
oil on linen
61 x 56 cm



ANGUS WOOD

The Unfortunate Planet 2010
oil on canvas
84 x 71 cm

Climate Changer 2009
oil on canvas
102 x 84 cm



ARTIST BIOS

GEMMA SMITH (b. 1978) Smith's work explores abstraction and colour through painting and three-dimensional adaptable sculptures. Solo exhibitions include *Entanglement Factor*, Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne (2009), *New Paintings and Sculptures*, Milani Gallery, Brisbane (2008) and *Gemma Smith*, Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney (2006). Group exhibitions include *New Acquisitions*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2009) and *Contemporary Australia: Optimism*, Gallery of Modern Art, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (2008). Smith was recently awarded the Clayton Utz Travelling Scholarship (Rio de Janeiro) (2009).

JULIE FRAGAR (b. 1977) Fragar's work is centred on the relationship between autobiography and painting. Solo exhibitions include *The Oracles*, Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney (2009), *Your Place and/or Mine*, MSSR Projects, Brisbane (2009) and *LIAR*, Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney (2008). Group exhibitions include *The Brisbane Line*, The Narrows, Melbourne (2009), Shandong Anniversary, Shandong, China (2009) and *Temperature 2: New Brisbane Art*, Museum of Brisbane (2009). Fragar was recently awarded the Australia Council Barcelona Studio Residency to be undertaken from March – June 2011.

RON ADAMS (b. 1959) Adams' work is autobiographical and primarily text based Geometric Abstraction. Solo exhibitions include *to light the brightest beacon*, James Dorahy Project Space, Sydney (2009), *Cut*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2005) and *Before and after Science*, Peloton, Sydney (2004). Group exhibitions include *Big Painting*, Fraser Studios, Sydney (2009), *Faith & Lust*, Flinders St. Gallery, Sydney (2009) and SafARI, China Heights, Sydney (2008). Adams' is Curator, Archive Manager and Publishing co-ordinator of MOP Projects, Sydney.

DAVID GRIGGS (b. 1975) Griggs' paintings focus on the human condition. Solo exhibitions include *All I want is peace in the Middle East a blow job and a free T-shirt*, Kaliman Gallery, Sydney (2008), *Blood on the Streets*, Uplands, Melbourne (2007) and *The Bleeding Hearts Club*, Newcastle Region Art Gallery, Newcastle (2007). Group exhibitions include *Australian*, Casula Powerhouse, Sydney (2008) and *Bloodlines: Art and the Horse*, Hawkesbury Regional Gallery, NSW (2007). Griggs was awarded the Australia Council Barcelona Studio Residency in 2008 and the Primavera Grant, MCA, Sydney in 2007.

MICHELLE HANLIN (b. 1972) Hanlin plays with the language of heraldry and grotesque decorative forms. Solo exhibitions include two shows at Gallery 9 in Darlinghurst, Sydney (2007 and 2008). Group exhibitions include *Rectangular Ghost*, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney (2006) and *Where the Wild Things Are*, at UTS Gallery, Sydney (2005). Hanlin was selected as a finalist in the Helen Lempriere Travelling Art Scholarship exhibition at Artspace, Sydney (2004).

MITCH CAIRNS (b. 1984) Cairns studied painting at the National Art School graduating with Honours in 2006. Solo exhibitions include *written & recorded by Ringo Starr*, BREENSPACE, Sydney (2008), *slow dancing*, Locksmith Project Space, Sydney (2008) and *hey, hey, hey, my, my, my, gone, gone, gone*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2008). Group exhibitions include *What I think of when I think about dancing*, Campbelltown Arts Centre (2009) and *Reality Check*, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery (2009). He is a founding member of *The Cosmic Battle for your Heart*, Sydney.

ELIZABETH PULIE (b. 1968) Pulie's paintings aim to blend the role of art between production and participation in a meaningful way. Solo exhibitions include *Smart Casual*, Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney (2008) and *Language of Love*, Sutton Gallery, Melbourne (2003). Group exhibitions include *Sweet Spot*, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne (2009), *New Moon*, Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney (2008) and *SNO 24*, Sydney Non Objective, Sydney (2007). Pulie was Co-director of Front Room, Sydney between 2002—2004 and is currently editor and publisher of Lives of the Artists magazine.

ANNA PETERS Peters' paintings are colourful abstract/object works made with acrylic paint. Solo exhibitions include *Paintings*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2009), *On a Roll*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2005) and *Humour Plus*, Front Room, Sydney (2003). Group exhibitions include *Our Lucky Country (still different)*, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney (2007), *Cones of Contact*, Loose Projects, Sydney (2006) and *Eldorado*, Downtown Art Space, Adelaide (2006). In 2007 Peters was an artist in residence at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney.

NELL (b. 1975) Nell's work deals with birth, sex and death understood through physical experiences of impermanence. Solo exhibitions include *All The Way*, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney (2008) and *There Goes a Narwhal*, Gertrude Contemporary Art Space, Melbourne (2008). Group exhibitions include *Wax On*, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery (2009), *Soft Sculpture*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (2009) and *New Acquisitions*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2007). In 2007 Deutsche Bank commissioned a tapestry by Nell woven by The Victorian Tapestry Workshop.

HUSEYIN SAMI Sami's work is predicated on investigations into the ontology of painting. Solo exhibitions include *I wish I was a Fauve in 1905*, Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney (2009) and *Everything is Everything*, Fremantle Arts Centre, Perth (2009). Group exhibitions include *RBS Emerging Artists Award*, RBS Tower, Sydney (2009) and *Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize Exhibiton*, Sydney (2009). In 2009 Sami was awarded a residency at the Fremantle Arts Centre in Perth.

ROB MCHAFFIE (b. 1978) McHaffie's work intertwines humour and pathos to reveal piercing observations of humanity. Solo exhibitions include *Slow me down*, USQ Arts Gallery, Toowoomba, Queensland (2008), *Small Triumph*, Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney (2008) and *Painting Gardening and Hiding*, Darren Knight at Silvershot, Melbourne (2007). Group exhibitions include *Cross colouring*, Joint Hassles, Melbourne (2009) and *Primavera 06 - Exhibition of Young Australian Artists*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2006). In 2007 McHaffie was awarded a residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris.

MARIA CRUZ (b. 1957) Cruz completed a Master of Visual Arts at Sydney College of the Arts in 1999 and is based in Manila, Berlin and Sydney. Solo exhibitions include *Oo (yes): selected paintings & projects by Maria Cruz*, 1996-2009, UTS Gallery, Sydney. *Oo: selected paintings and projects*, Kaliman Gallery, Sydney and *Paintings*, Galeria Duemila Manila, Philippines. Group exhibitions include *An Ever Expanding Universe*, Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Perth (2008), *Our Lucky Country (still different)*, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney (2007) and *UnAustralian*, Anna Bibby Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand.

MARIUS JASTKOWIAK (b. 1981) Jastkowiak's recent paintings explore the curious intersections presented by neon signage derived from fuzzy photographs. Solo exhibitions include *Neon Objective*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2009), *Maintaining an Equilibrium of the Fantastic*, Blacktown Arts Centre, NSW (2007) and *I'm not here, I was never here, It's not me*, Gallery Wren, Sydney (2003). Group exhibitions include *Light in a box*, Arterial Gallery, Sydney (2009), *Frenzy*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2008) and *Becos I'm Worf It*, Linden Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne. Jastkowiak was awarded a Casula Powerhouse studio residency for 2009/10.

NANA OHNESORGE (b. 1955) Ohnesorge's practice explores the complexity and darker side of human nature in narrative and figurative paintings, drawings and sculptures. Solo exhibitions include *Global Roaming*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2009), *Bambi Killer*, Hugo Michelle Gallery, Adelaide (2009) and *Les Mystères de Paris*, James Dorahy Project Space, Sydney (2008). Group exhibitions include *A Fairy's Tale*, Hawkesbury Regional Gallery, NSW (2009), *Hits From the Wand*, FELT Space, Adelaide (2009) and *Stupid Little Dreamer*, INFLIGHT, Hobart (2008). In 2007 Ohnesorge was awarded a Paris Studio Residency by the National Art School.

FIONA LOWRY (b. 1974) Lowry's paintings hint at events that might be traumatic, revelatory, fatal, or, indeed, playful. Solo exhibitions include *I ACT AS THE TONGUE OF YOU*, Gallery Barry Keldoulis, Sydney (2008) and *all I want to do is spend my life with you*, Roger Williams Contemporary, Auckland (2006). Group exhibitions include *Wax On - From Cronulla to Palm Beach and Beyond*, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney (2009), *Feminism Never Happened*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane (2009) and *Now & Then*, Campbelltown Art Centre, Sydney (2009). In 2008 Lowry was awarded The Bundanon Trust Artist in Residence.

ALEX GEREK (b. 1973) Gerek is a painter and mixed media artist who uses pop culture references. Solo exhibitions include *Warriors of the lost world*, MOP Projects (2008), *Galactic Adventures*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2007) and *May Lane Street Art Projects* (2005). Group exhibitions include *Art&About*, Sydney (2006), *Safari*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2006) and *Allcitystyle*, China Heights, Sydney (2006).

ADAM NORTON (b. 1964) Norton often takes science and technology as a starting point and then makes funny pictures and objects which reflect his increasing disbelief, amazement and sometimes dismay at the world around him. Solo exhibitions include *Camouflage Suit Experiment*, Gallerysmith, Melbourne (2009) and *Generic Escape Capsule*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2005). Group exhibitions include *Adam, Adam, Mitch, Nigel & Ron - Big Painting*, FraserStudios, Sydney (2009), *The Dark Arts*, Peloton, Sydney (2009) and *Stupid Little Dreamer*, INFLIGHT, Hobart (2008). In 2008 Norton was awarded a NAVA Janet Holmes à Court Artists' Grant.

LEO COYTE (b. 1976) Coyte mixes trompe l'oeil with horror, heavy metal with DIY carpentry to produce mixed media installations that could be equally at home in a gallery or workshop, recording studio or teenage boy's bedroom. Solo exhibitions include *Web Kicker*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2008) and *Slo Blo*, Firstdraft Gallery, Sydney (2008). Group exhibitions include *Hazelhurst Art Award*, Hazlehurst Regional Gallery, Sydney (2009), *32m Squared*, *Firstdraft Gallery Studio Residents 2008* At Australia Council for the Arts, Sydney (2009) and *Look out Wembley Arena*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2008).

ANGUS WOOD (b. 1984) Wood's paintings engage with socio-political crises and the subsequent alienation that incurs. Solo exhibitions include *Thought Crimes*, NG Gallery, NSW (2009), *The Light on the Hill Leaves Darkness in the Valley*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2008) and *History is Written by the Living*, NG Gallery, NSW (2008). Group exhibitions include *Eutick Memorial Still Life Award* (2009), *Waiting*, NG Art Gallery, NSW (2009) and *Deck Mop*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2008).

JOHN SPITERI (b. 1967) Spiteri completed an MFA at COFA, UNSW in 2001 and in 2002 was Associate Research Professor at Goldsmiths College, London. Solo exhibitions include *Paint a Rumour* – Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney (2009), *Taster of Tastes*, Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney (2007) and *New Paintings*, Michael Lett, Auckland (2006). Group exhibitions include *Rimbaud/Rambo*, Neon Parc Gallery, Melbourne (2008), *Artist Swap* (with Maria Amidu) Parramatta Artists Studios, Sydney (2008) and *Select: A Night with Mark Titchner*, Tate Britain, London (screening) (2007).

TOM POLO (b. 1985) Polo is currently undertaking a Masters of Fine Arts (Research) at the COFA, UNSW. Solo exhibitions include *The 2009 B.E.S.T Contemporary Art Prize*, MOP Projects, Sydney (2009) and *CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN*, GRANTPIRRIE Window, Sydney (2009). Group exhibitions include *I AM THE MESSAGE*, Lismore Regional Gallery, NSW (2009-10) and *Why do we do the things we do*, PICA, Perth (2009). In 2011 Polo will undertake an Australia Council for the Arts Skills & Development Grant Studio Residency in London.

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UTS Gallery

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www.utsgallery.uts.edu.au

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future classic.



MOP Projects



Front and back cover:

Tom Polo *Twenty/20* 2010

acrylic and oil on sandwich board

Inside front and back cover:

Tom Polo

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Huseyin Sami

Violent Dream 2009 (detail)

Page 4

Mitch Cairns

Easy Living/Rhythm Method

(*Caretaker*) 2009/10 (detail)

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Ron Adams

Dondestan 2010 (detail)

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Leo Coyte

No Fun 2010 (detail)

