

# WALL POWER

WALL POWER:  
CONTEMPORARY  
AUSTRALIAN  
PHOTOGRAPHY

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**Australian Government**

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*WALL POWER* has been made possible by the direct support of the Australian Government as part of the cultural initiative *Australia now* 2017 – a year-long program celebrating Australian arts, culture, science and innovation across Germany.

## FOREWORD

### Gael Newton

The exhibition title *WALL POWER* says it all. I could imagine it being a banner in a 1970s' street photograph. It points literally to the polished and dramatic quality of these exhibited works, and metaphorically to the importance of the gallery wall as a physical experience for viewing and contemplating art.

The works in *WALL POWER* reflect the diversity of practice in the last two decades or so by Australian artists born between 1955 and 1984 whose careers began from the mid-1970s to the early 2000s.

Stylistically, the images reflect the centrality of postmodern approaches in photomedia in the contemporary art scene in Australia since the late 1980s. Even when most provocative, they still seem 'Australian' to me in their offbeat subtlety and their wry puns and references.

Shaun Gladwell's bat-like inversion of the Captain Cook monument is worthy of a John Donne poetic conceit. Narelle Autio's swimmer with shark tattoo is a finger to a real threat present in the Australian surf.

I like, too, that the most classic black-and-white seascape with no overt Australian motif is by the youngest artist, Luke Shadbolt (b. 1984). Tamara Dean's image of teenage boys by a river nevertheless makes me

think of the American painter Thomas Eakins's work *The Swimming Hole* (1885), but the place would be instantly recognisable to many Australian viewers as one we know.

It remains a huge financial and logistical undertaking to uplift an exhibition from Australia. That the support has come from the Australian Government is to be applauded. Support for curatorship beyond museum walls to visual arts organisations and private galleries is essential.

Exhibitions such as *WALL POWER* that showcase Australian photographers to new audiences should be regular events. It will be interesting to learn what European audiences see in this finely curated touring show.

*Gael Newton BFA is an Australian art historian and curator specialising in surveys and studies of photography across the Asia-Pacific region. Newton was formerly the Senior Curator of Australian and International Photography at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. Prior to joining the National Gallery of Australia, Newton was the foundation curator of photography at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.*

## INTRODUCTION

### TOBY MEAGHER

*WALL POWER: Contemporary Australian Photography* brings together 22 leading Australian photographers, sourcing key works from both the artists and private collections. The exhibition is indebted to the generosity of the lenders and has been made possible by the direct support of the Australian Government as part of the cultural initiative *Australia now* 2017 – a year-long program celebrating Australian arts, culture, science and innovation across Germany.

When Michael Reid and I began developing this exhibition in late 2015, we were acutely aware that there were few serious opportunities to broaden the visibility and reputation of Australian photography outside the Southern Hemisphere. Photography is one of the major directional forces in contemporary art, and Australian contemporary photography holds a significant place within that movement. This exhibition presents some of the strongest examples of Australian photography to a broad international audience over a two-year tour of Cologne, Berlin, London and Paris.

Multiple curatorial threads can be drawn from this nationwide collection of works, but they are united in their exploration of the myths and legends surrounding Australia's unique light, landscape and history. In this broad spectrum of practical and conceptual approaches you will find insights into the Australian national identity, which is rich in complexities and conflicts.

At the core of *WALL POWER* lies the photographic image and the immediacy and power of the medium.

TOUR DATES  
AND LOCATIONS

Cologne

7 September – 7 October 2017

Haus der Stiftungen  
Zeughausstraße 26  
50667 Köln / Cologne  
Deutschland / Germany

London

17–25 May 2018

Australia House  
The High Commission of Australia in London  
Strand, London WC2B 4LA  
United Kingdom

Berlin

1–23 December 2017

Direktorenhaus  
Am Krögel 2  
10179 Berlin  
Deutschland / Germany

Paris

13 June – 11 November 2018

Embassy of Australia, Paris  
4 Rue Jean Rey  
75015 Paris  
France

## WALL POWER

### CLAIRE MONNERAYE

*‘Australia is mostly empty and a long way away. Its population is small and its role in the world consequently peripheral. It doesn’t have coups, recklessly overfish, arm disagreeable despots, grow coca in provocative quantities, or throw its weight around in a brash and unseemly manner. It is stable and peaceful and good. It doesn’t need watching, and so we don’t. But I will tell you this: the loss is entirely ours.’* (Bill Bryson, *Down Under*, 2001)

There is something unconventional if not shockingly iconoclastic about using as this essay’s epigraph a quote from the 2001 travelogue book *Down Under* by best-selling Anglo-American author Bill Bryson. Yet, and despite its excessively caricaturing tone, it might still reveal, seventeen years on, a widespread perception. An evocative compendium of images has adorned the cover of the several editions, a choice of koala, kangaroo, crocodile, boomerang, an ice cream cone, a campervan, a diamond-shaped yellow warning road sign and of course the impressive red rock, Uluru. It is somehow peculiar that three of the images most commonly associated with the country—the beach, the ocean and the rainforest—did not find their way to the cover, but suggestive and epic descriptions plentifully fill the pages. At the time of its publication, Australia had just received the Summer Olympics in Sydney and images of spectacular scenery were flooding the media. Images of the iconic Sydney Opera House and

Harbour Bridge guarding the magnificent harbour sparkling under dazzling fireworks; an image that those who live to the west of the meridian 151° east of Greenwich wake up to every year on 1 January. Another image of ‘Australia’ to be added to a collection of stereotypical visual representations widely circulated via social media.

For the most attentive, the North American version of *Down Under* was entitled *In a Sunburned Country*, which conjures two significant Australian cultural icons. If ‘sunburn’ ironically hints at how locals sometimes refer to British and Irish visitors, the term also is a direct nod to Australia’s most quoted poem, *My Country*, by Dorothea Mackellar (1885–1968). Its famous verse, ‘I love a sunburnt country’, is regarded by many Australians as the universal testimonial of the nation’s connection to the land.

Bryson’s subtitle also alludes to a photograph that has profoundly marked the country’s consciousness. Taken by revered photographer Max Dupain (1911–1992) in 1937, *Sunbaker* depicts a young man lying on the burning sand after a swim. A familiar scene in Australia, the ordinary subject matter is enhanced by its low-angle viewpoint, which abstracts the landscape and monumentalises the sculptural figure, creating

an ideal canvas to spark imagination, admiration and identification. The image, which entered into the public realm in the 1970s when photography had only just begun to be recognised by institutions as an artform, is layered with meanings that challenge how the nation collectively perceives itself.

One of the photographs presented in this exhibition, *This Brutal World* by Christian Thompson, unlocks a unique and disturbing dialogue with this symbolic image. Where Dupain’s *Sunbaker* conveys what is considered to be a quintessential example of Australian identity, Thompson reminds us that policies of assimilation were first outlined at the ‘Aboriginal Welfare’ Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities in 1937 and that Aboriginal people were not counted in the national census until 1967. References to flora and fauna suggest how Aboriginal people were denied agency and sovereignty, whilst subtly evoking spirituality. Here, the artist wears a costume borrowed from London’s National Theatre, his eyes covered with dried roses and his body superimposed on the glittering shallow creek beds, captured during trips to his traditional homelands in outback Queensland. Enchanting and haunting, this image points out the danger of visual simplification and stereotypical representational modalities.

*WALL POWER* assembles the work of 22 contemporary Australian photographers, presenting a unique portal to a diversity of techniques and forms, concerns and ideas. Although it would be reductive to limit contemporary Australian photography to this selection of works, together they epitomise local idiosyncrasies whilst suggesting ways for non-Australians to engage with images that resonate aesthetically, socially and politically on a more global scale. It emphasises some of the main conversations that have animated the medium in Australia since the 1970s: the interrogation of Australia’s colonial heritage; the exploration of its relation to the land and landscape, be it natural or urban; and the examination of body and gender politics. Imbued with international references, from the classical and romantic tradition to modernism and postmodernism, the visual strategies employed here span documentary, staged and performative practices.

Despite the significant and modest showings that have, over recent years, contributed to an increased awareness of the diversity of photomedia practices emanating from the region, occasions to encounter contemporary Australian photography are still relatively limited in Europe. They include, but are not limited to, the 2013 exhibition *Australia* at the Royal Academy of Arts, London; the exhibition *Phantasia* at PhotoQuai 2009 at the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris;

*Island Australia* as part of the 2015 Photolreland Festival, Dublin; and the projection *I love a sunburnt country* at the 2017 La Nuit des Images of the Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne, Switzerland, the last three projects having been organised by the Australian Centre for Photography. It is worth noting that artists with a photomedia-based practice have often been selected to represent the country at the Venice Biennale, including Tracey Moffatt (2017), Simryn Gill (2013), Shaun Gladwell (2013), Susan Norrie (2007), Patricia Piccinini (2003) and Bill Henson (1995). Likewise, the participation of Sydney-based Stills Gallery and Melbourne-based Tolarno Galleries at the leading international photographic fair Paris Photo has vastly contributed to the visibility of Australian photomedia art, which the growth of both Michael Reid Gallery and Jarvis Dooney Galerie in Berlin has also fostered.

While Australian contemporary photography has found its way into many private homes, its presence within institutional public collections in Europe remains sparse. Although it would be fastidious to meticulously list Australian photomedia works held in these institutions, it is worth noting that the Tate's collection comprises 34 artworks by Tracey Moffatt, two large photographic installations by Simryn Gill and one photograph from David Moore. The Centre Pompidou – Musée National d'Art Moderne has 29

photographs and five videoworks from Australia; while the Centre National des Arts Plastiques has 15 photographs by Tracey Moffatt, Bill Henson and Henry Lewis. Compared to the breadth of these institutions' photographic collections, the presence of contemporary Australian photography is in fact minimal.

On the other hand, Australian photographic imagery from the second half of the 19th century is prominent in institutions such as the Berlin Ethnologisches Museum, the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris and the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. Representative of the anthropological collecting trend that prevailed at the time, and of the quest to document the 'cultural Other', the photographs entered these ethnographic collections during a period when world exhibitions were becoming increasingly popular. Devised to showcase achievements of nations across artistic, industrial and scientific fields, they constituted the prime place to disseminate photography, whose novelty, variety of techniques and rapid technological development represented modernity.

The milestone exhibition *The Photograph and Australia*, organised by the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2015, highlighted the public role of the photograph in representing Australia at

world exhibitions before Federation in 1901, when six separate British self-governing colonies of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia agreed to unite and form the Commonwealth of Australia.

During Australia's colonial period (1788–1850), the world exhibitions constituted the primary platform for encountering the photographic representations of the nation. For instance in 1862, the Australian colonies sent 600 photographs for the London International Exhibition. Displays consisting of an abundance of information about facilities and employment opportunities complemented by romanticised images of urban and natural scenery were designed to entice and convince potential immigrants and investors that the colonies offered everything needed for a prosperous future. Images depicting the wonders of the new land featured alongside photographs of Aboriginal people. Photography, within the period, had vastly contributed to defining new observational methods and became, with its qualities of precision and accuracy, the privileged tool of biological anthropology. These collections of colonial images soon began to indicate the prevalence of Darwinist theories, which established race differences based on superficial physical differences and racial hierarchy.

The ongoing impact of colonisation permeates the strategies devised by Australian artists to represent stories and influences how works are received and interpreted in foreign contexts. Today, Australian photographers address some of the most explosive issues of our time, reflecting on global warming and climate change scepticism, and controversial environmental and migration policies. The variety of forms and ideas presented within this exhibition, as well as those that could not be presented, including long-form documentary visual essays, contemporary camera-less and analogue investigations, and photobooks, only demonstrates how much we would gain by engaging with contemporary photography from this part of the world.

*Claire Monneraye is Curator, Australian Centre for Photography. Previously, she has worked at the Centre Pompidou and at the Réunion des Musées Nationaux – Grand Palais, Paris as Exhibition Project Manager. She has a bachelor's degree in Art History and a master's (honours) degree in Art Administration. Claire joined the Australian Centre for Photography in 2011 and was made Curator in 2014.*



Christian Thompson  
*This Brutal World*, 2017  
c-type print on Fuji Pearl  
120 x 120 cm  
edition of 6 + 2 AP

*image courtesy the Artist, the  
Australian Centre for Photography  
and Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

## Christian Thompson *This Brutal World* 2017

Born 1978, Gawler, South Australia. Bidjara.  
Lives & works London.

*This Brutal World* was commissioned by the Australian Centre for Photography for the exhibition *Under the Sun: Reimagining Max Dupain's Sunbaker*. Dupain's low-angled black-and-white image of a 'bronzed Aussie' lying face-down on a beach is one of Australia's most iconic photographs. Thompson used the work on its 80th anniversary as a jumping-off point to consider representations of Australian culture.

When creating this image, Thompson noted that the year of *Sunbaker's* creation, 1937, was also the year of the Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities on Aboriginal Welfare, a reminder of the discriminatory policies of the time which saw Indigenous Australians managed as flora and fauna, rather than as citizens under the Constitution. The artist is portrayed in a costume belonging to the London National Theatre, with roses, symbolic of England, covering his eyes. He lies in a creek bed photographed near his home town in Queensland. In 2010, Thompson was one of the two first Aboriginal Australians to be accepted into the University of Oxford in its 900-year history, and is now based in London. *This Brutal World* explores notions of colonialism and dispossession, both in an historic and a personal sense.

This work has been commissioned by the Australian Centre for Photography on the occasion of the exhibition *Under the Sun: Reimagining Max Dupain's Sunbaker*.

## AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHY DR ANDREW FROST

Like most conquered and colonised lands brought to heel by the firepower and sheer numbers of European invasion, the evolution of photography in Australia followed a similar, historically recognisable pattern. The earliest uses of photography in Australia were to record flora and fauna, its notable and wealthy citizens, and its unique landscapes. While these approaches were largely in the service of 19th-century scientific disciplines such as geology, biology and anthropology, and to flatter bourgeois tastes for portraiture and genre subjects, subsequent advances in photographic art in the 20th century built on these foundations, employing practices that were at once peculiarly specific to their place and time, yet also universal as Australian artists and photographers engaged with global developments.

Much contemporary Australian photographic practice draws its inspiration from the work of artists of the late 18th and 19th centuries. In the colonial period, artists, illustrators and graphic artists were widely employed to record Australia for audiences in England and Europe. Much of this work was scientific in nature, but as artists on the far-away continent began to feel the influence of Romanticism in the mid-19th century, a tradition of grand painting arose to remake Australia

as a dark and moody dreamland of hidden dangers and neo-classical idylls. Marian Drew's *Wombat and Watermelon* [2005] and Joseph McGlennon's *Thylacine Study* [2013] make explicit reference to this art history, reconfiguring the style of colonial artists in photography, while Bill Henson and Tamara Dean's works consciously connect to Romantic and neo-classical traditions in artfully composed contemporary tableaux. The tradition of landscape photography – long a staple of Australian art – is here seen vividly in Polixeni Papapetrou's *Ocean Man* [2013], while Indigenous artist Nici Cumpston's hand-coloured images evoke both the work of Aboriginal painters such as Albert Namatjira and quasi-objective scientific documentation of photography.

Until the 1980s, photography in Australia was regarded as a related but largely separate field of practice from what might be considered contemporary art. That division began to dissolve as the technology to make large-scale, colour photographic imagery became more widely available and, not coincidentally, as the effects of what was later called *postmodernism* became apparent in Australian art. The mark of this photography is

often found in studio-bound work that celebrates, rather than hides, the artificiality of its making. Works such as Petrina Hicks's *Venus* [2013] and Deborah Paauwe's *Blue Curtain* [2007] – which celebrate symbols of the feminine – share common ground with the work of Joan Ross and Catherine Nelson, two artists who use openly manipulated photography to reconstitute the landscape in satirical-historical and scientific terms, respectively. Shaun Gladwell's *Cook Invert* [2011] and Fabian Muir's *Blue Burqa* [2014] series of images represent a broad stream of performance art-photography practice: staged actions to create political and poetic narratives, a practice pioneered in works such as Rosemary Laing's *bulletproof glass #1* [2002].

A key member of the 1980s' generation of early postmodernists was Tracey Moffatt, whose *Something More #1* [1989] also serves as an important historical marker for Indigenous artists using photography to reinterpret, question and critique Australia's colonial heritage – and its contemporary attitudes. Michael Riley's *Untitled (Boomerang)* [2000] presents the titular object as a work of minimalist beauty. Tony Albert's *Mid Century Modern* [2016] and Destiny Deacon's *Axed* [1999/2003] find new narratives

for racist kitsch. Christian Thompson's *This Brutal World* [2017] – a response to Australian Modernist photographer Max Dupain's iconic *Sunbaker* [1937] – suggests an alternate interpretation of the country's sunburnt shores.

This sketch history of Australian photography represents three broad trends presented in this collection. Some outliers here, such as Narelle Autio's *Shark Tattoo* [2001] and Trent Parke's *No. 178, Candid Portrait of a man on a street corner* [2013], represent the poetic possibilities of street and documentary photography, both highly significant aspects of contemporary Australian photographic practice.

Can we say, then, that Australian photography is significantly different from trends and developments elsewhere? There is a widely held assumption that because of its geographical location, Australia is also culturally remote. This is not true, nor has it ever really been the case. Australian art has always kept abreast of what happens globally but also, because of its physical isolation, those influences mutated into idiosyncratic local variations. Indeed, one could argue that Australian photography *is* unique in the world because of the strange admixture of its historical circumstance. Where

cultural exchange between Australia and the world was once limited by the speed of freight and mail carriers, it is now instantaneously connected. The work therefore represents Australian photography, both what it has been and what it will become.

*Dr Andrew Frost is an art critic, broadcaster and independent researcher in contemporary art, science fiction and cinema. He is the art critic for Guardian Australia, the writer and presenter of thirteen documentaries on Australian contemporary art made for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and the director of the documentaries The Grand Disaster: A Portrait of McLean Edwards [2017] and My Space Program: The Art of Peter Hennessey [2015].*

# WALL POWER: EXHIBITED WORKS



Bill Henson  
*Untitled, 2007/2008*  
 c-type print  
 180 x 127 cm  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP

*on loan from Private Collection*

*image courtesy the Artist and  
 Roslyn Oxley9*

## Bill Henson *Untitled, 2007/2008*

Born 1955, Melbourne. Lives & works Melbourne.

Bill Henson's photographs encompass landscapes, interiors, portraits and nudes in a sensitive examination of the human condition. His cinematic images employ intense velvety shadows from which the artist's subjects emerge in lush and soft colours through masterful use of *chiaroscuro*.

Like most of Henson's works, *Untitled 2007/2008* is an image which leaves context to the viewer's imagination, presenting instead an open-ended narrative. A young nude woman emerges out of a dark background. She is lit from behind, causing a halo of light to appear around her slight frame. She is preoccupied by her thoughts, gazing at a point unseen by the viewer. Her *contrapposto* pose echoes that of classical statuary, her hands placed over her groin. As she stands on the precipice between childhood and adulthood, she is shown to be a figure of simultaneous vulnerability and strength. Henson's photograph elevates her from an uncertain pubescent girl, so often viewed by society with superficial indifference, to a powerful figure of womanhood.

## Brook Andrew *Systems of Substance VI*, 2017

Born 1970, Sydney. Wiradjuri. Lives & works Melbourne.

Brook Andrew's interdisciplinary practice examines dominant historical narratives – in particular, colonialism and modernism. Andrew often employs archival materials and imagery to pose questions around representation and identity.

The series *Systems of Substance* brings together archival research conducted while Andrew was a Photography Residency Laureate at the Musée du Quay Branly in Paris in 2016, and images taken during photographic trips to country Australia. This particular work brings together a black-and-white photograph of a group of soldiers, made anonymous by the cropping of the image at their necks, and a colour photograph of a cloud-dotted blue sky underscored by the tubes and scaffolding of a factory in the foreground. A number of inversions are contained in this combination of images, most prominently that of the ground and sky. Compositionally the arrangement of images is disruptive, the legs of the soldiers dangling towards the blue sky creating a cognitive dissonance for the viewer. By instinctively seeking to find and replace the heads of these men, we instead find the hard industrial pipes and silos of the factory – a collision, or collusion, of narratives around colonial dislocation.

Brook Andrew  
*Systems of Substance VI*, 2017  
hand-coloured silver gelatin photograph  
130.5 x 145.5 cm  
edition of 5 + 1 AP

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery*

*on loan from Artist,  
courtesy Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery*





Catherine Nelson  
*Guthega*, 2010  
pigment print from digital photograph  
100 x 100 cm  
edition of 7

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

## Catherine Nelson *Guthega*, 2010

Born 1970, Sydney. Lives & works Gent, Belgium & Amsterdam, Netherlands.

After studying painting, Catherine Nelson entered the world of film and television, creating visual effects for films such as *Moulin Rouge*, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* and *Australia*. In 2008, she turned her focus to her own art practice. Drawing on the painting and special effects elements of her art training, Nelson began to create photographs which moved beyond a direct representation of the world. Containing whole worlds in themselves, they are reflective of journeys taken by the artist through the landscape. Each image is created by piecing together hundreds of individual photographs, the resulting compositions suggesting fairy-tale worlds.

This work, *Guthega*, depicts a silvery green sphere floating against a cloudy grey sky. This miniature planet has a grassy surface which opens towards the viewer with a central slice. The body of water appears murky and mossy beneath its surface, with a collection of rocks and shale around its bank. Further afield a flock of birds disperses into space. It is a moody world, containing untold mysteries that create a sense of foreboding.



Deborah Paauwe  
*Blue Curtain*, 2007  
c-type print  
75 x 75 cm  
edition of 6 + 2 AP

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

## Deborah Paauwe *Blue Curtain*, 2007

Born 1972, West Chester, Pennsylvania, USA. Lives & works South Australia.

Deborah Paauwe's photographs explore the impact of childhood memories on adult life. The artist's images of girls and women are in many ways portraits, although the faces of her subjects are obscured, forcing the viewer to look closely at the bodies in the works for clues – be it in their pose, or a bruise or scar on their skin. Paauwe uses seductive photographic devices to draw viewers into her images in order to explore more opaque subtexts. Her subjects don costumes which suggest gendered roles and activities, the brightly coloured outfits and backdrops suggestive of fashion and advertising photographic tropes. The brightness and girlishness of these images combine with the unsettling poses of the subjects to create a sense of the uncanny and disturbing.

In *Blue Curtain* the subject uses the ethereal blue sheer fabric to shroud herself protectively despite its flimsy ineffectiveness. Her arms wrap nervously around each other, covering a ruffled cream lace dress, symbolic of innocent femininity – perhaps a confirmation dress or bridesmaid's gown? As in many of Paauwe's works, the age of the person in the image is ambiguous, allowing the viewer to concoct their own narrative.



Destiny Deacon  
*Axed*, 1999/2003  
 lightjet print from Polaroid original  
 100 x 80 cm  
 edition of 15

*image courtesy the Artist and  
 Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery*

*on loan from Helen and Tim Throsby*

## Destiny Deacon *Axed*, 1999/2003

Born 1957, Maryborough, Queensland. G'ua G'ua & Erub/Mer.  
 Lives & works Melbourne.

Describing herself as a political artist, Destiny Deacon has engaged with political themes across work in performance, academia and activism. Deacon's installations, video works and photographs are imbued with a dark humour, and explore the rift between the perception of Aboriginal people by non-Aboriginals, and Aboriginal people's own lived experience. The artist's use of a low-tech aesthetic creates an emotional immediacy between the viewer and the images.

The subject of *Axed* is a dark-skinned doll which has been decapitated by an axe. This unfortunate scene played out on dirty wooden floorboards has been photographed from above, the angle and lighting suggestive of a piece of crime scene evidence. The doll, a symbol of maternal nurturing, recalls the trauma suffered by the Stolen Generations of Aboriginal children separated from their parents and forced into state care. The doll has been set up to hold the axe itself, framing it as responsible for its own predicament. Deacon reclaims this object of Aboriginal kitsch with this violent gesture that serves as a reminder of the relationship between Australia's Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.



Fabian Muir  
*Blue Burqa #1*, 2014  
digital pigment print on William Turner  
Hahnemühle matt fine art paper  
80 x 120 cm  
edition of 8 + 2 AP

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

*on loan from the Collection of  
Tony and Fran Meagher*

## Fabian Muir *Blue Burqa #1*, 2014

Born 1969, Melbourne. Lives & works Sydney.

Fabian Muir's 2014 suite *Blue Burqa in a Sunburnt Country* saw the artist travel 10,000 kilometres through the extremes of Australia's natural landscape photographing a figure wearing the Islamic garment. In Muir's work the veil is used as an allegorical device, making reference to issues around assimilation, populism and immigration. The series captured the ways the flowing blue form of the burqa interacted with the colours, forms and weather phenomena of the landscape. Muir seeks to highlight the debates and conflicts that have occurred in Australia and many Western countries around acceptance of refugees and, in particular, Muslim people.

In this image Muir has used intense, high-key colours to his advantage, placing the blue burqa-clad figure against a red, corrugated iron fence – a scene reminiscent of the iconic paintings of the late Australian artist Jeffrey Smart. The work captures the heat of the sun shining down on the starkly contrasting elements in this hotly contested scene of contemporary Australia.

Muir works as a documentary and fine art photographer, focusing on humanist issues and visual storytelling. Prior to the *Burqa* series, he spent many years documenting the legacy of the former Soviet Union.



Joan Ross  
*Who's gonna clean up this mess, 2015*  
hand-painted pigment print on  
cotton rag paper  
96 x 150 cm  
edition of 5 + 1 AP

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

*on loan from Robyn Flemming*

## Joan Ross

### *Who's gonna clean up this mess, 2015*

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Born 1961, Glasgow, Scotland. Lives & works Sydney.

With a practice encompassing drawing, painting, installation, photography, sculpture and video, Joan Ross addresses Australia's colonial legacy. Ross's works often use imagery from 18th-century landscape paintings as sets in which European protagonists, often coloured fluorescent safety yellow, stake their claim on the Australian bush. Ross is concerned with the effect of colonialism, particularly on Aboriginal people, and on native flora and fauna. The artist employs humorous devices to introduce these concerns, creating giant designer handbags from kangaroo pelt, and turning gaming machines into colonial pick-n-mixes. These techniques allow Ross to seduce the viewer into questioning the status quo of Australian cultural identity.

In *Who's gonna clean up this mess* (2015), an image of Newcastle, New South Wales, made by convict artist Joseph Lycett in 1824 has been invaded by a huge fluorescent dog taken from a painting by Gainsborough. The dog has made an unfortunate mess, in the same lurid shade as itself, and the same size as the buildings which make up the then-small village of Newcastle over which the dog stands. Ross's amusing title invites the viewer to consider the carelessness with which British colonialists treated this land and its inhabitants.



Joseph McGlennon  
*Thylacine Study No. 5, 2013*  
giclée digital print on archival  
Hahnemühle fine art paper  
100 x 120 cm  
edition of 8 + 2 AP

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

## Joseph McGlennon *Thylacine Study No. 5, 2013*

Born 1957, Adelaide. Lives & works Singapore.

Joseph McGlennon began his photographic career in advertising. His approach to creating his images reflects this background, as the artist spends weeks painstakingly layering and arranging many photographs to construct the final image. Every detail in McGlennon's photographs is carefully considered, creating a hyper-real effect that recalls the traditions of studio portrait photography. However, in place of human subjects, McGlennon turns his lens to animals, often the extinct, endangered or exotic specimen. McGlennon is drawn to taxidermy as a practice that bridges the gap between life and death. He brings these specimens further into the realm of the living through elaborately constructed backdrops designed to reflect the natural habitats of these creatures rather than their museological resting place.

The thylacine, commonly known as the Tasmanian tiger, was the largest known carnivorous marsupial of our age, and is believed to have become extinct in the 20th century. By the time of British invasion it was nearing extinction on the Australian continent but survived on the island state of Tasmania, before intensive bounty hunting and other factors introduced by colonists rendered it extinct by the 1930s. All surviving photographs of the thylacine show it in captivity. McGlennon's *Thylacine* series is the result of the artist's desire to depict this mythologised creature in its natural habitat.



Luke Shadbolt  
*Acquiesce #8*, 2017  
giclée digital print on archival  
Hahnemühle fine art paper  
100 x 150 cm  
edition of 8 + 2 AP

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

## Luke Shadbolt *Acquiesce #8*, 2017

Born 1984, Terrigal, New South Wales. Lives & works Sydney.

Luke Shadbolt's practice focuses on the forces of nature that collide in the ocean. His passion for the sea has seen him create two bodies of work, *Maelstrom* (in 2016) and most recently *Acquiesce the Front*. Both series capture waves at their most dynamic, creating compositions in which the tumbling, spraying, churning and arcing foam echoes the spontaneous strokes of a paintbrush.

Shadbolt's photographs continue a broad art historical tradition of artists – from J.M.W. Turner to Hokusai – attempting to capture the turbulent ocean. In *Acquiesce #8*, the waves are seen from above. At the top of the image, dark water is being sucked into a curve of spray which transforms it into the frothy surface in the lower half of the composition. The impression is both macrocosmic and microcosmic, appearing simultaneously like a topographic scene viewed from space, and the individual cells of a skin-like surface. Shadbolt's photograph allows the viewer to see the ocean through new eyes and, in doing so, to reflect on their own place in nature's grand scheme.



Marian Drew  
*Wombat and Watermelon*, 2005  
archival pigments on  
Hahnemühle cotton paper  
70 x 90 cm  
European edition of 3

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

## Marian Drew *Wombat and Watermelon*, 2005

Born 1960, Bundaberg, Queensland. Lives & works Brisbane.

In Marian Drew's photographs, Australian wildlife meets the 17th-century European still-life tradition of *vanitas*, where animals are placed in the context of consumable food and objects in the service of people. Australians often fleetingly encounter dead wildlife on the side of the road or in the mouth of their pet; however, through Drew's lens these animals are imbued with a sense of pathos in death by the way they are positioned within the scenes. These seductive tableaux, with their careful lighting and lush colours, confound the fact that these animals have been unthinkingly sacrificed in the making of our contemporary lives.

*Wombat and Watermelon* is a simple composition in which the luminous pink and green of the fruit takes centre stage. To the right of the frame lies the dead wombat on its back, legs outstretched towards the rounded skin of the watermelon. To the left of the image lies a scattering of other fruit. The unceremoniously hacked flesh of the watermelon serves as a reminder of the mortality of the wombat, which Drew has situated within a context so unlikely it forces the viewer to consider this iconic creature with new eyes.



Michael Riley  
*Untitled, 2000/2005*  
from the series *Cloud*  
chromogenic pigment print  
110 x 155 cm

*image courtesy The Michael Riley  
Foundation and The Commercial  
Gallery, Sydney*

*on loan from Private Collection*

# Michael Riley

## *Untitled, 2000/2005*

Born 1960, Dubbo, New South Wales. Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi.  
Lived & worked Sydney. Died 2004.

Michael Riley was a photographer and filmmaker who co-founded the landmark Boomalli Aboriginal Artist Co-operative in Sydney along with eight other artists (including Tracey Moffatt, whose work also appears in *WALL POWER*). The subjects of Riley’s early works were his peers, all members of a talented generation who blazed a trail for strong Indigenous Australian voices through cultural work and activism. As well as portraiture, Riley worked in photo-collage and made conceptual works as well as documentary films.

*Untitled* is part of Riley’s *Cloud* suite. This was the artist’s first body of work to use digital photographic techniques. It was also the last photographic suite the artist completed before his death at age 44 in 2004. Each photograph depicts a single object floating against a blue sky mottled with white clouds. These objects include the wings of an angel statue and of a bird, a single feather, a moth, a boomerang, a cow and a bible. Together these objects represent elements of the artist’s childhood – objects of communication and survival in a community permanently altered by white Christian settlement.



Narelle Autio  
*Shark Tattoo*, 2001  
from the series *Watercolours*  
c-type print  
80 x 120 cm  
edition of 15

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Hugo Michell Gallery*

*on loan from Private Collection*

## Narelle Autio

### *Shark Tattoo*, 2001

Born 1969, Adelaide. Lives & works Adelaide.

Narelle Autio's works are concerned with the Australian landscape and lifestyle, particularly the outback and coast. Recalling her earlier career in photojournalism, Autio's photographs serve as a counterpoint to stereotypical, romanticised images of the ocean or bush. Instead, Autio chooses to focus on spontaneous moments and encounters – exquisite wildlife come to rest as roadkill; the sublime horizon blurred from a speeding vehicle; the turbulent surf viewed from below.

*Shark Tattoo* is from the series *Watercolours*, a suite celebrating leisure time in and around the sea. This image has been captured from below the ocean's surface, which appears algae-green in contrast to an arc of blue sky at the top of the frame. Beneath the waves, three figures are visible, each visually decapitated. The man in the centre of the image treads water away from the viewer, the top of his head appearing far above his body as two specks on the threshold between green and blue.

The figure closest to the viewer sports a number of tattoos on his sun-dappled shoulder, including a shark which lunges in our direction, jaws parted. Autio's playful use of the water's surface as an unpredictable photographic lens allows for a swirl of reflection leading from the swimmer's shoulder up to his head which bobs above the surface.



Nici Cumpston  
*Listening to the River*, 2005/2016  
 from the series *Attesting*  
 crayon on archival pigment print on  
 Hahnemühle fine art paper  
 72 x 170 cm  
 edition of 5

*image courtesy the Artist and  
 Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

## Nici Cumpston

### *Listening to the River*, 2005/2016

Born 1963, Adelaide. Barkindji. Lives & works Adelaide.

Artist and curator Nici Cumpston emphasises her Afghan, English, Irish and Barkindji Aboriginal heritage, as well as her cultural affiliations with the River Murray people, in order to demonstrate the inherent diversity of all humans. Cumpston is best known for her works employing the technique of hand colouring photographs. Her images, taken in the Australian bush, are also informed by her years working for the South Australian Police Department, where, amongst other work, she processed and printed crime scene, accident investigation and forensic autopsy films.

*Listening to the River* is from Cumpston's *Attesting* series, which saw the artist documenting the environmental impact of the Australian Federal Government's decision to cut the water-flow to Nookamka (Lake Bonney) on the Murray River. As the lakebed dried, it revealed evidence of pre-colonial Aboriginal occupation of the site, which was captured by Cumpston's lens before it was erased by heavy rains in subsequent years. Cumpston captures this paradoxical destruction via panoramic photographs referencing colonial-era Western depictions of the Australian landscape. Here the gum trees stand as ghostly sentinels reflected in unmoving waters.



Petrina Hicks  
*Venus*, 2013  
pigment print  
120 x 120 cm  
edition of 4 + 1 AP

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

## Petrina Hicks *Venus*, 2013

49

Born 1972, Sydney. Lives & works Sydney.

Petrina Hicks embraces the conventions of commercial photography in her work, using glossy perfection in her images to seduce viewers with images that contain a darker quality. Her works bring together this contemporary aesthetic with references to history and mythology in order to explore female identity.

There are a number of contradictions at work in Hicks's deceptively simple image *Venus*. Compositionally, this work is a traditional bust portrait; however, the subject has obscured her face with a large conch shell. Conch shells have been employed as a trumpet for communication across the world in various contexts, but in this image the conch prevents the viewer from seeing the face of the subject, obscuring communication. The shell's opening is presented to the audience, its soft pink and flesh tones along with its shape suggestive of female genitalia. The name *Venus* makes clear reference to Botticelli's painting *The Birth of Venus*, which shows the Roman goddess of love emerging from the sea aboard a scallop shell. Hicks's subject, like Botticelli's, is white with long blonde hair, an idealised Western notion of beauty whose identity is defined by the pink shell which symbolises her sexual organs.



Polixeni Papapetrou  
*Ocean Man*, 2013  
from the series *The Ghillies*  
pigment ink print  
120 x 120 cm  
edition of 8 + 2AP

*image courtesy the Artist,  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin and  
Jarvis Dooney Gallery, Berlin*

## Polixeni Papapetrou *Ocean Man*, 2013

Born 1960, Melbourne. Lives & works Melbourne.

Ghillie suits were originally worn by Scottish gamekeepers before being adopted by hunters, snipers and the army as a form of camouflage. Polixeni Papapetrou's photographic series *The Ghillies* came about when the artist's son Solomon came across a ghillie suit in an archery store. Solomon, familiar with the garment through playing the video game *Call of Duty*, insisted on Papapetrou buying the suit and photographing him in it. The resulting suite of works featured both of the artist's children wearing the suits in a variety of landscapes across southeastern Australia, from the desert and bush, to the coastal scene depicted in *Ocean Man*. The series is concerned with the transitional space of childhood, with Papapetrou explaining that her aim was to 'make a body of work that looked at what it felt like to be a boy going through adolescence'.

Papapetrou's practice is concerned with the relationships between identity, culture and history. Since 2002 the artist's work has been particularly focused on childhood. Her own children have modelled for her for photographs taken on location and in the studio before artificial backdrops. Papapetrou's use of costumes in these settings highlights the play and theatre of childhood exploration, with her subjects often depicting characters from fairy tales, literature and popular culture.



Rosemary Laing  
*bulletproofglass #1, 2002*  
c-type print  
102 x 209 cm

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Galerie Conrads, Dusseldorf*

*on loan from Private Collection*

## Rosemary Laing *bulletproofglass #1, 2002*

Born 1959, Brisbane. Lives & works Sydney.

Rosemary Laing creates photographic suites which are often tied to places of cultural or historical significance in Australia, or made in response to specific socio-political situations. While sometimes depicting scenarios that might appear digitally manipulated, the artist's works often come about either through interventions on site, or through carefully choreographed performances, which are painstakingly created and subsequently photographed by Laing.

Like Laing's widely recognised *flight research* series before it, the series of photographs *bulletproofglass* feature a woman in a bridal gown floating through the air, appearing to hover, leap or fly. Laing's subject becomes a fantastical billowing cloud; however, in this series the joyful fantasy is brutally disrupted by a bullet wound to the protagonist's torso. The clouds form a plane dividing the sky into two halves, and with her dark red blood contrasting with the clarity of the white clouds and dress and the blue sky, this bride and her lost innocence is caught between life and death, heaven and earth.



Shaun Gladwell  
*Cook Invert*, 2011  
 c-type print  
 177.5 x 134 cm  
 edition of 2 + AP

*image courtesy the Artist and  
 Anna Schwartz Gallery*

*on loan from the Collection of  
 Tony and Fran Meagher*

## Shaun Gladwell *Cook Invert*, 2011

Born 1972, Sydney. Lives & works Sydney & London, UK.

Shaun Gladwell is best known for his video works which feature the artist as a solitary figure engaging with the natural and urban environments through counter-cultural activities. In the case of *Cook Invert*, Gladwell literally turns Australia's colonial history on its head. Performer Kathryn Puie assumes a pose akin to an action figurine, holding onto suspension wires but appearing to lean quite nonchalantly against the base of a statue. This statue in Hyde Park in central Sydney valorises Captain James Cook and his 'discovery' of the East Coast of Australia in 1770.

While somewhat different from many of Gladwell's works which use dynamic activities such as skateboarding and motorcycle riding to engage with the landscape, *Cook Invert* continues the artist's investigation of the way human activity can subvert existing understandings of our environment. It also carries on Gladwell's interest in examining mortality. Cook is immortalised in this sculpture; however, the performer's precarious pose highlights the mortality of humans. Cook himself was killed by Indigenous people of Hawaii, yet continues to be celebrated because of his 'discovery' of Australia, which ultimately led to the suffering of Indigenous Australians under colonial settlement. History may seem fixed, in the same way these statues are fixed, but Gladwell invites us to imagine how our small but powerful individual gestures can affect the shape of history.



Tamara Dean  
*Ebenezer Rock Drop*, 2013  
from the series *The Edge*  
archival pigment print on cotton rag  
paper  
75 x 100 cm  
edition of 8 + 2 AP

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Martin Brown Contemporary*

*on loan from the Artist, courtesy  
Martin Brown Contemporary*

## Tamara Dean *Ebenezer Rock Drop*, 2013

Born 1976, Sydney. Lives & works Berry, New South Wales.

The works of Tamara Dean, encompassing photography as well as installation and participatory works, explore the relationship between humans and the natural world, and the place of ritual in contemporary life. To take these images, Dean engages along with her subjects in their chosen activity. This allows the artist to capture their experiences with exceptional intimacy and emotional depth.

*Ebenezer Rock Drop* is part of Dean's series *The Edge*. A group of young people are gathered at the edge of a lake as one prepares to swing over and into it from a suspended rope, in an informal rite of passage. The act of jumping into the water, echoing a baptismal ritual, sees these young people launching themselves over a physical and emotional barrier in order to join the milieu of their peers. In portraying this scene, Dean reminds viewers of the lack of a formal transition from childhood in contemporary secular Australia.

While these are clearly contemporary subjects, Dean has captured their poses and expressions in a timeless manner, setting them into the wild sublime landscape with a lush moodiness that echoes 19th-century painting.

## Tony Albert

### *Mid Century Modern*, 2016

Born 1981, Townsville, Queensland. Giramay & Kuku Yalanji.  
Lives & works Sydney.

Tony Albert's works examine the legacy of racial and cultural representation of Aboriginal Australians. In recent years, he has become known for images and installations that employ what Albert has termed 'Aboriginalia': kitsch items such as statuettes, crockery and toys featuring naïve portrayals of Australian Aboriginal peoples and cultures.

Here we see a selection of works drawn from Albert's suite *Mid Century Modern* – 70 photographs of ashtrays presented against textile backdrops. Some of these objects appropriate the imagery and techniques of certain types of Aboriginal mark-making, while others feature portrayals of Aboriginal people engaged in stereotypical activities such as hunting or fishing. Set against carefully chosen backgrounds featuring screen-printed designs of a similar nature, these elegantly shaped objects speak to the mid-20th century interior design aesthetic currently enjoying a contemporary renaissance.

The legacy of Australia's colonial history endures, not only in overt ways but insidious ones, such as the glamorisation of these problematic objects. The cigarette butts stubbed out on the appropriated images in each ashtray recall viscerally the callousness of colonialism. By arranging each photograph as a domestic composition from the smoker's perspective, Albert reminds us of the changes needed in individual attitudes if Australia is to address its collective history.



Tony Albert  
*Mid Century Modern* (4 of 70 panels),  
2016  
pigment print on paper  
50 x 50 cm each  
edition of 2

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Sullivan+Strumpf*

*on loan from Helen and Tim Throsby*





Tracey Moffatt  
*Something More #1* (single panel), 1989  
 series of 9 images  
 cibachrome print  
 98 x 127 cm  
 edition of 30

*image courtesy the Artist and  
 Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery*

*on loan from the Collection of  
 Naomi Milgrom AO*

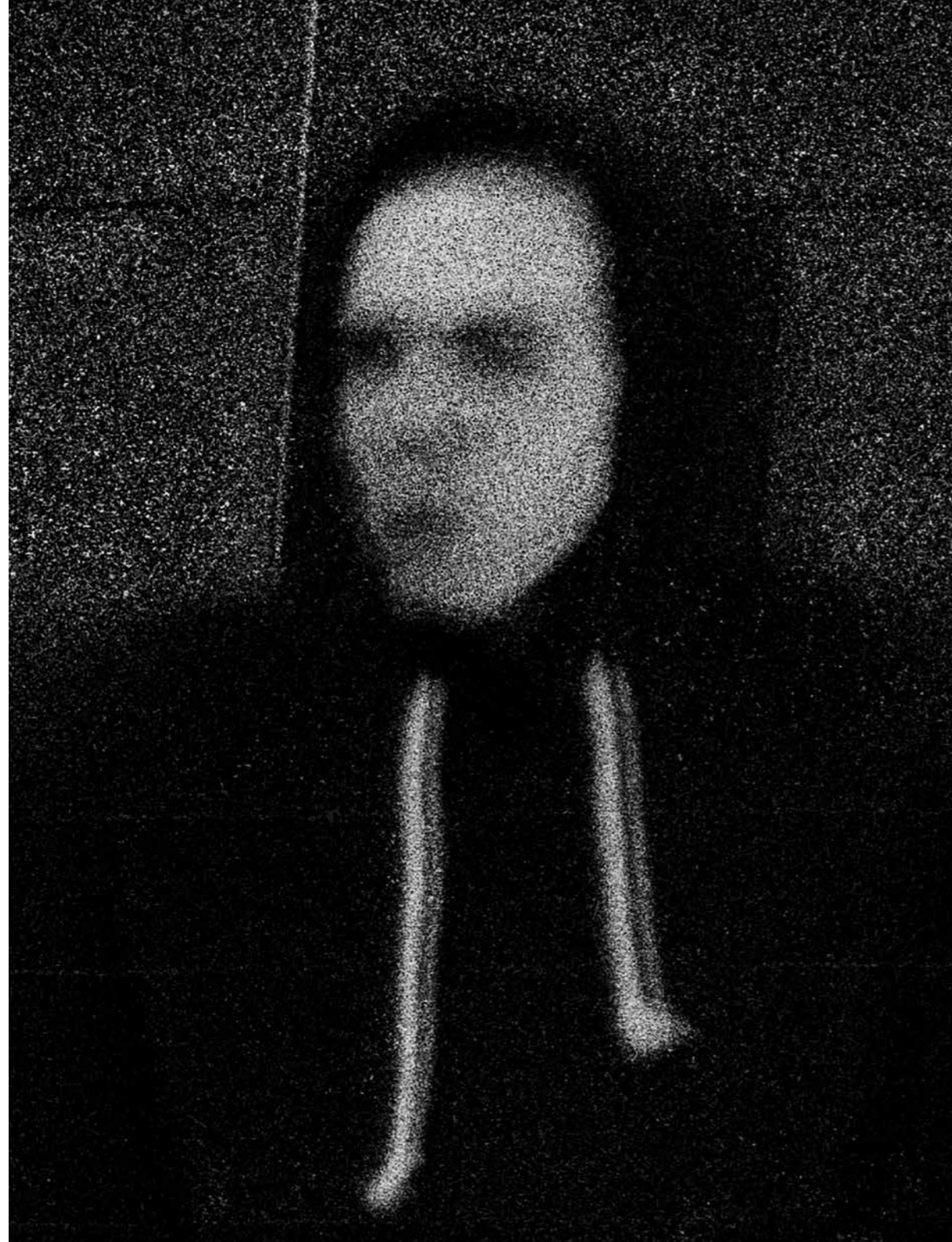
*Tracey Moffatt is the representative  
 for Australia in the 57th Venice  
 Biennale 2017*

## Tracey Moffatt *Something More #1, 1989*

Born 1960, Brisbane. Lives & works Sydney.

Tracey Moffatt is a filmmaker and photographer, and one of Australia's most successful artists nationally and internationally. Moffatt's photographic series, much like the artist's films, take the viewer through an unspoken narrative. Her works are often based upon personal stories which capture the pain and humour of the human experience.

In 1988, Australia marked the Bicentenary of the arrival of the First Fleet of convict ships from Britain. The event sparked a debate around national identity, Indigenous rights and multiculturalism. *Something More* was created in the wake of these discussions. The series depicts the artist herself as the main protagonist, a young woman in a rural place longing for 'something more'. The compositions and painted backdrops of *Something More* make reference to the work of Australian painters Russell Drysdale and Albert Namatjira, taking these iconic interpretations of the Australian landscape as points of departure. The young woman's attempts to escape to the better life she imagines for herself are ultimately dashed. However, in this first image in the suite she is still contemplating what lies beyond her current world while the status quo plays out around her.



Trent Park  
*No. 178, Candid Portrait of a man on a  
 street corner, Adelaide, Australia, 2013*  
 from the series *The Camera is God*  
 pigment print  
 80 x 60 cm  
 edition of 2

*image courtesy the Artist and  
 Hugo Michell Gallery*

*on loan from Private Collection*

## Trent Parke

### *No. 178, Candid Portrait of a man on a street corner, Adelaide, Australia, 2013*

Born 1971, Newcastle, New South Wales. Lives & works Adelaide.

Trent Parke is the first Australian photographer to become a member of the Magnum Photo Agency. Parke works primarily as a street photographer; however, his images go beyond traditional documentation into a realm of psychological investigation between fiction and reality.

For the series *The Camera is God*, Parke explored city streets at night, taking a series of portraits of anonymous people standing on street corners. These grainy images contain varying degrees of clarity, as if we are viewing them through night vision goggles. Some become clearer from a distance; others contain shifting subjects unable to be fixed by the viewer. They appear as spectres, or the remains of a dream impressed on the eye upon waking. Their identities become subsumed into the psychological journey of the artist. In this image from the series, a hooded figure is reduced to a dark shape whose white face is underscored by two parallel white lines made by the cord of his hoodie. Peer in close, and he disappears into an asphalt-like surface.

LIST OF WORKS

Christian Thompson  
*This Brutal World*, 2017  
c-type print on Fuji Pearl  
120 x 120 cm  
edition of 6 + 2 AP  
*image courtesy the Artist, the Australian Centre for Photography and Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

Bill Henson  
*Untitled*, 2007/2008  
c-type print  
180 x 127 cm  
edition of 5 + 2 AP  
*on loan from Private Collection*  
*image courtesy the Artist and Roslyn Oxley9*

Brook Andrew  
*Systems of Substance VI*, 2017  
hand-coloured silver gelatin photograph  
130.5 x 145.5 cm  
edition of 5 + 1 AP  
*image courtesy the Artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery*  
*on loan from Artist, courtesy Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery*

Catherine Nelson  
*Guthega*, 2010  
pigment print from digital photograph  
100 x 100 cm  
edition of 7  
*image courtesy the Artist and Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

Deborah Paauwe  
*Blue Curtain*, 2007  
c-type print  
75 x 75 cm  
edition of 6 + 2 AP  
*image courtesy the Artist and Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

Destiny Deacon  
*Axed*, 1999/2003  
lightjet print from Polaroid original  
100 x 80 cm  
edition of 15  
*image courtesy the Artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery*  
*on loan from Helen and Tim Throsby*

Fabian Muir  
*Blue Burqa #1*, 2014  
digital pigment print on William Turner Hahnemühle matt  
fine art paper  
80 x 120 cm  
edition of 8 + 2 AP  
*image courtesy the Artist and Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*  
*on loan from the Collection of Tony and Fran Meagher*

Joan Ross  
*Who's gonna clean up this mess*, 2015  
hand-painted pigment print on cotton rag paper  
96 x 150 cm  
edition of 5 + 1 AP  
*image courtesy the Artist and Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*  
*on loan from Robyn Flemming*

Joseph McGlennon  
*Thylacine Study No. 5*, 2013  
giclée digital print on archival Hahnemühle fine art paper  
100 x 120 cm  
edition of 8 + 2 AP  
*image courtesy the Artist and Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

Luke Shadbolt  
*Acquiesce #8*, 2017  
giclée digital print on archival Hahnemühle fine art paper  
100 x 150 cm  
edition of 8 + 2 AP  
*image courtesy the Artist and Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

Marian Drew  
*Wombat and Watermelon*, 2005  
archival pigments on Hahnemühle cotton paper  
70 x 90 cm  
European edition of 3  
*image courtesy the Artist and Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

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*Untitled*, 2000/2005  
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*image courtesy The Michael Riley Foundation and The Commercial Gallery, Sydney*  
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*Gods & Kings*, 2016  
c-type print on Fuji Pearl  
edition of 6 + 2 AP  
*image courtesy the Artist and Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

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This exhibition has required numerous loans from private collections, including those of Tim Throsby, Fran and Tony Meagher, Robyn Flemming, Naomi Milgrom AO and various collectors who wish to remain anonymous. Multiple loans were facilitated directly with artists, including Catherine Nelson, Christian Thompson, Deborah Paauwe, Joseph McGlennon, Luke Shadbolt, Marian Drew, Nici Cumpston, Petrina Hicks and Polixeni Papapetrou. We thank each lender for making these important works available for this exhibition and for their ongoing support of Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin and all its endeavours.

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Lastly, our greatest thanks go to all the artists included in this exhibition; they are world class and thoroughly deserve every chance to be exhibited on the world stage.

*Toby Meagher, Curator*

WALL POWER:  
Contemporary Australian Photography

## Cologne

Haus der Stiftungen  
7 September–7 October 2017

## Berlin

Direktorenhaus  
1–23 December 2017

## London

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17–25 May 2018

## Paris

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Claire Monneraye, Andrew Frost & Chloé Wolifson

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Copy Editor: Robyn Flemming

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Back cover:  
Christian Thompson  
*Gods & Kings*, 2016  
c-type print on Fuji Pearl  
edition of 6 + 2 AP

*image courtesy the Artist and  
Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin*

## Christian Thompson *Gods & Kings*, 2016

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Born 1978, Gawler, South Australia. Bidjara. Lives & works London.

Christian Thompson works across photography, video, sculpture, performance and sound in a multidisciplinary practice examining identity, cultural hybridity and history. The artist is best known for his photographs and live performances which see him appear in handmade costumes, posing against constructed backdrops. Thompson does not regard these images as self-portraits; rather, the artist sees the personas he inhabits in these works as explorations of identity, sexuality, gender, race and memory.

In the photograph *Gods & Kings*, Thompson appears covered by a hooded shield of triangular origami, made from a combination of maps which tell a number of historical narratives from different perspectives – a history of Australia's Indigenous people, that of colonisers, and also of discovering and charting the country. Thompson wears this object as an armature, but he also appears almost hidden by it, consumed by the weight of conflicting and unresolved histories that it represents.

M I C H A E L

R E I D



S Y D N E Y

+

B E R L I N