

# craftivism. dissident objects and subversive forms.

edukit.



# craftivism. dissident objects and subversive forms.

*Craftivism. Dissident Objects and Subversive Forms* presents the work of 18 contemporary Australian artists and groups who use craft materials and techniques with a political intent. Broadening our understanding of craft-making traditions, the artists in this exhibition subvert and extend these forms as vehicles for activism and social change, reflecting on the world in which we live. While some respond directly to artistic or political movements, others encourage social connection between community members with works that require participatory activation through collective processes.

Craft, activism and social change have long been interlinked; they have crossed boundaries and borders, genders and generations. *Craftivism. Dissident Objects and Subversive Forms* evidences this moment in contemporary art, embracing craft techniques in order to explore and articulate the ideas and issues of our times.

This exhibition addresses a number of themes. Gender, representation and identity are ever-present, because 'the personal as political' remains relevant today. Many artists are engaged with environmental politics and climate change, while others are concerned about contested borders, immigration and democracy. Many embrace relational production processes that implicitly promote collaboration and social connection. This exhibition reveals the myriad ways that these artists challenge our perceptions of craft materials and approaches within a contemporary context, inviting viewers to rethink craft in a new light.

Catherine Bell

Karen Black

Penny Byrne

Erub Arts

Debris Facility

Starlie Geikie

Michelle Hamer

Kate Just

Deborah Kelly

Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran

Raquel Ormella

Kate Rohde

Slow Art Collective

Tai Snaith

Hiromi Tango

James Tylor

Jemima Wyman

Paul Yore

#### Curators:

Anna Briers, Senior Curator, and

Dr Rebecca Coates, Director.

#### Cover image:

Hiromi Tango

*Amygdala (Fireworks)* 2016

neon and mixed media

120 x 140 x 40 cm

© the artist, courtesy the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney / Singapore

# touring schedule.

## Shepparton Art Museum (SAM)

Shepparton, Victoria  
24 November 2018 – 17 February 2019

## Warrnambool Art Gallery

Warrnambool, Victoria  
4 March – 5 May 2019

## Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery

Mornington, Victoria  
17 May – 21 July 2019

## Museum of Australian Democracy

Canberra, Australian Capital Territory  
6 September 2019 – 2 February 2020

## Bega Valley Regional Gallery

Bega, New South Wales  
18 April – 13 June 2020

## Warwick Art Gallery

Warwick, Queensland  
3 July – 15 August 2020

## University of the Sunshine Coast Art Gallery

Sunshine Coast, Queensland  
12 September – 31 October 2020

Jemima Wyman

*Propaganda textiles – Washington, Pink Bloc protester at Gay Pride in Copacabana, 13th October 2013 (detail) 2016—17*

custom made fabric book: *Minky, Hot Pink Brazil 10-13*, ed. 2/6 + 2AP  
40.5 x 45.5 x 2.5 cm

© the artist, courtesy the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney / Singapore  
and Milani Gallery, Brisbane.



# glossary of key terms:

## the Anthropocene

noun: a proposed term for the present geological epoch (from the time of the Industrial Revolution onwards), during which humanity has begun to have a significant impact on the environment

## catharsis/cathartic

noun: the process of releasing, and thereby providing relief from, strong or repressed emotions

adjective: providing psychological relief through the open expression of strong emotions; causing catharsis

## craftivism

craft + activism = craftivism; craftivism is the practice of engaged creativity, especially regarding political, environmental or social causes

## detritus

noun: waste or debris of any kind

## dissident

noun: a person who opposes official policy, especially that of an authoritarian state

adjective: in opposition to official policy

## epoch

noun: a particular period of time marked by distinctive features, events, etc.

## ethnography

noun: a branch of anthropology; the scientific description of peoples and cultures with their customs, habits, and mutual differences

## gender

noun: either of the two sexes (male and female), especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones, the term is also used more broadly to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female

## ghost net

noun: a commercial fishing net that has been lost, abandoned or discarded at sea that floats on currents, entangling and killing marine life

## identity

noun: the fact of being who or what a person or thing is; identity is the conception, qualities, beliefs, and expressions that make a person (self-identity) or group (such as national identity and cultural identity) different from others

## patina

noun: a film or incrustation, usually green, produced by oxidation on the surface of old bronze, often esteemed as being of ornamental value; a similar film or colouring appearing gradually on some other substance

## resettle

verb: settle or cause to settle in a different place

## selfhood

noun: the state of being an individual person; individuality; one's personality

## subordinated

adjective: noting or designating a debt obligation whose holder is placed in precedence below secured and general creditors

## subversive

noun: a subversive person

adjective: seeking or intended to subvert an established system or institution

# gender identity and representation.

Previously subordinated within art world hierarchies, craft has been a trending topic for the last decade, its processes and presence now seen in both popular culture and contemporary art circles. In Rozsika Parker's seminal text *The Subversive Stitch* 1984, the feminist theorist argued that the historical divisions between art and craft, as well as their attributions of value, were bound up within the divisions of gender. Craft was associated with the defining and reinforcing of notions of femininity; it was considered a frivolous, decorative activity found in the domestic sphere. By contrast, painting and sculpture were considered more intellectual, masculine pursuits, produced for financial gain in the public domain.<sup>1</sup> The artists in this exhibition leverage off both traditional craft techniques and their associated readings in relation to gender constructs and representation. Concurrently, they reinscribe the value of craft as a powerful and subversive tactic within the canon of contemporary art.

Using craft materials and techniques, artists, such as Deborah Kelly and Kate Just, explore ideas concerning gender, sexuality, feminism and LGBTQ+ politics, responding to histories of representation and creating new aesthetic forms of selfhood and rebellion.<sup>2</sup>

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**Anna Briers**

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<sup>1</sup> Parker, R, 'The Creation of Femininity', in *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine*, Women's Press, London, 1984, pp. 5–11.

<sup>2</sup> Briers, A, 'Subversive Craft as a Contemporary Art Strategy: Re-thinking the Histories of Gender and Representation.' *Craftivism. Dissident Objects and Subversive Forms* (ex. cat.), published by NETS Victoria and Shepparton Art Museum, 2018, p12.



## deborah kelly.

*LYING WOMEN* 2016

digital video, 16:9 ratio, colour, stereo, 3:56 minutes

Cinematography by Christian J Heinrich

Editor: Elliott Magen

Original score composed by Evelyn Ida Morris

Soundscape: Adam Hulbert

© the artist, courtesy the artist

Deborah Kelly's animated collage, *LYING WOMEN*, 2016 features multiple reproductions of reclining female nudes painted by male artists. Cut from art history books, these once passive figures are released from the picture plane and enlivened by Kelly's use of stop motion animation. This distances them from the role into which they were cast by the male artist; that of an idealised feminine form to be gazed at. Kelly's work highlights the similarities in the original works (i.e. pose and role of the woman in the painting) and the variations on the original created through reproduction.

### activity.

Research other non-animated collage works by Deborah Kelly. Using her method as inspiration, and magazines, old books and photos as source material, manually create a collage of a figure that expresses your understanding of gender or identity.

# kate just.

*Feminist Fan #3 (Pussy Riot at Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Savior, 2012)* 2015  
hand-knitted wool and acrylic yarns,  
canvas, timber  
38.1 x 50.8 cm  
© the artist, courtesy the artist  
Photo: Simon Strong



Kate Just's knitted works are images of feminist artists and activists. Just's works pay homage to the protestors whilst acting as another protest, laboriously created through the 'domestic art' of knitting and hash-tagged to enable sharing via social media.

## Casey Jenkins:

Co-founder of radical craft group Craft Cartel, prolific performance artist, and craftivist, Casey Jenkins became widely known for her 2013 performance work, *Casting off my womb*. 'When Pussy Riot was imprisoned, Casey Jenkins and some other artists in Melbourne had organised a protest, and I had this photo of Casey holding a sign that said 'PUSSY' on the steps of Parliament House.'<sup>3</sup> – Kate Just

## Pussy Riot:

Clad in brightly coloured dresses, tights, and balaclavas, Pussy Riot is a Russian Feminist punk rock band which came to notoriety in February 2012, when three of the band's twelve members shot a music video at Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour called *Punk Prayer: Mother of God, Chase Putin Away!*<sup>4</sup> Weeks later, Pussy Riot members Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, Maria Alyokhina, and Yekaterina Samutsevich were arrested and charged with hooliganism motivated by religious hatred. The women were convicted and sentenced to two years imprisonment.

## FEMEN:

Founded in Ukraine in 2008, and with the slogan *My Body is My Weapon*, FEMEN is an international women's movement of radical feminist activists who protest against patriarchy with a goal to protect women's rights. They inscribe slogans on their bare breasts and wear crowns of flowers to symbolize femininity.<sup>5</sup>

## China's Feminist Five:

Li Maizi, Wei Tingting, Zheng Churan, Wu Rongrong, and Wang Man – later known as China's Feminist Five – were arrested in March 2015 for planning to commemorate International Women's Day by handing out stickers about sexual harassment on public transport. At the time of their arrest, the women were completely unknown outside China, but their detention highlighted their planned action and provided 'the spark for the creation of a powerful new symbol of feminist dissent against a patriarchal, authoritarian state.'<sup>6</sup>

## Guerrilla Girls:

The Guerrilla Girls are a collective of feminist activist artists. Although more than 55 individuals have been members over the years, they remain anonymous to ensure their identity does not overshadow their activism. Guerrilla Girls wear gorilla masks in public and 'use facts, humour and outrageous visuals to expose gender and ethnic bias as well as corruption in politics, art, film, and pop culture.'<sup>7</sup>

## activities.

Apply the Analytical Frameworks (Structural, Personal, Cultural, and Contemporary) to Just's Feminist Fan works

Examine Just's studio practice by studying two artworks, and exploring the different historical and cultural contexts of each.

<sup>3</sup> <https://portrait.gov.au/magazines/58/heroine-knits> accessed 26/07/2018

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.centerforinquiry.net/cfe/pussy-riot/> accessed 12/08/2018

<sup>5</sup> <https://femen.org/about-us/> accessed 12/07/2018

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/china-feminist-five> accessed 12/07/2018

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.guerrillagirls.com/our-story/> accessed 12/07/2018

# borders, barriers and contested territories:

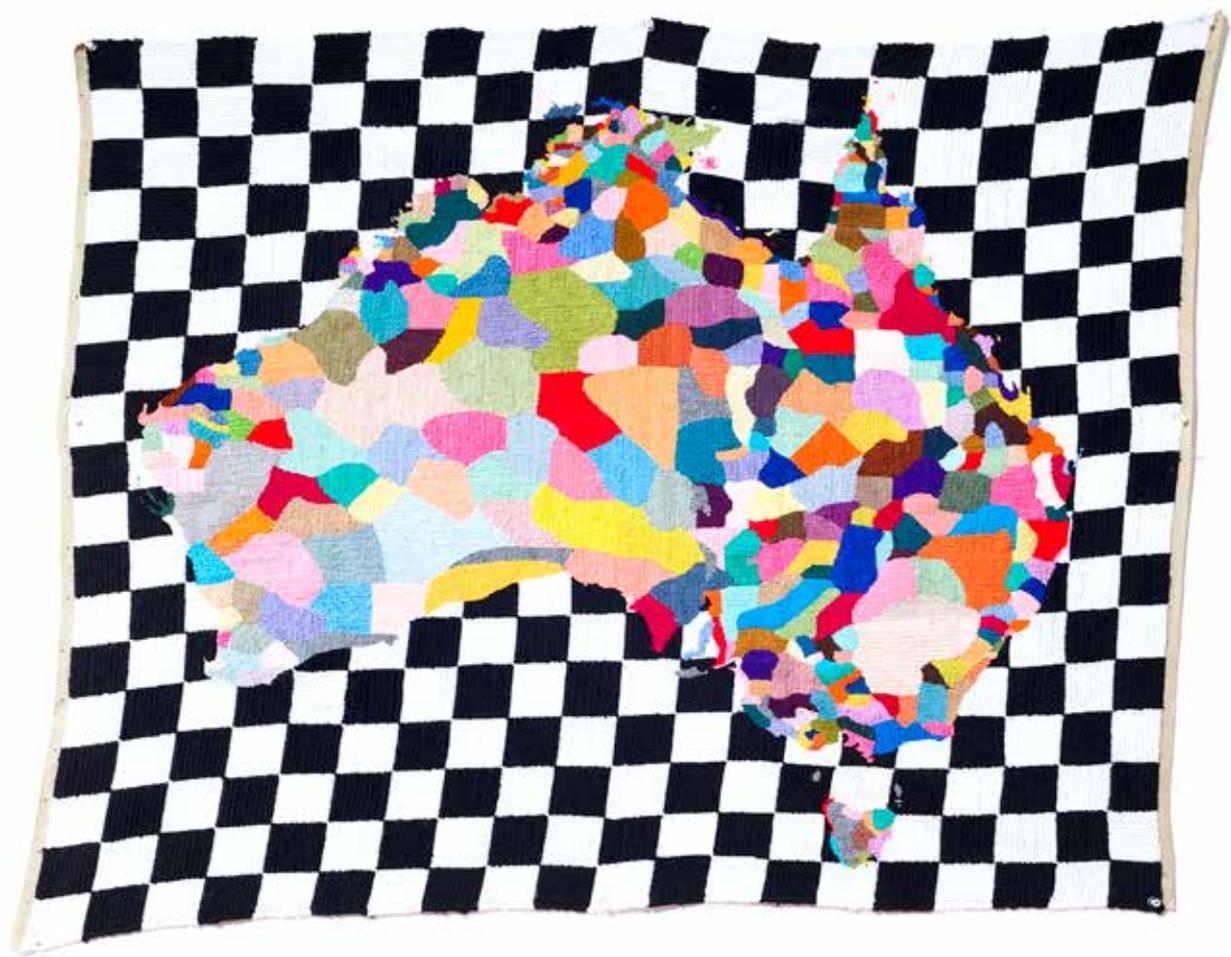
In recent years, craft has frequently been aligned with the 'nice', the decorative, the apolitical. However history tells us that countless artists working with craft have been deeply engaged with their socio-political environments and have often created in moments of absolute uncertainty, political unrest and shifting or unstable borders. Paul Yore and Penny Byrne build on a long tradition of craft as a site and generator of contestation. Bringing craft into the contemporary moment, these artists build on the loaded practices of their chosen mediums to consider current world political events involving territories, borders and barriers, including the experience of asylum seekers, and First Nations peoples.<sup>8</sup>

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Amelia Winata

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<sup>8</sup> Winata, A, 'Contested territories, borders and barriers.' *Craftivism. Dissident Objects and Subversive Forms* (ex. cat.), published by NETS Victoria and Shepparton Art Museum, 2018, p42.



## paul yore.

Map 2012  
wool needlepoint  
90 x 101 cm  
Wangaratta Art Gallery Collection, © the artist

Paul Yore's wool needlepoint, *Map*, 2012 is a textile representation of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) map of Indigenous Australia (1994). Portraying a complex matrix of Indigenous language or nation groups, each assigned with their own colour, Yore's *Map*, is inspired by the boundaries that were utilised by First Nations Peoples for tens of thousands of years. Foregrounding the AIATSIS map in place of the lines demarking borders of states and territories, Yore's work raises questions around land claims, custodianship and sovereignty.

Yore uses needlepoint, along with quilting and assemblage to express queer male sexuality and commentary on national identity. Yore describes the process of working with wool as a '*subtly subversive methodology*,' and a '*laborious yet cathartic craft*.'<sup>9</sup>

## activities.

As a class, look at a map of your school and consider the different spaces that make up the yard and buildings. Which one is your classroom? Are there areas that are out-of-bounds? Are there spaces used only by teachers? Where do you like to play? Inspired by Yore's *Map*, redraw the map of your school grounds using interconnected, coloured shapes that define each space.

Study Yore's *Map*. Can you locate the place you live or go to school? Do you know the name of the traditional owners of this land? Visit the website of the AIATSIS to find out more about the land on which you live, and discover why it is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

<sup>9</sup> Wangaratta Art Gallery, Wangaratta Contemporary Textile Award 2013, 2013 p26



## penny byrne.

#EuropaEuropa 2015  
 antique porcelain serving platter, vintage porcelain  
 figurines, epoxy putty, epoxy resin, enamel paints  
 26 x 50 x 41 cm  
 Darebin Art Collection  
 © Penny Byrne / Copyright Agency, 2018  
 Photo: Angela Bailey

With a background in ceramics conservation and law, Penny Byrne's sculptural works *'are politically charged, highly engaging and often disarmingly humorous.'*<sup>10</sup> In making her assemblages and sculptures, Byrne uses bronze, glass, vintage porcelain figurines, and found objects including mass produced figurines and dinnerware sourced from Op Shops, Ebay and a social media call-out for donations; *'The Great Blue and White Figurine Hunt of 2017.'*<sup>11</sup> Figurines are modified, adapted, altered, and enhanced under her skilful hand to communicate her ongoing inquiry into popular culture and international politics which includes geopolitics, social justice, climate change and human rights.

#EuropaEuropa, 2015 is an assemblage of blue and white, mass produced figurines clustered on a blue and white serving platter. Wearing dresses, hats, pantaloons, jackets, and powdered wigs, and some carrying umbrellas and stringed instruments, the ladies, gentlemen and children each have a bright orange life vest around their neck which Byrne has made from epoxy putty. The precarious arrangement

of so many 'individuals' on one 'vessel' (serving platter) is at odds with their serene or vacant expressions. The work highlights the migrant crisis in Europe, but also references the plight of refugees trying to come to Australia by boat.

### activities.

Closely observe #EuropaEuropa. Discuss Byrne's use of contrast in this work and the way visual language is used to express the artist's viewpoint to the audience.

Examine Byrne's studio practice, referring to the historical and cultural context of #EuropaEuropa. Compare Byrne's work to Ai Weiwei's installation of 1000s of lifejackets on the columns of Berlin's Konzerthaus.

<sup>10</sup> <https://pennybyrneartist.com/page/about> accessed 12/07/2018

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.juxtapoz.com/news/sculpture/europaeuropa-penny-byrne-on-europe-s-refugee-crisis-and-the-power-of-porcelain/> accessed 16/08/2018

# Collaborative production, catharsis and social healing:

Although there is a solitary dimension to crafting practices, whether it be in the pleasure of quiet knitting, or working in the studio with only the whirl of the sewing machine for company, craft has always at the same time been an avowedly social practice. Across the broad spectrum of crafts, from needlepoint and weaving to the bespoke production of jewellery, the activity of making is often not an end in itself, but an organisational structure around which generous and convivial social relations can be formed and nurtured.

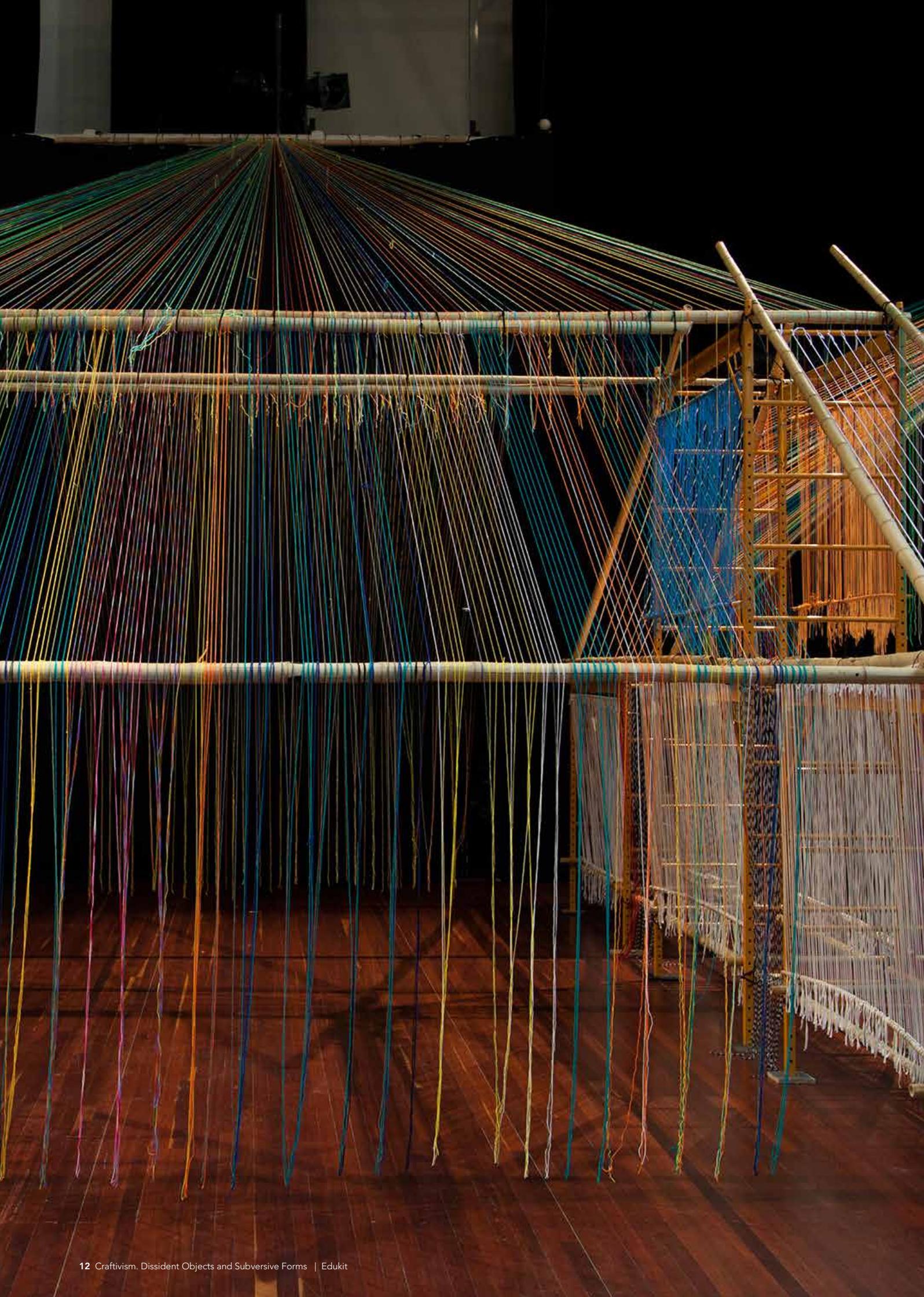
Social relations play a fundamental role in the work of many artists in this exhibition; however, in the work of Catherine Bell and Slow Art Collective, they could be seen as a principal driver. For these artists, shared dialogue and collaborative processes are at the core of their assorted practices. Whether the social relations are generative, as in the case of Bell, or focused on shaping the form of the final work, as evident in the participatory collaborative projects of Slow Art Collective, they reflect the artists' interrogation of artistic agency and, specifically, the value of ceding differing degrees of authorial ground to allow for other creative voices. In responding to the social turn in arts and crafts, these artists examine how an inclusive and collectivist approach across research and making allows for craft to push at the amorphous borders of what separates art from life.<sup>12</sup>

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**David Cross**

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<sup>12</sup> Cross, D, 'The Social Spaces of Craft.' *Craftivism. Dissident Objects and Subversive Forms* (ex. cat.), published by NETS Victoria and Shepparton Art Museum, 2018, p24.





# slow art collective.

Slow Art Collective, *Archiloom* (detail) 2016. Installation view Artshouse, Melbourne. © Slow Art Collective, courtesy the artists.

Established in 2009, Slow Art Collective is an artist collective comprised of Chaco Kato and Dylan Martorell. The interdisciplinary group is primarily interested in the act of making, with environmental sustainability, material ethics, DIY culture, collaboration, and community links at the core of their practice. The act of creating together enables an opportunity for a 'slow exchange of value,' 'the slow absorption of culture' and the blurring of boundaries between artists and viewers.<sup>13</sup>

*Archiloom*, 2018 has been commissioned for *Craftivism. Dissident Objects and Subversive Forms*. The title is a mash-up of architecture and loom; one an environmental design field concerned with spaces and structures for being within, the other an apparatus used to create a woven fabric. As a confluence of these concepts, the *Archiloom* provides the site for the evolution of a collaborative installation that will 'never be finished or resolved' but will show the markers of 'hundreds of small performative modifications.'<sup>14</sup>

## activities.

Create a woven artwork using strips of coloured paper that have been cut to different thicknesses. Weave the strips through a pre-cut piece of coloured cover paper. As a class, display the works like a giant patchwork quilt.

As a class, find an existing structure – like your school fence – and create an opportunity for your school community to gather together and weave. You could use strips of coloured fabric, yarn or reclaimed plastic. Document the collaboration through a series of photographs and interview participants about their experience. Present the images and words on your school's chosen social media platform.

<sup>13</sup> <http://slowartcollective.blogspot.com/> accessed 6/08/2018

<sup>14</sup> Cross, D, 'The Social Spaces of Craft.' *Craftivism. Dissident Objects and Subversive Forms* (ex. cat.), published by NETS Victoria and Shepparton Art Museum, 2018, p29.

# catherine bell.

*Crematorium vessels* 2012–13

floral foam vessels

installation: 19 x 93 x 17 cm

© the artist, courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

Photo: Andrew Curtis

Created during a yearlong residency at St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne, Catherine Bell's *Crematorium vessels*, 2012—13 were carved (using her fingernails) from Oasis foam reclaimed from floral bouquets that were removed from patient rooms. Used in floristry as the base of wreaths and flower arrangements, Oasis foam both holds and prolongs the life of fresh flowers. Bell's use of this reclaimed material reflects environmental and artistic sustainability whilst imbuing the resultant artworks 'with the history of the patients, health care setting and the fragility and resilience of the terminal body.'<sup>15</sup>

*'Death, dying and bereavement inhabits these materials so it is not surprising they address the human condition and challenge our fragile sense of mortality. The hollow Crematorium Vessels are poised to receive the ashes of the deceased. Placed throughout the hospice during my St Vincent's Hospital residency, they collected the floating dust that is the detritus of everybody, thus binding the living and dead. The dust that settled on these urns transformed them from bright green vessels to ancient relics by creating a patina on the surface suggestive of antiquity.'*<sup>16</sup>

Bell's *Crematorium vessels*, replicate the vessels in which cremated remains are stored and kept by loved ones. The solemnity of these forms is echoed by their linear arrangement, muted colour palette and symmetry; the differences in size and form hint at the individuality of the deceased.

## activities.

Consider Bell's use of Oasis foam and the physical and conceptual reasons she allowed her sculptures to collect dust. How do these materials, techniques and processes combine to create visual language and express the artist's intentions? Discuss your ideas with a class mate.

Research Bell's related bodies of work that use Oasis foam; *Mountains of Mourne*, 2012-14 and *Caritas Christi Bouquet* (a)bove and (b)elow, 2012-13. The latter features a series of prints taken from the surface of used Oasis foam. What reclaimed or recycled objects could you use as a printing matrix or substrate? Test out some surfaces with black relief printing ink, a roller and photocopy paper. What stories or ideas might these impressions reveal to an audience?

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.craft.org.au/maker-interviews/2016/11/14/gallery-interview-catherine-bell> accessed 05/07/2018

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.craft.org.au/maker-interviews/2016/11/14/gallery-interview-catherine-bell> accessed 05/07/2018



# environmental politics:

There are fewer more sobering images than that of a bleached coral reef or the 'Bermuda Triangle' of plastic in the Atlantic Ocean. The state of the planet has led to the suggestion of a new geological epoch entitled the Anthropocene<sup>17</sup>, a period that defines human activity as the dominant influence on the Earth's ecosystems. Beginning in the 1950s with the 'great acceleration' – an era of nuclear bomb tests, population boom and disposable plastics – the Anthropocene is an epoch characterised by climate change, mass production and resource wars.

Historically, artists have played an important role in reflecting and engaging with environmental concerns. Art provides a seductive vehicle by which to highlight environmental issues beyond science as it utilises the aesthetic, the physical and the emotional. In *Craftivism. Dissident Objects and Subversive Forms*, Erub Arts present works that employ traditional craft techniques to engage with the history and geography of the natural world in a globalised 21st century environment.<sup>18</sup>

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Jessica Bridgfoot

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<sup>17</sup> The Anthropocene was first described by Nobel Prize-winning atmospheric chemist Paul Cruzen in 2000

<sup>18</sup> Bridgfoot, J, 'Creative acts in an epoch of environmental change.' *Craftivism. Dissident Objects and Subversive Forms* (ex. cat.), published by NETS Victoria and Shepparton Art Museum, 2018, p32.



# erub arts.

Emma Gela

*Ghost net vessel* 2016

ghost net, twine

30 x 13 cm (diam.)

© the artist, courtesy the artist and Erub Arts

Photo: Lynnette Griffiths

Erub, also known as Darnley Island, is located in the Torres Strait, on the edge of the Great Barrier Reef, approximately 160kms north east of Queensland's Cape York Peninsula and 60kms south of Papua New Guinea. With a population of approximately 400 people, this tropical volcano island is home to one of the most remote communities in Australia. The Meuram/Erubum people's seafaring heritage, pearl diving tradition, and connection to the Pacific is reflected in their artistic and cultural traditions including decorated canoes, carved stone, dance costumes, and weaponry. Erub Arts, founded 20 years ago by four tribal groups seeking to preserve and revitalise traditional Erub culture, operates as a collective.

Working with a variety of forms including printmaking, jewellery, textiles, weaving, and ceramics, the collective have used reclaimed fishing nets since 2010 through an introduction to the medium by GhostNets Australia. Ghost nets are fishing nets that have been lost, abandoned or discarded at sea. They can float for long distances on currents, entangling and killing marine life and birds. *'Lengths of net more than 6km in size have been found off northern Australia.'*<sup>19</sup> The nets, which are collected by rangers, are used by artists in place of natural fibres to make sculptural forms. The works raise awareness about the destruction caused by ghost nets whilst highlighting the role communities have in protecting the marine environment.

## activities.

Closely observe the *Ghost net* vessels by Erub Arts. How have they been made? What aesthetic qualities combine to create unity in each piece? What ideas do you think the artists are communicating and what evidence do you see to support this? How do the works make you feel? Discuss your ideas with a partner before sharing with your class group.

Closely observe the waste that accumulates in your school, town or region. What do you typically see in the school yard, streets or public spaces? Where might the wind or rain take them? What impact might these items have on the local flora and fauna? Are these items safe to collect and if so, could they be used as an art making material? As a class, discuss your findings. If possible, collect items and use them as a basis for a new collaborative work that communicates a message about the environmental impact of waste in your school, town or region.

<sup>19</sup> <https://australianmuseum.net.au/ghost-net-art> accessed 28/06/2018

## cultural identity.

James Tylor's multicultural heritage is the prism through which he focuses his work. He performs and documents traditional techniques used by First Nations Peoples in order to explore cultural identity, and the weight of the Australian colonial legacy.

Contrary to the idea of the 'untouched' landscape or terra nullius, Tylor's series hints at the agricultural sophistication present before the European settlement of Australia. The work builds on recent research and discussion spearheaded by writers such as Bruce Pascoe in his book *Dark Emu*, 2014, around the obliteration of Indigenous agriculture by western forestry and farming methods. It reveals the endurance of Indigenous cultural practices despite their supposed erasure, and the current revival that these forms are experiencing.

## james tylor.

Kaurna language group (Tarntanya Adelaide, SA)

*Un-resettling (A-frame hut)* 2018

hand-coloured digital print

50 x 50 cm

© the artist, courtesy the artist, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne and GAG Projects, Adelaide

James Tylor's *Un-resettling*, 2018 series of hand-coloured digital prints documents his practical exploration of 're-learning and practicing traditional Kaurna Indigenous cultural practices'<sup>20</sup> including themes of dwellings, happenings, hauntings, and hunting. Tylor's work responds to the loss of traditional practices as a result of European colonisation. The images are accompanied by Kaurna tools, hand crafted by the artist and used in the traditional practices he is researching, applying, and documenting. The use of documentation style photography references the ethnographic use of the medium as a colonising tool. In his body of work, he subverts this use in order to re-write historical omissions, and reclaim representations of history.

*'As a young Australian with Kaurna Indigenous ancestry I feel that it is extremely important to learn, understand, practice and teach indigenous culture. In this self-experimental exploration project, I have attempted to re-learn some traditional practices from oral discussions, language, drawings, paintings, photographs, historical journals and publications.'*<sup>21</sup>

*'Re-learning these practices has given me a deeper understanding of Australian history, the environment and my ancestors' cultural practices but most importantly a great understanding of my own Kaurna Indigenous identity.'*<sup>22</sup>

## activities.

Speak with an older member of your family or community about a skill or practice they learnt but no longer use. Why do they no longer use this skill or practice? Have them teach it to you and record the experience in a series of photos with hand written annotations or a video with voice-over. Exhibit your work.

Explore Tylor's title, *Un-resettling*. What does 'resettle' mean? How does this definition change with the prefix 'un'? How does the title reflect the artist's viewpoint and how does it impact the way the artworks are viewed by the audience?

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.jamestaylor.com/un-resettling-dwellings.html> accessed 05/07/2018

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.jamestaylor.com/un-resettling-dwellings.html> accessed 05/07/2018

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.jamestaylor.com/un-resettling-dwellings.html> accessed 05/07/2018



## acknowledgements

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Australian Government  
Visual Arts and Craft Strategy  
Victoria

