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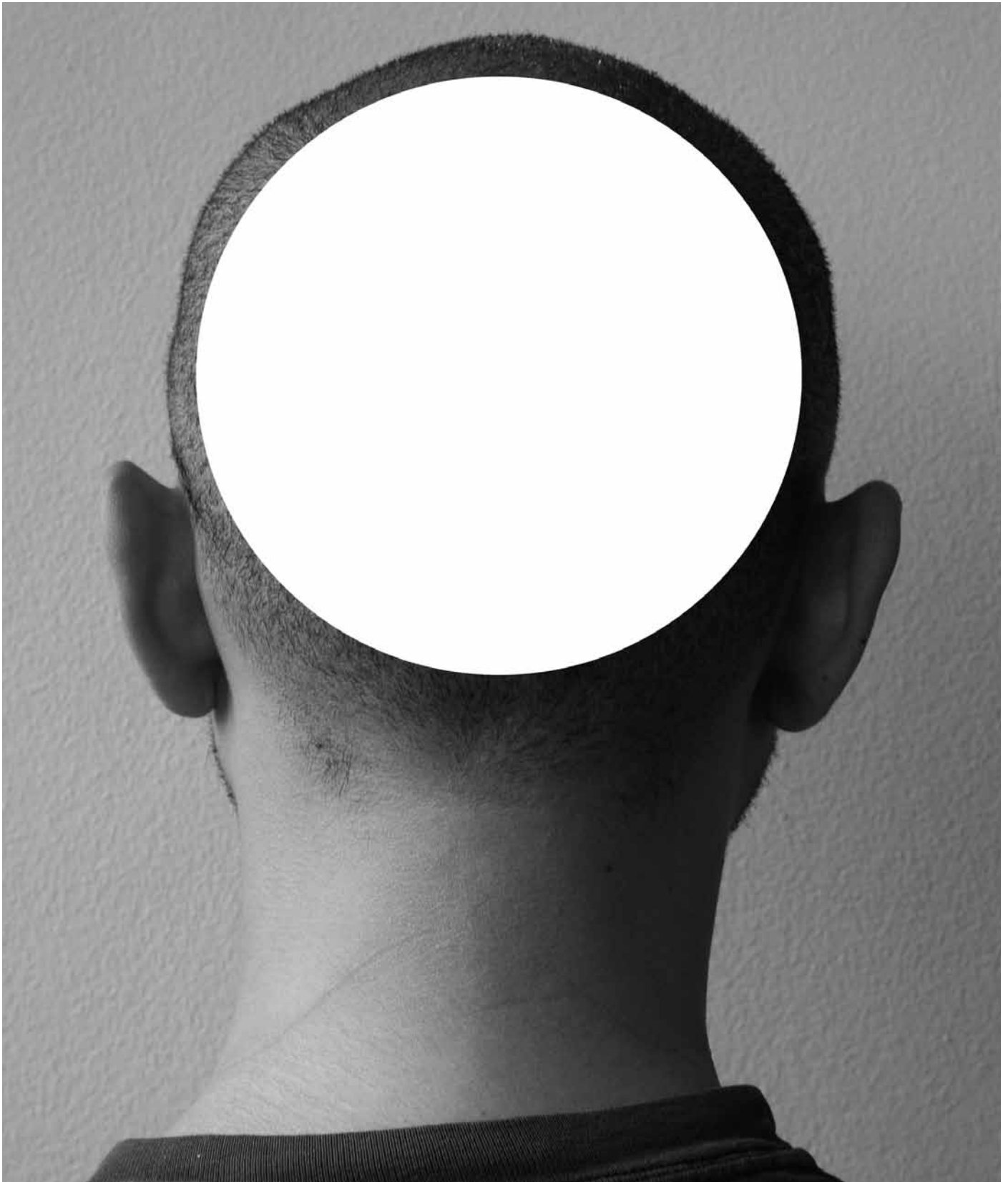
PRIMAVERA 2010

Young Australian artists

Education Resource

Agatha Gothe-Snape

Born 1980 Sydney. Lives and works in Sydney.



Agatha Gothe-Snape
Wrong Solo I 2010
screenprint on paper
59.4 x 42.0 cm
Courtesy the artist, Sydney

Agatha Gothe-Snape

There is always a sense of improvisation with regard to the unknown outcomes of each moment and therefore each work.¹

Agatha Gothe-Snape's eclectic approach to art-making is intuitive and spontaneous. Her desire to avoid being fixed into categories is matched by her conviction that modes of communication can and must take many forms. Agatha's work is always in the process of 'becoming' and resists grand gestures. It includes interactive performances and PowerPoint presentations—the ultimate in clichéd communication tools in the modern era. The simplicity of colour, sound and movement in *TRUE FALSE LOVE CONSCIOUSNESS* subtly affects our emotional state. While her recent mind-map series *Feelings* uses minimalist geometry to celebrate and question the creative process.

Cruising at Primavera is a collaborative performance the artist has developed with Brian Fuata, a performer she has worked with for many years. Using the title of *Wrong Solo* for their collaborations, it humorously refers to the idea of an individual practice gone wrong. *Cruising* is a way for visitors to navigate through the gallery spaces creating a heightened sense of physical and psychological awareness.

Learning Activities

K- Year 6

Thinking about it:

1. Look at Agatha Gothe-Snape's work *Feelings I-V* (2010). Create a poster based on your visit to the gallery. Think about how you felt on the day – focus on finding the colours and shapes that express that mood. Why do those colours, and shapes "feel" right?

Making it:

1. Agatha Gothe-Snape uses Microsoft Powerpoint to make "short animations". As a class create a short animation of your own, based on feelings. Each member of your class should contribute one Powerpoint slide that includes colours, text or images that conveys your feelings for that particular day, and play the whole sequence at the end of the day.

Year 7-10

Thinking about it:

1. Using the structural frame think about the material elements utilised in Agatha Gothe-Snape's *Solo: Cruising at Primavera* 2010 and how they work together? Did you see the artist perform during your visit or not? How would it have been different if you had, or had not, seen her perform – how does it change the nature of the artwork? The word ephemeral can be used to describe anything that maybe brief or short lived. What aspects of Agatha Gothe-Snape's work would you describe as ephemeral? If you were an artist who made ephemeral art how would you prove it existed?
2. What are the differences between conceptual art, performance art, installation art, can an artwork fit into many categories at one time?

Making it:

1. Agatha Gothe-Snape's practice is influenced by the theories of Max Lüscher, a Swiss psychotherapist who developed theories and tools for measuring a person's psychophysical state based on their colour preferences.

Create an artwork using colour to represent a particular mood or feeling. Look at the work of Mark Rothko and the other Colour Field artists for inspiration.

Year 11-12

Thinking about it:

1. Agatha Gothe-Snape's work borrows from many disciplines; one of which is performance. Think about the work *Wrong Solo: Cruising at Primavera* 2010 and discuss the relationship between the artist, artwork and the audience. How does it feel to be a participant in the artwork and the creation of meaning?
2. Agatha Gothe-Snape refers to the space of a gallery as "a highly loaded dense rich space." How does this relate to *Cruising Primavera* 2010? How does she make use of the special characteristics of gallery spaces?
3. The word ephemeral can be used to describe anything that maybe brief or short lived. What aspects of Agatha Gothe-Snape's work would you describe as ephemeral? If you were an artist who made ephemeral art how would you prove it existed?

¹ Interview with the author, 01/08/2010

Akira Akira

Born 1981 Kobe, Japan. Lives and works in Adelaide.



Akira Akira
Spillberg (black) 2008
table, automotive paint on polyurethane resin
table: 120 x 75 x 73cm; object: 90 x 49.5 x 3cm
Courtesy the artist

Akira Akira

*"The physical characteristics of paint have held a pivotal role in my practice to date. I identify this substance as an entity that embodies an inevitable sense of potentiality."*²

Akira Akira describes his lustrous *Spillberg* sculptures as paint that never dries. To create these works he intensively designs, sculpts, sands and builds up layers of automotive paint to make something that looks accidental, constructing a paradox that he readily embraces. This sense of material transformation is a key motivation for the artist. Paint as a substance is also pivotal to his work, with hours of effort applied to remove the trace of the artist's hand. In contrast, *Edifice 2* is created from Rapid Prototype printing technology with the marks of the machine production left intact. A trained painter who includes drawing, sculpture and installation as his main areas of practice, Akira considers the optimistic potential of this historically loaded medium.

Akira's sculptures and other works are presented alongside mass-produced items of furniture, such as an Ikea table or shelf. His work embraces the idea of the modular, relating to late modernist ideologies of utopian and utilitarian function. He creates "conversations" between things in the world, making highly crafted forms and juxtaposing them with readily available objects such as the roller balls from deodorant sticks and flat-packed furniture items.

Learning Activities

K- Year 6

Thinking about it: More questions here

1. Look at *Spillberg (black)* 2008 and think about things and forms that can transform and change, e.g melting butter. Write a list of everything you can think of.

Making It:

1. Using a camera, or drawing, capture a "freeze frame" of something from your list above. The "freeze frame" should capture the moment in time when one thing is transforming into another, for example, the moment when an ice cube melts into water.

Year 7-10

Thinking about it:

1. What are the materials that Akira Akira uses? Why are the materials important to his work? What is the relationship between the highly handcrafted components of his work and the mass-produced items that they are placed with?
2. What do you think is meant by the title *Spillberg*? How does the title add meaning to the work?

Making it:

1. In your VAPD, collect images of objects that are mass-produced, as well as images of objects that are handcrafted. Under each image make a list of words that reflect the structural qualities inherent in each of the objects.
2. Research *minimalism* and consider how Akira's work may relate to this art movement.

3. In Japanese culture craftsmanship is highly celebrated and perfection of both process and product are deeply valued. How might Akira Akira's cultural heritage inform his art making practice?

Year 11-12

Thinking about it:

1. Ricky Swallow is a contemporary Australian artist who juxtaposes concepts of the handmade and the mass-produced. Compare Ricky Swallow's *Everything is Nothing* (2003) to that of Akira Akira's *Spillberg (black)* (2008). What structural and conceptual similarities do the artworks share? How do they differ?
2. "Perfection is finally attained not when there is no longer anything to add but when there is no longer anything to take away..." Antoine de Saint-Exupery³. How can Antoine de Saint-Exupery's quote be applied to the work of Akira Akira? In your answer consider Akira Akira's preoccupation with technical proficiency and removing the traces of the artist's hand.

Making it:

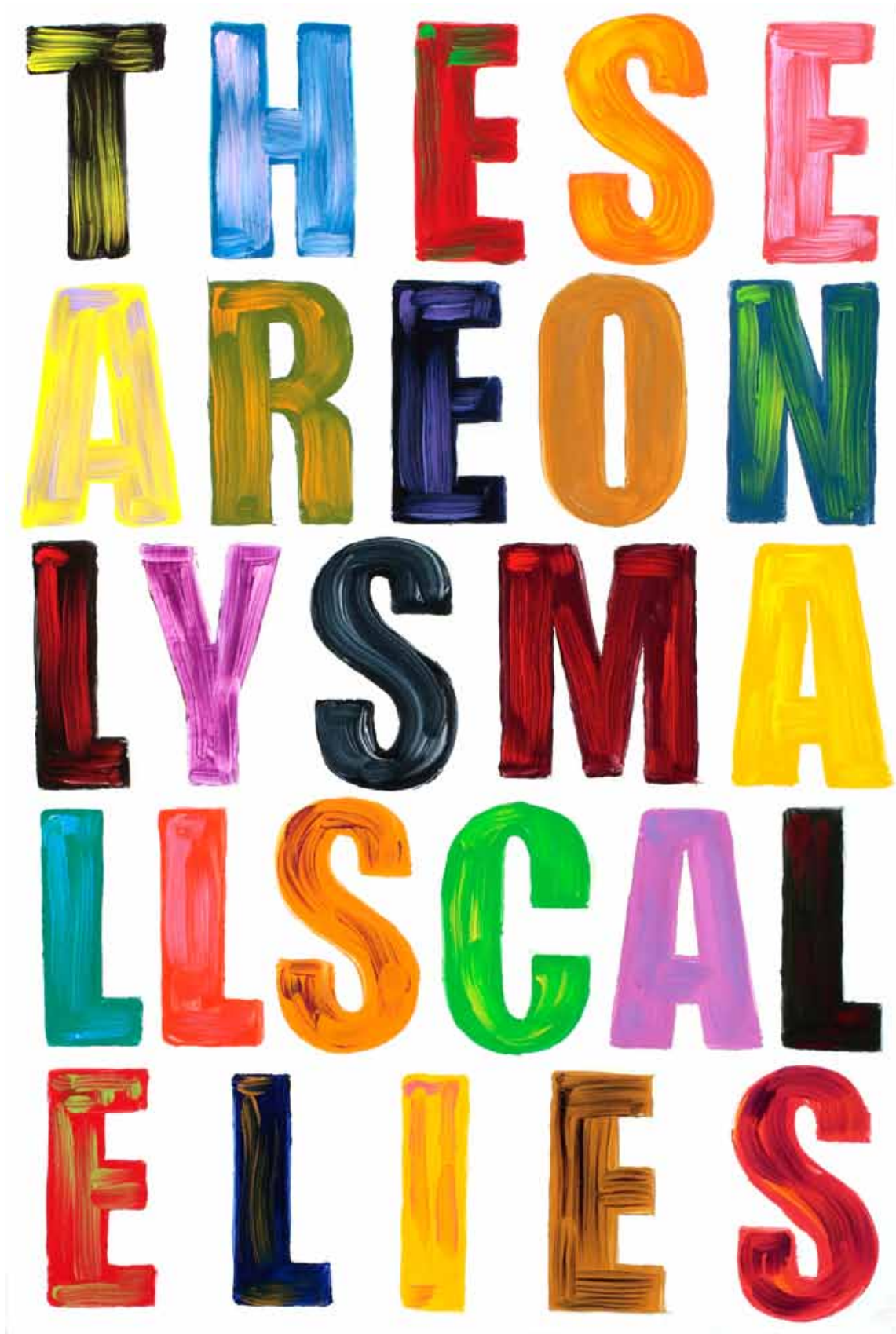
1. Surface and the exploration of perfection could be seen as an increasing phenomenon of popular culture in the 21st century. In your VAPD collect images from magazines and the web that communicate this preoccupation with perfection. For example look at cosmetic surgery or digital animation. From the images you collect, create an artwork that addresses this issue.

² http://aeaf.org.au/studios/studios_artists.html, 07/08/2010

³ French Pilot, Writer and Author of 'The Little Prince', 1900-1944.

Julie Fragar

Born 1977 Gosford. Lives and works in Brisbane.



Julie Fragar
THESE ARE ONLY SMALL SCALE LIES 2008
oil on board
60 x 40cm
Courtesy Sally Rose, Sydney

Julie Fragar

"I always think of the work as having two central concerns. The first is thinking about biography—the make up of a human life, the way it falls together and apart and what happens inside of the 80 years or whatever it might be. The other concern is about painting—formally, historically and conceptually, about how it works and what it does."⁴

Julie Fragar's paintings create a fantastic alchemy between image, viewer, history and the present encounter. Her works are attuned to the everyday while reminding us of painting's ability to focus our attention on a subject. The paintings are full of personal information or historical references, yet despite these seemingly divergent narratives, Julie creates pictures that feel like an intimate memory. The subjects, whether herself, her family, or a recognisable art historical figure such as the French Realist painter Gustave Courbet, are captured in their labours and repose. In this rare moment of attention turned onto a subject she invents a sense of the present and its connection to the past.

Julie uses photography to register a specific person or event as the basis for her paintings. Using a lush palette, the picture plane is disrupted with slashes of colour; one image overlays another, or is stencilled with text, so that the illusion of painting is revealed.

Learning Activities

K- Year 6

Thinking About It:

1. Think about the scale of Fragar's paintings in the exhibition. Does this affect how you relate to the artwork? Does the size of the work remind you of anything?
2. Julie Fragar's paintings deal with the subject of portraiture. Choose another contemporary artist who also addresses the concept of portraiture, e.g Adam Cullen or Ben Quilty. In what way are her paintings different or similar to that of other portrait painters?

Making it:

1. Julie Fragar likes to paint portraits of her friends and family. Collect photos of important people in your life and use them as the basis of an artwork. Ask your teacher to photocopy your photograph, then slice it up in to different shapes. Rearrange these pieces of paper and redraw what you see. Can you still recognise the subject of the work?

Year 7-10

Thinking about it:

1. Julie Fragar's paintings can be seen as an intimate dialogue between the artist's life, the artwork and the viewer. How can you have a dialogue with a painting? Can the presentation of a painting affect this dialogue?
2. What is the different between fiction and non-fiction and how can this be applied to painting? In what way does a painting tell a story? What does Julie Fragar mean by saying that there is an "inherent fiction in painting"⁵?

3. What has been the influence of photography on portrait painting? In what ways might you be able to tell if a portrait has been painted from a photograph as opposed to life? What are the differences and similarities between painted portraits and photographic portraits? Is one medium more effective or valid than the other?
4. Like many artists, Julie Fragar uses text (words) in her art making. How does the use of text in art affect the way that an artwork is interpreted?

Making It:

1. Several of Fragar's paintings contain text. In these works words and their meaning become difficult to read. By doing this Julie Fragar has created an opportunity for dialogue between her paintings and the audience. Record in your VAPD a conversation between yourself and another person: select a sentence or phrase from that conversation and create a painting by running the words together, like Julie Fragar does in her work 'IAMSORRYWECOULDNOTHEARYOU'. (2010)

Year 11-12

Thinking about it:

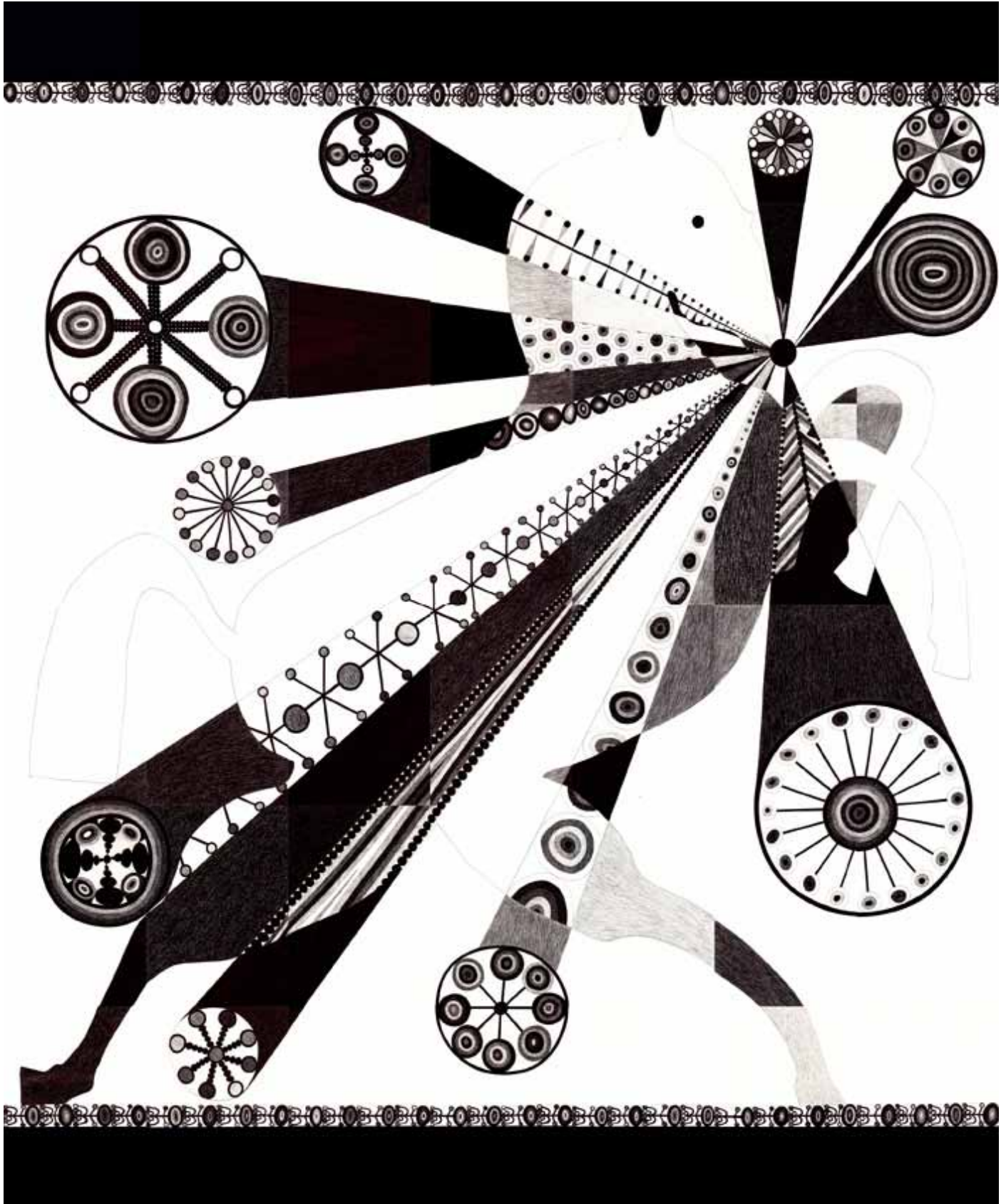
1. Why do you think that Julie Fragar creates paintings from photographs? Think about what happens to these images once they have been transformed by paint? Does this add to their strength and meaning or change them entirely?
2. Julie Fragar lists Gustave Courbet and Franz Hals as influences in her art making practice. In your VAPD construct a case study on either Gustave Courbet or Franz Hals and suggest how Fragar may be influenced by their work and philosophies on art.

⁴ Interview with the author, 03/08/2010

⁵ Interview with the author, 03/08/2010

Alasdair McLuckie

Born 1984 Melbourne. Lives and works Melbourne.



Alasdair McLuckie
There ain't no fear in this forest (1-40) 2009
inkjet print and watercolour on paper [40 parts]
29.7 x 21 cm each, 40 parts
Courtesy the artist and Murray White Room, Melbourne

Alasdair McLuckie

*"I don't believe that there is a distinction between a creative practice or discipline, and a spiritual worship or discipline. I think either one is an engagement and acknowledgement of something greater than yourself."*⁶

The cosmic and mundane are merged in the work of Alasdair McLuckie through the proliferation of patterns, elemental shapes and popular cultural references. Throughout his work, McLuckie employs repeated decorative and organic forms. These are informed by folklore and the ritualised traditions of tribal and non-western cultures. Often created in series, the slightly altered shapes suggest infinite visual possibilities and concentric layered interiors, underscoring the power of art to reveal what is not easy to see.

The artist's obsessive attention to detail translates into a dense symbolic language that expresses the imagined energies of the cosmos. Incorporated into his works are mythical creatures, references to psychedelic imagery and 1970s design. Alasdair focuses on the medium of drawing, often producing multiple digital copies from his sketchbooks and infusing them with watercolour. Linking his works is an interest in movement and transformation through the use of repetitive graphics, continuity and chance.

Learning Activities

K-Year 6

Making it:

1. Create a mythological style story of the history of your school. Either in groups or as individuals represent this story in a visual form. In your artwork consider not just the present but also the past history of the school and the area in which it is situated.

Year 7-10

Thinking about it:

1. Consider the materials that McLuckie uses in his work? Consider how these materials compare to those used by Indigenous cultures both now and in the past.
2. Consider Alasdair's use of "tribal" and folk patterning in his work and compare it to folk art of Indigenous cultures; possible examples could be Australian Indigenous art, Native American art, Indian art and middle European folk art.

Year 11-12

Thinking about it:

1. Do you believe that artists have an ethical responsibility when they appropriate images from Indigenous cultures? What does it mean to appropriate? As a class debate the idea of ownership of Indigenous patterns and imagery.
2. McLuckie's work is closely tied to values associated with shamanism. A shaman encompasses the belief that they are mediators or messengers between the physical world and that of the spirit world. Research the roles of shamans in different cultures. How does this relate directly back to Alasdair's work? Look at both the physical characteristics and the intention of the artwork.

⁶ Interview from Primavera 10 catalogue

Emma White

Born 1976 Canberra. Lives and works in Sydney.



Emma White
Copy 2008
polymer clay
dimensions variable (object to scale)
installation view, BREENSPACE, Sydney, 2009
Private collection
Image courtesy the artist and BREENSPACE, Sydney © the artist

Emma White

"I am more interested in focusing on really specific things like particular marks or accidental arrangements that tell a story of how we spend our time. I'm drawn to the power of representation to transform things from one thing to another."⁷

Emma White creates thrilling moments of revelation with her artworks that celebrate the unnoticed. At first her pieces can be hard to discern. A roll of masking tape or foam left on a worktable, a copy stamp or discarded paint stirrers turn out to be exquisitely sculpted replicas, which reward the viewer with this realisation on closer inspection. Emma provides a renewed encounter with notions of the real and the reproduction. The viewer is faced with questions of whether she is laying bare art's illusion or further mystifying the creative process.

The meticulously sculpted objects such as the Hasselblad camera, presented in combination with a photograph of itself draws out the differences between an object and its reproduction, a model and a copy. Her works experiment with contrasting value systems: precious and worthless, purposeful and redundant. They compel viewers to consider why such re-creations are necessary and seduce them at the same time through the process of illusion. Emma applies obsessive labour, intensive skill and effort to create work that plays with our perception and expectation.

Learning Activities

K-Year 6

Thinking about it:

1. Identify the different materials Emma White uses in her artworks.
2. Emma White's copies are made to the exact size of the original. Why do you think she decided to make them the same size?

Making it:

1. Have a look around your bedroom, house or classroom and choose an object you use all the time. Use clay or playdough to make a copy of your object. Does turning this object into 'art' make you think differently about it? How?
2. Look at *Artefact* (2010). The work has been made using polymer clay which is a hard material. Select an object from the classroom; it could be a pencil, table, or chair. Working in groups of 3-4, discuss the different ways you could make this object using a softer material like fabric and stuffing. Illustrate your design and label it with the materials you would use. Research the soft sculptures by artists Yayoi Kusama and Claes Oldenburg for ideas.

Year 7-10

Thinking about it:

1. What is meant by the term "double take"? How does this apply to White's work?
2. Emma White exhibits her artworks as a combination of sculpted objects and the photographs of these sculptures. What does this say about notions of the real versus the reproduced?

Making it:

1. Choose an artefact that best reflects your identity and justify why you have made this choice. What medium is most suitable for re-creating this object and why?
2. Use your chosen object from above as the basis for a body of work that explores metaphor by brainstorming the words associated with the object, its function, symbolic meaning, etc. How might you convey these layered meanings in your work? Try documenting your object through photography, drawing or textured rubbings.

Year 11-12

Thinking about it:

1. The artist references Thomas Demand as influential in her art practice. Research his work and compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the two artists' work.
2. What is the difference between "art" and "craft" or "craftsmanship"? Research images on the internet to support your ideas and record these findings in your VAPD. Look at the work of Ricky Swallow and Denise Litchfield⁹ and discuss how art and craft intersect in their work.
3. Emma has stated that she is interested in the artefacts of human life, how they tell a story of who we are, and how they describe our actions and histories. What is an "artefact", and why does she refer to the sharpener and sharpenings as 'artefacts'? What is she preserving?

Making it:

1. In your VAPD, record every object that you use in a week. Are there some things you use every day. Select some of these objects as the basis for a body of work.
2. As a class choose one object to document. Create a work on paper or a photograph that represents this object and compile it into a book. What do you notice about the different ways the object is interpreted and represented by your peers.

⁷ Interview with the Artist 6th August 2010

⁸ Interview with the Artist 6th August 2010

⁹ <http://dneese.blogspot.com/>

Jackson Slattery

Born 1983 Melbourne. Lives and works in Melbourne.



Jackson Slattery
Untitled (detail) 2010
watercolour on paper
55 x 37 cm, paper size
Image courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne © the artist

Jackson Slattery

"In my work, I try to experience the unfamiliar by subjecting the image to intense scrutiny and then replicating it in intricate detail."¹⁰

Jackson Slattery searches for repeated symbols and recognisable forms that reflect our lives in the 21st century. As a society we constantly make use of a vast range of communicative tools and engage with media to understand the world in which we live. Exhaustive in his research, Slattery utilises Flickr, Google, and other archives and networks to mine the Internet for images, encountering unknown people and worlds. Using the medium of watercolour, he then reformulates this imagery to create new fictions, blurring perceptions of the real, the private and the public.

Every gesture and mark is permanent and the capacity for adapting and covering over mistakes is almost non-existent. The playful intermingling of fact and fiction, representation and reality, is further explored in his site-specific painting *Small Ambition* (2010) on the ceiling of the gallery. The overall effect is enhanced by the unsettling light that permeates the room, requiring us to peer in to see the works and fully comprehend what it is we are looking at.

Learning Activities

K- Year 6

Thinking about it:

1. Look at the paintings *Small Ambition 2-13* (2010). Describe some of the images that Jackson Slattery has painted. Do they remind you of anything?
2. How large are Jackson's paintings? Why do you think he chose this size?
3. Look at *Man Made Paradise #3 (Total Recall)* (2009-2010). Write down the words that come to mind to describe this sculpture. Can you find this object in one of the paintings on exhibition?

Making it:

1. Find an image from your favourite book. Paint this image using watercolour or draw it using lead or coloured pencil. Look carefully at the original and pay close attention to the colours and lines in the picture.
2. How would you decide to display your image? In past exhibitions Jackson Slattery hung his paintings on MDF board with bulldog clips. Line up all the painting as a class on boards and move them around to create different stories like a comic strip or storyboard.
3. Choose a book that you love to read. Photocopy the illustrations in the book and using these illustrations as the basis for a new story. Perhaps you might place yourself, your friends or family in the story.

Year 7-10

Thinking about it:

1. What ideas are Jackson Slattery exploring in his work? Think about the size and proportions of Slattery's paintings. Why do you think he chose to use this format?

2. Refer to the work *Man Made Paradise #3 (Total Recall)* (2009-2010). What do you notice about how these objects are made? What notions of truth and fiction is Slattery exploring? Consider this in relation to the size, form and materials.
3. Sam Leach made the comment that whilst Slattery's images are paintings of photographs they are not photo-realistic. Research 'photo-realism' by looking at artists such as Richard Estes and Chuck Close. Do you agree with Leach's comment? In what ways is Slattery's work similar or different to photo-realism?

Making it:

1. Write a short story about something that interests you. Using this story as your starting point, find images that best represent this story. Source these images from sites such as the internet, magazines and newspapers. Explore the different ways in which you can represent your story using different images.

Year 11-12

Thinking about it:

1. Jackson Slattery spends months sourcing images for his paintings. He uses sites such as Flickr, Google, and other archives and networks. Throughout the execution of his work he painstakingly removes any trace of where his subjects come from. Discuss why the artist may have done this. What comment is Slattery saying about the immediacy of the image and globalisation.
2. In the series *Small Ambitions* (2010) and *Man Made Paradise #1 & #2* (2009-2010), Slattery has referenced the film "12 Monkeys" by Terry Gilliam. This is a film that deals with themes of cinematic illusion. What idea is Slattery playing with that relates to Gilliam's work and is he successful?

¹⁰ Retrieved from www.artinfo.com.au/opinions/read/my-plastic-everything-jackson-slattery 27 July, 2010. Last update 2010.

James Newitt

Born 1981 Hobart. Lives and works in Hobart.



James Newitt
Saturday Nights (video still) 2007
Image courtesy of the artist and Criterion Gallery, Hobart
© the artist

James Newitt

"I wanted to cinematise everyday performances and use things like car park and street lighting as if it was a staged film set".¹

Learning Activities

K- Year 6

Thinking about it:

1. Newitt's artworks are videos that include footage and interviews of real people. Look at *Saturday Nights* (2007) and describe what you see in the video. How old are the people, what are they doing?
2. *Saturday Nights* (2007) is about community dances or social gatherings that were typical in small towns about 50 years ago. Interview your grandparents, parents or members of your community about what they used to do on Saturday nights and use this material as the basis for a short story.

Year 7-10

Thinking about it:

1. Choose one of James' videos and think about the relationship between the artist and the world.
2. How does Newitt's artwork relate to the theatre stage? What is meant by the term "staged"? How is James Newitt's process of working similar to that of a stage director?
3. Newitt has stated that "Video is a material that is constantly in flux."² What is meant by the term "flux"? What do you think the artist means by this statement? Consider this in reference to the history of video.

Making it:

1. James Newitt has used video to represent people and places. Explore other ways of creating a moving picture. Look around your community and record a particular event; it could be the bus arriving to take you to school every morning. Document this event through a series of still photographs. Download the images from the camera and create an animation using Quicktime or iMovie.

Year 11-12

Thinking about it:

1. Explore the differences and comparisons between documentary and fiction. How does Newitt blur the boundaries between the two?
2. Research the work of Kate Murphy, and compare and contrast with Newitt's works *Dreams* (2008-09) and *Unstable Ground* (2006-07). What are some of the similarities and differences in their use of materials and ideas.
3. Newitt's work has often been described as having an aesthetic value. Discuss this statement.

Making it:

1. Who are the people who live within your community? Focus on a particular group and find out as much as you can about them. Meet with them, find out their history and how long they have lived in the community. Record all these findings in your VAPD. Use this research for a body of work.

¹ Spillane, David. 'In the studio: James Newitt' in 'Artbank now: National Contemporary art rental. Newsletter, April 2010.

² Interview with author 3rd August, 2010.

Acknowledgements

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Designed by Katherine Gennusa.



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Cover Image

Julie Fragar
Lie to Me 2008
oil on board
60 x 40cm
Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales -
Viktoria Marinov Bequest Fund 2010