

## new04

24 march - 16 may 2004

NEW is ACCA's showcase for the best in new art created for the best of art environments. NEW is an annual event in the ACCA exhibition calendar. Outstanding young artists will be given the opportunity to create ambitious new works for the ACCA spaces supported by the ACCA curatorial team. Lead by Artistic Director, Juliana Engberg and selected by curator Geraldine Barlow, NEW04 promises a rich range of new projects by exhibiting artists who will each use the drama of ACCA's extraordinary space to create works unparalleled in their own output. It is our expectation, that the NEW04 works will be seen beyond ACCA, around Australia and overseas as a consequence of their sophisticated and ambitious delivery. This is precisely what has occurred for the NEW03 artists whose projects have moved beyond ACCA to be seen interstate and internationally.

NEW04 draws together projects dreaming of impossible landscapes, drawing upon traditions of myth and history and questioning the place and role of the artist. The artists in NEW04 pose questions related to the responsibilities of an individual and an artist: Is a unique perspective possible in this image saturated, virtual/real world? How do we respect and carry forward the cultures of our ancestors? And, how do we create our own position in relation to the grand histories, the myths of art and nation? NEW04 brings together works and structures by artists: **Guy Benfield**, **Nadine Christensen**, **Anthony Hunt** and **Stephen Honegger** (in collaboration), **Tom Nicholson**, **Sangeeta Sandrasegar**, and **Parekohai Whakamoe**.

## artist backgrounds

### GUY BENFIELD

Born 1964, Sydney, New South Wales. Currently lives and works in Melbourne, Victoria.

Melbourne-based artist Benfield completed a Post Graduate in Fine Art at the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne in 1987. In 1999 he undertook a Master of Fine Art by Course Work at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Melbourne followed by a Master of Fine Art by Research, at Royal Melbourne Institute of



left: Guy Benfield, LP Werk (Pais Tropical) 2002 still from video, duration 7 minutes

above: Guy Benfield, French Pup /Live action, 2001 still from video Images courtesy the artist

Technology, Melbourne which he completed in 2001. Guy Benfield has been actively involved with exhibitions, performances and projects for artist-run spaces and publicly-funded galleries since 1991. Benfield's solo exhibitions include Brazilian Wax Museum (with Vittoria Di Stefano), Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne (2003), Ode to the Superquick, 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne (2001), French Pup/Live Action, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne (2001) and Castles in the Air, Metro Galleries, Brisbane (2000).

He has also participated in numerous group exhibitions including X Melbourne, Sydney College of the Arts, Sydney (2003), Love Stories, First Floor, Melbourne (2002), Blink, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne (2000), Aerphost-an Australian Survey, The Debtors Prison, Dublin, Ireland (1995).

In 2001 Benfield received a Pat Corrigan Grant and an Arts Victoria New Work grant. In 1998 he received an Australia Council New Work grant. Benfield is a 2004 recipient of the Gordon Samstag Scholarship.

'Guy Benfield's works involve, and to a degree 'feature', elaborate sets and decor. Benfield shows what might be thought of as ironised demonstrations of artistic endeavour.'<sup>1</sup> Benfield creates 'live' and recorded performances which parody elements of performance art and painting; combining the spontaneity and gesticulation of early performance art with the meticulous planning of a formal installation. His works are filled with allusions to fashion, music and pop culture. His decor, music and props specifically reference 1960s and 1970s popular culture and design. Benfield's works are lush, complex, cheeky and ironic, they question the drive for an individual artist to position their process in relation to a broader artistic history and investigate the parallel possibilities for an exploration of the personal and the idiosyncratic.

## PREVIOUS WORK

### Universal Love Action, 2002

Universal Love Action, a collaboration with fashion designer Vittoria Di Stefano, was shown at First Floor artist and Writers Space in 2002. For this work a structured scenario was performed as a one-take 'live act' and presented as a video loop. Daniel Palmer describes the work as showing a: '...couple moving unsteadily around a gravitationally challenged, though regularly furnished room. Subtle 1970s fashion and music recall Barbarella's famous opening scene. The action commences with Benfield climbing headfirst out of a cupboard, and then shows a protracted bodily struggle to move a large stretched canvas into position on the 'wall'. In short, we are immersed into the spatial disorientation of puerile 'turn the camera on its side' slapstick designs. Yet by the time the artists splatter, drip and pour fluorescent pink paint straight from the can, we can only revel in the magical, almost sexual attraction of paint to canvas, as it flows horizontally in space.'<sup>2</sup>



left: Guy Benfield  
Om Supreme Bhagavan 2004  
Installation: mdf, plywood, wood veneer, plastic, DVD loop on plasma screen, 6 framed drawings, rice paper and wall drawing  
Dimensions variable  
Installation view, ACCA  
Image courtesy of the artist

<sup>1</sup> Ken Bolton, Samstag catalogue essay: 'New Brew: Export Quality Six-Pack', <http://www.unisa.edu.au/samstag>

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Palmer, review of Guy Benfield and Vittoria Di Stefano, Universal Live Action, First Floor artist and Writers Space, 2002 for ACCA Magazine Issue 1, <http://www.accaonline.org.au>

## Om Supreme Bhagavan (Demonstration Werk), 2004

Benfield's performance/video works are like metaphors or allegories for romantic conceptions of art-making. For NEW04 we walk into a room where an action or performance has already occurred; the evidence and props used by the artist remain. We can view the looped DVD of the performance on a plasma screen on the floor. Where is the art? Is it the colourful framed graffiti-style drawings, the video documentation of the artist's performance, the performance itself, or the objects and props used by the artist that remain behind as evidence of his actions? For his NEW04 project at ACCA Guy Benfield has created a surreal and riotous dreamscape where wall paintings, drawings and video/performance investigations collide.

Benfield's drawings make up only a part of his project for NEW04. The landscape within the drawings — rocky cliff-top outcrops and an array of dripping stalactites — spills beyond the frame and onto the gallery walls. A massive raised wooden dais occupies the centre of the gallery. It is on this modernist-style stage that Benfield's performative action-painting investigation has occurred. Dressed in wigs and white mumu's Benfield and long-time performance collaborator Vittoria Di Stefano are the principal actors in an investigative process that is part action-painting and part mystic-shamanism. In the video documentation we do not notice the the artist giving directions or the collaborators speaking. Benfield's performances are carefully prepared and choreographed, before being acted out in front of the camera.



left: Guy Benfield  
Om Supreme Bhagavan 2004  
DVD still from ACCA installation  
Installation: mdf, plywood, wood  
vener, plastic, DVD loop on  
plasma screen, 6 framed drawings,  
rice paper and wall drawing  
Dimensions variable

Image courtesy of the artist

## FURTHER RESEARCH

You can view an excerpt of Guy Benfield's video and installation work The Essence of Ju Ju 2003, 1998 at <http://www.unisa.edu.au/samstag/scholars/scholars2004/benfield-mm.htm>

Universal Love Action at [http://www.vca.unimelb.edu.au/admin/admin\\_links/projekt/artists/benfield.html](http://www.vca.unimelb.edu.au/admin/admin_links/projekt/artists/benfield.html)

Guy Benfield had a studio residency at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces in Fitzroy. Still images can be viewed at the Gertrude website <http://www.gertrude.org.au>

## NADINE CHRISTENSEN

Born 1970, Victoria. Currently lives and works in Melbourne, Victoria.

Nadine Christensen completed a degree in painting at Monash University Gippsland in 1993, then graduated from painting at the Victorian College of the Arts in 1997.

Nadine has exhibited widely in artist-run, public and commercial art galleries. Her recent group exhibitions include: *Everyday at home, anytime away* (with Delphine Coindet) the LA International, Solway Jones Gallery, Los Angeles, U.S.A and *This was the future*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne (2003); *Into the Blue*, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne and *Octopus 3*, Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne (2002), and *Painting: an arcane technology*, The Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne, (2001). Recent solo exhibitions include *Synthetic Longing*, Uplands Gallery, Melbourne and *Making Eyes*, Kaliman Gallery, Sydney (2003); *Nadine Christensen*, Kaliman Gallery, Sydney (2002) and *In the Land of Fen*, Uplands Gallery, Melbourne (2001).



left: Nadine Christensen  
Four Fruit Flummery 2002  
Acrylic on board

Image courtesy the artist,  
Kaliman Gallery, Sydney and  
Uplands Gallery, Melbourne

Between 1998 and 1999 Nadine was a studio artist at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces. She is a founding member of CLUBSproject; a Melbourne based artist-run initiative. In 2003 Nadine was the recipient of an Australia Council residency at the Los Angeles studio. Nadine has participated in the ACCA Schools' Outreach program since 2001 presenting talks at numerous Melbourne metropolitan and regional secondary schools.

Nadine Christensen is represented by Uplands Gallery, Melbourne and Kaliman Gallery, Sydney

## PERCEPTION AND PAINTING

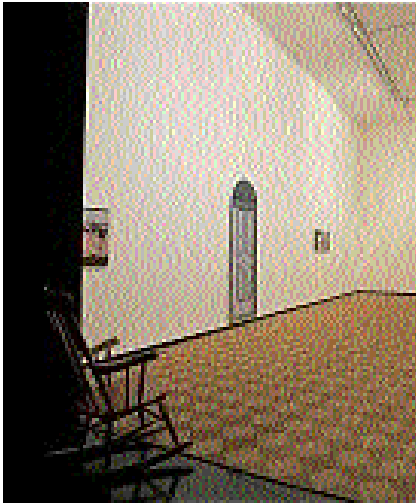
Nadine Christensen works primarily with the expanded language of painting. A sustained interest in geographic and atmospheric phenomena has led her practice to examine the changing possibilities and conditions of perception. This coupled with an interest in networks of communication enable her to trace the illusory spaces that both imitate and invert the natural world. For NEW04 Nadine's project aims to open a space for these transient and potential worlds, bringing the techno-romantic environments of her paintings into the gallery space.

## It's Been A Long Time Longing, 2004

For NEW04 Christensen's painting installation creates a domestic environment in the gallery. The artist has covered the floor with seagrass matting; a wooden rocking chair rests at its edge. A to-scale painting of an ornate and decorative door suggests an exit or portal to the fantastical environments suggested in her other paintings. In many of them Christensen foregrounds the ruins of small shacks or huts, which are painted in tones of black, brown and grey. She leads our eye to the mundane details of human habitation: a power-lead hangs by an open door in one work, a mobile phone and charger sit on the table in another.

## INSPIRATION AND INVESTIGATION

In her investigation into refracted and reflected light and its atmospheric and communicative effects, Nadine draws on diverse sources including: design and illustration; architecture; new and old imaging technologies; special effects in sci-fi and animation; natural and geographic phenomena and tall stories and curiosities. Her work investigates: the endlessness of light; space and movement; portraits of technology; mood and feeling in painting; the framing of fantasy and ideas of utopia; the desire to map and understand the environment and the role of narrative and story telling. She is also interested in the unfolding of information and communication in contemporary culture. Nadine sources inspiration for her paintings from browsing in opportunity shops, magazines, film, music, the Internet and books. Christensen has mentioned that the artist John Brack was an early inspiration for her own practice. She was interested in his choice of subject matter and painting technique; the way he gradually built up the surface of his paintings through layered applications of paint.



far left: Nadine Christensen  
It's been a long time longing  
2004, dimensions variable  
Installation view ACCA

left: Nadine Christensen  
Hello Sorrow 2004  
Acrylic on board, 60 x 100 cm

Images courtesy the artist,  
Uplands Gallery, Melbourne  
and Kaliman Gallery, Sydney

## MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES

Nadine's collected images are pared down by their translation through a sequence of drawing, photography photocopying, projection, collage and distortion. Her reduced images are painted in acrylic (synthetic polymer paint) on board to achieve maximum flatness and often suggest a printed medium with diagrammatic or educational purposes. The subtle candy-coloured tints and shades used by the artist are meticulously and painstakingly built up on the surface of the board.

## PROFESSIONAL ART PRACTICE

Nadine's largely studio-based professional practice influences the development of her work and her approach to subject matter. She works mainly at a desk with collected source material close at hand. This gives an intimacy and introverted nature to the scale and brushwork. Working like this in the studio she is often removed from her subjects which means she is able to invest a sense of remoteness and disconnectedness in her work. Nadine's studio is in a building with a number of other artist studios. This arrangement provides an environment of critical dialogue and experimentation.

## FURTHER RESEARCH

Nadine Christensen's work can be viewed online at the Kaliman Gallery website <<http://kalimangallery.com>>

## STEPHEN HONEGGER & ANTHONY HUNT

### STEPHEN HONEGGER

Born 1974, Johannesburg, South Africa. Currently lives and works in Melbourne.

In 1996 Stephen Honegger completed a Bachelor of Art, Fine Art, at RMIT University, Melbourne, followed in 1997 by a Bachelor of Art, Fine Art Honours at RMIT University, Melbourne. Recent exhibitions include Plasticine Park, ACMI (2003); Something/Something Video Something, Uplands Gallery, Melbourne and Artspace, Sydney, and Container, (with Anthony Hunt) Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne (2002); Made to Move, Hot Rod Tea Room, Oslo, Norway; Outer Limits, Video Lounge, New York, USA; Final Fantasies, 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne and Blink, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.

Honegger's practice involves the mediums of painting, installation and video. Most recently, Honegger has been utilizing computer gaming technology and three-dimensional digital animation to create his work.



left: Stephen Honegger & Anthony Hunt  
Container 2002  
Installation view Gertrude Contemporary  
Art Spaces

Image courtesy the artists

### ANTHONY HUNT

Born 1977, Melbourne, Victoria. Currently lives and works in Melbourne.

Hunt's solo exhibitions include Days: hours: minutes: seconds, Penthouse and Pavement, Melbourne, All the Three Letter Words in the English Language, Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne; Casting, Westspace Gallery, Melbourne and Burst, First Floor Artist and Writers Space, Melbourne. He has participated in the group exhibitions Something Something, Video Something, Uplands Gallery, Melbourne and Artspace, Sydney; Works on Paper, Seoul National University, Korea; Make it Yourself, 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne, and The Cask-An Aussie Icon, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.

Hunt's work ranges from architectural interventions to more technology driven works. Hunt's interest in spatiality, evident in his earlier structural installations, is still explored within the realms of new technologies. With Hunt, new technologies provide another avenue for exploring ideas, rather than constituting the basis of the idea.

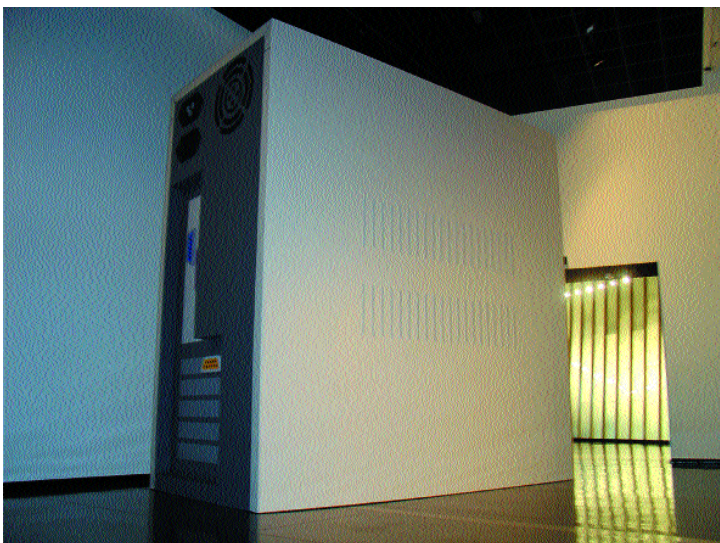
### A COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE

Honegger and Hunt began collaborating in 1998 with Gameplay at Grey Area Art Space in Melbourne, and have undertaken a number of collaborative efforts since. In their collaborative practice they make strange the familiar story-telling devices of gaming and virtual role-play scenarios. Honegger and Hunt question the very process of looking at art. They expertly handle the expectations of their audience: by turn they intrigue, manipulate, delight, nurture and frustrate. Bringing together two separate and sophisticated practices the collaborative interests of Hunt and Honegger provide a model of artists working together to evolve a joint process which is distinctive in its own right. Collaboratively, Anthony Hunt and Stephen Honegger have exhibited Hatchback at Uplands Gallery, Melbourne, Container, at 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne, Scene at Talk Artists Initiative, and Gameplay at Grey Area Art Space, Melbourne. They were also featured in Primavera, at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

## Container, 2002

Their recent works are often specific to the context in which they are exhibited, creating installations that utilize digital animation. In these works the gallery is transformed into an environment in which conflict and competition are played out through gun battles in which the viewer participates, as both spectator and assailant. For Container, exhibited in the main gallery at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces in 2002 the artists constructed a scale replica of a shipping container with a looped video projection screening inside. The video component of Container, depicted a model of the Gertrude gallery itself, produced with software used to make computer gaming environments. The video narrative revealed the strange origins of the container, whilst also depicting a sinister and unsettling event taking place in the gallery.

The container was: ' ... lifted and then lowered one night into Gertrude Street, in Hunt and Honegger's own covert operation. In an eerie yet comical loop, the movie and the container explain each other, while they are simultaneously contained within each other. As the mystery unfolds the viewer is engaged in a bizarre dislocation of time and place: after entering the gallery you 'leave' into the container replica to watch a movie, in which you proceed to re-enter the gallery and then re-enter the container. Here the containers' unlikely presence and impossible entrance is proven best suited to the virtual.'<sup>3</sup>



left: Anthony Hunt and Stephen Honegger  
Tower Case 2004  
MDF, pine, acrylic paint  
480 x 240 x 480 cm  
Installation view ACCA

Image courtesy the artists

## Tower Case, 2004

For NEW04 Hunt and Honegger have built a monumental CPU (central processing unit) unit in the gallery spaces out of pine, MDF, and acrylic paint. Their Tower Case, 2004 is a reminder of just how quickly technology becomes obsolete. The CPU, monitor, and keyboard combination, until recently standard technology in many homes and workplaces, is rapidly being superseded by the increasing affordability and portability of laptops and more streamlined or integrated computer models. Hunt and Honegger fashion the CPU as an epic relic; a monument to what computers looked like before we had the slick and colourful iMac range to choose from. Their work responds directly to the scale and architecture of the ACCA spaces; standing 4.8 metres high, Hunt and Honegger's Tower Case is a monument to the everyday and the voracious pace of redundancy.

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3. Chad Chatterton, Container, Catalogue essay, <http://www.gertrude.org.au>

The use of the CPU tower was fuelled as much by increasing access to the internet and a mass information/communication system, as it was by a desire for broadly accessible information processing and handling systems. The internet itself was established out of research networks supported by the United States military and was developed as a communications network that could function independently of any one of its main centres. In the event of a major catastrophe, the loss of any one city or communications centre would not bring down the network. In creating a system empowered to exist without a centre the conditions were set in place for the proliferation of the CPU: the tower of one, owned by many millions.

## FURTHER RESEARCH

Container was included in Issue #1 of PROJECT; a quarterly video catalogue which archives the artwork of gallery-based artists working with video. The catalogue, curated by Brendan Lee, contains the artwork of established, mid-career and emerging artists from Australia

You can view Container at <[http://www.vca.unimelb.edu.au/admin\\_links/projekt/artists/honeggerhunt.html](http://www.vca.unimelb.edu.au/admin_links/projekt/artists/honeggerhunt.html)>

Download the video, and view images and video and production stills from Container on Anthony Hunt's website <<http://www.hunthunthunt.com>>

## TOM NICHOLSON

Born 1973, Melbourne, Victoria. Currently lives and works in London, England.

Tom Nicholson completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts in drawing at the Victorian College of the Arts in 1998. His work has been exhibited in commercial galleries, public institutions, and project spaces in Melbourne, Sydney and Berlin.

His solo exhibitions and projects include After Action for Another Library, at Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany; Stills from an Archive into 5 Actions, Australia Centre, Berlin, Germany (2002); Melancholia (Documents after 5 Actions, Berlin) at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne (2003) and Dili Action, Dili, East Timor. Recent group exhibitions include Feedback: Art, Social Consciousness and Resistance, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne (2003); The Office of Utopic Procedures, West Space, Melbourne (2001) and Critical Response, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney (2000).



far left: Tom Nicholson  
Document after five actions, 2002  
Installation view, Kapelle der  
Versöhnung, Berlin

left: Tom Nicholson  
After Action for Another Library,  
2003  
Humboldt University Berlin

Images courtesy the artist



In 2000 Tom Nicholson was the recipient of the Queens Trust for Young Australians award and an Australia Council New Work grant. In 2002 he received an Australia Council grant to live and work in Berlin, where he developed new work for exhibition in Berlin and Melbourne. Tom is an active writer of reviews and criticism, and has been published in journals such as Art/Text, Art and Australia and Like, Art Magazine, as well as in exhibition catalogues published by the National Gallery of Victoria, Auckland Art Gallery, Wilhelm Fabry Museum (Germany), Artspace Visual Arts Centre, and West Space.

## THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY

Nicholson's practice seeks to raise political awareness and social consciousness through community action and group participation. Nicholson explores these ideas through various events and happenings that are historically and politically referential, replacing the specificity of their respective causes with the universality of a desire to make change. The meticulous documentation of these events then serve as the exhibited outcome. He has used images in public actions in a number of recent works - in Berlin, Melbourne, and also East Timor - exploring the ways that an image alternately discloses and conceals its subject.

## INFLUENCES AND INSPIRATIONS

The artist has cited Joseph Beuys, Ian Burn (Art and Language) and Gerhard Richter as being artists that he admires and is influenced by. He is particularly interested in conceptual art and the way in which images can simultaneously reveal and conceal information about their subject.

## PREVIOUS WORK

### After Action for Another Library,, 2003

Tom Nicholson's 2003 exhibition *After Action for Another Library* presented traces of a two-year book collection project. It includes a massive grid of 3,000 photographs of the title pages of books collected in Australia as a response to the situation in East Timor after the vote to become an independent nation. The vote resulted in Indonesian troops occupying and destroying much of East Timor, and in particular their books. Tom Nicholson established *Action for Another Library* in Melbourne, gathering thousands of books from bookstores, libraries and individuals and shipping them to East Timor. These books now form part of the new University Library of East Timor.

### Seven Days, 2003-04

Seven days is a series of marches undertaken by the artist, volunteers and his friends around Melbourne over seven consecutive days, Sunday 22 February - Saturday 28 February 2004. These marches were undertaken with banners, large-scale images of faces produced by the artist over the last year. The first six marches (22-27 February 2004) were carried out with banners, at dawn. The seventh march (28 February 2004) was conducted without banners, at dusk. This march finished with a Volksküche, a meal eaten on the street, open to all, often shared at one large table.

The routes for the marches were generated by collecting instances of the creation of national boundaries since 1 January 1901. Each national boundary generates a line. This line provides a route for marching, so that each march traces a national boundary by its course through the streets of Melbourne.

For NEW04 Tom Nicholson's project *Seven Days 2003-04* consists of three parts: double video projection documenting seven 'actions' (each action consisting of a public march with a large banner); the banners themselves (digital prints on synthetic canvas); and a long trestle table displaying documentation of the creation of national boundaries since January 01 1901. The work is a meditation on the limits and possibilities of images, and on the relationship between the language of images and the language of human action.

## FURTHER RESEARCH

View Tom Nicholson's work online at the Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces website:  
<<http://www.gertrude.org.au>>

## SANGEETA SANDRASEGAR

Born 1977, Brisbane, Queensland. Currently lives and works in Melbourne, Victoria.

Sandrasedgar's practice explores ideas of sensuality, eroticism and exoticism through her meticulously crafted paper cuttings. The delicacy of her drawing technique belies the confidence and forthrightness of her subject matter, which oscillates between contemporary Manga-style animation and re-interpretations of traditional religious texts and illustrations.

Sandrasedgar's solo exhibitions include Goddess of Flower, That happened which did happen, Room to Frieze, and Floating Worlds at Mori Gallery, Sydney, Lady White Snake, Lord Mori Gallery, Los Angeles, USA, and Floating Worlds, West Space, Melbourne. She has also participated in a number of group exhibitions including Papercuts, Monash University of Art, Melbourne, A Third Place, SOFA Gallery, Christchurch, New Zealand, The Inaugural Freedman Foundation Awards Exhibition, Sir Herman Black Gallery, Sydney, and National Works on Paper Prize, Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Victoria. Sandrasedgar's work will also be featured in the upcoming 2nd Auckland Triennial-Public/Private/Tumatanui/Tumataiti in New Zealand.

Sandrasedgar is represented by Mori Gallery, Sydney

## INFLUENCES, INSPIRATIONS AND IDEAS

Sandrasedgar has a continuing interest in cross-cultural debates incorporating interests in feminism, the preservation of cultural difference and strategies of resistance. Sandrasedgar's own cultural heritage is Indian Malay. Growing up, she lived between Melbourne and Malaysia. In Malaysia, where an enormous variety of cultural traditions co-exist, Sandrasedgar was brought up with a richness of storytelling, hearing narratives from both Hindu and Christian traditions that, for her, had the quality of second tales rather than primary beliefs. Sandrasedgar's parents were each brought up in different Christian contexts, her father Catholic and her mother Methodist. She recalls a childhood of many stories, including her mother encouraging her awareness of Chinese gods and mythology.



far left and left: Sangeeta Sandrasedgar ...and she spins and weaves with them still, and continues to hang, 2004  
Central cut paper hanging, shadows, spiders in cut paper and built installation  
395 x 312 x 312 cm  
Installation view ACCA

Images courtesy the artist and Mori Gallery, Sydney

## THE USE OF SHADOW

Sandrasegar's development of the papercut and shadow as her chosen medium sprang from her early work with miniatures from the erotic Indian text the kama sutra. In these works Sangeeta chose to remove the figures from their environment, to show in parallel the intricacies of the empty room and the papercuts of the entangled couple. In her installation at ACCA the shadow is an integral part of the work; in fact without it it is difficult to make out the intricate hand-cut, sequined and beaded Comity of Spiders that adorn the outside walls of the pavillion.

### ...and she spins and weaves with them still, and continues to hang, 2004

Sangeeta Sandrasegar has installed a white wooden pavilion in the middle of the main gallery at ACCA. At the centre of this space an intricate white papercut lantern is suspended from the ceiling; like the pavilion it is square in form. When you enter the pavillion you become part of the work; entrapped in the shadow that spills out from the hand-cut paper lantern. The lantern itself is a paper cut on one sheet of paper that has been folded in a rectangular form to make the lantern shade.

Sandrasegar's four-sided papercut lantern takes the form of a web wrapped around itself. One panel represents the centre of the web and shows the heroine of Sandrasegar's tale, the spinner with a tear in her eye and hair cascading over her elegantly long-fingered hands. She has the face of a female character from Japanese manga, or cartoons, and yet her web is like the clouds of a Japanese scroll, abstracted

The woman spider form that Sandrasegar represents comes from Japanese culture; in Japanese folklore tsuchigumo, the earth spider was a fearsome creature capable of sucking the vital essence from humans.

Also depicted within the paper-cut lantern are a number of other clues to the possible narrative; a sailing ship, a shoreline in the distance, a swashbuckling adventurer, his weapon at his side, the web of the spider a foreboding sign behind him. Paths stretch towards distant horizons upon which the silhouette of a city may be seen and strange creatures populate the shores. Perhaps this is a vision of the arrival of the Portuguese in Japan in 1497?



far left and left: Sangeeta Sandrasegar  
...and she spins and weaves with them still, and continues to hang, 2004  
Detail from central hanging: paper, sequins, glass beads, glitter and glue  
110 x 30 x 30 cm

Image courtesy of the artist and Mori Gallery, Sydney

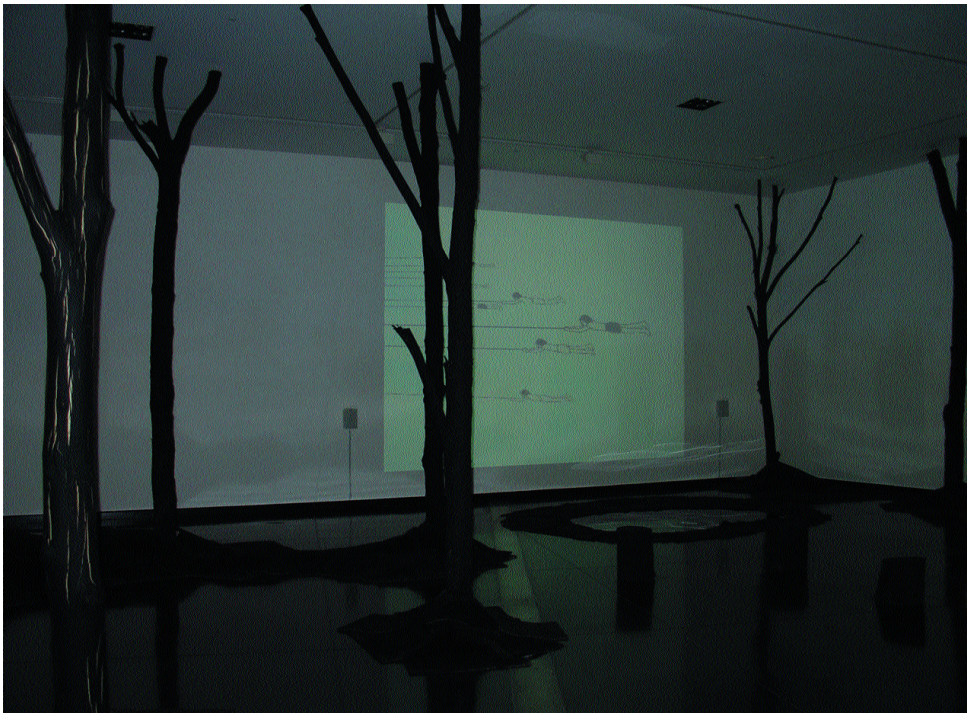
## PAREKOHAI WHAKAMOE

Born 1969, Dunedin, New Zealand. She is of Maori (Tuhoe tribe) and European descent. She has lived and worked in Melbourne since 1998.

Whakamoe's solo exhibitions include *Love is a Battlefield* at Kiosk, Christchurch, New Zealand, *Storing Up*, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, *Transformers*, and *The Spa* at 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne. She has also participated in numerous group exhibitions including *Studio Artists 2001* at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne, *Paintings are Ace* at Linden gallery, Melbourne, *Celebrating Women's*

*Suffrage*, New Zealand touring exhibition, and *Kohio ko taikaka Anake- Artists Construct New Directions*, at The National Art Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand

Whakamoe's practice traverses the mediums of sculpture, installation and screen-based works. One of the core concerns of Whakamoe's work is the relationship between identity and place, be it actual or mythical. These places become sites for exploring the self in terms of history, physicality and mythology.



Parekohai Whakamoe  
There He Is 2004  
Sculpture and multimedia  
installation  
flash animation projection  
played in a 12-minute loop  
with spoken word narrative  
and soundscape, trees,  
acrylic, and carpet  
dimensions variable  
ACCA installation view

Image courtesy of the artist

## ARTIST BACKGROUND

Parekohai Whakamoe was born to Pakeha and Maori parents. They exposed her to Traditional Maori Art with its highly stylized features and fantastic imagery and also to contemporary European and American Art with its naturalism, representational art and divergent styles. Parekohai has said that: 'like many New Zealander's land and a sense of isolation has featured highly in my work.'

Parekohai moved to Melbourne in 1998 and exhibited sculpture, installation, drawing, painting, digital animation and video in a number of artist-run and public galleries. She undertook a 2-year studio residency at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces in Fitzroy where she was exposed to a diversity of art, artists, and curators from Australia and overseas. In 2002 Parekohai completed an MA in sculpture, painting and video at the Victorian College of the Arts.

For NEW04 Parekohai has drawn upon her Whakapapa; her family history and geneology, a greatly codified and carefully guarded body of knowledge.

## INSPIRATION FOR IDEAS, MEANING AND IMAGE, AND WORKING METHODOLOGY

Parekohai says: 'my work has a Gothic sensibility, drawing from European and Maori mythology, horror, and selected sources of propaganda to make artwork rich in stylized forms and dark representational narrative. I use pictorial devices taken from traditional storybook narrative (film, oral histories, and literature) to look at the construction of personal identity. I am interested in showing "unrealised" or unfinished stories, for example, dashed hopes and dreams, or the slow passing of time. I apply archetypal forms to reveal the different stories as being part of an overall story, and if they end up being negative, then to expose the collective story as being a "horror house". If the story reveals upheaval or transformation it could then be a "magic lake". I'm quite morbid, someone else might do quite joyful archetypal forms.'

For NEW04 Parekohai has really extended her practice. She is an artist who previously has worked on a much smaller scale; primarily with mixed media, wall drawings and sculpture. For ACCA she has investigated the process of animating her mixed media drawings and paintings. When planning the animation sequences for NEW04 Parekohai began with the narrative. She spent a long time developing and editing the four tales to be animated. She then completed a large number of drawings relating to and illustrating the narrative. These were laid out in storyboard format before the animation process began. Parekohai worked with her partner, who is an animator, to realise the final sequences which incorporate a mixture of low-tech stop animation techniques and digital animation. The animation process was the most lengthy part of the project and was an exciting learning experience for the artist. The installation process at ACCA took about a week. Trees were sourced from a forest and delivered to ACCA, these were painted and then secured in the gallery spaces. She has used black acrylic sheeting to make the pond and recycled plastic and carpet a previous artist's project at ACCA to build up areas and add texture to the 'forest' floor.

### There He Is, 2004

For NEW04 Parekohai Whakamoe has created a darkened forest space, complete with an ink-black reflective pond ringed by tree stumps that double as gallery seats. In this space Parekohai Whakamoe incorporates history, myth and gothic fable. Projected on the wall of the gallery are four flash animation sequences; recounting from a male perspective fictionalised tales and legends from the Maori history. Whakamoe has written her her own narratives from the tales of four historical figures, all spiritual leaders of a kind, and all important in New Zealand's Maori/settler contact histories of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



left: Parekohai Whakamoe  
There He Is 2004  
Sculpture and multimedia  
installation  
Animation still

Image courtesy the artist

Whakamoe creates first-person narratives that weave together moments of history and myth. In the narrative each of the characters is presented as a father figure. Her story cycle begins with the figure of Jesus Christ who rises from the central pool of water within the forest and plays with a small child. Next, we meet the figure of the Presbyterian missionary Father Walker, who is represented flying through the sky with a chain of children in tow. He introduces the people to the wonders of the book, but at the same time draws them away from their own culture. He is the most fictionalised character, his life as imagined by Whakamoe draws upon the experiences of various missionaries in the Tuhoe region.

Whakamoe's great-grandfather Erueti Tamaikoha was both a spiritual leader and guerrilla warrior of Whakamoe's Iwi, or tribe, the Tuhoe. In Whakamoe's narrative he is taken for a walk through the potato plantations by his foster son. Together they ponder the changes to the Maori way of life brought on by the coming of the pakeha, or strangers. The fourth narrative relates to the prophet and spiritual leader Te Kooti Arikirangi, who drew upon Christian teachings to establish the Ringatu church.

## NEW04 POINTS FOR STUDENT DISCUSSION

- Consider the way each of the artists in NEW04 have responded to the gallery space and to the scale and architecture of ACCA. A year ago the artists were selected by Curator, Geraldine Barlow and invited to begin developing their individual projects. They were aware of which space they would be creating work for. How have they each chosen to respond to the space? Consider the use of lighting, the arrangement of works in the space, whether works have been installed on the walls or the floor, the introduction of other elements (such as the floor covering and chair in Nadine Christensen's installation) and the use of sound components.
- Anthony Hunt and Stephen Honegger's work Tower Case was built entirely in the ACCA gallery spaces. It is too large to be removed and at the end of the exhibition will be dismantled. It will only exist in people's memories and as documentation in the form of photographs and reproductions of the work in the NEW04 catalogue. What differences are there between artists making work to exhibit at a public gallery, like ACCA and at commercial galleries and ? Do you think you would see a work like this at a commercial gallery? Why/Why not?
- A number of the artists worked with other people to realise their projects. Parekohai Whakamoe worked with her partner who is an animator; Tom Nicholson worked with a number of friends and volunteers who took part in and assisted with the marches; Anthony Hunt and Steven Honnegger collaborated on their work Tower Case and had assistance from other artists to build, model and paint the finished work. What benefits might there be for artists working in this way? All the artists were assisted by the Curator, ACCA's installation team and a number of ACCA's volunteers. Do you think that all the people who worked on the project should be credited for making the work or only the person whose idea it was? Why/why not?
- Guy Benfield appears in his own work - in the looped DVD of the strange performance. He has said that he admires the work of Jackson Pollock. Compare and contrast Jackson Pollock's style of gestural action-painting, with the role of the artist as depicted by Guy Benfield in his DVD performance, part of the installation at ACCA. What comment do you think Guy Benfield might be making about the role of the artist in this work?
- NEW04 is an exhibition of six separate commissioned artist projects rather than a group exhibition. Curator Geraldine Barlow said that she wanted to: 'stage an exhibition that highlighted the "breadth of perspective" in local contemporary art and also present pieces that "worked off each other".'<sup>4</sup> What effects are generated by placing works next to each other? Are there any relationships that occur between works due to their proximity in the gallery?

4 Megan Backhouse, 'New map of the human art', The Age, Monday April 19 2004. A3 pp. 6-7.

Education kit prepared by Kate Barber, Education and Public Programs Manager, ACCA 2004

Material for this kit has been drawn from a number of conversations with the NEW04 artists that took place at ACCA in February 2004 and from Geraldine Barlow's NEW04 catalogue essay

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