MUMA

Shapes of Knowledge

Continuing an ambitious program of bringing critical thinking and innovation into the galleries of MUMA, Shapes of Knowledge brings together eight projects from artists, collectives and organisations from across the globe.

This is a compelling exhibition of big ideas – reflecting on how we live, how we learn, and the unique ability of art to animate our sensory experiences and critical faculties.

The first exhibition of its kind in Australia, Shapes of Knowledge opens at MUMA Saturday 9 February – Saturday 13 April 2019 and has been curated by MUMA’s Senior Curator, Hannah Mathews.

The exhibition reflects on the different platforms, spaces and timeframes in which knowledge is produced and shared. These projects include: A Centre for Everything (AU), Asia Art Archive (HK), Chimurenga (SA), Lucas Ihlein (AU), Annette Krauss and the shifting team at Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons (NLD), Alex Martinis Roe (AU/DE), Kym Maxwell (AU) and The Mulka Project (AU).

The eight projects in Shapes of Knowledge range from an ice cream machine making coal-flavoured treats, live radio broadcasts, a cinema of Indigenous culture, test sites for future greening technology, a toolkit for feminist action, and performance lectures.

Each project will be activated at various times throughout the exhibition – including bus visits to regenerative farms, morning stretch classes for Monash staff, weekend DIY workshops, a salon of feminist performances, amongst others. These programs are free and open to the public.

The exhibition focuses on the role that artists play in relation to knowledge, taking up notions of research, of the laboratory, of learning and of teaching as its central concerns.

‘One of the most powerful things about art is the multiplicity of knowledges it leads us to. Whether it be the materials and techniques of the studio, the histories – contested, real and imagined – of people and places, the politics of culture, technology and economics, art and artists invariably introduce us to knowledge that spans perspectives, disciplines and time. This knowledge may be new to us. The accumulation might challenge what is already familiar, renew something of our past or revise something for our future’, says Hannah Mathews.

‘Shapes of Knowledge’, she continues ‘considers not only how art can impact knowledge but how art itself – its forms, meaning and audiences - can be transformed by learning. It acknowledges the myriad ways in which art and its makers challenge the conventions of knowledge towards new means, towards new acts of knowing.’

The eight projects:

MUMA will undertake an intensive workshop with Dutch-based artist Annette Krauss and the shifting team at Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons (NLD) in an ongoing, collaborative research project for unlearning specific organisational habits, behaviours and ways of thinking. It takes the art organisation as a concrete site for research and subject for change, while placing emphasis on unlearning as a strategy integral to learning something new. The results of MUMA’s ‘unlearning’ will be displayed as part of the exhibition.

Conceived by artist-educator Kym Maxwell, Objects of Longing is a multi-disciplinary project that engages students at Dandenong Primary School in an extended investigation into the relationships between play (personal collecting) and cultural production (institutional collections). The resulting work is a live theatre piece performed by the students at MUMA on Saturday 23 February 2019.

The Mulka Project is a digital library and production centre located in Yirrkala in north-east Arnhem Land. It exists as part of the community’s art centre Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, facilitating the production of audio-visual material and new-media artwork, along with repatriating valuable artworks, texts, images,
sounds and videos of Yolngu culture that are stored in museums, art galleries, libraries and universities in Australia and around the world. The artists will be in Melbourne to discuss this unique program.

*Our Future Network* is part of artist Alex Martinis Roe’s *To Become Two* series, which traces her long-term research into the genealogy of ‘feminist new materialist’ and ‘sexual difference’ theories through an engagement with different international feminist communities and their political practices. The films are presented in a modular architectural installation designed with Fotini Lazaridou-Hatzigoga.

*Asia Art Archive (AAA)* asks: how do the activities of art schools impact the history of art? AAA will present an exhibition display and series of lectures and workshops that draw on their recent research into the pedagogical models used by art schools throughout Asia, in particular the schools of Bigakkō in Japan, Baroda in India, and Zhejian in China.

Artist Lucas Ihlein presents, *Baking Earth - Soil and the Carbon Economy*, a new project that builds on his long-term research into the work of Australian agriculturalist PA Yeomans. Ihlein, along with his artistic collaborator Ian Milliss, view Yeomans as an important cultural innovator whose work they consider in the tradition of land and conceptual art.

*A Centre for Everything (ACE)* presents *Maps of Gratitude, Cones of Silence and Lumps of Coal*, a new project that reflects on the ways in which the fossil fuel industry ingratiates itself to the Australian public. The project adopts ACE’s signature triadic formation, bringing together the topics of Ice Coal, Data Networks and Collectivactivity to converge in generative and revealing ways.

An initiative of the Cape Town-based collective, *Chimurenga*, the *Pan African Space Station* is a live radio studio and innovative platform for free ideas and political reflection about Africa by Africans. It will broadcast live from MUMA from 11-13 April 2019.

Please see here for full details on each of the eight projects: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/390qd6a3q501dvl/AAAG-t89oJz2ZsaB8EjqPXoqa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/390qd6a3q501dvl/AAAG-t89oJz2ZsaB8EjqPXoqa?dl=0)

Each of the artists is available for interview.

MUMA, Monash University Museum, Ground Floor, Building F, Monash University, Caulfield Campus, 900 Dandenong Road, Caulfield East. Entry Free. Tuesday-Friday, 10am – 5pm; Saturday 12-5pm  
[monash.edu/muma/](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/390qd6a3q501dvl/AAAG-t89oJz2ZsaB8EjqPXoqa?dl=0)

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