SEEPAGE WATERS
ON RIVER FLATS.

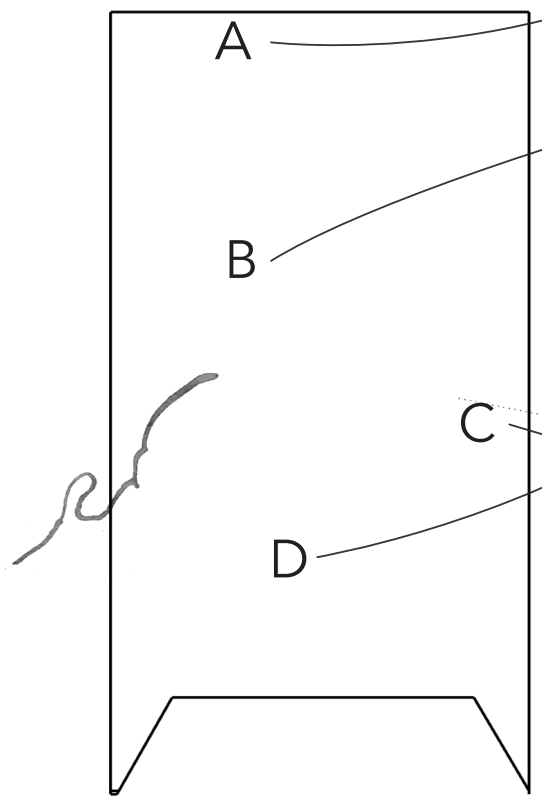
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Seepage: On Eye Floaters and Drains

Anatol Pitt

MFA Examination Exhibition
16th - 19th September 2026, MADA Gallery,
Monash University, Caulfield.



A: Saccadic Suppression, 2026, framed cutting mat, engraved acrylic. 685 x 535mm.

D*: Demonstration*, 2026, installation and performance, overhead projector, petri dishes, water, ink, transparency slides.

C: *I've Got Worms in My Eyes That Are Telling Me What to Think (Right Eye & Left Eye), 2025,* two channel video, whiteboard, computer monitors, engraved acrylic, speakers. 5:20min.

E*: in retrospect I became preoccupied, 2025, solvent transfers on paper, steel.*

This project has been supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) scholarship.

The work towards this Masters was undertaken on the lands of the Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung people of the Kulin Nations and the lands of the Whadjuk Noongar and Menang Noongar people. I acknowledge the as original custodians of these lands and waterways, and pay my respects to their Ancestors and Elders, past, present, and emerging.

i

A few years ago, as we were sorting through my grandmother's house, I rediscovered the box of home movies made by my grandfather Gábor. Some were labelled, some not. I decided to digitise as many as I could, so I set the 8mm projector up to project a small image onto a sheet of paper and filmed it. In the early 1960s Gábor bought a standard 8 camera and started documenting family life and work projects. Some are family holidays, while others are short vignettes of family life in Perth ('Saci goes shopping'). It is a jumbled box of film reels, some are fragments, some are offcuts, while others have been edited together with intertitles as mini films. A selection of them, though, are work-related, documenting water drainage and flooding in and around Boorloo/Perth. Gábor was a civil engineer, working on water drainage and river management.

From the first time seeing these drainage films I was drawn to them, much to the bemusement of my mother, Kati. She has always found them boring, associating them to her childhood memories of going on Sunday outings to various drains. The family would sit in the car while Gábor would do his inspections.

It was while I was watching these drainage films, fragmentary footage of varying quality and focus, feeling overwhelmed and destabilised by the torrent of potential angles and directions, unsure how to feel about the films and how I would frame the material and position myself, that I started to see familiar shapes. Small knots and lines that appeared quickly and then disappeared in the film. Where had I seen them before? I see them every day. Everywhere. On everything. My eye floaters are constantly interfering with my visual field. Both the accumulated dust on the film as well as the degradation of the 8mm celluloid itself reminded me of my own visual experience in the world.

ii

Seepage: On Eye Floaters and Drains is an investigation into a bodily metaphor I call 'the floater,' which I use as an artistic methodology to make work responding to my grandfather Gábor's drainage engineering home movies. The concept of the floater is based on my visual experience of having eye floaters, the mobile opacities in the gel of my eye that are a visual problem, a distraction that I can't escape but can't see clearly. The floater is at once a concrete object (a knot in my eye), an experience of distraction, a symbolic vehicle, and an artistic logic.

How might making and thinking through the floater structure an approach to drainage engineering, technological perception, climate anxiety, water and family history?

The artistic research for this project—spanning drawing, film, solvent transfer and performance— investigates how to represent the floater, but also how to use its characteristics (mobility, distraction, elusiveness) to structure the compositional decisions around layering and fragmentation I use in the studio. Using the floater as a lens to focus on various dimensions of distraction and noise brings out an emphasis on instability, mediation, and situated perspective.

The title, *Seepage*, is taken from the intertitles of Gábor's films. Much of his work as a drainage engineer was to prevent forms of water seepage around drainage structures, which could destabilise and erode the structures and surrounding ground. In this sense, seepage indicates where water 'shouldn't' be, as well as the difficulty of controlling it. Perhaps seepage is the non-bodily reflection of the floater, one that emphasises slippery wateriness and porous boundaries—but also the desire for control, or stability.