



MONASH UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART
EDUCATION KIT

MUMMA

BELIEVE NOT
EVERY SPIRIT,
BUT TRY THE
SPIRITS

21 April - 27 June 2015

 **MONASH** University
Museum of Art

Ground Floor, Building F
Monash University, Caulfield Campus
900 Dandenong Road
Caulfield East VIC 3145 Australia

www.monash.edu.au/muma
Telephone +61 3 9905 4217
muma@monash.edu
Tues–Fri 10am–5pm; Sat 12–5pm

Georgiana Houghton
Installation view
Monash University Museum of Art
Photo: Susannah Wimberley

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This education resource about the exhibition *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits* includes:

- An introduction to the exhibition
- Curatorial rationale
- An introduction to selected artists
- An interview with MUMA's Curator - Exhibitions Francis Parker related to the curriculum for Studio Arts: Art Industry Contexts
- Learning and teaching activities for the classroom
- A glossary of relevant terminology

EXHIBITION INTRODUCTION

'A unique amalgamation of artist, Spiritualist and medium, the fascinating and unexpected story of Georgiana Houghton has generated international interest from curators and writers who see her work as representing an abandonment of figurative form that anticipates the development of modern abstraction by artists such as Kandinsky or Malevich by several decades.' Charlotte Day, Director, MUMA

Believe not every spirit but try the spirits is a thematic, group exhibition that explores spiritualism and spiritualist practice in art. The exhibition takes as its starting point a forgotten artist from the Victorian era, Georgiana Houghton (1814-1884), who developed a practice based on otherworldly entities. Houghton produced wildly abstract watercolours to convey spiritual messages. Her works are remarkable because they represent an abandonment of figuration that predates the development of abstraction by 20th century artists Kandinsky, Malevich and Mondrian.

The exhibition at MUMA is the first time Houghton's watercolours have been presented to the public since 1871 alongside artworks by historical and contemporary artists whose creativity is influenced by spiritualism.

GUEST CURATORS

International guest curators Marco Pasi and Lars Bang Larsen collaborated with the curatorial team at MUMA to develop the exhibition. Marco and Lars had been researching the life and work of Georgiana Houghton for several years when MUMA's Director Charlotte Day invited them to co-curate the exhibition.

Lars Bang Larsen is an art historian, independent curator and writer based in Copenhagen. He has undertaken extensive research in art and psychedelia and curated projects at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Sala Rekalde, Bilbao; and Raven Row, London.

Marco Pasi is Associate Professor in History of Hermetic Philosophy and related currents at the University of Amsterdam. His research focuses on the complex web of relations between modern Western esotericism, religion, politics and art.



CURATORIAL RATIONALE

'In many respects nineteenth century Spiritualism has been a lost continent for a long time. Recent research however has begun to show how important this movement has been from a cultural and social point of view. Houghton's watercolours emerge from this lost continent as alien, impossible objects, which on the one hand oblige us to rethink the relationship between artistic creativity and alternative spirituality, and on the other open the door to new interpretations in the history of modern art.' Marco Pasi

Created during a time when few opportunities were present for women to explore creative practices, Georgiana Houghton's watercolours draw attention to the role of women within society by creating an alternative space through ritual. The perceived irrationality of Spiritualism has in the past been used to belittle the importance of Houghton (and other female artists such as Hilma af Klint) within the history of abstract art. Houghton's mediations between the individual self and the collective otherworld foreground a feminist investigation that complicates common tropes of female hysteria and feminine theological excess as dangerous or disturbed.

Houghton's watercolours accept as legitimate that which lies beyond the bounds of conventional experience, offering a fascinating context for contemporary artists who are interested in the spaces between dream, after life and living reality. Other artists in the exhibition such as Belle Bassin, Matt Mullican and Jess Johnson absorb both shared cultural and personal memories through the aesthetic of ritual to interrogate notions of the world beyond.

EXHIBITING ARTISTS

There are works by 26 artists presented in the exhibition; 4 historical artists and 22 contemporary artists.

Historical Artists:

Georgiana Houghton, Madge Gill and Madame Favre

Contemporary Artists:

Yuri Ancarani, Jan Backlund, Kathy Barry, Belle Bassin, Vincent Ceraudo, Mikala Dwyer, Max Ernst, Chiara Fuamai, Diena Georgetti, Tamar Guimaraes & Kasper Akhoj, Susan Hiller, Susan Jacobs, Jesse Johnson, Kristine Kemp, Joachim Koester, David Lamelas, Dane Mitchell, Matt Mullican, Olivia Plender, Lea Porsager, Laurent Schmid, Georgina Starr and Dorothea Tanning.



Vincent Ceraudo (video stills)
The distance between the viewer and I 2014



SPIRITUALISM IN ART: ARTISTS' PRACTICE AND PROCESS

Georgiana Houghton

'In Houghton's practice mediumship is the key. Houghton transferred authorship and agency to the spirits. In doing so she could radicalise her artwork and make alien objects that could not be placed at the time in which they were made.' Marco Pasi

Georgiana Houghton was born in the Canary Islands in 1814 and spent most of her life in London. She received formal training in art as a young girl, but gave up her artistic practice in 1851 when her younger sister died. In the early 1860s, after she became acquainted with spiritualism, she began to produce 'spirit drawings' as a medium. She claimed that the spirits were guiding her hand when drawing. The result was a stunning series of watercolours that were very different from all other art produced at the time. She developed a visual language where all figurative elements gradually disappeared, leaving complex abstract compositions.

During her lifetime Houghton wanted to display her art in an art context and show it to the world. In 1871 she presented 155 works at a fashionable gallery in Old Bond St, London. Houghton spent her own money on this project and for two months met visitors in the gallery and spoke about the work. Commercially the exhibition was a failure but Houghton continued to paint afterwards.

The works by Georgiana Houghton exhibited in *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits* are on loan from the collection of the Victorian Spiritualist Union (VSU) in Melbourne. The works were first brought to Australia in 1910, during a period when Spiritualism was popular within Western culture. The VSU counts amongst its many distinguished patrons Australia's second Prime Minister Alfred Deakin, who was the organisation's President before devoting himself to politics.

Georgiana Houghton
The Love of God (detail) 1868

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Materials and Techniques

As a class select and look carefully at two watercolours by Georgiana Houghton.

1. Watercolour can offer an immediate and fluid application to support a spontaneous and improvised art practice. Examine the way Georgiana Houghton has used watercolour. As a class discuss how the material qualities of watercolour have supported the spiritualist process undertaken by Houghton.
2. Complex patterns, lines and shapes are significant elements within Houghton's artworks. How has the process of channelling the spirit world contributed toward these particular aesthetic qualities?
3. Consider the titles of Houghton's artworks and review the accompanying text on the back of each piece. What do these artworks communicate to you? Reflect upon how your own beliefs and understanding of a 'spirit world' affect your reading of the work?
4. Working in pairs share your understanding of Houghton's artwork with a classmate. How are your interpretations different/similar? What personal, cultural or spiritual experiences have affected your interpretation?

Display of artworks

A display system to exhibit the work of Georgiana Houghton was required to solve the dilemma of presenting both the front and back sides of each artwork simultaneously. MUMA was inspired by the glass easels hanging system designed by Lina Bo Bardi in 1968.

1. Research the architecture of Lina Bo Bardi and specifically her glass-easel hanging system. What was the original context for this type of display? Do you think this design revolutionised the way audiences view of art in a museum environment? Consider and discuss
2. How does the glass-easel hanging system affect your experience of looking at the artwork?
3. How does this display method enhance the esoteric themes represented in the artworks?



Georgiana Houghton
Front and back installation view
Monash University Museum of Art
Photo: Susannah Wimberley

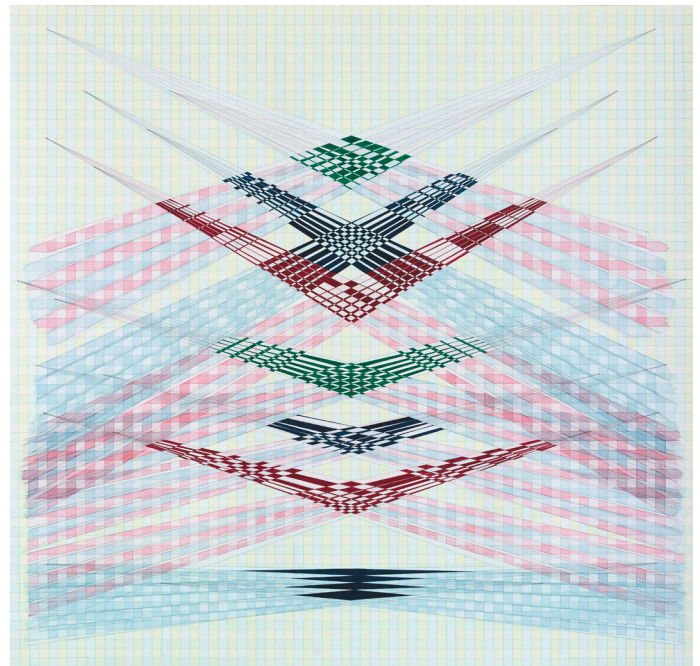
ARTISTS' PRACTICE AND PROCESS

Kathy Barry

Kathy Barry is an Auckland-based artist with a practice founded in drawing. In 2012 she was the seventeenth McCahon House artist-in-residence, which was followed with a residency at the Vermont Studio Center in the United States. Barry's work is represented by Bowen Galleries in Wellington, and has been exhibited in project spaces and public galleries across New Zealand.

Barry's abstract geometric watercolours function as encoded diagrams that address the possibility of multidimensional reality. Like Houghton, Barry attributes her arts process to channelling energies from other dimensions. To make the work Barry describes surrendering to the process of being a pure conduit, transferring authorship to the spirits. A certain amount of faith on behalf of the artist is required to remain open to process. Whilst making the work Barry often notices a random pattern that is eventually resolved in the final hours of production.

The title of Barry's artwork *Cloud nine* references her aspiration to comprehend the consciousness and possibility of a ninth dimension; a metaphysical realm where energy vibrates at such a high frequency that matter is no longer concrete or visible.



In Star witness 2013 Barry explores the movement of energy in the human body through the chakra system. The work diagrammatically describes the movement of swirling vortexes of energy. According to Barry green represents electromagnetic energy travelling up and the blue represents energy moving down the central energetic channel of the body.

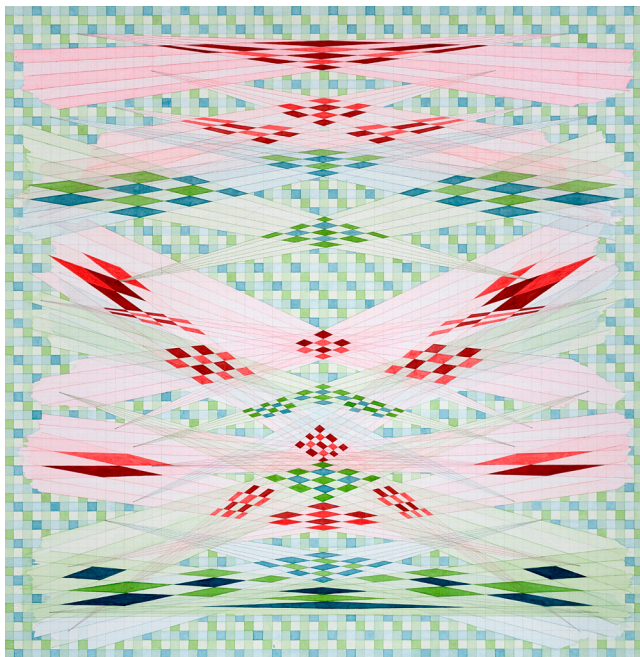
Kathy Barry
Cloud nine 2013

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Compare and contrast historical and contemporary artworks

There is more than 150 years between the production of work by historical artist Georgiana Houghton and contemporary artist Kathy Barry. Both artists have used pencil and watercolour to channel communication from other realms, producing abstract works with quite different aesthetic styles.

1. Compare and contrast the ways Houghton and Barry have used materials and techniques to address similar subject matter and have undertaken similar processes to produce their artworks.
2. Examine the application of art elements and principles in works by Houghton and Barry. Compare and contrast their use of line, colour, harmony and balance.

**Spiritualism in a cultural context**

'It is wrong to put Houghton in the context of outsider art. It reduces the extraordinary aspect about her art. She was not naive as outsider artists were supposed to be. Rather Houghton wanted to be seen and perceived as an artist' Marco Pasi

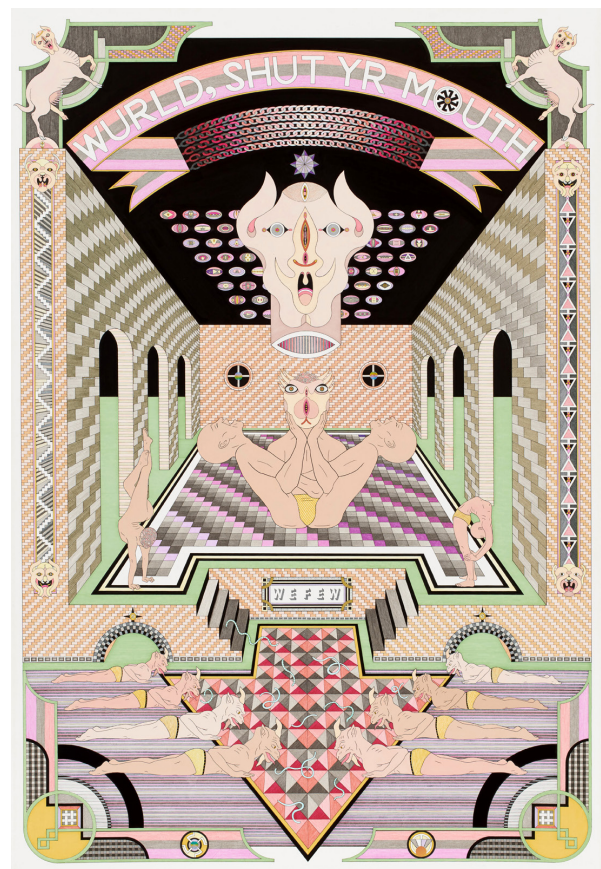
1. Do you find the spiritualist practises and ideas within artworks by Houghton and Barry challenging? Discuss.
2. Why do you think women artists such as Georgiana Houghton have only been recently rediscovered by art historians?
3. Is the social and spiritual climate different today than it was 150 years ago? Discuss.
4. Why do you think the work of Georgiana Houghton has been left uncelebrated and forgotten by the wider community until now?
5. Propose why the work of Houghton and Barry is well received today?
6. Contemporary society is more accepting of spiritualist work than the contemporaries of Houghton. Research the exhibition in depth and prepare a class debate about this statement.
7. Can you locate a new interest in spiritualism in contemporary culture? Looking at the world around you identify the evidence for or against this.

ARTISTS' PRACTICE AND PROCESS

Jess Johnson

Jess Johnson was born in New Zealand in 1979 and currently lives and works in Melbourne. Her work has been exhibited in numerous public galleries and artist run initiatives in Melbourne, Sydney, Christchurch and Auckland.

Jess Johnson's drawing and installation practice is inspired by language, science fiction, culture and technology. In her drawings she depicts complex spaces that combine densely layered patterns, objects and figures within architectural settings. Johnson's drawings are often displayed within constructed environments that act as portals into a fantastical other world. Recently Johnson has explored virtual reality, enabling audiences to access a simulated experience of entering the hypnotic spaces depicted in her drawings.



LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Communication of ideas and development of styles

1. *Wurld, Shut Yr Mouth* references a song by the musician Julian Cope. How does the title affect your understanding of Johnson's artwork?
2. Examine the imagery in Johnson's artwork; goat, spine, worms, wings, naked figures and pillars. Undertake research to identify the possible meanings of these visual symbols. Drawing upon your knowledge, create a conceptual analysis of the 'picture puzzle' Johnson presents in this work.
3. Complete a visual analysis of Jess Johnson's *Wurld, Shut Yr Mouth* 2015. How has Johnson employed art elements and principles within the composition?

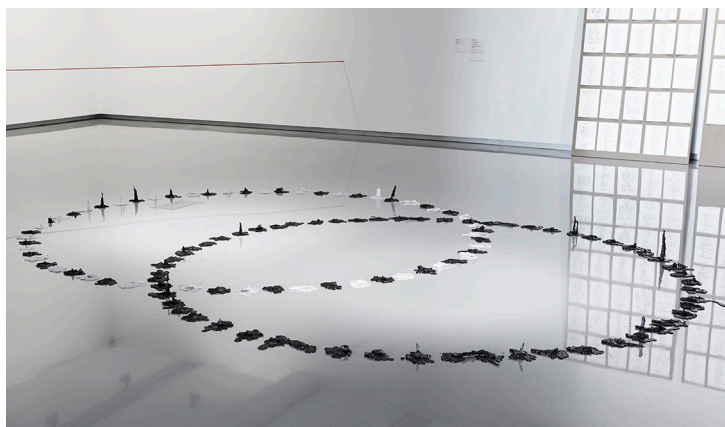
ARTISTS' PRACTICE AND PROCESS

Belle Bassin

Contemporary artist Belle Bassin applies a multidisciplinary approach to her art practice. Bassin's work is held at Latrobe Regional Gallery and private collections throughout Australia. She is currently a Masters of Fine Art candidate at Monash University.

Bassin's *Vesica piscis* 2010 explores ideas about ritual. The vesica piscis is a shape that is the intersection of two circles with the same radius that intersect in such a way that the centre of each circle lies on the perimeter of the other. The vesica piscis is often referred to as sacred geometry and it is also a reference to the female genitals, the gateway for the birth of all spirit beings into the physical world.

During the opening for *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits*, black and lavender coloured wax candles burned in vesical piscis configuration. During the exhibition the remaining wax from the candles remained the floor of the gallery referring to the ritualistic element of light through fire, evident by what took place while the candles were burning.



LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Creating and making

As a class explore the following creative process that was developed by Belle Bassin for children. This method uses meditation as a way of accessing creativity and initiating new creative projects;

1. Prepare a selection of materials including watercolour paper, watercolour paint, colour pastels and brushes.
2. As a class sit quietly, close your eyes (if you feel comfortable doing so) and relax the body.
3. Become aware of the breath moving the body during inhalations and exhalations.
4. Keeping the eyes closed complete a 'body scan' by visualising each of the following body parts; toes, feet, ankles, knees, thighs, fingers, hands, wrists, forearms, upper arms, shoulders, spine, neck, head, crown of head.
5. If possible, let go of any conscious thoughts that arise during this process.
6. From this 'clear state' of consciousness choose some materials and begin an automated drawing/painting.
7. After exploring this creative process, reflect on your experiences through class discussion.

Frederik Hudson and Spirit Photography

Seeing is believing, but what does it mean to see? Presented within the exhibition are a series of spirit photographs made by Frederick Hudson. Georgiana Houghton collaborated with Hudson in good faith to document her experiences as a medium. Given these images were made in 1882, it is likely that Houghton understood very little about photography and the double-negative process. Although spirit photography was accepted as evidence of visiting spirits during the Victorian era with a 21st century eye it obvious that a ghostly figure has been superimposed fraudulently by Hudson.



LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Photography

1. In a darkroom explore black and white printing techniques such as double exposures to create your own 'spirit' photography.
2. Make your own pin-hole camera and experiment with different exposure times to create esoteric illusions on film.
3. When posing for the spirit photographs, do you think Houghton was deceived by Hudson or complicit in the process? Discuss.
4. Research the Victorian craze for spirit photography. Why do you think this kind of photography was so popular at the time?
5. Compare and contrast historical spirit photographs by Frederick Hudson with the Vapours series by contemporary artist Susan Hillier.



Conceptual focus: Concrete and transcendent

In preparing the exhibition curators Marco Pasi and Lars Bang Larsen were interested in the relationship between concrete reality (how the imperceptible world of the spirits becomes perceptible) and transcendent reality (energies beyond the construct of physical reality). Artworks in this exhibition are both seen and intuited; cognitively understood and emotionally experienced.

The curators have selected artists who work with a particular sensibility. Some artists work involves subtle kinetic movements. For instance, the vapours represented by Susan Hiller, the movement of magnets by Susan Jacobs and the ougji board featured in work by Mikala Dwyer.

In *Before normal II* 2014, Danish artist, Kristine Kemp presents a long sensual length of yellow wool that appears to measure the viewers' presence in the space. It is a beautiful saturated yellow. The work offers a withdrawal from a specific visual identification or representation to propose a different experience.

David Lamela's famous 1966 work, *Limite de una proyeccion (Limit of projection)* offers the viewer a theatre spotlight, that proposes the anticipation of an entity, a spirit body or energetic presence to take the stage.

Danish artist Joachim Koester's work *Of the spirits of empty spaces* 2012 is a monochrome 16mm film that refers to the historic story of a liberated African-American slave and spiritualist who was interested in finding out how sewing machines worked, believing that if sewing machines were available for all women it would help their feminist cause. He choreographed a dance that attempted to channel how a sewing machine works, creating a performative aspiration for the goal of women's emancipation.



LEARNING ACTIVITY

Reading and experiencing art works

Wall texts, labels, reviews and commentaries about artworks can influence our understanding of them. Prior experiences, education and cultural knowledge may also shape how we read artworks. Another way of approaching artworks in an exhibition is experiencing the sensations and feelings evoked in the presence of artworks.

Try a direct approach to viewing art

Visit the exhibition and approach an artwork that you are drawn to. Stand quietly and look carefully, make a note of your feelings and experiences. Look at the visual qualities of the work; explore the visual symbols and elements within the artwork. Look at the placement of other artworks nearby. How does the artwork you have selected relate to the other works around it? Following your experience, document what you noticed.

ART INDUSTRY CONTEXTS: AN INTERVIEW WITH FRANCIS PARKER, CURATOR - EXHIBITIONS

What is the role of a University Museum such as MUMA?

MUMA manages the Monash University Collection, which represents the work of leading Australian artists from 1960s, when the University was established, to the present. The focus has always been on collecting the work of contemporary artists and the collection includes more than 2000 works that cover a period of dynamic change from late modernism to through the increasingly diverse forms including pop, minimal, conceptual, performance and digital art. Works are regularly lent to galleries nationally and internationally and are also on public display around all Monash University's campuses.

In addition to caring for the University's collection, MUMA is committed to developing innovative and engaging exhibitions involving artists from around Australia and the world. These may take various forms from surveys of the work of a single artist to major thematic exhibitions; they may involve existing artworks on loan from other collections or the artists, or entirely new works commissioned by MUMA.

MUMA invites the wider community to engage in events such as lectures, workshops, forums, performances and floor talks by curators and artists. All are designed to expand critical debate and participation in the contemporary visual arts.

Were there any artworks from the Monash University Collection featured in 'Believe not every spirit but try the spirits'?

There are works from the collection by two artists: three works on paper by Susan Jacobs and a two-part work by Diena Georgetti.

What does the curator do and what process is undertaken to produce exhibitions for MUMA?

The Curator – Exhibitions develops and coordinates exhibition projects for MUMA. Curating is a creative process and curators work with particular artists or ideas out of curiosity. They want to see what an artist at a particular point in his or her career can do with the opportunity to mount an exhibition in a significant public gallery, or there might be a number of works that they have come across that they want to bring together to see what dialogues emerge between them.

At MUMA, the curatorial staff conceptualises the exhibitions, identifies appropriate artists and engages in negotiations with them or with the lenders of specific artworks. Having made the selection of the artworks, or planned with the artist what is to be made for the exhibition, the curatorial staff organise the transport or materials required for the artworks. An important aspect of exhibition-making is deciding how artworks will be presented in the gallery, where they are placed in relation to other artworks, what structures might need to be built or what technology is required to present them, in order to present the artwork to its best advantage.

How was 'Believe not every spirit but try the spirits' conceived?

Under a new initiative of the Museum to develop an occasional series of exhibitions by international guest-curators, MUMA's Director, Charlotte Day, invited Lars Bang-Larsen and Marco Pasi to curate an exhibition out of their research into art and spiritualist practices, in particular the works of Georgiana Houghton that are housed by the Victorian Spiritualist Union. Lars and Marco came to Melbourne in 2014 to view the works and Lars presented one of MUMA's Boiler Room Series of public lectures.

What was the specific role of MUMA's curatorial staff in this exhibition?

This exhibition provided an opportunity for MUMA's staff to propose the work of Australian artists that might be of interest to the guest-curators' research, as well as encountering a number of unfamiliar international artists that they had included in their selection. The role of the staff at MUMA in a project like this was one of coordination, organising loans and planning the exhibition installation.

Can you offer an example of how the curators have negotiated with the artists?

There are several video works in *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits* but there is not enough space in MUMA's galleries to give them all room to be projected separately. It was necessary to present the three single-channel videos as a program in MUMA's Education Space, which is only occasionally used for exhibitions. This required the guest-curators seeking permission from the respective artists to show their work in this way, which they agreed to.

How was the work transported and received by the gallery?

Works located within Australia were generally packed in bubble-wrap to protect them and transported by specialist art freight companies. Works from overseas have to be packed in wooden crates to protect them but if they are not extremely fragile and are well packed, they can often be sent using a regular courier service such as FedEx or DHL.

What types of considerations were factors for presenting work in this exhibition?

The character of the exhibition and its works meant that plenty of space was required around each of its elements. There are also several works that produce different kinds of sound, from the rattle of the 16mm film projector showing Joachim Koester's film to Georgina Starr's vinyl record that requires a parabolic speaker to envelop the listener in its sound. All the sound emitting works needed to be placed well apart so they do not interfere too much with each other.

Matt Mullican required enough space so that the audience could assemble in front of his works for his performance at the exhibition opening. Dane Mitchell's work specifically requires a corner. David Lamelas's work comprises a pool of light on the floor, so it had to be shown in a darkened space. The guest-curators wanted Georgiana Houghton's works to occupy a space to themselves. All of these factors had to be taken into consideration in laying out the exhibition.

What do you consider the significant design features of this exhibition?

The collection of Georgiana Houghton's spirit drawings is at the core of this exhibition. A special system for hanging the work was

required to solve the problem of how to show both sides of the paper because the artist made important annotations to the back of each drawing. The glass easels that Lina Bo Bardi designed in 1968 for the São Paulo Museum of Art inspired the guest-curators and MUMA staff.

How was this hanging system produced for the exhibition?

MUMA worked with concrete fabricators who have particular expertise in casting concrete for sculpture commissions to design and make this highly unusual display furniture. They were able to provide advice on the engineering of the blocks so that the heavy glass sheets could be inserted relatively easily and are secure.

Did any of the historical works featured in the exhibition require any special handling or preservation considerations?

The spirit drawings by Georgiana Houghton have hung for many years at the Victorian Spiritualist Union's premises in the city. With the VSU's permission, MUMA engaged a conservator to make minor repairs to the frames where the gilt had been damaged.

Were there any Occupational Health and Safety concerns for the exhibition?

Belle Bassin's *Vesica piscis* 2010 is a floorwork comprised of two overlapping circles of wax candles that were lit for the exhibition opening. MUMA worked with the University's OHS Advisor to develop a plan that involved constant supervision of the work to prevent visitors from getting too close and having a fire blanket on hand. The system that detects fire in the galleries also had to be isolated so that the alarm was not set off.

What processes were undertaken for the promotion and marketing of the exhibition?

MUMA has an extensive email list for its newsletters and invitations as well as strong following on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, which allows us to reach a dedicated audience. The Communications Coordinator also set up radio and television interviews with the guest-curators to reach a broader audience.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Developing, designing and presenting an exhibition at MUMA

Review *Believe not every spirit but try the spirits* and answer the following questions;

1. Describe the role of MUMA;
2. Who were the guest curators at what was their rationale when preparing and presenting the exhibition?
3. What was the role of MUMA curators for this exhibition?
4. What considerations have been undertaken in preparing and presenting the work for exhibition?
5. What are the key features of the exhibition design?
6. Discuss methods involved in the preservation and conservation of historical artworks featured in this exhibition.
7. How was the exhibition marketed and promoted?
8. Describe the unique display method was developed to present the work of Georgiana Houghton within the exhibition.

GLOSSARY

Automatic drawing: An artistic approach used to express intuition and the subconscious. In applying chance and accident to mark-making automatic drawing is said to be free of rational control and pre-planning.

Collaborate: to work with another person or group in order to achieve or do something. Artists often collaborate with other artists to create a work of art.

Ouija board: The ouija board is a device marked with words, numbers and letters of the alphabet. Participants use the ouija board to spell out words, answer questions and receive messages from celestial beings, spirits and guardians.

Occult: Involving or relating to mystical, supernatural, or magical powers, practices, or phenomena

Séance: A meeting in which a medium attempts to communicate with the spirit world.

Spiritualism: A belief that spirits and supernatural beings have the ability and inclination to communicate with living people. Spiritualism developed and reached its peak growth in participation from the 1840s to the 1920s.

Channelling: Seen as a practice where a medium communicates with the spirit world by hearing voices and receiving messages and knowledge from spirit entities.

Abstraction in art (non representational): image making with little or concern with representing the world naturalistically.

Chakras: Chakras are part of the subtle body, not the physical body. Chakras are esoteric energy centres.

Figuration (representational): depicting or attempting to depict objects directly as seen in a naturalistic way.

Spirit Photography: a form of photography whose primary concern is to capture images of ghosts and other spiritual entities.

Spirit drawings/paintings: Channelled pieces of art that reveal insights from the realm of the spirits.

Double-exposure: In photography and cinematography, a multiple exposure is the superimposition of two or more exposures to create a single image.

Metaphysical: Metaphysics is a broad area of philosophy marked out by two types of inquiry. The first aims to be the most general investigation possible into the nature of reality: are there principles applying to everything that is real, to all that is? The second type of inquiry seeks to uncover what is ultimately real, frequently offering answers in sharp contrast to our everyday experience of the world.

Sacred Geometry: Symbolic and sacred meanings ascribed to certain geometric shapes and proportions. Sacred geometry has been applied in the architecture of many religious and sacred structures and spaces worldwide. Numerous natural forms can be related to geometry, for example, a nautilus grows at a constant rate and so its shell forms a logarithmic spiral.

Medium: In this document the term 'medium' can both refer to the materials the artist used, such as watercolour, pastels and oil paints and also an individual who channels spirits.

Esoteric: intended for or likely to be understood by only a small number of people with a specialised knowledge or interest.

REFERENCED ARTISTS

Hilma af Klint: (1862–1944) A pioneering Swedish abstract artist and mystic whose paintings and drawings were guided by spirits.

Wassily Kandinsky: (1866–1944) Russian artist who was a central figure in the development of 20th-century art and specifically in the transition from representational to abstract art. Kandinsky also developed a theory of geometric figures and their relationships—claiming, for example, that the circle is the most peaceful shape and represents the human soul.

Kazimir Malevich: (1878–1935) Malevich was a central figure in a succession of avant-garde movements during the period of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917 and immediately after. The style of geometric abstraction with which he is most closely associated, Suprematism, was a leading force in the development of Constructivism, the repercussions of which continued to be felt throughout the 20th century.

Piet Mondrian: (1872–1944) Mondrian evolved a non-representational form which he termed “neoplasticism.” This consisted of white ground, upon which he painted a grid of mostly vertical and horizontal black lines and the three primary colors.