INTRODUCTION

In February 2017 MUMA | Monash University Museum of Art presents Open Spatial Workshop: Converging in time, the first major museum exhibition by Open Spatial Workshop (comprising artists Terri Bird, Bianca Hester and Scott Mitchell). The exhibition is part of MUMA’s much anticipated annual survey exhibition series that presents the practices of Australia’s most exciting and innovative mid-career artists.

Converging in time continues OSW’s sculptural investigation into the forces of material formation. Drawing on earth sciences research and studies of the Anthropocene, this new exhibition explores the relationship between the mineral make-up of a site and the societies they produce and sustain. This approach is particularly relevant in the context of Australia, where an ‘extractivist’ logic bears a powerful influence on politics, the economy and land.

OSW’s exhibition brings together new sculptural, video and sound works in assemblages with extended support structures that incorporate items from Museums Victoria’s Geosciences collection. These include specimens such as a meteorite fragment containing pre-solar grains, Saléeite crystals from the Ranger Uranium Mine in the Northern Territory, a 23-million-year-old kauri log and a fossilised ‘sea lily’ unearthed in a Brunswick clay pit in 1923.

EXHIBITION DATES

11 February – 8 April 2017

OPENING FUNCTION

Saturday 11 February, 3pm
With remarks by Professor Lynette Russell, Director, Faculty of Arts Monash Indigenous Studies Centre.
Charlotte Day, MUMA Director:

‘Together as Open Spatial Workshop, and each with their own distinct practices, Bird, Hester and Mitchell have been able to create a significant creative entity and platform on which to test their ideas, challenge their working methods and open their joint practice to a range of contexts and other disciplines. MUMA’s galleries will become an extension of OSW’s studio, with a number of elements formed in situ, and others imbedded in the Museum’s architecture.

In addition to sharing their engagement with the natural sciences collection at Museums Victoria, OSW’s new project and exhibition at MUMA builds on their recent projects in La Trobe Valley, their realisation of an anthropocite rock for Monash’s geological garden, and their thinking about time itself – grappling with the immensity of time as well as the social and economic impact of human activity.’

MUMA will publish the first monograph on OSW, which will include three newly-commissioned essays by Matt Poll, Curator of Indigenous Heritage and Repatriation Project at Macleay Museum at the University of Sydney; Dr Saskia Beudel, previously Carson Fellow, Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich; and Dr Kathryn Yusoff, Senior Lecturer in Human Geography at Queen Mary University in London; and selected texts authored by Open Spatial Workshop. As well, the publication will include in situ exhibition documentation and numerous reference images that have been instrumental to Open Spatial Workshop’s research over the last decade.

BIOGRAPHY

OSW is a collaboration between Terri Bird, Bianca Hester and Scott Mitchell. Over the past thirteen years OSW has produced work that spans sculpture, installation, curatorial practice, publications and video. OSW’s recent projects have explored connections between materiality, the shaping of territories and the politics inscribed in place. These explorations include: Anthropocite 2015 commissioned for the Earth Sciences Garden at Monash University, Clayton; Splinter 2015 in From the collection: Gertrude Regional Residencies, curated by Emily Cormack at La Trobe Regional Gallery, Victoria, 2015; Glimpse 2015 in Feeling Material, curated by Benjamin Woods, C3 gallery, Melbourne, 2015; FAULT 2015 in Performing Mobilities, curated by Mick Douglas, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne, 2015; ‘Shaping Territories’, a text contribution to Making Worlds: Art and Science Fiction, Amelia Bankin and Helen Hughes (eds), Surpllus, Melbourne, 2013; Lumpen Falls, Conical Gallery, Melbourne, 2012; Big Log Jam, Australian Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide, 2011; BIG LOG in Collected Collaborations, curated by Brad Haylock, MUMA, Melbourne, 2011; and the curatorial project West Brunswick Sculpture Triennial, distributed across five sites in West Brunswick, Melbourne, 2009.

With special thanks to Dermot Henry, Acting Head of Sciences and Museums Victoria for their involvement and support of OSW’s new work.

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.

Bianca Hester is a Sidney Myer Creative Fellow 2017-2018.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Open Spatial Workshop (Terri Bird, Bianca Hester and Scott Mitchell) will be available for interviews.

Installation views of the exhibition will be available by Monday 13 February 2017.

For all media enquiries please contact Warisa Somsuphangsri: warisa.somsuphangsri@monash.edu +61 3 9905 4360