

## James Barth

Born in Naarm/Melbourne; lives and works in Meanjin/Brisbane.

### ***Spilled Blueberries* 2022**

oil screenprinted and brushed on composition board

Monash University Collection, Naarm/Melbourne

Purchased 2022

James Barth employs a digital avatar in her paintings, videos and sculptures to transcend the limitations of inhabiting a body. In *Spilled Blueberries*, her proxy lies recumbent in a studio-like setting, framed by draped fabric. Referencing the long tradition of the reclining nude, she wears only a bralette—one strap slipping from her shoulder, the other supporting an antiquarian book. Her smooth, featureless crotch recalls the historical erasure of female genitalia in Western art while confronting the societal miscomprehension of trans bodies.

Scattered around her are the spilled blueberries of the title. She dons a mask of rotting fruit, invoking Renaissance painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo's (1526–1593) monstrous portraits composed of fruits and vegetables. The presence of organic matter in various states of decay emphasises the paradoxical materiality of digital space and creates associations with abjection and bodily shame.

This interplay between digital and physical is echoed in the material process behind the work. Barth's paintings begin as 3D-rendered images created within video game software, which are then screen-printed in oil paint and brushed to soften their mechanical precision. The avatar functions as both a shield and a mirror image, rendering the self as other to navigate the precarities of trans femininity.

## **Ian Burn**

Born 1939, Djilang/Geelong; died 1993 in Pretty Beach, NSW.

### ***Systematically Altered Photographs***

***(Torrens Lake, Adelaide) 1968***

***Systematically Altered Photographs (The Suburbs) 1968***

### ***Systematically Altered Photographs***

***(Shopping Mall in Canberra) 1968***

offset prints using photocopied and original  
photographic images

edition 17/25

### ***Systematically Altered Photographs***

***(Text) 1968***

offset print

edition 17/25

Monash University Collection, Naarm/Melbourne

Purchased 1992

Ian Burn was a conceptual artist and member of the collective Art & Language. Burn made these *Systematically Altered Photographs* in the year following his arrival in New York in 1967 and, describing his process later in 1988, wrote:

In the *Systematically Altered Photographs*, the image was photocopied, then the copy copied and so on, for about a dozen times. The altered image was then juxtaposed with the original, with the readings drawing attention arbitrarily to certain features and details. The original image was cut from a magazine. There was no sense of creating the image, only of recreating it within a new system. The source was a promotional publication put out for overseas consumption by the Australian government . . . The clichéd character of the images was important.

Burn used the commonplace technology of the photocopier to degrade the photographs in a process devoid of the mystique of art-making—and with no distraction from the work's theory about how content is perceived in an image. In selecting publicity images and handing over part of his artistic process to a machine, he sought an understanding of the mechanics of image consumption.

## **Juliet Carpenter**

Born in Waipukurau, Aotearoa New Zealand; lives and works in Frankfurt, Germany.

## **Róisín Berg**

Born in Limerick, Ireland, where they live and work.

### ***The Sun Is Not To Be Believed* 2022–23**

HD video with recursive editing algorithm (MSP patch), sound

Performer: Erdmuthe Pumin

Costume Design: Luka Mues

Sound Mastering: Simon Lear

Courtesy of the artists

The black and white film *The Sun Is Not To Be Believed* is driven by a computer algorithm that determines edits and gradual overlays of imagery in real time, a process that follows a programmed butterfly effect protocol developed by artist Juliet Carpenter in collaboration with Róisín Berg. Initially we see the shrouded protagonist undertake various tasks in a German allotment garden, or *Schrebergarten*. Combining references to Maya Deren's avant-garde film *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943) and the logic of Samuel Beckett's *Quad* (1981)—a play written for four performers who appear to exist in parallel time spaces—the algorithm continually modulates the frame rate across the film. The cycle endlessly repeats itself, with the machine looking back and forth into past and future, inserting fragments to produce a mutant temporal fissure. Through this cyclical reflection on a human relationship to soil, sun, nature and light, Carpenter and Berg raise questions around our impact on and existence within the current climate as the imagery is slowly obliterated by the machine.

## **Jeff Gibson**

Born in Meanjin/Brisbane; lives and works in New York, NY, United States.

***disENGAGE* 1986/1996**

***disINHERIT* 1986/1996**

***disLOCATE* 1986/1996**

***disORIENTATE* 1986/1996**

***disPOSSESS* 1986/1996**

screenprints on paper

second edition 1/4

Monash University Collection, Naarm/Melbourne

Purchased 1996

A self-confessed television addict since childhood, Jeff Gibson's artistic practice is known for media appropriation and the mining of images. Informed by punk poster graphics, Gibson's 1986 series of 'disPOSTERS' exemplifies postmodern sampling. With text containing the prefix 'dis' that sets up a binary negation, each poster combines a pair of images taken from United States television, movies or governmental photographic archives that appear to be linked only by a visual rhyme. Contrary to a poster's usual, decisive purpose in advertising or political messaging, Gibson deliberately set himself the task of putting image and text together without the images illustrating the text nor the text explaining the images. Produced as screenprints and shown originally as anonymous street posters, as well as in an artist-run gallery, they engage in the then current forms of mass circulation of images.

## **D Harding, with Hayley Matthew**

Bidjara, Ghungalu and Garingbal

D Harding was born in Moranbah, Qld; lives and works in Meanjin/Brisbane.

### ***Untitled (Private Painting H1) 2019***

dry pigment, acrylic and gum acacia on canvas

Commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation, 2019

Monash University Collection, Naarm/Melbourne

Purchased 2019

*Untitled (Private Painting H1)* is part of a six-panel work made by D Harding with their cousin, Hayley Matthew. It is one of several projects Harding has undertaken with family members in an effort to bring forth their stories and create space for the continuation of cultural practice.

The work was commissioned for exhibition at the Sharjah Art Foundation in the United Arab Emirates and made in its galleries following a framework informed by family members to ensure cultural safety for Matthew in an international, gallery context. For the first four days, Matthew painted her story using yellow-hued pigments reminiscent of ochre, until she decided it was complete. The following day, using standard paint rollers and the same white acrylic in which the gallery walls were painted, Harding set about concealing the yellow pigment, making aesthetic decisions together with Matthew.

In veiling Matthew's work in this way—a direct acknowledgement of the context in which it was made—she was ensured control over her story and the right to share knowledges at her discretion. Harding has also described the process as 'obliterating'—an act of self-empowerment, whereby their cousins have reclaimed 'white washing' to destroy stories of their own choosing and for their own safety.

## Ana Iti

Te Rarawa, Ngāi Tūpoto, Ngāti Here

Born in Aotearoa New Zealand, where she lives and works.

### ***Howling Out at a Safe Distance 2021***

single-channel video, colour, sound; 11 minutes 42 seconds

Courtesy of the artist

*Howling out at a safe distance* draws on four editions of the historic Māori language newspaper *Te Pīpīwharauoa* (1899–1913) as a way to think about grey areas in language and understanding. In the video, Ana Iti isolates words and brief phrases from articles in *Te Pīpī*, which are about looking for something, translation, speaking to one another and loneliness. The text has been processed through Google Translate and the artist's own imperfect knowledge of Māori language. The translation process is further mediated by the online resource [maoridictionary.com](http://maoridictionary.com). Te reo Māori (the Māori language) is inherently poetic, contextual and relational. In using this digital translation process, some meanings are clearly retained, while at other times the text becomes completely opaque—much like the experience of navigating through one's own histories in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## Machine Listening

(Sean Dockray, James Parker, Joel Stern)

Established 2020, Naarm/Melbourne.

### #C 2025

4-channel video, sound; 80 minutes

Courtesy the artists

In #C, Machine Listening examines Ego4D, a dataset released by Facebook AI in 2021 to advance the automation of 'egocentric perception'. This is the 'first person' perspective of virtual reality, robotics, smart glasses and the Metaverse. To train machines to see the world this way, Facebook commissioned 9,000 videos, captured by 855 camera wearers across nine countries, and painstakingly annotated by low-paid 'narrators'. '#C' is the subject of every one of the 3.85 million resulting annotations: *#C opens the washing machine. #C cuts spinach with a sickle. #C hits the guitar strings with a pencil.* Officially, #C denotes the camera wearer, but it also names a new subject position: the protagonist of an emergent, doubly egocentric image economy.

This multichannel work loops twenty four-minute videos from Ego4D—just 0.03% of the dataset—narrated by an ambiguously located synthetic agent and layered with sounds and annotations from other clips. None of this material was originally intended for human eyes or ears, but #C offers a glimpse behind the curtain. The material is deliberately de-aligned and estranged, drawing out and enhancing the dataset's artifice and voyeurism. #C explores how perspective itself is being captured, mined and commodified in the age of AI.

## **Bea Maddock**

Born 1934, Nipaluna/Hobart; died 2016 in Launceston, Tas.

### ***Hanging Tracks One Two 1975***

### ***Hanging Tracks Three Four 1975***

photo-etching and aquatint on paper  
edition 9/10

Monash University Collection, Naarm/Melbourne  
Purchased 1977

Bea Maddock had a habit of collecting press images from local magazines and newspapers, stripping them of contextual information such as captions or dates, and subtly manipulating them for her own purposes. Across her practice, she recycled and reinterpreted images, with one series of work flowing into the next. In 1974, Maddock obtained her own camera and also started making paper, two factors that made her process more self-generated. However, reproduction, repetition and various print techniques, from woodcuts to silkscreen printing and photo etching, remained foundational for her practice.

Of this diptych, Maddock wrote:

A press photo had caught my attention, an aerial view of American military trucks fleeing south at the end of the Vietnam war [April 1975]. The very unusual close-packed vehicles recalled my own 'aerial' view of tyre tracks, photographed at Bellerive in Hobart. As in some previous photo-etchings I paired a positive and a negative; then in a second pair further manipulated the image with off-register overlays.

She remarks that the tracks appear to be hanging, the disorientation lending a sense of ambiguity. By detaching the images from their original mass media context, Maddock dislocated and reframed them, in order to question the way images operate in a media-saturated society.

## **Tracey Moffatt**

Born in Meanjin/Brisbane, lives and works on Gadigal Country, Sydney.

### ***Heaven* 1997**

video, colour, sound; 28 minutes 35 seconds

Monash University Collection, Naarm/Melbourne  
Purchased 1998

Filmed in and around Sydney beaches by the artist and her friends, *Heaven* subverts gendered cinematic conventions of desire, presenting male bodies and sexuality from the surreptitious viewpoint of the female gaze. The footage, captured on a handheld 8mm home video camera, features close-ups taken of surfers removing their wetsuits beside cars—a semi-private public space. Moffatt and her collaborators attempt to catch the inadvertent moment the towel slips.

This act of voyeurism towards men involved in surfing, an iconic national sport in Australia, is intended to provoke, though many subjects smile or laugh playfully when they notice the camera. The viewer and viewed are entangled in a sensual complicity, and Moffatt invites us to also share in the act of 'perving'. *Heaven* anticipates the ubiquitous surveillance of public and private spaces that has become pervasive today.

## **Sione Tuívailala Monū**

Born in Ngambri/Canberra, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland.

### ***Stories 2015–25***

single-channel iPhone video, sound; 16 minutes 1 second

Courtesy of the artist and Robert Heald Gallery,  
Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington

Shot on an iPhone, Sione Tuívailala Monū's videos were first posted on their Instagram profile, later migrating to Instagram Stories when that feature became available. Spanning from 2015 to the present, Monū is often the star in these scenes, as they go about everyday activities—at home, work, malls, family functions, laundromats and parks—moving between Tāmaki-Makaurau Auckland, Warrane/Sydney, Naarm/Melbourne, Tonga and Ngambri/Canberra. While they might appear as whimsical and ad-lib moments, these films speak to the lived realities of the Tongan diaspora, representing these experiences as intimate and impossible to directly translate.

Monū is often wearing a headdress made from strings of pearlescent beads that links them back to the world of leitī, individuals with a feminine gender expression. At other times, they wear a mask festooned with bright plastic flowers, inspired by nimamea'a tuikakala, the Tongan fine art of flower arranging, included in ceremonial and celebratory attire. Through these vibrant personal adornments, Monū suggests the performativity of daily life, drawing connections to live performance traditions, from ceremonial dance to voguing, karaoke and the club scene. The wearing of a costume creates the opportunity to construct, adopt or reveal another aspect of their identity.

## **Ashley Perry**

Goenpul

Born in Meanjin/Brisbane; lives and works in Naarm/Melbourne.

### ***Precipitation 2021***

multi-channel looped video, galvanised steel, cables, monitors, Raspberry Pi 4 Computer Model B

Courtesy of the artist

Ashley Perry works with museological and artistic approaches to repatriation, considering the ancestral knowledge and connections to Country embedded in archival objects. As a Goenpul person from Quandamooka Country (the islands off the southeast coast of Queensland) living on the lands of the Kulin Nation, Perry highlights the intersection of institutional collections, data systems and digital access in reconnecting people with cultural practices and ancestral knowledge across distances.

Perry has developed his own Microsoft Excel database cataloguing Indigenous material culture, drawing from a range of publicly accessible sources including university collections, national archives, libraries, museums and personal websites. This research compiles information about objects that have become separated from their cultural stories and Country. By integrating this institutional data with private cultural knowledge, for *Precipitation*, Perry has created digital versions of stone implements that slowly fall across the screens as though into water. Rendering them in animated form shifts the focus from the documented provenance, size and material weight of these objects to their functional use, and ancestral and cultural importance. In doing so, Perry highlights the limitations of institutional databases, the strength of embodied knowledge and the potential of digital repatriation for cultural renewal.

## **Joshua Petherick**

Born in Tarndanya/Adelaide, lives and works in Naarm/Melbourne.

### ***Glass Tables 3 2014***

single-channel HD video, colour, sound; 8 minutes 38 seconds  
edition 1/3

Monash University Collection, Naarm/Melbourne  
Purchased by the Faculty of Science 2014

Joshua Petherick cultivates visual ambiguity in his work, whether it be sculptures that involve labour-intensive simulations of processes of degradation and decay, or the series of *Glass Tables* video works he began in 2011, in which real-world objects are subsumed into processes of digital abstraction. Placing his iPhone camera over articles from his home assembled on a flatbed scanner, Petherick creates an enclosed optical environment in which the mobile phone records content illuminated by the data capturing process of the scanner. While the phone camera implies an immediacy that is regularly construed as true to life, in Petherick's work, its field of vision is already abstracted and his process anticipates the feedback loops of digital data that emerge as machines talk to machines.

Rather than mounting the screen on the wall at a conventional eyeline, where it would act simply as a portal into the video content and notionally 'disappear', Petherick places it lower to the ground to imply that, despite ending up as a video file, the *Glass Tables* are still an extension of his sculptural practice.

## Scotty So

Born in Hong Kong; lives and works in Naarm/Melbourne.

### ***Seeking Affirmation of a Mother 2025***

HD video on transparent LCD hologram box, AI-generated voice audio, found audio; 6 minutes.

Courtesy of the artist and MARS Gallery, Naarm/Melbourne

Scotty So's *Seeking Affirmation of a Mother* explores self-representation and the performative nature of engaging with online audiences. By adopting the voice and likeness of a celebrity persona, So pushes drag into ethically ambiguous territory.

As the pop-cultural figure Kris Jenner—the indomitable 'momager' of the Jenner-Kardashian empire—using AI to create the script and then convincingly replicate Kris Jenner's voice, So alternates between two contrasting evaluations of his practice: an effusive celebration of his artistic brilliance and a biting takedown of his work as derivative and self-indulgent. The piece nods to an episode of *The Kardashians*, where Jenner appears as a hologram to surprise her daughter Khloe.

So raises questions about the ownership and control of personal identity in digital media. These concerns echo high-profile legal battles involving celebrities such as Scarlett Johansson, Morgan Freeman, Elon Musk and Joe Rogan over the unauthorised use of their voices in advertising and media. With his signature blend of irony and humour, So pokes fun at the fragile ego of the artist and his yearning for validation, framing the work as a therapeutic exercise. More broadly, the work examines how identity is negotiated in digital spaces, where self-presentation and public perception influence how we construct and curate our personas.

## **Sorawit Songsataya**

Born in Chiang Mai, Thailand, where they live and work.

### ***Unnamed Makers 2023***

2-channel 4K video, colour, sound; 11 minutes 37 seconds

With acknowledgement to Kāi Tahu whānui of Maerewhenua, Waitaki as the guardians of the area where the artist recorded the limestone surfaces

Courtesy of the artist

*Unnamed Makers* includes ceramic objects from three distinct historical contexts: Jōmon pots from Japan; a vessel from Ban Chiang National Museum in Thailand; and a collection of Chinese snuff bottles. These objects were all made by craftspeople whose names have been lost to history.

Using photogrammetry, Sorawit Songsataya has digitally rendered these ceramics, their surfaces becoming polygonal in translation. Clay, once a foundational material for developing societies, is understood by the artist as connecting ancient innovations with contemporary digital forms. Songsataya's three-dimensional mapping extends the idea of distance—across time, between cultures, makers, knowledge and places.

The work also anchors us in geological deep time in Aotearoa New Zealand. The photogrammetric reconstructions of limestone surfaces in the Waitaki region reinforce the fact that ceramics are inherently from a specific land, ground, country. Early writing systems appear as sketches, and the soundtrack, featuring moving water and a Thai percussive instrument called a ranad, suggests the ability of water to both preserve and erase.

*Unnamed Makers* reflects on these examples of ceramic history from across Asia, the unnamed craftspeople who created them, and the ways embodied knowledge is maintained, transmitted and accessed over time.

## **Tennant Creek Brio**

Established 2016 in Jurnkkurakurr/Tennant Creek, NT.

## **Rupert Betheras**

Lives and works in Mparntwe/Alice Springs, NT,  
Jurnkkurakurr/Tennant Creek, NT, and Naarm/Melbourne.

## ***Wound Series I-VII 2021***

mixed media, television screen

## **Simon Wilson**

Kaytetye

Lives and works in Jurnkkurakurr/Tennant Creek, NT.

## ***Wound Series 1 2021***

mixed media, television screen

Monash University Collection, Naarm/Melbourne

Purchased 2022

Tennant Creek Brio is a fluid collective of artists living and working on Warumungu Country in the Northern Territory. The artists revive the detritus of Tennant Creek's mining history with their own individual styles and stories. Here, in their respective *Wound Series*, Rupert Betheras—who is a facilitator and co-artist with the collective—and Kaytetye artist Simon Wilson have repurposed discarded televisions as paintings, invoking the rapidity with which technologies become obsolete. This act also speaks to prevalent media portrayals of communities such as Tennant Creek in terms of deficit-centric framing of First Nations residents as victims of the mechanisms of colonial control. Instead, Tennant Creek Brio arrests the news cycle and its narratives with painting, offering an alternative insight in which the community is empowered to tend truth telling and healing processes.

## **Victoria Todorov**

Born in Naarm/Melbourne, where she lives and works.

### ***Jezebel Spirit 2025***

fabric, mannequin

### ***Trumpettes (MAGA) 2024***

oil on canvas

### ***Cicciolina Triptych 2024***

oil on canvas

### ***Anna Nicole Glamour 2024***

oil on canvas

Courtesy of the artist

Victoria Todorov draws from the visually saturated online world to explore the intersection of extreme beauty standards, body modification, hypersexuality, wealth and consumption—forces that have long shaped the power and perception of the feminine image. Employing a gaudy, camp aesthetic, Todorov creates digital collages of iconic pop-cultural figures, which are then custom-painted in a studio in China. This fabrication process, and process of further mediation, mirrors the commodification of her subjects, inviting reflection on artistic authenticity, authorship, labour and mass reproducibility in a digital age.

This series revisits figures central to Todorov's practice: Cicciolina, the Italian porn star-turned-politician famously married to artist Jeff Koons; Anna Nicole Smith, whose tumultuous life as a model, Playboy mate and reality TV star was defined by her marriage to an elderly billionaire; and Toni Holt, a Hollywood TV news personality and founder of the Trumpettes USA, a pro-MAGA socialite group.

Todorov's work is both critical and celebratory, revelling in the hedonistic pleasures of conspicuous consumption and the strategic manipulation of patriarchal desire for wealth and autonomy. At the same time, Todorov acknowledges the tragedy of many of these women's stories: the exploitation, dismissal and scrutiny they face within a misogynistic public sphere. More radically, her paintings explore how women, in their pursuit of physical perfection, push the boundaries of what is deemed human, challenging the distinction between nature and artificiality.