VITAMIN

MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF VISUAL CULTURE

2010

free

EPISODE: THE REDUX

VITAMIN

EPISODE: THE REDUX - NOVEMBER 2010

Polly Dance and Sera Waters
(with assistance from Olga Sankey and Pamela Zeplin)
Editors

Dianne Longley
Layout

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What we think about when we talk about Vitamin

A small team have worked together to bring you *Vitamin – The Redux*, an episode envisioned and begun by editor Shaw Hendry in 2008. This is the final episode of *Vitamin* before this humble photocopied zine becomes history; something that was. *Vitamin*, through the time and dedication of each and every contributor, has done something important for South Australian visual culture; it has claimed a place where our local writings, our makings, our artworld have been given a voice. Shaw's vision of inclusivity will always remain in his editorials, the pages of *Vitamin* and in the spirit of this project.

So even though *The Redux* brings *Vitamin* to a close, fear not fellow *Vitamin* reader, after you have devoured this a sweet lingering aftertaste remains. While *The Redux* collates the last of your generous contributions; writings, artist pages, and insert artwork, Shaw ensured that *Vitamin* will continue to boost your art health (and spirit). All thirteen episodes, the *Index*, and this very special episode will remain downloadable online at www.vitaminarchive.com where you can also enjoy the freshly picked *Vitamin Flowers* exhibition. This group exhibition, curated by Dianne Longley, showcases the art of South Australian artists made to celebrate Shaw's happy and emblematic *Vitamin* daisy. As well, Shaw's predilection for merchandising and his continual gifting of lovingly-made *Vitamin* t-shirts, mugs, badges, multi-coloured pencils, and other *Vitamin* memorabilia (in your collection, or soon to be) will continue to exude sweetness into your day.

Vitamin will remain a repository of small but powerful truths. The articles throughout this *Redux* edition are evidence of the effects of

Shaw's insights and the *Vitamin* ethos. Keep these Vitamin-isms close at hand (perhaps in your new *Vitamin Collection* bag):

> Never be afraid to speak in your own voice about something for which you care.
>
> The South Australian art world is important and its participants are not to be underestimated. *Vitamin* was created because Shaw observed that "the rest of the world was already doing the rest of the world but South Australia wasn't even doing South Australia properly!" *Vitamin* was never short on talent, contributions and content, all derived from South Australia.
>
> People's interactions are the substance of our art world: interact with those who fulfil your art needs.
>
> People who fare better than others are those willing to get involved.
>
> Amazingly, the feeling of being cut out and disenfranchised at one time or another is a shared experience in the arts.

The closure of *Vitamin* undoubtedly leaves a gap within our local visual culture; it also offers a space for us to fill.

Thank you Shaw and all those who contributed to *Vitamin*. A good time was had by all...

Polly Dance and Sera Waters

HERMANO!
AUSTRALASIAN WORLD TOUR
...AUSTRALIA...MICRONESIA...MELANESIA...POLYNESIA...

By Way of a Back Story

The Impresario:

As he made his way up North Terrace from City West, the light dry air of the capital seemed to burn his lungs. A few puffs of Ventolin, and soon enough the heat that filled his chest felt like home again. The pain in his stomach was something else though; like a knife being slowly rotated. Nothing seemed to fix it. As he turned the corner, munching Quick-Eze, he knew that in a few minutes he'd be up there at Allans talking turkey. In the paper that morning, he'd seen a recording unit for sale. It was the right time, and the right unit. All he needed now was the right price and his dreams of becoming a recording mogul would be within his grasp.

Fan Base:

She had all the records - the b-sides, the promos, even the Christmas fan club releases. Her bedroom wall was plastered with vintage posters and magazine clippings. The colours may have faded, the sticky tape had gone yellow, but the images still held a strange power. Dolly and Smash Hits had stopped publishing stories years ago, almost as soon as the trials began. What really happened? For Romi and her friends, it was as

Hermano in photo shoot at Max Dawn Gallery, August, 2009

if their hero had simply fallen off the face of the earth. Anyway, it was just an infatuation - what did it matter? She had more exciting things to think about since leaving Art School.

Hermano Rojo:

By Spring of 1998, Hermano Rojo had risen to become the darling of the Australian Authentic Music scene. His dismissal of the ultra-nationalist Folk Federation's objection to his use of electric ukuleles, and his infractions of their autocratic rules governing uke use, helped build his reputation as a respected upholder of the traditions of real music. But he'd made himself a target. For his fans, he could do no wrong. The Federation, on the other hand, waited for their moment. The pinnacle of his career occurred towards the end of 1999 when he was voted Australasian World Champion of the Ukulele, a title he retained for the next two years. Then, in April 2002, a great tragedy occurred: Hermano released the experimental quadraphonic double album, "ElectroPhonica!", an eclectic mix of ambient street sounds, uke samples, and various digitally manipulated constructs. His enemies declared it the worst double album of the year, and possibly of all time. He was heavily criticised by the South Australian Digital Music Alliance for his decision to release the recordings only on vinyl. As his friends abandoned him, mayhem followed. The Folk Federation, as expected, came out hard, issuing writs of *habeas corpus* and so on.

Many will recall the series of scandals that followed and which preceded the degradation and dissolution of this once proud artist. Fighting case after case, Hermano seemed to lose his spiritual compass. His downward spiral was epitomised by his abandonment of Tequila Sunrises in favour of handfulls of Lorazepam washed down with Yägerbombs.

Hermano, it must be said, even in adversity, never lost his sense of keeping it 'real'. Reading through transcripts of his many court appearances, I was touched by how often Hermano, always representing himself, referred to the Chief Magistrate as "Your Holiness". In the end, he maintained a dignified silence as he was led from the dock. It was reported in both

The Advertiser and *The Sunday Mail* that the young women crying on the steps of the Adelaide Magistrate's Court were inconsolable.

Almost five years later, when released from the Cadell Training Centre, Hermano Rojo was a different man. Now largely forgotten in the world of Authentic Music, he found work as a part-time World Championship Wrestler on a riverboat at Mannum. It was there that I re-discovered him

Left: Single cover, Hermano Super Group, Live at the Metro, August 21, 2009
Right: Hermano Super Group, with Romi Graham and Mark Siebert live in action

on Australia Day last year. While slurping a ginger beer slush puppy, and enjoying a magnificent spread of tapas, I noticed a masked man attempting to perform a snap suplex on an angry patron. I called him over and we got talking. What happened next was unfortunate in some ways, but it was also the beginning of our friendship.

Halfway through a bottle of Monte Alban, I found myself saying; "Hermano, for me, what ruined that last album was all the synth crap". He nodded quietly as he lifted the Mezcal to his lips. "Yeah, and not only that", I continued, "what about the production? - I mean, I thought I was listening to Yoshimi's fucking Battle of the Pink Bats!" At this point, Hermano slammed his glass to the table, accidentally knocking over one of the scented mood candles. He had that psycho look in his eyes - you know, like in his film clip "Scarred for Life". He glared furiously at me for a few seconds and then, in a broken voice, stammered; "Shaw,

Hermano in the Garden of Eden avec ukulele

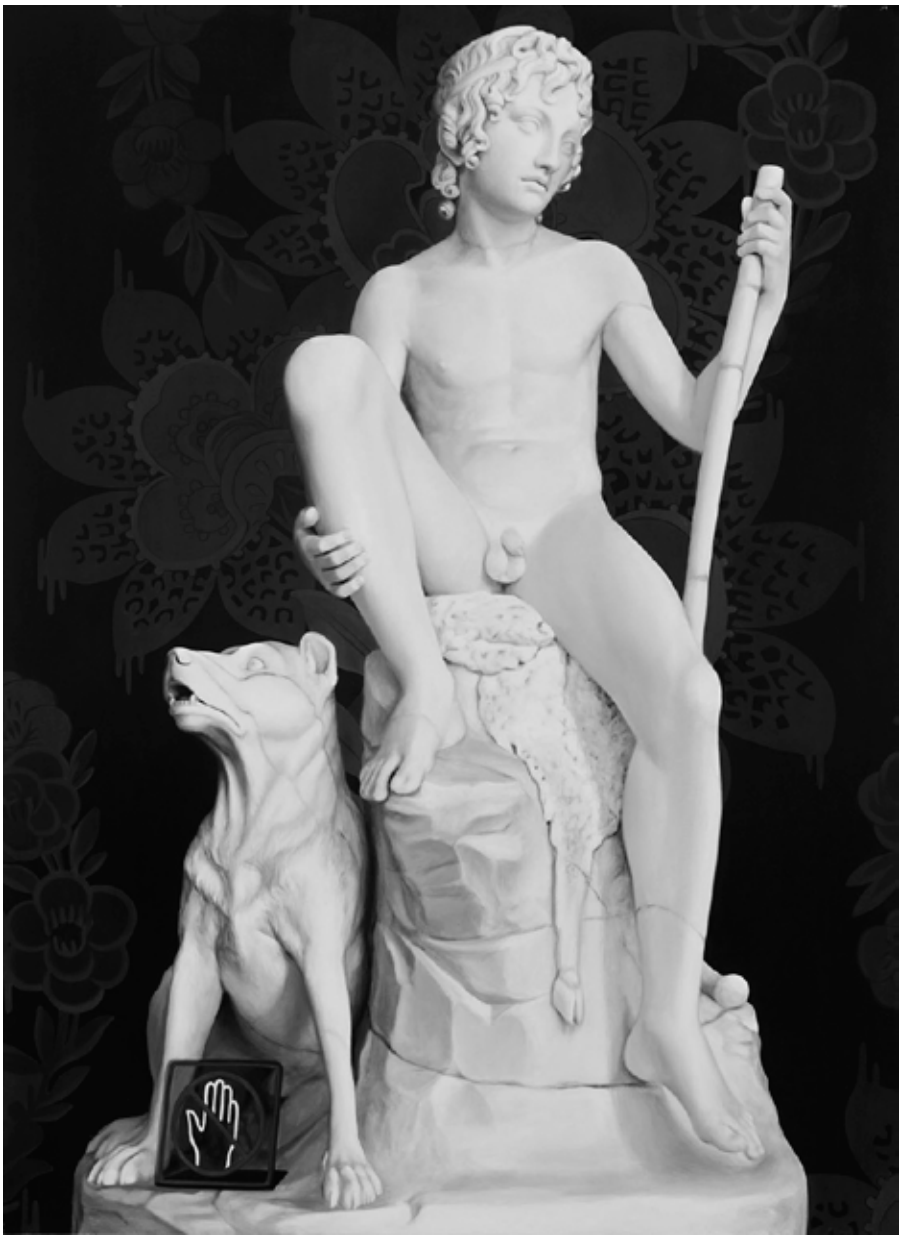
people don't know shit - that was the best fucking record I ever made!" Then he burst into tears. Then I burst into tears.

In at the studios of Joyful Vitamin:

As the doors to Vitamin Headquarters swung open, I felt a charge of electricity run through the place. The girls setting up mikes felt it too and we all turned to say hello. Before us, morning light flooding through the door, stood the original masked man, his Ohana sopranino uke in hand - reinvigorated, reinstated, and ready to rock. The trials and tribulations of the past had fallen away; the future was once again enticing and exiting: The future was, once again, Hermano.

Viva Hermano!

Shaw Hendry
Recording Mogul and Raconteur
Chairman of Joyful Vitamin Records and Tapes



Deidre But-Husaim
Swan Hunters
Oil on linen, 152 x 112 cm, 2010

To the other side of the Pacific:

I sit in a café in Adelaide as I write this, and imagine you sitting next to me and we're catching up like old times. Adelaide. The town that I love, a place you didn't know existed until you met me and whose name you can never remember. "What's it called again Jess? Adel…Adelone or something?" I miss you like crazy but I'm happy being home.

We never talked much about Australia, preferring instead to experience the country we were in, but the longer we're apart the more I want to share it all with you. "I will be there one day" you assure me from another place that was my home too for a while "it's just so far away". So I resign myself to dreaming about what I'll show you if I ever get the chance.

I'll drive you through the hills to Mt Lofty to show you how different it is from your home. Not all cities are full of cars and freeways and smog. I'll tell you about the Ash Wednesday bushfires and the ruins of the kiosk I used to see here and hope that we see a koala or two in the trees on the way home.

Bee on Beehive Corner by Shaw Hendry

We'll drink cheap beers at an opening at FELTspace, and while we stand in the crowd on the street, squinting at each other until the sun disappears we'll talk about artist run culture and our plans for the year. I'll introduce you to the people that I know, and tell you again how happy I am that you're here.

As we wander through town I'll point to the sky to show you Shaw Hendry's Bee at Beehive Corner. We'll take pictures of our reflections distorted in Bert Flugelman's Balls and love that it's an artwork that is one of the most recognisable parts of the city. We'll crouch low to the ground on

Found on Union Street, Adelaide

Rundle Street to see the coins Michelle Nikou embedded in the pavement, and find the doorway nearby to a miniature restaurant whose food we'll never get to eat. "This is an Honor Freeman" I'll say as we run our hands over the porcelain light switch outside the Exeter, automatically trying to flick it on even though we know it'll never move. We'll look out for strawberry seedlings that Peter McKay planted in the pavement, though I'm not sure if any continue to survive.

We'll sit on the beach one night as the sun sets, watching the waves roll in until the wind picks up and we wish that we'd brought warmer jumpers. We'll eat hot chips and talk about everything; as if this is the last time we'll ever get the chance, and wonder if it's possible to find the meaning of our lives in a handful of sand.

I take a sip of my hot chocolate, and remember afternoons with you at Starbucks, and half expect you to walk through the door at any minute. And then I remember you're not here, and that I can't share this with you quite yet, and smile to myself at my own sense of longing. If I believed it hard enough would you appear?

I'm missing you as always dude. Come visit me soon. The long flight will be worth it.

Jessie Lumb

Catherine Truman
Hybrid White
Hand-carved English Lime wood, paint, 12 x 7 x 3.5 cm, 2010
photo: Grant Hancock

The Archive

I have a recurring dream of being lost in an archive – wandering barefoot, in the middle of the night, through dimly lit aisles lined with shelves laden with musty books and old manuscripts. I think it stems from a haunting image on the cover of a Penguin edition of Jorge Luis Borges' *Labyrinths* that I once copied and pinned on the wall above my bed. It depicts a circular library spiralling up to a domed ceiling. Or perhaps it relates to writing, and getting lost in the quagmire of a thesis. Groping through the darkness and stepping tentatively through convoluted ideas and esoteric details. In my dream, sheaths of yellowing papers and indecipherable texts held together by faded crimson ribbons disintegrate when touched; the silence is interminable and the dusty smell is stifling. Invariably, I wake up perplexed, as if I have misplaced a key.

Archives are amazing. They hold obscure collections and half-forgotten things, they are often hidden and difficult to access. In the 1830s in Paris, discreet bibliophiles began to consign banned images and texts to l'Enfer (Hell), a basement in the Bibliothèque nationale de France. They accumulated an extraordinary collection of around 2000 works including the handwritten manuscript by the Marquis de Sade, *Les Unfortunes de la Virtue*, erotic photographs by Man Ray and Fèlicien Rops' prints.

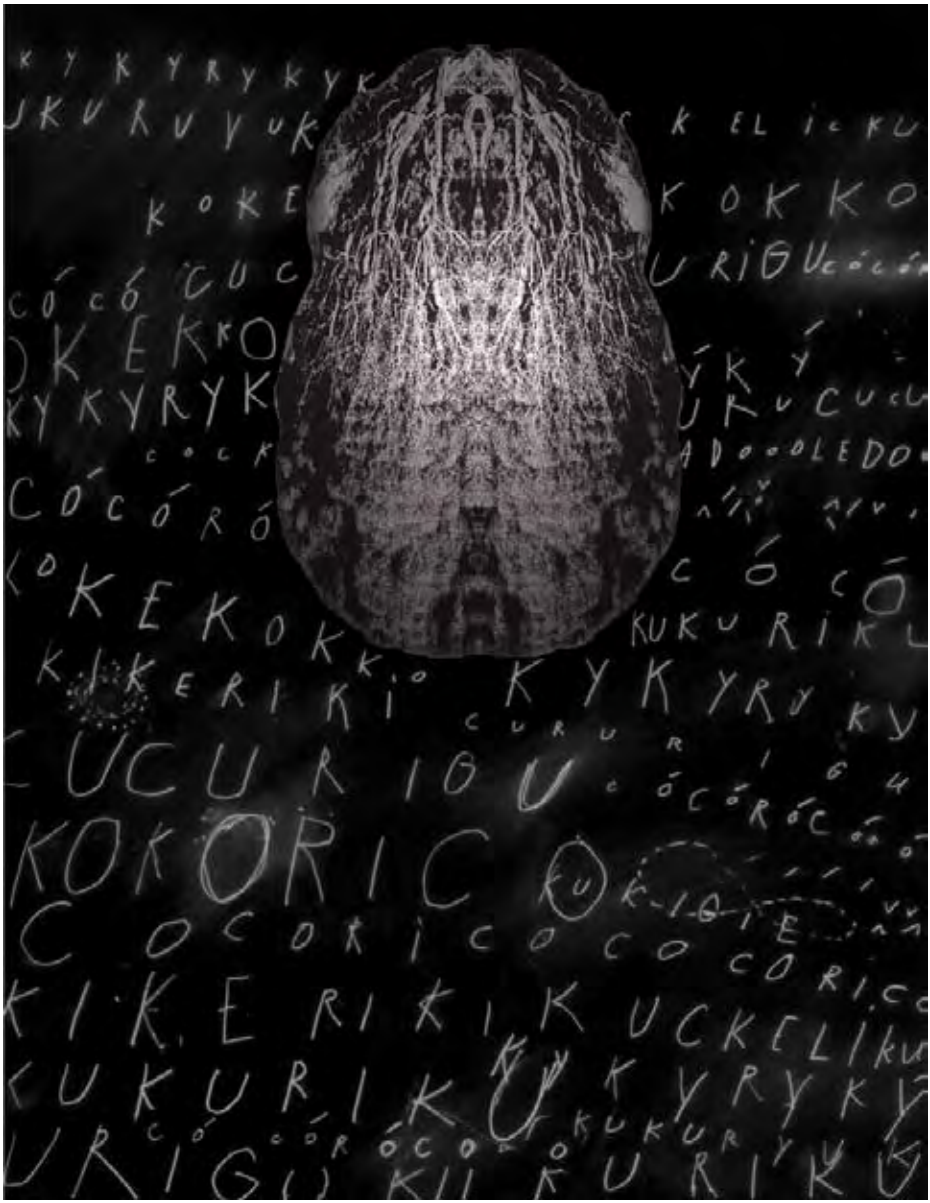
The Bibliothèque l'Arsenal, housed in a small Parisian château, holds the Pierre Lambert collection of materials relating to the work of novelist and critic Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848-1907). Notes in cursive script outlining Saint Lydwine's litany of illnesses, copies of youthful and indiscrete letters to Arij Prins, as well as black-rimmed notices sent out to mark the writer's death are carefully handled by earnest researchers who are scrutinised by sombre librarians. More easily accessible are Louis Aragon's *Paris Peasant*, snippets drafted between 1924 and 1926 that document the architectural details and eccentric characters to be found in one of the last Parisian arcades to be demolished for Baron Haussmann's boulevards; and Walter Benjamin's *The Arcades Project*, fragments written between 1927 and 1940 and published in 1982.

Archives offer brilliant insights into the culture and attitudes of specific places in particular times. Shaw Hendry's *Vitamin Archive* is a collection to be reckoned with. Disruptive, rowdy, anarchic and discursive, it resounds with many voices; it celebrates Adelaide's artists and writers, and reveals trends and currents simmering just below the predictability of the conservative city grid. It will be plundered, perhaps almost

www.vitaminarchive.com

forgotten, to be rediscovered in the future by some bemused researcher or lost soul who fondles an old Vitamin t-shirt (in almost pristine condition) and drinks tea from a cracked Vitamin mug, while obsessively trying to piece together what it was that we were all on about.

Mary Knights



Olga Sankey
Glossolalia #1
Inkjet print, 39 x 30 cm, 2009

PHANTOM WRITING: VITAMIN REVITALISED

Redux: "of a topic, redone, restored, brought back, or revisited". Okay, then. *Vitamin – The Redux* is *Vitamin* resurrected, reconsidered, reviewed. And for this writer, it's an undertaking shrouded in irony. Currently residing and working in Melbourne, I am contributing to a publication that is unashamedly, exuberantly South Australian.

Adelaide CBD

Piccadilly, North Adelaide

Where does one start to reconstruct the past? At the most elementary place of all: numbers. What is history without numbers? Every number conjures a story. Like 2004. You know, as in the year. That was when *Vitamin* was launched into the artistic milieu of the Festival State. The opening editorial set the egalitarian tone of the publication: "It is my hope that this little magazine might become a kind of open forum for those of us who like to write, read, and think about the visual world". And "those" who participated in this open forum included visual artists, writers, curators, musicians: fledgling, emerging, midcareer.

Every number conjures a story. Like 13. You know, as in the number of issues (or "episodes"). I never fathomed that choice of term, or, if I did, I can't remember. Memory: with minute facts and details it miserably fails, but with

the trivial and tall, it's almost instant recall. "Episodes": perhaps it had something to do with the exorbitance of each one. Like the experience of watching your favourite drama or sitcom, and being flooded by a tidal wave of information: a digital tsunami of image and text, sight and sound, content and commercial breaks. Now picture this sheer abundance of disjunctive data — this cool, ecstatic intertextuality — translated to print and PDF, registered in film-noir black-and-white, and dispatched every three months.

Water slide, Glenelg

Lo and behold! 13 episodes in fast-forward mode: new-millennium Pop, graffiti and sweat magazines, public art and hyper-real sculpture, St. Augustine and time travel, Heraclitus and memory, pasta and penance, photography and migration, Richard Wagner and *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, designer cakes and gourmet pies, Franz Kafka and 21st Century Modern art, Pluto Pups and Slush Puppies, painting and digital media, disaster movies and Pulp art, Manga, Anime and Japanese New Wave, George Orwell and authorship, iPods and book burnings, cosmetic cults and commodity fetishism. 13 episodes. Online. Accessible. Downloadable. 24/7. Electronic archive.

Revisiting each one is like sitting through a re-run — at once familiar and foreign, similar and surreal. And nothing is more uncanny than screening your own writing, three years on. The words and paragraphs have not altered; they remain as they were. It's your interpretation that shifts, with every reading. You relate differently to what you wrote. You cringe, grimace, groan, laugh, vent, regret, accept.

Every number conjures a story. Like 4. You know, as in the said number of contributions. 'Spaces and Spectres: Displacement and the 2004 Adelaide Biennial', a review and commentary on the spectral nature

of contemporary photo-media and video. 'Infinitely Deferred', an open letter to the late Jacques Derrida (1930-2004), a writer perpetually bedevilled by death, mourning, spirits, survival, and philosophy as hauntology. 'Unfinished Business', a profile on the nocturnal photographs of Darren Siwes — the artist as apparition, haunting South Australian landmarks and institutions. 'Elegy for the City', an ambivalent ode to Felicitania as a metropolis perennially plagued by phantoms: Beaumont, Snowtown, Kelvin, Truro. 4 menaced meditations. 4 spooked discourses. To revisit these writings is to summon time, or, better still, to contemplate

Jetty, Glenelg

multiple temporalities: the future, the present, the past — inescapably out of joint and inextricably interwoven, like the threads and weaving of your most intimate garment. Intertemporality. It echoes and reverberates in Episode 4: "So much of what we do *today* is based on what happened in the *past*, and what we think may happen in the *future*. In a practical sense, we are already time travelers". So wrote the man who instigated and sustained *Vitamin* with his witty ingenuity, concrete tenacity, and fizzy energy. Who maintained its circulation with his astute foresight and acute appreciation of time. And whose legacy survives for generations present and generations forthcoming. Yes, Mr. Shaw Hendry, it has been a most excellent adventure, but it's only just beginning…

Varga Hosseini

Nicholas Folland
Mother
Digital print, 2010

Francis Ponge (1899 – 1988)

> ". . . And now, dear reader, for your intellectual toilet, here is a little piece of soap. Well handled, we guarantee it will be enough. Let us hold this magic stone."
>
> Francis Ponge, *Le Savon*, (*Soap)*, 1967.

This piece began as a ranting speculative essay into authenticity and slacker aesthetics, but has turned out (probably much to everyone's relief) as a gentle introduction to one of my favourite writers. Born in Montpellier in 1899, Francis Ponge was a man who published his first book at age 43, was often broke, and wrote in the gap between his working day and sleep.

'Tamago Mountain', 2008

Ponge has long been associated with Phenomenology, analysed by Jacques Derrida and admired by Jean Paul Satre. However his gentle precision and humble subjects cut right through any obscurest mystique he may have acquired. The honesty and subtlety of his writing is astonishing. Ponge finds in the minutia of daily life the essentials of broader existence. Without moss, molluscs, soap or rain, or the lunchtime exodus from work, there would be no world. Ponge's appeal lies in the humanity of his humble subjects, and his clear perceptive observations valuing small details as cherished parts of life, whilst not sliding into sentiment.

His books most often take the format of collections of short essay / poems that remind me of Sei Shonagon, Walter Benjamin or even Roland Barthes. AC Grayling is another who perhaps attempts some of the same deep observation, but I find Grayling a bit trite. Ponge's descriptive technique began with extreme writer's block, which he solved by exercising acute levels of observation and a willingness to not censor bland remarks.

The discovered difficulty in describing or understanding anything (say a pebble) results in what Ponge himself called his "Failures to describe" where the attempt of describing promotes a wonder of the thing itself- of the unknowable nature of the world.

As an introduction, I would recommend the following Ponge books that are fairly easy to obtain in translation:

Le Parti pris des choses (1942), literally *On the side of things* and translated as *The Voice of Things* or *Nature of Things*, Ponge's first book, published during the WWII, when Ponge was 43.

Le Savon (1967): *Soap*, begun during WWII when Ponge was involved in the French Resistance and taking two decades to finish. It is about soap. Yes, really.

La Fabrique du Pré (1971): *Mute objects of expression* more about the countryside, buses, looking at towns. Also begun during WWII.

These titles are available at the Dark Horsey Bookshop or online. Please don't ask me to lend you my copies: I need them all.

****

The Cigarette

First let's set the atmosphere, hazy yet dry, wispy, with the cigarette always placed right in the thick of it, once engaged in its continuous creation.

Then, the thing itself: a small torch, far more perfumed than illuminating, from which, in a number of small heaps set within a chosen rhythm, ashes work free and fall.

Finally, its sacrifice: the glowing tip, scaling off in silvery flakes, while a tight muff formed of most recent ash encircles it.

(from *The Nature of Things,* translated by Lee Fahnestock, 1942)

Bridget Currie

KINDA SOUNDS FUNNY, BUT I LOVE HONEY, AND HONEY… I LOVE YOU

Itchy and Scratchy: The Movie

On July 20, 1969 a middle-aged Abe (aka Grandpa) Simpson sits in front of the television. As Neil Armstrong famously says: "That's one small step for man…" Abe sheds a tear. To his left, a teenage Homer Simpson reclines on a beanbag, headphones plugged into a record player, eyes closed, singing, "yummy, yummy, yummy, I've got love in my tummy…", bobbing his head, oblivious to the historical event. ('*Itchy and Scratchy: The Movie*', season four, *The Simpsons*)

I'm going to tell the following story as I remember it. Some of the details may have changed in my mind. On a warm Spring day in 2008, Amira (my friend and housemate) and I went to The Project Space at CACSA to see Shaw Henry's exhibition *Honey*. We were both disappointed to have missed the opening. We stepped into the gallery space, and were immediately bombarded with the sweetness and joyousness of the sounds, smells, and colours. The first thing I noticed was The Archies' song, *Sugar Sugar* playing on a portable stereo. The space was filled with pastel coloured cardboard 'wishing flowers', which were also spray-painted onto the cement floor, and faux fireworks rockets hung from the ceiling. There was a smell of flowers (I noticed a bottle of Glade plugged into the wall).

Amira and I exclaimed how beautiful it all was. We noticed an instruction to take a 'wishing flower' from a pile and pin it to a wall while making a wish. There was only one left, so we decided to share it. I can't remember what our wish was. I can't remember whether we agreed on a mutual wish, or whether we expected the one flower to grant both of our wishes. I do remember tears welling up in my eyes, and feeling as though this was the most adorable installation I had ever

'Honey' exhibition opening

seen. It seemed that Shaw's aim had been to make each viewer feel happy, and special. As we left, *Yummy, Yummy, Yummy* was playing on the stereo.

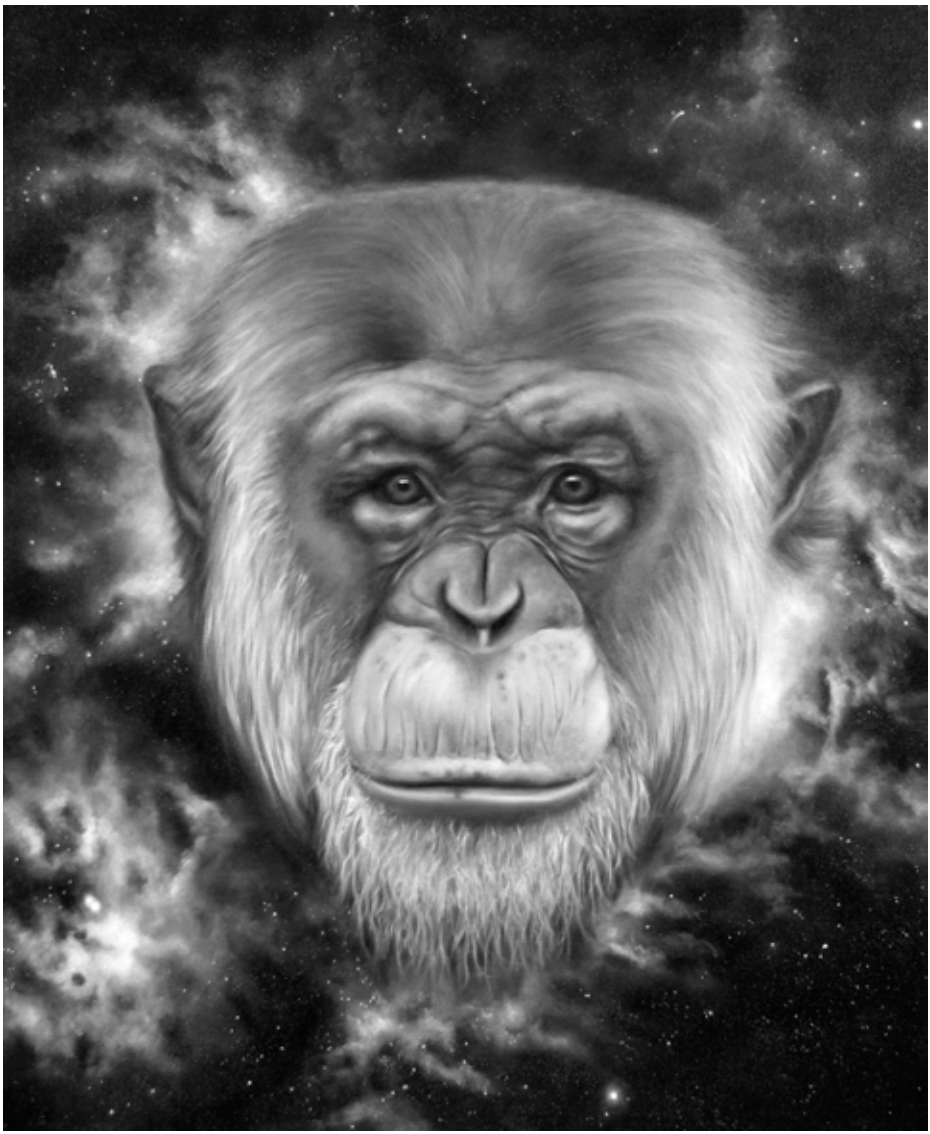
Homer Simpson misses the moon landing because he is too busy listening to this one hit wonder by Ohio Express. Aside from the mutual use of the song, there is a greater link between this joke and Shaw's exhibition, *Honey*. I think it's sweet that Homer misses the moon landing. Obviously, there is a strong element of comedy in his obliviousness, however it conveys a deep engrossment in something so everyday that we might forget how lovely it really is. Noticing the beauty of everyday things like pop songs, lollies and 'The Simpsons' merchandise was important to Shaw, and an important element in his artwork.

Abe Simpson—portrayed throughout *The Simpsons* as a grumpy, albeit loveable, old man, who rarely shows emotion and has an old-fashioned masculinity—is moved to tears as 'mankind' reaches a new frontier. Homer, blissfully unaware, sings along to Ohio Express, espousing sentiments that I tend to find equally important:

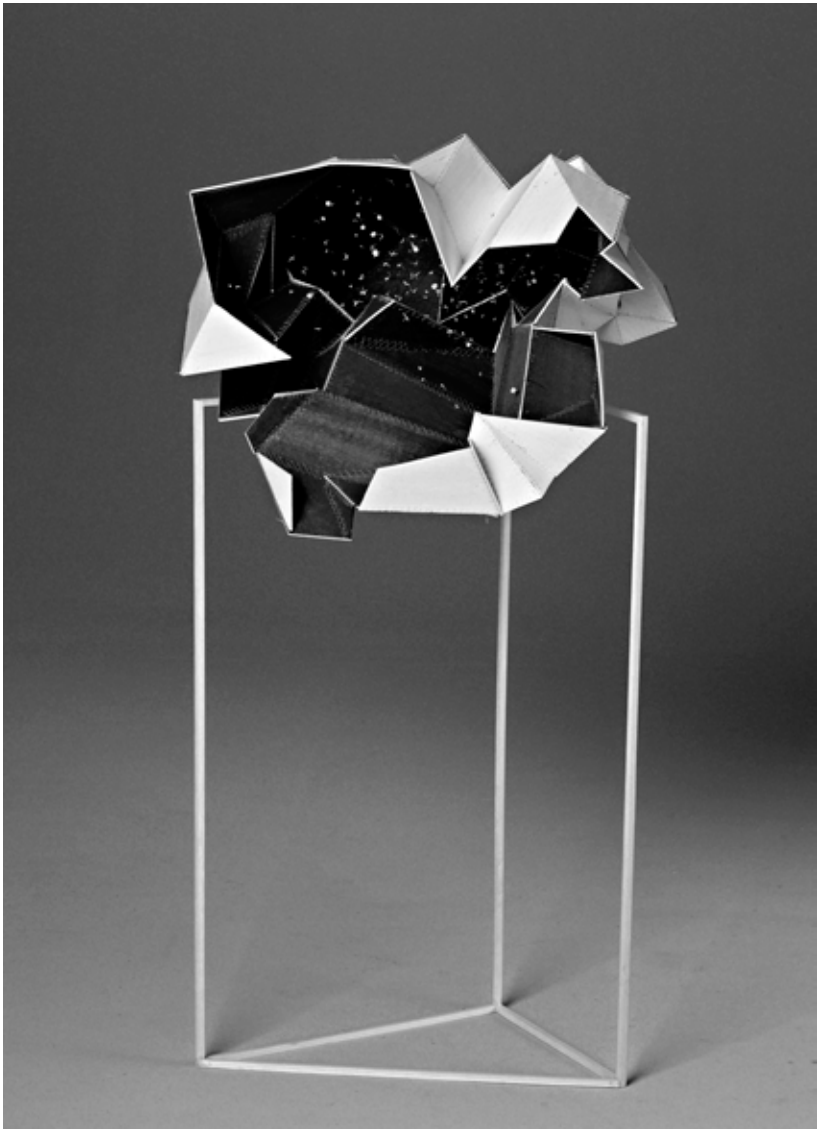
> *Yummy, yummy, yummy, I got love in my tummy and I feel like loving you. Love is such a sweet thing, good enough to eat thing, and it's just a-what I'm gonna do. Oh love, to hold you, oh love, to kiss you, oh love, I love it so. Oh love is sweeter, sweeter than sugar. Oh love, I won't let you go.*

Shaw Hendry's Amazing Simpson's Collection Exhibition will be held at Light Square Gallery, opening on January 27, 2011. The exhibition will include a 'Show within the Show' with local South Australian artists exhibiting *Simpson's* inspired artworks.

Romi Graham



Angela Black
Starboy aka Tsotsi
Oil on canvas, 91 x 76 cm, 2010



Amy Joy Watson
The Story of the Heavens
Balsa wood, Indian ink, polyester thread, glow in the dark thread, pine, 120 x 60 x 40 cm, 2009
photo: Michal Kluvanek

Social Intercourse

Pen whipping the page, I draw my heroes. The singer. The drummer. The punters. The dancers. The flirts. The drunks. I draw Tam watching me draw. We're chatting and I follow her to the toilet, drawing her going there. I draw the girls in the mirrors, applying lipstick and laughing at a limp joint. I draw Tam peeing.

"Fran...um…do you think you are maybe...a little bit…obsessive?"

I draw her saying that. I draw Tim Rogers:

"Fran- you get it. You fucking get it."

He gets it!

I draw Peter Koppes from The Church. He's playing guitar, watching me draw him playing guitar, our eyes connected in rhythm. I'm a part of it. I am. And later;

"Fran, I felt like we were having sex. It was that intimate."

A punk gig. Someone grabs me…"Come here! Draw this!" He pulls me in to the men's toilets – a row of Mohawks, leather and studs lined up at the trough. I stand in the corner and draw.

I draw Fleck, in all his mohawked glory. "Fran when you draw me I feel like this…", he points to his Mohawk, "…has been worthwhile. I feel validated."

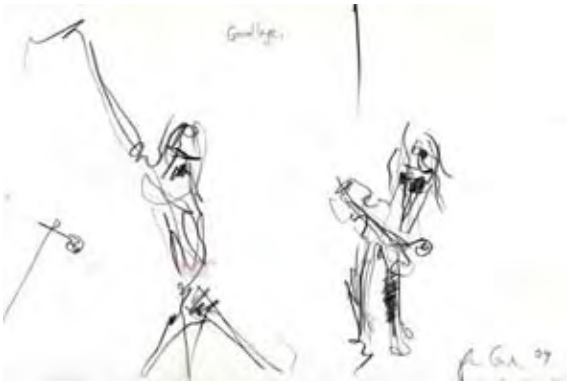
I feel validated.

I draw because I'm shy. Because I want what they have. My obsession with drawing social interaction stems from the memory of feeling crippled by that shyness, hanging on the outskirts wanting to be in the thick of the action.

I draw extroverts. Singers, dancers, people in conversation, people connecting with each other, socially, sexually, creatively. I want to be closer to them, to that. And these moments, they're perfect. Fleeting parts of complex narratives. I want to pin them down but keep them alive.

Hold them up like a mirror, "See look at us! How perfect, passionate, pathetic, screwed up, sick, ugly we are? And how beautiful that is. We were there. You were. I was there. And I touched it with my pen. And here we are."

So I travel, and I haunt the venues of sub cultures and I draw us. I draw the things we say. Our social interaction. The narrative of our body language, our surroundings. Sometimes I'm referred to as a witness, a journalist, a scribe, a documenter... Sometimes I get intrigued with a subject, for their angles, their shapes, their presence, their character, their lack of inhibition. And sometimes they become lovers and I draw that too. I draw our interaction, our relationship. I've even drawn us having sex while we're having sex. And I'm still not close enough. I still don't have what they have. So I keep drawing.



Fran Callen, Nick Cave Thebby Theatre 2009, pencil on paper, 18 x 28 cm

Yes I'm a little bit obsessive.

And now I want to paint the synopsis, the summary of collections of these drawings.

It stems from my fascination with the structure of storytelling, in literature, in music, in film, and in painting. How that connects. And how that connects *us*.

Fran Callen

I love Vitamin

I love *Vitamin* so much that when Shaw Hendry stopped publishing hardcopies in 2007, I followed in his footsteps and started producing my own independent magazine, *Point Blank*, as a way of encouraging others to speak honestly, boldly and directly about the art world around them. It was my hope that one day *Point Blank* might be just as groundbreaking as *Vitamin*.

I met Shaw, founding Director and Editor of *Vitamin* at the beginning of 2008 and picked his brains about all things 'vitamin'. At the end of that meeting I had pages and pages of notes about what was involved, how to get started, things to think about, things to avoid and many other handy tips. Shaw was very generous with advice. This was the beginning of many conversations about *Vitamin*.

Shaw Hendry and Mark Siebert chatting at the launch of the first edition of Point Blank, April 2008

In fact, I asked Shaw if I could interview him about *Vitamin* for the very first edition of *Point Blank*. Of course he said: "Yes, I'd love to talk to you more about *Vitamin*", Shaw came to the *Point Blank* launch party and when he wandered into Higher Ground on that barmy eve, I thought to myself: "WHAT A STAR!"

I now know that was what Shaw did; he got involved. On countless occasions he gave freely of his time, knowledge and creativity to anyone who asked. In 2009 I was lucky enough to be studying Honours in Visual Arts with Shaw as a fellow student. Over the year we got to know each other much better. We'd often bump into each other in the sculpture studios or the corridors of Dorrit Black building and have a good old yarn. An hour or so later we'd return to our own workstations with an enlightened view of the world.

My favourite conversation about *Vitamin* was the 47 minutes and 43 seconds of interview time recorded on 21 December 2009. I even went through the ridiculously long-winded process of getting UniSA ethics approval just so I could record, interview and transcribe that amazing 47 minutes and 43 seconds of conversation with Shaw about *Vitamin* and include it in my Honours thesis.

I really am a self-confessed Vitaminolic… I think I built my whole Honours research topic around the significance of *Vitamin* magazine. This involved research into the history of independent art magazines in Adelaide and I have to admit a slight bias towards Vitamin. It was the best, closely followed by Adam Dutkiewicz's *Words and Visions* of the 1980s.

I hope to publish this study but for now I wish to share some of what Shaw shared with me about *Vitamin.*

Shaw did two kinds of writing; one he called 'creative non-fiction', the other type of writing was catalogue essays and art reviews for friends and colleagues.

It was very important to Shaw that the writing flowed; He thought of writing as spatial. In Shaw's words:

> *It has a certain form and it has to finish in a certain way so that you know it is finished. I don't like it to finish up in the air. You turn the page and, "oh it's already finished?" I used to say to Sera that the last paragraph was called 'A Good Time Was Had By All'.*

In every aspect of the publication *Vitamin* was produced specifically for the South Australian art community. As far as Shaw was concerned:

> *The rest of the world was already doing the rest of the world but South Australia wasn't even doing South Australia properly!*

When Shaw first started producing *Vitamin* in 2004 people said two things: Firstly, that he wouldn't find enough people to write. Secondly, that he would run out of things for people to write about. Shaw thought those opinions were ridiculous because we live in a visual world.

Shaw always acknowledged how important Sera Waters and Dianne Longley were to the success of *Vitamin* publications. He also noted that the people who do well in the arts are those willing to get involved.

Vitamin was made to positively impact on the local arts community and to encourage communication and interaction. Shaw would always encourage his writers to speak in their own voice about something that they cared about.

I know that things have changed now and that I can no longer have those inspiring conversations with Shaw. Although this *Vitamin Redux* is our last hoorah, I'll keep checking up on *Vitamin* online (www.vitamin archive.com). And on the occasions when I miss Shaw the most I'll go to my bookshelf and flip through the pages of *Vitamin* (the ones that Shaw gave me personally). I'll skim through a few articles and feel that same connection to my very good friend.

Thank you Shaw for your generosity and wisdom. Hey, maybe one day I'll produce another zine in memory of you.

Polly Dance

Sera Waters
Things Happened
Card, linen teatowel, cotton, wooden beads, trip, stuffing,
approx 50 x 22 cm, 2010
photo: Grant Hancock

DIANNE LONGLEY: FANTASTIC GROTESQUE

Adelaide Central Gallery 30 July – 4 Sept 2010
Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery 19 Sept – 1 Nov 2009

The fantastic and the grotesque are peripheral categories of art often involving ornamental arrangements of small human and animal figures. Dianne Longley's embrace of these categories is long standing, and spans the centuries by including characters like Pokemon, along with medieval figures. Such references always remind me of horoscopes and Tarot cards – they share an air of predicting the future in an enigmatic way.

Fantastic Grotesque reflects great productivity, experimentation, consistency and versatility. This exhibition includes digital wood engravings, artist books, etchings, engraved brass panels, tiny sculptures and wooden panels with pokerwork and oil paints. Longley says: "These works are imagined spaces populated with curious and fantastic creatures, actual and bizarre plant forms, costumed figures, and symbols of chance and renewal."

Greeting the Day,
digital wood engraving
150 x 72 cm, 2009

Many of the works were begun when Longley undertook a residency in Broken Hill on the occasion of the donation of Pro Hart's etching press to the Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery in 2008. Her travels from Adelaide to Broken Hill involved passing striking cactus and succulent gardens at Terowie and Silverton. The photographs she took of these weird and wonderful gardens became inkjet polymergravure prints with *chine collé*, their spooky strangeness heightened by digital colour tweaking. Longley has not embedded her figures within the photographs but has used adaptations of the plant forms as backgrounds in etchings and as the starting points for a series of cuttlefish castings in bronze and pewter. Cuttlefish carving and casting is a very old jeweller's technique and the texture of the cuttlefish gives a special striped grain. Both spiky and graceful, these tiny casts are like talismans or charms.

Longley has long been an early adapter of new technologies, though her work always has an antiquated feel. This bringing together of contrasts works effectively in her large digital wood engravings of cactuses, flowers and the *Fisher of Dreams*, a medieval female character emerging from the mouth of a fish.

Withstanding alone, bronze, 12.5 x 6.5 x 2 cm, 2007
Flowering dreams, bronze, oil, 9 x 4.5 x 3 cm, 2007
For you a gift, bronze, oil, 9 x 6 x 2.5 cm, 2008

Fantastic Garden Succulent Grotto, Terowie, polymergravure print, inkjet chine collé, 42 x 59 cm, 2009

Succulents and cactuses are adapted to dry conditions and are becoming more frequent in South Australian gardens. Thus even though Longley's works exist in a fantasy space with links to anime and the creatures crawling around the borders of mediaeval art, it also touches on the reality of the dryness of Adelaide, and our changing approaches to gardening which curiously look back to arid gardens of the past as seen in Terowie and Silverton. Thus the work locates us in the present while simultaneously placing us somewhere else in a dream of the fantastic and grotesque.

Stephanie Radok

Elizabeth Hetzel
Breathing Place - Blackwood Forest
(Installation detail) tree holes, PET, dimensions variable, 2010

Logan MacDonald
Skulls are always pretty cool (Ode to Hirst)
Digital print,100 x 70 cm, 2010

Gray Street Workshop: Birthday 25, and a new gallery

Artist studios and workshops often have modest origins. Ramshackle and dingy sheds and buildings become the artistic crucible. In these marginal (and in many cases un-rentable) spaces, ideas and scraps of metal and bits of wood are transformed into works of incredible beauty and intellectual significance.

Catherine Truman is one of the founding members of Gray Street Workshop, a jewellery workshop in Adelaide. She originally shared a studio with Anne Brennan in the basement of Mitcham Village Arts and Crafts. With minimal equipment, objects were forged in an exciting environment of individual creative expression and feminist politics. Catherine and Anne, on exhibiting in Melbourne, met Sue Lorraine, who in late 1984 moved to Adelaide. Early in 1985, Catherine, Anne and Sue established Gray Street Workshop in Norwood.

Gray Street Workshop, Sydney Place, Adelaide

Artists join studios, and artists leave studios; workshops are created, equipment pooled and working relationships fostered. The collaborative studio can be a very positive working environment for artists. Studios and workshops evolve, and over time they are reconfigured with different studio artists and relocate to different locations.

Alice Potter working, Gray Street Workshop

The history of Gray Street Workshop has evolved since 1985. This partnership of artists has changed over time, as has the location of the workshop.

Gray Street Workshop moved from Norwood to St Peters in 1989, and then relocated to the JamFactory between 1992-94. Gray Street Workshop moved into its current, convenient location in Sydney Place, off Halifax Street, in 1995.

Leslie Matthews joined the partnership (of Anne, Catherine and Sue) in 1986, Julie Blyfield in 1989. Anne Brennan left the studio for lecturing work at Canberra School of Art in 1990, and Sue Lorraine, working as creative director of the Metal Design Studio at the JamFactory, left the partnership in 2005. In 2010, Leslie Matthews and Julie Blyfield left Gray Street Workshop to set up their own studios, and Sue Lorraine has rejoined the partnership. As well, Jess Dare, a young emerging jeweller, has been invited to join the partnership.

Jess Dare setting up the new gallery space

The partnership of artists at Gray Street Workshop provides a beautifully functioning workshop where younger and emerging artists can come to make their work. This has been a particular strength of Gray Street Workshop; they have a number of access tenants who can work in a professional studio alongside more experienced and recognised practitioners. There is also a 'day bench' available for short-term hire, for artists wanting contact with the workshop. This mix of new graduates being nurtured and supported by senior artists in a professional studio facility has resulted in much appreciated funding assistance from Arts

SA, and generous support from Adelaide patron of the arts, Maureen Richie.

Gray Street Workshop has been operating at Sydney Place since 1995 and in 2010 is celebrating its 25th birthday. This year has seen changes in the partnership and a re-organisation of the workshop space.

A very exciting development is the creation of a gallery space at the entrance to the workshop. The opening of the new gallery was held on November 14, showcasing the works of Gray Street Workshop artists; Catherine Truman, Sue Lorraine, and Jess Dare, alongside current access tenants, Chloe Shay, Eliza Gregerson, Sarah Rothe, Alice Potter and Jane Bowring. In the following year each of these artists will present solo exhibitions of their work. In the future Gray Street Workshop will take applications from makers of contemporary jewellery and small objects, to hold exhibitions in this space.

The Gray Street Workshop artists have worked very hard to create this new space. Giving up time in the evenings and over weekends, they have installed shelves, polished the floor, painted the walls, and created a beautifully designed space for the exhibition of small objects.

Workshops don't just keep on keeping on. There is usually a core of committed and high-functioning artists who develop a successful working and studio environment. This in turn attracts younger jewellers and graduates. In this way Gray Street Workshop provides a form of mentorship for emerging jewellers. Here in Adelaide, in one of Australia's most respected workshops, they can extend their technical skills and find their own form of individual creativity.

Congratulations and Happy Birthday, Gray Street Workshop!

Dianne Longley

Catherine Buddle

Invincible Suit

polyethelyne overall, hand-cut polyethelyne thread,
overprinted text on paper, 125 x 60 cm, 2010
photo: Grant Hancock

Ray Harris
Land Mind
Still image from HD digital video, 2010

My Involvement with Vitamin

Editors note: The following article has been adapted from John Hewson's eulogy at Shaw Hendry's funeral on April 29, 2010.

I had known Shaw for many years as an acquaintance when we met on what were fairly rare occasions. We always enjoyed each other's company as we had shared interests in music and the visual arts. We became much closer friends after I commenced my involvement with *Vitamin*. Shaw started producing *Vitamin* as a hardcopy and an online zine in 2004 in order to promote discussion on the lively contemporary South Australian art scene. I was attending a launch of an early *Vitamin* episode, when I casually said to Shaw, "I should write something for Vitamin" and Shaw said, "Why don't you?" The unusual aspect of this was that unlike the majority of people writing for *Vitamin*, I am not a practising artist and really had no claims to any expertise on the subject other than an enthusiasm for the visual arts. I have generally introduced myself as Shaw's least talented friend or as I appointed myself in one article, *Vitamin's correspondent from the other side of the easel*.

Vitamins 1-13

Having agreed to write an article, I then had to decide on a topic. I decided to write about how I became interested in the visual arts. Shaw was quite taken with my starting point, which was my failure at art in high school. It was Shaw's idea to scan into the article the comment of my art teacher in my school report "shows little natural ability". This became the title of the article. The writing described my journey from high school art failure to a love of the visual arts. Shaw was very enthusiastic about my contributions over the years,

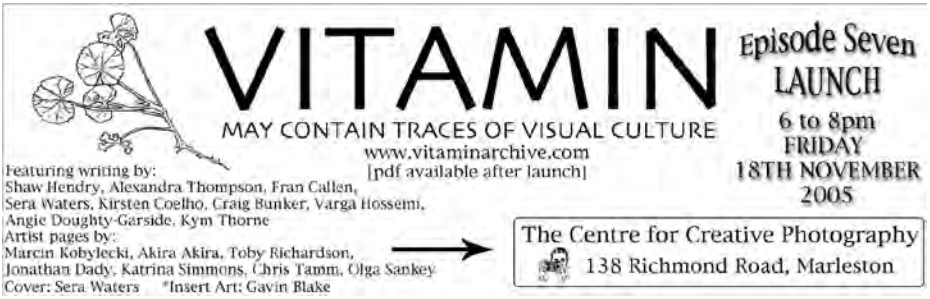
though often despaired at their lengthiness. As time went by, with Shaw's encouragement and as my confidence grew, I started writing about exhibitions I attended rather than just general topics on art. Shaw gave me the opportunity to write about things that interested me in the visual arts, something that never would have happened without the opportunity and encouragement he gave me.

The energy that Shaw brought to the magazine over such a long period of time was typical of the generous and positive person he was. *Vitamin* was about promotion of South Australian contemporary art and not self-promotion. Shaw loved the visual arts and music and wanted people to participate. He didn't believe that the arts should be left to the highly talented elite but enjoyed by everyone. I can only imagine what a positive impact this would have had on the many students he came in contact with at the art school. I know his confidence in me gave me a confidence in my writing I would not otherwise have possessed. Shaw was always keen to see me extend my talents in other directions so that I now possess a harmonica, kazoo and ukulele, all courtesy of Shaw. I know others do as well, as Shaw, never one to do things by halves, bought a box of harmonicas and a box of kazoos on the internet to hand out. He admitted to me that the harmonicas were crap quality but really cheap!

Shaw playing the ukulele, 2010

Shaw produced thirteen episodes and a detailed *Vitamin Index* between 2004 and 2008. The commitment required to produce that many editions was tremendous. I don't think it should be underestimated the amount of effort that such a task required and it was the impact of his illness that caused further episodes to be deferred. The *Vitamin* website still holds an archive of his achievements. Shaw wanted each edition to be special and so, despite the extra workload it imposed, each hardcopy of

the magazine featured a unique insert artwork, some examples include the rainbow pencil, the special 'limited edition' *Vitamin* badge, and the Christian Lock swirl painting. As if this wasn't enough, Shaw, ever the arts entrepreneur, extended *Vitamin* to hosting its own thematic online exhibitions.



Over the years the launch of *Vitamin* episodes occurred in galleries and studios across Adelaide. There was always a large turnout and although there was a hard core of enthusiasts that attended most of the launches, there was also a moving population so that the feeling of each launch was quite different, depending on the venue and the group that attended. We moved from up-market galleries to scruffy studios and one launch was held at the old art school just before it closed. The launches were always fun but had a serious intent. It became a tradition that Shaw would always launch the latest edition by declaring it as, "The Best *Vitamin* Yet!" The diversity of venues and people, demonstrated the esteem in which Shaw was held by his peers. His popularity was also made evident by the legendary 'Hermano Fan Club' exhibition opening at FELTspace (April 2010), which attracted record crowds.

I gained a lot from my participation in *Vitamin* but the most significant thing was Shaw's friendship. Shaw was a special friend to me and I can't think of any other person that will fill the hole in my life left by his death. I was able to have a very special but somehow typical day with him the day before he went into the Royal Adelaide Hospital. When I arrived at Shaw's house in the morning he was very down and in quite a bit of pain. Di asked if I could take Shaw into hospital for some tests

Hermano Fan Club opening, FeltSpace, April, 2010

as she had some other tasks to attend to. As soon as we left the house, Shaw discovered he had left his keys at home and was locked out. This only made his mood worse. During the time we were out we had a series of minor setbacks, the tests took longer than expected, my phone ran out of credits when we tried to contact Di for the keys to the house, one problem after another. Of course eventually they were all resolved. When I finally took Shaw back to the house he laughed and said: "It's funny but I really enjoyed today". I responded, "I did too. We should do it again but next time remember to take the keys". Sadly there wasn't another opportunity. As I finish this I am very conscious of a message Shaw left for us in the *Vitamin Index*.

He wrote:

> *If at some time in the future, you remark that I have 'lost' my 'brave battle with cancer', I will be sending a mystical spirit your way to mystically kick your arse.*

I will not risk the fate of a mystical kick in the arse but simply say "Dearest Shaw, I will miss you very much".

John Hewson

Christopher Orchard
Captured
Charcoal on paper, 34.5 x 29 cm, 2010

Vitamin Index Launch Speech

Editors note: Shaw's speech from the launch of the Vitamin Index, at Greenaway Art Gallery, December, 2007. Vitamin Index launch photos by Craigh Marsden.

Hello everyone, thanks for coming along to the launch of the *Vitamin Index*.

It's great to be able to launch the *Index* at the Greenaway Art Gallery. Many of the artists appearing in the Index, as you might know, have been associated with this space, but more importantly Paul Greenaway's own involvement as Chair of the SALA Festival over the past 10 years is exactly the kind of thing that *Vitamin* is about.

Participation builds a vibrant arts community.

The ethos of *Vitamin* from the beginning was that all were welcome. Everyone who wanted to get involved did. On the inside cover of every Episode was my email address and the words "Contributions are Welcome".

No one ever made a cent out of *Vitamin*. It ran on goodwill and cheap wine. The generosity of those involved, particularly the writers, was always amazing.

When the First Episode came out, and I told people that *Vitamin* was going to focus on South Australian art and visual culture, some people said "Oh, you will run out of things to write about". In

fact, the possibilities were endless. If not for other considerations, the publication could have continued indefinitely.

It is really only a lack of confidence that makes other local art publications seek to portray themselves as 'International'. 'Internationalism' is a smokescreen. *Vitamin's* great aim was to be local, and it remains the only visual art publication in this state with such an aim.

The South Australian School of Art kindly covered the cost of *Vitamin* photocopying. The South Australian Government, though Arts SA, has assisted the *Vitamin Archive* website. All Episodes of *Vitamin*, and the *Index* too, are permanently downloadable from the *Vitamin Archive* at www.vitaminarchive.com

So…

The index followed various rules, which of course, were made up as I went along. But I tried to be consistent at least. Now that we have an *Index*, the Episodes will become a true resource for people interested in actual South Australian Art.

School children everywhere will rejoice.

The *Index* was laid out by my wife, Dianne Longley. Di's over in Melbourne at the moment visiting family and so couldn't be here today.

Di laid out four of the Episodes. Sera Waters laid out the rest. Included in this interesting statistic is the story of Episode Seven, which due to a monumental computer collapse, was laid out in its entirety twice: once by Sera and then again by Di who also provided computing assistance for the Episodes and wrote a number of articles.

I must say, it was always a pleasure working on the layout with Sera Waters. It always seemed more like fun than work, or as Noel Coward might have observed, it was more fun than fun. Every Episode had its dramas, naturally enough, but at the end there was always a happy ending waiting in the wings - just like in real life.

Last year, when I was too sick to edit, Bridget Currie and then Sera Waters stepped in as Celebrity Editors (that was Episodes 10 and 11). They were the best Celebrity Editors I ever met. Sera also wrote in most of the Episodes and did the insert art with Daniel Torchio, for the final Episode.

The only person apart from myself to have written in every Episode was Varga Hosseini. My favourite Varga quote was when he described Aldo Iacobelli's painting *Phillip wants to be a top dog* as a "plush purple plain populated by a polychromatic posse of posing pooches".

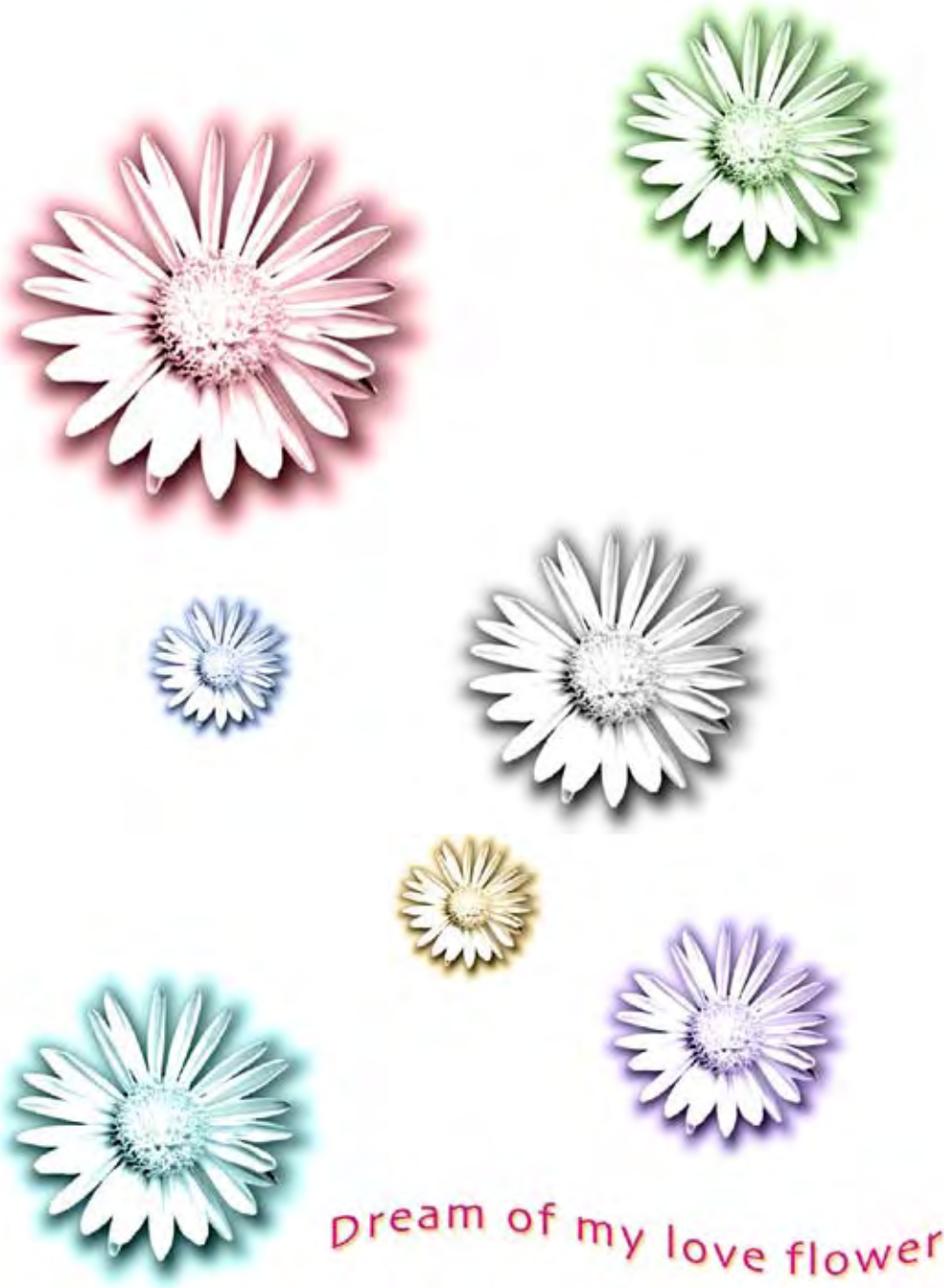
I thought it was important to distinguish the hard copy of *Vitamin* from the downloadable pdf, and nothing made that distinction more pronounced than the Insert Art. In previous issues there have been artworks by people such as Paul Hoban, Christian Lock, and Julia Robinson. And so it is a particular pleasure to host the work of Roy Ananda, as the *Vitamin Insert Artist*, for the *Vitamin Index*.

There's one last thing: Apart from Sera and myself, there was one other person who attended all the *Vitamin* Launches. Seldom has such a meritorious feat been achieved and it would be a shame to let this occasion pass without due acknowledgement. And so, it is my great honour to call upon Mark Siebert to accept the *Vitamin Honorary Doctorate of Perfect Attendance.*

Thanks again everyone. There is nothing more to say except that I think the *Vitamin Index*, is the Best Index Ever.

Thank you.

Shaw Hendry


Dream of my love flower