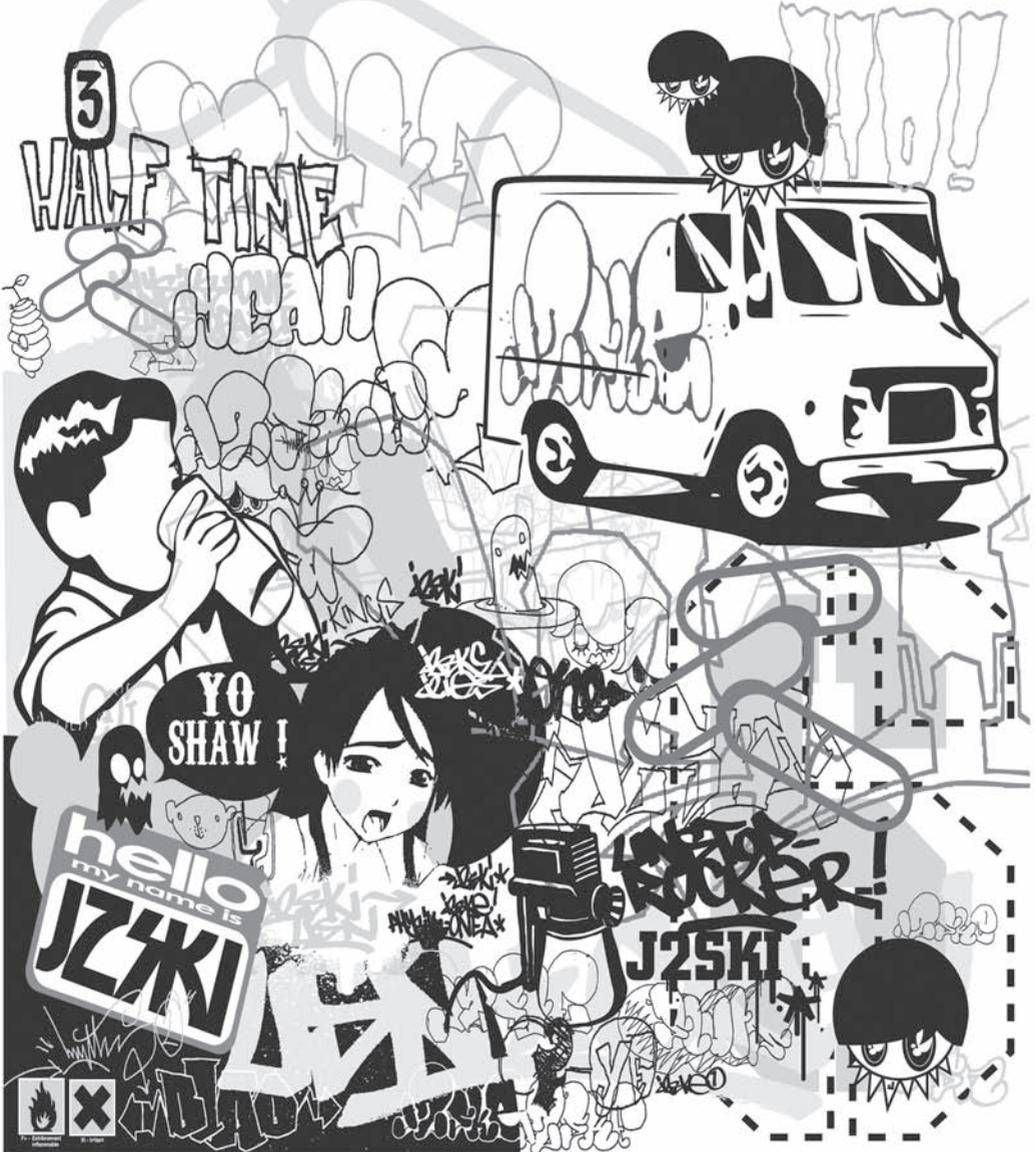




VITAMIN

MARCH/APRIL 2007
Twelfth Episode

free





VITAMIN

EPISODE TWELVE - MARCH/APRIL 2007

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VITAMIN

MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF VISUAL CULTURE

EPISODE TWELVE MARCH/APRIL 2007



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The Candy Isles

Do you like chocolate-coated aniseed rings? Maybe they are old-fashioned. They're still as scrumptious as ever though. Are they chocolates or lollies? I can't decide. You can get some nice ones at David Jones from the Food Hall. You could pick up some watermelon-flavoured jellybeans while you are there.

I don't know where sugary treats intersect with culture, but they certainly form a large part of the visual experience for anyone who visits a supermarket – they have their own aisle, and they also decorate the checkouts and other parts of the store. The Coles at Welland has racks of chocolates above the meat trays. Who knows why?

My wife says I crave confection so much now because I didn't have enough when I was young. Or was that 'affection'? Children, as you know, almost universally love lollies. You wouldn't argue with the wisdom of a child, would you? If it was good once, it probably still is. If there were more lollies in the world, babies wouldn't cry, and adults wouldn't need to reminisce. Right?



*White chocolate heart art,
by the author, 1989*

Bearing in mind that commercial food is made to a price; honest-to-goodness candy is the only sort to have. Better to pay a little more and get what you actually want. Hague's chocolate-covered caramels, at the Beehive Corner, are worth every cent. Get some today.

Stay away from anything labeled "lite" or "lo-fat". Don't even consider calorie-free chemical sweeteners – that's just Frankenfood invented by Evil Food Technologists to steal your soul away. If you're not prepared to do real sugar





then maybe you should just stick with cigarettes. Yeah, and don't believe those dentists who claim that your teeth will drop out: Your teeth will drop out anyway, given enough time. Better to use those chompers while you still have them, for crunching "Five Flavour" Life Savers.



*Cadbury Chocolate Bars, 1991
Ultra-rare, and in my collection*

You can make your own lollies and chocolates. I've got a recipe here somewhere (you know, "half a pound of kindness"). I've only ever made them for art purposes, sometimes as the art object itself and sometimes as a kind of artifact. It was nice to think of people eating my art. There should be more edible art, don't you think?

Did you know I used to collect confectionery? Strange hobby, huh? My delicious collection includes complete display boxes of various lollies, chocolates, and even bubblegum - all related to The Simpsons TV show. Imagine what a 16-year-old Simpsons chocolate would taste like. Mmmm ... rare and collectible.

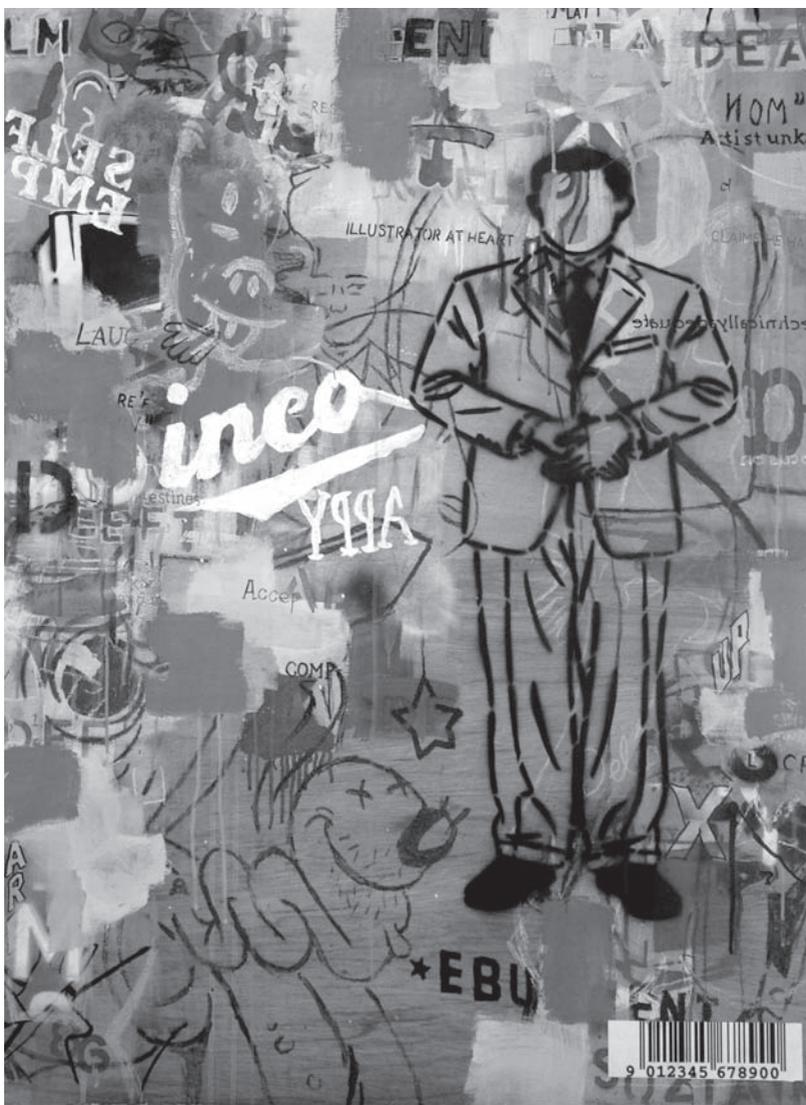
I gave up lollies and chocolates for a while, thinking they might be bad for my health. But it's no use worrying about things like that. I'm back on Mentos' grape-flavoured "Chewy Dragees" and my health has improved 115%.

You've probably been thinking that the sourness in your mouth is life, but that's just the way you've learned to taste. It is time to embrace sweetness. Bitterness is over.



Shaw Hendry





Logan Macdonald

Fracture

Mixed Media on Plywood, 120 x 91.5cm, 2006

Vitamin Episode Twelve - 4





Elegy for the City

Corporate attire, impassive faces,
Translucent skin, diaphanous gazes:
the spectres of the departed
linger like traces,
enrobing the metropolis
and its genteel spaces.

In the city that Rushdie
frequented, then defamed
native cadences,
phrases and names
arise like Abraham from the flames —
echoing across the famished plains.

Some years past,
in Light's idyllic town
a mighty bank collapsed
an eccentric doctor drowned.
Certain words ring
reverberate and resound:
Beaumont. Truro. Kelvin. Snowtown.

Stroll with me Banquo
through the city that boasts
a cosmopolitan mall
a refurbished coast.
Raise your hallowed wine glass
advance an ambivalent toast
to the Festival State capital
bedevilled by ghosts

Varga Hosseini



All Art Needs is Love

Love. Love. Love. The smell of love is in the air, particularly at this Valentine time of year. Everywhere we turn, songs are proclaiming lusty love, television dramas play out happily dysfunctional ways of loving, and top ten novels are exploring jealousy fuelled murder plots or the overwhelming sensation of falling in love for the first time.

Love, as in the complicated array of relationships between partners (or more) is cultural fuel. And we just don't seem to tire of a good love story. Where would songwriters, novelists, playwrights, actors

or musicians be without the chemical connection we call being 'in love'? One look at the mainstream music industry reveals that it is largely founded on the desire to explore love and relationships through sound. However, if we imagine Australian culture as a pie chart, love appears all around... except... perhaps... in that slender slice we know as contemporary art. If love is the main ingredient in so many other cultural slices of pie, why is it not so for art?

In some ways current art does have its fingers in the love pie. Just for an artist to follow and develop their practice requires a high



Vintage Valentine's Card

level of infatuation with the subject and its explorations, amidst the other life matters of paying bills and eating. This sticking power reveals a certain kind of love, but not the couple type love.

When looking back over art history, perhaps the non-commissioned portrait is the most obvious expression of one's love, well lust at the very least. Most obviously, think of the portraits done by Picasso of his many female conquests. Yes, they definitely could be considered overt gestures of love and desire, expressed through his drawn and painted observations of their bodies and form. But what of the mingling of art and love today?

My hypothesis is that love is too much for art today. It can be perceived as too soppy, too obvious, too mainstream, too attached, too needy, too personal, too predictable, too overdone or too unfashionable. And even though it is difficult to come up with a concrete list of artists who delve into love, I like to believe that all artists are making reference to their personal relationships in one way or another, whether they know it or not. But in the effort of

	Name	Date Added	Time	Artist	Album	Genre	My Rating	Play Count	Last Played
1	Siripsearch	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:29	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...	Other		19	27/08/06 13:38
2	Middle Crisis	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:23	Faith No More	Angel Dust	Rock/Pop		16	27/08/06 11:45
3	Falling To Pieces	25/04/06 1:18 PM	5:12	Faith No More	The Real Thing			15	30/08/06 11:01
4	Last Cup of Sorrow	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:08	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			15	27/08/06 11:49
5	Last Cup of Sorrow	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:10	Faith No More	Album Of The Year			12	29/08/06 9:52 AM
6	From Out of Nowhere	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:20	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			12	28/07/06 9:50 AM
7	Middle Crisis	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:17	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			12	25/08/06 13:37 PM
8	Digging the Grave	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:03	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			11	12/07/06 11:21
9	Evidence	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:52	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			11	5/09/06 10:05 AM
10	Evidence	24/04/06 1:18 PM	4:52	Faith No More	King For A Day, Fo...	Alternative		9	18/05/06 5:12 PM
11	Last Cup Of Sorrow	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:09	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			9	7/07/06 4:55 PM
12	From Out Of Nowhere	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:22	Faith No More	The Real Thing			7	28/08/06 10:50
13	I Started A Joke	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:00	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			7	15/08/06 2:33 PM
14	Middle Crisis	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:26	Faith No More	Fool's Small Victo...	Blues		7	1/06/06 11:47 AM
15	Evidence	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:52	Faith No More	King For A Day, Fo...	Alternative		6	2/09/06 1:00 PM
16	Easy	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:05	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...	Alternative		6	24/05/06 11:25
17	Falling To Pieces	25/04/06 1:18 PM	5:12	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			6	24/07/06 6:22 PM
18	Siripsearch	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:29	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			5	28/08/06 6:28 PM
19	Digging the Grave	30/04/06 10:37 AM	3:04	Faith No More	Hi Machine 9	Unclassifi...		4	24/05/06 12:48 E
20	Digging the grave	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:03	Faith No More	King For A Day, Fo...			4	5/09/06 4:58 PM
21	Easy	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:07	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			4	12/07/06 6:46 PM
22	Evidence	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:54	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			4	27/07/06 2:33 PM
23	I'm Easy	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:06	Faith No More	Fool's Small Victo...	Blues		4	15/08/06 12:58
24	Siripsearch	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:28	Faith No More	Album Of The Year			3	9/06/06 11:45 AM
25	Ashes To Ashes	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:35	Faith No More	Album Of The Year	Alternative		3	2/08/06 4:23 PM
26	A Small Victory	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:57	Faith No More	Angel Dust	Rock/Pop		3	10/08/06 13:05
27	King for a day	25/04/06 1:18 PM	6:33	Faith No More	King For A Day, Fo...	Alternative		3	15/08/06 2:23 PM
28	From Out Of Nowhere	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:24	Faith No More	Live At The Brocton...	Alternative		3	6/09/06 3:55 PM
29	Middle Crisis	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:16	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			3	15/08/06 10:43
30	Digging the Grave	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:04	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			3	2/09/06 1:07 PM
31	Epic	21/11/05 11:50 AM	4:53	Faith No More	Epic	Metal		2	26/05/06 9:33 PM
32	Epic	21/11/05 11:47 AM	4:53	Faith No More	The Real Thing			2	28/07/06 10:31
33	Epic	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:50	Faith No More	The Real Thing			2	21/07/06 11:43
34	Epic	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:51	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...	Alternative		2	24/08/06 10:34
35	Falling To Pieces	25/04/06 1:18 PM	5:12	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...	Alternative		2	27/04/06 10:54
36	The World Is Yours	25/04/06 1:18 PM	5:49	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...	Alternative		2	15/05/06 9:58 AM
37	Epic	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:53	Faith No More	Who Cares A Lot (L...			2	3/08/06 4:20 PM
38	A Small Victory	25/04/06 1:18 PM	4:20	Faith No More	Fool's Small Victo...	Blues		2	15/05/06 3:11 AM
39	Naked In Front Of The Computer	25/04/06 1:18 PM	3:07	Faith No More	Album Of The Year			1	25/04/06 1:02 PM

ilovetunes



being ‘cool’ and detached, have we stopped communicating the warmth of human interactions?

To finish this article I am going to take inspiration from Top Gear (minus the interest in cars) by setting myself a challenge. Rather than gathering more research (I do realise this is a proven method for a reason) I will race to the end of this article using only love song titles from my iTunes in an attempt to give fuel to my argument. Will it make any sense, probably not, but here goes:



Fueled by love

*Oh honey I don't believe in love.
 Frenchy I'm faking [as] everyday
 I love you less and less. I don't
 love anyone, just passing through
 beyond the sunrise a little more.
 Maybe not, the state I am in I
 could be dreaming [of] Hindley
 street, superstition [and that I]
 can't get enough reality TV. Call
 me anytime [and] free gamble
 everything for love expectations.
 [At] times like these don't panic
 [about] missing accidental babies*

*[and their] embryonic journey. Do your thing my best friend [and] whisper I
 want your love fool. I'm so glad love is [a] strange monster. Don't change lady,
 it's you on the radio today. Let go [of] what you are [and] take me back to your
 house [for a] love affair [in] tiny paintings.*

42 love songs, and art even made an appearance. Love is a complex world which awaits us art lovers.

Sera Waters





Leslie Matthews

My Splendors, are Menagerie

6 neckpieces, sterling silver & silk cord, 2006





Localism – Art in Public Spaces

the art of Hossein & Angela Valamanesh

I have lived on the lip of insanity
Wanting to know the reasons,
Knocking on the door. It opens.
I've been knocking from the inside.

*Sufi poet Rumi inscribed on the work 'Knocking from the inside'
at the back of the Convention Centre Adelaide*

One of my favourite Adelaide artists is Hossein Valamanesh. Although I had seen examples of his work over the years, it was his major exhibition in 2001 at the Art Gallery of South Australia, "Hossein Valamanesh, A Survey" that gave me a better appreciation of the wonderful range of his work. As a lover of this artist's work, I have taken it upon myself to curate an imaginary exhibition that is so up to the minute that no one yet knows about it. This article is the first public revelation of its existence, although the works are freely available for viewing around Adelaide.

My imaginary exhibition covers a wide range of Valamanesh's work from one of the earliest pieces of his public art to the most recent. To see the first piece you will need to get to North Terrace outside the Museum of South Australia. There you will see the most recent piece; a most beautiful work entitled '14 Pieces' by Hossein Valamanesh together with his wife Angela Valamanesh. The South Australian Government and the Adelaide City Council commissioned this work as part of the North Terrace upgrade. The work at first sight consists of 14 large pieces of black and red granite quarried in South Australia with water running over the surface. They are of themselves very beautiful and tranquil pieces, reminiscent of stone water features found in Japanese gardens. The work adds interest to North Terrace, much improved by the upgrading that has taken place. A closer look at the work reveals the pieces to be in the shape of vertebrae. The link with the museum then becomes apparent. The work was inspired by one of the museum's most famous exhibits; the opalised vertebrae of an Ichthyosaur - also





worth a visit while you are in the vicinity.

The next work you should see requires a bit of walking. Head west along North Terrace until you reach the Hyatt Hotel. Make your way down the western side of the Hyatt in the walkway between the old convention centre building and the hotel until you reach the Torrens River side of the building. In arriving at this next piece, there is a sense of the archaeologist discovering the ruins of an ancient civilization rather than observing a contemporary work of art. It is rewarding to take some time to explore this work.

The first appearance of what is an extensive piece covering a considerable space is a granite sphere cut in half, lying on the flat side. A black trail of rectangular pavers leads to the main part of the work, which is called 'Knocking from the inside'. The work is a complex piece consisting of sandstone columns and staircase on a clearly identified area giving the appearance of an archaeological dig in which fragments of buildings have been uncovered. The site has the appearance of deserted ruins, as if a civilisation had fled from the place like the ruins at Pompeii. At the top of the stairs



14 Pieces





Knocking from the Inside

is the wooden representation of a figure that has been cut in half with the two pieces slightly offset. This figure appears frequently in Valamanesh's work, representing an 'everyman' icon. The figure appears again in the work but as the obverse of the standing figure, it is the empty space that remains in a door-like structure that gives the appearance that the figure has escaped from. It is the shadow of the standing figure. At a distance from these 'ruins' is the other half of the granite sphere this time turned over with its flat side on top and chiselled into the rock, as if the voice of God speaking, is the amazing quote from the poet Rumi (see above).

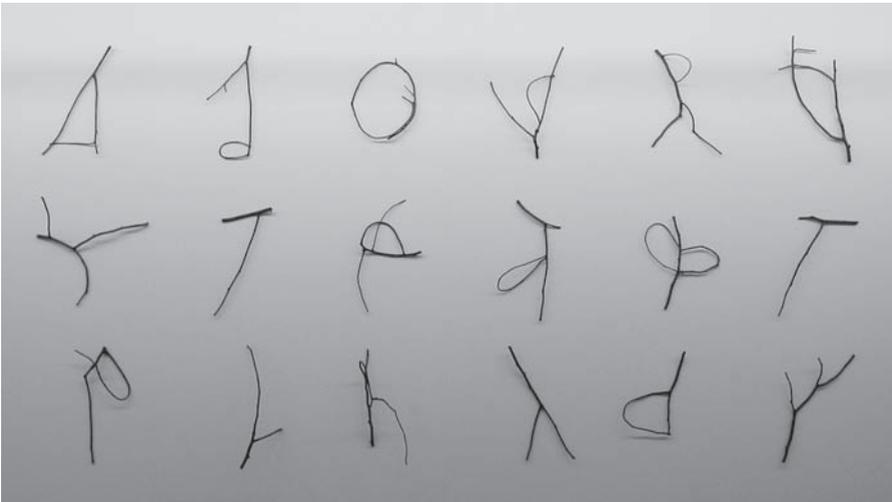
Once you have spent time with this work, it is time to head towards the last piece in this small but special exhibition. Return to North Terrace and continue heading west until you arrive at the University of South Australia. Make your way to the third floor of the Kaurna building and there you will see the third work 'Forest of Words' (2000). This is another joint work of Hossein and Angela Valamanesh.

From a distance this looks like quite a delicate piece consisting





of small pepper tree branches manipulated so that they have a vague appearance of letters forming words. On closer inspection, what seems delicate is quite robust, as the branches have been cast in bronze. The work, mounted on a thick MDF sheet, would be particularly heavy, but from a distance has a fragile appearance. No matter how long you look at the 18 'letters' that comprise the piece, you can only attempt an interpretation. As in the last work at the Convention Centre, the viewer feels like archaeologist trying to interpret hieroglyphs of another civilization. Perhaps it is Valamanesh's experience of moving between cultures and the struggle for understanding that inspires this and other work.



Forest of Words

Valamanesh's work over the years touches so many themes and ideas and the range of materials he uses is endless; sticks, leather, sand, material, stones, pine needles, candles, sound and even medicinal tablets. Rather than seeming unrelated, his work is readily identifiable and consistent so the range of his work fits together to tell the unique story of his view of reality. His work is both beautiful to look at and layered with meaning. He has the capacity to use the artefacts of the everyday and give them transcendental meaning. I hope you find the experience of these works as rewarding as I do.

John Hewson





I Loved You Before You Were Cool

Romi Graham interviews amira.h.

amira h. is an art student. Perhaps I should say “emerging artist” to sound more professional ... anyway, it seems to suit her to be an art student because she’s political and a feminist and biding her time before her family forces her to get married. These are the things most of her art is about, coincidentally. Lot’s of her work requires the viewer to respond to a statement via mobile phone text message, so I asked if she’d like a taste of her own medicine, and do an interview with me using that technology. Unfortunately, she loved the idea and I wasted all my credit on her...

r.g. Are you obsessed with marriage? Wedding paraphernalia features in a lot of your work.

a.h. I’m obsessed with using the theme of marriage in my work! In my life, marriage features a lot because my religion states that women must be married. I’ve chosen to go against this ruling, but there’s still a lot of guilt there - I’m letting down my parents, society, God.

I was at a relative’s place a couple of weeks ago and she was trying to hook me up with a 37 year old engineer [amira is 23 years old]. Her pitch to me was that he was rich, and love only lasts two minutes anyway.

r.g. Why did you turn that down?! Are you really a romantic?

a.h. Hahaha. Yes, part of me is a romantic... but part of me is also stubborn and refuses to ever submit! I keep wondering, if I didn’t have the pressure to marry, would I then set out to find a husband?



Unfinished performance in three parts





r.g. What artists are you looking at at the moment?

a.h. Damn, I don't want to sound boring, but I'm always discovering new things about Yoko Ono. And keep dreaming about Vito Acconci. Oh, and On Kawara.

r.g. Dreaming about Vito! Wet dreams?



"Because 2", video still 2006

a.h. Ha!!! Not quite.

Although I have been fantasizing about picking random people out and following them. And masturbating while screaming "Oh, Vito!" I think he'd like that. I don't know why, but he has been in my subconscious for a while now. Half of me hates Vito, the other half wants to name my child after him.

r.g. Your text-based work has a similar aesthetic to conceptual art, is that another obsession?

a.h. Indeed. Since the beginning of first year at art school I've been obsessed with conceptual art. At this moment I love everything about it, but I think I'll get sick of it one day. When that day comes I will become a painter. Or a housewife.

r.g. Are you going to be like Justin Timberlake ("I'm bringin' concept back!")?

a.h. Heh, I'd probably be more like Michael Jackson trying to make a comeback - get exiled to Bahrain, try to get buff and get Will.I.Am from the Black Eyed Peas to produce my next work. Heal The World as a performance art piece?

r.g. At least you'd have Macaulay Culkin on side!

If you like being told what to do, you'll love amira's work. She's not famous (yet) but luckily, like everyone, she has a Myspace:
www.myspace.com/amiraartwhore

Romi Graham



Sweet Monsters

the art of Dianne Longley

For the past few years, Adelaide artist Dianne Longley has been producing intriguing works combining encaustic and pokerwork on wooden panels. I first saw these works in “Sweet Monsters and ScallyWags”, at Adelaide Central Gallery in November 2006. At the time, I was a fourth year student ACSA, and Longley’s work, hung right outside my studio, provided a welcome respite in those final stressful months. Now, sometime later, Longley’s images remain with me, and as I settle at my laptop with my own Sweet Monster sitting next to me (10kg of orange feline [dis]grace,) I find I have rather a lot to write.

As always, the host of characters in Longley’s work provide much interest and speculation. The creatures in her latest instalment are at once familiar and unfamiliar: there are sphinxes, Medieval-esque hooded characters, and in one work, a monster with a face



Elemental Negotiations, pokerwork & mixed media on hoop ply, 2006

bearing an uncanny resemblance to one of the players in Maurice Sendak’s children’s classic, *Where the Wild Things Are*. Longley’s (beautifully designed) website also informs me that she has borrowed from 16th century drawings by François Rabelais and Conrad Gesner, and contemporary Japanese ‘kawaii’, pop-imagination figures and toys. Longley has chosen well, the original beasts are all in sympathy with Longley’s own drawing aesthetic, and the 16th Century European imagery somehow sits very comfortably with contemporary Japanese



pop characters. Through a long process of editing, refinement and reinvention, Longley has synthesised her host of players into new social structures and foreign landscapes.

Longley's new works are a mix of digital technology and the patiently hand crafted. Adept at combining a multitude of diverse techniques: she seems as at ease hand-planing wood for frames as she is fine-tuning her imagery in Photoshop. How is it that Longley can combine lazertran decals, encaustic, wood veneer, wax sticks and pokerwork to such effect? The results are inviting, fascinating, and surprising.



Celebration of Small Victories: a cautionary tale, pokerwork & mixed media on hoop ply, 2006

The recent works are a pleasure to look at – harmonious colour fields, mesmerising pokerwork, and creatures with enough eccentricities and flaws that the work escapes mere prettiness. For me, the meaning of these works revealed themselves gradually, sometimes obscured or distracted by little technical triumphs or puzzles. This isn't a bad thing – if the complete intended meaning of a work of art immediately hits you between the eyes, there is very little left to sustain repeat visits.

Although inhabited by otherworldly creatures, Longley's work is largely about the nature of human interactions, relationships, and human nature itself. It can be no mistake that Longley references Rabelais, known for his humanist, satirical and bawdy writings: the creatures in Longley's work are engaged in both serious and





humorous interchanges – surely a character named ‘Velour Fancy Pants’ deserves a giggle or two.

Longley follows in that long artistic tradition of depicting creatures that are half-human half-beast, and it is useful to speculate what this says about our own views on the human species. Do we recognise beastly traits in humans, or human traits in beasts? And

perhaps extra appendages such as wings, trunks, scales and horns are a device to visually express internal emotions and/or personality quirks.



Salutation, pokerwork & mixed media on Japanese ply, 2006

Longley’s art certainly makes us reassess our prejudices about the ugly and the beautiful, and the good and the bad. In fairy tale land, virtuous characters are always breathtakingly beautiful, and the evil are hideously ugly (think Cinderella and the Ugly Step Sisters.) However, in these works, traditionally ‘ugly’ monsters are seen carrying out good deeds; supporting their young on their backs, or having a kind word to

a neglected creature in the corner. Perhaps they are not all so monstrous after all. Conversely, Pikachu, the Pokemon character, (who makes repeat appearances throughout this body of work) is not as ‘cute’ as I had always perceived him to be. When I assess him in the same objective manner I have used for the other monsters, I realise that, with eyes the size of cricket balls, and ears sharpened to points that could gore you through the heart, he is no less threatening than any of the other traditionally ‘ugly’ creatures. In Longley’s world it pays to tread cautiously around the too beautiful, or too flashy, and to give the monsters a second chance.

Deborah Prior





Liz Williams

Red Shoes

Stoneware clay, acrylic colour, 2006

Vitamin Episode Twelve - 19





Unfinished Business: Sites and Spectres in the Art of Darren Siwes

For some time now, the photographic practice of Darren Siwes has been haunted by ghosts. Spectres abound in the Adelaide-based artist's tense, austere and nocturnal photographs of South Australian locales and, by extension, those he made in the United Kingdom.

It is the former body of work which interests me here. In a series of images produced from 1998 to 2001, the ghostly figure of the artist inhabits some of Adelaide's most emblematic sites and institutions: among them, Rundle Mall, the Festival Theatre, the Lutheran church and the War Memorial. In most of these culturally and historically significant contexts, Siwes' conservatively-attired spectre stands firm, exudes confidence and confronts our gaze.

"I am moving" (1998) takes Adelaide's bustling Central Business District as its focal point. Rundle Mall is currently paraded on our television screens as the quintessential hub of fashion, entertainment and cuisine: a trendy, cosmopolitan, consumers paradise "with 800 shops" perfectly suited for spendthrift Russian beauties with portly, nostalgic and cantankerous husbands. In "I am moving" Siwes positions himself at Beehive Corner, the gateway to this buzzing, frenetic, neon Parthenon of consumerism.

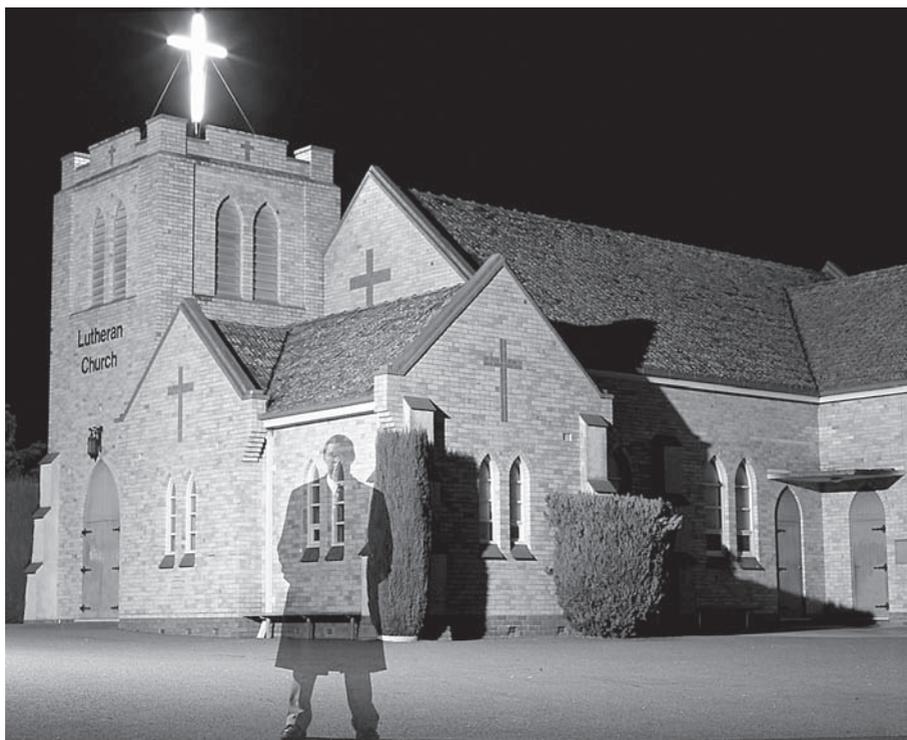
Alternatively, in "Church 1" (2000), Siwes' phantom frequents the grounds of the imposing Woodside Lutheran Church. In a city renowned for its impressive quantity and variety of churches, the image is perhaps a poignant metaphor for the complex relationship between the Lutheran church and Indigenous peoples in South Australia. Conversely, in "Still My Worli Takanna" (Still My Spacious House) (2001), the artist's apparition surfaces on the plaza of the Festival Theatre and almost dissolves into the shadows cast by the sharp, angular forms of its iconic architecture. The choice of context here is telling given the Indigenous history of this site and the egalitarian rationale behind the construction of the Festival Theatre; namely, as a venue for all Australians.





What are we to make of such hauntings? The ghost has become a fixture of contemporary cinema and television where it is often an imperceptible entity that is marooned on our world and burdened with unfinished business. This provides a valuable point of entry to Siwes' imagery, particularly when one takes into account the artist's Indigenous heritage — Siwes is of Ngalkban and Dutch descent — and his selective choice of settings. South Australian arts writers such as Christine Nicholls have interpreted the ghostly figure of the artist in these milieux as a signifier for “the pre- and still existing Indigenous presence”.

The city of Adelaide was established on Kurna land, and one particular site which has powerful cultural and spiritual resonance for Kurna people is the Festival Theatre and its surrounding



Church 1





sculptural plaza. This recently refurbished environment was an important ceremonial site for the Kurna people. Bearing this in mind, we can interpret the phantasmic figure of the artist in “Still My Worli Takanna” as a symbol of Kurna people’s prior occupation of, and ongoing connection with, this site and its perennial status as Kurna land.

Technically, the ghosting effect in Siwes’ images is the result of timed exposures, during which the artist exits his carefully staged mise en scene to create his trademark stylistic device. Whilst the spectre is an arresting and loaded visual effect for Siwes, it also touches on the peculiar condition of his chosen medium. Spectrality has become synonymous with the composite nature of photography and, by extension, the schizoid and enigmatic character of photographs.



I am standing still

It is widely construed that our cameras furnish us with images which confound rigid distinctions between life and death, the corporeal and the ethereal, the actual and the virtual, and, most notably, presence and absence. Peter Conrad, that most entertaining and irreverent of cultural critics, once remarked that since “film captures light, which it traps inside the dark-room of the camera, it inevitably waylays spectres, fragments of the spectrum”.

And the spectre is a sublime anomaly; singular, unnameable, disruptive, formidable. Neither alive nor dead — or, conversely, both alive and dead — the ghost defies the binary oppositions and





essentialist notions of Being that have historically sustained Western ontology and philosophy. It is not surprising, then, that the spectre has spooked certain strands of poststructuralist thought, namely deconstruction.

In Jacques Derrida's writings, most notably "Spectres of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International" (1994), the spectre powerfully conjures the double-bind that motivates deconstruction; namely a fidelity to tradition, history and the memory of the departed, and, at the same time, an openness towards the unforeseen and a promise and commitment to the generations to come.

It is this conception of temporality and responsibility that is dramatically visualised in Siwes' art, and, indeed, constitutes the ethical and political urgency of his undertaking. As John Kean astutely observes, "transparency for Siwes conveys inter-temporality, the capacity to be standing on the concrete Plaza



Still my worli takanna

in 1998, but also to represent an Indigenous presence at the site for millennia". The spectres that infiltrate Siwes' engrossing photographs effectively suggest that the relationship to place and the question of justice requires that we remain sensitive to the ghosts of history and also assume responsibility for the ghosts of the future.

Varga Hosseini





YOU NEVER KNOW A GOOD THING UNTIL YOU LOSE IT

Some thoughts on stuff I never appreciated till it was gone: Some convenient generalizations that help make the world more boring.

Having the joys of my arthritis getting worse, it's pretty easy to miss stuff like walking when I want for as long as I want. So I can't run around town putting on shoestring budget shows and pasting up unsolicited public art.

Now I'm in Sydney looking for some desk jockey job, so I can crawl in and out of bed and move less often. Adelaide has lots going for it - you can get around on free buses. The pigeons are more attractive. You can guzzle an ounce of greens a month without a hunting some dude too hard.

One thing I really miss is you can look in any cafe or street press and find out what art stuff is on. Over here I have seen bugger all art publicity, except a magazine subscription form. In Adelaide Art is fully integrated into pop culture, up there with movies, music, eating out and other stuff to do (if you look at street press and flyers). Plenty of international pop culture mags feature art ahead of pop music even. Sadly Sydney street press seems just about just music, and maybe film and computer games. Art is on the cultural backburner. I shouldn't be surprised that something I like gets classed into obscurity by the culture business.

Book and music retailers have increasingly used genres to sort their wares. So in bookshops we have true crime, science fiction, romance, horror etc. Music shops we have punk, ska, metal, country, indy, alternative, progressive etc. The biggest problem with this is if something does not conveniently fit a marketing genre it could miss out on even being published, let alone placed on a shelf along side other works in some section. Some of the more interesting works combine or break genre conventions. You will know what I mean if you've asked to find a title in a music store and some slack jawed music store clerk asks: "what kind of music is that".

It's a bit tragic to think that ground breaking and original work gets marginalized by genre generalizations. This happens with visual arts more than you might think. Not only do we have many mediums with their own conventions and prejudices - it gets worse.





100 years ago, if you studied art, you could do anything from commercial design, to theatre stage design, illustration to fine art. Now this has been fragmented into dozens of specializations to the point where visual communications students are taught to react with anger if they are called artists. Where the conceptual art scene has no idea of what portrait or landscape artists do or where they exhibit. If some student had a flair for portraiture, they might suffer in a school based on conceptual work. I'm not sure if a teacher in such a school could even recommend where such a student should exhibit. I worked in a comic studio for twenty years with an internationally published and award winning artist (or should I say illustrator). When I showed his work to drawing teachers, it would make their heads rotate in anger. "Anyone could draw like that, it's just practice". I guess sketchy pictures of reclining nudes with perhaps a dirty smear of colour requires some other quality than a lifetime's hard work.

The sad result of this is that artists are all too keen to separate themselves from each other. I can't see a united artists front for better pay happening (or to stop administrators gobbling our money). Art makers have erected barriers which could allow them to exchange some amazing skills. The general public are incapable of distinguishing the schemata of



art trades which have grown over the last hundred years. Time can place the most banal commercial work in some gallery eventually. Too much obsession with our own niche conventions only makes cliches. I'd like to think that all artists have something in common. We ought recognise each other's worth while we are still alive rather than suffer the petty tyrannies of our clique distinctions. At the end of the day skill is the only source of authority I respect.

Chris Tamm

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Hans Kreiner: Magenta Ducks

Vitamin [Online] Gallery

 <http://www.vitaminarchive.com>

Log on to the Vitamin Archive - www.vitaminarchive.com - to view Vitamin [Online] Gallery's latest contribution to the World Wide Web: Hans Kreiner's new exhibition, "Magenta Ducks".

Those familiar with Hans Kreiner's oeuvre will know his precise cut-outs in paper, plastic, and other materials, including those exhibited last year, in "Smogflowers", at The Park's Elbow Room. Many would also recall his performance art, and his video and film work screened in various SALA Festival "Moving Images" programs.

Much of Kreiner's work has a pop feel - almost anti-theory in its lack of self-consciousness. But the works are always full of meaning, not easily translated into words, like real art always is, and have the stamp of an artist continuing to develop his own visual language within an individual approach to creativity.



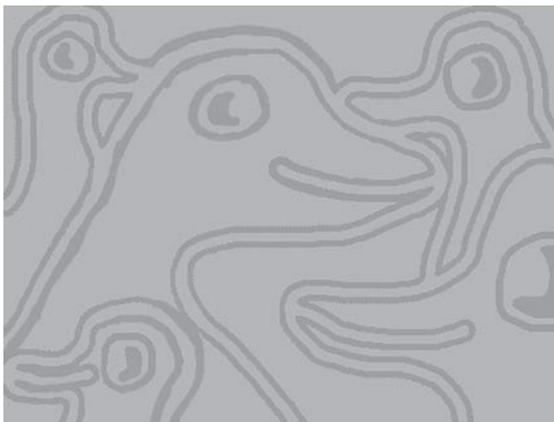
Moby

create a sense of pathos that can sometimes be missed in more labour-intensive work.

In "Magenta Ducks", the artist has used his computer mouse as a drawing tool, and digital media to draft his imagery in a looser, more spontaneous way than his better-known intricate scalpel work. His childlike drawings, ideas reduced to a colourful line, and the bright colours used,



The connections with previous work are still there in the line based graphics and colour schemes of the new computer drawings/paintings. There is a sense of drama in the computer works, along with an underlying sense of the absurd: We discover happy families, happy ducks, a mythical whale in a marina, a psychedelic deer in search of Nirvana and other digital adventures in imagery.



Magenta Ducks

“Magenta Ducks” was the result of seeing the benefit of things that could be produced in low res files and then be sent out, or downloaded, via the

Ethernet. Having been created in digital space, it is fitting that the new works will have their first outing, not as printouts of variable sizes, but as compressed digital documents, ‘thumbnails’. Single-click or double-click; Hans Kreiner is showing, on a computer screen near you.



Shangri-La

Shaw Hendry



Episode Eleven Launch - 17/12/2006 Central Studios, Grote St, Adelaide

Launch photos by Kristen Bence & Cheryl Hutchens



VITAMIN EP. 11

has landed

Come along for not one, but two Vitamin celebrations:

- the launch of Vitamin Episode 11 featuring your quarterly dose of articles, interviews and artist's pages from local practitioners
- as well as special insert by Julia Robinson.
- the unveiling of "Hold Fast" - the latest Vitamin on-line exhibition curated by Ray Asado

• 2-4pm, Sunday Dec 17 2006
• Central Studios
109-119 Grote St Adelaide
please ring the front doorbell upon arrival



Insert Art, Julia Robinson





Vitamin Episode Twelve - 29



