



VITAMIN

MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF VISUAL CULTURE

EPISODE TWO AUGUST/SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2004



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The Wide World Awaits

If the earth were the size of an apple, then the atmosphere of the earth would be as thick as the skin on that apple. On that scale, to continue the analogy, a human being wouldn't be any larger than an atom (10^{-8} cm).

The earth, as you know, is a small planet orbiting a star on the edge of a galaxy we call "The Milky Way". I like Milky Ways; they are so creamy and chocolaty. The average Milky Way contains about a hundred and eleven calories.

The average galaxy contains about a hundred thousand million stars. It is estimated that there are over a hundred thousand million galaxies. There are significantly more stars in the universe than there are grains of sand on planet earth.

Some stars, perhaps most, have planetary systems. On some of these planets, there is likely to be life. Life is probably comparatively rare in the universe - but it is not as rare as is *intelligent* life.

.....

Contributions are welcome.



The Milky Way: may contain 111 calories

.....

With so many of today's artists (and yesterday's) wanting to be international, I hope you can forgive me for wanting to be *local*. There are worse things happening at sea, you know. I'm here, and I would be happy for you to be here too, for even happiness loves company.

I have printed a map on the next page so that you can find where we are.

Being international means subscribing to a whole stack of imperatives which have little or nothing to do with being a creative person in Sunny South Australia. When I was younger, I thought that artists broke rules, but I've since discovered that imperatives are, more often than not, *observed* - pity the poor bugger who has a paddle set aside for their own canoe.



Trends come and go in the arts, just as they do in popular culture. You never can tell what's coming up next. Right?

Overseas art movements naturally impact upon local artists – artists will always engage with new ideas - but it may lack dignity to base your art object on an imported magazine.

....

Some people say that art, the practice of art, is a game. Still others describe it as a kind of obstacle race. What do you think?

Are there rules for the art game/race? What kind of prize might I get if I win, or even if I manage to *finish*? Drop me a line if you know. My email address is on the inside cover of this publication.

It may be more useful, and less painful, to view art simply as a human activity.

There are those folk that like to participate in activities and those that prefer to watch. As long as life may seem, it is really helpful if you know which one of these types you are.

Vitamin is an open opportunity for South Australian arts practitioners to engage with the *world* in which they live. The main thrust of this zine is visual *arts*, but there is room for all kinds of visual culture subjects and views. The more variety the better.

Our voice, here in South Australia, our experience of the world, is as valid as any other in human existence.

We are *here*.

The clock is ticking.

The wide world awaits.

Shaw Hendry





FAKE ROCKS

Fake rocks in art are much more than rocks pretending to be ‘real’. Real rocks are hard and heavy things that take forever to form. There is a feeling of truth about them and a sense that history has been trapped between their rocky layers. Fake rocks however, and I’ve noticed a few in contemporary art of late, are built of layers of synthetic stuffs, are light and hollow, easy to move and sit well in our fast-paced fictional-reality world. They cleverly remind me of a fast-food meal or sweetener: replicas of the real thing, minus the natural goodness, but maybe with a bonus chemical buzz or theme song.



In contemporary art, the idea of the ‘rock’ and what it symbolises has shifted. The use of rocks or stones in Land or Earth art of the 70s and 80s differs considerably from the use of the same materials or ideas in current contemporary art. Robert Smithson’s *Spiral Jetty* (1970), Richard Long’s circular arrangements or even *Everybody just get stones* by Noel Sherridan (where the floor of the Colonial section of AGSA was overlaid with tonnes of stones – it was *controversial* at the time) used ‘real’ rocks and stones often referring to environmental concerns. Although we still care about the environment, now it is a lot more fun to mimic rocks to highlight the artifice and fabricated-ness of culture, than to lug actual rocks into gallery spaces.



In Louise Weaver’s winning installation for the Cicely and Colin Rigg Contemporary Design Award at the NGV, *Taking a Chance on Love*, she links her faux environment together with a fake rock. This installation; a fantasy land on a carpeted island with romaing animals fashioned in dissembled Issey Miyake designs, crochet, felt skins and the occasional sequin... is an empty shell of the real thing. The animals, though they are in fashion, reek of artifice and that culture-gone-too-far feeling. To give this installation authenticity of the ‘real’,



that is the faked real (being real isn't the intention here), she completes it with a fake rock. Although not a major element in the installation, it is this fake rock that is integral to creating a fictional reality through its reference to 'nature'.

Of the Adelaide fake rocks I've seen, Sarah crowEST's *Hard Things*, exhibited at Underdale's N-Gallery for the Constance Gordon-Johnson Sculpture and Installation prize are multicoloured giant pebble-shapes that resemble sleeping creatures and are not hard at all. Not exactly or entirely rocks, their painted felted-ness mimic something more like smoothed but still furry giant pebbles. Likewise, Nicholas Folland, in his past exhibition *Artificial Worlds* at Greenaway Art Gallery, used boulder type rocks, real not fake, but made artificial through their continual heating to embody them with an unnatural warmth.

The intentional fiction of Chris Flanagan's fake rocks in *Jordy* at the Contemporary Art Centre's Project Space earlier this year cleverly mirrored the Disney construction of suicidal lemmings in the 1952 documentary 'White Wilderness'. Of *Jordy*, the fake rocks featured were; a cliff, iced up and ready for a projection of lemmings to tumble



Chris Flanagan, *Jordy's Theme*, mixed media, 2004



Chris Flanagan, *Jordy 1: detail*, mixed media, 2004

from, and *Jordy's Theme*, a musical rock with multi-coloured buttons to enable participants to play the token theme song for a fictional reality. (Movies and television, other fictional realities, *always* have a theme song). As Andrew Best says in the exhibition's essay; it's the sense of constructed-ness that makes it so endearing. And it's the use of fake rocks that give an otherworldly quality - even if that other world is a theme park.

Places like Disneyland, Dreamworld and Movieworld are teeming with fake rocks. Glenelg still has (although not for much longer) a fake rock Magic Mountain. It's that hollow fibreglass sound that gives it away, or the peeling paint or the crack in the outer shell revealing the chicken-wire frame. It's this simulation of the real, the hyperreal (to use a Baudrillard term) of which Contemporary art is so aware. In theme parks, movie sets, or contemporary art installations, the emphasis isn't necessarily upon the fake rock itself, but its constructed-ness of the 'real'. Sometimes constructed reality is more real than real itself.



Glenelg's Magic Mountain

Sera Waters



Craig Bunker, *Sub-Creatures*,
pastel on cardboard, variable dimensions, 2004





First-hand experience

I was entranced, no transfixed, as she caressed the knife through the cool crisp lettuce, then taking its place in rows on trestle-tables with hundreds more from the market gardens out at Virginia. She murmured sensuous phrases smoothly with the in-built confidence of lifetime proximity; ‘a kilo for you?’ as she trimmed the dross from another cauliflower. Her head tilted at forty five degrees, communing with both the customer and the short knife worn to a reverse crescent



by generations of slicing hands; her eyes somewhere in that liminal region between. Meanwhile her colleague calls out an offer that can't be refused; ‘fresh today ladies and gentlemen’. I know this; I trust this – my hands confirm it as mandrakes of tangy ginger root leave my fingers and plunk into the bag. I participate equally here; we are both in the business of touch, of intimate gestures – a kind of fore-play where the multiple cash orgasm is repeatedly achieved all morning.

Hand and knife, indistinguishable in swift motion, carve out another fresh form of a desire on a chilly Sunday morning at the Gepps Cross Trash and Treasure Market. The buying and selling becomes fever pitch as the one o'clock closure looms and the rush to return home empty-handed and fully-laden respectively where then, exchange exhausted, we rest. And back for more next week.

“Wow Dad, we've been here for over four hours and I'm still enjoying myself!” It's a tough challenge keeping my fifteen year old son walking and engaged without resorting to bribes. With the exhibition *Treasures*, Museum Victoria is celebrating its 150th birthday by displaying a wide cross-section of its 16 million items for six months and its new headquarters has a similar architectural feel to Federation



Square; a bribe in itself. Why do we need inducements to immerse ourselves in objects representing lived history? Are there way too many items with fixed narratives, poetics and facts, but not enough head space to engage with them? Is visual culture an exponential monetary and cognitive burden as the scale of its spectacle increases to meet the competition of infotainment head-on?

In a paradigmatic shift Museum Victoria has exchanged the mode of the passive gaze (still the case at Melbourne Zoo) for a juxtaposed and personal itinerary where even a highly strung youth can engage. It's here that visual culture has not so much acquiesced as collaborated with the spectre of our obsessive need to hoard, pitched against the dwindling resources for managing these artefacts. And a random three-dimensional vertical, horizontal and diagonal roam through the building is no more disparate than a display recital





from the 'Treasures' location map; 11. *Red Bird-of-Paradise*. 12. *McCoy's ape case*. 13. *Trout Cod*. 14. *Weary Dunlop's medical instruments*. 15. *Courting Mask*. 16. *Washing machines*. 17. *Shackleton's sledge*. 18. *Flintlock blunderbuss*. 19. *Carousel model*. 20. *Phar Lap*. Curator's indulgence or audience wooing - who cares?



The organic if chaotic choreography is more in tune with the fluid process of memory and that which we make for ourselves by ourselves.

But our willingness to be entertained, in order to maximise ticket sales and fill the playhouse, can leave us short-changed. Time has been consumed, yes, but have we grown any smarter? The discipline - a very unfashionable term - of linear historical study, of tying together yesterday with today,

demands hard work but rewards the labour with a deeper understanding and personal context; if not immediately for a distracted teenager.

The spectacle of commodity and social exchange is worthy alongside the analogy of produce markets and museums where time and space truly is money; the less time storing bananas and mastadons the greater the return. But in that rigorous space, our bodies, voices and hearts are invited to perform on a stage where there are more players and less observers. So the intimacy of artefacts and their attendant industries continue to enchant us with the playhouse venue as the first order experience, followed by the stage props second, and the script third.

Philip Hind



Beverley Southcott, (top) *Plane and Beyond*,
(bottom) *Shiny and Shoes*,
C type photographs, each 1.18 x 1.68 m, 2003

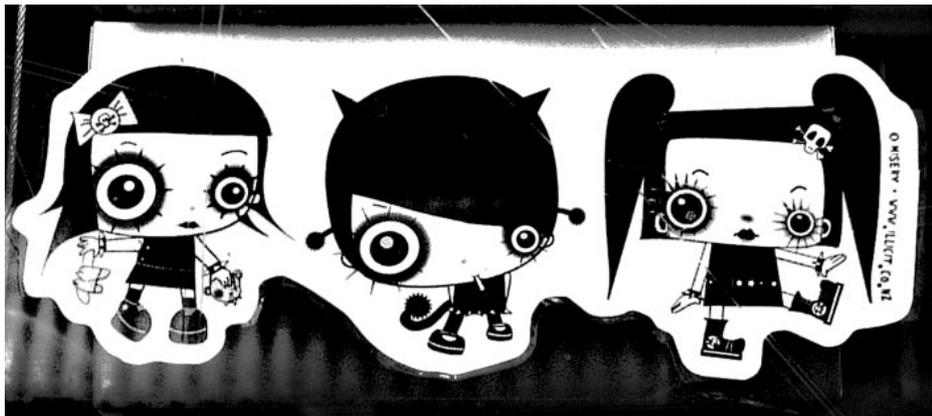


Well paint me **STRIPY**

Arrrrre you a pirate, me matey?

There's a few ways to identify this growing trend towards pirate fashion. For instance, are you, at present wearing stripes? And how? I mean, are you looking back on a late 80s to mid 90s grunge phase, where striped attire under not striped attire had, of course, a direct link to grunge heroes like The Pixies, and Kurt Cobain, or even Ratcat (if you chose a black and white combo). Perhaps yours is more of a 'Where's Wally?' statement, (and should therefore be left as such). Or, maybe you've just stopped in at your local Paul Frank outlet and made friends with that adorable little skull and crossbones character. That's right, your new pal "Scurvy".

Scurvy is oh-so-nice, he and that little monkey guy. They hang around on purses and underpants, between those stripes, yucking it up all season long. Sometimes they're cute, perhaps a bit grrrr!, like on the bottom of your cool new pink stripy Paul Frank novelty skateboard. Other times they are just one big happy family with all the other monkey face impostors.



Illicit character goth girls-Irving Baby



and call me **SCURVY!**

Scurvy has all the hallmarks of an empty shell (or skull). He takes the form of a symbol that represents a deliberate derailing of society and reduces its meaning to something cartoonistic and flippant. Once this symbol, the skull and crossbones, donned the sails of a ship that inspired pure terror in all that crossed its path.

Pirates were once a severe and very real threat on the oceans. They were anti society and definitely wanted to stir the calm waters of order. In this day and age, the skull has been used in the same way. It is a symbol of danger, a real warning that something is not right or will not be if you cross its path. We see the symbol on poisons, in photos of land mines in war stricken countries, on city streets accompanied by 'BLOOD AND OIL DON'T MIX' in English, Arabic or French. It is the symbol of modern cultural pirates and a potent symbol connected to our very flesh and bones.



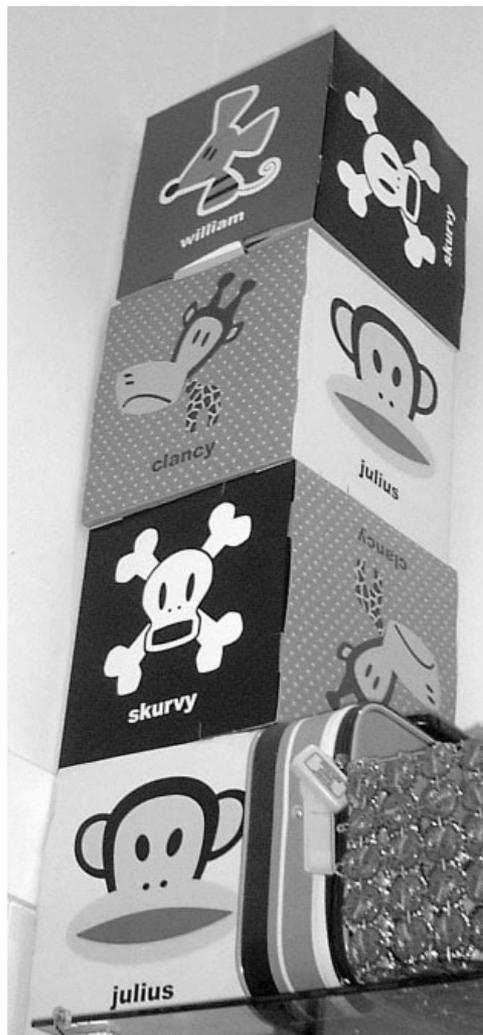
How interesting it is then that such a symbol can, like many others, suffer a Paul Frank takeover. This label is just one in a long string of labels utilising the new essence of cool found in the skull and crossbones, and sometimes just the skull. Street Vision and other long living skate labels have been doing so since the late 80s on and off.



A trip down Adelaide's Rundle mall encounters a barrage of faux piracy, from Jay-Jay's to Surf and Ski. Perhaps the main difference between slightly more alternative labels like Street Vision and Illicit, for instance, and Paul Frank is that the alternative parties wish to define themselves as being apart from the norm (in keeping with the symbol's original sentiment), whereas Paul Frank aims to make the symbol as user friendly as possible. This blandening effort, our friend Scurvy, is blatant scallywagism, isn't it? Damned piracy of the original pirate material, I tells you! Where does an honest pirate go from here?

Oh Scurvy, I hate your silly smile and your monkey faced friend. A pox on your posse of impostors and your rent-an-image existence.

Scurvy, I hate that you inhabit my handbag and, like a leech, affirm to me every day that Paul Frank isn't my friend.



Nancy Downes



Felicity Electricity, Art Car (detail),
Prince Charles decoupage on 1959 Austin Cambridge



Ch- Ch- Ch-Changes

New Work - Gordon Bennett

May 5-30 2004

Greenaway Art Gallery

Gordon Bennett's latest line of paintings may seem like another drastic stylistic shift in an oeuvre that has witnessed almost as many face-lifts as a plastic surgery clinic. Make an inventory of Bennett's imagery and you'll be left with a vast, dynamic and dizzyingly diverse corpus.

Take for instance, Bennett's early engagements with the repercussions of colonialism on Indigenous Australians in paintings like *The Coming of the Light* (1987) and *Message in a Bottle* (1989), which were then followed in 1990, by the smaller, sparser, and more elegiac *Black Angel* series of watercolours.

In 1996, a series of multilayered paintings emerged under the puzzling title *Home Décor: Preston + De Stijl = Citizen*. In these congested, jittery canvases, fragments from European and Australian modernism intersected, whereby the sketchy Indigenous figures plonked from the decorative Aboriginal paintings of Margaret Preston were immersed in the jazzy, candy-coloured grids and lattices of Piet Mondrian.

Who could forget the scratchy graffiti and kamikaze quotation and explosion of signs in Bennett's *Notes to Basquiat* series (1998)? A sprawling, spectacular tribute to the Haitian-Puerto Rican New York artist who shot to fame in the 1980s, and with whom Bennett identifies on a number of levels: artistic, aesthetic, circumstantial.

Or the post-9/11 engagements with terrorism and the crisis in Iraq that Bennett first visualised in the Basquiat series, and later in his 2003 *Camouflage* paintings whose scumbled, abrasive-like surfaces teemed with *Shamsa* Islamic patterns overlaid with patchy portraits of ominous, gas-masked soldiers and busts of Saddam Hussein.

A hefty proportion of the aforementioned paintings are distinguished by a scrupulously composed, proficiently executed and visually engrossing eclecticism: a plethora of images and texts snapped up

from social studies texts, history books and the visual paradigms of Australian, European, American and Aboriginal art. Bennett frames his aesthetic rationale in these terms:

I use strategies of quotation and appropriation to produce what I have called 'history' paintings...My approach to iconography can best be expressed as an allegorical approach where images as sites of historical meaning are fragmented and re-contextualised to form new relationships and possibilities for the generation of nuance.

Whilst Bennett's most current paintings prolong his interest in appropriation, they seem like a dramatic digression from his previous accomplishments. Instead of the customary, manic mish-mash of symbols, inscriptions and icons, the new, numerically titled abstracts are minimal, toned-down, stripped-back.

Here, stripes, squares and spirals proliferate in various formats and arrangements. Bennett's 'new works' are like the offspring of a feisty love triangle between Barnett Newman, Frank Stella and Sean Scully.

In *Number One* (2003) and *Number Thirty One* (2003), the partition of the composition into rigid, conjoined rectilinear panels of chunky and skimpy bands of colour and tone steers us into Sean Scully territory.

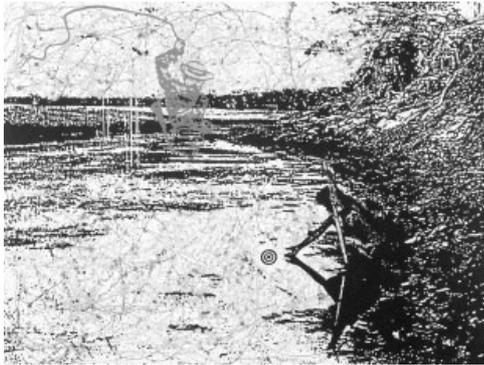
In other canvases, Bennett (like Scully) brings into unison the ordered, austerity of Minimalist painting and the colour and brushwork synonymous with certain exponents of Abstract Expressionism. In *Number Eight* (2003), with its four striped, white squares divided by a central, vertical black bar, one witnesses the coupling of Barnett Newman's trademark 'Zip' with Frank Stella's mathematical balance of forms and subdued palette. The rows of washy, translucent crimson and ivory bands on black ground in *Number Twenty Seven* (2003), seem to reconcile



Aborigine Painting (The Inland Sea), 1994



Newman's gestural styling (and transcendental aspirations) with Stella's cooler, cut-the-crap fixation with immediacy, reduction and repetition.



Poet and Muse, 1991

That may explain why Bennett connoisseur Ian McLean, in his accompanying catalogue essay, initially argues that these paintings subscribe to “*an aesthetics of indifference*”, only to add that they simultaneously extend Bennett's identification with, and commitment to, abstraction: particularly the social and ethical concerns of

some of its exponents, as well as its complex (and at times hostile), historical relation with Aboriginal art. More importantly, McLean insists that these paintings are indicative of Bennett's own endeavour to “*escape an identity politics which paradoxically dispossesses a people (including himself) by Aboriginalising them*”.

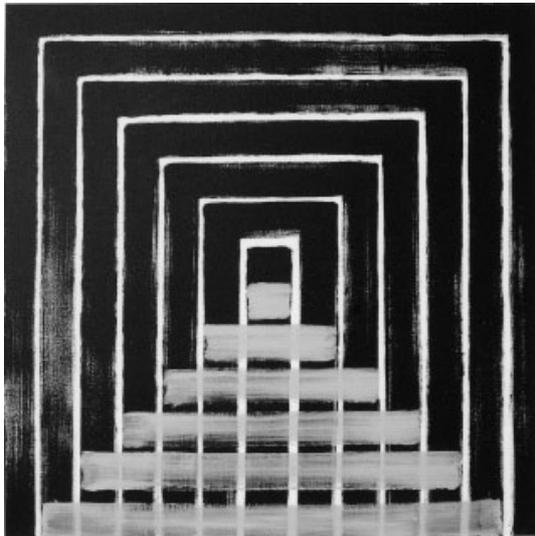
Mmm, perhaps. However, what I find intriguing about Bennett's recent abstract paintings is not so much his ability to combine, according to McLean, “*the postmodernist aesthetic of indifference with the committed art of expressionist artists he admires*”. Rather, I am fascinated by the plurality of possibilities that Bennett's images can unleash.

Bennett's mimicry of the visual schemas of various types of abstract painting can double as both homage and subversion. They may augment the idioms and ideals of his predecessors, and simultaneously stress the abstraction involved in the act of perception and the activity of representation, in all its forms. Then again, Bennett may be veering away from his prior concerns with the constructions of Aboriginality in Australian history, and fidgeting with the formal dimensions of his chosen medium – concocting canvases where, to quote Frank Stella, “*what you see is what you see*”. However, if these paintings evince, as McLean suggests, Bennett's attempt to resist the labelling of his art as ‘Aboriginal’ or himself as



an ‘Aboriginal painter’, they may ironically (as McLean admits) reference the iconography or style of other Aboriginal artists.

For example, the soft-edged, black squares on white ground in *Number Twelve* (2003) slightly resemble the chain of inverted squares found in the paintings of Pintupi artist Ronnie Tjampitjinpa. Similarly, the ebony, labyrinthine spirals in *Number Five* (2003) recall the deep-set Indigenous clan designs found on the dendroglyphs (carved trees) in New South Wales. Moreover, the striped paintings of Emily Kame Kngwarreye spring to mind when one scrutinises the luscious, loose grids and slushy, transparent strokes of Bennett’s *Small Thin Lines* (2004) paintings.



Number Fifty Four, 2003

A powerful and timely attribute of Bennett’s art (through the course of its many rollercoaster swings in style) has been the efficacy of his images to interrogate various modes of perception and representation, confound singular readings and clear-cut definitions, and propose multiple avenues of interpretation through the deployment of different visual paradigms.

Whilst lighter on the cross-referencing, and less confrontational than his previous offerings, Bennett’s new abstracts continue to jolt and surprise with their shift in focus, and their ability to rattle and blur the borders between form and content.

Varga Hosseini



Handy-cams in Pompeii

Disaster movies are a source of morbid fascination aren't they? I personally have not seen one for a couple of years, though the genre has pricked my attention just recently.

I think it was one of those waking dream moments, early in the morning when thoughts/dreams seem to be most profound. It occurred to me that if there were a new major catastrophe, there would probably be plenty of documentation to put together a pretty interesting documentary (given the footage survives).

Wow, (and given the survival of a few broadcast technicians) we would be witness to our own demise. I know, not a nice thing to think about, but when we watch disaster movies the spectacle is as captivating as is our want to be impressively deceived.



Eye in the sky



Eye on the ground

Watching the news these days yields a steady supply of hand-held amateur footage of naturally occurring disasters, accidents, acts of terrorism etc. This type of footage is caught with the ever ubiquitous handy-cam. Since the invention of the camera Cartesian perspective has been literally fractured into a multiplicity of points-of-view, so when one watches TV, one can witness a tornado, for instance, from space (we're talking hi-tech now) all the way down to ground level ('Watch out Bill this ones coming to kill us!')

This ubiquity is illustrated by the recent events of September 11. Sorry to bring it up, but the tragedy is in recent memory, and possibly the most comprehensively documented event in history.

The Last Days of Pompeii, a docu-drama depicting the city of Pompeii's violent destruction at the whim of Mount Vesuvius, was televised recently. I wondered, if there were handy-cams then, it is more than likely people would have recorded the whole event. Wouldn't that have made a great disaster film?

Clint Woodger



So Little Time

So soon as I could read, I was introduced to the children's library and was soon immersed in the worlds of Beatrix Potter and Fairy Land, with its moral tales of the misjudged, the tricky, and the true.

I sobbed my way through *Black Beauty* and other stories of dumb, dependent creatures subjected to the spectrum of human behaviour.

When I was eleven, I was deemed mature enough to tackle books at home "bar the books on the top shelf". Were my parents afraid I would break my neck I wondered?

The first two books I dipped into from that alluring shelf were unmemorable, but the third, a collection of short stories called "Tomato Cain" by Nigel Kneale, was another matter. I had discovered irony; irony so painful that I stopped at the third story and retreated to the books lower down wondering what else the grown up world held in store.

The day I decided to abandon a book because it was unrewarding was liberating. The best books are those that cause you to shift reading higher up on the list of life's priorities.

Writing about artists and the creative process is rarely successful but there are exceptions. Emile Zola gives us an authentic look at the Parisian art world of the 1880s in 'His Masterpiece'. He based his protagonist Claude on three of his friends: Cezanne, with whom he went to school, Degas, and Manet. Cezanne never spoke to him again after it was published. Certainly it was bleak. Zola had become disenchanted with the direction the Impressionist Movement away from content towards the capture of light, but really I think he overreacted.

Joyce Carey's character, Gully Jimson, in "the Horses Mouth, is convincing, and for a vivid account of the manners and morals of 16th century Italy, super ego Benvenuto Cellini's autobiography is



fascinating and he writes a compelling description of the casting of the bronze Perseus.

I have a penchant for books about obsession and for first novels. First novels are usually highly autobiographical but they are fresh and lively and sometimes the writer's best work.

For me, the appeal of books over film is the possibilities the inner voice offers for enriching the narrative. Also those affirming moments when you come across a feeling or opinion that you had thought was your own.

At the moment I am reading John Updike's Rabbit novels and am interested in the way Harry Angstrom's mind works. I have it on reliable authority that it is a fair representation of the male psyche.

When it comes to the realm of books, the world really can be your oyster. You can be anyone, do anything anywhere, and you can do it whenever you choose. I forget who said it; "So many books, so little time", but how true.

Lisa Young





Subterranean

When I think of rural art I think of water-coloured landscapes or maybe tyre swans, so it was a pleasant surprise to come across one of the best installations I've seen for ages in Naracoorte, SA. Naracoorte's claim to fame is its caves and fossil relics. Apparently the remains of all kinds of bizarre creatures were preserved intact after said beasts fell to their doom through one of the many cave shafts around the area. The first thing I saw at Naracoorte's Wonambi Fossil Centre was the skeletal remains of a marsupial lion locked in hilarious mortal combat with a (now hopefully extinct) giant snake. From there it only got better. The girl at the desk with an unfeasibly high voice asked me if I wanted to "enter an ancient world where the Megafauna once roamed." I of course did.

As I walked down the wheelchair ramp I was transported back 50,000 years to the time of the Megafauna. A cavernous room was filled 20 feet high with simulated forest and swampland complete with eyes beaming out from the darkness. Apparently giant Wombats, Kangaroos and even Koalas were once the norm about these parts. I've always liked marsupials, but there's something a little unnerving about them when they're so huge. I kept a safe distance from the fiberglass billabong, wary of any extra big platypus that might dart out and drag me under in its ever-smiling beak (bill?, whatever). The path through the forest twisted and turned so that you never knew what you'd come across next. I gradually





Schlock

became aware that the creatures were moving, slowly turning their heads or munching away at the simulated vegetation. My favourite mechanised mega fauna was probably the water-dwelling *Zygomaturus trilobus*, something like a Rhino. On



closer inspection I saw a little head popping out from between mamma *Zygomaturus*' legs and then popping back in again! This beautiful moment was given a slightly sinister dimension as I noticed that the constant mechanical motion (or maybe 50,000 years of birthing agony) had eroded the back of the creatures neck, exposing its internal wiring, making it look like some deranged malfunctioning robot in the process of spawning equally deadly offspring.

Passing through the remaining forest with rumbles of thunder booming out of concealed speakers, I came to a lower level with a simulated cave. Apparently Tasmanian devils had once lived in the area and I came across two tearing into a plastic carcass, complete with exposed intestines. Although it was a little revolting it was tacky enough to be cool rather than upsetting.

From this faux cave I ventured into one Naracoorte's World Heritage listed geological marvels. Frankly I was a little underwhelmed by the real cave and found it hard to tell the difference. It looked great but I couldn't quite take it seriously. The forms were so clichéd and the colours so retro - 50,000 years of painstaking drip upon drip accumulation had resulted in a dated b-grade aesthetic. I guess this is the bit where I should say something about truth, reality and artifice but I'm not gunna.

Chris Flanagan



Andrew Dearman, *Untitled*,
acrylic on paper, 2m x 1m, 2004



Hans Kreiner, *Universal Family Tree* (detail),
plywood, 2.4m high x 1.2m diameter, 2004

There's a place called **Downtown**

May 13th 2004

It was great to have been able to launch the inaugural issue of Vitamin (Episode One) at Downtown Art Space. The night before, they had had their own inaugural launch having recently moved from a former skating rink to their new biker workshop premises in Waymouth Street (opposite the Grace Emily).



The launch of Vitamin was a joyous event, as you would have expected. All my friends were there. (All my enemies were at home annotating their leather-bound copies of Das Kapital.)

I bought the best cheap wine I could afford and over two hours 22 bottles were consumed and over a hundred copies of Vitamin enjoyed.

Downtown is the only space I know to have served ice cream at an opening and for that they deserve a *warm* place in anyone's heart.

I was thankful for Andrew's encouragement and good humour in the lead up to the launch. On the night, Louise, Anne, and Bridget looked after the drinks (and me).

Sera Waters did a fantastic job with the layout of Vitamin, and Dianne Longley provided technical help throughout the





project. The South Australian School of Art kindly covered the cost of photocopying. The contributors, especially the writers, showed faith in Vitamin from the beginning. No one needed to be talked around and all gave their time in the positive spirit of participation.

Most of the edition was distributed within days of the launch. The pdf has since been widely utilised. Feedback indicates that the first episode was read from cover to cover.



Pictures by Amanda Poland.



There was a generous spirit at the Downtown launch. We can only hope to continue as we began.

Shaw Hendry



VITAMIN

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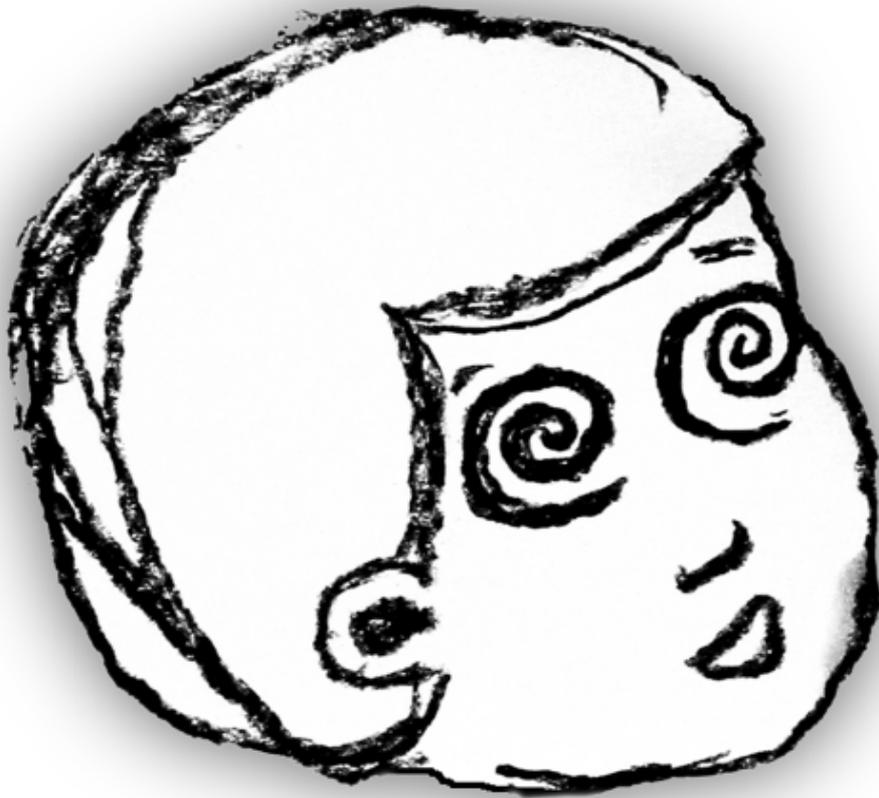


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EPISODE TWO -
AUGUST/SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

