Artistic Courage: reimagining work, ambition, and equity in the arts

Friday 29 July 2022, RMIT University (online)

Ana Tiquia, *WORKPLACE*, 2019–2021, participatory performance, installation (detail)
Photographer: Agniezka Chabros

Visual
Arts
Work

Program

Session One, hosted by Marnie Badham

12.00 – 12.10pm   Esther Anatolitis, *Acknowledgement of Country; Introduction*

12.10 – 12.50pm   Bev Munro and Jodi Edwards, *Yarning about creative cultural practice as a gateway to strength-based futures*

Session Two, hosted by Grace McQuilten

1.00 – 2.00pm   Jennifer Hickinbotham, *Capitalism: survival of the fittest*

                        Madeleine Collie, *Experimenting with Slow Infrastructures, Food Art Research Network*

                        Penelope Benton, *NAVA Code of Practice*

Break

2.00 – 2.30pm

Session Three, hosted by Kate MacNeill

2.30 – 3.30pm   Raphaela Rosella, *Moving beyond participatory frameworks and collaborative rhetoric to shared agency: Developing contractual agreements that resist imperial archival practices imposed by stakeholders and Eurocentric art institutions*

                        Sarah Gory, *Creative Value Chains and the Australian visual arts sector*

                        Channon Goodwin, *We Care a Lot: Artist-led strategies towards a new commons for the visual arts*

3.30 – 3.50pm   Grace McQuilten, Jenny Lye, Kate MacNeill and Marnie Badham, *Visual Arts Work research project*

Session Four, hosted by Esther Anatolitis

4.00 – 4.40pm   Lucie Loy, *Room to Move: Reflections on collectivity, agency and grassroots action through the Nicholas Building Association*

                        Madeleine Thornton-Smith, *Artists organising, class and trade unionism*

                        Alistair Webster, *ArtsPay: founding a payment solution for the arts*

4.40 – 5.00pm   Esther Anatolitis, *Facilitated discussion*

Presenter Bios

Alistair Webster is a lawyer and public policy expert with a passion for tackling society's wicked problems. He has worked with large not-for-profits, philanthropic organisations and government agencies developing policies and strategies for addressing some of our most complex challenges. He is the co-founder of ArtsPay, a new for-purpose payment processing company that aims to build a new source of funding for artists and small arts organisations.

Bev Munro is a Wiradjuri woman living on Bunurong land in the Bass Coast where she is engaged in community activities focussing on the environment, health, and local government. Bev's past experience includes work in social, legal and health related roles in community and public sector organisations. Bev holds a Master's in Public Health, a BSoc Sci and a Dip OHS, and is currently undertaking a PhD in cultural economics focussing on the Indigenous art market and its impact on Indigenous artists in the South-East of Australia. Bev's PhD highlights the importance of creative cultural practice to the ongoing strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in the southeast of Australia.

Channon Goodwin is an artist and artsworker whose research examines artists' collective, participatory, and activist activities and the new forms of social, cultural, and economic value they create with the aim of improving the working and living conditions of visual artists in Australia. Channon is the founding Director of Composite Moving Image Agency & Media Bank, and Convener of All Conference, an organising network comprised of 17 artist-led, experimental and cross-disciplinary arts organisations from around Australia. From 2012–2021, he was Director of Bus Projects, one of Narrm/Melbourne's longest-running Artist-Run Initiatives. He aggregates his various collaborative and independent videography work under Fellow Worker. In 2019, Channon was awarded an Australia Council for the Arts International Residency at ACME in London, where he examined the lineages of artists' video and filmmaking cooperatives. He also edited Permanent Recession: a Handbook on Art, Labour and Circumstance (2019), published through Onomatopee Projects. This book is an enquiry into the capitals and currencies of experimental, radical and artist-run initiatives in Australia and the labour conditions of working artists.

Esther Anatolitis heads Test Pattern, a consultancy focused on creative strategy, practice and precincts. Across two decades Esther has led arts, design and media organisations with significant national impact, and has served numerous boards, advisories and policy committees, and

was a founding director and Deputy Chair of Contemporary Arts Precincts, the organisation behind Collingwood Yards. Esther is Honorary Associate Professor at RMIT School of Art, has a long-term engagement with RMIT Architecture + Design as an external examiner and critic, and has taught and guest lectured at universities across Australia. Her academic background is in European philosophy, and she also holds the postgraduate Zertifikat BauhausDessau for her work on the international architectural project Serve City: Interactive Urbanism for which she was awarded a DAAD Künstlerprogramm residency. A prolific writer and influential advocate, Esther's work regularly appears in literary journals, newspapers, and across the arts and design media. Her book Place, Practice, Politics (2022) is published in the Spurbuchverlag Art Architecture Design Research series.

Grace McQuilten is Associate Professor in the School of Art at RMIT University. Her research explores art's relationship to economic, social and political systems with a particular focus on artists' critical engagement with markets and the development of new economic models in the arts. Grace's research also challenges and transforms conventional understandings of the relationship between margin and centre in relation to the cultural economy, contemporary art practice and art history. She has pioneered work on the field of art-based social enterprise in Australia and has worked extensively in migrant and refugee settlement.

Jennifer Hickinbotham makes art because she likes to turn her thoughts into 'things'. Living with schizophrenia, thoughts can be troublesome while art is a joy.

Future: Shortlisted Incinerator Gallery Art for Social Change exhibition; RMIT Gallery, Archives of Feeling. I will select works from the original Cunningham Dax Collection, now considered patient records, these works of patient art are internationally considered, I will write Ephrasic poem/songs in response. My song performance shares my lived experience of family disabling, personal, intergenerational and epigenetic trauma. Déjà vu all over again is a game board I created about mental health and neuro-diversity.

Currently: Decentring Australian Art, including my own feature chapter and contribution to methodology with project partners: Grace McQuilten RMIT, Anthony White Melb Uni and Tristan Harwood The Monthly.

Past: Solo exhibitions Sticks and Stones will Break my Bones, but Words Can Totally Destroy my Mind!, Blindside Sound Series Program 2022, curated by Joel Stern of Liquid Architecture. Sam

Pankhurst practiced with us for the live performance, he wrote: 'I so loved playing together .... Best music I've played for a long time. A real honour to meet you and play your music.' Melbourne Fringe 2021, Digital and two Live show Living Live at Woodend, both sold-out.

Associate Professor **Jenny Lye** is an economist with an extensive international publication record in theoretical and applied econometrics and statistics. Her applied econometrics work focuses on policy issues and recent industry research has analysed issues in tertiary education, gambling and alcohol and smoking. Jenny has supervised numerous PhD Candidates and research assistants and her research has strong industry uptake providing evidence for policymakers and translated to a general audience through mainstream media such as The Age.

Jodi Edwards is a Dharawal language speaker who is passionate about awakening the language and working in and with the local Aboriginal community. She is a cultural educator working predominately in the area of Aboriginal environmental heritage, cultural knowledge education and more recently public art. The Illawarra Flame Trees are an Aboriginal women's performing arts group. The group was established in 2014 to encourage and assist young Aboriginal women to explore traditional Aboriginal environmental cultural knowledges and share those knowledges with others through contemporary performances. Jodi recently completed a PhD at Macquarie University and is the inaugural Indigenous Vice Chancellor's Post Doctoral research Fellow at School of Art, RMIT University.

Kate MacNeill is a Professor and Associate Dean, Education and Students in the Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne. With a background in law and economics, and a PhD in Arts History she has extensive experience in policy work in the government and non-government sectors. Her research in the visual arts industry addresses the intersection between law and artistic practice (cultures of intellectual property and censorship), leadership in the arts and cultural sector and the politics of identity and representation. Kate's track record includes a number of research projects and outputs with interdisciplinary teams and industry partners and users, specifically on gender, the ethics of creative practices, and visual art industry working conditions.

Lucie Loy is a multi-disciplinary artist, curator and writer (currently) based in Northern NSW and Naarm (Melbourne). Alongside her independent practice which spans visual art, publishing, writing and curating she has committed much of her professional capacity to platforming independent, artist-led and experimental practice.

From 2014-2020 Lucie co-directed BLINDSIDE. Through her work with artist-run projects local-ly and internationally, Lucie has explored notions of the 'artist-led', platforming the importance of art and artists critically and creatively addressing global and social struggles. In 2017, she co-founded the Nicholas Building Association with fellow resident artists and creative workers with the aim to protect and nurture the unique, self-determined culture the Building has become known for.

Working with the aesthetics of hope, resistance and imagination, as well as through policy advo-cacy, activism and frustrating bureaucratic frameworks, Lucie's practice and work seeks to ex-plore the intersection of art, political ecology, social and environmental justice and postcolonial globalisation. Lucie is interested in collaboration, ideas of the commons and critical, transdisci-plinary projects. Her recent research explores biopolitics, notions of power and the philosophies and contexts of post-truth.

Madeleine Collie is a writer, artist and curator who now lives and works on the unceded lands of the Boon Wurrung and Wurrundjeri people of the Kulin Nations. She is a PhD candidate in Cura-torial Practice at Monash University exploring proposals for instituting otherwise with land and waters. Her work takes the form of curatorial projects, pedagogy, performance and poetic prac-tice often working in collectives or collaboration with others. Her work attends across registers to artworks as a form of encounter with ecosystems in flux and she works with artists, activists and scientists to expand the way we experience ecological narratives. She led the collective memorial, The Ash Project (2016-2019). She was the initiator of the research platforms for Custom Food Lab from 2018-2021. She set up the Food Art Research Network in 2020.

Madeleine Thornton-Smith is a painter and ceramic artist from Melbourne. Her practice ex-amines the hierarchy that exists between fine art and craft in relation to class and gender, with a particular interest in subverting meaning and value through remediation. She has completed a Bachelor of Arts and Visual Arts at Monash University majoring in Creative Writing and Painting (2013), Honours in Fine Art at Monash (2014), a Diploma of Languages in Spanish (Monash, 2015) and a Diploma in Ceramics at Holmesglen (2017). In 2017 she was awarded First Class Honours in Object-Based Practice (Ceramics) at RMIT University. Madeleine has a strong interest in labour issues particularly in relation to the visual arts and ceramics industry, and has written several articles on this topic for publications such as Art Guide and the Journal of Australian Ceramics. She has become passionate about the working rights of artists and artworkers since doing an internship with the Victorian Trades Hall Council and the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alli-

ance, participating in discussions with the Melbourne-based Artists' Union research group and after experiencing years of insecure and unsafe working conditions as a practising artist, technician and tutor alongside her artworker comrades. Madeleine has undertaken several local and international art residencies and has exhibited in various artist-run, private and publicly-funded galleries throughout Melbourne.

Marnie Badham. With a twenty-five-year history of art and social justice in Australia and Canada, Marnie's research sits at the intersection of socially-engaged art practice, participatory research methodologies and the politics of cultural measurement. Through aesthetic forms of encounter and exchange, her work brings together disparate groups of people in dialogue to examine and affect local issues. Her current focus includes a series of creative cartographies registering emotions in public space; expanded curation projects on the aesthetics and politics of food; and a book project The Social Life of Artist Residencies: connecting with people and place not your own.

Marnie is a Senior Research Fellow at the School of Art at RMIT University where her teaching focuses on expanded curation, relational ethics, and contemporary art and social practice.

Penelope Benton is the Executive Director of the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA). Currently living on Gadigal land, she is also an artist with a collaborative practice and recently became a mum. She has worked previously as the Manager of Arc @ UNSW Art & Design, General Manager of the College of Fine Arts Students' Association and was Co-Artistic Director of Art Month Sydney 2013. Penelope was a co-Director at Firstdraft 2007 - 2008 and a Co-Founder/Director of The Red Rattler, an artist and activist run space in Sydney's inner west 2008 - 2013. She has a Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts) from the University of Newcastle, Masters in Art Administration from the University of NSW, Graduate Diploma in Arts Management from University of Technology, Sydney, and completed a Masters of Fine Arts at UNSW in 2017.

Raphaela (Rosie) Rosella is an Australian artist with Italian immigrant and Anglo Celtic convict/settler descent who resides in Meanjin QLD. Working at the intersections of socially engaged art and long-form documentary practice, her practice draws heavily from her lived experience of being raised in an over-policed, low socioeconomic community in NSW, Australia. Rosella employs an immersive auto-ethnographic approach to documenting everyday life through photography, moving image, sound recordings, and the collection of ephemera, state-issued documents, and criminal indexes. This has emerged over fifteen years with contributions from several women in

her life. Their collaborations have resulted in what they now consider a co-created archive. To date, their co-created archive has been used in family albums, court cases, funeral services, and art exhibitions. Furthermore, their work has supported five co-creators to obtain several significantly reduced custodial sentences and multiple successful bail and parole applications.

Sarah Gory is a writer, editor and researcher. She works collaboratively with individuals and organisations across the arts sector, with a particular interest in the intersection of creative and critical writing. Sarah has worked in leadership positions in the arts sector for the past two decades, most recently as Managing Editor for arts publisher un Projects. Sarah's creative and critical writing has been widely published in Australian journals, and she is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne. Sarah is also the co-founder, with Paul Mylecharane, of radical publishing collective Common Room Editions.