

Paul Selzer Exhibition and Prize 2023

Kay Abude

Trent Crawford

Nusra Latif Qureshi

Lisa Waup

Fiona and Sidney Myer Gallery

Room 1 (left)

Lisa Waup

***Mother/Country*, 2023**

Ink screen print on cotton rag paper with reflective glass beads ink, ochre, thread

Ink screen print on jute sandbags, reflective glass beads ink, rope, cotton thread

Dimensions variable

Kay Abude Room 1 (right)

***Smoko room* 2023**

Performance and installation

Dimensions variable

Room 2 (left)

Trent Crawford

***Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century: Images from Kate Daw's The Between Space: Narrative in Contemporary Visual Practice, 2005*, 2023**

laser-engraved silver gelatin prints

16 framed images, 450 x 600mm each

Room 2 (right)

Nusra Latif Qureshi

***Gnawing ships idle in the troubled sleeps of Erasmus* 2023**

Digital print on fabric, stone, glass and plastic beads, thread, wool, and pearls

Dimensions variable

Lisa Waup

***Mother/Country*, 2023**

Ink screen print on cotton rag paper with reflective glass beads ink, ochre, thread

Ink screen print on jute sandbags, reflective glass beads ink, rope, cotton thread

Dimensions variable

Sharing the innate connection that Waup has with Country and nature, *Mother/Country* has been created to honour Mother Earth. The work suggests the fragility of Country, and how she mourns to be taken care of, loved and respected. Waup's practice serves as a catalyst for dialogue, inviting viewers to examine the significance of Country and to consider their individual responsibilities to care for and protect Country. In light of the current climate crisis *Mother/Country* can be understood as a reminder of the preciousness of delicate ecosystems. The intricate patterns and textures that adorn *Mother/Country* evoke a sense of storytelling. The lines of Country, family, water and community are repeated, to allow an exploration of the nuance of the narratives they suggest. Country - the land, waters and interrelation of all people and all things - constitute a single cultural landscape. Waup's artistic practice serves as a vessel through which this understanding of landscape is preserved and shared.

Waup's exploration of bags as artistic mediums transcends their utilitarian nature and invites contemplation of their profound role in life and culture. These bags suggest repositories of memories, traditions, and human experiences. In this light, the bags are protectors - holders of Country. Each bag tells a unique story that is inked into the fabric of its design. Waup's bags highlight the significance of the objects we carry, the stories they silently hold and impress upon us and the importance of connection with and responsibilities to Country and one another.

Lisa Waup 2023

Kay Abude

***Smoko room* 2023**

Performance and installation

Dimensions variable

It's break time for the workers of CARGO XXV - LABOUR SOLUTIONS, a fictional crew of 12 working for a fictional cargo company. They've paused from discharging the Merlin Arrow vessel to have a well-earned rest in the company's smoko room, a place where conversation knows no limits and everyone has an opinion. But there's nothing fictional about the jobs these workers really do; stevedores for whom the smoko room is a safe haven from their high risk, high reward existence at the docks.

This piece continues my work exploring work itself: the value of it, the effort, the inequality and insecurity of it, especially for artists. These performers are my colleagues, the imagined smoko room is one I have sat in many times before. Since February 2022, after leaving the precarity of sessional teaching, I have worked as a stevedore to support my art practice.

The wharf is like no other workplace I have experienced - a high-risk environment where the workers openly and constantly challenge management, because it's our lives at risk on a daily basis. It's always us against them; where 24/7 shift work is all consuming; where there is boat after boat or none at all; where profanities and verbal abuse are the only form of communication; where, in a strange and shocking way, bullying is a form of endearment; where gossip spreads instantly and where women make up less than 12% of the entire workforce.

Smoko room celebrates all of this: the nature of individual work and collective labour, the sometimes cruel dynamics of a team and the rarely-seen bodies that economies rely on to keep pushing ever-forward. It blurs boundaries, presenting life as art, and art as life through a performance by a real and skilled waterfront workforce - wharfies who are being remunerated for their time at their designated rate, and whose pay levels reflect their position on the labour placement sheet. There may be a hierarchy at the docks but in the smoko room, we're together.

Kay Abude 2023

Trent Crawford

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century: Images from Kate Daw's The Between Space: Narrative in Contemporary Visual Practice, 2005, 2023

laser-engraved silver gelatin prints

16 framed images, 450 x 600mm each

Titles of individual images:

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Edward Hopper, New York Movie, 1939), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Edouard Manet, A Bar at the Folies-Bergere, 1881-82), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Jean Luc Godard (dir.) A bout de soufflé, 1959), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Cindy Sherman, Untitled Film Still #21, 1978, silver gelatin print), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Mary Kelly, Post-Partum Document (Documentation), 1977), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Tracey Emin, My Bed, 1998), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Georgina Starr, visit to a Small Planet, 1975), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Gillian Wearing, Confess all on video. Don't worry you will be in disguise. Intrigued? Call Gillian, Version II, 1994), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Tacita Dean, Bubblehouse. 1999), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (David Rosetzky, Maniac de Luxe, 2004), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (John Meade, Black duo: self-portrait as Mary Magdalene, and nude with pitchfork, 2004), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Sophie Calle, Suite Vémitienne, 1980; printed 1986), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Kate Daw, Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century, 2005), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Kate Daw, Girl and Rabbit, 2002), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Kate Daw, Voice (Len Deighton, 1962), 2003), 2023

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (Kate Daw, The Between Space (cups and saucers), 2005), 2023

Continued

Trent Crawford

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century: Images from Kate Daw's The Between Space: Narrative in Contemporary Visual Practice, 2005, 2023

laser-engraved silver gelatin prints, 16 framed images, 450 x 600mm each

Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century (2023) is a series of 16 laser-engraved silver gelatin prints drawn from the research of esteemed artist and mentor Kate Daw. Published in her 2005 PhD *The Between Space: Narrative in Contemporary Visual Practice*, these images annotate personal and historical shifts in artistic practice towards an embrace of fragmentary and non-linear perspectives – enduring the compressed quality of low-fidelity scans typical of the University of Melbourne's digitised dissertations of that period.¹

The title of the series refers to a video artwork of Daw's also named "Learning to Waltz in the 21st Century" that remains unexhibited to this day. Recorded in 2002, the video documents a group of drama students from the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA), dressed partially in 21st-century and 19th-century attire, as they learn to waltz in preparation for a theatrical adaptation of Harold Pinter's screenplay based on Marcel Proust's "Remembrance of Things Past." Finding their feet, the students reconcile their place in history and straddle the boundaries between different eras.²

In my recreation of these images and the dancers among them, a simulated grid overlays the surface. This laser-engraved photographic process draws inspiration from the work of Bea Maddock, whose pioneering photo-etching techniques often employed grid-like patterns over personal and found imagery. In an adapted version of Bea's method, the grid and photographic image simultaneously render each other visible, entangling Daw's work with the influence of Maddock — who was herself the Head of The VCA School of Art from 1979-80, and is renowned for her pioneering text paintings that have been cited as touchstones in relation to Daw's practice.³

During her time in the print-making department, Maddock was drawn to the thin metal Louvres that girded the school's windows and started to translate them into her printing practice.

*"the windows had little grills on them . . . and so they got drawn in because that's how I saw the world – through those windows."*⁴

Like Maddock, the VCA continues to shape how I see the world, and Daw remains an integral part of that process.⁵ On the one hand, the reproduction of these images reflects upon divergent notions of institutional and cultural memory within a networked educational community like the VCA. And on the other, they aim to ask a simple question: How do we, as inhabitants of these halls, understand ourselves to be working in history?⁶ How do we find our feet?

Trent Crawford 2023

¹ The final exhibition of Daw's research for this project was presented in the Fiona and Sydney Myer Gallery (formerly the Margaret Lawrence Galleries), in a solo exhibition titled *The Between Space*, October 2005.

² Writing about the rehearsal period, Daw notes the student's persistence, often using their breaks to scour the shelves of the Baillieu Library for every available book that would give them a glimpse into this distant world of 19th-century Parisian society. See Daw, Kate. *The Between Space : Narrative in Contemporary Visual Practice*, 2005, p. 87.

³ See Juliana Engberg's essay 'Between meaning and things' in Daw, Kate., Duncan, Jenepher, Engberg, Juliana, and Art Gallery of Western Australia. *The between Space. Artist in Focus*. Perth, W.A.: Art Gallery of Western Australia, 2006, p. 7.

⁴ The windows referred to were in the VCA's prior location as part of the National Gallery School. See Maddock, Bea. *Being and Nothingness : Bea Maddock : Work from Three Decades / Exhibition and Catalogue* by Anne Kirker and Roger Butler. Australian National Gallery, 1992, p. 78.

⁵ I won't forget that the windows of Kate's office upstairs in the Painting Department were also embedded with wire mesh... or at least that's how I remember them to be.

⁶ In her research, Daw contemplates this question of art and history, citing her close friend and colleague John Meade, "Art has always been influenced by art... for a long time now I have taken the view that I need to consider myself working in history." See Daw, Kate. *The Between Space : Narrative in Contemporary Visual Practice*, 2005, p. 71.

Nusra Latif Qureshi

Gnawing ships idle in the troubled sleeps of Erasmus 2023

Digital print on fabric, stone, glass and plastic beads, thread, wool, and pearls

My work is mainly documenting a state of loss. I arrange and rearrange remnants of objects, desires and memories to voice this feeling and sense of loss. My thirteen-year old child said “you should call this work ‘suffering through threads’”. I do not disagree. I lay out and layer the remnants of imagined pasts and lost histories. These remnants are diverse: factual and re-imagined, framed in divergent and contrasting contexts of winning and losing, the conquered and the conqueror, of the desired and the lonely, the chosen and the rejected. This work is equally aiming to document love and longing, desire and disgust as well as intimacy, obsession and contempt through poignant markers and objects such as swords, daggers, polo sticks, fabrics, posed photographs and items of personal adornment. Hands become the symbol of what once was possessed and is now gone- the emptiness is contained within the waiting, empty, expectant, deprived hands. Though the images are as much about loss as they are about celebration of belonging, they try to contain a sense of desire and being desired in the grand scheme of colonization and consequently in attempted decolonization.

Nusra Latif Qureshi 2023