

2011

installation art - Frenzy Episode | Contact | Raising the Dead

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Description

This monograph presents a series of three exhibitions developed collaboratively by Agnieszka Golda and Martin Johnson. It describes a wonderful tracery of not quite recognisable anthropomorphic creatures who inhabit oddly constructed and disjointed spaces. Together Golda and Johnson have utilised crocheted and printed textiles, carved wood and painted aluminium to form strange dwellings, figures and passages. Dr Ruth Fazakerley's research and art practice span Australian contemporary urban public art, painting and sculptural installation. In her essay here she positions Golda and Johnson's work in a wider context. The distinctive aesthetic force of collaborative process is underpinned by Golda's discerning scholarship in opening up 'sensography', a terrain that explores both art practice and the emotional, affective resonances it engenders.

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Agnieszka Golda
Martin Johnson



installation art

Frenzy Episode | Contact | Raising the Dead



Frenzy Episode, 2010

Agnieszka Golda Martin Johnson

Frenzy Episode

Project Contemporary Artspace
Wollongong 2010

Contact

Faculty of Creative Arts Gallery
University of Wollongong 2009

Raising the Dead

Light Square Gallery
Adelaide Centre for the Arts 2008

Essays by Agnieszka Golda
and Ruth Fazakerley



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foreword

In May 2009 I found the Australian journal 'Artlink' prominently displayed in a university library in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. On the cover was Agnieszka Golda's stark image from the exhibition 'Raising the Dead' (2008), demonstrating that she and Martin Johnson have a wide audience for their vivid mixed-media images and sculptures. Striking powerfully through the imagination, Golda draws on her emigrant Polish childhood for ritual practices and inter-cultural worlds that have moved with a surprising élan into Australian installation spaces.

This monograph presents a series of three exhibitions developed collaboratively by Agnieszka Golda and Martin Johnson. It describes a wonderful tracery of not quite recognisable anthropomorphic creatures who inhabit oddly constructed and disjointed spaces. Together Golda and Johnson have utilised crocheted and printed textiles, carved wood and painted aluminium to form strange dwellings, figures and passages. Like Golda, Johnson studied visual art at North Adelaide School of Art, South Australia and then at RMIT, Melbourne. Since 1996, both have collaborated in notable exhibitions in Krakow, Poland, in Adelaide and Wollongong, and have been invited to create 'Last Exile' installation at Wollongong City Gallery in June 2011.

Dr Ruth Fazakerley's research and art practice span Australian contemporary urban public art, painting and sculptural installation. In her essay here she positions Golda and Johnson's work in a wider context.

Agnieszka Golda's trajectory points out the importance of university art schools in developing leading artists who are also influential scholars and teachers. In 2007 she enrolled in a Doctor of Creative Arts degree, and in 2008 she was appointed to a lectureship to run the forward-looking Textiles Studio in the Faculty of Creative Arts.

The distinctive aesthetic force of collaborative process is underpinned by Golda's discerning scholarship in opening up 'sensography', a terrain that explores both art practice and the emotional, affective resonances it engenders. I am moved and delighted to have participated in the refractory mirrored realms of her texts and the shimmer of her artworks.

Professor Diana Wood Conroy
Faculty of Creative Arts
University of Wollongong

Frenzy Episode, 2010



contact

socio-spatial entanglements

Agnieszka Golda

University of Wollongong

As I anticipate the proximity of the keyboard to my body, I'm reminded of the multiple forms of contact in everyday life. Forms of contact encompass encounters between bodies, objects and narratives. Some occur through institutional forms involving education sectors, art galleries and scholarly enquiries in disciplines such as visual art, anthropology, cultural studies, philosophy and human geography. In collaborative projects between Martin Johnson and myself, these contacts are entangled and shape our explorations into the relations between bodily capacities and socio-spatial intercultural contexts. Our work is informed by aspects of Polish folklore, modes of *immersive* installation practice,¹ feminist enquiries, popular genre of anime (Japanese animation) and Australian urban building practices. Each is reconsidered in the present through the process of constructing objects and spaces.

Another more discrete form of contact with *sensography*² occurs here as bodies engage with writing about our installations. However, rather than just *reading* bodies and spaces through vision, our approaches to making also involve *feeling* and *sensing* the emotional and multi-sensorial dimensions of spaces as we are concerned with the affective, emotional and sensory dimensions of bodily capacities encompassed in everyday intercultural encounters between Australian and Polish cultures.

Cultural theorist Sara Ahmed³ positions feeling; bringing together affectivity, emotionality and sensation as

powerful social machinations involving political and economic productions that circulate towards and press against bodily spaces. Through the deployment of narratives or political rhetoric into private and public spheres, this pressure or contact is felt by the body and gives rise to a multiplicity of bodily movements - physical, emotional and psychical - which then shape bodies and the spaces in which the bodies reside. When it comes to the sociality of bodily capacities, the research of Howes⁴ and Classen⁵ into the senses is also useful. Both position the complex configurations of bodily encounters in spaces as renegotiable cultural communicative systems that vary from place to place and between different bodies. To explore the productions of these bodily capacities in everyday intercultural encounters and installation sculptural spaces, we knot affect, emotion and the senses together with the sociality of the place. This concern with the dimensions of feeling is the main focus of my doctoral research titled *Sensography*, that Howes describes as "...predicated on the recognition that the senses are constructed and lived differently in different societies..."⁶

Howes' model of the interwoven three-dimensional form of the knot⁷ becomes useful when thinking about the complexities of bodily encounters in spaces. Knots bring to mind culturally varying uses, social meanings and histories⁸ ranging from Chinese knotting, Japanese braiding, Celtic knots, Polish crochet and Sudanese or Haitian fish netting. The process of knotting utilises multi-

sensory acts across various social spheres, numerous industries and local economies. Knots are used by sailors, arborists, rescue professionals, surgeons, mathematicians and artists.⁹ Knotting skills are also crucial to numerous industries and local economies whilst being essential in many leisure and domestic activities. In the popular film genre of westerns, the precision of tightening the lasso shaped an iconic image of the US. Expressions such as *tying the knot*, mark social values and intimate feelings and a *knot in the stomach* points to an emotional state of anxiety. The hangman's noose may be considered as one of the most political and feared knots. We engage with Howes' model of the knot to think about how bodily capacities, objects and spaces are knotted with and steeped in sociality and issues of power.

In other words, through a *creative action* we attempt to negotiate what Raymond Williams calls *structures of feeling*.¹⁰ In referencing Williams' ideas, art critic and curator Jim Drobnick explains *structures of feeling* as "that unrepresentable, inarticulable sense of lived experience".¹¹ More specifically, *structures of feeling* are intangible forces of the present that arise out of the knotting between political and economic tensions and the felt bodily experience. Such entanglements promise that *structures of feeling* are far from innocent. These dynamic and relational forces are products governed by social formations; the political and economic practices of a particular place. Our encounters in places such as

Australia, Poland and Japan knotted such *structures of feeling* into our modes of expression.

As I attempt to feel my way out of this paragraph, I'm yet again drawn to the view outside my office window. There, in close proximity, stands a lush velvety green mountain called Mt Keira, at the bottom of which Martin and I live, make things and share our lives with my 90-year-old Polish grandmother. This is an intimate world, where feelings, sensations and affects circulate in swirling cycles. It is also a space where Australian and Polish cultures intermingle and collide. As human geographers Liz Bondi and Joyce Davison and philosopher Mick Smith put it, "Clearly our emotions matter. They affect the way we sense the substance of our past, present and future...".¹² Entanglements between narratives, emotion and the senses convert into affect: an ability to affect and a susceptibility to be affected.¹³ The affective, emotional and sensory movements between the past, present and future in both Polish and Australian cultures are heavy with social significance, saturated with politics and economics of both places, which in turn move our bodies and form worlds through which our bodies manoeuvre.

These felt forces are reflected in the process of making these exhibitions. For example, whilst Martin is assembling a sculpture in the studio, aromas of timber and sounds of tapping are released by his repetitive actions and contact with the materials, tools and processes. He takes a deep care as each piece of wood



is cut into wafer-thin slivers and drilled with a single hole to enable it to be hung from a toothpick. Each piece feels like raw silk, the soft furry pattern grazed by the blade still detectable. Hung by the hundreds onto a large triangular roof structure, the paper-thin slices take the shape of a roof shingle. From the warmth of pine we move to the cool, slippery surface of aluminium printing plates. Through a painstaking process, tiny impressions of dots are driven into the surface of printing plates with a nail. Each tap brings to mind an experience of frenzied labour involved in producing short-lived printed material for transforming bodies into consuming products in Adelaide. As the subtlety of the pattern emerges, a much slower world is also invoked. In this world, bodies are affected and emotionally moved by paintings of icons adorned with a glimmering silvery surface at the Pauline monastery of Jasna Gora in Czestochowa. In the studio, aluminium plates are also cut in narrow strips, edges of which are then nicked and rolled into rosettes. This process was shown to us by a folk artist in Zalipie, who twists colourful papers into flowers for the ephemeral Spring greeting ritual. These influences and their connections to the politics and economics become knotted together with the potential for future action.

The philosopher Brian Massumi explains this potential for futurity by pointing out that the transition between affective and affected involves uncertainty - the moment of *what to do next?*, which is felt or registered by the body.¹⁴ Affect intensifies due to the multiplicity of recurring

movements, which unlock the reservoirs of past histories and the contingency of future in the reality of the present - the *margin of manoeuvrability*, the feeling of an opportunity for future experimentation. Through this intensification, bodies connect and attachments are made between bodies, objects, spaces or situations. Ahmed goes on to suggest that over time repeated circulations of ideologies invested into emotion and sensation, which are bound to the protean nature of politics and economics, accumulate in memory as a kind of capricious affective value.¹⁵ The fluctuation in the intensification of affect makes *structures of feeling* unstable. We utilise this instability as an access point for constructing spaces, which attempt to negotiate the real and imagined dimensions of our intercultural worlds.

At the other end of our house, sounds of Polish words circulate, gravitating towards the studio space and Martin's body, in the process entangling with noises, aromas and emotions. My grandmother, Maria Zawada is teaching me how to crochet complex traditional Polish lace patterns for a hood that will clothe a sculpture that Martin is carving. Like preparing Polish ritual foods with my grandmother, the multi-sensory dimensions of making crochet stir up stories about the past. Tales of Polish history and personal experiences are resurrected and interwoven with current encounters in Australia and political agendas of both places. We invest much emotion into these narratives and our utterings reverberate through the house. As I wait in anticipation for how to proceed with



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the next crochet loop, our binding migrant experiences of journeying to Australia in 1981 resurface. Together, in a rush, with few possessions, we – my grandmother and I – escaped from Poland during the 1981 Martial Law period, manoeuvring our way to asylum in Austria. Later we reunited with our family in Australia. These were extraordinary emotional passages of anticipation and tension.

Although the process of crocheting is central in recalling my past experiences in the reality of the present, Martin and I attempt to link the traditional practice of Polish crochet with the place of our current residence in Wollongong by collecting plant material from the grounds of the University of Wollongong and by drawing on the plant dyeing practices developed by Australian artists including Elsje King,¹⁶ Kay Lawrence¹⁷ and India Flint.¹⁸ Potent aromas are released and permeate the studio when Merino wool yarns and *Eucalyptus tereticornis* leaves come together in the dye pot, sometimes interrupted by the sizzling sounds of brew escaping from the dye pot. The almost black fluffy strands are formed by crochet into a hood and rib-like garment, designed to shape the absent body of the creature that is being assembled. Through the cross-cultural intermingling of the textiles processes the boundaries between past, present and future seem to become blurred.

Likewise, the worlds of the folk legends of Baba Jaga¹⁹ and Yu-Baaba also become entangled in the sculptural

works. In Slavic folklore and contemporary animations, Baba Jaga is portrayed as a witch that is both an antagonist and a source of wisdom. Yu-Baaba on the other hand, is one of the protagonists of the Japanese anime film *Spirited Away* (2001) directed by Hayao Miyazaki of Studio Ghibli.²⁰ For me, Slavic folklore and anime from Japan became intertwined in Poland, during the 1970s when anime was a consistent element in Polish television and film. Since the 1980s both of our interests into anime deepened with the rapid growth and popularisation of the Japanese animation genre in Australia. In these stories both characters are powerful witches, Baba Jaga is a keeper of the forest and Yu-Baaba manages a Bathhouse for the spirits that populate Japanese folklore traditions and Shinto beliefs. Both are anthropomorphic creatures that move between the spiritual and contemporary worlds of popular culture, invoking multi-sensory and emotional places. Baba Jaga's and Yu-Baaba's shape-shifting abilities enable them to construct spaces where movements between the past, present and contingency of future can occur. Although ambiguity surrounds the precise location of Baba Jaga's and Yu-Baaba's territory, this world can be accessed through oral and moving-image narratives from the reality of the present. When entered, the boundaries between past, present and future seem to erode and a space for critiquing or resisting aspects of contemporary life emerges.

The cross-cultural knotting between these stories provides more than fantasy-scapes or escapes. In

terms of our installation, the exploration of the narrative structures and identities in Polish folklore and anime has enabled us to construct objects and spaces that negotiate some of the uneasiness felt by us in everyday encounters of intercultural living. In this context, our installations are not simply about the proximity of contact with affects, emotions or sensations but also with the *objects of feeling*.²¹ For example, through the emotionality invested in narratives about Baba Jaga, her feared identity moves across bodies and spaces from Poland to Australia. These circulations or productions are saturated with the affective value and feelings, which have stuck to her for over thousands of years.²²

When it comes to *feeling* and *sensing* the ways in which we as both migrant and non-migrant bodies negotiate living, work and gallery spaces, movement and attachment are equally important. Attachments are formed through the multiplicities of movements alluded to above, which occur between past, present and future and between affect, emotion, the senses and the social formations of the place. The productions of affectivity, emotionality and multi-sensory dimensions in spaces, move bodies towards certain bodies whether real or imagined. Through our collaborative projects we respond to such attachments by forming and constructing protean territories or worlds where setting of boundaries and loosing of ties with other bodies, spaces and worlds also occurs. The interconnections between Massumi's, Ahmed's and Howes' insights into affect, emotion and the

senses suggest that much can escape the notice of the artist's and viewer's body yet somehow it registers and accumulates. When felt repeatedly over time through the deployment of narratives or creative actions into spaces it has the potential to resurface somewhere in the future.

Crack! Snap! Another blade breaks as it comes into contact with a knot in the wood. Our bodies move towards the studio to make a hood fitting. Lots of questions circulate in both languages. Is it death, a witch or an anime character? It's scary but soft. Why does it wobble? Are these human teeth? Ahh it's a good demon... Is there such a thing?...Well in anime there is.



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- 17 Kay Lawrence's artworks utilising plant dyes include the Lake Mungo project: *Plant dye grid* (1997) and *Translation* (1999-2000).
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- 19 In Slavic languages variant forms include; Baba Yaga, Baba Yaha or Baba Jaha, in the Polish language names that relate to Baba Jaga include; *wiedźma*, *jedza* and *czarownica*.
- 20 Miyazaki, H 2002, *The Art of Miyazaki's Spirited Away*, VIZ Media LLC, San Francisco, CA.
- 21 Ahmed, S 2004, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Edinburgh University Press, New York, p13.
- 22 For etymology of Baba Jaga's identity see: Johns, A 2004, *Baba Yaga the Ambiguous Mother and Witch of the Russian Folktale*, Peter Lang Publishing, New York.

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other worlds

Dr Ruth Fazakerley
RMIT University

Agnieszka Golda and Martin Johnson make things. Through more than twenty years of independent and collaborative practice, involving painting, photography, video, wooden sculpture and textiles, what is unmistakable in their object-making is their love for an often eclectic mix of materials, colours, textures and surface patterns, combined with a pleasure in narrative and allusion. Often playful and sometimes startling, they manipulate figurative imagery and symbolism drawn from traditional European folk and contemporary, globalised popular culture to fashion a space for imaginative and emotional associations to stir.

In a parallel trajectory, their collaborative exhibition work both inside and out of the gallery demonstrates a literal concern with the fashioning of space. The strategies of installation practice – the consideration of objects, not in isolation, but as an integral component of a complete environment in which the spectator also plays a part – offers the artists a means of paying attention to the complex multi-sensorial nature of experience and of creating new possibilities for viewer interaction. In this way, Golda and Johnson seek to instigate movements between physical bodies, materials, artefacts, spaces, and events – in the process evoking memories and sensations, thereby telling stories.

In Golda and Johnson's collaborative installation 'Contact' at the Faculty of Creative Arts Gallery (University of Wollongong), the visitor is invited to make contact with

another world, one situated somewhere between art gallery, folk tale writ large, or the set of a fantasy film or Japanese anime scene; a space formerly familiar as a container for artworks now enlivened with possibilities for exploration, association and experience.

Dominating the gallery is a huge timber-shingled roof smelling of newly cut pine, a life-size sketch of an imagined dwelling, now somehow displaced and without its proper 'home'. Open at one end, the structure draws visitors around the walls of the gallery and invites them to peer within or even enter, despite the seeming precariousness of the internal timber props – a protective shelter, a place from which to look out and not be seen, to whisper with friends, to plot and play.

Covering the floor, pale green carpet underlay modifies the transmission of sound within the space and even the experience of placing foot to floor. Visually unifying the gallery, distinguishing inside from out, indisputably synthetic in appearance, smell and feel, the green surface nevertheless speaks 'ground' with all the lingering associations of grass, lawn, or forest floor.

Three-dimensional aluminium flowers attached to one wall likewise continue the reflections upon an encounter with storybook, synthetic nature. At the far end of the gallery a nightmarish, ribbed and horned figure seems to extrude from the wall, long arms stretching to meet the floor, perhaps emerging from some other realm (caught



at the interface between worlds) to greet the viewer face-to-face. Two walls are covered in large aluminium sheets. Embossed with a regular dot pattern, the metal provides a surface that gently bounces light around the gallery (including the diffuse bodily reflections of gallery visitors), creating movement and another impetus for visitors to reassess their own spatial perceptions.

Here, installation is conceived as a form of ephemeral, contingent practice that pivots on the role of the encounter between viewers and their surrounds. Since at least the 1960s, visual artists have explored installation as a mode of practice that has sought to undermine the autonomy of both viewer and art object by focusing on subjective perception and 'environmental' relations. New York academic and artist, Allen Kaprow's simple definition of environment was of 'an art form that fills an entire room (or outdoor space) surrounding the visitor and consisting of any materials whatsoever, including lights, sounds and colour'.¹ Environmental artworks produced by artists such as Kaprow throughout the 60s and 70s claimed to create an immersive experience, an environment in which the spectator was literally absorbed to become 'a real part of the whole'.² Artistic experience therefore involved the whole body of the visitor, their full range of



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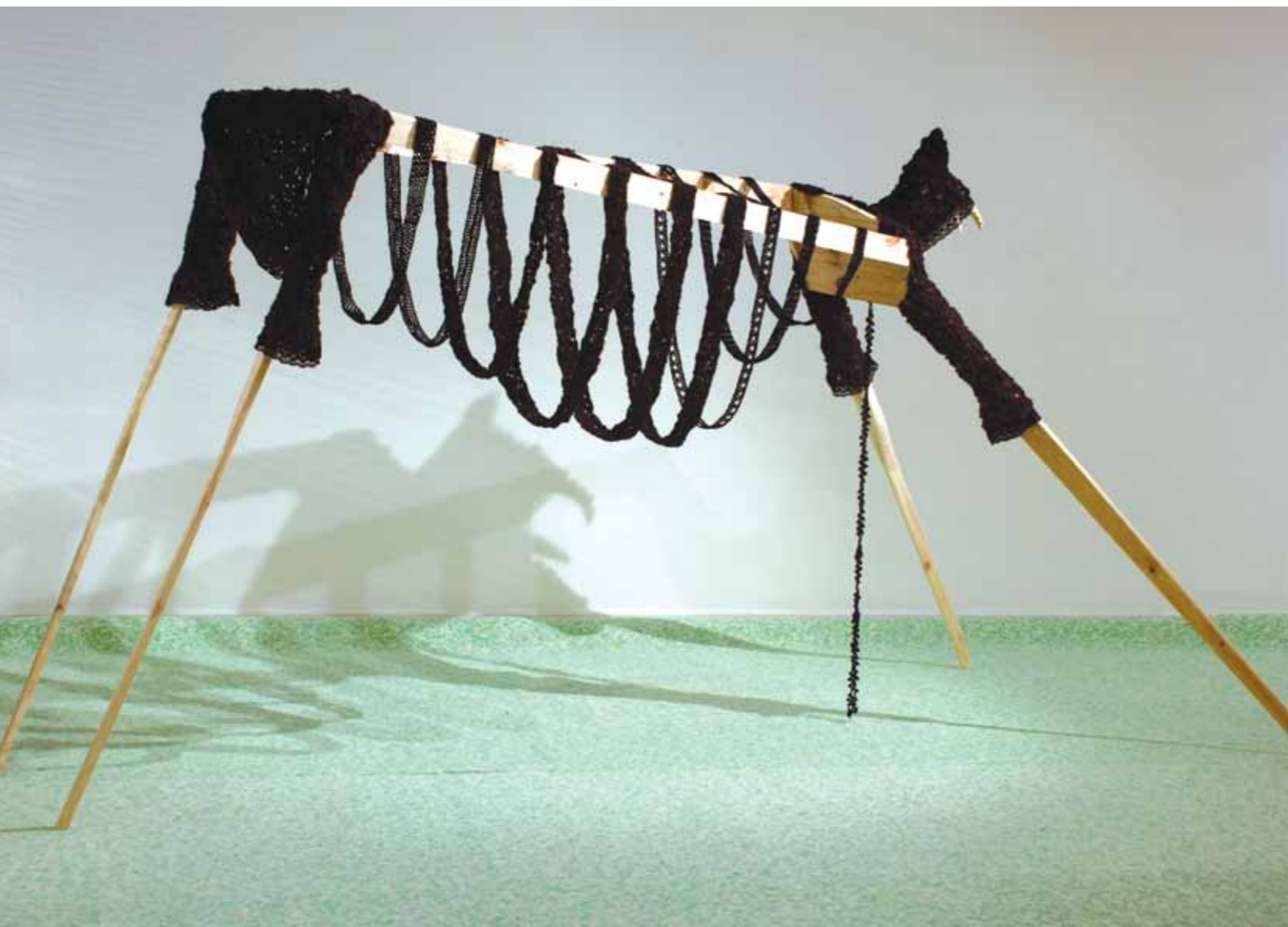
sense perceptrors as well as the mind and imagination – a proposition, as Martin Jay notes, in direct contrast to the Kantian notion that aesthetic experience was inherently contemplative, with the observer supposedly distanced and separate from the object of knowledge.³

Proliferating 'new art' and 'new sculpture' in this period (such as earthworks, land art, assemblages, happenings, environmental, installation, conceptual, ephemeral and performance art) sought new approaches to art that would break down established boundaries between art forms, between art and everyday life, and create a drastically new relationship with the audience.⁴ In emphasising active experience and the consciousness of the viewer, rather than the particular qualities inherent in any given object, such practices brought to the fore the role of the beholder of artwork as an active participant in both the production and reception of art, reflecting a trend towards what Jay calls a performative impulse: 'the anti-optical theatricalization of the aesthetic experience, that addressing of the body of the beholder in real time that formalist critics like Michael Fried were vigorously, if unsuccessfully, condemning in the Minimalist art of the 1960s'.⁵

For Nicolas Bourriaud, however, while the participants of Kaprow's Happenings and Environments might have been active and engaged, they were restricted to reacting to those initial impulses engineered by the artist as 'transmitter'.⁶ Claire Bishop notes that the emphasis on

first-hand experience in environmental and installation art of the 1960s and 70s, despite claims to reconfigure relations between the artist-producer and viewer-consumer, frequently played on an ambiguity between a fully present, autonomous subject (the viewer) and the abstract, philosophical model of that spectator postulated by the way in which the work itself attempted to structure the artful encounter.⁷ Bourriaud describes this situation as a 'soft' version of interactivity, in contrast to the possibilities of contemporary DIY cultures and internet practices, for example, and he argues instead for the possibility of a 'relational art' that might somehow ignore the separation between transmission and reception.⁸ No longer 'a space to walk through', contemporary art, for Bourriaud, is a state of encounter and 'interstice': 'a space in social relations which [...] suggests possibilities for exchanges other than those that prevail within the system' – not through representation per se, but by modelling possible universes, providing alternative models of action.⁹

In the installation 'Contact', Golda and Johnson don't simply represent an alternative space for contemplation, one of intermingled worlds comprised of fantasy and reality, the artificial and the natural, traditional and contemporary. Instead, the encounter is central, not only through the inevitable contingency of each meeting of viewer-material-object-space (and so on) within the gallery, but in the emphasis on praxis, that is, in the actual performance and practice of spaces and relationships



through which alternative worlds are both encountered and modelled, remembered, transformed or rejected.

It is with the performative in mind that Golda has so often drawn upon the traditional, regional folk tales and ephemeral, ritual practices of her birthplace in Zalipie, Poland. These folk practices are significant not only for their rich symbolic language but as socio-experiential forms that connect places and identities. Take the ambiguous figure of the Baba Jaga, for example, a woman both wise and threatening whose home is in a willow tree, deep in the forest that borders Zalipie village. In this forest time exists differently from outside and for those who enter past and present can seem to merge. From within, Baba Jaga keeps careful watch. By means of powerful spells and charms (and special abilities that enable her to transform into a bird or forest animal) she can pass unnoticed when she chooses to, moving between worlds, space and time.¹⁰ The telling of the Baba Jaga story, like the act of walking through the forest, embodies specific knowledge about appropriate ways of behaviour, about real places and local constructions of identity, in the process making links between the village and villagers, the forest and its groves, its plant and animal life, and what lies outside. At the same time, the tale expresses a broader conceptualisation of the relationships between humans and nature, between dreams and reality, the visible and invisible, past and future.

It may be pertinent to introduce the concept of animism

here as a potentially useful abstraction for thinking about European folk traditions and systems of knowledge. Sociologist John Clammer describes animism as an approach that regards reality as non-material, or nature as spiritualised.¹¹ Taking account of everyday phenomena such as dreams, which might be taken as evidence of the uncertain boundary between fantasy and the waking world, animist beliefs and practices envision the existence of a world beyond ordinary materialism. Animism, Clammer suggests, embodies 'an experiential, active and everyday relationship to creatures and things in nature', effectively dissolving fixed boundaries between the animate and inanimate, and 'spiritualising the mundane'.¹²

An example of animist beliefs and practices can also be found in Japanese traditional folk Shinto, and its articulation of human, natural and spiritual relationships. In a world where almost anything has the potential to be deified, including natural forces and phenomena, mountains, rocks and trees, animals and humans, living or dead, Shinto constructs a rich network of spiritual influences that results in a very permeable sense of human-nature-divine boundaries.¹³

Although, in common parlance, the term animism may be associated with traditional (or even 'primitive') systems of knowledge, the concept is clearly alive and well in contemporary Japan. This is a world-view, for example, that might be seen to underpin aspects of contemporary



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Japanese story telling, such as Hayao Miyazaki's animated films 'Spirited Away' (Studio Ghibli, 2001) or 'My Neighbour Totoro' (Studio Ghibli, 1988), both popular internationally. Ostensibly stories for children, these tales articulate the complex, porous and overlapping boundaries that exist between realms of past, present and future, between humans and the natural and spirit worlds. Science fiction films, such as the well-known anime 'Ghost in the Shell' (Mamoru Oshii/Studio IG, 1995), in a similar way, take as a given the intermingling of the synthetic and the natural, the virtual and the real.

While animism is clearly manifest as a trace in the products of the internationally successful manga and anime industries, Clammer argues that animism is also used within Japanese intellectual discourse as a way of explaining the distinctiveness of Japanese culture, and as a means of explicitly locating nature as part of the constitution of Japanese society.¹⁴

From the perspective of attempts to reveal or redefine relationships between society and nature, humans and technology, or the material and the immaterial, the concept of animism suggests particular possibilities as one lens for reflecting upon the history of recent installation practice, as well as for organising the various threads emerging in the installation 'Contact'. In this exhibition, Johnson and Golda bring European and Japanese animism into dialogue, drawing on their knowledge of traditional Polish folk practices and

contemporary Japanese anime (linked as well to childhood memories of popular Japanese cartoon series, shown on both Australian and Polish TV). It might also be worth reflecting (following Clammer) that animist systems have a subversive potential – in their undermining of rigorous scientific categories and resistance to assimilation or codification within rationalist schemas they throw a spotlight on the political dimensions and effects of everyday practices and beliefs (including contemporary art).

Cognisant of the historical foundations of installation practice in the visual arts, the installation 'Contact' invites the gallery visitor into an environment and 'sets it in motion', allowing for new meanings or counter-meanings to be created through the 'radical juxtaposition' of bodies, objects and spaces.¹⁵ Although a world where (almost) anything might happen, Golda and Johnson's installation draws on shared histories (of story-telling, popular culture, the feel and smell of materials) to set the scene for an encounter with overlapping and porous borders between fantasy and reality, and between the gallery and the everyday world of the University outside, and beyond.



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Raising the Dead, 2008

list of installations

Frenzy Episode, 2010, mixed media installation;
wood, cotton, aluminium, enamel paint.

13m x 15m

Project Contemporary Artspace, Wollongong, NSW.

Pages 2-17

Contact, 2009, mixed media installation;
wood, cotton, silk, merino wool, aluminium, foam.

16m x 7m

**Faculty of Creative Arts Gallery,
University of Wollongong, NSW.**

University of Wollongong, NSW.

Pages 18-27

Raising the Dead, 2008, mixed media installation;
wood, cotton, wool blankets, rabbit fur, digital print
on paper, oil and acrylic on canvas.

20m x 20m

**Light Square Gallery, Adelaide Centre for the Arts,
Adelaide, South Australia.**

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Raising the Dead, 2008

biographies

Agnieszka Golda and **Martin Johnson** completed Associate Diploma in Art at North Adelaide School of Art, South Australia, and Bachelor in Arts degrees at RMIT, Melbourne, Golda in Textile Design and Johnson in Photography. Golda has completed Master of Visual Arts (Research) at the University of South Australia and received a Churchill Fellowship. She is currently lecturing in Visual Arts and completing her PhD (Creative Practice) research at the Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong. Together they have collaborated on numerous projects since 1996, which have been exhibited in Australia and Poland. These include the founding of Threaded Limbs studio in Adelaide, exhibitions at: Jam Factory Contemporary Craft & Design Centre, Artspace - Adelaide Festival Art Centre, Prospect Gallery, BMGART Gallery and Moving Image Festival in Adelaide, South Australia, Grotta Nobile Gallery, Krakow, Poland, site works in South Australia and Poland. Their recent research projects involved mixed media installations at Project Contemporary Artspace, Wollongong and Faculty of Creative Arts Gallery, University of Wollongong, NSW that drew from field studies undertaken by the artists in France, Poland and Japan.

Dr Ruth Fazakerley writes on visual art and visual culture, with particular expertise in the history and practice of Australian contemporary urban public art. She has a background as a visual artist, specialising in painting and sculptural installation. Over the last fifteen years she has variously worked as an artist, arts administrator and as a lecturer in areas such as drawing, professional practice, urban culture, and contemporary Australian art. She is currently undertaking a fellowship at RMIT in association with ARC Future Fellow Quentin Stevens, where she will be conducting research on memorials and public art, and their links to urban design and planning practice.

Raising the Dead, 2008



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Cover and Back Images; Agnieszka Golda and Martin Johnson, Frenzy Episode, 2010, mixed media installation; pine, cotton, aluminum, enamel paint, 13m x 15m, Project Contemporary Artspace, Wollongong, NSW.

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Raising the Dead, 2008



