

PARALLEL COLLISIONS

2012 ADELAIDE BIENNIAL OF AUSTRALIAN ART CURATORS ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR AND NATASHA BULLOCK

AMELIA BARIKIN: *This is the first time you have collaborated as co-curators on an exhibition. How did this partnership come about, and how would you characterise the parallels in your curatorial thinking?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: This partnership started as a friendship and the collaboration has evolved from conversations we've been having for over ten years. Natasha is originally from Melbourne, but lives in Sydney and Alexie is from Sydney, but lives in Melbourne. We have never actually resided in the same city at the same time. We became aware of each other in 2000 and over the years through correspondence and sharing some very long nights, it became apparent that we had certain commonalities, starting with our interest in the relations between photography, film, literature, and art history. These subjects form the curatorial crux of our respective interests. We both prefer to privilege the artist as the starting point in exhibition making. We would rather look or listen to the work itself, than research backwards from a thematic stance, using art or artists to illustrate a secondary point. We both like work environments that are characterised by a spirit of generosity, food on the table and bottles of wine, sharing ideas and arguments with artists and peers. From our position as curators, we think it is important to not only state that you believe in equality and discursive thoughts, but to also welcome radical thinking at your own table. And we have laughed at ourselves during this process, often when we try to find a shared position or consensus we are reminded that we ourselves also form a parallel collision!

AMELIA BARIKIN: *As the last remaining major biennale dedicated solely to showcasing contemporary Australian art, the Adelaide Biennial is frequently expected to provide a 'snapshot' of contemporary Australian practice and offer an overview of the field. You have explicitly rejected characterising Parallel Collisions as a survey. How has the function of the Biennial changed?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: As Australia's only standing biennial of national art we are humbled to be working on this exhibition project. From the inaugural *Biennial* in 1990 curated by Mary Eagle to *Adelaide Installations* incorporating the 1994 *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art* that featured commissioned work, and to the recent critical success of *Before and After Science* (2010), the *Biennial* plays an important role in presenting work by living artists. Yet, the function of the *Biennial* has changed because the landscape in which it is being presented has changed. In the last decade biennials have helped to significantly alter the terrain of art. They used to be, and some still are, large-scale overviews of contemporary art practice uncovering the new and/or showcasing the existing. However, biennials are increasingly taking stronger curatorial positions, which are as much a result of, or perhaps a reaction to, the changes and commercialisation of contemporary art as it is a result of the professionalisation of the curatorial industry. We would prefer to describe this *Biennial* as an impression and a speculation—we have consciously resisted an authorial or definitive stance. We would prefer to not use the word survey because it implies a particular way of working. It implies a process of review or examination. We have explicitly placed the relationship with the artist and their ideas at the forefront of our curatorial practice. It is their ideas, developed by some of the artists after site-visits to the Art Gallery of South Australia that have created this exhibition. We provided a framework, a proposition from which the artists have responded but, in the end, this *Biennial* has been shaped by their respective concerns. We wanted to embrace an element of chance in our working process and give support to the unknown and the untested idea.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *What can we expect from this iteration of the Adelaide Biennial?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: The 12th *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art* explores how ideas emerge, converge and reform over time and echo through history to reveal points of similarity (parallel), contact (collisions) and encounter (trespass). The title *Parallel Collisions* describes the architectural

and temporal devices at play in the exhibition's structure. Presented across the AGSA's Elder Wing of Australian Art and the temporary exhibitions galleries, this edition is transhistorical, bringing the past into dialogue with the present. Works variously collapse, hover, evolve, accumulate or splinter. At times the encounter is in *parallel* or *collision* with the historical Australian collection, highlighting the conditional and at times, complicit nature of the narratives on display.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *Tell us about the Marco Fusinato work that the Biennial exhibition title is based on. Why this title, this work?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: We are interested in the contradictions raised by this title. What happens when a parallel and a collision are placed in dialogue, especially when their meaning may at first appear antithetical? At the heart of their concurrence is the complex and intangible nature of time. A parallel cleaves a path through time continuously. In descriptive terms, the parallel can refer to correspondences—a tendency or a similarity of *parallel* concern. A collision, however, describes contact and feels like a rupture to the sequential nature of temporality, even though time persists beyond the expansion of that moment. Cars crash. Particles collide.

Marco Fusinato's 2008 work *Parallel Collisions* is drawn from moments of conflict—the face of a terrorist, the images of an explosion—interpreted by musicians who introduce subjectivity to the piece in all its volatility. The image functions as a parallel collision, its transmission an act of indictment as much as incident; the sheaves of the score scatter like detritus and their dismissal allows for a reconfiguration to occur that is unique to each performance. Situated in the Elder Wing and surrounded by modernist paintings and sculptures, Fusinato's work is a testament to past actions and an emboldened agitprop.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *Unlike many past Adelaide Biennials, the majority of artists have been given the opportunity to create new works. What kind of curatorial guidance was offered in the development of these commissions, and what can we expect to see by way of these new creations?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: Including new work was important to us because this *Biennial* is, above all, an exhibition of living work. We presented the artists with a proposition anchored around four words: time, trespass, parallels, collisions. We have not worked with the artists as producers or sponsors. We have approached each artist as an individual. Inevitably some artists' projects require consistent input throughout their development whereas other projects are self-contained. We are fortunate to have wonderful support at the Art Gallery of South Australia with new director Nick Mitzevich and project curator Lisa Slade. This support enabled us to commission many new works, which is a first in some time for the *Adelaide Biennial*. Given this support, we brought fourteen of the twenty-one artists/artist duos/artist collaborators to South Australia in early 2011. It was not necessary to take every artist to Adelaide as some projects were more autonomous. The architect Jan van Schaik was also made available to each artist in the event they wanted to discuss specific spatial concerns. This trip offered the artists the opportunity to respond to the Gallery context/environment, or to further develop their ideas.

For example, there are major commissions by Richard Bell, Stephen Bram, Daniel Crooks, Marco Fusinato, Susan Jacobs and Tim Silver. Tim Silver has made a full body cast of himself lying in a foetal position wearing nothing but a hoodie. The cast is filled with wood putty and deep-frozen before being displayed in the gallery. Over the duration of the exhibition the frozen structure evaporates. It doesn't melt. As the moisture leaves, the form collapses and ages, so in the timeline of the show the body is obliterated. The series of accompanying photographs reveals further erosion, bringing the form closer to death and to a husk devoid of moisture. The dramatic chiaroscuro, the foetal position and the head covering lends a classical *and* contemporary sensibility to the work. The dense character of temporality and idea of transience, represented in Silver's work, are concepts that run through many of the new commissions in this *Biennial*.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *Australia has a very particular relationship to the past, coaxed from multiple strands of converging histories at varied levels of visibility. Within Australian art history parallel collisions are often kept out of alignment, running as separate threads within the same frame. How do the 'Redux', 'Incursion' and 'Tracking Shot' sections fit within or respond to this historiographic framework?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: Within the parallel structure, works have been named an 'Incursion', a 'Redux', or situated within the 'Tracking Shot' to reflect the artists' concerns and the different temporalities of their work. Sixteen artists' works are included in the 'Tracking Shot'; five appear only as 'Incursions' in the Elder Wing of Australian Art, while seven artist's works are placed across both the Elder Wing and the temporary exhibition galleries to form a connective tissue, which we call the 'Redux'.

Like water through stone, the Incursions in the Elder Wing respond directly to the ideas and narratives on display in the collection. These works simultaneously collide with their context (or at the very least are placed in contact) as much as they are in parallel with it; their meaning ultimately derived from a network of spatial, historical and contemporaneous associations. Nicholas Folland, for example, takes up the rich and associative environment of the Elder Wing through the creation of a levitating glass island. Comprised of more than 2000 cut-glass vessels, the work is an incandescent archipelago. It is as if Folland has emptied the drawing rooms and vitrines of South Australia's middle classes to create a mythological psychogeography of refracted light. Inspired particularly by early stories of colonial exploration, discovery and failure, which are embedded in the collection works on display, Folland's floating form embodies anxiety and splendour, a figurative "black swan of trespass on alien waters".

To unravel further the arrow of time's chronology, the Redux works are those that return or are brought back; they exist *post-positively*. As one instance of a Redux within the exhibition, Rosemary Laing's photographs are evidence that an image may alter an established order. A work of art cannot be broken down into singular, reproducible elements and Laing's images, when viewed in the Elder Wing in direct contact with the vernacular of colonial landscape painting, are not about juxtaposition or appropriation but rather about how photography has become as much a precursor for painting as the reverse. Laing disturbs the order of things by reshaping the symbolism embodied in the tradition of landscape painting in Australia, usurping the assumed narrative and not flinching from rendering even the most specious of introduced species. In *Parallel Collisions*, Laing's photographs are situated in dialogue with John Glover's 1835 painting *A view of the artist's house and garden, in Mills Plains, Van Diemen's Land* and Han Heysen's *Mystic Morn* of 1904.

Like Laing's series, many of the Redux works consider notions of recall, the repeat and at times, the elusive nature of memory. Selected from different periods of an artist's practice, they not only signal a sustained engagement with specific ideas but also, in their physical locations across the galleries, point to the elastic and transformative nature of those same thoughts. These works proffer ways of thinking that shift from one parallel to the next and, in so doing, describe a doubling that evokes the temporal character of perception.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *You mention photography as a point of parallel in your curatorial histories. Can you discuss the different types of photography in this Biennial?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: Representing the breadth and diversity of photomedia practices is important to us. From the prints of Rosemary Laing, Tim Silver, Shaun Gladwell and Pat Brassington to the incorporation of photomedia from Tom Nicholson and Robert Cook Vs Max Pam, the richness of the medium is underlined. The association of Laing's prints with historical paintings, for instance, draws a complicated line between photography's history and its relation to the contemporary.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *The phrase "parallel collisions" is suggestive of relationships that are difficult to perceive, measure, or capture. To imagine multiple collision points on alternate courses that may never meet—to think of explosive or volatile moments that have no perceptible correlation—this is in direct opposition to modes of narrative storytelling that rely on chains of causes and effects. I ask firstly, what is the role of narrative in this exhibition? And secondly, does history need narratives in order to survive?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: As students from the heyday of postmodernism it is difficult for us to accept narrative in straightforward terms as simply a beginning, middle and end. At this time, in the 1980s and 1990s, our thinking was influenced by Lyotard's ideas in *The Postmodern Condition*, the end of the grand narratives, and by Linda Hutcheon's writings on parody. Having said this, we have felt in more recent times the shift to a personalised, reflective and localised sense of storytelling within literature, cinema and some aspects of contemporary art making. We don't believe in history as a 'blank slate'. Narratives are important and history relies on facts, however porous those facts might be to the passage of time and interpretation and the recollection of meaning and

intent. Many of the artists in this *Biennial* use narrative, looking back to events in history or forward to whims of fancy or fiction. Working in painting, drawing, and porcelain sculpture, Michelle Usher's work exploits the pleasure of fictional narratives and the indulgent enjoyment of serendipity. Concurrent with making art, she writes short stories to bring together seemingly disparate ideas and references. The stories are conceptual models that inform the work as it is made. The work in turn influences the stories, which are constantly re-adapted. In a related way, Usher's multifaceted installation represents a space of doubling and illusion and provides a meditation on the impermanence of being. The face we see repeated in some of her images is an ambiguous figure inspired by the opera *Don Giovanni*. Obscured by translucent veils and turning away from us, this woman is a man, whose identity is in a state of flux.

Narrative takes another form in the collaborative book written by Robert Cook and illustrated by Max Pam. This is the first time this curator/writer and photographer have worked together. Documenting the vagaries of the internal realm as well as the experiences of the wanderer at large, *Narcolepsy (a novella)* (2011-12) is a hand-held fetish object, a giveaway zine that sits in the gallery free for the viewer to take away, enacting a gesture of trespass. Starting with the masculine wound and self-harm as an in-between state, images shimmer and occlude with repetitions in text often left hanging mid-sentence, partially erased and constantly jarring.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *You have cited both Alexander Sokurov's film Russian Ark (2002), and Paul Thomas Anderson's film Magnolia (1999) as inspirational in the development of this Biennial. I suspect this intersects with the idea of navigating or designing an exhibition like a moving image, and resonates particularly with the creation of moments where different forms of temporality collide. But the idea of the Sokurov-style tracking shot, as in a continuous single take with no edits, actually works against the notion of montage and can reinforce linearity. What is the appeal of the tracking shot as a model of spectatorship?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: *Russian Ark* is a film comprising a single continuous shot. Moments in history provide the visual language and are akin to punctuation points. Martin Scorsese also famously employed the long take in *Goodfellas* (1990). He did this to introduce each character of the story. Sokurov does the same but to different effect and purpose. For him, Saint Petersburg's Winter Palace is the vessel and the State Hermitage collection is a part of the *mise-en-scène* or the texture of film. Architecture provides a quasi-framework for *Russian Ark* by spatially articulating edits. Doorways become transitions. The snow of the landscape outside marks another shift. We employ the term tracking shot for its associative potential to describe the passage of the viewer through time and space. For *Parallel Collisions* we have used the architecture of the exhibition in the temporary galleries in a similar way. In collaboration with architect Jan van Schaik we have created a pathway through the exhibition, framing works in particular ways or in dialogue with other works. As spectators we encounter works in an experience that accumulates from beginning to end. Passageways become thresholds to another space. By creating a singular passage through the "parallel" downstairs we were interested in the ability of spatial perception to augment and truncate the spectator's temporal experience.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *In his book Chronology, Daniel Birnbaum remarked that, "it is no longer a question of pushing the linear model of time to the verge of collapse, but rather of suggesting more sophisticated and complex networks that allow for temporal heterogeneity in a multiplicity of non-synchronous connections, delays, and deferrals".¹ Your curatorial strategy is very much more on the side of speed (of slowness and acceleration) than it is on the side of measurable or 'objective' temporality. Are there other curators or exhibitions that you would cite as inspirational for this approach?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: We recognise the pioneering curators from the 1960s to the present day, who have produced radically different methodologies for working with art and artists: from Pontus Hultén and Harold Szeemann to Jean-Hubert Martin, Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Massimiliano Gioni and WHW (What, How and for Whom). And in Australia we acknowledge the transhistorical exhibitions of Anthony Bond, Juliana Engberg, Ted Gott, Nick Waterlow and the creation of the Museum of Old & New Art (MONA).

Over the last decade a number of exhibitions and artworks have attempted to address the materiality of time and to bridge the (artificial) museological divide between past and present. Perhaps the most prescient example is *Artempo: Where time becomes art* (2007) at the Palazzo Fortuny in Venice. Structured around the notion of temporality, *Artempo* tested the possibilities that emerge when historical objects are situated beside recently made artworks. Points of difference or similarity create a ricocheting effect for the viewer. A similar conceptual underpinning was explored in the *Biennale of Sydney's Revolutions-Forms That Turn* (2008) where avant-garde practice was situated in relation to recent art making.





In terms of individual practices, Daniel Buren sliced his high-end minimalism through the architectural heart of the Musée Picasso (2009) forging a physical path between Picasso's brutal modernism and Buren's playful austerity; and with more subtle effect, Mona Hautom wove webs between chairs from the collection of the Fondazione Querini Stampalia in Venice, Italy (2009) in a work about and entitled *Conversations*. Closer to home in 2009, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery was transformed by Patricia Piccinini's sculptures, with animals hanging between pictures and sleeping among didactic displays. This intervention illustrates how Piccinini's ideas relate as much to evolution and science as they do to art and culture. These are just a few examples of how artists are using the matter of time and the historical as media, allowing for more imaginative engagement with collections and architecture beyond a typical narrative through time or a modernist white cube.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *In many ways Parallel Collisions manifests as a site-specific project that has developed in dialogue with both the institution and the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia. Could you give us some examples of how the exhibition responds to or alters the existing conditions on site?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: The exhibition opens with an assertion. For the first time since the inauguration of the Art Gallery of South Australia in 1881, an artist will create a deliberate and decisive act of trespass in the vestibule behind the neo-classical columns framing the Gallery's entrance. Richard Bell's installation *Solidarity* (2011-12) is the reclamation of a space that has long needed contesting. Moving to one side the white marble busts of colonial forebears, he draws on the voices of the civil rights movement. His painting *Peter Norman A white hero for black Australia* will be erased for subsequent re-hangings but his action will endure in the DNA of the gallery walls. As the artist says: "We will not be put in darkies' corner".

The transition between the collection spaces and the subterranean contemporary galleries is defined by an architectural incursion, activating both a horizontal and vertical axis. Foster & Berean's newly commissioned work, *Unity and fragments (how to be alone)* (2012), slices through the temporary gallery's entrance stairwell, amplifying the psychological threshold aspect of the space. Using provisional materials, the formality of their elevated grid is ultimately articulated as a failed or aborted structure unable to wholly contain the objectives of the modernist project. This is complemented by the inclusion of the Zig-zag chair, designed by Gerrit Rietveld (c. 1934), which hangs precariously from the grid. Drawn from the AGSA collection, the chair is a feat of stripped back three-dimensional virtuosity, the simple abstract form belying a complex structure.

Responding in a different way to the existing conditions of the site is Philip Samartzis' *Microphonics* (2012). Samartzis re-deploys and configures site-specific field recordings to create points of aural pressure that have no discernible origin or source. Recorded in the galleries of AGSA over the course of several visits, Samartzis's soundscape permits the sound of one time to pass imperviously through the space and time of another.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *Heraclitus famously quipped that it was impossible to step into the same river twice. It appears from some of the works you are interested in the image of the river as an historical analogy?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: You could be referring here to the works of Yvonne Koolmatrie, Jonathan Jones and Tom Nicholson. The Murray River, or Murrurundi as it is known to the Ngarrindjeri people, is a constant source of inspiration to Yvonne Koolmatrie. Her weaving is directly linked to the river and its health—when the river suffers, the sedge grass she uses is harder to find; when it flourishes, so do the rushes. The work commissioned for the exhibition, *River Dreaming* (2012), is a flat circular weave that sits against the wall and in its folds and curves speaks of the interconnectivity of the present and the past. It is not uncommon in colonial art for a fallen tree to provide a framing device at the foreground of a painting. In a new sculptural installation, *Untitled (illuminated tree)*, Jonathan Jones literally brings a lifeless Murray River red gum into the gallery. In highlighting compositional conventions, the work alludes to the overly idealistic and romantic overtones of these early colonial views of the landscape. The interweaving and wrapping of fluorescent light around and under the grooves and rivulets of the irregular surfaces enables an elegiac renewal of the displaced form.

Within the Elder Wing, Jones further shifts our perspective by intensifying subtle differences. An amalgamation of paintings and drawings of the Murray-Darling river system drawn from the AGSA collection reveals a multifaceted archive of a living entity, the river itself, neutralised and interpreted through 'white eyes'. In reordering and assembling many views of a single subject, the differences become more apparent and entrenched. The Murray-Darling river system becomes the *remembered* river. In a further collaboration, Murray River gums are shaped into benches that refer to canoes, and in this reincarnation as bespoke furniture, they manipulate our vantage point and acutely alter our perception.

Tom Nicholson offers a collision with an alternative "river story", and has selected the gallery's most enduring picture and first acquisition, *Evening shadows, backwater of the Murray, South Australia* by H.J. Johnstone, as the central tenet of his project. Nicholson draws a parallel between the content of this painting and the politics of the Cumeragunja walk-off in 1939. In 1881, the year in which AGSA acquired the painting and the year the gallery itself was founded, the Cumeragunja Mission was established on the Murray River on the traditional lands of the Yorta Yorta and Bangerang peoples. Almost sixty years later, in 1939, Cumeragunja became the site of the first mass strike of Aborigines when one hundred and fifty people crossed the river border in protest at their abuse at the mission. Nicholson builds a type of monument to this action by presenting a mass hang of copies of the *Evening Shadows* painting in the Elder Wing, along with a stack of posters to be distributed in the homes and streets of Adelaide. Downstairs he re-positions Johnstone's original painting alongside a drawing and a powerful video showing a series of interviews with indigenous elders. Merging uncertain social, cultural and political circumstances, Nicholson's work creates a rich tapestry of connections between past and present actions.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *What role does the exhibition catalogue play in relation to the Biennial as a whole?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: Our view is that an exhibition catalogue is not simply a piece of marketing collateral, there is instead an opportunity to create a book that can outlive an exhibition by containing ideas in a way that evokes the texture and textuality of a project. It was important to us that the publication for *Parallel Collisions* could function as a venue for the exhibition in the same way that the galleries would provide a site to intuit ideas and encounter artworks. There is also a pragmatic acknowledgement embedded in this approach: audiences that may not see the *Biennial* can obtain the publication, and by curating this space you can extend the potential for the ideas of the exhibition to exist beyond the gallery.

In Australia, there is ample opportunity to work more closely with graphic designers in the articulation and development of exhibition publications and identities. From the beginning of this process we invited Fabio Ongarato Design (FOD) on board as collaborators and they have been involved in our discussions, tracking the evolution of the *Biennial*. Daniel Peterson, a designer from FOD travelled with us to Adelaide for the artists' research trip, becoming complicit in the process rather than simply responsive to a publication brief. Consequently, the *Biennial* book proposes a graphic distillation of the exhibition's central premise. Creating transitional moments, a series of parallels and collisions—in the striking form of triangular shapes and diamonds in three fluorescent colours—propel the text and images through the framework of the book. With its shifts in stock and finish, the feel of the publication emulates the textural and experiential quality of the exhibition's structure and installation.

More succinctly, the exhibition publication is conceived as an offering and while it mirrors the structure of the exhibition it is not designed as a true representation. By giving scope and breadth to reproductions and by dedicating pages to the creation of original artwork or ancillary research material, the publication was developed with the artists' visual practices at the forefront.

The commissioning of original texts was a key strategy for allowing complexity, contradiction and discursive thought to emerge. We invited eleven writers from across disciplines and around the world including academics, a poet, an author, colleague curators and artists to write for the publication, offering our four key words—time, parallel, collision and trespass—as a proposition in much the same way as we approached the early discussions with the artists. We invited international writers because we believe Australian art is international art. Anthony Gardner writes about the demand for locality in contemporary art practice, Philip Brophy establishes a parallax between the representation of the body in art history and the serial killer in cinema, Lily Hibberd writes a ficto-critical text of wonder and imagination, Mami Kataoka discusses spirituality in the Asian world, Raimundus Malakalus writes a fictional text about slippages in time and perception, Jennifer McMahon charts a vivid passage through the works in the exhibition, Adrian Martin pumps up the volume on the body in art and cinema, Glenn Isegar-Pilkington discusses an indigenous aesthetic, Justin Clemens casts a retrospective gaze upon artists whose works mine the past, Johanna Featherstone pens a poem and Christos Tsiolkas writes a story that slides between fact and fiction.

AMELIA BARIKIN: *Marked with descriptors such as "the mirror", "the void", "the descent" and "the oral", the exhibition catalogue also presents the Biennial as a coalition of poetic fragments. Finally, can you talk a little about the naming of the sections, and more broadly to the significance of language in the development of the exhibition?*

ALEXIE GLASS-KANTOR & NATASHA BULLOCK: A passion for language, words and literature certainly informs our work. We appreciate the physical shape of words or, for instance, the 'sound' that alliteration makes and how it can impart

meaning. In the development of *Parallel Collisions* we tried to conscientiously put aside personal bias, prejudice and persuasion to instead work together to curate an exhibition that neither one of us could conceive on our own. The descriptors attributed to each artist and their “action” in the show—which exists only within the publication—was initially motivated by a desire to work through the impressions created by the artist’s works; to siphon the vision of the exhibition into a quasi-cinematic story-board that would enable us to conceive of what the other was imagining.

By including these descriptors in the publication in the form of a conceptual map, we are able to introduce the reader to the exhibition’s cartography and more broadly to the relationships that have co-existed during the development of the project. At certain stages in our research and in the original conversations with many artists, we—of course—realised the myriad directions that an idea can take so we looked to the work, and the work only, in deciding on the tenor and timbre of this exhibition. In this way these descriptors underscore

the intimacy of our experience in curating this *Biennial*. To use Milan Kundera’s words, we seek in this exhibition to “penetrate to the essential”.² We make use of this phrase because of its generous capacity, an emotive quality that implies movement and change. For, above all, we wanted to make an exhibition that has the capacity to move people.

Notes

¹ Daniel Birnbaum, *Chronology*, New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2005: 52

² Milan Kundera, ‘The Painter’s Brutal Gesture: On Francis Bacon’, *Encounter*, United Kingdom: HarperCollins, 2010: 13

Pages 36-37: Rosemary Laing, *Jim from the series leak*, 2010; *Parallel Collisions*: 2012 *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*
Photo courtesy the artist and Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
Page 39: Tim Silver, *untitled (bust) (Selleys Woodfilling Putty) #2*, 2011; *Parallel Collisions*: 2012 *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*
Photo courtesy the artist and Breenspace, Sydney

