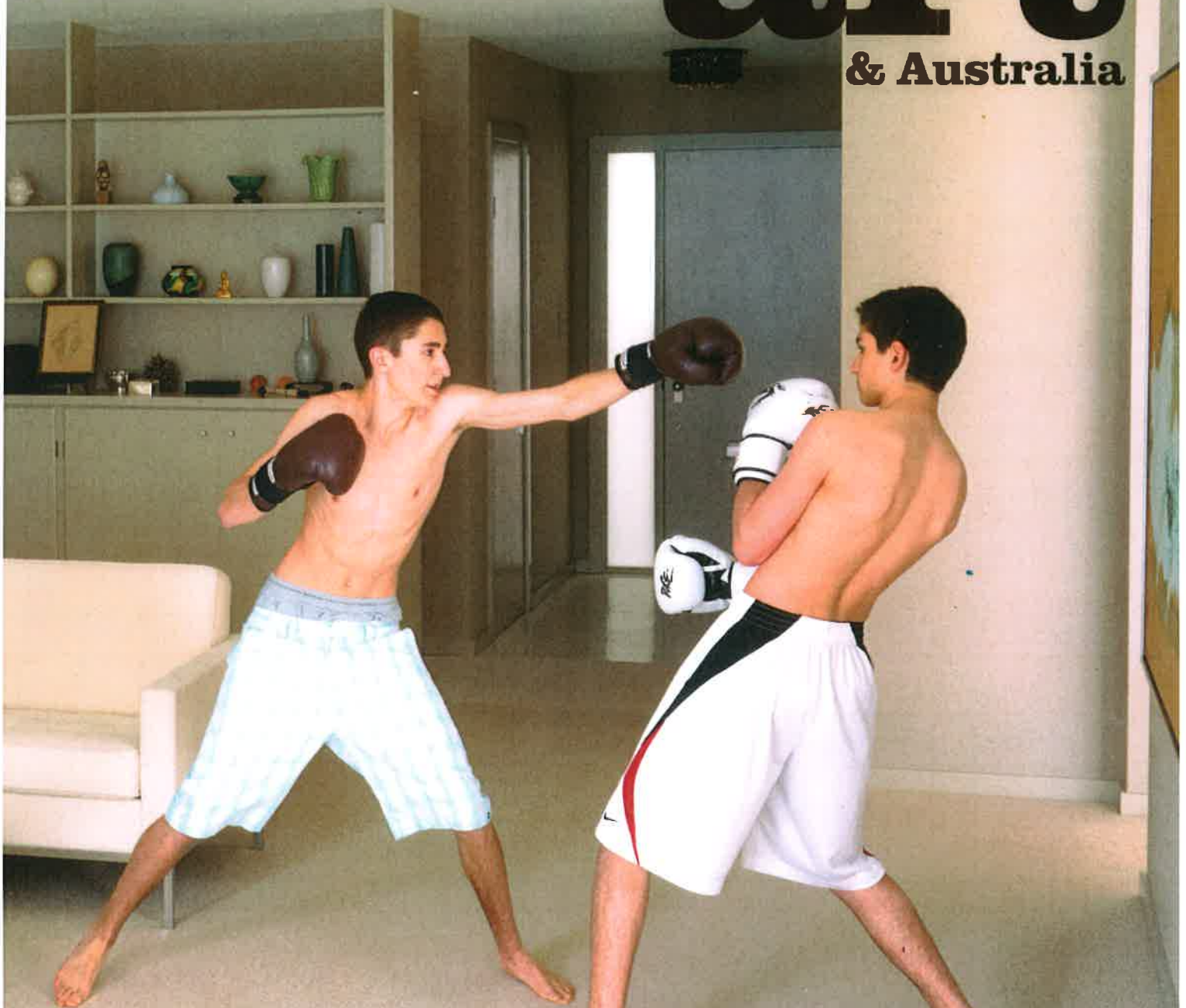


art

& Australia



ff Wall, Justene Williams,
gia Clark and Hélio Oiticica,
briella Mangano and Silvana Mangano, Anne Wallace, The 18th Biennale of Sydney

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below, from left

Erin Manning, *Slow clothes*, 2007, installation view at Society for Art and Technology, Montreal; fabric, magnets, buttons, thread, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist. Photograph Sandra Bélanger

Kikutake Kiyonori, *Hotel Toko-en*, Tottori, Japan, 1965
Courtesy DAAS. Photograph Shinken-chiku-sha

Michael Cook, *The mission no. 3*, 2011
Inkjet print, 125 x 100 cm
Courtesy Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Dianne Tanzer Gallery + Projects, Melbourne

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Jeff Wall, *Boxing*, 2011
Colour photograph, 215 x 295 cm
Courtesy the artist. © Jeff Wall
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Kate Shaw, *Lavalake*, 2011
Acrylic and resin on board, 105 x 80 cm
Courtesy Sullivan+ Strumpf Fine Art, Sydney

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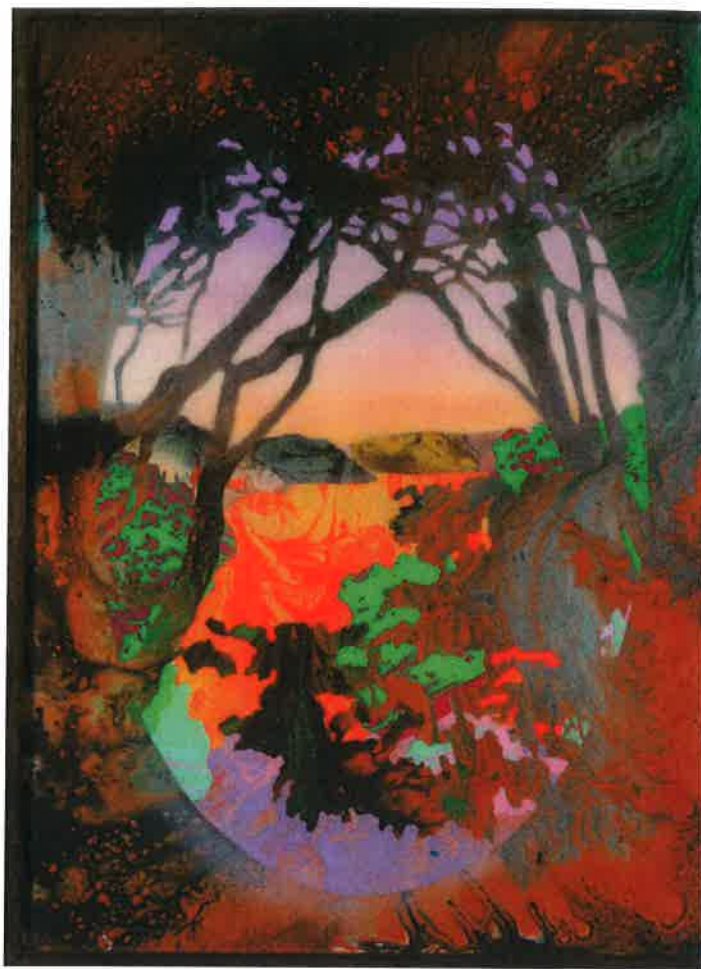
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Contributors

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TONY BOND is Assistant Director, Curatorial, and Head Curator of International Art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney.

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CHRISTINE FRANCE is an independent curator and writer. A former tutor in contemporary art at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, she has curated exhibitions for regional galleries and worked as a critic and art writer. She is currently researching the former Notanda Gallery and bookshop in Rowe Street, Sydney.

RACHEL FULLER is a Sydney-based artist and writer. Rachel grew up in Central West New South Wales on a sheep and cattle property and has a particular interest in issues pertaining to regional and rural Australia. She was a co-director of the Sydney artist-run-initiative Locksmith Project Space and co-edited the arts journal *Locksmith Project* from 2008 to 2010.

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WES HILL is a writer, artist and curator based in Hamburg, Germany. He is a regular contributor to Australian and international art magazines such as *frieze*, *frieze d/e*, *Artforum* and *Eyeline*. In 2011 he completed a PhD in Art History at the University of Queensland. As an artist he collaborates with Wendy Wilkins as Wilkins Hill, recently exhibiting 'Ethnic Pizza' (2011) at Hinterconti, Hamburg.

RACHEL KENT is Senior Curator at Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA). She has worked with leading Australian and international artists and was the curator of 'Marking Time' for the opening of the MCA's major redevelopment in March 2012.

TESSA LAIRD is a lecturer in contextual studies at Auckland's Manukau School of Visual Arts. A former general manager of The Physics Room, Christchurch, she was co-founder and editor of *Monica Reviews Art* and *LOG Illustrated* and has been a regular contributor to the *New Zealand Listener*, along with numerous other art publications.

ANNE LOXLEY is a curator and writer who works with contemporary artists both inside and outside gallery contexts, in communities and in public spaces. In January 2011 she took up the position of Curator, C3West, for Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art Australia.

Based in Tokyo, ANDREW MAERKLE is the Deputy Editor of the Japanese bilingual online publication *ART iT*, and contributes to other local and international publications, including *The Japan Times* and *frieze*. From 2005 to 2008 he was deputy editor of *ArtAsiaPacific* in New York.

CHRISTINE MORROW is Director of the Australian Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide. For the past fifteen years she has worked as a writer, curator and artist, mostly in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney.

DANIEL MUDIE CUNNINGHAM is Senior Curator at Artbank. From 2007 to 2010 he was the curator at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney. A practising artist, his installation *Funeral songs* (2007–12) was acquired by the Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, and shown there as part of 'MONA FOMA'.

MAURICE O'RJORDAN is Editor of *Art Monthly Australia* and a freelance arts writer and curator.

SARAH PIRRIE is Lecturer in Fine Arts at Charles Darwin University, Darwin.

JACQUELINE STRECKER recently curated 'The Mad Square: Modernity in German Art 1910–37' for the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the National Gallery of Victoria. She has lectured and published widely on twentieth-century art and has coordinated exhibitions on Giacometti, Rembrandt and the art of the First World War.

Mawalan ɪ Marika, Djang'kawu, ancestral beings, of the Dhuwa moiety, carvings, 1960
Feathers, human hair, fibre, natural wood pigments, 74.3 x 14.8 cm; 81 x 13 cm
Art Gallery of New South Wales Collection, Sydney



Yalangbara: Art of the Djang'kawu

Sarah Pirrie

'YALANGBARA: ART OF THE DJANG'KAWU' arrived in Darwin in late November 2011. The small wet-season audience who attended the opening were privileged to a special Marika family ceremony. More than twenty clan members, young and old, traversed the exhibition site on a ceremonial tour, conducting visitors through dance and song and welcoming their Yalangbara heritage, embodied in all the sixty artworks on display.

It was a fitting entry to a groundbreaking exhibition. Conceived by Banduk Marika in 1989–90, this was the first major survey of artworks produced by three generations of Marika artists. This artistic dynasty has maintained its clan estate at Yalangbara, south of Yirrkala in north-east Arnhem Land, the place where their first ancestors, Djang'kawu, were born and created, and where all Dhuwa moiety clans in north-east Arnhem Land originate. For the Marika family art has been a way to strive for political and educational aspirations while maintaining culture as guardian of Yalangbara and the descendants of Djang'kawu.

'Yalangbara: Art of the Djang'kawu' was also the first Indigenous art exhibition to focus on one clan's ancestral land. Dating back to the 1930s, artworks exhibited hold custodial knowledge of ancestral traditions and responsibilities to land. Included in the exhibition were luminous crayon drawings collected by anthropologist Ronald Berndt during the 1950s detailing Djang'kawu journeys and rituals; one of the most important works, artist Mawalan ɪ Marika's *Maps of Yalanbara*, 1947, revealed early interactions with Macassan trepanners and their boat, while the 1976 *Djang'kawu digging stick*, made by Wandjuk Marika and normally exhibited next to the famous Yirrkala bark petition in Parliament House, Canberra, spoke powerfully as a major symbol and affirmation of Indigenous law.

Yalangbara: Art of the Djang'kawu, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 25 November 2011 – 15 July 2012.

David M. Thomas, *Dream job*, 2011, detail
Installation view National Portrait Gallery (NPG), Canberra
Courtesy the artist and the NPG, Canberra



Dream Job

Anne Loxley

DAVID M. THOMAS'S 'DREAM JOB' was one of the more concise exhibitions shown at Canberra's National Portrait Gallery. Originally commissioned by Griffith University Art Gallery Brisbane, and shown there in late 2010, this installation of painting, video and motion graphic animation was as much about the role of the artist and the construction of identity as it was about portraiture.

A large video screen was flanked by wall paintings of high abstraction with traces of 1960s and 1970s suburban motifs (garage doors). This high art/populist slippage was also evident in the screen works. In *Dream job*, in which the artist poses in his studio, a photograph of another head – usually a glamorous woman from advertising – replaced the artist's. Overlaying this tradition of 'stripped bare' self-portraiture with consumerist imagery, these sequences were awkward and affecting.

Alongside the existential absurdity of Thomas's self-portraits, the beauty and artifice of the 'group portrait' *Five in one, or five*, 2010, was invigorating. In this video, a group of teenagers performed a script crafted from interviews with actors Brock Shields and Marlon Brando, writer Charles Bukowski and musicians J Mascis and Iggy Pop. Thomas's dialogue was a selection of composed reflections on such questions as 'What is important to you?' and 'How can you become a better person?' Cinematic and insightful, this video was a provocative reflection on the formation of personal values and adult subjectivity.

Combining the artist's self-deprecating conceptualism with his multilayered references to contemporary culture, *Dream job* presented a compelling take on subjectivity, being and portraiture. David M. Thomas seemed to suggest that his own and others are unknowable.

David M. Thomas: *Dream Job*, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, 2 December 2011 – 18 March 2012.