

Jan Murphy Gallery

FORM AND SUBSTANCE

Curated by Alex Seton

17 June – 12 July



Amy Joy Watson *Floating Sequence* 2013 balsa wood, watercolour, polyester thread, balloon & helium 250.0 x 90.0 x 90.0 cm

Form and Substance:

Form and Substance, curated by Alex Seton, presents twelve artists whose work demonstrates a strong bond between concept and execution. The exhibition reflects Seton's long-standing interest in the qualities of his own medium, predominantly marble. Seton's exploration of marble has been extensive - soft and folded, inflated and deflated, buoyant and waterlogged. Always, the stone itself informs and reflects its conceptual content.

In *Form and Substance*, Seton has turned his attention to a community of artists similarly engaged; a survey of concepts, forms, materials, gestures and processes that emerge in chorus and collusion, each inextricable from the other. Featuring work from **Abdul-Rahman Abdullah, Tully Arnot, Lionel Bawden, Ham Darroch, Honor Freeman, Laura Moore, Victoria Reichelt, Caroline Rothwell, Tim Silver, Charlie Sofo, Amy Joy Watson** and **Alex Seton** himself. This exhibition introduces a number of new artists to the JMG audience.

These artists, although working across diverse mediums, have a finely honed attunement to their craft, and an ability and desire to allow the objects they produce to speak for themselves. The conceptual and studio practices inform and feed into each other, becoming inseparable parts of a whole. In the making of work from a particular material with its own inherent qualities, ideas are brought to life. Form and substance are symbiotic; the medium has become the message.

Interview with Alex Seton:

1. Where you came up with the title *Form and Substance*?

The title *Form and Substance* stems from the unifying idea that surrounds these twelve artists. Form relates not only to my own interest in sculptural form but implies format as well. There are many different types of medium in the show ranging from photography, video, painting and sculpture. Whatever the chosen format the concepts are made material, and given true substance. Substance refers to not only material substance, but also implies substantial ideas.

2. What does it mean for you to curate an exhibition of both established and emerging Australian artists now?

I genuinely think Australian art is some of the most exciting art being produced at this moment. It is really interesting to draw a lineage between established and emerging artists and a show like this enables me to unravel the similarities between them that make Australian artists so dynamic and unique.

Recently, I have been involved with the Jump Mentorship Program as well as being included in the 2014 Redlands Art Prize. These two programs have made me understand the importance of mentoring exchanges, and have encouraged me to cultivate my own relationships where we discuss concepts and work and build off each other. These relationships were very important to me in my early career and I am thankful that I have had the opportunity to continue this tradition. I was introduced to the work of Abdul-Ramen Abdullah as he is my Jump mentee, and the emerging artist I chose to complement my work for the Redlands art prize was Tully Arnot. Through these programs I have really come to understand both artists and their practices and this has enabled me to include them in this show. The more established artists I have chosen are artists whose work and outlook I really admire at it is great to be able to work with them, and to show their work alongside those artists that I think are going to do great things.

3. It seems as though each of the artists you have chosen have engaged in a similar process of either making or thinking, could you tell us more about these connections?

It is not so much that they are similar to me directly, but there is definitely an affinity of ideas that is expressed in different ways by each artist. For example, Caroline Rothwell's work has that killer combination of environmental passion and fantastic sculptural execution from her acutely observed inflatables to her delicate line work with exhaust fumes. Tim silver's overwhelming narrative of the temporal nature of things, from the environment to human passion, is expressed so clearly in whichever medium he chooses from wood filler to sand on a beach. Lionel Bawden's joyous sculptures are the natural predecessor to the colourful light filled sculptures of Amy Joy Watson. The beauty of the everyday is captured by the discreet and harmonic electronic sculptures of Tully Arnot, and is equally reflected in the poignant narratives of the everyday that is at the heart of Charlie Sofo's work. Both Laura Moore and Abdul-ramen Abdullah transform their personal experiences and struggles into universal artworks. Victoria Reichelt and Honor Freeman look at levels of redundancy to deconsecrate their subjects. Ham Darroch on the other hand, co-opts every day utilitarian objects into highly abstracted and conceptual forms.

The common thread between all of these artists is that they have a strong conceptual practice that is sensitively observed in their chosen medium. They are all thoughtful artists, not artists struggling to express the unutterable exhortations of their soul, but artists who are in charge of their faculties, who know what they think and feel about the world and endeavour to find the best way to express this with clarity.

4. Are there any other exhibitions that you were drawn to as points of reference for your curatorial practice?

No. But, I have enjoyed seeing the re-emergence of spotlighting local communities by regional and state institutions, such the recent Melbourne Now exhibition at NGV and the upcoming Brisbane equivalent exhibition. This is a show of faith by the institutions that local artists are doing important and interesting work and this is a great validation for the artists and the artistic community working now. The energy and enthusiasm garnered from these shows is palpable.

Attending the Victorian College of the Arts then Curtin University, emerging West Australian artist **Abdul-Rahman Abdullah** graduated in 2012. In 2013 he was received an Artstart grant from the Australia Council, a development grant from the Department of Culture and the Arts and was selected for the Artsource Emerging Artists Program. Abdullah was a finalist in the Blake Prize, Substation Prize, Fishers Ghost Art Prize and was the West Australian recipient of the Qantas Foundation Encouragement of Australian Contemporary Art Award. In 2014 he was awarded an Art and Australia / Credit Suisse Contemporary Art Award and selected as a finalist in the Bankwest Art Prize, he is currently undertaking a Jump Mentorship with Alex Seton. Abdullah is represented by Dianne Tanzer gallery + projects and Venn Gallery.



Abdul-Rahman Abdullah Long round 2014 concrete & galvanised chain 115.0 x 28.0 x 18.0 cm \$2,200

Tully Arnot's practice develops 'outsider' modes of invention, generating a non-teleological creative process with unanticipated outcomes. Inventive and alchemical manipulations of materials and forms explore the subtle changes of state that objects undergo in the creative process. By the artist's hand everyday items become invention/artwork, or something in between, in constant flux between these two identities. Tully Arnot has completed a MFA at The College of Fine Arts, Sydney and has exhibited in both group and solo exhibitions within Australia. He has received awards from NAVA and other funding bodies, completed studio residencies in Milan, Beijing, Berlin and Shanghai and was winner of the Visual Arts category in the 2012 Spirit of Youth Awards.

This project is supported by Arts NSW's NSW Artists' Grant Scheme, a devolved funding program administered by the National Association of the Visual Arts on behalf of the NSW Government. The Australian Artists' Grant is a NAVA initiative, made possible through the generous sponsorship of Mrs Janet Holmes à Court and the support of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council for the Arts.



Tully Arnot Bottle song (octet) bottles, fans, microcontrollers, programming, electronics, air & sound dimensions variable \$1,800

Lionel Bawden is an Australian artist working in sculpture, performance, installation and painting. Bawden's core practice exploits hexagonal coloured pencils as a sculptural material, reconfigured and carved into amorphous shapes, mining the material's rich qualities of colour, geometry and metaphor. Bawden's sculptural works harness landscape as a stand-in for the body, personal themes of desire, longing and interconnection become abstracted in a generative process to create form. Lionel Bawden completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts with Honours at The Australian National University, Canberra School of Art in 1997. He has exhibited in over 40 group exhibitions nationally and internationally. Bawden was the recipient of the 2009 Wynne Prize, through the Art Gallery of NSW and the 2004 ABN Amro emerging Artist Award, Sydney. Lionel Bawden is represented by Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne.



Lionel Bawden Pattern spill 2014 coloured Staedtler pencils, epoxy & incralac 35.0 x 31.0 x 26.0 cm \$11,000

Ham Darroch is an Australian artist working in sculpture, performance and drawing. His work references traditional methods of making that show a playful, subtle and at the same time critically-founded treatment of everyday objects. He is currently working on a concept of altered orbits to explore personal commentaries on everyday movement, place, and perception, while his performances create interactions with the public to investigate various tensions between the physical and psychological. In early 2006, he completed an MFA (research) COFA University of New South Wales and in 1997 a Bachelor of Arts from Australian National University. From 2006-2009 he lived in London working as an assistant to Bridget Riley. In 2002, he received a New Work Grant from Australia Council for the Arts and in 2000, a Development Grant from Arts ACT. Ham is represented by Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney.



Ham Darroch *Resurface* 2009 shovel head (retrived from Thames River) oil on wooden handle, plumb bob & twine 130.0 x 30.0 x 30.0 cm SOLD

Completing her studies in 2001 at the South Australian School of Art, **Honor Freeman** took up an Associate and later a Tenant position in the ceramics studio at JamFactory Contemporary Craft & Design. She has undertaken international residencies at Guldagergaard, Denmark's International Ceramic Museum and in the US at Indiana University's School of Art & Design. Freeman has exhibited work extensively across Australia, including in Primavera 2007 at MCA Sydney, the Tarrawarra Museum of Art and Adelaide's Samstag Museum. Her work is held in major private and public collections including the National Gallery of Victoria, Art Gallery of South Australia and ArtBank. Freeman's work is currently on tour around Australia with *Designing Craft/Crafting Design: 40 years of Jamfactory*. Her work features in the recent publication *101 Contemporary Australian artists*, published by the National Gallery of Victoria. Honor Freeman is represented by Sabbia Galleries, Sydney.



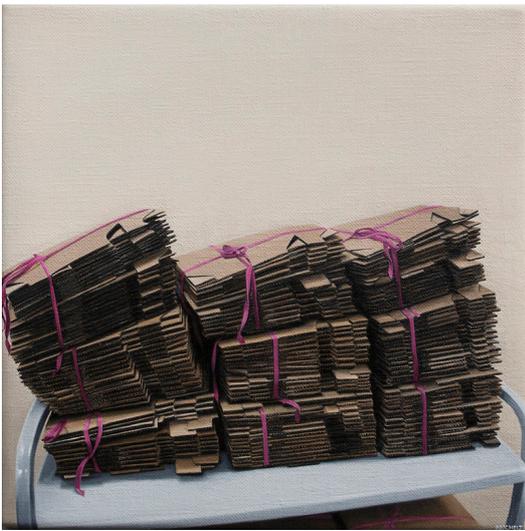
Honor Freeman *Soap Study II* 2008 slipcast & hand built porcelain dimensions variable \$1,500

Laura Moore is an emerging artist based in Sydney. Currently studying photomedia at Sydney College of the Arts, she is also a regular exhibitor and winner of the National Portrait Gallery's 2012 Digital Portraiture Award with her work, *Hereinbefore*. While an Artist in Residence at PICA in 2013, Moore's work was presented on the Perth Cultural Centre Screen, James St Amphitheatre. Moore's work has featured in a number of award exhibitions including The Moran Contemporary Photographic Prize, Art and About Sydney Life Exhibition and the Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Award. In 2013 Moore had a featured exhibition as part of the Head On Photo Festival and earlier this year Moore's work was exhibited in SafARI 2014. Moore's work examines the nature of photography itself, experimenting with the capacity of the photographic portrait to represent complex meanings about identity and human relationships. Often inspired and informed by her everyday life, observations and memory, Moore's work can hold very personal content. Yet ultimately the work expands beyond its autobiographical nature through actively inviting speculation and projection.



Laura Moore *Hereinbefore 1* framed pigment print (Ed 5) 2014 40.0
x 26.5 cm \$1,500

Victoria Reichelt studied Fine Art at the Queensland College of Art, graduating in 2005 having completed her Doctor of Visual Arts. She has been short-listed for a number of major art prizes including the Gold Award at the Rockhampton Art Gallery, the RBS Emerging Artist Award, the Fletcher Jones Art Prize, and in 2013 she won the Sulman Art Prize at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. She has been awarded an Australia Council New Work Grant and the Linden Innovators Award from the Linden Centre for Contemporary Arts. Her work has been included in exhibitions at the Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation and at the Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA) in Brisbane. She has most recently been appointed to the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts.



Victoria Reichelt *Flatpack* 2014 oil on linen 20.0 x 20.0 cm SOLD

Victoria Reichelt *Fragile* 2014 oil on linen 20.0 x 20.0 cm SOLD

Caroline Rothwell engages with the politics of place, migration, conflict and mortality through the lens of the environment. Her work often draws on the anatomy of endangered or extinct species, though she is equally known for creating mutant and hybrid forms that explore the impacts of biotechnology and environmental contamination. What may at first appear playful or innocent in Rothwell's work - shiny surfaces, toy-like contours, and the allure of a flower or animal - are typically decoys for more ominous or unsettling subjects. Caroline Rothwell completed her MFA in Sculpture at Hunter College, New York. Caroline Rothwell's work can be found in many important public and private collections including the Art Gallery of South Australia, Deutschebank, Sydney, Artbank, Sydney, Auckland City Art Gallery, Chartwell Trust, NZ and James Wallace Trust, NZ among others. Caroline Rothwell is represented by Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne.



Caroline Rothwell Dancer 2014 Britannia metal & wood 60.5 x 23.0 cm \$5,000

Alex Seton is a Sydney based artist who explores contemporary notions of loss within themes of nationhood, security and our transition from the analogue to the digital world through sculpture, installation and photography. Within the framework of marble carving, Seton interrogates and displaces our expectations through overturning historical and cultural constructs, challenging our optical perception and subverting the tradition of the material. He has exhibited in numerous group exhibitions both national and international. Seton's work is held in numerous public and private collections both in Australia and internationally including the Art Gallery of New South Wales Society, Sydney; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide; ArtBank; Australian War Memorial, Canberra; Danish Royal Art Collection, Denmark; Newcastle Region Art Gallery, Newcastle; Patrick Corrigan Collection, Sydney and University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane.



Alex Seton Three quarters 2014 Statuario marble 69.0 x 124.0 x 33.0 cm \$42,000

Tim Silver has been exhibiting photographs, sculptures and installations internationally for over a decade. Working across sculpture, photography and installation, Silver explores the interface between time and decay, particularly in relation to the human body. Silver's works are held in many important collections including Artbank, Sydney; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Australia Council for the Arts; Museum of Contemporary Art Australia; Ten Cubed Collection, Melbourne and University of Queensland Art Museum Collection, Brisbane. He has been awarded various grants and residencies within Australia and abroad. Recent group exhibitions include *Seven Points (Part Two): Daniel Boyd, Newell Harry, Kate Mitchell, Tim Silver*, Embassy of Australia, Washington DC (2013); *We used to talk about love*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2013); *Parallel Collisions*, 2012 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. Tim Silver is represented by Sullivan and Strumpf.



Tim Silver Untitled (found rock) 2013 forton MG 17.0 x 14.0 x 17.0 cm \$4,400

Charlie Sofo completed a Bachelor of Visual Art (Honours) at the Australian National University School of Art, Canberra, in 2005. Sofo has been the recipient of numerous awards, including grants for new work from Arts ACT, 2007, and the Australia Council for the Arts, 2008. Recent solo exhibitions include *Facts*, Utopian Slumps, Melbourne, 2009; *I Wish I Were Smaller*, Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney, 2010; *I Wander*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2010; and *corn chip, mobile phone, finger print, incense stick*, Craft Victoria, Melbourne, 2012. Recent group exhibitions include *Unguided Tours: Anne Landa Award for Video and New Media Arts 2011*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2011; *NEW12*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2012; *Volume One: MCA Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2012; and *Desire Lines*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2012. Charlie Sofo is represented by Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney.



Charlie Sofo 33 objects that can fit through the hole in my pocket 2014 digital video, duration 1.29 minutes
\$1,800 Edition of 8

Born in Adelaide in 1987, **Amy Joy Watson** grew up in Belair, South Australia and graduated from Adelaide Central School of Art in 2008 with a Bachelor of Visual Art with Honours. Amy has presented solo exhibitions throughout Australia at galleries such as Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Hugo Michell Gallery, West Space, GRANTPIRRIE and CACSA Project Space. She exhibited a major sculptural work in *Heartland – Contemporary Art from South Australia* at the Art Gallery of South Australia in 2013. Amy has been successful in winning several grants through CARCLEW, Arts SA and the Australia Council and was awarded the 2012 CARCLEW Ruth Tuck Scholarship which supported a 3-month studio residency at International Studio and Curatorial Program in New York in 2012. Amy was successful in winning an Australia Council for the Arts Tokyo Studio Residency, which she is currently undertaking. Amy-Joy is currently represented by Dianne Tanzer Gallery in Melbourne.



Amy Joy Watson Floating Sequence 2013 balsa wood, watercolour, polyester thread, balloon & helium 250.0 x 90.0 x 90.0 cm