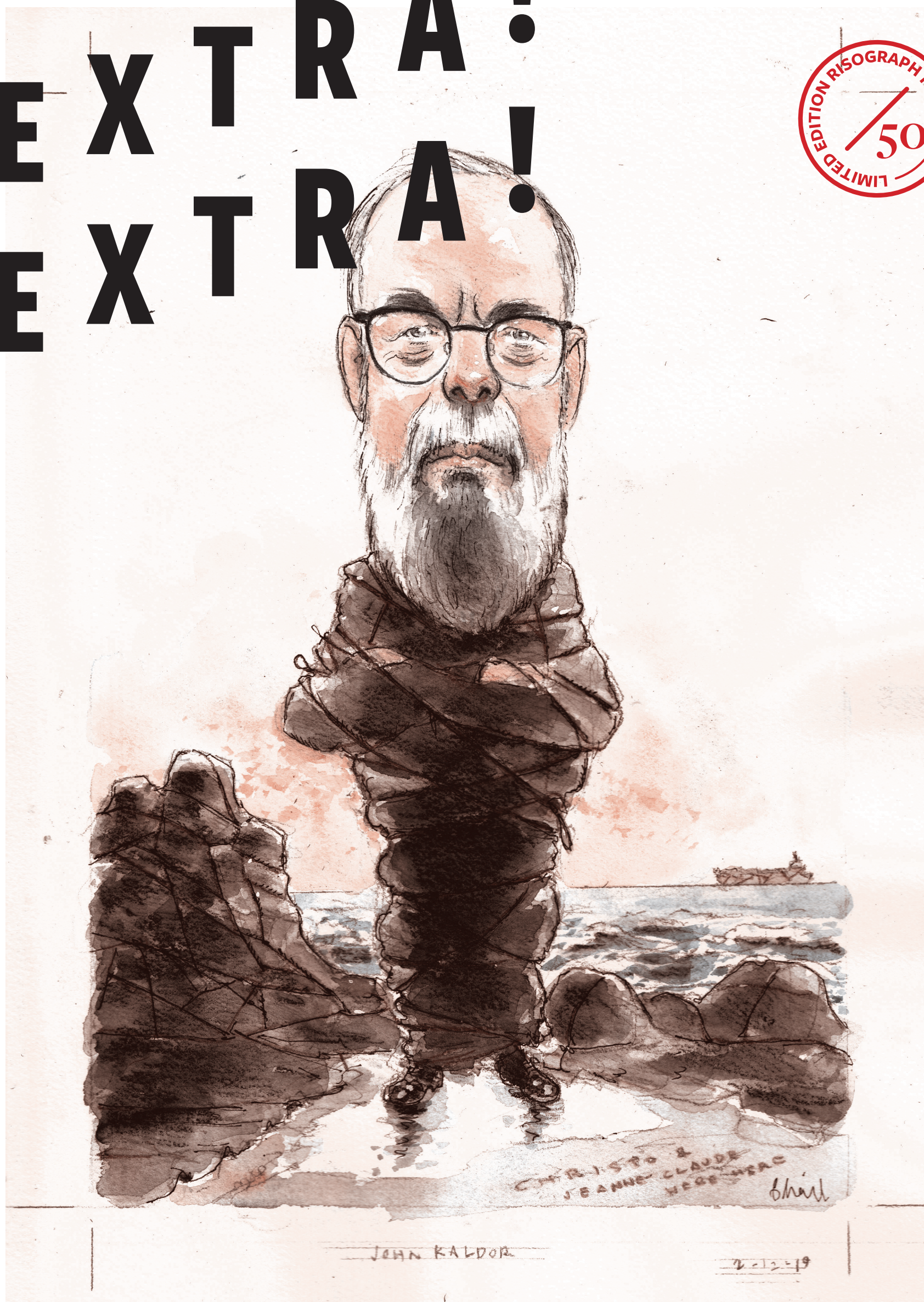


EXTRA! EXTRA!



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EXTRA!EXTRA! is published at the Art Gallery of NSW, which stands on the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. We the editors and contributors to this artwork acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this Country, and we acknowledge that sovereignty to this Land was never ceded.

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From 9 November to 15 December, Lucas Ihlein and the Rizzeria Collective take over the Kaldor Studio at the Art Gallery of NSW with **EXTRA!EXTRA!** – a weekly newspaper which responds critically and playfully to Making Art Public.

Each week, editor-in-chief Lucas Ihlein and special correspondent Ian Milliss will be joined by special guest writers and artists, who will work with the Rizzeria team to print the newspaper in situ.

Visitors to the Kaldor Studio are invited to write letters to the editor – and a selection of letters will be featured in each week's edition of **EXTRA!EXTRA!**

Throughout the run of **EXTRA!EXTRA!** in the Kaldor Studio, you can also participate in a range of fun workshops and have a go at making a risographic print yourself!

CONTENT DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in the pages of **EXTRA!EXTRA!** are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or official policies of the editors, Kaldor Public Art Projects or the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

We welcome responses to our articles, which can be submitted by writing posting a physical Letter to the Editor in the gallery space, or online at extra-extra.press

SUPPORTERS



EDITORIAL

The decline of newspapers has seen the decimation of entire areas of traditional journalism. Among the first to go as a cost cutting measure were the specialist press photographers. In our final edition of **EXTRA!EXTRA!** next week we'll feature an interview with one of the greatest, Lorrie Graham.

After press photographers, next in line to be axed were illustrators and cartoonists, who are now reduced to a very small number. We are pleased to feature on the front cover of this issue "CHRISTO AND JEANNE-CLAUDE WERE HERE!" – a portrait of John Kaldor by Ward O'Neill. He has received three Walkley Awards and last year won the Prix International at the St Just cartoonists Salon in France. O'Neill has worked for *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The National Times*, *The Bulletin*, the *Australian Financial Review*, and now for **EXTRA!EXTRA!**.

Our exploration of the labour relations surrounding live art continues this week. The centre spread hosts a playful dialogue "in three acts" between local artists Sarah Rodigari and Malcolm Whittaker, who have each at various times been employed by Kaldor to enact or inhabit the spaces created by international stars like Marina Abramović and Tino Seghal.

EXTRA!EXTRA! editor Ian Milliss provides further commentary on art and labour, arguing that the organisational logistics of collectives (like a union, like a group of rock climbers, like a fabric company) can prompt significant cultural adaptation, and thus be framed as "art".

And speaking of fabric as art, in her article Jenna Price recalls attending an early Kaldor Public Art Project with her mum, in the rag trade district of Sydney. Jenna's discussion about diversity in the arts is also a reminder that Surry Hills, where John Kaldor Fabricmaker traded, was in its heyday a thriving centre of cultural diversity.

Lucas Ihlein



Lucas Ihlein is an artist and member of Big Fag Press and Kandos School of Cultural Adaptation.



John Kaldor Fabricmaker Pty Ltd, Fabric sample 1981



Photo by Michael Waite

ABSEILERS REUNITED AT LITTLE BAY

On Saturday, November 30, approximately 20 of the *Wrapped Coast* rock climbers gathered at Little Bay for a reunion. Michael Waite, Research Assistant at Kaldor Public Art Projects was there to listen to some stories from the climbers, 50 years on. Here we reproduce a few of their tales.

Megs: Megs was, and still is a member of the Sydney Rockclimbing Club (SRC). The club was approached to supply people to abseil at Little Bay to help Christo and Jeanne-Claude create *Wrapped Coast*. Hearing that it was paid work "was like music to our ears", said Megs.

She was on a Commonwealth scholarship, in the second year of her Social Work degree at UNSW. The most she had been paid up to then was \$20 per week and that had to cover rent of \$17 per week in one of the residential colleges, "So to get \$20 a day was phenomenal!" she said. Her regular work was part time waitressing at University events, plus some babysitting.

Megs worked most days for two weeks on *Wrapped Coast*. "It wasn't just the money we were

doing it for. It was a very new-age thing to have somebody come out and do something so stupendous as wrap up part of the coast, but it was really because I was with friends. We were a close-knit group of people, and doing what I loved, it was outdoors. It was exciting and it was physically demanding, and I'm very proud to say I was the first woman in NSW to get a Ramset licence." She says that it was probably a twenty minute lesson, since there wasn't much in the way of occupational health and safety training in those days.

The abseiling was difficult because the cliff was undercut, and you couldn't see what the terrain was like beneath the material, billowing in the wind. It was hard to find your footing, and the material was slippery. The climbers were safety conscious, always checking their gear. After *Wrapped Coast* Megs went on a climbing trip to NZ with Warwick Williams, and her earnings went towards the fare. Megs appears in both of the *Wrapped Coast* documentaries.

Hugh Ward: Hugh was one of the main abseilers and was responsible for organising

many of the others who could only commit for a few days. Hugh was there full-time as he was otherwise unemployed. While working on *Wrapped Coast*, Hugh sprained his neck when an anchor gave way and had to wear a neck brace for a couple of months, after which he was fully recovered. His wife Maureen was also a member of SRC but didn't work at *Wrapped Coast* as she had a full-time job and was too honest to take sickies.

Ed: At the pub after our reunion abseil at Little Bay, Ed told us that he was the only person to be fired from *Wrapped Coast*. One day he was slacking off, sitting on the edge of the cliff smoking a cigarette and idly firing Ramset nails into the ocean. Christo came over and said "You're finished". Ed told Hugh Ward who then went to Christo and said "One out, all out!". So Christo allowed Ed to stay on.

Lee Smith: Lee can't recall how many days he worked on *Wrapped Coast*, but not many. In 1969 he was a graduate surveyor, had studied at UNSW, was working for the Commonwealth Government, going through his Licensing Board exams and working in an office in the Sydney CBD. He would take sickies from his day job to work on *Wrapped Coast*. Lee says, "At one stage I was abseiling down the cliff and I looked across the headland and there was the local news camera zooming in on me. I'm thinking, 'Oh no, my boss is going to be seeing me on the news tonight!' ... But they never found me out".



To read more stories from *Wrapped Coast* reunion, scan this code.



Michael Waite is a Research Assistant at Kaldor Public Art Projects and also a tutor at the Australian Centre for Photography

What's Your Footprint Going To Look Like?

Hello! It's good to have you with me again and I must thank you for your Letters to the Editor! Your responses and questions are so welcome! So, shall we go in?

After our conversations about respect for Country and our Traditional Custodians, last week, through Jonathan Jones' *barrangal dyara* (*skin and bones*), 2016, we touched upon self-accountability in land-art... let's walk that path? This week I hope to bring you closer to a sense that ethical land-art practice is not only an Indigenous thing but that it is accessible and achievable for artists from any cultural background. What I hope to leave you with is this: it's not a paint-by-numbers system of protocols, but a set of principles that might help guide culturally ethical land-art practice.

It seems to me that as more and more people come to embrace the holistic, environmental knowledges of Indigenous cultures, and what it means to be entwined within socio-ecology, we might begin to absorb the idea of shared responsibility. The need to engage with Indigenous people, sciences and environmental knowledges is compounded by the urgent needs of the environment. Climate change and environmental crises exist for all things of nature, from the bacteria and microbes, through all plants, all soils, oceans, rivers, to the smallest and largest animals. The environment requires our social cohesion.

If we of the art community can harness our concerns for the environment through eco-aesthetics with meaningful demonstrations of respect for Country and its Indigenous people, perhaps our efforts would go some way to reorienting Australia's cultural changes over time.

So how can land-artists align and demonstrate respect for Country and Indigenous people in their practice? Well, I've done some looking and what I've found is that there's not one blanket set of protocols for the state or the nation. Now, this is understandable and a good thing! What it means is that art agreements, protocols and collaborations are local to the Indigenous people and places where they're undertaken.

But some common themes emerge. And folks, the more I looked the more I found! Ethical artistic engagement with Indigenous people is brought together through these principles: respect, reciprocity, reflexivity, relationships and partnerships, representation and meaningful reflection. It's apparent that so very much work has been done, it cannot be avoided.

In your art practice, look to your galleries, museums and universities and their policies and practices. Be humble and brave at the same time and seek out ethical, collaborative relationships with your Indigenous community. Indigenous agencies to connect with might include the local Aboriginal Land Council, art gallery or Indigenous centre on a university campus. In effect we in the art community have before us the oppor-

tunity to form diverse trans-cultural coalitions with Indigenous communities for cultural revitalisation. We can be eco-diplomats to address the environmental crises that the whole world is confronted with.

The healing and respect for this Land we all live upon requires that diversity and respectful collaboration become the new norm. Furthermore, culture and nature cannot be separated. Diversity and culture are inextricably interconnected and entwined with biodiversity and require all of us to respond. In these most serious of environmental times, I think artists can undertake a serious role, not only as warning messengers but as translators and problem solvers in the new socio-ecology.

Now, wow! That feels like a huge amount for you to digest during our short amount of time together! So, the take-away I'd like to give you is this: in these times of environmental crises, collectively and respectfully, we have the ability to heal our relationships with the planet if we undertake to simultaneously heal our relationships with each other.

Before I say goodbye for this week, here are a couple of readings on some of the things we've been yarning about:

The Indigenous Roadmap Project (2018), produced by Terry Janke and Company, available here: <http://www.terrijanke.com.au/roadmap-report>

Protocols for Working with Indigenous Artists (2007), produced by the Australia Council for the Arts, available here:

<https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/about/protocols-for-working-with-indigenous-artists/>

"Art Ecology & Institutions" (2013) by Lam, Ngcobo, Perskian, Thompson, Witze & Liberate Tate, in *Third Text* Vol 27, No. 1.

"Not just a pretty picture: art as ecological communication" (2007), by Catriona Moore, in Gavin Birch (ed), *Water, wind, art and debate: How environmental concerns impact on disciplinary research*, Sydney University Press.

Juundaal Strang-Yettica



Juundaal Strang-Yettica:
"I don't know much
about much but the
learning keeps me
alive!"



Juundaal Strang-Yettica, *Fairy Meadow Beach*, digital photograph, 2019

“
**Ethical artistic engagement
with Indigenous people is
brought together through these
principles: respect, reciprocity,
reflexivity, relationships and
partnerships, representation and
meaningful reflection.**
”

TINA CIGARS, TENNIS OR GOLF

CAST

SARAH RODIGARI
MALCOLM WHITTAKER

ACT ONE

Level 2, Art Gallery NSW

Two characters convene. They each have a background in theatre, rendered daggy and repudiated by the contemporary art world they now work within, which has included much enacting of live art works for Kaldor Public Art Projects over the years. They walk and talk. They record the conversation that unfolds. The conversation will be published in the newspaper EXTRA! EXTRA! Does this make them journalists? Maybe of Nietzschean type, in that they offer "no facts, only interpretations". The same could be said of much of what passes as journalism in the post-truth world they live in.

Critic Michael Fried suggested that art depreciates when it reaches the point of theatre. But maybe he didn't go far enough. Maybe it is life that depreciates when it reaches the point of art?

SARAH: So, you've already written about This is So Contemporary?

MALCOLM: Well, yeah. They needed some content last week. So, I wrote a reflection on labouring and interpreting for the Tino Sehgal work This is So Contemporary that we both did in 2014, and I am doing again now.

SARAH: I haven't read your article. Should I read your article?

MALCOLM: Maybe? It's coming hot off the press this afternoon.

SARAH: How shall we think about this piece then? Lucas has approached us to write something about art and labour. What did you want to say about art and labour that you haven't said in your article?

MALCOLM: Well, maybe it would be good to expand on it. What you mentioned earlier sounded interesting. The article that you found and then couldn't find again, about the focus on valuing artist's labour beyond a fiscal sense? Is that what the article was about?

SARAH: Last week, you talked about labour, what you're doing, how much you're getting paid, who's getting valued. You were in This is so Contemporary in 2014 and now it's 2019 and you're in it again. Are you getting paid the same?

MALCOLM: I think it is a little bit more this time around.

SARAH: That's something we might want to fact check.

MALCOLM: What I think we need to fact check is what an award wage is for a performer. A slippery ground is created because we're not deemed performers, but rather "Interpreters". Officially speaking, contractually, you're an interpreter, not a performer.

SARAH: Are you entitled to an MEAA rate for a performer or a NAVA rate as an artist?

MALCOLM: Strictly speaking, within the "score" of the work, you are not an artist or a performer, but rather an "Interpreter". The other problem is that you're labouring to produce capital for someone else. This is what I wrote about last week. Whether it's a commensurate wage or fee that you're paid to interpret in a Sehgal work, or in any of these delegated performance works, seems to me to depend on how much the artist with their name on the work is getting paid and what you are paid comparatively to execute the work. I don't know how much Tino Sehgal was paid. To me, the idea of whether our wage is a "good one" or an "award one" or an "appropriate one" seems to be that it should have some interplay with that greater context. But because there's a lack of transparency around that, it does feel like you're not acknowledged because you're an "Interpreter". And your name isn't mentioned. What are you really labouring for?

SARAH: Okay, so what are we going to talk about this week, given that that you've already written an article on art and labour?

MALCOLM: Well, I wasn't really sure what we were doing this week. We scrawled some notes and then we were just going to wing it with a conversation.

SARAH: Let the improvisation begin.

MALCOLM: Maybe, like you said, the point is to shift the conversation from being one of valuing artists' labour in a finan-

cial sense, versus, I don't know, an aesthetic sense or something like this? Is that what you reckon?

SARAH: Uh, I'm not sure. How do artists work and how do we value what they produce, not just financially, but also socially and culturally - which is of course linked to economic value. There's a lot of discussion around fair pay for artists, so that's great, but how might we value the work that artists do differently so that artists can recognise the labour that they're doing and see merit in it. Is that even possible?

MALCOLM: What is a process by which we might be able to work to achieve and articulate that? Within the practices of Tino Sehgal's work, and maybe yours and mine, the labour is achieving an intangible performative experience. Is there an assessable efficacy as the outcome of what you do?

SARAH: I think there's also some idea of sustainability. To be invited to do This is so Contemporary again raises questions for me. Why do I want to do that? What do I get out of it? Is it just a financial exchange?

MALCOLM: Performing artists seem much more accustomed to getting paid and asking to be paid than visual artists. I've done a couple of the Australia Council peer review panels, and visual artists actually are so ill-accustomed to being paid that they don't even ask for fees. Whereas people with more of a performative background or practice value their labour and ask for a fee for what they're doing.

SARAH: This becomes complicated because in visual art, the labour of the artist isn't necessarily valued, but the artwork is, so you get paid for the object. Perhaps the object will sell and if it sells, you recuperate the labour costs in its sale? But that's taking a risk, right? In the performing arts, for example, in a professional context, I think you get paid for the labour and the value of your labour is your ability, your skill as a performer. It doesn't necessarily have to be contingent on say ticket sales. You're paid a wage, regardless of ticket sales. You're not risking anything in the way visual artists would at the potential of selling their work.

SARAH: You have to get paid for performance because you have to be in the rehearsal space. The visual artist foregoes an artist fee in order to pay somebody to fabricate the artwork, which then potentially sells. That's rare for a lot of people. Visual artists need to be paid proper artist fees regardless of the artwork.

MALCOLM: Of course!

SARAH: To come back to this Tino Sehgal thing, did the interpreters get paid the same as a visitor services officer?

MALCOLM: I think we were actually paid a little bit more. When we did it in 2014, I remember standing next to a real gallery officer and having a little chat in between routines. You know, I'm there in my officer's costume, standing next to an actual gallery officer. I asked him and he told me his hourly rate and it was a bit less than the \$27-odd dollars an hour we were getting last time. And this time round, in 2019, we're actually on \$30 an hour Monday to Saturday and \$40 on Sundays.

SARAH: I wanted to bring up the idea of being called an "Interpreter" but not an artist. Isn't an artist an interpreter of some sort? There seems to be a fine line between not being recognised as an artist or as a performer. Everything seems a little false. Like these flowers in the Jeff Koons puppy work we now find ourselves standing in front of.

MALCOLM gestures to fondle a flower in the Jeff Koons Puppy installation. SARAH slaps his hand away. A gallery officer gives them a disapproving look but says nothing.

MALCOLM: Well. I suppose that all art involves representation and all representation involves a process of interpretation, and in so doing becomes removed from the truth. Didn't Plato make that observation a few thousand years ago? But Sehgal has leveraged this position for himself where the work is not considered theatre, even though it runs for a season, even though we have learnt lines and attended rehearsals and wear a costume. I feel like I read once that he doesn't like the word performance because there's a quantifying side to the word, like "key performance indicators" or "high-performance". There's a certain effi-

cacy to what performance achieves that he wasn't into, so instead he calls them "constructed situations", using the language of the Situationist International. But why shy away from the idea of achieving something, and what is theatre but a constructed situation in the first place?

SARAH: Doesn't Sehgal value the performance as an object? He sells it like an object. He separates himself from the gallery or the institution that goes on to present the work. He's not building a relationship with the interpreters. They're just outsourced labourers making the work happen.

MALCOLM: But each time I've been an interpreter for This is so Contemporary, there's also always someone there to give the tick of approval of how "Tino would like it to be". We have worked with Xavier Le Roy, Becky Hilton, Asad Raza and Ivey Wawn, as "directors" (whether they like that term or not). You're interpreting, but within that there is someone there to oversee on Tino's behalf, to keep the score, to be a delegate somewhere in between us as interpreters and him as the artist.

Pause.

MALCOLM: All this wondering that we do is because of what Sehgal has orchestrated through his anti-documentation, anti-material stance, which elicits our speculation. Everything is hearsay, everything trickles through the grapevine, nothing is written down.

SARAH: Have you done any research on this?

MALCOLM: *(Shrugs)*. I have read a couple of articles. He sells the work. There's a verbal contract that says "this is what you have to do, this is the amount of people, this is the score, this is the amount of time they need to rehearse and train, this is how much they should be paid, which is equivalent to this rate". Something like that. But apparently there's not even any written contractual paperwork anywhere.

SARAH: So that's what creates all this mythology and narratives around human labour, because it's so elusive?

MALCOLM: To write it down would be documentation and therefore create a material trace of the work - which Tino forbids.

SARAH: I have also heard that if you buy the work, somebody delivers the contract to you verbally. Perhaps Kaldor could clarify this?

MALCOLM: Maybe you could ask him?

SARAH: Maybe.

Pause. They walk.

SARAH: We're walking from one end of this Kaldor exhibition to the other. What's it called again?

MALCOLM: Making Art Public.

SARAH: We started at one end of the exhibition, skirting This is So Contemporary, and now at the other end there is Lion's Honey, a performance by Agatha Goth-Snape. Both consist of other people working in public on behalf of the artist to make the art happen. We had an awkward conversation before about whether or not people talk about money and artist fees and how it always feels impolite to talk about money. In this instance, how do we talk about Making Art Public without talking about labour, and how do we talk about labour without talking about money?

MALCOLM: Well, Agatha's work seems like a joyous gift for the delegates she is working with, especially when we can see them from our position interpreting for Sehgal. Their labour is for their own enrichment, being provided the time and space to simply read in the gallery.

SARAH: I've said yes to doing Kaldor projects in the past because I saw them as an opportunity to work with international artists and develop my skills and understanding of art practice. *[Editor's note: in 2015 Sarah Rodigari was a selected artist for Kaldor Public Art Projects' Australian Artists Residency Program for Marina Abramovic: In Residence. Sarah reflects on this experience in her PhD thesis.]*

MALCOLM: Sure, me as well, and critical reflections have then been generated and fed back into my own practice through my participation, which has been incredibly valuable.

SARAH: But with the international artists, there is seldom an interpersonal relationship. In this case, you don't get to work with the artist, even though you're in their work.

MALCOLM: But with Agatha you do.

SARAH: Yes, and you are not constrained by a "conceit" in Agatha's work, to use one of your words. You are just reading.

MALCOLM: Yes. Richard Schechner has this idea of "dark play", where some of the participants don't know they're part of the play. The frame has been concealed. The conceit is still there. I think that's definitely what's going on in Sehgal's work. Even though you remove the didactics and all the usual technologies of framing an artwork, that doesn't mean that we're not still at play and experiencing an art project and a performance. I think This is so Contempo-

rary might be aiming for something of an institutional critique, but for many patrons it probably falls into the realm of parody, which incidentally is a place I have mistakenly fallen in my own work plenty of times.

SARAH: What have you learnt about yourself from working on the Tino Sehgal piece? Did you get fit?

MALCOLM: Oh, yes. Definitely. That's an added bonus, for sure. That's value adding! Adding further fitness value was cycling into the gallery each day, as Tino has requested we do. Oh, everyone also refers to him as "Tino", as if he is our mate, and I find that funny. I've never heard an artist that you've never met referred to by a first name so much.

SARAH: Is it important for you to value or respect artists that you're working with? Or do you just take this job for the money.

MALCOLM: Not necessarily, but don't get me wrong. I do respect Tino Sehgal, but respect doesn't place something above critique. This is also a chance to work and be paid as a practicing artist, which is rather rare. It's also nice to hang out with the other interpreters. It's convivial in that sense. We're a sort of temporary micro-community. I like doing the performance too. It has moments of great joy, when you do one of these routines and you get a sense of satisfaction when you do the job well, when you all come together in unison to reach a successful iteration of the performance. It is satisfying as an artist, aesthetically, in terms of what you have achieved with your comrades, in your three-person ensemble.

SARAH: This is a good point because Kaldor Public Art Projects employ a lot of local artists to work on their international projects, and these do form supportive local conversations and art communities.

MALCOLM: Definitely.

ACT TWO

Same time. Same place. Walking through the Sehgal exhibition.

INTERPRETERS: (Singing and dancing.) Oh, this is so contemporary, contemporary, contemporary...

MALCOLM: Oh, great.

SARAH: Did you ever feel like you're busking when you're doing it?

MALCOLM: Yeah.

SARAH: Have you ever thought of busking?

MALCOLM: No.

SARAH: Do you know how much buskers get paid? An hour?

MALCOLM: No.

SARAH: That's something to look into.

MALCOLM: Maybe.

Pause. They walk towards the escalator.

ACT THREE

Same time. Same place. They stand on the escalator, looking down on the INTERPRETERS as they head up to Level 1.

MALCOLM: On the record, what were you saying the other day about feeling a little bit humiliated when you did it last time?

SARAH: I did it with you in 2014?

MALCOLM: Yeah.

SARAH: Did we ever do it together?

MALCOLM: I don't think you ever had the pleasure.

SARAH: I don't think I've ever had the pleasure of seeing you do it. I wouldn't mind seeing that on video.

MALCOLM: That's one of the liberating joys of the work. There's no incriminating footage of me. (Pause). Although, maybe there is? Who knows?

SARAH: Hypothetically, it does look less humiliating this time round. Because this time around, you're within the context of an exhibition space with other contemporary artworks, as opposed to being in the entrance of the gallery.

MALCOLM: There have been a few significant improvements in how the work has been staged this time around. Placing the work in a gallery means that it resonates with the other parts of the space, rather than the work accosting people like a sort of flash mob in the entrance hall. Also, a wonderful degree of care has been shown to us as performers. For example, every hour we take a little break to have some water, have a snack, have a sit down. With this sort of care factor in mind, and the repositioning in the gallery space, we're producing much better work.

SARAH: Shall we get a coffee?

MALCOLM: I don't have my wallet. Your shout?

SARAH: Sure.

Audio recording fails.

FIN.

WORK AS ART

John Kaldor, as this exhibition demonstrates, has a well-earned reputation as a great patron. In my understanding of art as the process of cultural adaptation, Kaldor's history makes him a considerable artist in his own right, using other more conventionally recognisable artists as his material to change Australian culture.

Like most Australian artists, John Kaldor supported his art with a day job, as a manufacturer of widely admired high quality textiles for both clothing and interior decoration. As a manufacturer he commissioned original designs, many of which are now in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia. But by 2004 when the Australian branch of Kaldor's company closed, his daughter Bettina, who had been managing director of the company's UK division, identified that the economics of the fabric market had significantly changed:

"For textile wholesaling, the better years were behind us," Bettina Kaldor said. "There's probably lots of reasons for that, but the market - and I don't just think it's an Australian market - tends to want to do prints that have already been done overseas.

"Therefore if you are copying or creating the design, it's not the design (the customers want), it's whether you (the supplier) can do it quickest and cheapest.

peared, at least in the sense that it is no longer the production of a high status consumer item but has become a general category of human activity rather like work. Any activity can be art, just as any activity can be work (or not work) depending on its context. Initially this was described as the "institutional definition of art", that any object or activity could be regarded as art if it was endorsed by an institutional consensus. But this definition has broken down in the 21st century as the institutional gatekeeper's role has collapsed in the face of new technology enabling wider participation and distribution. There are no longer effective gates for the gatekeepers to keep, and indeed the institutions are increasingly scrambling for relevance. As a result institutional recognition is insufficient - what matters in the future is whether an activity generates cultural change.

Three Kaldor Projects illustrate this. The first is *Wrapped Coast* in 1969. For me as a young artist who worked on *Wrapped Coast*, the most impressive aspect was the artwork as work, as an organisational and financial project involving hundreds of people being managed to an end that most people considered absurd and yet became increasingly fascinated by. Thinking about this in following years led me to understand organisational structures as cultural artefacts, potentially as works of art, and also to an understanding that an organisation or a group of workers could be regarded as an artist. This is how I came to understand the NSW Builders Labourers Federation (BLF) and other trade unions like the Federated Engine Drivers and Fireman's Association (FEDFA) as artists in the sense that as collaborative groups they used their one tool, their ability to withhold their labour, to generate cultural change. In fact their influence was so great, starting with their first Green Ban at Kelly's Bush in Sydney's Hunters Hill in 1971, that they inspired the development of the German Green Party, leading to worldwide parliamentary Green Parties, one of the most important elements of the battle against climate change. This was cultural change on a grand scale.

The second is Project 22 in 2010, titled *7 forms measuring 600 x 60 x 60 cm constructed to be held horizontal to a wall*, by Santiago Sierra.

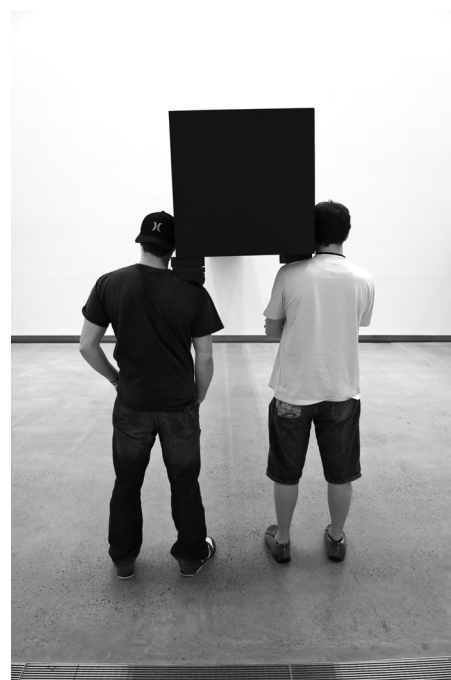


"The whole business in that sense has really changed; it's not colour and design that's important, it's logistics. It's about getting a product as quickly as possible (to market), so I guess over time we did lose our unique angle.

"The biggest thing is (that) the originality of fashion is really not that important any more."

The fact that Kaldor's fame rests so much on his activities as an artworld patron raises interesting questions about what we recognise and value as significant cultural activity, how we understand labour in society, and how we value it. It is a thread that appears several times in the Kaldor projects, often in challenging ways.

If we start at the end and look back we can see that, in the fifty years Kaldor Public Art Projects has been running, art has effectively disap-



Forty years after *Wrapped Coast* the world was a very different place. The rise of neoliberalism had featured global arbitrage of labour, by constantly shifting production from one country to another in search of the lowest conceivable labour costs and conditions. Sierra's work symbolised this process, a titillating spectacle of abjection where unemployed workers carry out meaningless tasks at the lowest wage. In this case they held up a series of beams against a wall, a sad parody of the caryatids of classical sculpture as precarious workers but also a forerunner of the age of so-called "bullshit jobs". While essentially pointless and unproductive, low paid bullshit jobs served to maintain a psychology of managerial control over workers. Sierra's work portrays this toxic cultural change.

In 2013 the anthropologist David Graeber published an essay entitled "*On the Phenomenon of Bullshit Jobs*". Graeber argued that the value of increased productivity was divided unequally, almost all going to management and shareholders and little to workers. Bullshit jobs were used to keep workers divided by constantly monitoring each other. Meanwhile the Puritan-capitalist work ethic turned having a job, *any* job, into a religious duty that stigmatised those who were not in paid jobs, disregarding the work they often did as carers etc. Wikipedia summarises Graeber's argument:

... [people] believe that work determines their self-worth, even as they find that work pointless. Graeber describes this cycle as "profound psychological violence", "a scar across our collective soul". In turn, rather than correcting this system, Graeber writes, individuals attack those whose jobs are innately fulfilling.

The third is Project 29 in 2014, Tino Sehgal's *This Is So Contemporary*. Sehgal's work involves creating a parody of service industry bullshit jobs. It is hard to see his work as anything but an attack on "those whose jobs are innately fulfilling", and this may well explain his reluctance to have the work documented in any way. Sehgal's resistance to documentation can perhaps be understood as a residual shame, a desire to leave no evidence. Sehgal's work allows institutions to misrepresent socially engaged art as little more than annoying harassment interrupting their preferred business model of art as exhibitions.

At the heart of this is the rise of social practice, the offshoot of conceptualism beginning in the mid 1970s that resulted in many artists (including me) distancing themselves from the official art world to work instead embedded in communities, using their artistic skills in social and political activism. The institutions, over ensuing decades, made repeated attempts to incorporate and monetise this tendency. The work of Vanessa Beecroft (Project 12, 1999) promoted by the curator Nicholas Bourriaud as "relational aesthetics", was typical of an earlier attempt to institutionalise the idea of community collaboration by mimicking it while compromising it, thus robbing it of political power. Sehgal is a later attempt that promotes but also parodies attempts at social engagement, turning it into a form of abuse and harassment.

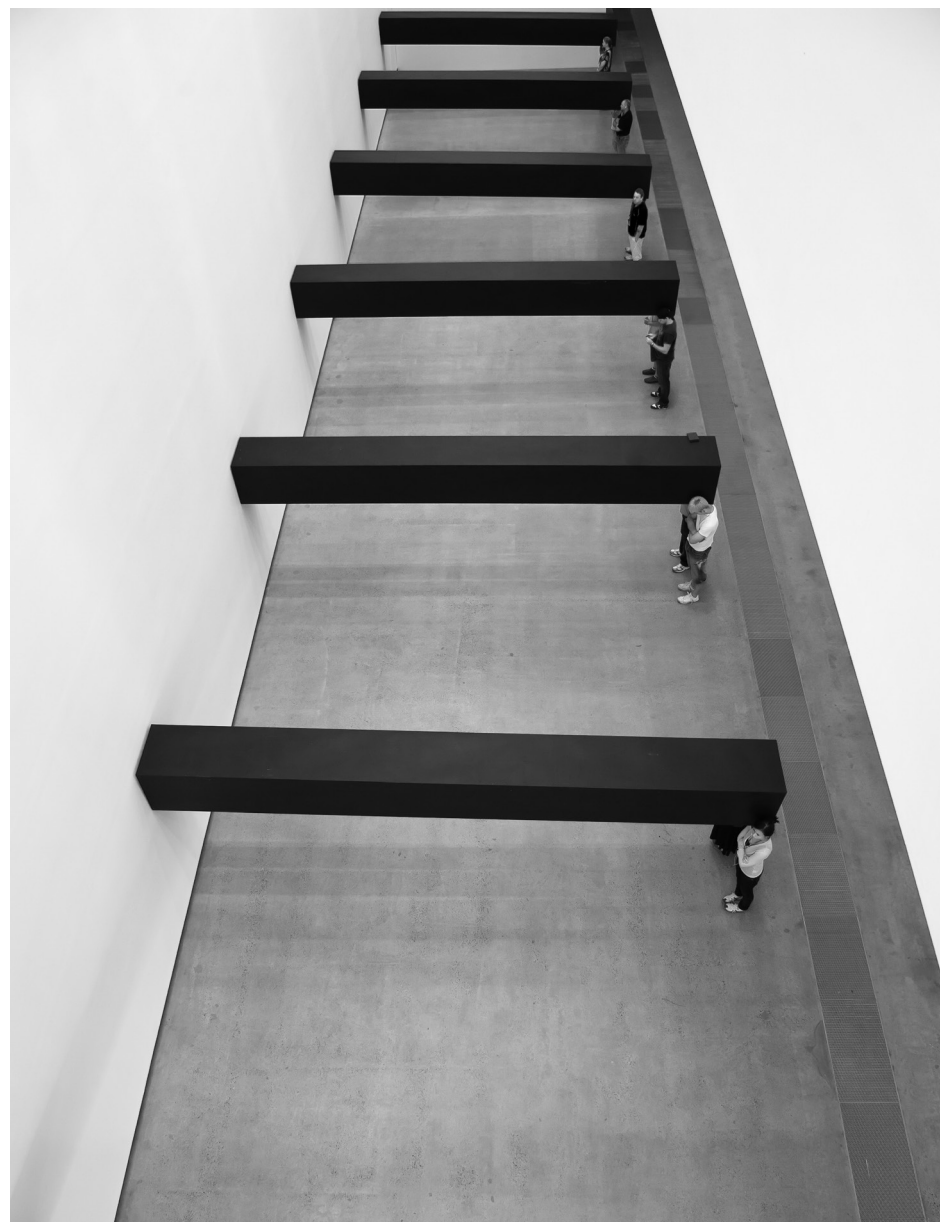
Sehgal's temporary popularity probably reflects the way institutions had begun to feel their own significance slipping away. Their power had waned as the more marketable forms of art had become less meaningful, hollowed out by vacuous biennales, art as tourism and money laundering, the art world version of the same processes of global neoliberalism that had slowly made the Kaldor fabric business less profitable and also less fulfilling. In art as in fashion originality is "really not that important any more" and the market only wants the quick, cheap and familiar delivered fast. It is ironic that within the Kaldor projects there is such an exposition of that process.

Ian Milliss

IMAGES: Kaldor Public Art Project 22: Santiago Sierra. 7 forms measuring 600 x 60 x 60cm constructed to be held horizontal to a wall, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 20 - 28 November 2010. © Santiago Sierra. Photo: Natasha Harth



Ian Milliss is an artist who worked on *Wrapped Coast*.



JOURNALISM INTO ART (PART 4): MUCKRAKING & MORAL OUTRAGE

When Guggenheim Director Thomas Messer cancelled Hans Haacke's commissioned exhibition in May 1971 because it was "not art but journalism", the supporters of Haacke and sacked curator Edward Fry bypassed the journalism question to support the artistic merit of the works. Messer's description of the work as "muckraking" invokes the North American term for investigative journalism linked with moral outrage going back to the nineteenth century. Subsequently Grace Glueck, the *New York Times* (NYT) arts reporter who covered the Haacke controversy for her paper, recalled how she had

marvelled at his diligence and skill as an investigative reporter. Had Haacke not devoted himself to art, he might have become an exemplary journalist, not only because of his bulldog talent for research, but also because of his total indifference to the power wielded by important people who are anxious to keep publicly questionable activities private. His work is all the more convincing because, while it comes out of a deep passion for justice, its presentation is studiously dispassionate.

Glueck also attributed to Haacke the "fourth estate" ethical commitment of journalism to the public interest, and linked it to the calibre of his research, which included both documentary and human sources of journalists.

Haacke's success as a watchdog of public morality is due in no small measure to his prodigious research efforts. While many artists need go no further than their own studio for their material, he travels far and wide, visiting libraries, checking archives, reading obscure publications, examining court documents, talking with "sources". And he keeps extensive files on his targets.

Glueck's view is that because of the high calibre of his research and his concern with issues involving public morality, Haacke's art substantively is journalism – with the converse implication that as journalism it is also art.

This was precisely Messer's problem with the work. He specified the verifiability and meaning of the facts being reported by Haacke as a basis for rejecting the works. If Haacke had been merely appropriating some unusual object, medium or process to make a symbolic statement, much as Duchamp did with his urinal, wine rack and snow shovel, then there would have been no problem, but because Haacke's art was making statements about facts open to verification in the material and social worlds, it was unacceptable to Messer.

Haacke himself has never rejected the art-journalism linkage, although he has never identified himself as anything other than an artist. He had quickly realised the significance of Messer's hostility on the verifiability issue for what it revealed about the importance of methodology in the politics of art and knowledge. Thereafter he used the research methodologies of journalism as a staple of his practice.

Apart from Glueck at the NYT, other journalists over the years who reported and analysed the controversies generated by Haacke's artworks also recognised both the reliability of his factual evidence and his journalistic sensitivity for the "productive provocations" that would provide access into institutional politics – his news sense. For most of the other institutions that exhibited these and similar artworks by Haacke, the works maybe were or were not journalism, but either way it didn't seem to matter. For those institu-

tions for whom it did matter – the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Kassel with *Manet PROJEKT* '74 in 1974 and Köln's *Westkunst* exhibition with *Der Pralinenmeister* (*The Chocolate Master*) in 1981, not to mention the institutions that discreetly avoided commissioning work from Haacke – the problematic issue was the same one: his claims to verifiable truth about the sensitive activities of people or organisations involved with the museum.

The very scale and intensity of the conflict at the Guggenheim in 1971 suggests that there was something deep and serious at stake in the journalism-art connection. The conflict was reported in detail in the *New York Times*, and their art critic Hilton Kramer was an assertive combatant in the struggle. Curator Edward Fry, an internationally respected expert on modern art, was dismissed for supporting Haacke and never worked again in a US art institution [see **EXTRA!EXTRA!** edition 3 for more on this story]. It took almost four decades before Haacke's work would be purchased by a major US institution: *Shapolsky* by the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2007, in a half-share with the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona. In the meantime Haacke's star had risen high in the international art firmament and, as Buchloh observed in a detailed analysis in 1988, his continuing marginalisation by elite US and German public institutions was meaningful in itself and required analysis. A reunified Germany acted with the 1991 Venice Biennale invitation for *GERMANIA* and the contested Bundestag invitation of 1999. In US art circles, the situation was undoubtedly an embarrassment when the Whitney finally acted in 2007 to purchase *Shapolsky* as one of the major works of 1970s American art. Nonetheless, four decades of prolonged absence demands an explanation.

In passing, the ignorance about this conflict among scholars of journalism is also important and needs to be rectified. In parallel to the art world, that ignorance is indicative of, in Buchloh's terms, a failure to recognise "a turning point – one of those historical moments in which a set of traditional assumptions about the structures and functions of art are being challenged." Haacke's work, precisely because it brings journalism and art together as methodology, highlights the issue

and can bring journalism into focus with contemporary art practice and theory.

Haacke proposed a relational approach to the issue of what is art, asserting the inherent social and political nature of the question:

Products that are considered "works of art" have been singled out as culturally significant objects by those who, at any given time and social stratum, wield the power to confer the predicate "work of art" onto them; they cannot elevate themselves from the host of man-made objects simply on the basis of some inherent qualities. Today museums and comparable art institutions ... belong to that group of agents in a society who have a sizable, though not an exclusive share in this cultural power on the level of so-called "high art". Irrespective of the "avant-garde" or "conservative", "rightist" or "leftist" stance a museum might take, it is among other things a carrier of socio-political connotations. By the very structure of its existence, it is a political institution. This is as true for museums in Moscow or Peking as it is for a museum in Cologne or the Guggenheim Museum.*

From Haacke's definition, an artist cannot but be involved in the politics of art, even if only passively as the beneficiary and bearer of a conventional wisdom about the nature of art. Similarly, a journalist cannot but be involved in the politics of knowledge, even if only passively as the beneficiary and bearer of a conventional wisdom about the nature of news.

Chris Nash

*Excerpt from "All the art that's fit to show", in *Hans Haacke: For real: Works 1959–2006*, eds. Matthias Flügge and Robert Fleck, Richter Verlag, Düsseldorf, 2006.

This is an edited extract from *What is Journalism? The Art and Politics of a Rupture* published by Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. For further information contact chris@chrisnash.com.au



Chris Nash is a former journalist and academic and author of *What is Journalism? The Art and Politics of a Rupture*.

DIVERSIFYING THE SOCIAL FABRIC

My parents were in the rag trade. That was pretty standard for Holocaust survivors who came to Australia. It worked this way at least in my family – Mum did piecework when she got off the boat. Dad worked at Port Kembla. They saved enough to start a small business and then built it into something bigger.

John Kaldor was a big deal to my parents. He was younger than they were, had arrived a couple of years before they did; and he fitted in to Australia in a way they never could. His English was perfect, theirs less so. But they worked within a few hundred yards of each other in Surry Hills. And it wasn't long after Kaldor began his business that he brought contemporary art to the *schmattes* district in a way which transfixed my mother. She received an invitation to *Coloured Feast* (1973) to celebrate the opening of the new Kaldor showrooms. I had already decided to study art for my higher school certificate and knew about Christo (we didn't hear much about Jeanne-Claude back in the day) and Gilbert and George. Mum was keen to go. My memories are vivid of the night. Mum made me a dress from bold Kaldor fabric. We walked up the hill to the showrooms together. Dad decided work was more important. But Leslie Walford, famed interior decorator, and even more famed social writer in Sydney's *Sun-Herald*

from the 1960s through to the 1980s, took notes:

"The mayonnaise was purple, the sausages blue. The cauliflowers were red or pink or green. The jellies were psychedelic. The pâté was turquoise, the corn on the cob sky blue. Was it the first work of art ever eaten in Australia?"

In an interview with Valerie Carr about the forthcoming *Coloured Feast* in the *Australian Women's Weekly*, then a publication where you could expect real news about contemporary art, Kaldor said he didn't really want to startle people with the food.

"Our feast won't be too psychedelic," he told Carr in September 1973, yet its memory is still intense in my mind.

This wasn't "art" in my father's mind. While Miralda was Spanish, he wasn't El Greco. That was about as modern as Dad got. He wasn't even sure Australians could be artists. And if you take an overview of the Kaldor Public Art Projects, it looks like Kaldor and Dad were pretty much on the same page at least when it comes to state of origin. Dad died in 1976 and would have been shocked by Jonathan Jones's expansive work in the Royal Botanic Gardens, which marked a clear shift in the Kaldor projects.

I looked at all the artists who are named as exhibitors in the Kaldor Projects since 1969, either solo or duo. Since I'm only looking at solo or duo projects, I chose to leave out *An Australian Accent*,

where three Australians, Mike Parr; Ken Unsworth, and Imants Tillers were shown in 1984 (that group exhibition travelled extensively and gave an international platform to these artists). I also leave out *13 Rooms* and *Making Art Public*. Of the 35 projects, I count 32. It gives a clearer historical picture of the story so far. Of those 32 projects, one is Jonathan Jones, of the Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi nations of south-east Australia; 15 projects have either one or two artists who can be predictably classified as European by residence at least before Brexit or at least before they died. Some divide their time in that group: Miralda, for example, spends time in the US.

A further 15 shows are of artists who live in the US or its territories (or did before they died) according to their biographies. Of those, Charlotte Moorman (d. 1991), Sol Lewitt (d. 2007), Jeff Koons, Barry McGee, Stephen Vitiello, Bill Viola, Jennifer Allora and Asad Raza were all born there. Others such as Vanessa Beecroft, Urs Fischer, Marina Abramovic and Ugo Rondinone moved to the US. Jeanne-Claude is the only artist born in Africa; Nam Jun Paik the only artist born in Korea; Guillermo Calzadilla was born in Cuba but, along with Allora, now lives in Puerto Rico, a US territory. Tatzu Nishi, the only Japanese artist, now divides his time between Japan and Germany.

Does it matter if the Kaldor Public Art Projects

are nearly exclusively white (some artists explicitly mention heritage which is non-European) and either European or from the United States?

I asked Ghassan Hage, Future Generation Professor of Anthropology at the University of Melbourne, about whether this really mattered. Hage, it could be argued, is Australia's leading scholar on race. *Should Kaldor Public Art Projects be more diverse?*

Hage: "Why should it be representative of anything, why does it have to be non-white or non-European? Is it really a national thing and therefore there has to be [or is] some tension or some need to represent, something like a variety of people to reflect the variety of artists around Australia? Or is it his own thing and that's his taste? Then he is free to choose and people who don't like this, don't have to go and watch."

As Hage points out, there are historical reasons why certain things are more white than others. A contemporary view would say that it is not acceptable now for something to be so white.

"And that is not said in a spirit of hatred but in a spirit of diversification, with the expectation that there will be a gradual transformation."

There is no point in taking a tokenistic approach: "You can't expect something [to go] from all white to a radical cultural diversity, but the critique has to begin somewhere."

Hage says there are two stages of transformation – the first and most obvious is for galleries and museums to exhibit non-white art, but the second and perhaps even more crucial is for the organisations themselves to be changed (as Richard Bell points out in his essay, *Bell's Theorem**).

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

DIVERSIFYING THE SOCIAL FABRIC (CONTINUED)

"It is a reasonable thing to demand some gradual move towards inclusion and diversification of both what is being presented and the mode in which it is being presented. Any step towards diversification is good [unless] the step becomes perceived as an answer or a structure."

"There is a continuous need for critique, an ongoing process."

Jennifer Higgle, editor-at-large of international contemporary art magazine *Frieze*, says that it's important to recognise that from the beginning the Kaldor Public Art Projects were also forward-thinking.

"John Kaldor started with a European – an outsider – sensibility, animating both local and public spaces. He didn't just ask Christo [to Australia] to impose something the artist did elsewhere, he invited Christo to wrap the cliffs."

"It was, 'how might this art adapt or be interesting to local people?'"

Higgle is back in Australia to finish writing her book *The Mirror and the Palette*, an investigation of historic self-portraits by women artists. She says she's noticed a shift in how art situates itself in this country.

"More vital and more representative – an awareness by Australian institutions of the

importance of discussions on race, class, sexuality and gender."

"Art wouldn't be able to happen without philanthropists – they are hugely important and hugely generous. Of course there are challenges," says Higgle.

For Kaldor Public Art Projects, some of the critiques and challenges are about making changes in its own organisational practices. More recent group exhibitions address questions of balance and origin. Clearly there's more to do, but in contemporary art, change is inevitable, even if slow. I can see change is coming. If Mum were still alive, I know she'd be coming to see the latest

Kaldor project, and maybe I could even have persuaded Dad to walk up the hill with me.

Jenna Price

* Richard Bell, *Bell's Theorem*, 2002, is available at <http://www.kooriweb.org/foley/great/art/bell.html>



Jenna Price is an academic at the University of Technology Sydney and a regular columnist for The Sydney Morning Herald.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM THE EXTRA! EXTRA! LETTER BOX 02/12/19

Re: *Nothing if Not Warm and Welcoming* (Mickie Quick, Edition 1)

Great piece of writing Mickie Quick. This reflects badly on City of Sydney. Greta Thunberg talked about 'Cathedral Thinking' in a recent speech – a reference to both the Notre Dame fire & the immediate global action to fund its restoration, as well as the potent symbolism of medieval guilds & the legacy of those builders in light of the kind of commitment we need to address the climate emergency collectively now. It's such a great visual reference, along with all of the other supposedly controversial imagery in the work. It's a strong piece in a long tradition of art as social action. I'm so glad Deborah Kelly spoke up & I really appreciate the clarity you've given this in your writing here, particularly the point about doctoring digital work – this should not happen. As you say, a painter would never be asked to touch-up a work to appease a patron.

Thanks,

Tania Leimbach

As someone who has been censored, banned and excluded from exhibit options I would urge other artists and the curator to withdraw their work in solidarity... otherwise we will see more and more of this.

Tim Burns

Re: *Filtering disinformation: climate change journalism since the late 1960s* (Wendy Bacon and Chris Nash, Edition 2)

Thank you, Wendy and Chris, for a meticulously researched and presented article. I hope it's amplified in large-circulation publications, but evidence of continued muffling of climate change stories is pretty clear, so I'm not hopeful. Social media will hopefully spread it nonetheless.

Thanks!

Peter Barnes

I agree Peter. Every bit does spread the word. Fairfax stopped printing sceptic columns about 8 years ago and the ABC likewise. I feel that one really big danger is that the threat of the impacts of climate change – for example – the bushfires gets normalised and becomes non-newsworthy. This needs more thought I know. As someone who has worked in the mainstream, I know the pressures and try to be fair. But when we heard story after story yesterday morning about Clive James as a public intellectual, the dire warnings [about the climate crisis] from the UN on the same day were pushed into the background. The SMH did cover it but only used the AAP wire story – and the ABC station that I was listening to it mentioned it as a footnote at best.

Wendy Bacon

Dear editor.

I believe that art is not just an object, but a story. Art is contemporary and temporary as it is not there forever. And it is not the same when you see it twice, it almost changes every time. There is always something new you notice each time.

Yours truly - Matilda Benedictus.

Dear Editor(s),

I like 😊 art. But! I don't always understand it, I feel like I don't know enough; so I'm unable to truly appreciate it.

One the other hand, some art is just exciting no matter if you know the story behind it or not.

May art be bad? May it have no esthetical qualities? Who decides whether is worth or not?

Magda who wishes to understand art better.

Love this concept! Had so much fun making my own poster!
Wishing you a long life full of travels & happiness.
P.S.

To the Editor,
What do I want your investigative journalists to look into? DIVERSITY!

I want an inclusive Australian Society that embraces and encourages DIVERSITY ...

Diversity of age
race
religion
socioeconomic background

Could you investigate this? Starting with Multicultural Policy of the 1960s to John Howard's divisive attitude to the present.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

We welcome responses to the articles in our newspaper.

Post a letter in our letterbox at the Art Gallery of NSW, or online at www.extra-extra.press/