

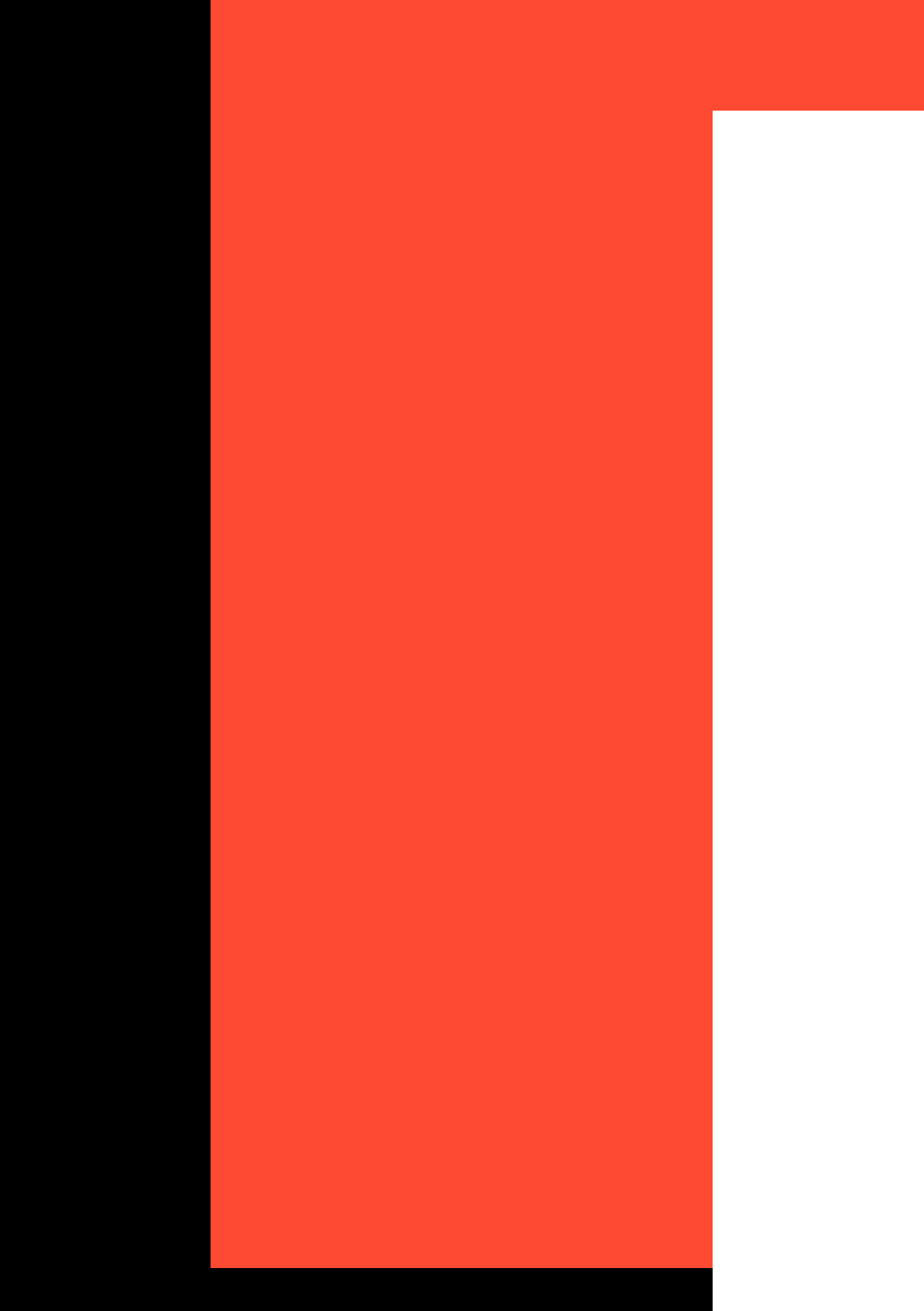



# EXHIBIT A

Dani Marti · Daniel Mudie Cunningham ·  
Tina Havelock Stevens · Nell · Drew Bickford ·  
Halinka Orszulok · Julie Gough · Carolyn McKay ·  
Anna Kristensen · Elvis Richardson

**30 OCTOBER – 6 DECEMBER 2015**

**THE  
LOCK  
UP**





**n 2008**, a series of photographs by celebrated Australian artist Bill Henson were confiscated by NSW police prior to the opening of a private exhibition of the work. Henson's subject matter included girls and boys on the cusp of adolescence, partially unclothed. Certainly, the public controversy around his work was largely framed in terms of the wider contemporary 'moral panic' about the sexualisation of children. The question that drove popular debates about Henson's work was: 'is it porn?'

But from the perspective of this exhibition it can also be read as an example of a moment where the question 'what is art?' coincides with the question 'what is crime?' The artists in *Exhibit A* address both these questions in various ways.

These artists are working at a time when conventional boundaries between artistic genres are becoming less relevant and the subject matter of art is ever broadening, so that what constitutes art is constantly being thrown into question. The topic of crime, criminality and the criminal subject therefore presents fertile conceptual ground for such artists who are already engaging with the nature of 'community standards' and 'acceptable' conventions in relation to their own discipline.

Through a wide range of mediums, the artists in *Exhibit A* make work that necessarily involves a reflexive questioning of the ahistorical, categorical distinctions that frame conventional art practice. Indeed, in the process of posing questions about crime through their art, they simultaneously question the nature of art itself. Rather than simply answering the questions at the heart of the exhibition then – what is 'crime'?, what is 'art'? - these artists have engaged with the way these categories are culturally constructed and reproduced, historically, politically, legally and materially.



Dani Marti  
*thin air* 2015  
4k video, 18'10"

The historico-political nature of crime and criminality is a central concern that runs through the exhibition. In *thin air*, Dani Marti darkly illuminates those often hidden aspects of sexuality that, through their very marginalisation, make them susceptible to pathologisation and criminalisation and the other



# DANI MARTI

way around. Marti employs cinematic techniques such as slow motion and the close-up in a way that deeply implicates the viewer in the action – creating an abstracted ambiguity about the content of the work. As a result, these images of auto-erotic asphyxiation and sensory deprivation as sources of

sexual pleasure connect us to the conflicted relationship we have to our own, sometimes disturbing, private fantasies. Through these confronting yet compelling video works the arbitrary nature of the dichotomous line we draw between acceptable and abhorrent behaviours reveals itself.

# DANIEL MUDIE CUNNINGHAM



@danmudcun

Daniel Mudie Cunningham

*Shitter* 2015

HD single channel video, silent, 21:14 min

Camera: Tim Buchanan

Courtesy of the artist

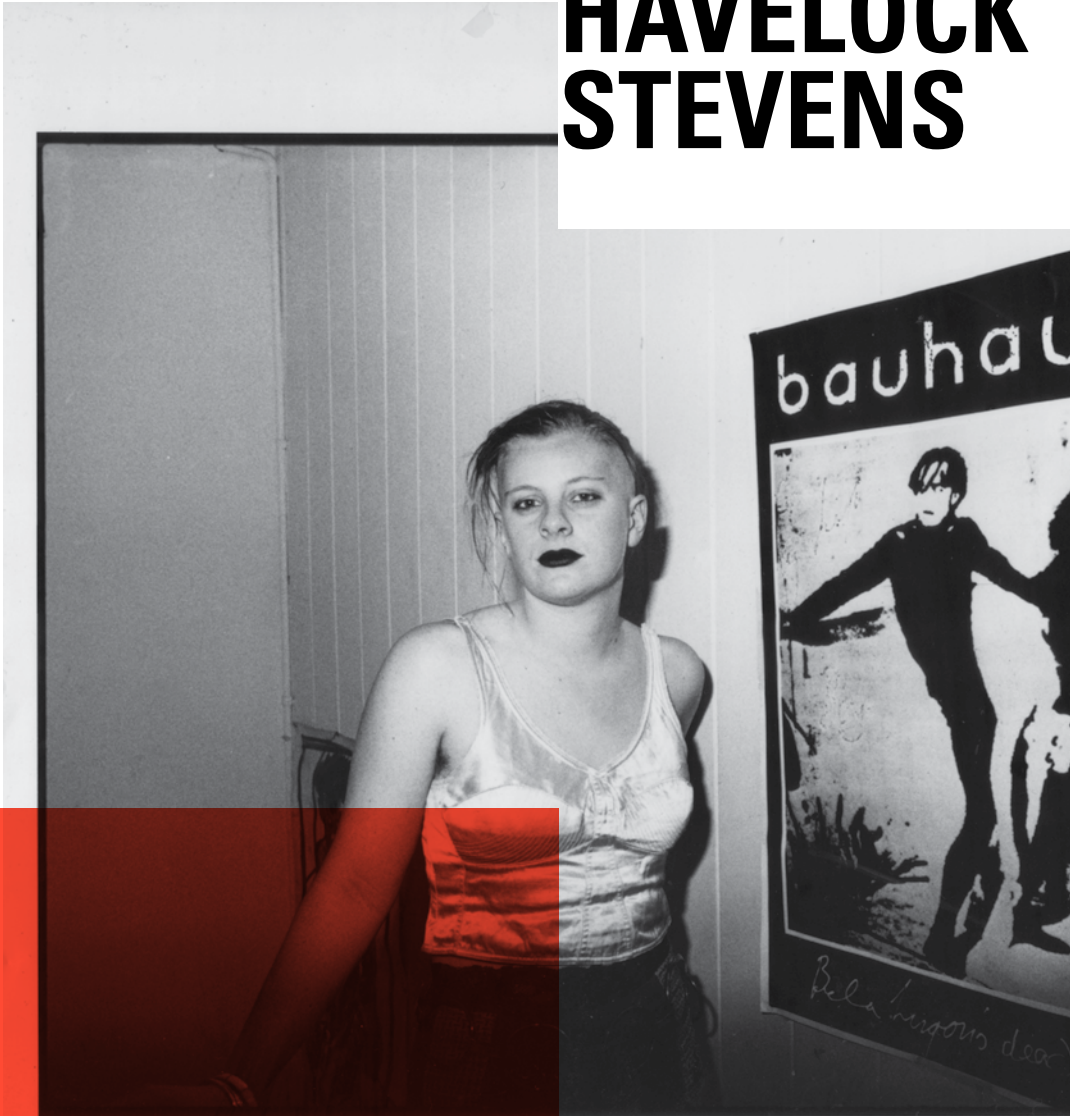


# Relieved it didn't happen to me #shitter

In Daniel Mudie Cunningham's *Shitter*, a prison toilet becomes the site for an obscene self-revelation of the once hidden shame that is too easily overshared in a confessional culture. In a series of tweets sent from a cell, the artist's innermost secrets crawl across the screen like a walk of shame after a drunken one-night stand.

The roll call of experience alluding to teenage kleptomania, childhood sexual abuse, drug use and porn addiction reminds us of the fluidity of criminality as a concept and how the relationship between perpetrator and victim can be a complex and shifting one.

# TINA HAVELOCK STEVENS







Tina Havelock Stevens taps into her own personal 'criminality' in *But I Don't Wanna Do That*, enabling the viewer to reflect on the subjective nature of legal and moral codes. In the spirit of the punk sensibility that characterises her broader practice, Havelock Stevens offers up an installation which centres around a discarded drum kit – the ultimate cultural signifier of civil disobedience.

While a parking ticket may seem trivial to most, an entire ceiling of them suggests the way banal transgressions rise to the level of criminality in a regulated community.

The palpable weight of that low ceiling also reminds the viewer of the weight of their responsibility to micro-manage their behavior in order to fall on the right side of the law.

*But I Don't Wanna Do That* 2015

Installation with sound

Telephone, stool, rope, parking tickets,  
drum kit

Photo: Have you seen this woman?

(Portrait of the artist as a young criminal)

Photo credit: Scott Wajon

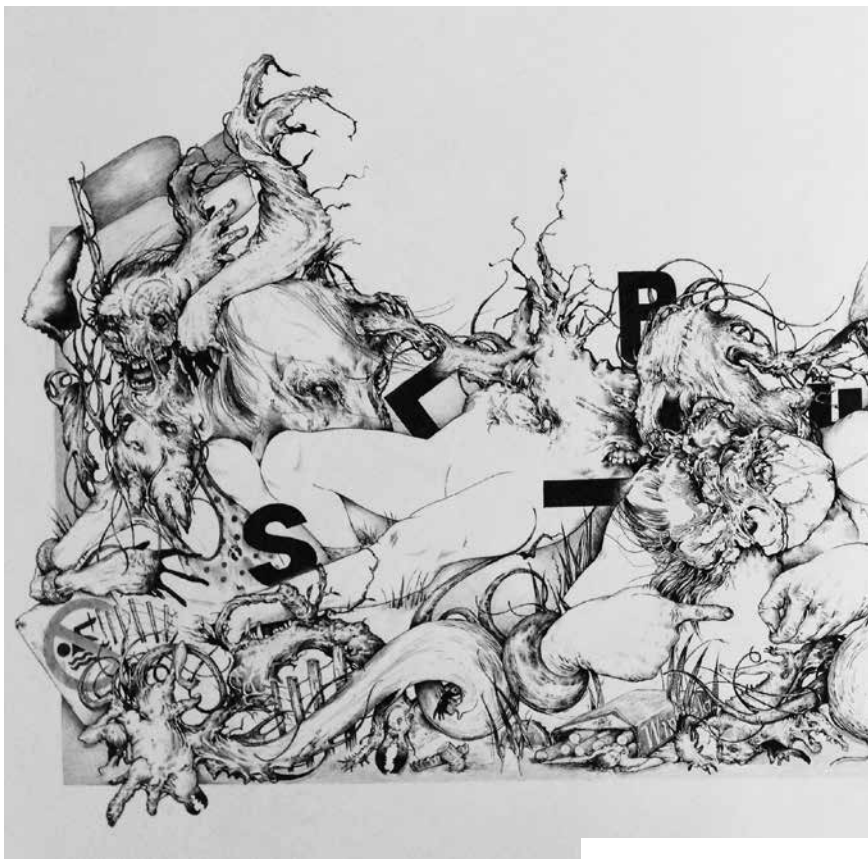
Other artists in *Exhibit A* chose to interrogate the pornographic language of a media culture which trades in salacious accounts of crimes of sex and violence. As a woman who grew up in the Hunter Valley, Nell has created a work which makes visible the unspoken reality of sexual violence in families and communities. She does this by representing the various, often contradictory, ways gendered notions of sexual violence circulate

in a mediated culture. Drawing on the music Nell grew up with, tabloid headlines, and hard statistics, *Where Newcastle Meets Maitland* looks like an old poster advertising pub bands from the 1980s, with ripped-from-the-headlines style slogans partly made up of cut-up second hand t-shirts. The monochromatic palette and in-your-face text imbue the work with the sort of rigid masculinity that all too often ends in abuse and violence.

# NELL

Nell  
*Where Newcastle meets Maitland* 2015  
Acrylic, pencil and mixed media on  
linen, wood





# DREW

Drew Bickford also takes as his starting point media imagery of serial killers, lust murderers and their 'evil' acts. He does so, not to contribute to the grotesque carnival of characters which populate the tabloid imagination, but to render this grotesqueness transparent. *Slipface* deals with the infamous

local rape and murder of Stockton teenager Leigh Leigh; the term refers to the inner side of a dune where the slope is unstable and precarious, reminding the viewer both of the lonely place where Leigh Leigh was discovered and the menacing nature of those allegedly involved, as well as the beach



Drew Bickford  
*Slipface* 2015  
Ink and graphite on paper  
56 x 79cm  
Artist represented by Flinders  
St Gallery, Sydney

# BICKFORD

culture that breeds a dangerously insular masculinity. Bickford's drawing practice is simultaneously an outlet for our personal fascination with sex murders and a representation of the brutal psychological truths that are revealed about ourselves through their very distortion in popular culture.

Halinka Orszulok's paintings also capture our fears of a criminalised other through the representation of spaces that are simultaneously beautiful and threatening - often the site of deviant behavior under the cover of darkness. In her latest

# HALINKA ORSZULOK



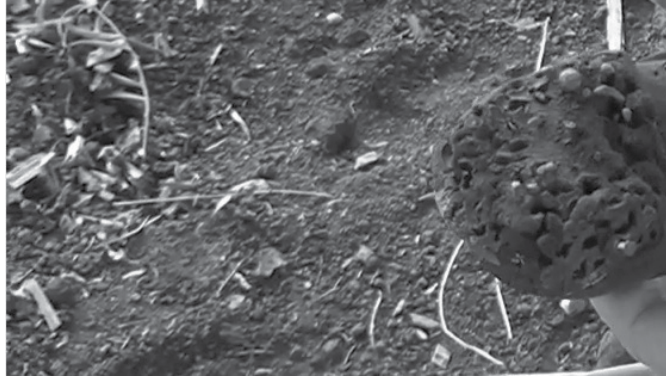
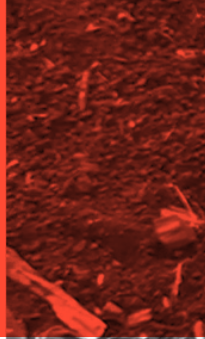
Halinka Orszulok  
*On the Ground* 2015  
Oil on canvas  
100 x 15cm

body of work, *Lone Rider* and *On the Ground*, these spaces are even more ambiguous – a road curving into an uncertain darkness and a rocky verge where weeds sprout. But understood in symbolic terms, these works suggest that, while some of us live

in circumstances which may seem a fait accompli (placed on a dark and rocky path that can only lead to a life of crime), there is hope we can make something out of what has been made of us.



# JULIE GOUGH



Other artists turned their attention to the past in order to illustrate ongoing injustices that are, in different ways, implicated in our colonial past. When Julie Gough found herself physically and psychologically isolated during a hosted trip to a remote area, she discovered the remains of a stock

keeper's hut and, amidst the rubble, an old shoe. She presented the shoe to her camp organisers who told her a story as plain and enigmatic as it was: 'He used to beat her. One day he went to town. He was all beaten and bruised. He said his wife had run off.' She kept the shoe and with it a nagging feeling that the wife





was buried nearby. Her subsequent, frustrated search for this woman's fate inspired her installation work, *Ode*, and is suggestive of the experience of so many generations of Aboriginal people looking for the truths of a past which continues to be buried by the violently silencing effects of colonisation.

Julie Gough

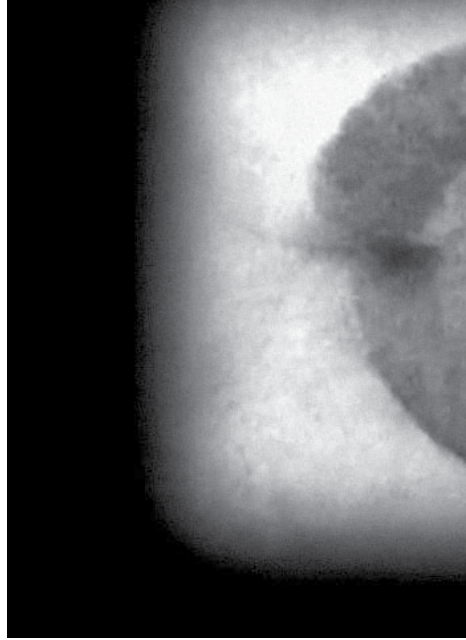
*Ode* 2014

HDMI video projection, H264, 16:9,  
sound, colour, 4:00 min, flag, pole, rocks

Edited by Jemma Rea

Thanks to Kaye and David Gough and the  
Tasmanian Land Conservancy

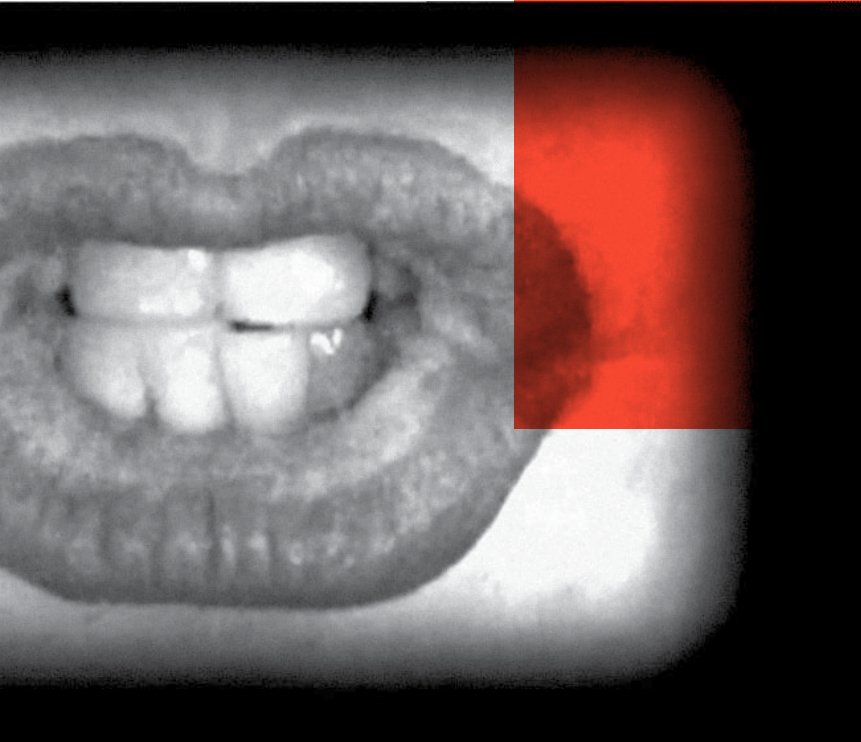
# CAROLYN McKAY



Carolyn McKay

*Moniker* 2015

Video installation (video with audio,  
07:54 minutes, looped, with printed  
fabric) and performance



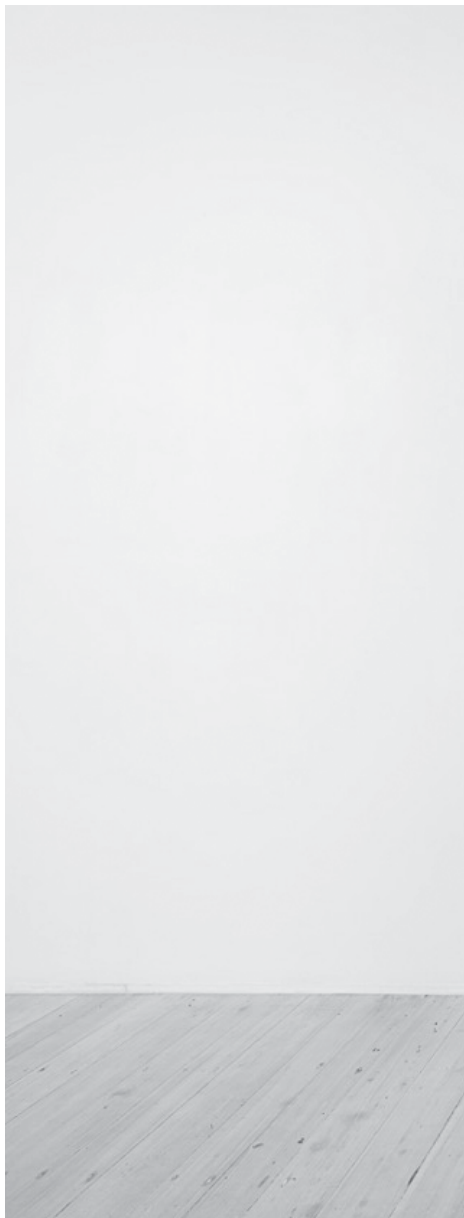
Carolyn McKay's video work *Moniker* excavates the past in a different way. Drawing on a register of local criminals, the artist discovered revealing descriptions of the criminals' physical appearance and distinguishing traits, in particular, their nicknames and aliases (including, strangely, her namesake: C.McKay). These monikers – at turns menacing, bizarre, and funny – are reminders of the way prisoners are reducible

to disembodied data, stripped down to the bare necessities of existence and indistinguishable except for rudimentary signifiers of their individuality such as tattoos and slang names. On opening night McKay augments the work with a performative component: reading a harshly monotonous roll call of these names which amplifies the brutality of a system which cannot appreciate the individual.

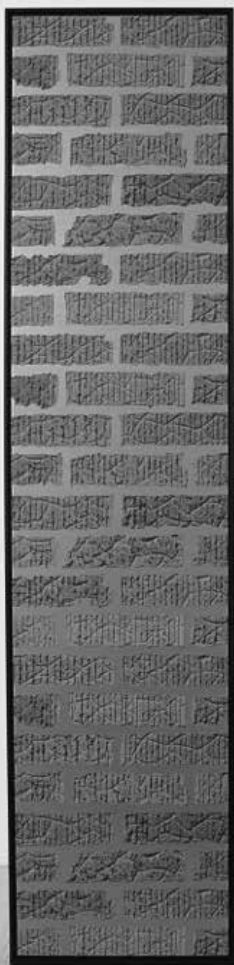
Finally, some artists explicitly consider the practice of art itself. Anna Kristensen's practice is specifically concerned with problems regarding the nature and experience of painting. Conventional oppositions which ground art historical categorisations between representation and abstraction, flatness and depth, for example, are thrown into question by the illusory possibilities of paint.

In *Column*, Kristensen presents the viewer with a soft, stuffed cylindrical painting that fits snugly inside the jail cell and which the audience is able to walk around. Echoing the cell which it inhabits, the corkscrew effect of the work – created by the incline of the painted bricks which, in their patterned form, seem to spiral upwards – inspires the viewer to pace in circles, round and round the column, suggesting the infinitely mindless and mind-bending activity of doing time in a confined space.

Anna Kristensen  
*Column* 2014  
Double sided painting, silkscreen ink and acrylic on polyester, framed, mild steel base, 223 x 53 x 10cm  
Photo: Yanni Kronenberg



# ANNA KRISTENSEN



# ELVIS RICHARDSON

In a different way, Elvis Richardson's work also asks the viewer to reflect on the nature of art – specifically questioning romantic ideas about the artist as outsider. Like a cross between a poster for healing potions and elixirs and a banner for a 12 Step group, *Art Problems* is based on a questionnaire which determines gambling addiction. Richardson's work eludes to the commonalities between the addict (who is often criminalised) and the artist. In a similar way to the compulsive gambler or even the career bank robber, the artist continues to practice often at great financial risk for the rare pay-off. The jackpot economy of creative success is a huge gamble; artists deal themselves into the highly competitive game of the contemporary art world where dreams are made and crushed in one round of arts funding.

As Richardson's work reminds us, artists, like criminals, are by their nature risk-takers. Particularly in societies that devalue creative innovation or, indeed, civil disobedience, artists are often positioned – and position themselves – at the social and cultural margins. Criminals and artists, somewhat romantically, are both considered 'outsiders'. But in contemporary culture it is criminals – the anti-heroes of a society with convict roots – that capture the popular imagination. The problem for artists is to engage with ideas in a way that makes their work relevant beyond the narrow concerns of the contemporary art world.

– Carrie Miller, 2015

Elvis Richardson  
*Art Problems* 2015  
Digital print on canvas banner 90 x 200cm  
Elvis Richardson is represented by Gallerie pompom, Sydney and Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide

HAVE YOU EVER FELT **ANXIOUS OR IRRITATED** WHEN YOU COULD NOT MAKE ART?

# ART PROBLEMS

Have you ever felt **RE M O R S E** OR **G U I L T** after making art? Have you ever **S U F F E R E D** **D E P R E S S I O N** as a result of making art?

Do you ever make art to worry, or ESCAPE trouble BOREDOM?

Do friends or family ever CRITICIZE or COMPLAIN about you making art?

Have you ever committed or considered an illegal act to finance art?

**DO YOU MAKE ART LONGER THAN PLANNED HOPING YOUR**

## LUCK WILL CHANGE

Have your **ART DEBTS** ever caused you to be declared bankrupt? Have you ever deposited items at a **PAWN BROKERS** in order to finance **ART**? Have you ever made art until your **LAST DOLLAR** is gone?

DOES ART EVER MAKE YOU CARELESS OF THE WELFARE OF YOURSELF OR YOUR FAMILY?

Have you ever tried to **STOP** **MAKING** **ART** but found you were **U N A B L E** ?

HAVE YOU EVER MADE FALSE CLAIMS ABOUT YOUR ART IN ORDER TO

## BOOST YOUR ODDS

**ART PROBLEMS**



**Headjam**



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