

IMAGINE ... THE CREATIVITY SHAPING OUR CULTURE

Can you imagine the future of Australian art? What will it be like? What current concerns will shape our culture to come?

Imagine... the creativity shaping our culture: 7 April – 25 June 2006 at Heide Museum of Modern Art. This exhibition launches the new Heide, following the 2005-06 Redevelopment Program. The exhibition presents a range of contemporary art practices in Australia today and the possibilities artists are creating in their work for Australian culture.

Exciting new work by ten artists from across Australia, provides insights into a cross-section of today's art practices. The featured artists are: Chris Barry, Vera Möller, Arlo Mountford, Garry Namponan, Lizzy Newman, Michelle Nikou, David Palliser, Stelarc, Lucia Usmiani and Roderick Yunkaporta.

The artists have been selected for the contribution their practice is, or will be seen to make, to Australian art. The works of *Imagine...* provide access to a wide range and scope of ideas, media and methodologies in contemporary art today. A range of public programs accompanying the exhibition will offer audiences further interaction with these artists and access to their work and ideas.

In *Imagine...*, internationally renowned artist **Stelarc** premieres his *Muscle Machine*, the largest walking robot in the country, and two new works that further his questioning of notions of being and our understanding of the natural human body and mind. The new projects, *Partial Face* (a face grown with living cells) and a new robotic work, engage with current social, ethical and scientific issues concerning the physical nature of being and the ramifications of our ability to control consciousness and intelligence.

Chris Barry is a Melbourne photographer, and a selection from her new body of work presents images of young people in Alice Springs, Central Australia. Her images rest uneasily between the documentary and the aesthetic, and are potent with the issues that lie at the heart of our struggle to define personal, local and national identity.

Garry Namponan and **Roderick Yunkaporta** are artists from Aurukun, a small remote Indigenous community situated on the north west tip of Cape York Peninsula, embracing the Wik and Kugu communities. Artists of this region, including Namponan and Yunkaporta, are aware of the long local tradition of carving and fibre art, and blend this heritage with contemporary influences and technology.

Darkrooming, the installation of German born, Melbourne-based artist **Vera Möller**, is a mock natural science laboratory store, overrun with collections of sculptural organisms. An optically dazzling cabinet of organic curiosities, *darkrooming* is the latest development in Möller's ongoing enquiry into the possibilities of evolution and human intrusion into the natural world, and the biological and sociological implications.

South Australian **Michelle Nikou's** intimate objects are modest and uncanny, and contravene the aesthetic conventions of traditional sculpture. Employing forms close to hand in the domestic realm, her resulting objects have a psychic potency, stimulating the viewer's imagination as to their interior lives. Nikou's new work includes objects transformed through processes of bronze casting, jewellery and other surprises.

The installations of Melbourne artist **Lizzy Newman** are intended to address their site and its inhabitants. Newman creates work with simple means; familiar materials and found objects with powerful metaphoric potential. Her work questions the nature of art and asserts the power of creative freedom for the individual.

An investigation of the nature of painting today is at the heart of **David Palliser's** work. His works on paper and paintings are excitingly open-ended. As a practice, Palliser's art functions as a continuous research project, rather than being defined by the production of predetermined images. Colour, mark-making and illusionism are all aspects of painting explored by this artist and awaiting discovery by the viewer. Palliser lives and works in Melbourne.

Based in Hobart, artist **Lucia Usmiani** uses recycled materials to create two and three dimensional works that bring out the inherent beauty, as well as excess, of consumerism. Usmiani crosses the divide between the realms of art and craft. She undertakes her work as if she is a production line, fastidiously collecting and cleaning objects generally classified as rubbish, which are then fragmented and combined into larger and sensually patterned works. Usmiani's work will extend beyond the galleries with a site-specific installation in Heide's Connie Kimberley Sculpture Park.

Often both macabre and humorous, animated moving image works by Melbourne artist **Arlo Mountford** are perceptive responses to popular culture, the canon of art history, and the 'condition of the individual'. Mountford's work for *Imagine...* employs his characteristic abstracted figures in a narrative that rewrites twentieth-century history (and Heide's place within it).

Zara Stanhope, Deputy Director and Senior Curator is available for interviews.

Heide Museum of Modern Art will be closed February and March 2006 in preparation for the unveiling of Heide's Redevelopment Program, 7 April 2006.

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7 April – 25 June 2006

Heide III: Main Gallery

Curator: Zara Stanhope

Heide Museum of Modern Art

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www.heide.com.au

Hours: Tue-Fri 10.00am – 5.00pm; Sat/Sun/Public Holidays 12.00noon – 5.00pm

Admission: All Areas - Adult \$12, Seniors \$10, Concession \$8.

Single Area (Heide I only) - Adult \$8, Seniors \$7, Concession \$5.

Gardens – Free.

For further media information:

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