

1992

co-ordinated by Sandra Bridie

Stephen Bram

Maria Griffin

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Andrew Hurle

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Andrew McQualter

John Meade

Rose Nolan

Sarah Stubbs

July 16-26 1997

1992

This line passes through this point. This one passes through that point. The surface of the painting is criss crossed by lines, each of which passes through one of the two points.

Continue along the lines in one direction and you will reach one or the other of these points. Go the other way, you won't get anywhere significant. Not in terms of the frame of reference of the work.

To one point - to the other - to one point - to the other. The work is like a branching decision tree: towards this point (how far?) to here, then towards this one (how far?) etc.

In regard to the space which contains the work the vanishing points are locations like any other. In regard to the work they exist as origins from which it is organised.

This painting was painted on a sunny balcony while two people attempted to write a play about dating agencies.

Does the painting have anything to do with that?

Stephen Bram



- Jan: Read the 'Beauty Myth' and had insomnia
- Feb: Started 2nd year at art school and "felt positive about my work". Read 'Crime and Punishment', went to the Astor to see 'Gilda', and 'The Lady From Shanghai'.
- March: My mother had a heart attack, later diagnosed as an angina. My brothers best friend died in a car crash. I had to look for a new place to live.
- April: Read 'The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat' and had insomnia; looked for houses and felt stressed out.
- May: Found another place in Fitzroy. Essay due at school.
- June: Listened to 'Proof' sound track and Red Hot Chilli Peppers 'Blood Sugar Sex Magic'.
- July: Read Patrick White, 'Riders In The Chariot', saw 'The Player' at the movies and 'The Cars That Ate Paris' on S.B.S. Went shopping with my mother, who kept whispering to me (as if my father might hear her) that if I wanted something she'd buy it for me.
- August: Saw The Chills at The Club. Read 'On The Road'. Saw The Blackeyed Susans at The Lounge. Made reprints of some old photos of myself with my brothers and sisters when we were young.
- September: Saw 'A Night On Earth' at the movies. Went to the Phillip Glass opera 'Einstein On The Beach' at the State Theatre.
- October: Read about Sol Le Witt for an essay at school. Bought two new C.D.s - The Clouds and The Penguin Cafe Orchestra. Saw The Church at The Palace. Had insomnia.
- November: Assessment at school. Bought John Cale C.D. Got an 'A' for my essay. Was given a Kate Bush C.D. - 'The Kick Inside'. Went to see Tori Amos at the Athenaeum Theatre, The Cruel Three at The Club, Nick Cave at the Palais, Died Pretty at The Central Club.
- December: Had a depressing Christmas, late night ride with taxi driver who said it was because of women in the workforce that we have high unemployment. Read 'The Bell Jar'. Watched old tapes of 'The Late Show'.

Maria Griffin



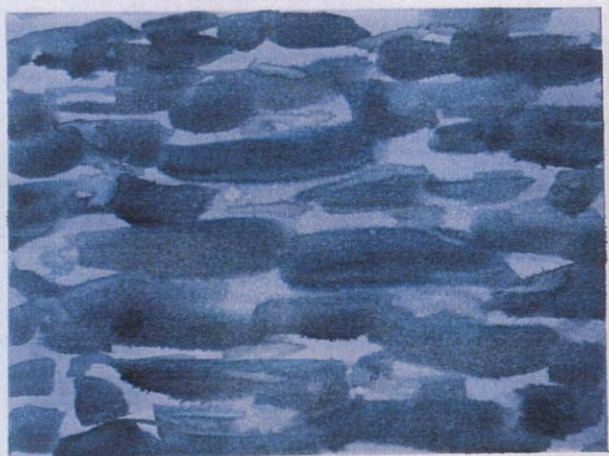
By the beginning of 1992 I was producing the last of a series of large and somewhat bombastic oil paintings, works which I still have great affection for in spite of their tendency towards humourlessness. On reflection the more playful gouaches I made at the time were an antidote to that seriousness. I was attracted to the way the medium lent itself to experimentation, the surprise element of aqueous paint. In this I was influenced by, or at least conscious of, the precisionist works of Charles Demuth and the thin turpsy paintings of Georgia O'Keefe. I'd seen works by both these artists during a trip to the U.S. a couple of years before and the impression they left had become a lasting one. In fact I'd become intrigued by the whole American water colour tradition.

At this time I was working in a studio in Middle Park though, as always, I struggled to find good studio time. I had a job I hated hanging bad art in a mediocre gallery: (toward the end of that year an incident involving a flying toolbox would see me mercifully ejected from the position). My collaboration with Andrew Seward was continuing; we were working in an investigatory fashion on a range of ideas using projections. This part of my practise always contained an element of play; another great foil to more sombre personal musings. Andrew and I were running Platform, which I think was going through a pretty good period (it went in cycles in those early days) and in 1992 we set up Slide, with assistance from Adam Boyd at 200 Gertrude St, as another forum for exploring the interface between art and its audience. Looking back at my CV to patch this period together, 1992 was also the year that Vault was born and died. Now part of the Crown Casino forecourt this anarchic little gallery was defeated as much by water (the wettest winter for many decades), as by any other factor. Perhaps the only art space in town where water freely flowed down the walls, Vault provided some useful experiences and an opening that I'll always remember fondly (against the backdrop of the city lights and the Yarra River an island of fire, music, booze and mayhem in the middle of the peak-hour city rush).

There's always been this conflict in the way I work, between infrastructure projects like Slide and Platform and the desire to just make art. The gouaches were an attempt, during a very busy time, to maintain some sort of foothold in the activities that art school had convinced me were central to being an artist. Nowadays I think I'm more reconciled to the fact that there will be moments when I just don't make art. The pictures I made in '92 grasped at small moments. They are, as a result, almost inconsequential and that is one of the things I like most about them.

The blue green rectangle is from a set of these gouaches which were notations relating to quiet walks around the St Kilda foreshore. It was shown at the Vault, where the lamination sure came in handy.

Richard Holt



I don't distinctly recall the artwork that belongs to 1992. I include the work that I have in the good faith that it was completed just before being exhibited in a show at Temple Studio in Prahran that year.

The year itself would have been something like a flat plain littered with small events. It was the first year of full-time work in a busy photocopy shop. For the first six months of this job I was so attentive and fascinated by the sight and manner of the shops customers that at any given moment I could recall with clarity everyone I had served in the past five days.

Gradually this attentive faculty was diminished until by the end of the year I could walk to work muttering like a maniac against the conviction that my life was dissolving without hope into a solution of warm shit.

According to a diary, the year can be abbreviated as follows:

- * I stopped smoking early in the new year
- * a stranger bought a drafting stand from me for \$145
- * I had dinner with my mother in February
- * I undertook to swim every day
- * The fact that Geoff Lowe was living at 49 George Street in Fitzroy was noted
- * I was due to fly somewhere in an aeroplane at 5.35 on a Friday afternoon
- * I booked a trailer for some reason
- * I collected a pair of trousers from the tailor. The job cost \$26
- * On Tuesday the 9th of June, I gave someone \$450
- * I took leave in August and caught a bus to MacGregors Creek where I spent four days
- * In early September I paid to have my hair cut
- * An old friend arrived in Melbourne in October and stayed for 9 days
- * There was a party somewhere in December

I was receiving \$332.05 every week during the course of this year. In November, my bank balance had reached an astounding \$2003.92.

As far as I can recall, I sold one artwork in this year and had two pieces stolen from separate exhibitions.

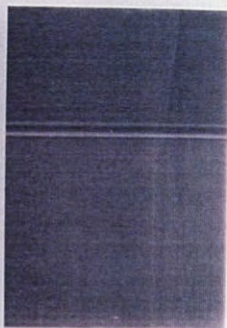
The A3 copies exhibited here belong to a series produced by taking a copy with an open lid and no original, from each of 27 different copiers in shops throughout the Melbourne CBD. At that time it gave me great pleasure to return to a photocopy shop as a customer with such a stupid, eccentric request. The undertaking was quite serious however and for that reason and because I think the work still has some value I reproduce the following description.

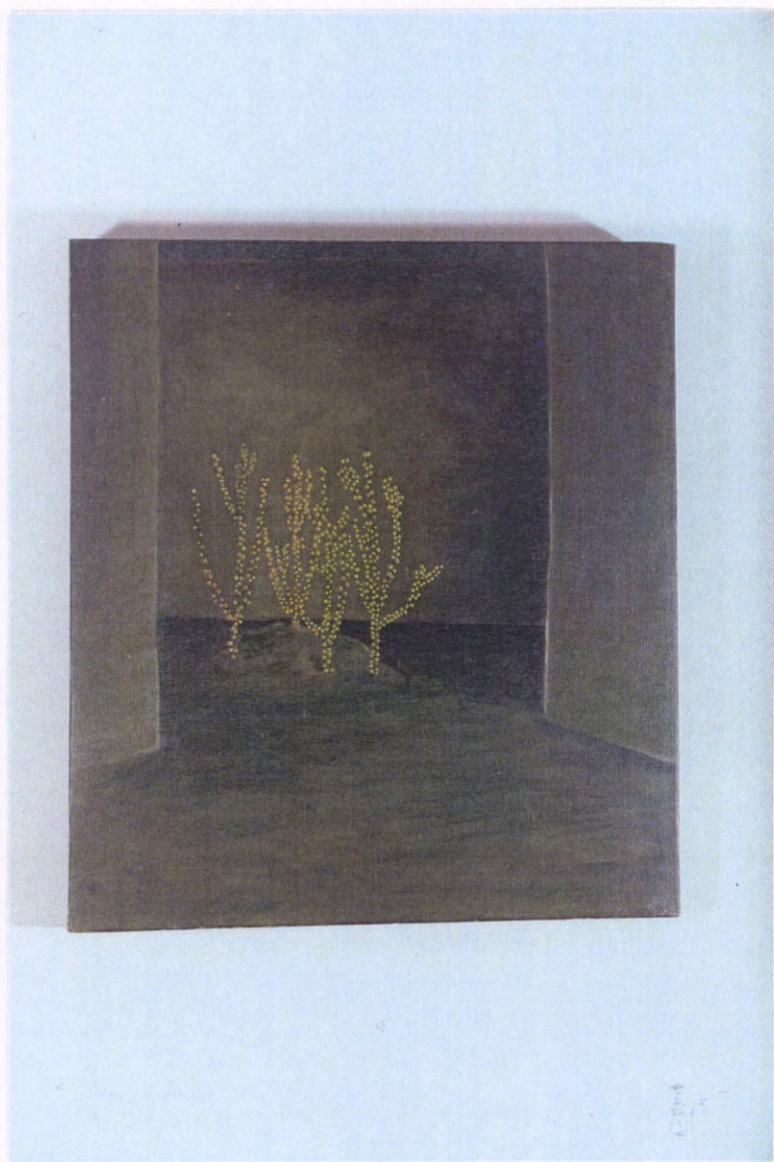
Untitled (Black)

The copier, at its most basic, is an optical scanner connected to a printing engine. This scanner, under standard conditions, sees nothing outside the A3 parameters of the copy board glass or beyond a focal range of 5-10mm from its surface.

For this work, one A3 photocopy was taken from each of twenty-seven different photocopy machines. In each instance, the lid was left open and the copier scanned the empty space above the glass. Having no object within range to reflect the light of the scanning lamp back into the lens of the camera, the copier should ideally print a dense, uniform layer of black toner. A new or recently serviced machine may accomplish something close to this. For the average copier however, a requirement of this sort exceeds certain limits and so the subject of the work is the range of irregularities that occur as a consequence of the photocopier being unable to perfectly represent the view, through its A3 'window', of the space outside. It is within this myopic and imperfect ground that all the signs and marks of electro-mechanical anomaly that riddles the machines operation become constituted as prints. I think this is the closest one gets to taking a photocopy of the interior of a photocopy machine.

Untitled (Black) was made in response to a thematic exhibition titled 'A3' at the Temple Studio in Melbourne 1992 and is printed on 110gsm character offset paper.





Sometimes people are like waves,
That never come ashore,
That spend their time on the bay,
Dredging up the lumps of coal.
And sometimes people are like a door
Through which the years pass.

Like poems the objects that we make are a collection of habits which remain long after the first encounter. Wave like they have the tendency to come and go when you least expect, to present themselves piece by piece, a fragmented domesticity of old plate, a sort of dead mail for old tenants that we have been obliged to hang on to.

I received a lot of that in the first years I spent living and working in an office at Commerce House. Through their letters those that came before me continued to make themselves apparent; long after the "fire sale", long after, as one newspaper succinctly put it, "the soup kitchens have come to pyramid city". In relation to this the letters were so many relics from which a past network of deals, free water coolers, free lunches and p.c.s could be reconstructed.

For a time, just so as to fit in, I gave myself the identity of such a business, even to the point of getting up early so as to come to work and gripe with everyone else about the agents and their inability to repair the lifts. Not that there was really a great need, over the years that I spent there the old tenants had begun to move out. What remained was the litter they left, the unpaid bills, the invitations to various consumer networks they could no longer access. It became apparent their position had been a temporary one, a making do until something better came their way.

Years earlier I had been intrigued by the idea of sending cards, filled with gobbledy gook, envelopes filled with shards. At this time not much happened, the only thing being sent being interpreted as a plea for help by a student prayer group. The card therefore seems to be part of a project that didn't get off the ground but found its counterpart in the letters I found later in my office. Emptied of use these now had become a threat to themselves as much as their would be recipients. A poetry of trouble.

In Benjamin's essay "The Philosophy of History" the "messianic" is a moment of ongoing potential, an entrance and an exit. Instead of seeking to transcend the labyrinth it calls for its reengagement. The unanswered letter, the unpaid bill, the perversity apparent in any object, asks for nothing less.

Sometimes
people
are like waves



October 1992

I had a regular route home from the VCA, where I was studying, to the place where I was living in Gertrude Street. This route was chosen to take in a number of places I found significant.

I would leave school at around 6.30pm and walk into the city. Then up Collins Street, then through the Fitzroy Gardens, and then along George Street to Gertrude Street.

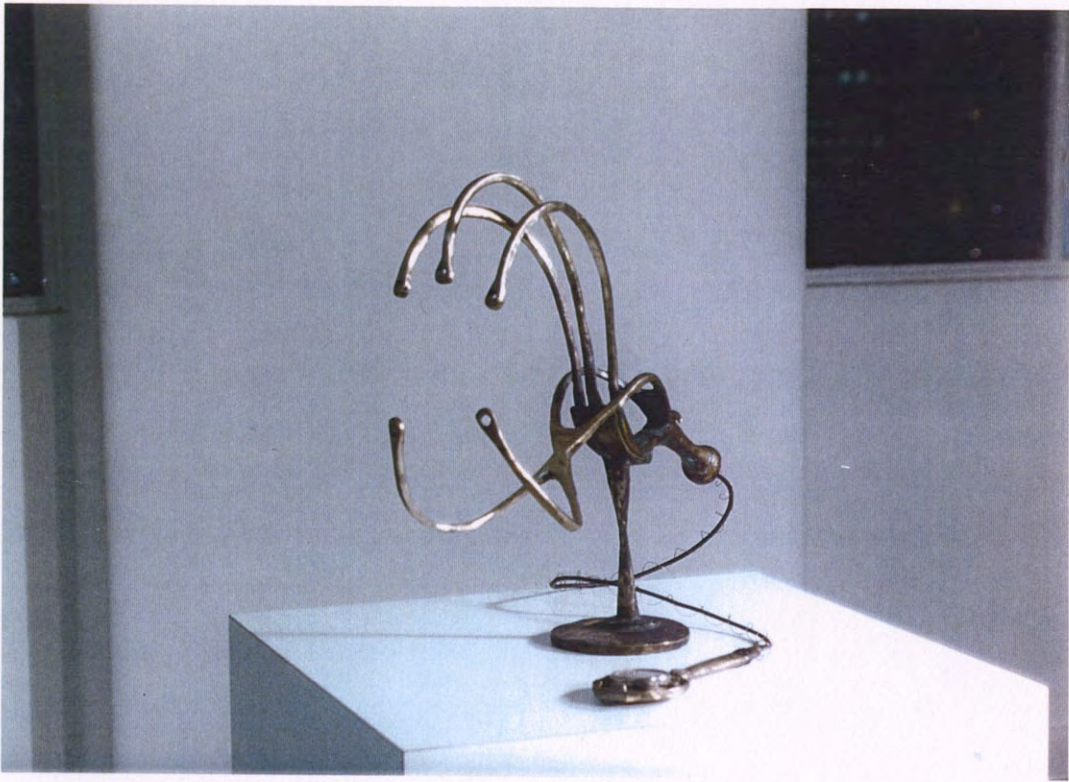
I had been living in Melbourne for 11 months.

Andrew McQualter

1992

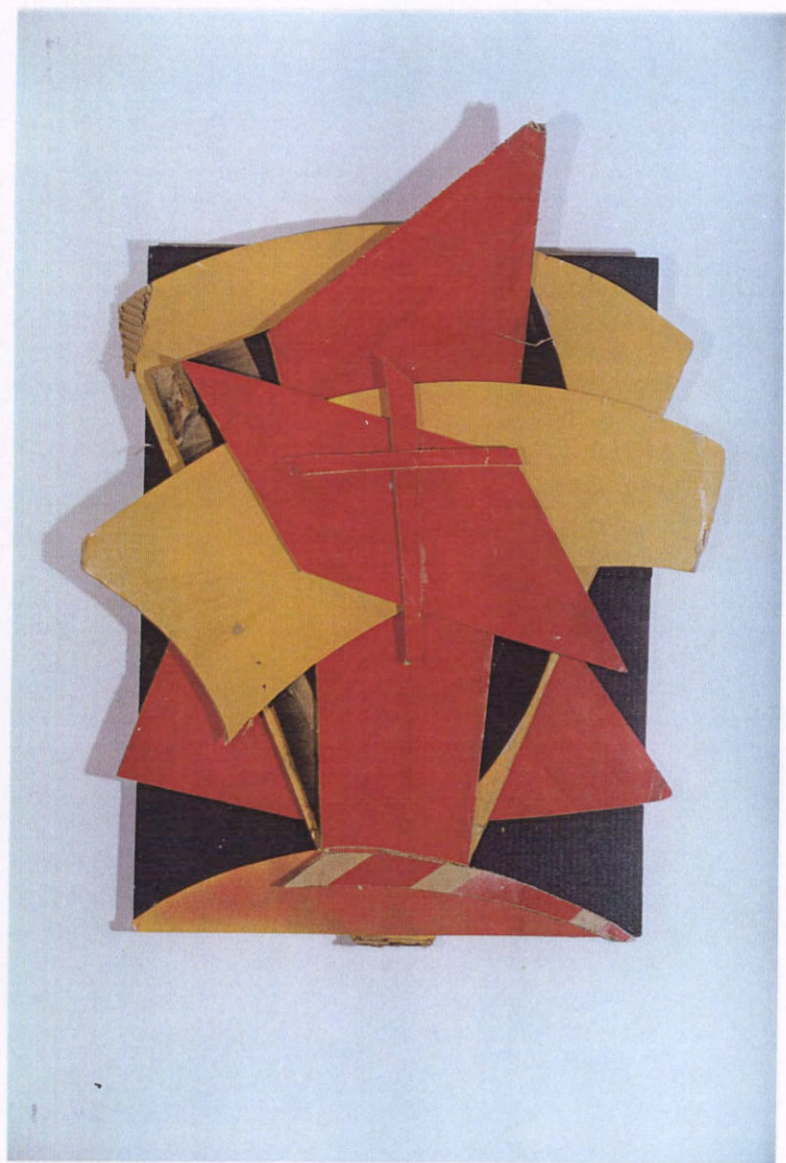
We did four technical workshops in first year sculpture at the VCA. One of these workshops was foundry and it was remarkable to learn that I could actually render metal. I fashioned a series of bronzes which I called stretching machines. The action of the metal coincided with a time of action and I literalised this in the machines. I displayed them rather morbidly; I was very keen on David Cronenberg. In the early 1970's Cronenberg made a sculpture called "Surgical Instruments for Operating on Mutants". This surfaced later as the film "Dead Ringers" (1988).

John Meade



RN+Elwood+Mighty Crosses+T.V+cartoons+Prince Planet+car
dboard+glue+cut'npaste+Callum+second chances+Adelaide+The
Overlander+Olympics+wild work+Malevich+Store5+Tolarno+pool
+The Duke of Windsor+Sort of Sensitive,With Standards+library+
CZ+Maples Lane+suits+brown+fighters+art talks+Next wave+privat
e worlds+Film Festival+shields+silk pyjamas+swimming laps+gy
mnasiums+diaries+The Caboose+Rosebud #2+Sydney+Abstract
Art+Ars Multiplicata+Octopus+claustrophobia+collages=**1992**

Rose Nolan



1997: Living in West Footscray. Studio Albert Street Footscray. Partner Brett Jones. Pets two. Work Monash University.

1992: Living in West Footscray. Studio Oxford Street Collingwood. Partner Brett Jones. Pets two. Work Firkbank Girls School.

I speak of 1992 from the position and viewpoint of 1997. I have had five years, to shift and change, develop new lines, extend and modify old ones.

Melodrama, is the piece I put forward as testimony for their being a 1992. It defines a point where myself and Brett Jones, became involved in teledrama, soaps, chat shows, info-commercials, private spaces of living, computers, design and independent art spaces. It signifies a period of time when histories were discarded and a collaborative arts partnership formed. I do not mean to bestow it with undue importance, for it is similar to all the years which have preceeded it. Like all years laden with events, conversations, there is something to salvage, an idea or thought; a new way of looking which affects the present. I spoke to my partner about this period of time, together we traced old ground, we were not hoping to discover a singular voice. We simply counted down the years, fully aware of our differences in seeing.

I have a habit of forgetting easily, of moving forward quickly and impatiently.
1997, 1996, 1995, 1994, 1993, 1992.

1992 was perhaps a significant year for personal histories to be retold at later dates, yet I'm loathed to tell a few falsehoods, to whitewash and select a romanticised history. I cannot recall the music I was playing, the food I tasted, whether my studio was hot or cold or warm, productive or stagnant. I don't know what words I uttered or recorded, whether I felt the emotions of intense hate, envy, love or satisfaction. I do know that 1992 happened, that I created a series of works titled Melodrama, computer generated art works, crafted from collaged newspaper texts and idealised symbol types. And I do know that I only reveal what is absolutely necessary.

Hazy images float in and out of an endless white expanse. Violence enacted within the parameters of an A4 page. Text, sliced using a scalpel from a daily newspaper and collaged. Type, redrawn, scaled and photocopied. Scanned and manipulated to become something else.

