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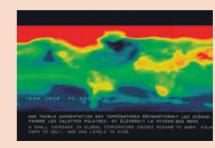
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Rise and Fall

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©ASSEMBLE 2017. **Cover** Helen Wright, *Rise and Fall* (2016–17), fibre coated cast resin and plastic, 23.5×17×16cm (18832). Courtesy the artist and Niagara Galleries. **Printing** Newsprinters Pty Ltd, Shepparton, VIC. Cover stock: 160gsm Ecostar, text stock: 55gsm Norstar 80. Ecostar is 100% recycled post-consumer waste and is a carbon neutral paper. Both stocks are elemental chlorine free and produced from FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) pulp from sustainably managed forests, reaching the ISO 14001 environmental standard.

EDITORIAL

the culture of living closer together



WORDS BY SARA SAVAGE ILLUSTRATION BY ALICE OEHR

In/formation

In Assemble Papers, we spend a lot of time advocating for the many ways we can make ethical decisions in our everyday lives through eco-friendly individual practices and small acts of conscious consumerism. We believe in having more bikes on the road; in community gardens; in shunning plastic bags and bottles; and in knowing where our clothes, food and even cleaning products come from. If you have the means to be a conscious consumer – and not everybody does – it can be a great thing. But if that's where our political activism stops, what – and who – are our efforts really for?

In a recent *Quartz* article, sustainable lifestyle blogger Alden Wicker argues that "voting with your dollar" is no substitute for systematic change. "We pat ourselves on the back for making decisions that hush our social guilt instead of placing that same effort in actions that enact real environmental change," she writes in her provocative critique of a practice that's commonplace for so many people myself included. But Wicker isn't suggesting that we should give up, nor "that we should stop making the small positive decisions we make every day as responsible humans". She's just saying that if many of us put the same investment of time and money into other forms of political action as we do our grocery shopping, collectively we may begin to see better results.

Inspired by the work of our partner for this issue, CLIMARTE – the clever folks behind ART+CLIMATE=CHANGE, a festival of exhibitions and events harnessing the creative power of the arts to inform, engage and inspire action on climate change – this edition of *Assemble Papers* is at once a political call to arms and a heartfelt ode to the power of people.

Collective action takes centre stage in the Wangan & Jagalingou people's fight against the

proposed Carmichael mine in Northern Queensland (p.44) and in the work of Liberate Tate (p.10), while a resident-led initiative at Bourj Al Shamali, a longstanding Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon, uses a humble citizen-science technique to empower its inhabitants (p.18). Meanwhile, photographer Alisha Gore captures the heart and soul of Sydney's under-threat Sirius building and some of its loudest advocates (p.66); Berlin-based architecture collective Raumlabor believes in the possibilities of urban occupation (p.36); EXIT explores the intersections of art and data in a foreboding depiction of our potential future (p.76); and Ernesto Oroza documents resistance through design and everyday ingenuity in Cuba (p.52). In Melbourne, Robin Boyd Foundation director and founder Tony Lee reflects on the pivotal role of architecture in our understanding of the world (p.28) and 5×4 Hayes Lane is an experiment in sustainability and advocacy through architecture (p.60). Elsewhere, Rafaela Pandolfini steps inside the Sydney home of Goodgod Small Club founders Hana Shimada and Jim Singline (p.82) while the team behind our neighbourhood favourite Tiggy cafe shares a recipe courtesy of Nayran Tabiei, a cooking teacher at Free to Feed - a pop-up cooking school in Melbourne taught by refugees and asylum seekers (p.90).

Regular readers will know Assemble Papers stands for small footprint living: a philosophy in which information, and informed decisions, play no insignificant part. In her final editorial in Issue 5, founding editor Eugenia Lim stressed the importance of "turning thought into action" – one year on, our cause remains the same. In this issue we've gathered an assemblage of strong, passionate voices in the hopes of stirring positive collective action and provoking real, tangible change. Let's take it to the next level. •

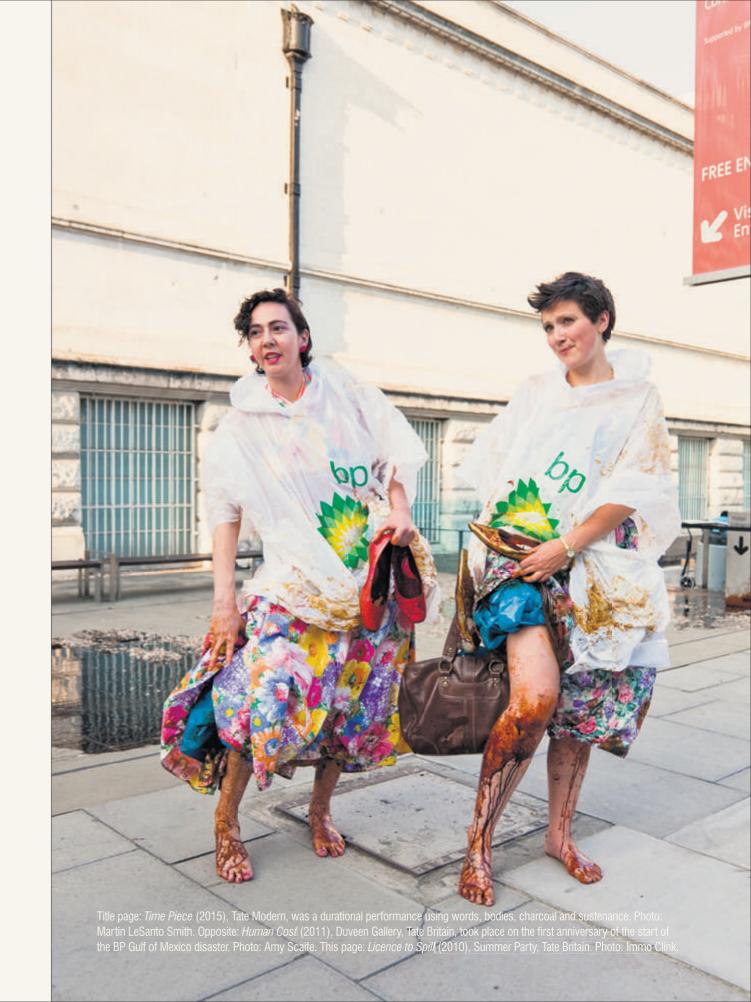


In March 2016, multinational oil and gas company BP announced it would end its 26-year sponsorship of the renowned British cultural institution, Tate. For activist art collective Liberate Tate – formed shortly after the Deepwater Horizon disaster of 2010 – this was the culmination of six long years spent campaigning Tate to drop its oil company funding through a series of nearly 20 unsanctioned performances, interventions and protests inside Tate Modern and Tate Britain. Ranging in size and scale, these performances – or acts of "creative disobedience", as Liberate Tate calls them – included a calculated 'oil spill' at the Tate Summer Party (*Licence to Spill*, 2010); the public presentation of a 16.5-metre, 1.5-tonne wind turbine blade submitted as a 'gift' to Tate's permanent collection (*The Gift*, 2012); and a 25-hour 'textual intervention' that saw the floor of Tate Modern's Turbine Hall covered in charcoal commentary relating to themes of art, activism, climate change and the oil industry (*Time Piece*, 2015).



In a world where arts funding is increasingly tenuous, corporate sponsorship is often a necessary part of the equation. But what might ethical funding look like, and who gets to decide what it constitutes? In *Not if but when: Culture Beyond Oil* (2011) – a collaborative publication by Liberate Tate, arts and research organisation Platform, and activist group Art Not Oil – Platform's Jane Trowell maps the shift in narrative around ethical funding from the mid-'90s until recently, concluding that, "Now more than ever before it is critical to put ethics, aesthetics and corporate sponsorship under the spotlight." In Australia, the conversation around ethical sponsorship came to a head in 2014, when exhibiting artists successfully boycotted the Biennale of Sydney that year on account of its sponsorship by Transfield Holdings (the company whose former subsidiary Transfield Services, now separated from Transfield Holdings and rebranded as Broadspectrum, manages Australia's offshore immigration detention centres in Nauru and Manus Island).

For Liberate Tate, an important element of the collective's resistance was the combination of performance and direct action in the name of opening up a more public, more transparent conversation around corporate sponsorship and the arts. Ahead of her trip to Australia, I caught up with Liberate Tate co-founder Mel Evans to chat about 'Big Oil', ethical sponsorship and the power of performance.



SARA SAVAGE

Take me back to the inception of Liberate Tate. How did the collective come about?

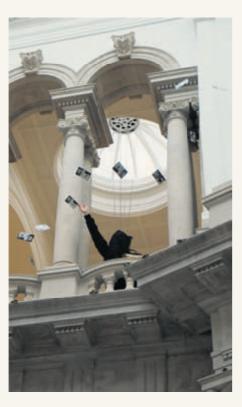
MEL EVANS Two things happened in quick succession. Firstly, some friends of ours [The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination] were invited to do a workshop at Tate [Disobedience Makes History, 2010] in which there were elements of confrontation and activism within the program. The workshop facilitators were warned by Tate staff members that it would be inappropriate to mention the sponsors as part of the workshop, which was kind of like a red rag to a bull. So at the workshop, the group decided to put up the words 'Art Not Oil' on one of Tate Modern's windows -

it's actually the name of a pre-existing project surrounding oil and the arts, but the words were used in the workshop too. Not long after, the Deepwater Horizon disaster happened, and the importance of confronting BP's power in the cultural sphere suddenly became even more pressing than it already had been.

But it was the Tate summer party in 2010 that was the real birth of our project. Our friend, the artist Peter Kennard, offered us his tickets to go along to the annual event, which that year was celebrating 20 years of BP sponsorship, and which after the Deepwater Horizon disaster to us just seemed highly inappropriate. So we arranged a series of 'spills' at the party, where myself and another woman arrived in bouffant floral dresses with 10 litres of molasses under our skirts and spilled them in the centre of the party. That's really when we started to appear in the media and the public conversation really kicked off in a new direction.

SS Compared to other mediums, what do you think is the power of performance as a form of direct action?

ME I think it's about the parallels between them. I have a theatre background, so I've always been coming from performance and from a place of centring the body. In live art, the vulnerable body is often the centre of performance – a durational



performance might be about how long the body can last, or the repetition of a certain act, or certain things being drawn on the body. At the same time, the vulnerable body is such a huge part of the philosophy of non-violent direct action, like putting your body in the way of a digger or a truck or an oil tanker. There's also the element of knowing that a performance has to remain responsive. I think it does come down to the body, though; bodies have always been hugely important in Liberate Tate's work, whether it's been a performance involving five people or a hundred people. And when the site of intervention and the target of the campaign is a public gallery that's free to access, that's somewhere we

can get in! [Laughs.]

SS I imagine it's often quite a process getting everyone into the gallery.

ME We've had quite a journey smuggling things in over the years. We've met Tate staff in the toilets to do a quick handover of big bags of molasses, we've had 64m² of cloth smuggled in in baby strollers ... but the easiest thing to get in is bodies and for that reason they're the core material of our work. It's also about people and about community-building, and opening up a space where artists and activists can come together and learn from each other. I think Liberate Tate's work has really been a place where artists who've never taken part in protest or direct action have tried it out - it's been quite a transformational process for artists, and for activists it's a way of doing things differently than perhaps they usually would. It's also about the live moment and not necessarily about creating something that we could repeat.

SS There's also something to be said for the power of performance in allowing the audience to slow down and consider how they actually feel about something.

ME Definitely. Often people ask us why the gallery staff don't just stop our performances





immediately – and we have had strong reactions from security in some performances – but in that art space, the gallery space, where people are performing, there's often the sense that maybe it's something that's been programmed. We've even heard staff checking in with each other, like, "is something going on in Gallery B right now?" [Laughs.] Because when someone's performing, you don't want to interrupt them. It maintains itself in that way and allows for much more unexpected things to happen, and for us to continue performances. I mean, for one performance we managed to stay in Tate Modern for 25 hours overnight [Time Piece, 2015].

SS How does that work? How did they not remove you? And did anybody get arrested?

ME No. It was threatened that we would, and we were prepared to – we started off with 100 performers and within that we had the direct action organising and preparation as well as the durational live art preparation. We had legal support ready if we needed and we'd had lots of conversations with people about what they felt and who would need to leave if there was a risk of arrest and who would be okay to stay and continue the performance.

SS In the current political climate of Brexit and Trump, do you think we're seeing a groundswell of political activism among people who wouldn't normally speak out?

ME In a way, yes. I think that's something we saw after all the global marches against the Iraq War for me that was a really formative time. I was 19 when the Iraq War began in 2003 and I remember the experience of going to protests and believing that those protests - some of the biggest the world's ever seen - would stop it. Then came the experience of watching bombs drop over Baghdad and realising we hadn't stopped anything at all. That really challenged me and informed a lot of my thinking around what kind of action works. I think the current political situation asks a different set of questions around what makes social and political change not only happen, but what makes it sustainable? A big question right now surrounds the women's marches against Trump – was it too narrow that it was a women's march? Why wasn't the racism and xenophobia around Trump and Brexit more named in this kind of global coming together?

I don't want to water down the enthusiasm, but at the same time I don't want to say this is a big moment of change. I'm also concerned that it's a very high-pressure situation right now, where a lot of people are in pain. Putting high demands on what those people can achieve right now is an additional pressure that's quite important to address.

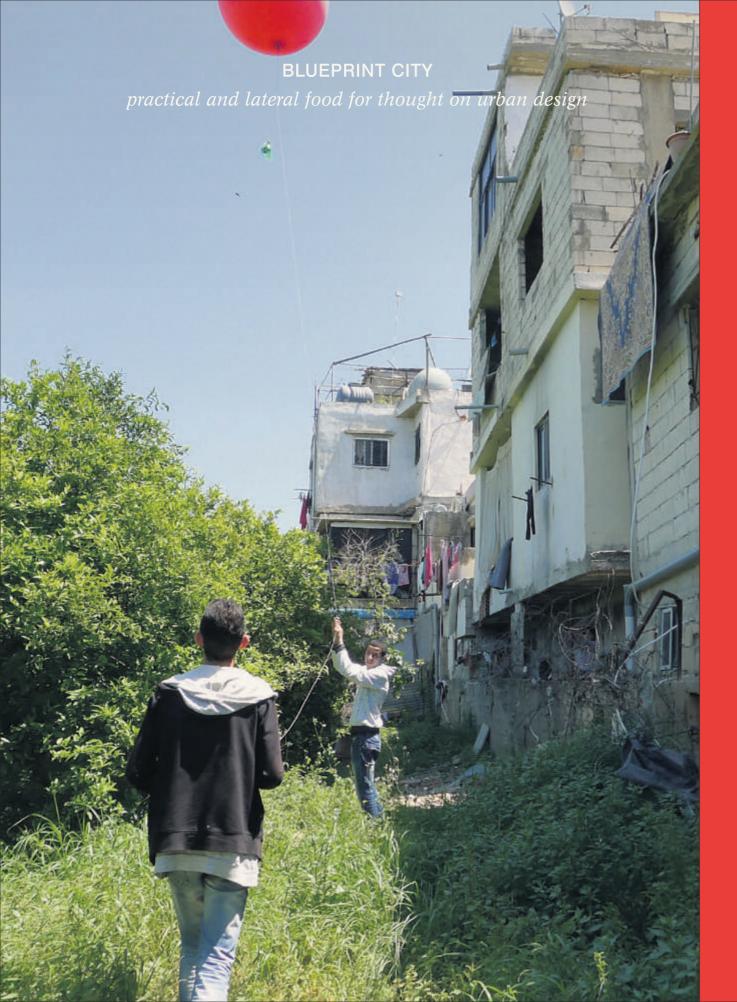
SS It's funny when you hear some people, particularly public figures, proclaiming that 'great art' is going to come out of this particular political moment, as if it isn't a huge luxury and a privilege to even be able to say that.

ME Right, exactly. I mean, I'm all up for wonderful art, but I want it to actually affect the situation too. I want to it to affect change. I don't just want it to be a dissociated piece of amazing art.

SS Soon you'll be visiting Australia as a part of ART+CLIMATE=CHANGE 2017. How much have Australian issues popped up in your research on sponsorship and the arts? In your book Artwash: Big Oil and the Arts (2015) you mention the December 2013 issue of Artlink magazine, entitled 'Mining: gouging the country', which explores the tensions between mining operations and arts patronage in Australia, as an influence.

ME The first and only time I visited Australia was when that issue of *Artlink* came out. It got me interested in the work of [Yamaji artist and writer] Charmaine Green and her specific critique of companies mining Aboriginal land at the same time as sponsoring Aboriginal art. There's also [Brisbane-based activist group] Generation Alpha, who actually got in touch with Liberate Tate when they were protesting in Brisbane. And then of course there's the Transfield case, at which time as a collective we wrote a statement of solidarity in support of the artists boycotting the Biennale of Sydney [in 2014]. We took a lot of inspiration from that – when they were successful, Liberate Tate thought, okay this can actually happen!

Coming to Australia, and being invited to speak at events there, I do have to consider that I'm a white British person and I have to continually ask myself, "How is our relationship decolonial?" I have to come over in a way that's humble and willing to learn, and focus on working together to heal the wounds we've inherited rather than to consolidate power dynamics that are a part of that. I do think it's important though to trade stories, share skills, support each other and bring people together – it's all a really important part of shifting the narrative. But it's certainly not something that's uncomplicated.



WHAT'S INAMAP?

GREENING BOURJ ALSHAMALI

WORDS BY SARA SAVAGE



There's a passage in Tanzanian novelist Abdulrazak Gurnah's *By the Sea* (2001) in which the character Saleh Omar, an elderly Zanzibari man seeking asylum in Britain, considers the power inherent in maps. "Before maps, the world was limitless," he reflects from the small British seaside town where he awaits the outcome of his case. "It was maps that gave it shape and made it seem like territory, like something that could be possessed ... Maps made places on the edges of the imagination seem graspable and placable." It's a telling rumination on the political nature of the map – an age-old tool that's practical and supposedly authoritative, yet also deeply precarious (the term 'cartographic anxiety' is sometimes used to describe the

dissonance between geographical representations of the world and the cultural and socioeconomic realities of how we actually experience it).

At Bourj Al Shamali, a Palestinian refugee camp situated in southern Lebanon, the settlement's 23,000 current inhabitants have never enjoyed the privilege of owning a detailed map of their 135,000m² grounds. This isn't to say maps of the area don't exist - they do, only they're classified documents protected by local authorities and international organisations who view them as potential security threats. (Public maps of Lebanon, whether on paper or on Google Earth, often depict refugee camps as grey splotches.) Originally built in the mid-'50s as a temporary

refuge, over the past seven decades Bourj Al Shamali has transformed from a tent settlement to its current state, where the distinction between 'permanent' and 'impermanent' is increasingly obscured. Today, homes in the camp are made of concrete, asphalt, brick and stone, with some covered in political graffiti and street art evoking an erstwhile Palestine long left behind.

In recent years, Bourj Al Shamali has become home to large numbers of Palestinian refugees from Syria, placing added pressure on the already overcrowded living conditions in the camp. A map would open up multiple doors for the Bourj Al Shamali community to address some of its more pressing planning issues: not only could the area be organised into different neighbourhoods (currently

there are informal zones named after agricultural villages in Palestine's Safed and Tiberias regions, though no street or alleyway is adequately signposted), but a map could also assist in visualising priorities for each of these areas, such as the unreliable electricity supply in many parts of the camp. A map would also aid in maintaining this infrastructure over time.

Enter Greening Bourj Al Shamali: a pilot urban agriculture program aimed at improving living conditions in the camp through the creation of its first public space. Almost anywhere else this would be a feasible objective – but in the overcrowded, haphazardly planned Bourj Al Shamali, this seemingly straightforward task becomes a delicate political

challenge. The first step? Figure out the best way to obtain a map of the grounds.

Humanitarian worker and ex-UN staffer Claudia Martinez Mansell is the co-founder of Greening Bourj Al Shamali, alongside Mahmoud Al Joumma 'Abu Wassim', who runs the Beit Atfal Assumoud vocational centre in the camp. "Our intent here is not malicious, and security is a legitimate concern, but such policies [that render current maps of the camp unavailable to residents] perpetuate the notion of the camp as a dependent and passive beneficiary. It perpetuates their dispossession, depriving camp residents of control over their geospatial reality," says Claudia, who first connected

with the camp in 1998 as a volunteer at the vocational centre.

"Bourj Al Shamali is currently going through quite a particular and inspiring political moment. There are several factors: the stalled negotiations between Israel and Palestine; the increasingly remote prospect of a negotiated agreement on the situation of refugees; the defunding of the UNRWA [the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East]; and local frustrations with the wrangling of Fatah and Hamas, which has led to political paralysis within the Popular Committee in the camp."

In a different environment, the area could be easily mapped by drone, but to employ such a "symbolically threatening" device, as Claudia puts it, poses more complications than solutions. For this reason Claudia, together with a new, politically neutral camp committee, and a group of students living in the camp (none trained geographers or mappers) engaged an organisation called Public Lab to assist.

Public Lab, founded in 2010, is a network of organisers, educators, technologists and researchers that connects people to open-source DIY techniques for data-gathering and research to allow participation in important decisions affecting their communities. Among Public Lab's various toolkits for data collection is 'balloon mapping' aerial photography a cheap digital camera attached to a large balloon on a rig fashioned out of an everyday plastic drink bottle. [Turn to page 25 for our Utilitarian You guide to the balloon mapping process.] In 2010, balloon mapping was employed by a group of MIT students to document the extent of the damage caused in the Gulf Coast by the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill that same year, demonstrating the colossal potential of this easy and relatively low-cost 'citizen science' method. It has also been used to document protests and other social events.

In the populous Bourj Al Shamali, balloon mapping has proved an effective way for the Greening Bourj Al Shamali team to connect with community members throughout the mapping process – a giant red balloon being flown anywhere up to 200 metres in the air is nothing if not a conversation starter (especially when navigating the narrow streets of the camp, cloaked with overlapping wires and cables). "The string tying us to the balloon meant that we had to be present when we were mapping, climbing on people's roofs and interacting with passers-by who asked questions," says Claudia. "The visibility inherent in this kind of 'umbilical cord' was a way of winning

trust – the mapper is in the map. If you look closely at our finished product, you can see the mappers in various locations."

Firas Ismail, a 19-year-old nursing student and lifelong resident of Bourj Al Shamali, has been leading the mapping activities at the camp alongside fellow student Mustapha Dakhloul, also 19, since the project's inception. We're speaking over Skype. "Most people are surprised when they see it. Children love balloons, so of course they always want to touch it. Other people always want to take pictures with it," says Firas.

Not everyone is so obliging, however, with the team occasionally met with resistance. Mustapha recounts a time when they ventured just behind the camp: "We had some problems with political forces like Hezbollah, who took the memory card for the camera, returning it after one month. Two or three times, the balloon was also shot down."

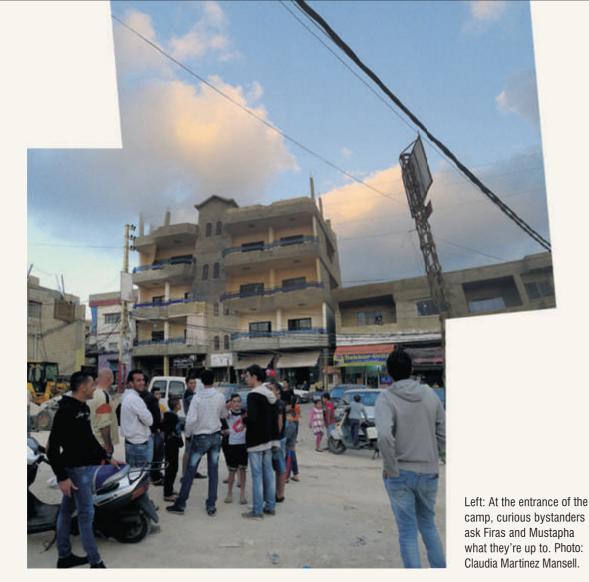
Claudia also speaks about a time when a mischievous group of kids from the camp thought it would be funny to attack the balloon with a pellet gun. "But [the residents] who dislike it are very small compared to those who like it," Firas is quick to add.

In *By the Sea*, Saleh Omar recalls his first encounter with a map – in the classroom when his teacher drew on the blackboard a line travelling westward from India all the way back around to China, depicting "half the known world in one continuous line with his piece of chalk". Such is the nature of the multifaceted map: its fluidity an essential aspect of violent colonial projects, and the cause of unease for both victims and enforcers of territorial sovereignty. How can a map – a concept so inherently frail, like chalk on a blackboard – hold so much power?



Above: (L—R) Firas, Amal Al Said and Mustapha learn balloon mapping techniques at the Beit Atfal Assomoud vocational centre. Opposite: Aerial photographs of Bourj Al Shamali. Photos: Claudia Martinez Mansell.





At Bourj Al Shamali, Claudia says the supervision of the local committee and the support of Mahmoud Al Joumma was instrumental in earning the trust of the residents, as well as outside forces. "A major effort was mounted by key members of the local committee to inform the community, both by speaking to the various factions within the camp, as well as the Lebanese Army. This took time – the actual mapping only took a few days, but the preparatory work took over a month and a half."

With the data collection process now complete, the next stage in the project is to stitch together the photographs and work on producing a final map through a series of a community workshops. And, Claudia explains, though foreigners need a permit to enter the camp, Mustapha and some of the local boy scouts are also planning to build a noticeboard with the map at the entrance to the camp "to make people feel welcome in the community when they arrive".

Ultimately, Greening Bourj Al Shamali is an exercise in empowerment for its residents, enabling

them to bypass bureaucracy in the development and improvement of the camp – their supposedly 'temporary' home. But for the likes of Firas and Mustapha, it's the only one they've ever known. "We hope other people outside the camp will have some ideas they can share after seeing the map," says Firas, who hopes the map will function as an advocacy tool for the camp and for the world outside to engage with it. "We just want everyone to know what's inside Bourj Al Shamali, and the problems of the Palestinian refugees inside." •

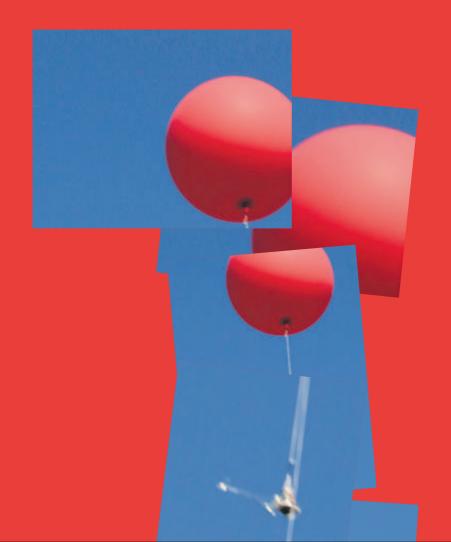
Many thanks to Claudia Martinez Mansell for sharing her knowledge about Bourj Al Shamali over email and Skype, and for facilitating our interview with Firas Ismail and Mustapha Dakhloul. For further reading about Bourj Al Shamali, we recommend Claudia's verbal sketch of the camp in *Places Journal* (April 2016) entitled 'Camp Code', from which some of the information about the camp's layout was additionally sourced for this article. **bourjalshamali.org**

UTILITARIAN YOU

recipes and insights for homegrown ingenuity

BALLOON MAPPING A Mini How-to Guide

WORDS BY ASSEMBLE PAPERS WITH PUBLIC LAB



On the Gulf Coast of the US, the citizen-science technique of balloon mapping has been used to document the damage from oil spills, while elsewhere in the world it's used to map informal settlements in the name of self-determination.

Inspired by Greening Bourj Al Shamali (see page 18), we recently conducted a balloon mapping workshop of our own under the guidance of Public Lab, a collaborative research initiative that develops DIY, open-source tools for environmental exploration and investigation. Consider this mini guide your 'Balloon Mapping 101' – but be sure to head to the Public Lab site for full instructions on how to become a balloon mapping pro.

WHY BALLOON MAPPING?

Sure, you could create an aerial map using a drone, satellite or aeroplane, but in reality few people have the means to do so. Balloon mapping is a low-cost, grassroots mapping method aimed at producing maps as modes of communication and as evidence for alternative, community-owned definitions of territory (as opposed to the use of maps by those in power to exert influence over territory).

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Including Public Lab's reusable balloon mapping kit (US\$95) and helium hire, our balloon mapping exercise cost us around US\$150 in total. You can also buy readymade camera mounts via Public Lab for US\$35–110, but we think constructing your own is more fun.

RULES & REGULATIONS

It's important to do your research before flying anything in the air

- Photography of public spaces and people in them is usually legal, but if you're mapping from unusual vantage points that could expose private property it isn't so straightforward. Always respect the privacy and wishes of your community.
- In Australia, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (Part 101) states that a recreational unmanned balloon may fly no higher than 400ft in the air. (To ensure we adhered to these strict regulations, we attached markers to our reel of string.) This will differ depending on which country you're in.
- Before our workshop, we also made sure to complete a comprehensive risk management plan.

WHAT DO I NEED?

- Public Lab's reusable balloon mapping kit (including: 170cm reusable balloon, Dacron line, protective gloves, swivel clips, rubber bands, reusable ties, rubber ring, carabiners and a printed instruction booklet). Purchase via publiclab.org
- A camera (older, used digital cameras work great and are less risky but smartphones can be used too).
- 2L soft drink bottle.



וו טעו טע אטח!

Choose and prepare your camera

 Any digital camera around 200–300g that has a continuous shooting mode and a large memory card will work. For all the options available, search for the Camera Trigger wiki on the Public Lab site.

Build a camera capsule

 This simple protective cover, built from the top half a 2L plastic bottle, stops your lens from hitting the ground and protects your camera from hitting walls and trees. Full video walkthroughs can be found online.



Set up your camera to auto-trigger

- Set your camera to continuous shooting mode, then wad up a bit of card paper or use a pencil eraser to hold down the camera trigger a small knot works very well. Use a rubber band to hold in place and apply pressure, making sure the button is pressed (you may have to double or triple the band up). Alternatively, if using a smartphone, download a timelapse app for use in the air.
- Attach the camera to the bottle rig using Public Lab's instructions. Once ready, bounce the camera on a mattress to make sure it doesn't scrape on the ground or fall out.



Prepare and fill your balloon

- Some people say you can use inflated rubbish bags instead of balloons, but we really recommend the high-quality red balloon that comes with Public Lab's reusable kit.
- Source your helium from your local party hire shop! Make sure there's at least two of you filling the balloon with helium, as someone needs to be in charge of not letting the balloon touch trees, bushes or the ground.



Fly your balloon or kite

- The highest wind is usually at around 2pm, with the lowest at dawn. Let the balloon rise as fast as you can – the wind will push it down as soon as you stop letting it rise.
- When releasing the balloon, be careful not to tangle your string! A second person to wind the string can be super helpful. Once your balloon is in the air, try walking around to take pictures of a greater area.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Always wear gloves to prevent string burns.
- Don't fly near powerlines or in thunderstorms.
- Check the terrain of the area you're mapping, keeping an eye out for potholes, ditches, poisonous plants and so on – it pays to have a good idea of the area you're covering.
- Still weather is required for balloon mapping if the weather is windy, reschedule your activity.

AFTER YOU'VE FINISHED

Upload your photographs and sort images into a small folder of clear, straight-down, map-ready images. Head to *mapknitter.org* and start a new map, following their instructions on the site to stitch photographs together. Share your research notes and findings on Public Lab to help future expeditions!

This is a heavily abridged and modified version of Public Lab's extensive guide to balloon mapping, which you can find at **publiclab.org**. The illustrations here have been reproduced from the Public Laboratory Balloon Kit Documentation, version 3, licensed under a Creative Commons ShareAlike 3.0 License. Balloon mapping requires great attention to detail — we suggest reading Public Lab's comprehensive list of wiki pages on their site before attempting your own balloon mapping adventure. Have fun & good luck!

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MADE IN METROPOLIS

interesting people, creative enterprises and small businesses

A Living Legacy:

The Robin Boyd Foundation

You'd be hard-pressed to find an architect in Australia who hasn't studied Robin Boyd. Better still, the influential architect, known for his sensitive variation of modernism, is a household name that stretches far beyond the architectural elite. Boyd's is a legacy that has endured in his expansive body of work, both built and written, lovingly upheld in no small part by the 2005-established Robin Boyd Foundation. Rachel Elliot-Jones visits its founder and director, Tony Lee, at the Foundation's unmistakable headquarters in Melbourne's South Yarra.

WORDS BY RACHEL ELLIOT-JONES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM ROSS

Tony Lee arrives on his trusty two-wheeler to let photographer Tom Ross and I in to Walsh Street, also known as Robin Boyd House II. We've been waiting on the timber steps that float up to the first-floor front door, nerding out about the building. It's crisp outside but the trees are still fully leaved. The sky is grey and we're happy about it; we know it's the perfect light to see this place at its best.

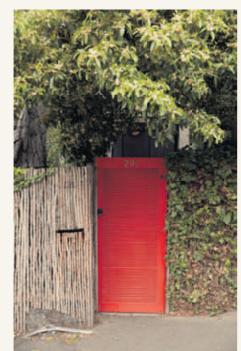
The house is quiet inside, a change from every other time I've visited when it's been heaving with film-watchers or seminar-goers. For more than a decade, Walsh Street has been a special kind of meeting place: a catalyst for discussion, busily advocating for a better understanding of design in the

community through constant programming – the custodian of Boyd's legacy.

It's a house museum like no other; not an object to be gawked at but a place to be lived in, even if only for a moment. Shoes on, wine in hand, no fingerwagging if you sit on a chair and not a velvet rope in sight – this is Tony's vision for Walsh Street and the Robin Boyd Foundation: to make the lived experience accessible.

In 2004, Tony was with the National Trust and charged with expanding its repertoire beyond its "collection of hand-me-downs" to acquire something that exemplified Melbourne and its architectural style. The answer in Tony's mind was unquestionably Boyd. "Robin was a design evangelist whose whole output – whether it was architecture, writing, journalism, films or public speaking – *everything* Robin did was about introducing the public to a greater understanding of what design is and the benefits of design." This awareness of good design that Boyd campaigned for, Tony thought, went hand-in-hand with the Trust's mantle of conservation. If buildings are understood in terms of their contribution to architecture, it's more likely the public will feel a duty to protect them.

Momentum for a Boyd acquisition grew through a dedicated open day curated by Tony and hosted by the Trust. There was an exhibition of Mark Strizic's photography of Boyd's work, a reunion of co-conspirators from Boyd's office and a series of talks at Federation Square. Buoyed by the event's success, the bones of a five-year plan to purchase a Boyd building began to take shape.



Walsh Street, the second of two homes Boyd designed for his own family to live in, was a lofty goal. Tony considered it "a kind of holy grail of architecture in Melbourne"; he knew it would demonstrate the pointiest end of Boyd's oeuvre. "Robin said on many occasions that it is an architect's obligation ... to experiment, trial and initiate design on themselves ... This house was inherently going to be an innovative building because he designed it for himself."

The house had been out of the public eye, privately tended to by Boyd's wife, Patricia. She had doggedly and determinedly maintained it since his untimely death in 1971, despite being left with a colossal mortgage, two

children still studying to support and a reportedly hefty overdraft incurred by Boyd's practice. (Boyd's work was exceptional, but not lucrative.)

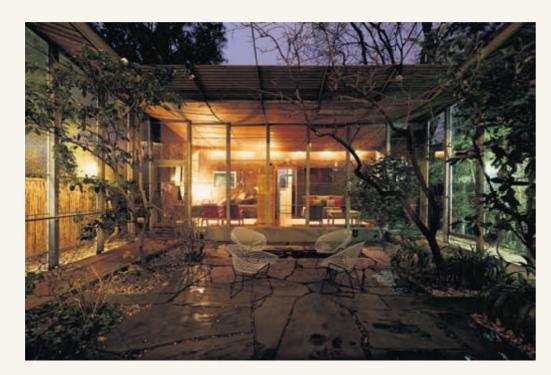
The Trust's five-year plot became "not quite five days" when Tony learned that Patricia had coincidentally just put Walsh Street on the market. The Robin Boyd Foundation formed swiftly to swoop on this opportunity and purchased the house, initially under the auspices of the National Trust.

Soon after Walsh Street was welcomed into the fold, priorities shifted at the Trust and within 18 months the house was put up for sale again. The Foundation separated from the Trust and lobbied independently for alternative support. With an enormous mortgage to grapple with and a loan to pay off, architect Daryl Jackson became the Foundation's loudest champion. His rallying cry in the ranks of the Victorian Government, the University of Melbourne and within the profession helped secure some initial funding, contingent on a strategic business plan that would demonstrate how the Foundation could achieve financial independence over time.

These unique economic factors are not the norm in house museums, usually the result of a generous bequest from the owner or architect (which often includes an allowance for maintaining the property too). The Robin Boyd Foundation's financial circumstances necessitated rigorous activation that would fund its day-to-day operation, however the program itself, initiated by Tony, was a direct descendant of Boyd's own work, inspired by the way he and Patricia lived at Walsh Street.







The regular talks series stemmed from the Boyds' dinner table conversations. "When they were here in the house, [it] was a venue for discussion. While it was very sociable – and the dinner parties here were quite legendary – they weren't just gregarious bashes. There were quite significant people sitting around the table, sharing information [with] a real concern for the betterment of our society," says Tony. The Foundation's DADo Film Society has provided another avenue for discussion, with recent film nights dedicated to a Brutalism love-fest, concrete love and *Amare Gio Ponti* (Loving Gio Ponti) (2015) – the fondness for the built form is palpable.

The Robin Boyd Foundation's famed design open days (now coming up to their 30th edition) "are like a curated collection of artworks – there's always a principal theme and buildings are selected to reflect that theme." The series began with a group of Boyd and Boyd-influenced houses and has since explored influential apartments, émigré houses, architects' own houses and so much more. Rather than being limited to Boyd's work, the program is "a public statement of good design being ageless".

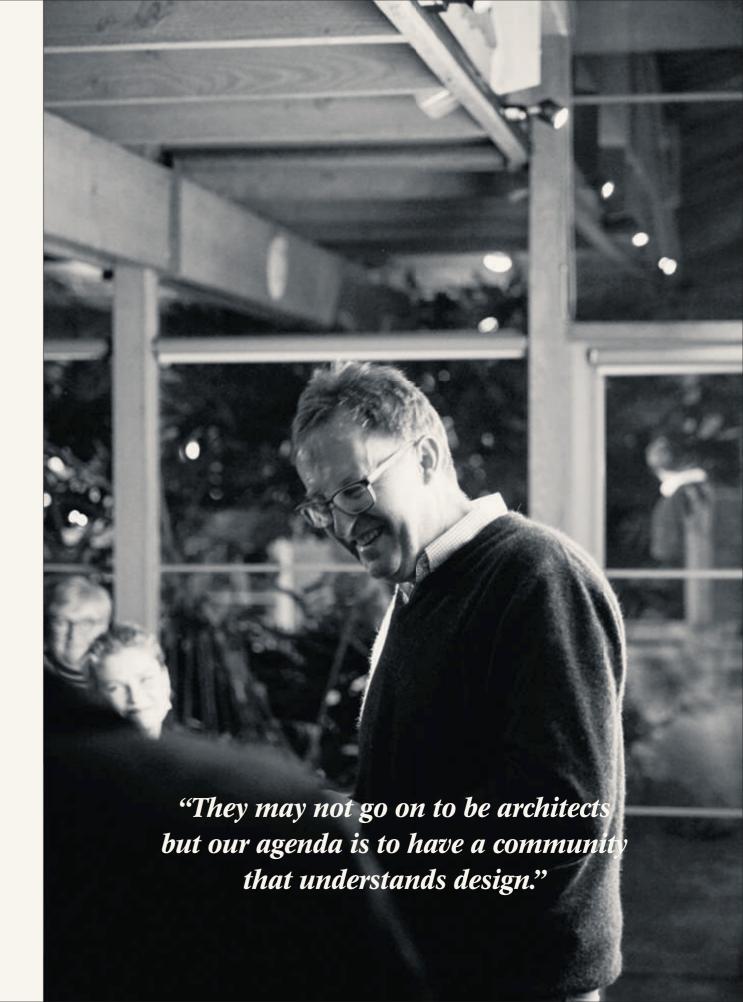
Design education was a pillar of Boyd's practice and Tony has sought to build on that. "Robin was very much about the urban environment, [so I thought] we could run workshops here that are [about] the role that architecture plays in creating the image of a city, or the culture of a city – and the importance of having buildings be respectful of streets and adjacent buildings." To date, the program has largely focused on university studios developed in partnership with Melbourne School of Design and the City of Melbourne, but Tony hopes to add primary and secondary education to the bill in the

coming years. "They may not go on to be architects but our agenda is to have a community that understands and expects good design."

The Foundation is also working on an archive of Boyd artefacts and ephemera. Being situated at Walsh Street is a huge coup on this front. "Not only do we get the house, but we get this whole time capsule that represents Robin's complete attitude to living. It's an architectural biography of Robin and Patricia – everything in the house reflects their relationships, their lifestyle, their attitudes. And nothing in this house happened by accident – everything is conceivable in material, in construction, the furniture and the placement of the furniture," Tony tells me as we perch on the red sofa, which, as we chat, I notice is in direct conversation with Tony Woods's *Man on Sofa* (1967) hanging over us.

The archive function of the Foundation is not limited to the physical bounds of Walsh Street – Tony is fastidiously locating and cataloguing all the Boyd material he can find to make it publicly accessible online. There's even talk of resurrecting the Boydhelmed Small Homes Service (the *Age* and the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects' service, established in 1947, for providing house plans by architects in the name of improving everyday home design), re-imagining it in a contemporary context to grapple with our current issues of housing affordability, urban density and the changing notions of family.

Today, Walsh Street endures not only as the living embodiment of a personal and architectural legacy, but a contemporary expression of the pivotal role architecture plays in our understanding of the world. It is, as Tony says, "a complete and absolute paradigm shift in how a house museum can be used." ●





Since its inception in the late '90s, Berlin-based collective Raumlabor has worked on a kaleidoscopic range of projects, from urban interventions and masterplans to public art and collaborative building workshops. Driven by a shared interest in urban renewal and transformation, their site-specific and often self-initiated interventions aim to activate public space, imagining new possibilities for urban occupation.

In 2005, Raumlabor constructed a mountain (*Der Berg*) in the defunct spaces of Berlin's former Palace of the Republic, opening a dialogue about the city's past, present and potential future. *Kitchen Monument* (2006–) – a roving, inflatable and inhabitable structure designed to accommodate everything from dinners to performances to conferences – has popped up all over the world, from Hamburg to Liverpool. (The collective took this concept to New York in 2009 with *Spacebuster*, a similarly pneumatic sculpture for temporary gatherings.) In 2009, *Eichbaumoper* saw Raumlabor undertake the temporary transformation of a metro station into a public opera house, complete with performances scored by the rumble of passing trains and the footsteps of the local commuters. "It's always about the people in the end – the users in a city space," says Mayer of Raumlabor's approach.

"Space is the result of social interaction. Space is not something between walls, it's what's going on between these walls, and you need people to bring it to life.

Space is always about negotiation."





EMILY WONG

Participation often plays a central role in Raumlabor's projects. How important is it to involve the input of local actors and users in the design of urban space?

CHRISTOF MAYER

A lot of people don't feel important and don't feel like they have a voice and so one aspect is to give them a different feeling about what they can do in the city – to see what's possible and what's not, and what public space is about. If you are going to have long-term impact on a site, it's important to get an idea about the perspective of the user: how do they feel about their neighbourhood, what are their needs and how do they think things could be improved? Architects often have this god-like perspective in relation to plans. The shift from this top-down view to a more experience-based view is what we try to achieve.

EW How do you integrate the often competing interests of different stakeholders?

CM I think it's a different role you have then – more like a moderator or a curator. I think the crucial thing is to always be open but still focused. It's like sailing: all the wind comes from somewhere but you have to navigate – you still have to control the ship.

EW Raumlabor's work seems to favour more open, dynamic processes over static masterplans. What is the value of this process in the context of designing cities?

CM It's always about the people. We try to encourage people to experience space and we even believe that space can be the result of social interaction. This is the 'performative' space of urbanism – the lived space. What are people within the city context? Are they consumers, commuters or citizens? The roles we inhabit will generate quite different experiences of our neighbourhood.

EW Your temporary interventions in public space often operate as a form of research – a way to gather information about a site. How do testing and experimentation inform your projects?

CM Testing is always about finding out what you haven't known before – it's about the possibility of discovering new things. It's also a luxury to experiment. It's good to learn something about a space and what works best, not just economically, but also socially. We often talk about sustainability, but this isn't only about material things – there's social not something as specific as a charabstract form that could have differ configurations. With it, we tested of situations and inhabited urban corrected a kind of pop-up pavilion seating. The provided feedback and then the possibility of configurations. With it, we tested of situations and inhabited urban corrected a kind of pop-up pavilion seating. The provided feedback and then the possibility of configurations. With it, we tested of situations and inhabited urban corrected a kind of pop-up pavilion seating.

sustainability as well. Neighbourhoods are collections of people. It's more complex than just buying a site and developing it, then selling it off for an economic benefit. There are other forms of capital – cultural, social – in addition to the economic.

It's a tricky, difficult thing, because when you look at temporary ventures or events you ask what impact do they have? Nowadays temporary use is also an instrument of place-making for developers. It's become a common tool, which is okay, but you have to be aware of what you do, who it's for and what those outcomes might be. That's why we've been shifting more towards long-term projects, to think about what the long-term implications of these interventions could be. That doesn't mean we don't still do temporary projects, but the idea is to be aware of the long-term goal.

EW How can architecture operate as a tool as well as an outcome?

CM Many of our small-scale projects, for example *The Kitchen Monument*, bring everything together – including the outcome. *The Kitchen Monument* works as an architectural object, it photographs well and it works as a tool because it's flexible and you can transport it anywhere. The idea of a tool is to trigger an interaction between people or to start a discourse within a community about what kind of development might be appropriate for a site. There are different functions. By simply placing an object somewhere strange, people will look at it and through different hospitable programming, such as common cooking and eating, it triggers conversation. But to work it needs the programming; the object alone does not work.

EW In your Generator projects, city dwellers design and build objects that are then used to inhabit urban space in new ways. Is this about residents reclaiming ownership of their city?

CM The Generator projects are a series of workshops revolving around making. Making is something that can create community through shared experience and communication. The workshops are also empowering in that they show people they can do things themselves. For the Sydney Generator, we wanted to make an object – not something as specific as a chair, but an abstract form that could have different configurations. With it, we tested out spatial situations and inhabited urban contexts with a kind of pop-up pavilion seating. The public provided feedback and then the police came – it was like flash mob architecture!







This page (clockwise from top): *Die Gärtnerei*, Berlin (2015) saw common cooking and eating; a former stonemasonry building reused as a school; and a donations stall. Overleaf: (left) Exploring public space at *Sydney Generator* (2013); (right) public installation *Vortex* (2012), Den Haag, the Netherlands. All photos: Raumlaborberlin.



It's about people being more open and aware of what's going on in their neighbourhood, and about taking part in what's available around them. This is the idea of being a citizen, rather than simply a consumer.

EW Do you think non-designers or local residents can have significant agency in the process of city-making?

CM I think they already have agency simply by being citizens. Not everybody has to have the expertise of a trained designer – it's about people being more open and aware of what's going on in their neighbourhood and about taking part in what's available around them. This is the idea of being a citizen rather than simply a consumer. Everyone is a consumer. It's not bad, but to reduce the way you relate to your environment to this sole function ... well, there's more to urban life.

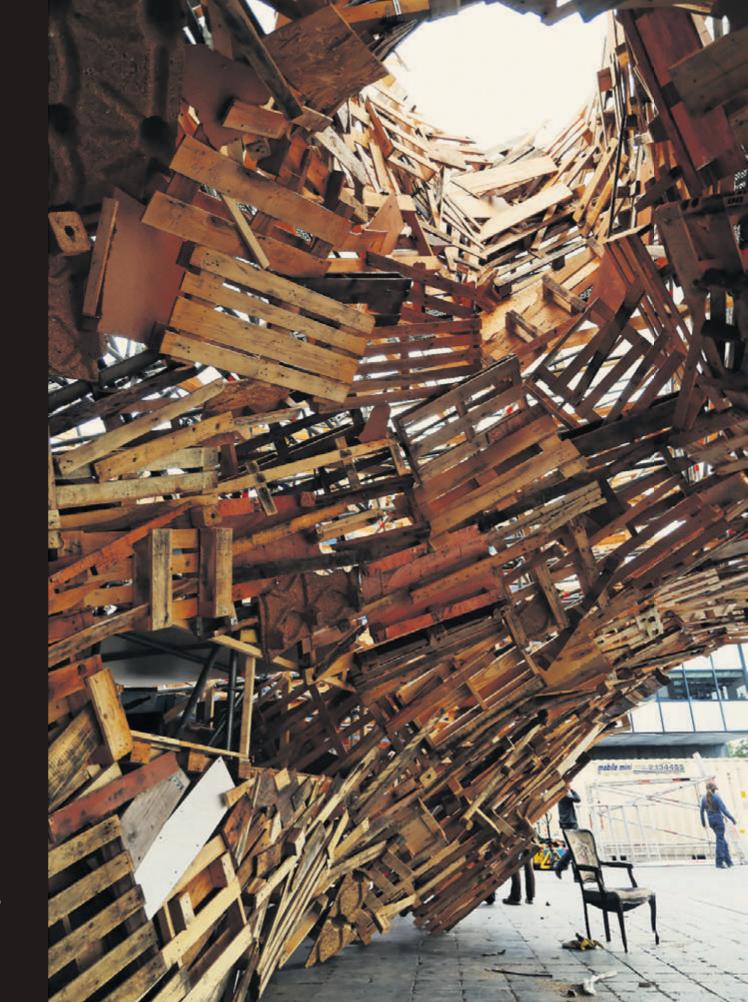
EW You mentioned that Raumlabor is starting to move away from short-term, tactical interventions in favour of strategising for a longer-term future. How is this beginning to materialise?

CM I think the time in Berlin for this sort of interim usage is over. Previously, there was space in the middle of the city centre for it, but now it's kind of filled up.

We're currently working on two projects in Berlin. One is called the Coop Campus, and it's

about the development of a former cemetery. We started this project in 2014 with a garden and a school for refugees; the next step is a 240m² greenhouse that we want to use as a lab for researching the different forms of residential buildings and as a communication platform for the information process. The other is a high-rise building complex next to Alexander Platz, which used to house the central office of statistics of the GDR. At the moment, the building is owned by the state of Germany. The initiative wants the state of Berlin to buy this property and give it to the initiative in a long-term lease, to develop the 40,000m² building. By reprogramming this existing, empty building, we can activate different layers of urbanism by bringing different programs to a spot that otherwise could have been turned into another shopping centre or office building. Instead, we're trying to bring in artist studios and different forms of housing for students and refugees. This is what makes it really interesting.

Both these projects again have a long-term focus. For us it has become more about securing spaces in Berlin rather than just doing something temporary. These projects will last for at least 40 or 50 years into the future.



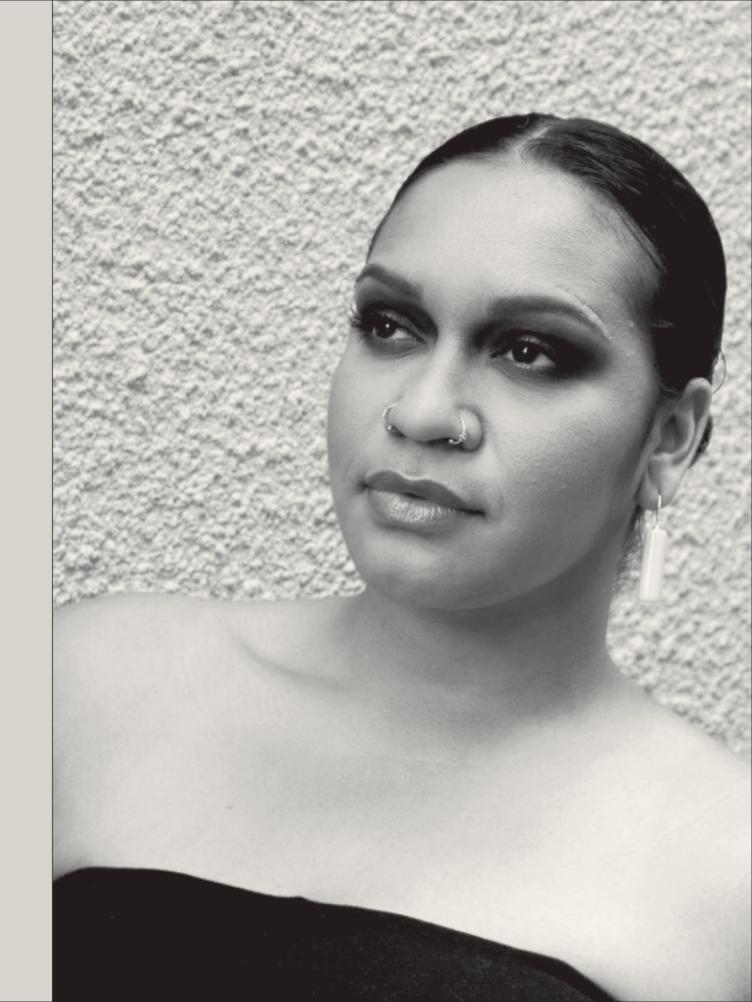
ENVIRONMENT

sustainability, environmental affairs and design innovations

SPEAKING FOR COUNTRY

ROJ AMEDI IN CONVERSATION
WITH MURRAWAH MAROOCHY JOHNSON

In the face of rapidly developing climate change and a fossil fuel industry desperately trying to hold onto old ways, now is the time to centre the voices and longstanding resistance of First Nations people. So goes the call-to-action of the Wangan & Jagalingou Traditional Owners Family Council, who since 2012 have been fighting the proposed Carmichael mine in central Queensland. As the struggle continues well into 2017, Roj Amedi speaks to tireless campaign representative Murrawah Maroochy Johnson about climate justice, Aboriginal sovereignty and the importance of self-determination.



Murrawah Maroochy Johnson is the type of person who carries her history in her bones. Her presence is powerful, impassioned and captivating. A 22-year-old woman from Wangan and Jagalingou (W&J) country in central Queensland, she is the youngest member of the **W&I** Traditional Owners Family Council and has

been at the forefront of a two-and-a-half-year strategy to reinforce her people's right to ownership and protection of their land from the Adani Carmichael mine project.

"When we say we speak for Country, that's literally what we mean. The earth can't speak for itself, and the water can't speak for itself, and it's our duty to speak for it. And that's how we protect it. When you wipe out the people who speak for

Country then you don't have to seek consent." reflects Murrawah over Skype during the height of the campaign in February 2017.

The Adani Group proposed to build the largest new coal mine at 40×13km, with 6 open-cut pits and 16 underground pits, only

10km from the Great Artesian Basin. The risk to the water tables is unprecedented, with a proposed permanent railway line planned between the Basin and Abbott Point Coal Terminal, south of Townsville. Not only is the proposed project environmentally destructive, says Murrawah, but it would also significantly impede on the sacred lands

of the W&J people and prevent them from practicing their customs and culture. Within current legal regimes, the only option available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is to apply for native title - an option often riddled with systematic obstructions.

The Native Title Act (NTA) was passed in



"We have no decision-making power,

yet we're forced to be in this space

because if we don't participate,

mining companies and developers

can say that they tried to include us

and we refused to engage."

1993, one year after Torres Strait Islander man Eddie Mabo successfully proved his people's rightful ownership of their land, overturning the legal doctrine and colonial concept of terra nullius (literally 'nobody's land') in the process. The NTA was first utilised in 1996 through the successful application by the Wik

people of Cape York Peninsula in a decision that saw native title applied to mainland Australia for the first time, bringing into question the status of almost 60 percent of the continent under leaseholds and other 'non-extinguishing' tenures.

The Howard Government quickly responded by putting together a group of lawyers to amend the Act which, in Murrawah's opinion, existed to slow down future applications for native title. "They've

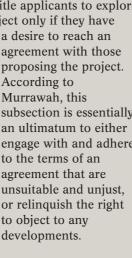
> written a legislation and amended it in such a way that it's totally process driven, and it actually undoes everything that the Act was initially meant to do. We have no decision-making power, yet we're forced to be in this space because if we

don't participate, mining companies and developers can say that they tried to include us and we refused to engage."

Murrawah points to the subsection in the NTA explaining the 'Right to Negotiate'. This particular mechanism allows native title applicants to explore the full breadth of any project only if they have

a desire to reach an agreement with those proposing the project. According to Murrawah, this subsection is essentially an ultimatum to either engage with and adhere to the terms of an agreement that are unsuitable and unjust, or relinquish the right to object to any









"I would argue that [the Right to Negotiate] occurs with Aboriginal people under duress. Because what happens is that if you don't negotiate, if you refuse to meet and if you don't consult? These developers will just go for compulsory acquisition anyway. There's little chance for compensation, and there's no chance for Aboriginal people to have any say over what happens to their Country." If companies fail to gain the consent of the traditional owners, they can still approach the Native Title Tribunal to gain approval on the grounds that the traditional owners do not consent but the project should still go ahead for the public good.

The *NTA*, says Murrawah, essentially provides a stifling and ultimatum-ridden method of reclaiming the right to protect, live and practice culture on country. "The hope is that if you're under stress

long enough, either you'll die and you won't be a problem anymore or you'll start in-fights. And then it divides native title claims up, and then claims fall apart, and then they get withdrawn," she adds.

"Existing as an Aboriginal person is a political statement. If you want to be Aboriginal and be Aboriginal in the way that you want to be cultured and have connection to your Country and maintain connection to your Aboriginality, then you're forced to

participate in native title ... That doesn't apply to anyone else in the country. They're free to go and do those things and accumulate their own wealth and also claim wealth."

After refusing the application by the Adani Group in 2012, the W&J Family Council realised that native title would not be an effective tool in protecting sovereignty. So they set-off to initiate a public campaign, raising awareness about their story and gaining support from the public. Part of this campaign involved approaching the eight banks who had agreed to invest in the project. Alongside other Council members, including her uncle Adrian Burragubba, Murrawah travelled to North America, Europe and Asia to meet with Bank of America, Goldman Sachs, Citibank, the Export-Import Bank

of the United States, UBS, Credit Suisse and Standard Chartered. These meetings involved sitting down with executive decision-makers not only to discourage them from investing in the Adani project, but also to interrogate the overstated long-term gains in a time when coal prices are dropping. Focused principally on stopping the establishment of the coal mine, the W&J Family Council has so far managed to prevent any banks from lending money to the mining project. "If everything we're doing fails in Australia then at least we know that they can never get the capital that they need – even once they do everything they need to bypass us – to even get it off the ground," says Murrawah.

The process of proving your existence, value and connection to land is an insurmountable burden in a context where the systems surrounding your

personhood are designed to erase and silence your self-determination. This global campaign to ensure the survival of the W&J people is an immense feat for any person, let alone a woman in her early twenties taking on some of the most powerful financial institutions in the world.

"The whole time, there had been people trying to undo everything. Trying to undo the work we were doing by undermining it and saying it didn't mean

anything." After several weeks of continuous flying, Murrawah returned back home to university and campus living. "It was the first time I ever felt hopeless, empty ... I was so exhausted, the most drained I've ever been in my life that I eventually passed out on the floor and I woke up the next day, still on the floor – light on, door open, clothes and shoes on. The next morning I immediately got up, had a shower, got dressed, and turned up to a day filled with meetings."

Every direction the campaign went, says Murrawah, the W&J Family Council faced alleged corruption, voter stacking, money laundering and manipulation by Adani. A breakthrough arrived in the form of the Noongar Federal Court decision on 2 February 2017, which stipulated that all native title

Speaking for Country

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'area agreements' need all Aboriginal representatives to sign off on the final decision. Before the Federal Government moved to introduce a bill to reverse the effect of the decision, the Noongar decision instantly cast doubt on the W&J Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) signed by seven of the twelve applicants in 2016 – the very same ILUA that was crucial for the advancement of the Carmichael mine. Without this agreement, the Queensland Government's only choice is to forcibly take Native Title on W&J land and move ahead with a project that even investors had turned their back on.

Murrawah believes that native title and the pecific confines of its

specific confines of its mechanisms fail to uphold the rights and freedoms of the traditional owners of over 600 nations in Australia. Ultimately, says Murrawah, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people cannot contest under the confines of these agreements or refuse to negotiate on unfair terms because the Native Title Tribunal can move forward with land use applications under compulsory acquisition provisions in the name of the greater good.

Alongside the W&J Family Council's campaign there exist other, ecologically focused campaigns against the Carmichael mine. Murrawah sees a clear delineation between her people's resistance

and these other campaigns. "They still have an extractivist approach to the environment, even though they're trying to protect it ... People who are in paid roles in environmental organisations especially get paid to do jobs, protecting the environment, that were stolen from Aboriginal people." Even though these organisations and campaigns have seemingly congruent aims – to halt the building of the Carmichael mine – Murrawah believes they tend to overlook the fact that they are visitors on traditional lands, arguing that this approach to environmentalism is "still paternalism".

"I think there is an imposed black–green alliance. Those in charge of environmental NGOs

assume that if they care about the environment and I am Aboriginal that we should go together. But I argue that if you struggle with white supremacy, the patriarchy and homophobia but are anti-Indigenous or anti-black, then no, we don't go together." Murrawah continues, "Everyone else can have these incredibly complex roles in society, but Aboriginal people are diminished as people who are just responsible for plants and animals." This inadvertent subordination, adds Murrawah, removes the incredible rich cultural tapestry and connection that Aboriginal people have with their culture, land, lore and law.

Since the onset of the Dakota Access Pipeline protests in the US, which came to a head in 2016, interest has grown around the world in the legacy of First Nations people resisting the destruction of their traditional lands. But this newfound attention comes with its own set of issues, says Murrawah. "People keep on repeating that 'this is our Standing Rock', and we've got to support the First Nations people in Standing Rock Sioux and

cannons, tear gas, tanks, fire and bombs, because we are still responsible for what happens on our Country and what happens to people on our Country." To speak over the direction and take ownership of the resistance led by the W&J people, says Murrawah, would actively undermine their self-determination – the core principal of their campaign.

their fight against the

But this conversation

also takes away our

power to determine

where our fight goes.

are live bullets, water

We never want to get it to that stage where there

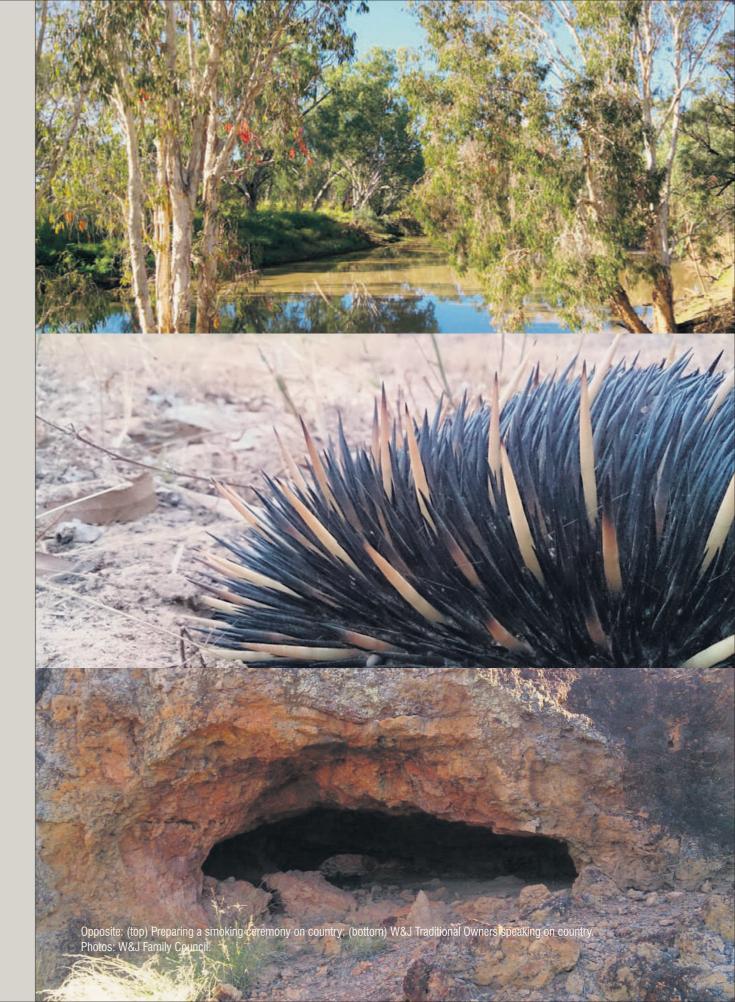
Dakota Access Pipeline.

"We are self-determined people who can talk for ourselves, and that's what our campaign is about. It's about us having a voice, saying 'no' and having our 'no' mean something."

This article was written in mid-February 2017. Certain developments in the ongoing case may not be reflected.







ASSEMBLAGE

the cultural fabric of cities across art, architecture, design and cross-pollinated creativity



ILLUSTRATION BY ALICE OEHR

Technological Disobedience: Ernesto Oroza

In August 1990, the Cuban government, led by Fidel Castro, announced a new Special Period in Time of Peace – a euphemism for the economic crisis in the country, resulting from its disintegrating commercial and productive links with Eastern Europe as it sought autonomy from the Soviet Union. This 'special period', the effects of which deepened in the decade that followed, acted as a summons to the Cuban people to struggle and sacrifice in the hope of a better future. It established a framework of austere rationing, where many individuals were forced into a lifestyle of unrelenting scarcity, challenged to live without many products that might otherwise grant a 'modern' lifestyle.

A fundamental shift in how civilians perceived objects and their material culture began to emerge. Commodities were pulled apart and resurrected into new and useful forms: aluminium dinner trays were hoisted onto poles to repair broken aerials, discarded soft-drink cans became vessels for kerosene lamps and vinyl records were cut and thermoformed as replacement blades for missing fan heads. These individual hallmarks of creativity did not exist in isolated practice – instead, they were passed on through word of mouth, spurring entirely new production and consumption models based on community and discourse, in contrast with the authoritative embodied designs of the West. This independent production was documented by the Cuban government and published under the title *Con Nuestros Propios Esfuerzos (With Our Own Efforts)* to encourage and empower the population to keep building, repairing and reinventing their surroundings.

Ernesto Oroza is a Cuban designer (now based in Aventura, Florida) who spent most of his life in Havana, where he experienced this phenomenon firsthand. Through his Technological Disobedience project, Oroza has archived hundreds of objects of invention that systematically resist mainstream protocols. Together, these objects highlight ingenuity as well as the sociopolitical and economic forces that inform design.

ELLIOTT MACKIE IN CONVERSATION WITH ERNESTO OROZA
TRANSLATED FROM SPANISH BY GABRIELA HOLLAND

ELLIOTT MACKIE

What first inspired you to begin collecting and documenting these artefacts of Cuban ingenuity and resourcefulness?

ERNESTO OROZA

When I graduated from design school the country was entering the economic crisis. I dedicated most of my time to developing a personal project - I wanted to articulate my own way of doing design, influenced by Italian radicals like Andrea Branzi and Ettore Sottsass. I would spend my days drawing furniture and objects I believed to be experimental and radical. At the same time, my mother-in-law would repair the fan and other objects in our house that were rapidly deteriorating. She invented meals using barely any ingredients, raised a pig on our balcony and created a machine to make cigars because the cost of them on the black market was astronomical. One day I realised that, in fact, it was my mother-in-law who was doing radical design. I decided to pay attention and learn.

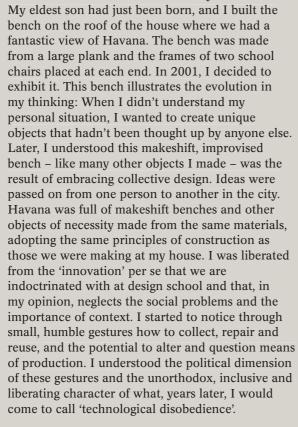
EM Many of the inventions you reference in your work were born out of fundamental needs that were not catered to during the embargo. Can you recount any personal stories of your own inventiveness during this time?

EO I want to clarify that, in my experience, it was not only the result of the American embargo on Cuba that these fundamental needs were not met. We Cubans see it as an 'internal embargo' - the restrictions of economic freedoms of individuals and corruption, and the squandering and systematic inefficiency of the political system on the island.

I think my practice, in the first few years of the crisis, was 'schizophrenic'. I tried to make experimental designs that were disconnected from reality, and, on the other hand would spend much of my day creating solutions to meet the needs of my family. I soon learned that these tasks that I was

developing in the house, which responded directly to the demands of the home, could be interpreted through the culture and history of design. The majority of my 'objects of necessity', as I later decided to call them, disappeared in the whirlwind of my family's survival and I never had the chance to chronicle them.

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In 1993 I made a bench for family reunions.

architecture and design era through his Adhocism: The Case for Improvisation, which for many was a manifesto for utilising everyday materials in design. There are clear parallels between Jencks's Adhocism and the Cuban military-issued text With Our Own Efforts, although Cuban 'technological disobedience' appears across many fields, not just architecture and design. How was communication between disparate fields encouraged during this period in Cuba?

EO Despite the abundance of inventions across all sectors of society, it didn't mean they were welcomed

> everywhere and by everyone. It's true that this inventive vernacular reached every corner of life in the country, but the expansion of the phenomenon was due to other factors. [...] Some of the concepts and terms I developed were in response to the need to elaborate arguments for discussions with



Opposite: El libro de la familia, Verde Olivo, Cuba (1991) and Con Nuestros Propios Esfuerzos, Verde Olivo, Cuba (1992). Courtesy Ernesto Oroza. This page, clockwise from top left: Direct immersion water heaters made from salvaged electrical components and PVC tubes; direct immersion water heater; repaired chair, Havana (2013); TV aerial made from metal trays sourced at public diners, Havana (2005). Photos: Ernesto Oroza.







EM In the 1970s Charles Jencks forged a new

ASSEMBLE PAPERS Technological Disobedience: Ernesto Oroza professionals and reject the derogatory titles I frequently heard in relation to this type of production – I tried to bring the dialogue back to the core values of the objects regardless of their appearance. 'Kitsch' and 'povera' design were just some of the labels I saw placed on these objects and in the readings I did about them. In all areas (art, architecture, design, sociology, anthropology) this form of production and its study seemed intrusive, provocative and askew.

At the start of the revolution, repair and reuse were encouraged, and almost seen as a duty to the Communist Party, but during the 1990s the government criminalised this type of production. (Fidel Castro named these objects "energy-devouring monsters" in a video you can find on YouTube.) On a couple of occasions, the editors of two local magazines asked me to remove words like 'precarious' and 'poverty' from my texts. Still today, for many, this is a type of production that shouldn't be shown or given any attention.

Contrary to this, *The Book for the Family* and *With Our Own Efforts* were both edited by the Armed Forces and The Federation of Cuban Women, and even though they were circulated in a very restricted sector (the army), they responded to a particular desire to involve the people and were more affiliated to the less dogmatic spirit of the '60s.

EM Both 'technological disobedience' and 'adhocism' encourage the revaluing of discarded material, and yet neither are anti-design – they both embody design thinking, and though similar in the upcycling of materials there seems to be a divergence within the objects from Cuba.

EO I agree. [Cuban] production was informed by necessity and by urgency – there was no interest in recycling, and the ecological benefits of using discarded materials and objects were not considered. In fact, many of the productive processes which took place in homes, like plastic injection and smelting aluminium, were polluting and unhealthy, and the improvised workshops didn't have adequate means to eliminate the toxic vapours or treat the waste from the production.

EM Do you think the West can learn from Cuban 'technological disobedience', or is this a dangerous idea, given the desperate conditions from which it eventuated?

EO Poverty is not a choice, but an individual who is aware of their needs and finds ways to meet them is very inspirational. It is a versatile and important

resource and is important in any context. In my work, I try to establish these connections, articulate the political dimensions of this practice and connect these ideas with other creative movements.

I don't know if one can learn specifically from the Cuban case because of the peculiar conditions in which it was developed, but I do think it's a phenomenon that has parallels in other countries and productive contexts that one can learn from. 'Maker' culture is something frequently mentioned as a parallel phenomenon to that in Cuba, but I think it is actually a 'hacker movement' and its techno-political positioning a creative movement that Cubans could learn from.

EM I have read that the Soviet washing machine played a crucial role in Cuba's capacity to develop new objects. What do you think have been the benefits of standardisation and industrialisation with regard to the communication of models of design within Cuba?

EO I have been writing about this topic recently. It is common to stigmatise the standardisation and norms as a negative aspect of globalisation. In cultural and post-colonial discourses, standardisation is presented as a global force that kills local culture.

What happened in Cuba, and perhaps in other contexts, proves that standardised and normalised objects and materials in situations of urgency become a means to energise the expansion and propagation of ideas. First of all, because of the common knowledge that is constructed socially around normalised objects and materials. Secondly, because of the sheer volume - an intrinsic intrusion of many standardised productions - of standardised and normalised objects that makes them an accessible resource. For example, reparation, via a standard route, became an institution on the island. A maker of spare parts for fans in the province of Holguín, through another standardised object such as a vinyl LP, introduced into the market blades made by cutting and thermoforming the disc.

In the case of the Soviet Aurika 70 washing machine, it came with a washing machine and a drying machine. Given the climate on the island, the mechanical drying could be done away with. Many individuals used the motor from the dryer for other purposes. This was the real motor of the revolution: there was no sector of life in which this object was not being reused in some way. I have records of its presence in dozens of artefacts including lawn mowers, key-cutters, vegetable cutters and fans.







Top to bottom: 'Rikimbili' bicycle propelled by a fumigation machine engine, Havana (2003); by a water pump engine (2005); and by a military tank engine (2005).

Photos: Ernesto Oroza.

EM When you look at the objects that you've collected over the past two decades, how do you see them? When assembled into an exhibition, for example, what are you saying about Cuba's so-called Special Period?

EO I don't see it as a collection, though at times I have misused the term and have been translated incorrectly. I understand these sets of objects as a library, an archive, or a *materioteca* (material library).

I think these objects can be interpreted in various ways. For me, they operate as a catalogue of collective creativity and the many other forces that shaped Cuba during the Special Period. As a whole they can be articulated as an example of cultural resistance. Because of their provisional character they can be interpreted as utopian objects, full of hope. I think there is an ideology in them, a unique relationship to beauty, comfort and technique.

My relationship to this production is experiential - I grew up with the crisis. At the same time I tried to create a critical distance and understand the political dimension of these tactics. Today, I can draw parallels between these practices and those developed by Cubans and Haitians in Miami or in other contexts. I'm interested in these recurrences, patterns and individuals who find similar solutions in different places, seemingly under different economic and ideological forces. These recurrences point to economic and political models that are increasingly more perpetual and homogenous. In this sense, I feel like these objects from the Special Period are becoming gradually less special. On one hand, this is bad because it means that the crisis is expanding. On the other, it's good because we're forced to confront it with imagination everywhere.

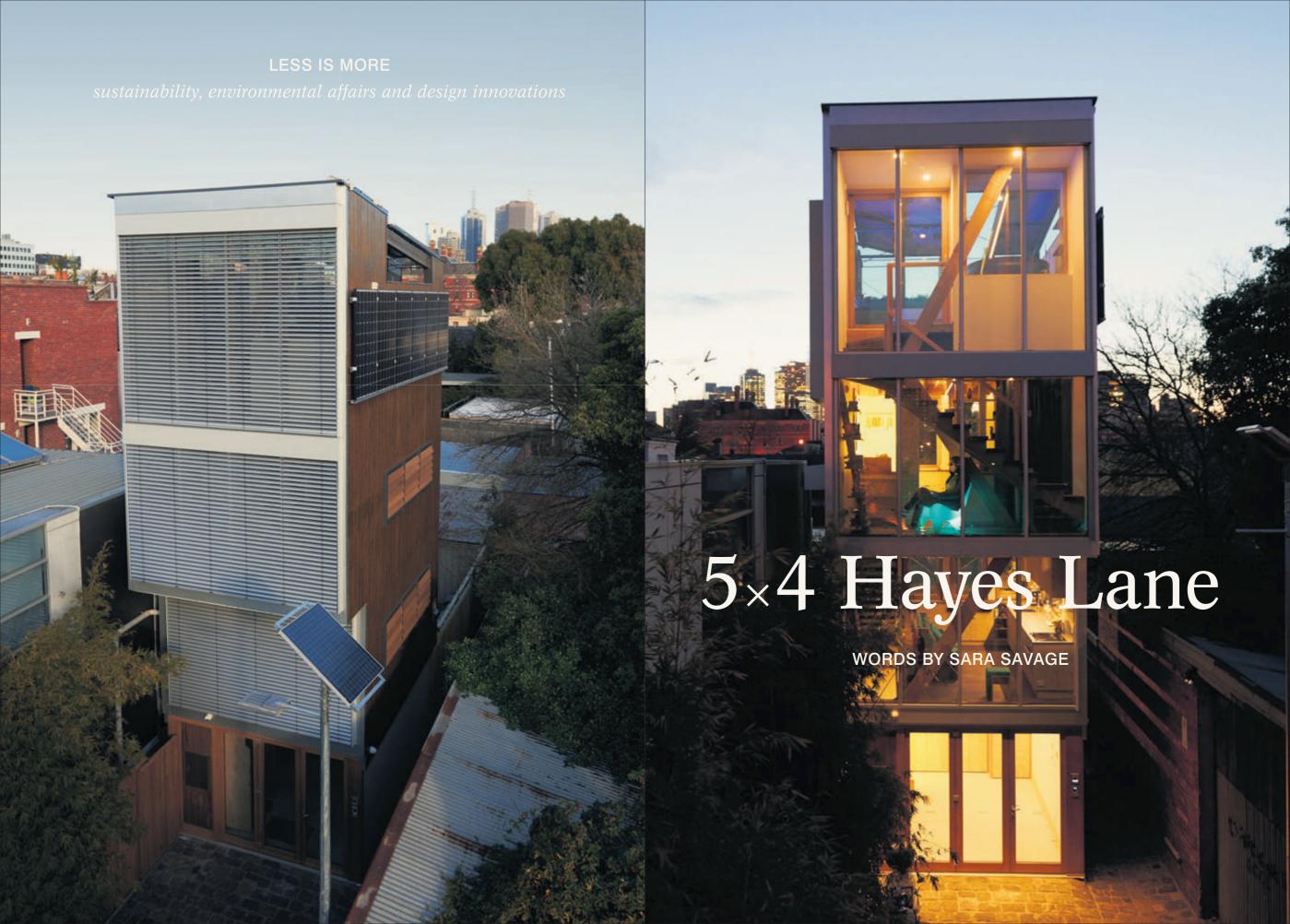




Opposite: Jar made with a detergent bottle, cut and folded. This page: (above) Homemade plastic injection toys made by mixing plastics from various sources; (below) Homemade electrical components made by the same method. Photos: Ernesto Oroza.



Technological Disobedience: Ernesto Oroza



Tucked in at the end of a narrow laneway in leafy East Melbourne, 5×4 Hayes Lane is not the typical home you'd expect to inhabit such a site. As its name suggests, the pocket-sized project boasts a footprint of only 20m². In order to maximise space, the house reaches skywards over four storeys – a feature that has both defined the project and dictated some of the challenges it came up against throughout its creation.

The home is the brainchild of photographer Ralph Alphonso, who also owns the set of townhouses next door to the laneway where an old shed previously lay dormant. When Ralph realised he wasn't using the site to its full potential, he came up with the idea of building a four-storey sustainable home in the miniature space. "I had been travelling a lot for work and saw the difference in what can be achieved overseas when it comes to sustainable homes. That really drove me and motivated me – I decided that if I was going to build a 'sustainable' house, I didn't want to just do that through little standalone gestures, like using solar panels when the rest of the house is damaging to the environment. I wanted to consider the full life cycle of the house."

The first step was to assemble a team of experts. Melbourne-based prefab architecture practice ARKit developed the initial design, with owner-builder Ralph later modifying some elements. Ralph's communications background is evident in the extensive website devoted to 5×4 Hayes Lane, in which over 90 project partners and suppliers are listed, many of whom provided services at discounted rates in exchange for publicity through the project. Since its completion in late 2015, 5×4 Hayes Lane has received no shortage of attention.

"Another reason why I took on the project is because I wanted to share this information. I wanted to use it as a knowledge base and to showcase what can be done with the right products," says Ralph. He'd like to see more demand for a lot of the products used in 5×4 Hayes Lane: "More people will start asking for these things and seeking them out when they're more educated on what's available. But first, the demand needs to be there."

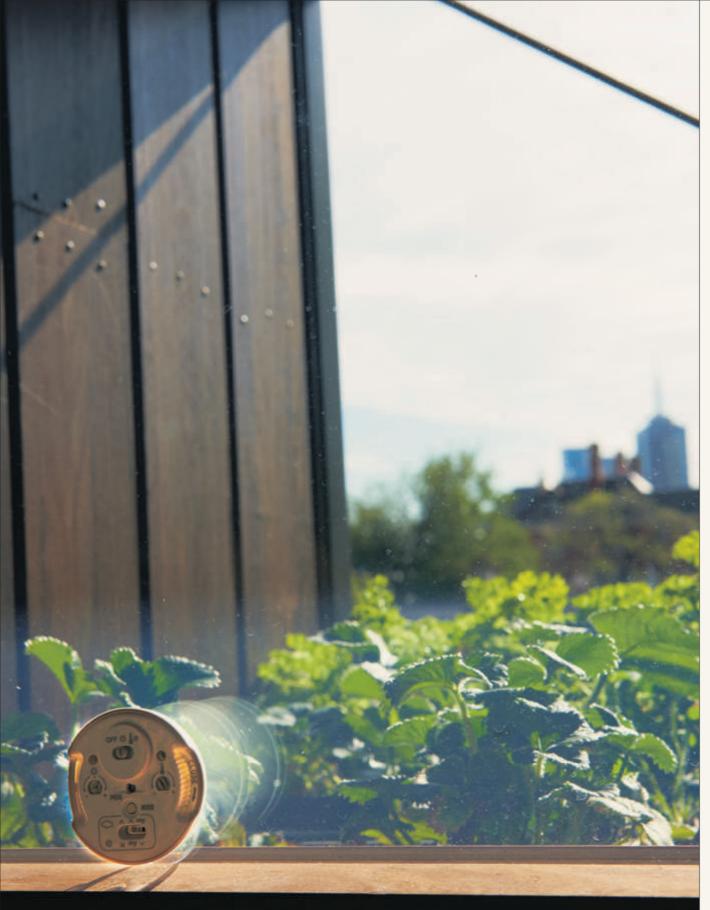
The hero of 5×4 Hayes Lane is its core material, Victorian ash timber. Most of it comes from a mixture of certified sustainably managed hardwood and recycled offcuts that would usually go to waste. This specialty manufactured timber has been used to construct many of the house's core components, from cladding and structural elements to furniture used in the interior. Speak to Ralph and he'll tell you, "If it was easy, everyone would do it." In the decision to prefabricate most parts of the house offsite, this motto becomes palpable.

But with great amounts of timber comes great responsibility – heavy use of such a material called for extra thought around how the house would be structurally supported and adequately insulated throughout. To maximise space, thin sheets of high-grade aerogel (a synthetic, ultralight material originally developed by NASA) were used alongside phase change material in a complex wall system to keep the house as airtight as possible. A geothermal heating and cooling system was also installed during construction, effectively using the temperature of the ground to regulate the inner climate of the house. It's by no means an inexpensive solution, with the geothermal system adding about \$30,000 to the bill,





Opposite: Smart storage conceals some of the technology behind the project. This page: (top) The voids under the staircase become rooms of their own; (bottom) The third-floor bedroom can fit a queen- or king-sized bed. Photos: Ralph Alphonso/fivexfour.com



This page: External blinds on this west-facing window drop when the sun hits this light sensor. Opposite: (top) A custom-designed couch in the living/dining space can easily be converted into a dining table and chairs; (bottom) The ever-indulgent rooftop hot-tub. Photos: Ralph Alphonso/fivexfour.com





but it was a priority in the original vision for the house. "Eventually, the hope is that it will pay for itself," says Ralph.

Guided by Bioregional Australia's One Planet Living framework (an initiative aimed at helping people and organisations measure and address sustainability solutions), 5×4 Hayes Lane also employs high-performance double glazing, integrated shading elements and passive solar orientation. (Though not officially a 'passive house', the project is very much informed by the design mechanisms of the movement.)

"It's not a house for everyone," says Ralph as he walks me through the four levels of the home.

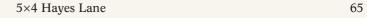
He means this in a literal sense as well as figurative – 5×4 Hayes Lane has been designed especially for Ralph's specific needs. "Just about everything in here is custom, right down to the furniture – that's why everything fits in the space so well." On the second storey of the house this is particularly true, where an innocent-looking couch is revealed to have a dual function: in a couple of swift movements, it can be converted into a dining

table. The ground floor of the house is also an adaptable space, functioning as a garage, a spare room and a home office – complete with a small, yet not squished, second bathroom.

On the third floor, the bedroom level, no inch of space goes unused with a small void under the staircase converted into a reading room complete with a custom-built bookshelf. And where the rest of the house responds to necessity and sustainability over all else, the fourth-storey rooftop is where Ralph has allowed himself one indulgence: a hot tub. But it's not all extravagance up here in the clouds, with the underside of a portion of the house's 15 solar panels totally visible – a reminder of the true

purpose of the project.

Nearly four years in the making, 5×4 Hayes Lane's striking yet minimal appearance manages to disguise the high level of thought (and modern technology) that has gone into its creation. But more than anything, says Ralph, it was a team effort. "Building sustainably isn't about little token gestures. It isn't an easy thing to do, and so it needs to be done thoroughly and it needs to be done holistically."•







When Tao Gofers designed the Sirius building in 1978, he had the wellbeing of its future tenants in mind. It's no secret that the architect was inspired by Moshe Safdie's Montreal housing complex and fellow Brutalist icon, Habitat 67. Although less than half its size, Sirius shares the modularity of its Canadian counterpart, not to mention the inclusion of outdoor spaces like landscaped terraces and rooftop gardens, and communal areas throughout the building (such as the ground-floor Phillip Room, pictured opposite).

"Sirius got all the urban cues right from the get-go," says Shaun Carter, outgoing president of the NSW Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects and chair of the Save Our Sirius Foundation, which, along with the Friends of Millers Point Group and the Millers Point, Dawes Point and The Rocks Resident Action Group, has been at the forefront of the fight to save Sirius for the last few years. "They gave it a front door and put it on the street, and those simple yet fundamental things have meant that Sirius is a building that is and always has been of the community."

In 2014, the NSW State Government announced its decision to sell-off hundreds of public housing properties at Millers Point, Dawes Point and The Rocks, displacing more than 400 public housing tenants – including the 79 tenants of the iconic Sirius building. Mass evictions ensued over the following years with residents forced out of the area despite its long history of public housing stretching back to the early 1900s.



In 2016, the then-Minister for Heritage Mark Speakman rejected the Heritage Council's recommendation to heritage-list Sirius, arguing that "whatever its heritage value, even at its highest that value is greatly outweighed by what would be a huge loss of extra funds from the sale of the site". This decision compounded the already rampant removal of residents from the area and the fight to save the neighbourhood intensified. Focus then shifted towards Sirius, with local lobby groups proposing it could house a number of the displaced local residents. (To many, this felt like a case of history repeating: when the controversial development of The Rocks in the late '60s and '70s was halted by union Green Bans, the then sparkling-new Sirius became home to many residents evicted from their houses nearby.)

When photographer Alisha Gore and I visited Sirius in November 2016, there were a mere five Sirius residents left, with that number dwindling steadily ever since (at the time of writing, only two residents remain). Local resident and tireless Sirius Foundation member John Dunn was kind enough to show us around, introducing us to three residents who generously shared their stories of Sirius and what it means to them.

Saving Sirius 69

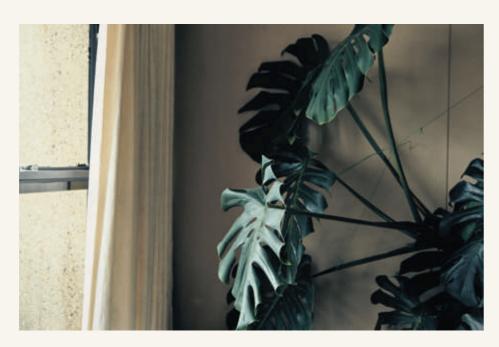
CHERIE

"Everyone who visits my place says it's like walking into a doll's house," says the ever-houseproud Cherie Johnson, 61, who moved into Sirius with her mother shortly after the building's completion in 1980. More generously sized than the average doll's house – or the average public housing unit for that matter - the 79 Sirius apartments were built to accommodate 200 people in a series of one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom units, both single-storey and split-level. Many of the apartments enjoy picturesque views of Sydney's world-famous harbour, but you won't find the residents bragging about it. "The thing is, it's not about the view. It's about the people that live here," says Cherie. Suddenly, she switches to the past tense. "That's what made this place."

Cherie says the neighbourhood has experienced a "complete turnaround" in recent years. "When I first moved into Sirius, I remember going around to Millers Point to buy the newspaper and the people in the street would say 'good morning' to me – it was like a little country town, right in the city."

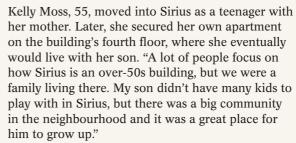
Lovingly dotted with knick-knacks and ornaments, indoor plants (some that have been there as long as Cherie) and a shrine-like arrangement of framed family photographs, Cherie's ninth-storey apartment is immaculately kept. Her late mother Betty, whose ashes take pride of place on an armchair facing the window, died not long before residents were notified of the NSW Government's plans for the building. "The only saving grace is that she didn't have to go through this."





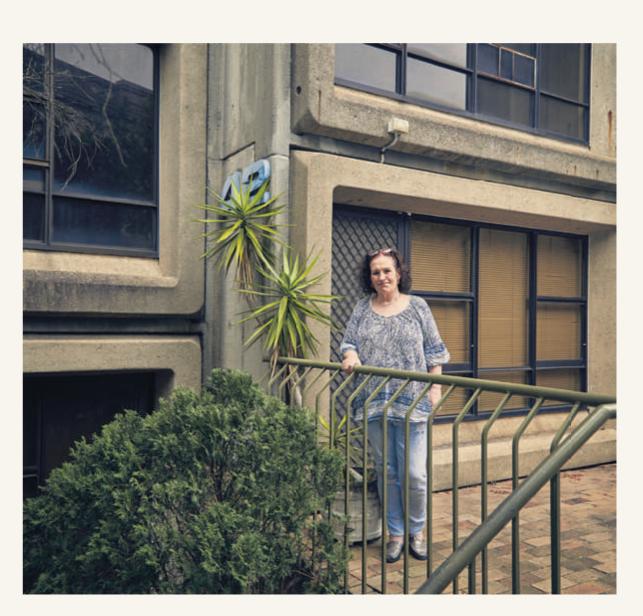


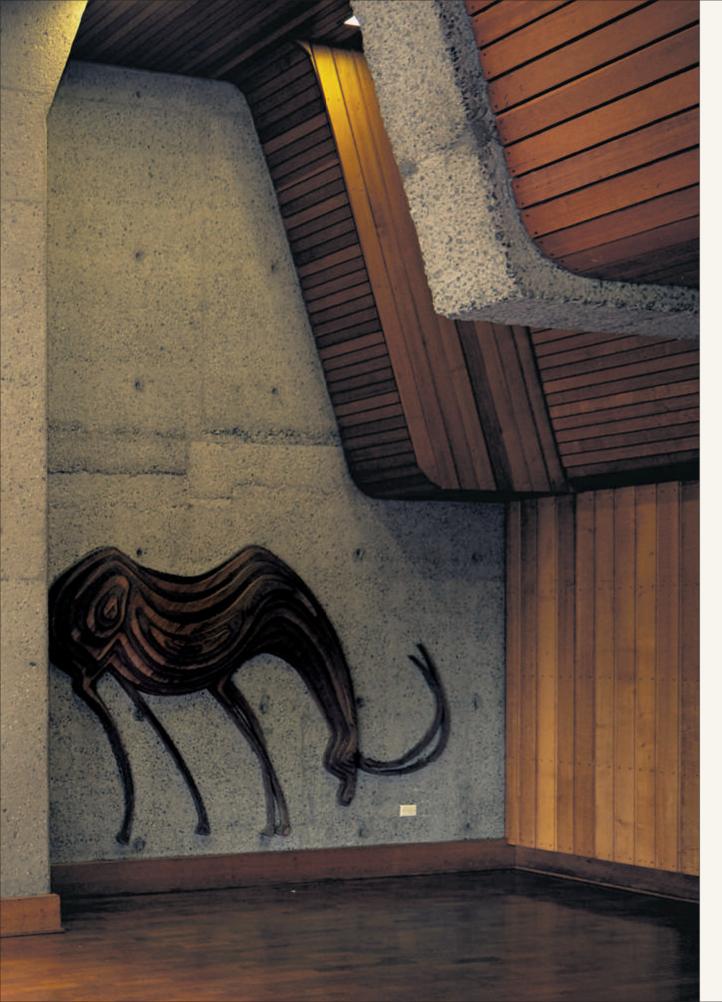




Thanks to ongoing stress caused by the upheaval, Kelly says her now elderly mother's health has deteriorated over the last few years. "My mum was a vibrant, healthy woman two years ago – getting up to walk the Bridge every day. Now, she's a shell of her former self. She says Sirius has lost its magic through this process."

But Kelly – who, along with her mother, has moved out of the building since we first spoke – has fond memories of the place she called home for so long. "Sirius is so beautiful aesthetically. I think so anyway – I don't agree with all the people saying it's ugly and has to go."





Saving Sirius 73



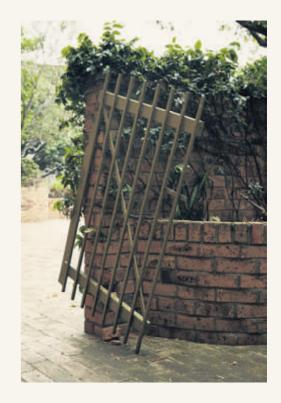


MYRA

If you've followed the Sirius story over the past few years, chance are you'll be at least somewhat acquainted with Myra Demetriou – a figurehead of the remaining residents. Though 90 years old and physically frail, Myra is commonly described by those who know her as 'tough as nails'. Myra is blind – the armchair in her 10th-storey apartment faces away from the so-called 'million-dollar' harbour views – but she remains a fiercely independent and cherished member of the local community.

Having lived in the neighbourhood for 60 years and in Sirius since 2008, Myra says her disability is a major reason why she's fighting for her right to remain. "How can they expect someone like me just to pack up and go somewhere strange? I want to stay."•

Read more about our trip to Sirius at Assemble Papers online. We thank Shaun Carter and John Dunn for facilitating our visit to Sirius, and Cherie, Kelly and Myra for welcoming us into their homes. Support the campaign to save Sirius at saveoursirius.org



Saving Sirius 75

SARA SAVAGE IN CONVERSATION
WITH THOMAS DELAMARRE

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EXIT

UNE FAIBLE AUGMENTATION DES TEMPÉRATURES RÉCHAUFFERAIT LES OCÉANS, FERAIT FONDRE LES CALOTTES POLAIRES, ET ÉLÈVERAIT LE NIVEAU DES MERS.

A SMALL INCREASE IN GLOBAL TEMPERATURE CAUSES OCEANS TO WARM, POLAR ICE CAPS TO MELT, AND SEA LEVELS TO RISE.

"It's almost as though the sky, and the clouds in it and the pollution of it, were making their entry into history. Not the history of the seasons, summer, autumn, winter, but of population flows, of zones now uninhabitable for reasons that aren't just to do with desertification, but with disappearance, with submersion of land. This is the future."

Paul Virilio on EXIT, 2009

Based on a prompt by French philosopher and urbanist Paul Virilio, *EXII* (2008–15) is an experimental 360-degree installation created by New York-based artists and architects Diller Scofidio + Renfro with architect-artist Laura Kurgan and statistician-artist Mark Hansen, alongside a core team of scientists and geographers. The data-driven artwork - which aims to investigate human migration and its leading causes around the world, including the impacts of climate change - was originally commissioned in 2008 by the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain in Paris for its exhibition *Native Land*, *Stop Eject*, and is now a part of its collection.

In November 2015, it was updated for inclusion in United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21). Updating the information was no simple undertaking, with *EXIT* comprising geocoded data from over 100 sources (ranging from international organisations to NGOs and research centres, including UNESCO and the World Bank), visually represented in a series of six animated, panoramic maps reflecting on the movement of people across the globe. Forced displacement caused by wars, persecution and violence are all represented in *EXIT*, alongside movement attributable to urbanisation, large-scale deforestation and natural disasters. Also included is a map of 'remittances', tracking the money sent by migrants around the world to their countries of origin.

It's a provocative and ambitious artwork that since its inception has travelled to Alhóndiga Bilbao (now Azkuna Zentroa) in Spain and more recently across oceans to the UNSW Galleries for Sydney Festival 2017. From 19 April until 16 July 2017, EXITI will show at the Ian Potter Museum of Art at the University of Melbourne as part of ART+CLIMATE=CHANGE 2017. I caught up with Fondation Cartier curator Thomas Delamarre to talk about EXIT, about working at the intersection of art and data, and about the role of cultural institutions in effecting change.



SARA SAVAGE

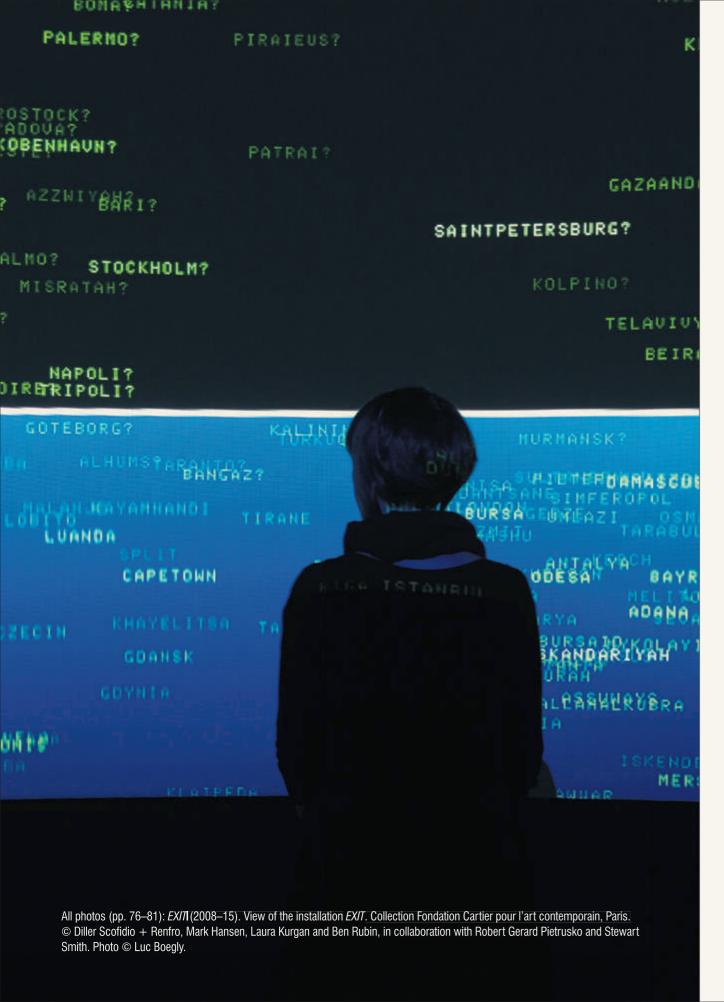
Quite some time has passed between the first showing of EXIT in 2008 and the current exhibition, which debuted in 2015. Can you talk about making the decision to update the data and what was involved in doing so?

THOMAS DELAMARRE

It's a rare challenge for an art collection to have something like *EXIT*. Because of course you can say, 'Okay, we can freeze it,' and present a picture of the subject in 2008, but it doesn't really stay relevant for long. Updating *EXIT* was a huge process: we had to gather the whole team again, and the team [that was] put together by Diller and Scofidio were scattered around the world. The occasion of COP21 in Paris really gave us the motivation to do it – we thought it would be a huge mistake not to use the occasion in this way.

Of course, the updates led to very dark conclusions – in every area of the data collected, things have worsened since 2008. So it's added a completely new face to this work. You can see more political refugees, the rising of temperatures has worsened, and so on.

- SS Do you think the response has been different this time around?
- TD Yes, we have felt an incredible difference. In 2008, we had strong attendance in terms of visitors but I don't think the effects were as large. The political atmosphere is so different now.
- SS In her essay 'Museums and the Public Good', director of the Ian Potter Museum of Art, Kelly Gellatly, argues that 21st-century museums and galleries shouldn't be afraid to be political or present agenda-fuelled exhibitions. She says, "The museum has not and has never been a neutral or objective space, and to effectively hide behind this sense of neutrality in order to avoid having and communicating an opinion is disingenuous." Do you think cultural institutions like the Fondation Cartier have a certain responsibility to foster conversation on issues like climate change?



TD That's a difficult question. We do feel we should have a commitment to include these questions in our exhibition programs - and actually, we do - but it's always a very thin line between art and pedagogy. Of course we always want to stay on the side of creating artworks, not tools for understanding, but at Fondation Cartier we believe, and [general director] Hervé Chandès believes, that an arts centre, an exhibition space, should be a place where you can learn things, and that this can be achieved through artworks. I think this is the case with EXIT.

Our recent exhibition *The Great Animal Orchestra* (2016–17) was an art exhibit but with an underlying

motivation to raise issues about biodiversity and the mass extinction of species. We spent many months trying to figure out how to include these ideas in the exhibition relying only on the artworks, but in a way that didn't mask or cover the aesthetics. I think it's a difficult balance to find, but it's an exciting challenge for an exhibition space. The fact that [Fondation Cartier] mostly works on commissions helps, because we can spend a lot of time with the artist, thinking together about the right steps to take. And we like to gather not only artists but also thinkers, researchers and scientists and foster a dialogue between these very different people. That's how we worked on *The Great Animal Orchestra* and that's how we worked on *EXIT*.

SS EXIT wasn't the first time you've collaborated with Diller Scofidio + Renfro. What has it been like to work with them?

TD Before making buildings, Elizabeth [Diller] and Ricardo [Scofidio] worked a lot on temporary installations and also outdoor installations. When they do this, and when they work with us inside the museum, they're always operating as architects. In a way they're always practicing architecture. Every time they are questioned on their different practices, they'll say it's all architecture. Because for them, they're thinking about space all the time, reflecting on what is contemporary space, how we live in it and how our bodies and minds react to it. It's all architecture. And I think this is really the case with





EXIT. In creating animated maps, they're showing abstract representations of people moving around them – it's really a way for [Diller and Scofidio] to reflect on space. Every time they've worked with us, that's the motivation they've had.

SS It's also not the first time Fondation Cartier has curated an exhibition based around statistics and mathematics – you also presented Mathematics, A Beautiful Elsewhere in 2011–12. Is it a conscious decision to work at the intersection of art and data?

TD Not really. I would say it's almost by chance that we did this show on mathematics

two years after *Native Land, Stop Eject* – they're two very different projects. With *Mathematics, A Beautiful Elsewhere*, the aesthetics created by the mathematicians and the artists are pretty different from *EXIT*. The movies [in *Mathematics*] were mostly created by David Lynch and they relate to the mathematical figures in a very poetic and dramatic way, breathing a lot of emotion into the figures. So that exhibition wasn't really about data visualisation.

For *EXIT*, it was really the subject matter that brought us to this kind of data visualisation. It's the first time in history that our lives rely so much on data, and with *EXIT* we wanted to be able to make the data speak, and to reveal any truths that might otherwise be concealed.

SS I heard Ricardo Scofidio speaking about EXIT, where he said that he and Liz Diller tried to let the data drive the visual side of things, but it was the sonic elements that allowed their emotions to shine through.

TD It really was the data that created the visuals in *EXIT*, especially because they only used data that could be geocoded. But data is an extremely dry material and not very emotional, and it's true there is a lot brought to *EXIT* by the sound. That's another reason why it really has to be experienced in person – because you are really immersed in the sound, and that changes everything. There is a kind of narrative brought by the sound that gives the piece its poetic aspect. •



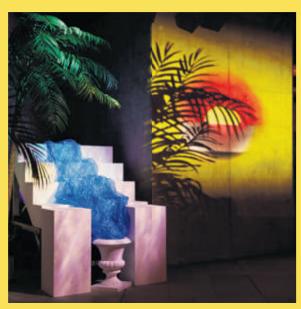
JIM, HANA & NONNA'S VERTICAL PLAYGROUND

Nightlife-loving Sydneysiders may already know of Jim Singline and Hana Shimada, and if not, chances are they'll know about Goodgod Small Club, the basement venue in the heart of the CBD that the couple founded in the mid-2000s and eventually sold in 2015.

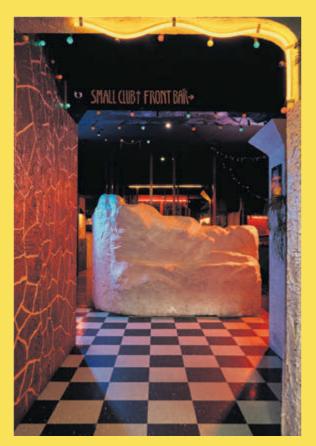
Rafaela Pandolfini shares an Aperol Spritz with Jim and Hana at their Redfern terrace to hear about their work, their home and how the two are intrinsically connected.

Jim Singline and Hana Shimada are two of the most interesting people I know. For years they've dedicated their time to putting on special events in Sydney with the most impeccable music programming and inimitable style. What's always struck me about the pair is the meticulous way they host events – every detail is always taken into consideration. From the exact placement of the sound system to the last lightbulb in an extravagant light installation, not to mention their attention to the way people move through a space, their curatorial precision is testament to their fierce, ongoing commitment to the communities in which they operate.

The pair first began collaborating in 2000, when they co-founded the Marrickville Jelly Wrestling Federation (MJWF) alongside a host of fellow jelly-wrestling novices and enthusiasts. They then moved into an old shop on Cleveland Street in Redfern, named Sydney, where Jimmy ran an Imports and Records Stand in the front room (plus all kinds of parties and events). But it was Goodgod Small Club that was by far the couple's grandest and most elaborate longstanding project to date.



The epicentre of all-hours dancing and entertainment for so many people in Sydney between 2008–15, Goodgod was a chameleon, offering a different experience each time punters travelled down its stairs and into the vibrant club. The subterranean city venue was always an upbeat, colourful and nurturing environment, brimming with good times and a rotating roster of local and international music. Jim and Hana cite community as the number-one driving force behind Goodgod, particularly amid Sydney's increasingly challenging nightlife terrain.



Since selling Goodgod in 2015, the pair has had more time to devote to their Redfern terrace home. A night there with Jim, Hana and Nonna (their five-year-old kelpie) is always special. Together, Jim and Hana possess a distinctive aesthetic, which is as much at home with the Japanese tradition of *ikebana* as it is with '80s-style Australian beach culture. Spread over three levels, the house is a tall and thin late-19th-century terrace. Step inside and you'll find a warm and welcoming home filled with art of all shapes and sizes, carefully lit vases and native floral arrangements throughout.

The kitchen is heart of the residence, featuring hand-painted tiles by Sydney artist Mary MacDougall (now based in New York). In the adjacent lounge is the couple's prized record collection (and player) and countless artworks by friends such as Gerry Bibby. On the lower level is a striking slate bathroom that opens up into a tropical garden, while the top level is Jim and Hana's bedroom and study, complete with a set of suspended shelves holding their liberal ornament and book collection.

When I visited Jim and Hana one summer evening, over Aperol Spritzes I asked them about living in Redfern and whether the philosophy behind Goodgod extends into their home:







"We've lived in Redfern for 12 of the 13 years we've been together, and it's changed a lot in that time. When we first moved to the area, everyone said it was already a totally changed place too. Now, Aboriginal housing getting pushed out of The Block and the impending sell-off of Waterloo public housing are two gigantic changes in the area. You can't help but feel like right now is a precious moment, where the suburb still maintains a great mix of different walks of life. There's a lot of pride here and so many people with long histories in the suburb.

Redfern's size still keeps a really 'human scale' too. You can walk between so many great providores (shout-out to Kitty's fruit and veg on Regent Street), bars, shops and parks. It's not a driving suburb and every spot is really attuned to being a part of the community. Scout's Honour, the coffee and sandwich spot around the corner from us, is really social – getting a coffee can take hours with all the people you run into on the pavement out front. Other staunch independents Arcadia, the Bearded Tit, Ciccone & Sons and Gunther's out the back of Redfern Continental are the top places for boozing.

Our house is very, very tall and skinny, so we're guided by the calm reward of keeping stuff on the floor to a minimum and playing with the vertical aspect instead. We have a lot of Australian interior

books and pottery from the '70s, courtesy of Redfern's own Blake Antiques, and lots of artworks by our friends. Ettore Sottsass is an inspiration too.

Cherished and displayed we have an original baseball card, gifted by a dear friend, of Gary Thomasson. He was a highly ineffectual outfielder for the Yomiuri Giants for a year in the early '80s, in the twilight of his career. The Japanese art collective Hi-Red Center named their brilliant project and publication after him (*Chōgeijutsu Thomasson*, a.k.a. *Hyperart Thomasson*), which photographically documented seemingly defunct Tokyo streetscape additions, reparations and oddities, such as concreted doors and windows with remaining awnings, staircases to nowhere and handrails without a cause. It's a prized book in our collection.

A favourite part of our house is the wooden underbelly of the incredibly steep staircase in our living room where Nonna sleeps. Also, the writhing geometric metal window and door grills put in by the previous owners are such lyrical barricades that they manage to elude any feeling of confinement. You can also see the wild canopy of our garden through them – it's a work in progress.

Currently, we're working on more Goodgod projects, including a few special installations this year. Jim's also working with Red Bull Music Academy, curating the artists and environments for their events.

What we learned through Goodgod is that it's a simple equation: your environment can change how you experience music. Partly it's about making people feel comfortable with the basics of spatial arrange-

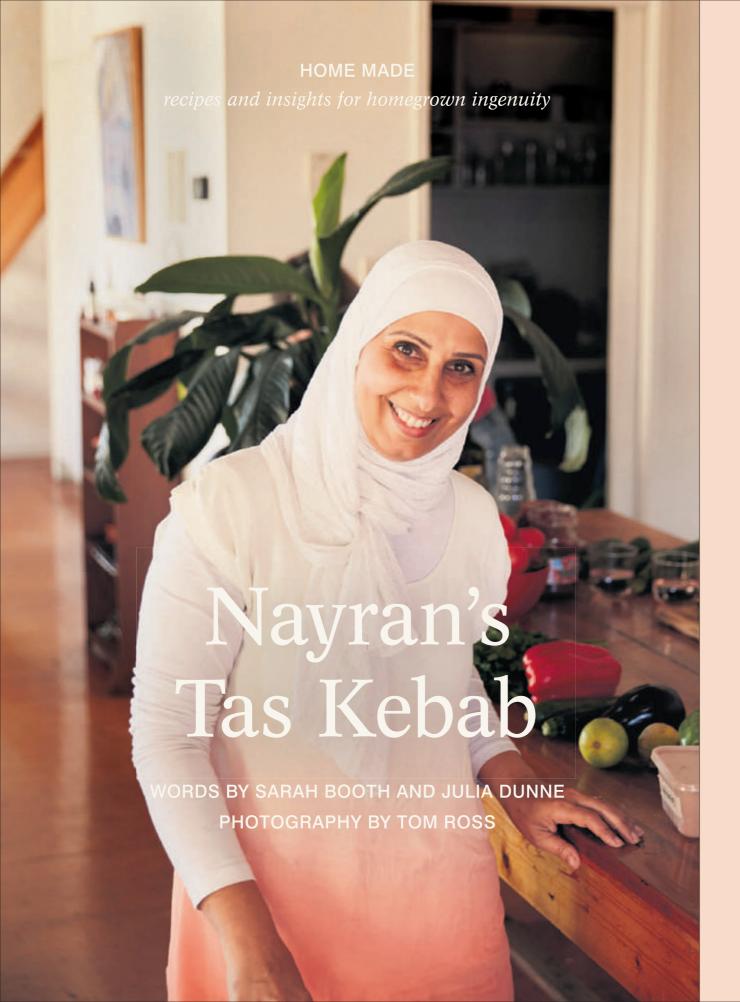
ment, how light or dark it is, and so on. But we've also experimented with interiors or stage sets that try to do a little more to enhance feelings of wonder, nostalgia and euphoria. It doesn't work every time, but when it does it's undeniably a greater, more transcendental experience than just the interior or the music by itself."







88 ASSEMBLE PAPERS Jim, Hana & Nonna's Vertical Playground 89



Tiggy cafe's Sarah Booth and Julia Dunne share a recipe they learned from Nayran Tabiei, cooking teacher at Free to Feed, a pop-up cooking school in Melbourne taught by refugees and asylum seekers.



Nayran Tabiei, her husband Majhid and daughter Alnour arrived in Australia in 2012. They came by boat, seeking asylum after fleeing Damascus during the current civil war in Syria. Behind them they left their whole life: their home, their careers, their friends and their three sons. They left behind all the things we usually rely on to identify and anchor ourselves.

Nayran is an electric woman. She's a leader, a storyteller and an incredible cook. Before leaving Damascus, she had a bustling cafe where she used to serve hundreds of customers each day. The food she makes is perfectly spiced and aromatic – the ingredients are simple enough, but there is something about the way the flavours come together to create a palate as full of depth and rich in history as the land it comes from.

After we met her through a friend, Nayran came to cook with us at our cafe in Collingwood. It's a fast-paced and kooky little kitchen, but that doesn't faze her – when everyone around her is in a spin, Nayran meets the scene with humour and grace. Cooking for 60 is nothing compared to the hordes she used to feed every day at her own cafe, the detainees she tirelessly cooked for at detention centres and camps during her journey, and those she feeds today as a teacher and volunteer all over Melbourne.

Nayran is a natural conversationalist – a generous source of information who talks openly about her culture and experiences. She is proud, hilarious, giving and wise – we have so many questions, and she allows us to ask them all. Nayran has become a wonderful friend and this meal was prepared in the spirit of that friendship.

NAYRAN'S TAS KEBAB Serves 6

Originating in Turkey, over the centuries this dish has made its way across the region and appears here with a Syrian twist. Making Nayran's Tas Kebab isn't difficult – don't be scared to be generous with spices and onions!

INGREDIENTS

1kg of lamb or beef mince

3-4 onions

3 red or green capsicums (mix colours for visual effect!)

2 eggplants

2 zucchinis (we added this because we had heaps at the cafe, but feel free to use any veggies you like – potato is one of Nayran's favourites)

2 cans of diced tomato

Juice of 3 lemons

A good whack of cinnamon

1–2tbsp of sweet paprika (you can also use smoked paprika, but remember it's strong so use less)
A few huge spoonfuls of red pepper paste (we get ours from Sonsa on Smith Street in Collingwood, Melbourne, otherwise tomato paste is an easy substitute)

Parsley (for meatballs and garnish)
Allspice for rice garnish
Basmati rice (cup for cup)
Salt and pepper

Toppings:

Greek yoghurt Crushed garlic to taste Cucumber Dried sabzi mint

Tip: When using eggplant, place it into cold water rather than salt – the eggplant will hold the water and when you cook it in oil it won't suck it all up. It's also a healthier option.

METHOD

Pre-heat oven to 200 degrees.

Finely dice 1–2 onions. With your hands, mix onions together with the mince and half the parsley. Season with paprika, salt and pepper. (Any cook will tell you that you need to taste as you go – Nayran even tastes the raw meatball mix!) Once it's thoroughly pounded together the meatballs are ready to roll.

Brown eggplant and zucchini in a hot pan. (This helps them keep their shape, and is easiest to do in batches.) Mix the eggplant and zucchini together with diced onions and capsicum in a deep, ovenproof dish and place the meatballs on top.

Combine the lemon juice, cinnamon and red pepper paste. Spoon the paste and the canned tomatoes generously over the meatballs. Top up the dish with water (it should come halfway up the meatballs and look like a juicy soup). Cover with foil and place in the oven for about 30 minutes, then reduce the temperature to 160 degrees and remove the foil to let some of the water evaporate so the meatballs can brown. After an hour, you should have a rich, bubbling tas kebab.

The rice can be done in a rice cooker (1 cup water per 1 cup of rice) or on the stove. Once done, press the rice into a cup and flip over onto the plate. You should get a little rice castle! Sprinkle some allspice on top, or, if you're feeling game, grind up the Seven Arabic Spices yourself (black pepper, paprika, cumin, coriander, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon and cardamom).

In Syria, says Nayran, you grate garlic into the cool yoghurt to balance temperatures for digestion. The hot garlic taste is great in the yoghurt, so we tend to be pretty liberal with it. Mandolin some cucumber into the mix and sprinkle with dry sabzi mint (you can substitute with fresh mint if need be).

The tas kebab should be served next to the rice castle, not on top of it, so spoon the mixture onto your plate and add yoghurt to the side. Sprinkle with parsley to garnish and black pepper to taste.

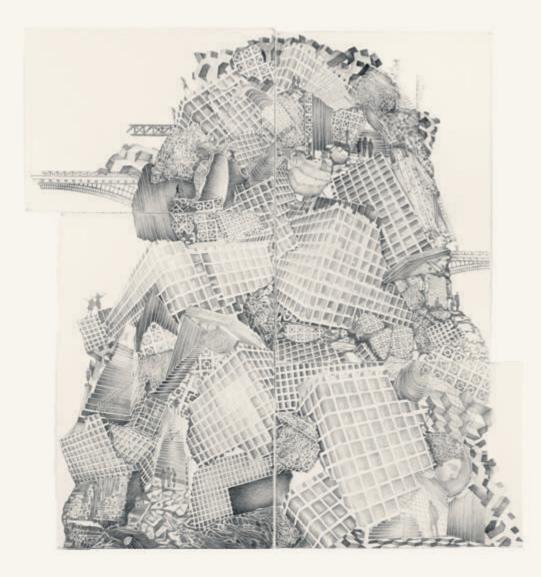


This recipe is one of the millions of things Nayran knows how to cook. Find her teaching traditional Syrian cooking at Free to Feed, or check out her passion for traditional and experimental cooking on Instagram: **@nt_catering**

ON THE COVER

shining a spotlight on our collaborators

Helen Wright: Rise and Fall



Above: Helen Wright, An Artist's Impression of Mona as a Ruin (2016–17), graphite and silver pencil on paper, 160×142 cm. Opposite: Helen Wright, Rise and Fall (2016–17), fibre coated cast resin and plastic, $23.5 \times 17 \times 16$ cm (18832). Both courtesy the artist and Niagara Galleries.

Tasmanian artist Helen Wright, this issue's cover artist, is concerned with the uneasy coalition between humans and the natural world. Through her paintings, drawings, prints and cast sculptures we see a playful yet political reminder of the fragile balances of this relationship. Here, she explains the thinking behind her multidisciplinary practice.

"Over a period of 10 years, the imagery in my work has dealt with personal responses to human interaction with the natural world. The issue of habitat destruction and water degradation caused by the threat of the proposed Gunns Pulp Mill in the Tamar Estuary, as well as the logging of old growth forests in Tasmania, became the catalyst for my

works One Tree on the Island (2009) and The Last Bird Tree (2011). The works appearing in Competing Interests at Niagara Galleries have developed from my connection and respect for the natural world. They are personal, interpretive and imaginative responses to local, national and global environmental, social and political issues. Living in Tasmania, you're often up close and personal with the impact of forestry, in particular the increasing erosion of wilderness and old growth forests.

The built environment has also become an aspect of my

work over the last three to four years. *Competing Interests* is connected to a research project I undertook at the University of Tasmania concerning the ruinous site of the Myer department store that was destroyed in a catastrophic fire in 2007. The building and all infrastructure was completely destroyed, leaving a fenced-off and abandoned crater in the CBD of Hobart for seven years. During this time, it became a ramshackle wasteland filled with weeds, garbage, junk, graffiti and remnant architectural rubble. Thankfully no-one died. It became a real-estate ruin that haunted the commercial engine room of the city, and formed the catalyst for some of the *Artist's impression* series of works featured in *Competing Interests*.

The ladder piece [cover image] is one from a series of white cloud-like sculptures that has developed and changed over the last five years, entitled *Rise and Fall* (2013). The sculptures act in an interrelated way with the two-dimensional works, expressing aspects of the drawings with all the lifeform elements informing one another: the rocks, the people, the bikes, the

birds, the trees, the treehouses, the skipping girl. The ladders repeat, recur and compete for our attention. They specifically act as a playful metaphor for rising to new levels, as well as connecting elements to one another, although they can also be read in a dreamlike way.

That said, with the exception of the *My Little Empire* (2013) escapist treehouse drawings, I don't think there is a lot of whimsy in my works. I see these works as an imaginative filtering of reality and a way of commenting on my dismay and alarm at the current uncivil and hostile state of world affairs and

the collective denial of scientific reason and human rights. But I prefer not to use a deadly documentary or preachy approach – that just turns everyone off!

I do see my work as a personal, but also as an informed response to a complex world that gives rise to a mixture of emotional and thoughtful reflections. There's definitely cause for optimism, but there's also a sense of disconnection and of feeling small and overwhelmed by the enormity of it all.

Helen Wright's *Competing Interests*, presented in conjunction with ART+CLIMATE=CHANGE 2017, is showing at Niagara Galleries in Melbourne from 4–29 April, 2017



FEATURED CONTRIBUTORS

Roj Amedi is an editor, writer and strategist based in Australia. She writes and speaks on a range of issues including public policy, international relations, the arts, culture, literature, race, gender and politics.

Sarah Booth is a hound for life, can't get enough of it. Most days she can be found at Tiggy cafe – a space she co-hosts in Collingwood, cooking up business ideas between lunch for the neighbourhood - or somewhere close by with a pair of secateurs and an armful of foliage.

Julia Dunne is a human who is curious about how people conduct themselves and why. She splits her time between Tiggy cafe in Collingwood – an experiment in cultural capital and co(mmunal) dependency – and an array of burgeoning experiments that could loosely be called An Art Practice.

Rachel Elliot-Jones is a London-based curator and editor of cultural programs for Hotel Hotel (and former creative producer of AP!). In 2011, she co-founded the curatorial and publishing platform Many Many and occasional publication *House Wear*, exploring nomadic culture across art, design, architecture and writing.

Alisha Gore is a freelance portrait and lifestyle photographer based in Sydney. Inspired by the stories of the people she encounters, she strives to create narrative-driven imagery that is rich in emotion and feeling. Studying Architecture and Design at the University of Sydney has given Alisha a unique perspective on the use of space, light and textures in her work.

Gabriela Holland has dabbled in everything from film production, managing an NGO and travel writing in Cusco, to writing and editing for online publication LeCool in Barcelona. She is now based in Melbourne, where she teaches English. co-runs Pop Plant and freelances as an editor and proofreader.

Elliott Mackie is an industrial designer who is concerned with constructing narrative through a reinterpretation of the familiar. His practice includes the development of products, system services and new design methods, seeking to navigate the intersection between traditional forms of production and emergent technologies.

Tristan Main has been weaving words and photographs for Assemble Papers for seven issues now. A Melbourne-based graphic designer, his particular interest is in publishing and the printed page.

Alice Oehr is a graphic designer and illustrator. Her distinct colourful style often incorporates her love of food, collage and good old-fashioned drawing. Many of her ideas have made their way off the pages of her sketchbook onto textiles, homewares, magazines and books.

Rafaela Pandolfini is a Sydney-based artist interested in the expression of emotion as form. She is constantly looking to explore movement through the lens.

Tom Ross grew up on Victoria's surf coast, always carrying a camera but never considering it a career. He started out studying marine biology before making the switch to photography at VCA. Now, he is a full-time photographer specialising in architecture and editorial work.

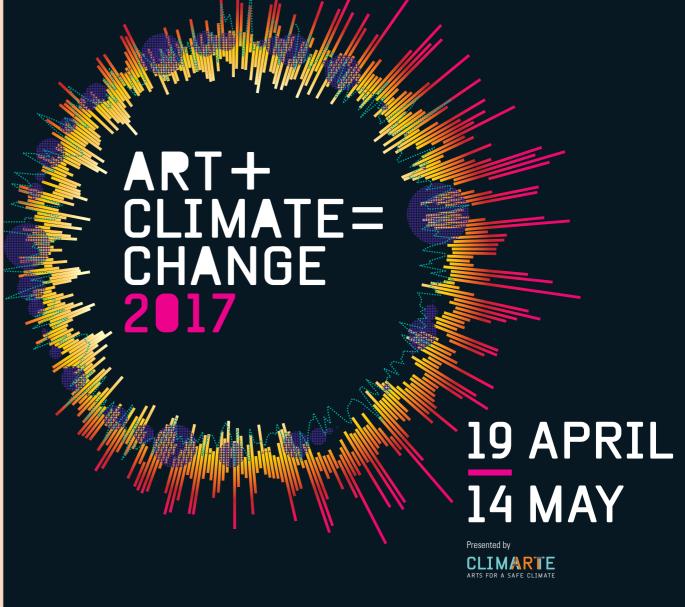
Sara Savage is the editor of *Assemble Papers*. She leads a (not)-so secret double life as a DJ and radio broadcaster, presenting the arts, culture, science and design show Parallel Lines every Wednesday morning on Triple R 102.7 FM. Her career highlight was hosting a dog show in early 2017.

Emily Wong is a landscape architect and designer who grew up on a steady diet of science fiction. She is co-director of TERRA FODA, a Melbourne-based studio exploring future scenarios through food and the act of eating. She has a fondness for spatial fiction, the Situationists and American constitutional law. and is always looking for ways to combine architecture and her former background in law.

EDITORIAL TEAM

Sara Savage Editor Tristan Main Publication Designer Nikki Muir Sub-editor / Proofreader Giuseppe (Pino) Demaio Creative Director / Assemble Director Sarah Castle Production Manager **Hudson Brown** Editorial Assistant Anita Delle-Vergini Assemble Community **Engagement Assistant** Joachim (Quino) Holland Assemble Director Ben Keck Assemble Director **Eugenia Lim** Founding Editor

Get in touch. We are always on the lookout for like-minded contributors. If you are a writer, photographer, illustrator, interested in an internship or just want to say hello, drop us a line at hello@assemblepapers.com.au



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