

THE GRETA EFFECT

14·12·19 - 26·01·20

Curated by
Natasha Welde

Featuring
Abhijit Choudhry
Anthea Feilen
Aysa Haris
Iffat Nonee
Irena Conomos
Jacqueline Olivetti
Lux Eterna
Matt Jones
Svetlana Panov

PEACOCK GALLERY AND
AUBURN ARTS STUDIO



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COVER:
Lux Eterna, *Aura Nox Anima* (detail), 2016

FROM THE PEACOCK GALLERY

Kristina Tito

*Arts and Cultural
Projects Producer,
Cumberland Council*

Cumberland Council's Peacock Gallery is hosting two exhibitions from 14 December 2019 to 26 January 2020 including *Painting Flowers* by Amani Haydar and Ms Saffaa in Gallery One and *The Greta Effect* by local Cumberland artists in Gallery Two. We would like to acknowledge that these exhibitions take place on Darug land and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Painting Flowers is an exhibition that subtly stands in solidarity with people who have experienced the effects of gender and familial violence. In Amani's painting *A Letter from MCC*, detailed still life ceramic objects, doilies and patterned calligraphic table cloths intricately intersect with Australian native fauna and books like *Rage Becomes Her* by Soraya Chemaly and *Trauma and Recovery*. It cleverly displaces and questions our interiors and ideas of home as a 'safe harbour' and yet also intimately holds space for cultural identity, vulnerability and healing.

The Greta Effect is curated by emerging local curator Natasha Welde and is a selection of work by local artists Abhijit Choudhry, Anthea Feilen, Aysa Haris, Iffat Nonee, Irena Conomos, Jacqueline Olivetti, Lux Eterna, Matt Jones and Svetlana Panov that creatively explores and reflects upon the current climate crisis that we find ourselves intimately a part of. Work like Jacqueline's, *Park Pharmacy*, is a simple yet complex reflection on this important contemporary challenge. A sign from

an actual local pharmacy has been given new life as an advocacy tool for the environment. It's a statement about our innate need for nature and parklands to revitalise and heal us from trauma or sickness, so why do we so easily destroy it?

Painting Flowers and *The Greta Effect* are exhibitions that actively advocate for reflection, change and healing...they are offerings and opportunities for much needed repair.

Cumberland Council and the Peacock Gallery team would like to thank all the creatives and Council staff who have supported the development of these two exhibitions. We extend a warm invite to the local community to come enjoy and reflect upon this creative work. We hope that these creative contributions transform us into action and provide insight into healing, be it within ourselves and or the environment.

FROM THE CURATOR

Natasha Welde

This exhibition aims to highlight the climate crisis and most importantly to start a dialogue between communities, friends and family in Western Sydney.

We live in a period of profound environmental upheaval. Climate change has become one of our greatest challenges today.

Worldwide, our school children have shown through protest that they understand our beautiful planet is facing serious problems. Today our environmental impact should be at the forefront of every decision we make.

Every day, we must ask ourselves:
Are we walking lighter?
Will this drive change?
Is this a force for good?

This show presents a group of established and emerging Western Sydney based artists who explore the power of art to make change, art that encourages community engagement and the need to motivate.

The ceramic piece by Anthea Feilen poignantly shows the remnants of loss and is a profound reminder that Australia is currently ablaze, and that loss is active! Experts predict we will experience the worst bushfire season yet this summer, so how do we heal from these experiences?

Iffat Nonees' painting is evocative of our rural families, communities and the native flora and fauna currently dealing with the enormous consequences and

burdens of drought. They are in the front line of climate change and acutely aware of how problematic society's impact is on the environment...from the way we eat, the way we travel and to our insatiable consumerism.

The movement work by Lux Eterna presents a clear visual and symbolic message where collective bodies traverse surreal, distant and colourless expanses...a cyclical displacement and dystopian reality.

Svetlana Panov's floral work approaches the theme of extended cycle, focusing on the symbolism of destruction and rebirth within our beautiful yet fragile flora. Many of us choose to ignore climate change, yet it's to our detriment. She implores us not to give up hope but to inspire others even in the most minuscule way, because as a collective as seen in her tiny flowers, we can make a huge difference.

There is also an underlying environmental anxiety that the air we breathe may not be clean anymore. As seen in and around Australia recently resulting from uncontrollable bush fires and dust storms. Aysa Haris' whimsical work depicts a sky without any colour, only grey and brown. Through her simple illustration she wants to foster an understanding of how things we take for granted may no longer be available for us to enjoy in the near future.

Irena Conomas' work looks at the collective experience of wood, trees, nature and the natural resources we use

and abuse. It's all for the present and for our pleasure. There is no thought about the aftermath of unsustainable design and living...perhaps it will come when the last tree is cut down?

Jacqueline Olivetti's large installation piece dares to ask us, where do we go for relaxation to forget about our stresses? It's nature that heals and replenishes our senses and mental wellbeing. Yet why do we go about damaging and destroying our one true solace we have in this world?

In the success of millions of children striking peacefully about climate change, Abhijit Choudhry's photographic work highlights pollution and the frustration our children feel. What kind of legacy will we leave behind?

Finally Matt Jones' fabric work asks us to bring all questions to the forefront and centres on a philosophical underpinning using the word 'perhaps'. His work entices us to generate thoughtful discussion through the image of a maritime flag used for 'Storm Warning'. Is it the actual climate, cultural, political, scientific or societal *storms* to come we should prioritise? Or should we be more fundamentally questioning our own being and biases?

This environmental journey has no end however if we continue on this path the impact, we know, will be disastrous.

Let's all commit to being part of the change, part of the revolution that our children hold onto...the Greta Effect!

ABHIJIT CHOUDHRY

I Don't Want This Legacy

2019
Photographic print
40cm x 50cm

This artwork was inspired by conversations I have recently had with my pre-teen sons about climate change. The conversations are many and varied but often steer towards the impact rapid modernisation has on the environment. Unchecked burning of fossil fuels, ozone layer depletion and water scarcity are some things that causes alarm and is discussed in classrooms, later repeated at home. As much as I want to alleviate their concern, I often don't have the answers they are looking for. The reassurance that all will be well. That perhaps this is all a bad dream we might wake up from.



ANTHEA FEILEN

Out of Luck

2019

Clay, wood

18cm x 18cm x 18cm

The artwork is a blackened and burnt chimney piece surrounded by debris. This stands as a sentinel in the landscape to changing climatic patterns and building in inappropriate places. Communities need to reassess their interaction with the Australian landscape and adapt practices to incorporate more detailed understanding.



AYSA HARIS

Sydney 2050?

2019

Digital illustration

60cm x 60cm

Blue sky is a thing we need to pass down to the next generation, sadly it's slowly disappearing from big cities around the world. Where the artist comes from, Jakarta, blue sky doesn't exist anymore most of the time. Once one steps out of her house, a mask is her ultimate best friend. Would Sydney be the next big city where the blue sky disappears?



IFFAT NONEE

Wonders of Nature

2007

Watercolour

56cm x 65cm

It's a floral abstract form.
I wanted to present how
wonderful nature is, but are
we able to keep them safe?
Climate change affects them
brutally, maybe one day this
wonder won't be able to
sustain due to change...



IRENA CONOMOS

Stir

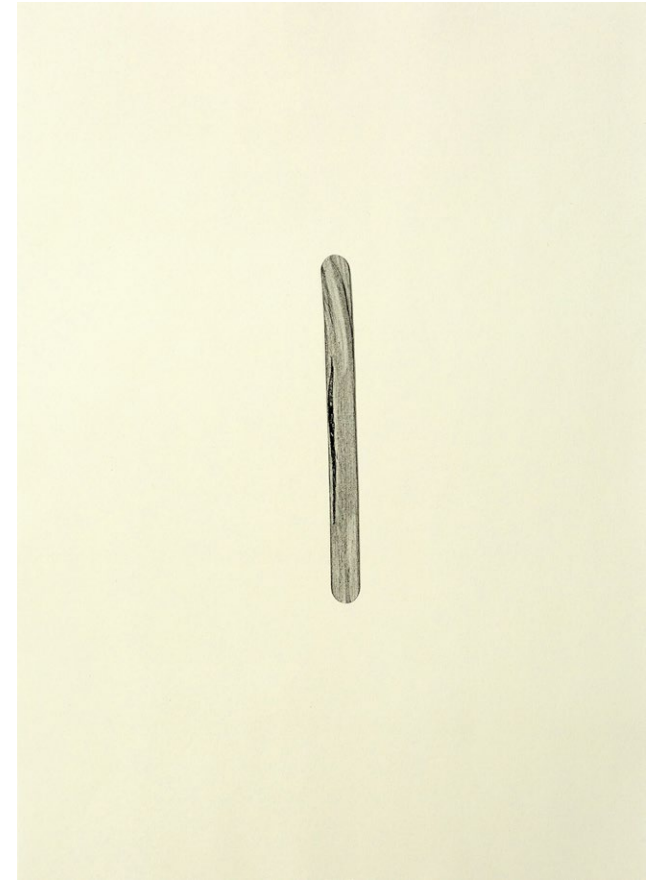
2019

Photocopy

16 pieces, dimensions variable

*Remnant: a part or quantity
that is left after the greater
part has been used, removed,
or destroyed*

This work consists of a
number of photocopies of
wooden coffee stirrers.
What struck me was their
imperfections and how
in not being perfect and
anonymous, instead they
showed the signs of the
trees they once were. They
are gnarled, bent, textured,
fractured, discoloured.



JACQUELINE
OLIVETTI

Park Pharmacy

2019

Found object

51cm x 246cm x 14cm

We look to nature to heal
us yet we are destroying it
and ourselves.



LUX
ETERNA

Aura Nox Anima

2016

HD digital video and soundscape

7min 45sec

Aura Nox Anima's dancers
move to match the weather
in the surreal sand dunes,
evoking Earth's cyclical
nature and beauty in decay.
Such contemplations
are underpinned by the
imminent mass migrations
that are taking place in our
current geography. Moving
(back) into the unfamiliar,
the distant and sometimes
forgotten, it provokes
imaginings of our future in a
collective chorus of bodies.



MATT JONES

Storm Warning

2019

fabric, cotton, embroidery,
rope, wooden rod

95cm x 90cm

Inspired by the work and writing of Jed Emerson, particularly focusing on his recent 2018 book titled *Purpose of Capital* examining impact investing, I have used the maritime signal flag for 'Storm Warning' to highlight a sentence which is central to Jed's work, addressing the calamitous circumstances facing our present time: "Perhaps we need fewer experts with answers and more openness to the fundamental questions and genuinely profound challenges of our own experience." The artwork centres on the word 'perhaps', generating thoughtful discussion through this image to present the uncertainty expressed by some as to the causes and actions required.



SVETLANA PANOV

Human Neglect, Environmental Hope

2019

Ceramic, wood, acrylic paint
50cm x 75cm x 70cm

My artwork shows the contrast between the devastating effects of climate change on our flora, and what it would look like if we took a stand and protected it.

If we don't act now it may mutate and morph into something we regret for futures to come; but if we act now and protect our flora we can prevent environmental neglect and can hope for its recovery.



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Peacock Gallery Auburn

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Jacqueline Olivetti · Lux Eterna · Matt Jones · Svetlana Panov

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