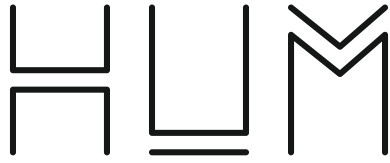


Kate Newby

Revue de presse

Press review



Chance and Impermanence

A conversation between Kate Newby and
Daria de Beauvais

by Daria de Beauvais, Kate Newby

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Kate Newby, work in progress at CRAFT (Limoges), 2022. Courtesy of the artist



Kate Newby, *The edge of the earth* (detail), 2022. Bricks, mortar, produced with the support of Rairies Montrieux (Les Rairies). View of the group exhibition "Reclaim the Earth", 2022, Palais de Tokyo (Paris). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris). Photo: Aurélien Mole



Kate Newby, *it makes my day so much better if i speak to all of you.* (detail), 2022. Porcelain, minerals, found glass (Paris), produced at CRAFT (Limoges). View of the group exhibition "Reclaim the Earth", 2022, Palais de Tokyo (Paris). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris). Photo: Aurélien Mole



Kate Newby, *Try doing anything without it*, 2022. Bricks, coins, wood, found glass (Paris, Texas), produced at Rairies Montrieux (Les Rairies). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris). Photo: Nicolas Brasseur



Kate Newby, work in progress at Rairies Montrieux, 2022. Courtesy of the artist

Kate Newby, *Rob Duncan Megan Daniel Margaret Lynn Samuel Deb Nico Marilyn Sarah Henry Mieke Kate Ruth Mike Briana Justine Grace Romesh Josefina Madison Nerissa David Nina Gabrielle Dayle Isabelle Ana Lilith Christian Ruby Sophie Millie Michaela Loretta Laura Christina Alison Olly Miriam Fred Lise Hazel Simon Mia Anita Caroline Anna Prak Nadya Alba Xander Flavia Emma Stef Areex Bella Rachel KirstyKateNicola Emerita Tim Megan Ruby Fina Felixe Ella Eva Ben Julian Bena Huhana Max Lily Tina Rose Bill and Teresa* (detail), 2021. Assorted clay, glaze, mortar. View of the exhibition *YES TOMORROW*, 2021, Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi (Wellington). Courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett (Auckland). Photo: Ted Whitaker

Among the fourteen artists in Reclaim the Earth, currently on at Palais de Tokyo in Paris, is Texas-based Aotearoa artist Kate Newby. Curated by Daria de Beauvais, the exhibition seeks to uncover the links between body and land, replacing notions of domination and sublimation of humans over the natural world, reconsidering our relationship as one instead of kinship and alliance.

In this piece, Newby talks with de Beauvais about the production of new pieces commissioned for the show, Newby's process of collaboration and materials-driven artworks, and the ecological themes in her practice and Reclaim the Earth.

DARIA DE BEAUVAIS I've been following your work closely for a few years now. I remember quite vividly for instance your subtle intervention at the SculptureCenter (NY, 2017), and with fondness your beautiful project at the Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna, 2018) where we met for the first time.

KATE NEWBY Yes, I remember meeting you very clearly. The exhibition *I can't nail the days down* at Kunsthalle Wien was made up of around 6,000 bricks forming a large carved floor piece that viewers were able to walk over. I had just finished laying it out (one of the largest projects I have made to date) and came back early in the morning with a coffee to soak in the final work. I saw your children before I saw you because they were running and jumping over the clay tiles in the ground outside. It was a profound moment for a chance meeting. The Kunsthalle is a glass pavilion so I created a parallel work on the hill outside. The city of Vienna had excavated the subway system below the Kunsthalle, and the local art school had kept the remaining clay. It was using this clay that I created handmade tiles which were then inserted back into the ground like a drain of some kind.

DB You've grown up in Aotearoa New Zealand, and are currently based in rural Texas after living for several years in New York City. How have these different contexts informed your creative process?

KN I think New York taught me a lot in regards to learning how to trust myself and my instincts for making the sort of work I want to make. At the end of 2020, I relocated to Floresville in Texas, in a rural landscape that couldn't be more different from where I grew up. The possibilities Floresville has offered me mark an opening up of my practice and have really pushed the improvisational quality to my work. There I have developed an open air studio where I can work with the elements around me with a new intensity. Sunlight and rain, grasses and sand, wildlife and extreme temperatures: they have all given me the opportunity to interact closely with a unique environment.

DB During lockdown you spent a lot of time in Aotearoa New Zealand, producing your solo show *YES TOMORROW* for the Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi in Wellington.

KN I did! I feel super grateful for that experience. The early stages of the pandemic in 2020 really took away many things like travel and exhibitions. I spent a lot of time in my own thoughts so when I had the opportunity to make *YES TOMORROW* with Christina Barton it felt like something I had been saving my energy up for.

I was given the entire building to create my project. There is this interesting aspect of the Adam Art Gallery where you enter on the top floor, then you can see down for three floors. There are also windows that look outside and over a loading dock. My works for the exhibition incorporated these different viewpoints, including the loading dock, where I inserted a tile mural. It meant a lot to make this exhibition in my home country and I had a lot of support from my family, friends and artist community.



Kate Newby, *I can't nail the days down*, 2018. Ceramics, concrete. View of the exhibition "I can't nail the days down", Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna), 2018. Courtesy of the artist and The Sunday Painter (London). Photo: Jorit Aust



Kate Newby, *I can't nail the days down* (detail), 2018. Bricks, found glass, bronze, coins, ceramics, silver, brass, white brass. View of the exhibition "I can't nail the days down", Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna), 2018. Courtesy of the artist and The Sunday Painter (London). Photo: Jorit Aust



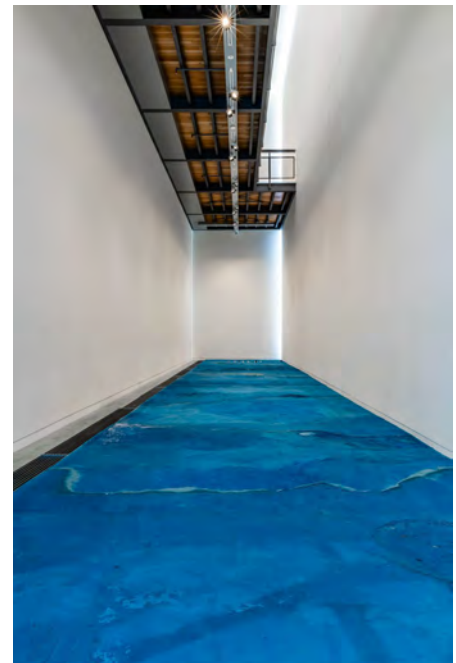
Kate Newby, *Not this time, not for me.*, 2017. Mortar, concrete color, silver, white brass, bronze, porcelain, cotton rope, glass, stoneware. Glass fabrication: Leo Tecosky. View of the group exhibition "In Practice: Material Deviance", 2017, SculptureCenter (NY). Courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole (Toronto). Photo: Kyle Knodell



Kate Newby, *A desert, plain and dry.* (detail), 2017. Pit fired stoneware, salt fired stoneware, porcelain, earthenware, sand. View of the group exhibition "In Practice: Material Deviance", 2017, SculptureCenter (NY). Courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole (Toronto). Photo: Kyle Knodell



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Kate Newby, *What Kind of Day Has it Been*, 2021. Screed, pigment, glass, silver. View of the exhibition *YES TOMORROW*, 2021, Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi (Wellington). Courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett (Auckland). Photo: Ted Whitaker

DB I invited you for the group exhibition *Reclaim the Earth* that I curated for the Palais de Tokyo (Paris, 2022). It was obvious for me early on that you should be part of it! This project

traces the trajectories of artists with different approaches to natural elements, irreducible to their mere materiality, considered both as medium and tool—cultural, historic and political vectors being revitalised in a context of ecological emergency. What did this project evoke to you?

KN I think a lot about the materials I use, where they come from, and what will happen to them after my projects. It was a meaningful process for me to participate in this exhibition and the overall ideas struck a very deep cord. Each artist was coming from their own specific position and it was incredibly valuable to have time with the other artists and their work. I feel challenged to continue creating works that take into consideration the process of how things are formed, and not just what the final outcome looks like.

DB The fourteen participating artists, from different generations and non-western cultural backgrounds, tell us that we are not just "face to face with a landscape", nor "living on Earth", but that we are part of it.

KN I think this is a super interesting part of the exhibition and I loved that the involved artists all made works quite consciously with the large ecosystem that surrounds us all. What were some of the more surprising moments for you in the research process? Did you find that your thinking changed from some of your initial ideas about what this exhibition could be?

DB Working on *Reclaim the Earth* was a journey, with the artists and the scientific advisors (Léuli Eshrāghi and Ariel Salleh) as my travel companions. It has indeed evolved through the almost three years it took to complete it. But in a sense it is still not "complete", I feel this is just the beginning!

It was good to work on replacing relations of domination and subordination with kinship and alliance. I feel the time has come to leave behind the obsolete model of an extractive society and put

humans back into their rightful place: not above all, but among all —finally overcoming the Nature/Culture partition that Europe has inherited from the "Enlightenment" in the 18th century.

Simplicity and authenticity were important concepts for this project. Your site specific interventions seem very simple, but in fact they question the buildings and institutions that welcome them. For instance at the Palais de Tokyo, several hypotheses we had been working on couldn't be completed because it is a protected building.

KN We had many rounds of suggested artworks and a lot of back and forth with the Palais de Tokyo building services. I think the process of finding what work we could push over the line to get approval only strengthened the final projects. The work had to be distilled into its most essential form, and each time I made a proposal it became more clear to me that the works should not just be placed on top of the building, instead I wanted my work to be inserted into the space where it was getting exhibited.

DB Yes, I feel your works are part of the building and its history now! Actually the two site specific interventions you have made will stay after the exhibition ends. You always spend a lot of time in the buildings and surroundings of the art institutions inviting you. What is your process? How do you connect to local stories, materials and knowledge?

KN When I am developing projects, I try to think about the actual building itself as a non-hierarchical space. I think about the columns, the cracks, the broken bits because every detail is as important as the big white walls. The Palais de Tokyo is a really significant building and institution, but I try to forget about all of that when I am on site and looking around.

I also talk to people a lot. I reach out to friends, to colleagues, to strangers. During site visits I try to walk around as much as I can

and I visit companies or potteries or anything really. I do a lot of awkward cold calling which is uncomfortable but often necessary. My goal is to build up an idea and an understanding for process, for materials, and for local histories.



Kate Newby, work in progress at CRAFT (Limoges), 2022. Courtesy of the artist



Kate Newby, work in progress at CRAFT (Limoges), 2022. Courtesy of the artist



Kate Newby, *it makes my day so much better if i speak to all of you.*, 2022. Porcelain, minerals, found glass (Paris), produced at CRAFT (Limoges). View of the group exhibition "Reclaim the Earth", 2022, Palais de Tokyo (Paris). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris). Photo credit: Aurélien Mole



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DB In the Palais *magazine* 33 dedicated to *Reclaim the Earth*, you've made a visual essay including words you found by chance on site.

KN The words I use for my titles and for these artist pages are always taken from the spaces and sites around me while I am working. I don't make them up myself, I pluck them from something I have read or even sometimes heard. I see the process of titling my work in the same way that I work with materials and forms. For this visual essay I collected words during my site visit to Paris. Some of the phrases come from a CD by Houria Aïchi, an Algerian singer, that I found in one of the squares where the brick pieces are. Others are from street posters and the names of stores.

DB Can you tell me about the collaborative project *it makes my day so much better if i speak to all of you?* You call these "puddles", transforming them into a natural phenomenon one wouldn't expect indoors.

KN Excavation and subtraction are a huge part of my work. For *it makes my day so much better if i speak to all of you*, this happened through the collection of broken glass from the streets of Paris by myself, friends, and staff from the Palais de Tokyo. The pieces of glass were some of the largest and the smallest pieces I have worked with. I never alter the sizes when the glass is collected. I made all the porcelain forms in Limoges, a city historically known for this extremely fine and white clay, and shaped them to the glass shards I placed at their bottom.

DB By bringing these elements together (combining them intimately through the firing process), you produced an upcycled work – the material is transformed, magnified, creating a multitude of microcosms. It feels like the tide has left an assembly

of shells on the Palais de Tokyo concrete floor. You have been developing this process in different contexts, what made you use it here and how did you choose to use porcelain?

KN Each of my three production opportunities were very specific to France. I worked with bricks at Les Rairies Montrieux, a factory making bricks for generations. I also worked at Atelier Loire in Chartres to create my glass panes, using the process of *jaune d'argent* which is a specialty of that particular workshop. The opportunity to work with Limoges porcelain seemed to make sense. I didn't want to use any old clay when there was this historically significant porcelain available. I've never made one of these works with only one clay body so I enjoyed the challenge of figuring out how slight shifts and changes in scale could affect the outcome of the work. I worked a lot with texture made by my fingernails and hands because the clay picked up every little detail.

DB With *you wish. you wish*, you've performed a work of repair, on the Palais de Tokyo main entrance. How did you get interested in this specific location, knowing that this door is as old as the building (built on the occasion of the Exposition internationale des arts et techniques de la vie moderne in 1937)?

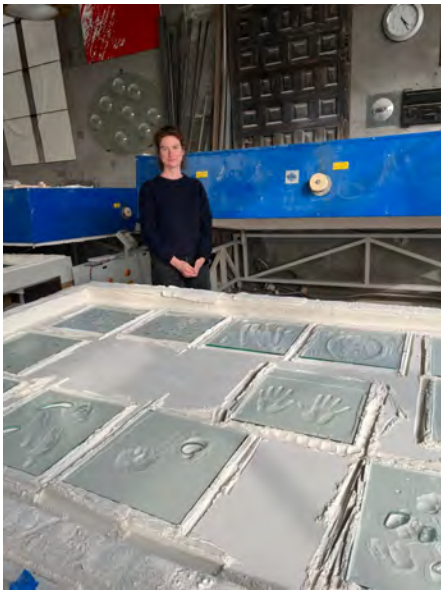
KN Depending on how you view the exhibition, this work is either the beginning or the end, with the brick work installed outdoors and the porcelain work inside the exhibition space. Using the entrance to the Palais de Tokyo was an opportunity to create work for this threshold between interior and exterior spaces. These doors are huge and a defining moment of entering the building. They have old and thick glass panes, I have never seen anything like them. There were a few perspex panes, replacements for the glass ones that had been broken over the years. By making five new panes to replace those in plastic, it felt like an act of giving to the building. These window panes undermine and interrogate the assumptions, history and purpose of windows as a key architectural element.

DB I love the fact that you used *jaune d'argent* (a cementation color which pigments the glass during its firing), a process that appeared in the West at the beginning of the 14th century and revolutionised the technique of stained glass. There are also imprints of the texture of your fingers, the touch of your hands, and the presence of natural elements such as light, rain, sun or wind on the surface. This work is only fully revealed when the Palais de Tokyo is closed to the public (from midnight to noon) and its doors are shut

KN It was interesting for me to have a work that one could only see when the building was closed. I am always interested in having works that are less mediated than those inside of institutional and gallery spaces. At the same time, it's very easy for one to miss them entirely. That's something that comes with the territory of using spaces that don't ordinarily host works.

DB You've also worked in the lower courtyard, a public space overlooking the Seine river. *The edge of the earth* is composed of handmade clay bricks on which you imprinted some body parts. But the patterns you created are abstract, evoking fossils as much as dinosaur footprints: it's as if this work had always been there! Through this subtle intervention, you propose a re-reading of the site.

KN Each square has its own personality and I see them as an extension of the surrounding landscape. There are two different clay bodies, fired at three different temperatures, in gas kilns but also in traditional wood fired kilns. It was a feat to be able to do this. The team at the Rairies Montrieux brick factory were really committed to producing the work to the best of their abilities. It still amazes me that they transported the bricks to us without a single one missing.



Kate Newby, work in progress at Ateliers Loire (Chartres), 2022. Courtesy of the artist



Kate Newby, *you wish. you wish.*, 2022. Glass, jaune d'argent, produced at ateliers Loire (Chartres). View of the group exhibition "Reclaim the Earth", 2022, Palais de Tokyo (Paris). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris). Photo credit: Aurélien Mole



Kate Newby, *you wish. you wish.*, 2022. Glass, jaune d'argent, produced at ateliers Loire (Chartres). View of the group exhibition "Reclaim the Earth", 2022, Palais de Tokyo (Paris). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris). Photo credit: Aurélien Mole



Kate Newby, *you wish. you wish.* (detail), 2022. Glass, jaune d'argent, produced at ateliers Loire (Chartres). View of the group exhibition "Reclaim the Earth", 2022, Palais de Tokyo (Paris). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris). Photo credit: Aurélien Mole

DB
lived with.

You said that you wanted this work to live and be

KN While I was still in Paris I would go and check on the bricks and every time I went there, something different was happening: some people would be sitting on the bricks in groups, kids would be running up and down the slopes of the carved forms, I saw some energetic skateboarding as well. This work was created through the act of subtraction and excavation to form holes, puddles, and various textures. The idea was that the work would create space rather than take up space, and in turn the work would create a new life for the five dirt squares that have remained unused for years? Decades?

DB These squares have been unused for a very long time, and it is beautiful to give them another life in relationship with their environment – the building, the city, the Seine and the trees...

Most of your projects are very collaborative and inclusive, with everyone playing a role. I remember how the install team was engaged in the work with you, as you all bravely kept going under the pouring rain...

KN Yes, absolutely. I couldn't do these sorts of projects without people supporting me every step of the way. From the moment we dive into production research, to when I am onsite producing the works in workshops, to when it comes to install everything, I work very closely with everyone. This community becomes a part of the work somehow in the final realisation of the project. Installing the bricks was particularly gruelling because we didn't have easy access to the site. Not only that, but it was a work that I had never installed before so I couldn't exactly say how to do it. I've worked with bricks a whole bunch, but never going several layers deep in a highly trafficked area in public space. I think everyone was super patient and supportive of one another, even in the rain.

DB At the same time of making your works for the Palais de Tokyo, you produced a solo exhibition, *Try doing anything without it*, at the Art : Concept gallery in Paris. How did you address working on two projects at the same time, in the same city but in different contexts?

KN I thought of them in the same way, in the sense that I wanted to find out comfort zones and limits for the works within the exhibition. I try not to distinguish between non-commercial and commercial projects but instead respond to the space and what interests me about it.

I often find myself diving into projects with about 60% planned and the rest up for improvisation. For the Palais de Tokyo I worked with a solid mass of bricks that was inserted into the ground and for the Art : Concept show I carved tiny spaces into the clay so that shape could host glass shards. The bricks then slotted together to form a wall. Thus one brick project was horizontal and the other vertical. I felt very fortunate to explore the same materials from different approaches. I had to make very clear decisions so that each project had its own outcome, even if it had the same process.

DB I'm fascinated by how you transform everyday materials and landscapes (both indoor and outdoor), creating situations that demand a special attention from the viewer. You always develop a strong relationship with the environment, how do you do so?

KN One of my driving forces is the transformation of very simple materials, and then connecting that with things outside of my control like the weather. There is an alchemy that can happen when transparent glass is connected to sunlight, or when a hollowed out brick puddle is filled with rain during a storm. Starting from this position means that site and environment are key informants for the resulting work. Because of this there is a

symbiotic relationship that my work has to the environment that it is shown within.

DB Most of your interventions are site-specific, which means you need to come and work locally. How do you engage with the context? Would you say that your works "belong" to a place?

KN I think my works participate with a "place" and try to fit in, but I am always aware that the interventions are never permanent and that these sites are hosting the work. I sometimes wonder if it's a codependent relationship – the site needs them and they need the site.

For me it's really important that I can make my work as locally as possible when I am working on exhibitions. It means that I am asking questions more than I am providing answers or solutions. I also think it's important that these works don't get shipped from a studio. I like turning up empty handed and working with collaborators, with limitations, and with possibilities that wouldn't have been possible if I wasn't on the ground. I think this method makes the work naturally a part of where it's getting exhibited.



Kate Newby, work in progress at Rairies Montrieux, 2022. Courtesy of the artist



Kate Newby, installation in progress at Palais de Tokyo (Paris), 2022



Kate Newby, *The edge of the earth*, 2022. Bricks, mortar, produced with the support of Rairies Montrieux (Les Rairies). View of the group exhibition "Reclaim the Earth", 2022, Palais de Tokyo (Paris). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris). Photo credit: Aurélien Mole



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Kate Newby, *Try doing anything without it*, 2022. Bricks, coins, wood, found glass (Paris, Texas), produced at Rairies Montrieux (Les Rairies). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris). Photo credit: Nicolas Brasseur



Kate Newby, *Try doing anything without it* (detail), 2022. Bricks, coins, wood, found glass (Paris, Texas), produced at Rairies Montrieux (Les Rairies). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris). Photo credit: Nicolas Brasseur

Kate Newby, work in progress at Rairies Montrieux, 2022. Courtesy of the artist

DB I like this idea of sourcing materials and working locally. It also seems that chance and impermanence are strong elements of your creative process and in what you want to achieve.

KN Yes, they are. I think a lot about this. I get worn out planning exhibitions through emails ahead of arriving and getting to work. But when I am working on site I feel that momentum takes hold of the situation and things just start happening. I leave lots of room for chance and to determine parts of the work. For example, it was from a walk down the Seine before I headed to the brick factory that I saw some piles of dirt that had been sculpted around a tree that was no longer there. It was this form that provided direction for what I then carved on my bricks. If I had tried to plan things from Texas, it would have felt more superficial. It takes a risk when I don't plan it all out but this way of working leaves space for localised details to emerge in the work.

DB Chance is also part of the curatorial process when you commission an artist with new works, it's about trust and leaving a door open.

KN You are extremely well informed about the artists you work with. I was always amazed to hear how much of my work you had seen over the years—not only New York or Vienna as mentioned before, but also Wellington, Sydney, Villeurbanne, London... The development of our project together was very much a back and forth. I always trusted your opinion because you know my work extraordinarily well. I felt resistant to having a work inside the exhibition space but you encouraged this hypothesis. *It makes my day so much better if i speak to all of you* is the result and I couldn't imagine my work for the exhibition without it. It was crucial in the end!

But it must also be demanding and challenging to invite artists and not know how they will respond. What is this balance for you ?

DB I believe in the possibility of failure and this possibility makes that most often the result pleasantly surprises us. But above all I believe in trust, and in a form of companionship between curators and artists, a long term relationship in which the exhibition is just one possibility amongst others.

KN *Reclaim the Earth* has many raw and pertinent propositions for how we are inhabiting this planet. I know for me it has further deepened my awareness about our time on this planet and how we use its resources. Has making this exhibition changed how you think about creating your further exhibitions?

DB *Reclaim the Earth* has modified both how I want to position myself in the world and the way I want to make exhibitions. Drawing away from a Western-centered vision, the artists in the exhibition develop new connections with the environment. Their actions form a complex assemblage of practices and scales of relationship: with the Earth, with ancestors, with human and non-human life... Their artistic, social, cultural or spiritual quests bear witness to the resurgence of

knowledge: knowing how to think, knowing how to do, but above all knowing how to be in the world.

Biographies



Kate Newby received her Doctorate of Fine Art in 2015 from the Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland; she has shown internationally at galleries and museums. Recent institutional exhibitions include the Palais de Tokyo (2022), Adam Art Gallery Te Pataka Toi (2021), Institute of Contemporary Art Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes (2019), Kunsthalle Wien (2018), 21st Biennale of Sydney (2018) and the SculptureCenter (2017). In 2012 she won the Walters Prize, New Zealand's largest contemporary art prize. In 2019 Kate was awarded a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors grant. She has undertaken residencies at The Chinati Foundation (2017), Artspace (2017), Fogo Island (2013), and the ISCP (2012). Kate currently lives and works in Floresville, Texas.



Daria de Beauvais is Senior Curator at the Palais de Tokyo (Paris) where her collective exhibition *Reclaim the Earth* is currently on view. She was recently co-curator of *Antibodies* (2020), *Future, Former, Fugitive* (2019) and the 15th Biennale de Lyon (2019). She has also curated numerous solo exhibitions, including Mimosa Echard, Angelica Mesiti, Laure Prouvost, Camille Henrot, Mel O'Callaghan, Mika Rottenberg... She previously held positions at institutions (Biennale and Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice; Museum of Modern Art and Independent Curators International in New York) and commercial galleries (Zlotowski, Paris; Alessandra Bonomo, Rome; Lili Marleen, New York). She is also a freelance curator, teaches at Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, writes for various journals and publications, and regularly participates in committees and juries.



Reclamation in Whose Name?

by Natasha Marie Llorens



View of "Reclaim the Earth," Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2022. Image courtesy of Palais de Tokyo. Photo by Aurélien Mole.

"Ecological turns" is a series in which writers consider how the ecological discourse is shaping the production, exhibition, and reception of contemporary art. In this instalment, Natasha Marie Llorens reflects on a group exhibition at Palais de Tokyo which takes a "rallying cry" for a title: "Reclaim the Earth."

Solange Pessoa's long swaths of felted horsehair, culled and woven together over many years, are suspended from the Palais de Tokyo's high ceilings, their rough surfaces and variegated brown tones visible from a distance as I enter the gallery. *Cathedral* (1990–2003) is part of a group show entitled "Reclaim the Earth," encompassing the work of fourteen artists, conceived as a multi-generational and multi-cultural "rallying cry" in response to climate collapse. Pessoa's references to horses imported to Brazil by the Spanish are described by the wall label as evocative of "distant memories of Brazil's colonization by the Europeans," and the artist's contribution to the exhibition is summarized as animating "both living and non-living elements, mixing present time with the ancestral past."⁽¹⁾ I am attracted to the abject quality of Pessoa's lines traced over the ghost image of Oscar Niemeyer's Brasilia Cathedral, but I balk at the softness of the generalization "European colonization," and at the suggestion that the colonizers' past in Brazil is "ancestral." The wall text suggests an analogy between the ancestors of Indigenous peoples and those of Spanish mercenaries and priests that obscures the violence which shaped these lives so differently. I wonder who benefits from that rhetorical obscurity.

"Reclaim the Earth," curated by Daria de Beauvais with the assistance of Lisa Colin, is a beautiful show. Kate Newby's delicate installation of found glass shards and Limoges porcelain shells, *it makes my day so much better if I speak to all of you*. (2022) spreads across the floor at the entrance to one of the exhibition rooms like a small universe of microcosms, a glittering re-valuation of urban detritus. The Karrabing Film Collective presents *The Family and the Zombie* (2021), a deliciously irreverent zombie movie starring a group of Aboriginal children and anthropologist Elizabeth Povinelli (as the zombie) luxuriously installed on large walls in a dedicated black box that doubles as an eerie post-apocalyptic landscape of broken-down cars and jumbled piles of motorized scooters. Yet the strongest connection between Povinelli playing the white monster to the delight of children and Pessoa's laborious, abject minimalism is the fact that colonialism destroyed the land both in Brazil and in Australia—the specificity of which lies outside the curatorial justification for placing these works together. Observing a group of monumental wooden sculptures by Huma Bhabha—*The Past is a Foreign Country* (2019), *Receiver* (2019) and *God of Some Things* (2011), each an amalgamation of found materials and aesthetic archetypes—I wonder whether these imposing figures are here as witnesses to the destruction of the earth, and, if so, by whom? Are they aligned with the curatorial imperative to reclaim something—experience, territory, ecological connection—or are they warning the viewer? Again, some specificity is missing about the connection between climate collapse and colonialism, between colonialism and racism, or between Bhabha's massive and grief-stricken distortions of the human figure and the idea of reclamation.

Throughout "Reclaim the Earth," this lack of specificity disturbs me. In the absence of contextual detail, the show evades the problem of what happened to the earth in the first place, who benefited from its destruction, whose descendants continue to hold power because of that benefit, and, ultimately, to whom the labor of reparation falls. This is not solely rhetorical criticism; without specificity, the exhibition forecloses the possibility of profound reclamation or healing in human societies' relationship to the earth, undoing the very work it claims to be committing to.

The problems inherent to decontextualizing artwork through global exhibition-making have been debated for decades. Admittedly, there is no easy resolution. One of the key turning points was the controversy surrounding "Magiciens de la Terre," the landmark 1989 exhibition presenting artwork by over 100 international artists, curated by Jean-Hubert Martin in lieu of a more traditional Biennale de Paris. Hubert's ambition was to demonstrate the universal nature of aesthetics and to break down the hierarchical relation between artists working in what he called the "Non-West" and well-established artists based in Europe and North America.

That same year, Karachi-born and London-based artist Rasheed Araeen wrote a critique of "Magiciens de la Terre" that was assigned to me in the first class of my MA program in curatorial studies more than a decade ago, and that remains canonical in decolonial curatorial studies today. Araeen's main criticism challenges the basis for Hubert's claim for aesthetic universality. Briefly put, Araeen argues that artworks cannot be abstracted from their historical formations without voiding their relevance to the socio-political field to which they respond. The enduring question for the field of curatorial practice in the wake of "Magiciens de la Terre" is how a conceptual framework can counter this abstraction or compensate for the displacement of artworks, especially those invested in the subtlety of historical formations. "My main criticism," wrote Araeen, after praising the quality and attractiveness of work on show, "concerns the lack of any radical theoretical or conceptual framework that can justify the togetherness of works which represent different historical formations."² Three decades later, his observations succinctly clarify my own discomfort with "Reclaim the Earth."

The consequence of Araeen's argument for the curatorial field is a widespread—I think—recognition that abstracting Indigenous artworks, or artwork about Indigeneity, from the context of their historical formation is politically questionable. The logical continuation of this argument is that it is not possible to “reclaim the earth” in an abstract sense. This work must be done on the ground, so to speak, with the murderous ideological complexity of specific places fully in view. This means that any curatorial framework must take seriously its responsibility to compensate for the displacement of abstract forms like Pessoa's. “Reclaim the Earth” does not provide that kind of contextualization. “It is in their decontextualization,” Araeen wrote of the works by Indigenous artists in the 1989 exhibition, “not only in the shift from one culture to another (which is inevitable), but more importantly, in the displacement from one paradigm to another; this has emptied them of their meanings, leaving only what Fredric Jameson calls a ‘play of surfaces’ to dazzle the (dominant) eye.”(3) The displacement in “Reclaim the Earth” functions in a similar manner by showing artwork addressed to very different, specific paradigms of coloniality side by side, with only the nebulous concept of “the earth” to bind them conceptually.

This nebulousness produces a second problem. Though the curatorial statement for “Reclaim the Earth” claims to be listening to a “rallying cry” sent out by artists, it simultaneously positions the Palais de Tokyo as an infrastructure for reparative witnessing, the platform from which symbolic reparations can be initiated. The Palais de Tokyo is represented as a sort of neutral space, stabilized by a dearth of artists who make work that implicates French institutions in the economic interests underpinning climate collapse. Even when the exhibition does address French colonial history, an effort is made to place violence in the past. The wall label for Daniela Ortiz's biting politically satirical series of paintings *The Rebellion of the Roots* (2020–ongoing) notes that

Ortiz depicts tropical plants that seem to be protected and nurtured by the spirits of victims of European colonialism. For too long “kidnapped” (according to the artist), the plants confront the politicians and authorities responsible for these crimes. Through her small formats, the artist instils a spirit of resistance and calls for the need to support existing anticolonial struggles.(4)

The paintings depict a fictional story composed by the artist about anthropomorphic plants. Why is it necessary to place the narrative action—the fact that the plants were kidnapped—in quotation marks and attribute this interpretation to the artist, if not to produce a vagueness around the figure of the perpetrator? The wall label's distortions come into even starker relief when compared to other curatorial framings of the same work. In a solo presentation of the series as part of Kadist's collection in Paris, Ortiz's paintings are described in these terms:

The Rebellion of Roots by Daniela Ortiz depicts a series of situations in which tropical plants, held hostage in the botanical gardens and greenhouses of Europe, are protected and nurtured by the spirits of racialized people who died as a result of European racism. [...] In the paintings, the plants create their own forms of justice by confronting the authorities and institutions that perpetuate structural racism. In particular, the series exposes the violent influence of French colonialism around the world.(5)

In the text for Kadist, the violence against people of color is in the present, the perpetrators are alive and among us, and racism is named as an integral aspect of the ecological destruction unfolding in real time. An ethically defensible reclamation of the earth cannot begin without this fundamental admission.

Without a clear articulation of the role colonialism and racism have played in climate collapse, it is also impossible to answer my most burning question about the exhibition: Who is addressed by the curatorial imperative to “reclaim the earth”? The display of Thu-Van Tran’s work lays bare the exhibition’s muddled positioning from a different perspective. In Tran’s immersive installation *From Green to Orange – Invasive Alien Species* (2022), the relationship to the earth is clear. The work is composed of photographs taken during the artist’s search for a rubber plantation in the Amazon basin in 2015. Eight large photographic panels depict dense vegetation, plants which are either toxic to humans or invasive species resulting from human intervention in the Amazonian ecosystem. The curatorial framework also makes a clear link between what is represented in Tran’s work and the ecological task confronting human societies: “This herbarium, subjective and immersive, questions the cohabitation and hybridization of these plants, as well as our relations with them.”(6) But that “us,” crucially, is ambiguous. “We” do not all have the same relations with the earth, nor do “we” all share the same responsibility for its spoilation. Is this imperative directed to French people descended from the formerly colonized, or those who—like the artist herself—sought refuge in France from political upheaval in its former colonies?

Tran’s work—like most of the pieces included in “Reclaim the Earth”—is polyvalent, articulating what remains visible in the wake of chemical processes (she soaked the photographs in successive chemical baths before mounting them) and evoking the historical migrations that such chemical processes mirror. Is this work asking a Parisian audience to reclaim the earth, or to reconsider the trace appearance of violent histories in the landscape? I think the latter interpretation is more faithful to the work.

“Reclaim the Earth” wants to participate in a broader conversation about the role of art at a moment of catastrophic crisis, but it is presented at an institution that—in this case at least—neither relinquishes its traditional universalist prerogative nor foregrounds the fact that European colonization is the primary vector for this crisis. Instead, a series of individually transformative artworks are employed as markers of a discourse that would dismantle the universalism of an exhibition space, in a space that does not allow for the possibility of that change.

“Reclaim the Earth” is at Palais de Tokyo, Paris through September 9, 2022.

(1) Wall text for “Reclaim the Earth” at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, May 2022.

(2) Rasheed Araeen, “Our Bauhaus, Others Mudhouse,” *Third Text*, no. 6 (Spring 1989): 7.

(3) Ibid, 9.

(4) Wall text for “Reclaim the Earth” at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, May 2022

(5) “Daniela Ortiz: The Rebellion of the Roots (France),” 2021, <https://kadist.org/work/the-rebellion-of-the-roots-france/>

(6) “Thu-Van Tran”, <https://palaisdetokyo.com/en/personne/thu-van-tran/>

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Adventures in sound art and installation: Tarek Atoui's 'Whispered Pulses' and Kate Newby's 'Feel Noise'

Two current exhibitions remind us that just as our lives are unpredictable, art is malleable. So roll with it.



On the left, Tarek Atoui's sound art installation (Photo by Jack Plunkett). At right, Kate Newby's "Feel noise" installation of glazed ceramic pieces pressed into empty flower beds at Testsite. (Photo by Erin Kever).

The thing I like about installation is the not knowing. Not knowing exactly how to enter and navigate an environment — maybe proceeding with caution — can be bewildering, but also exciting, and at the very least amusing.

Visiting "Feel noise," Kate Newby's exhibition at Testsite reminded me of this.

Entering the [33rd Street house-gallery](#), I was instructed that there was one work inside and the rest of the exhibition would be outdoors. Skipping the singular indoor work for now, I moved along the east exterior of the building down its tidy gravel-and-paver path.

Passing over works flanking the path below me, I impatiently proceeded to the St. Augustine filled backyard, my eye diagonally crossing the grass to alight on a multi-colored vertical work mounted on a wooden fence. Brightly colored and curved ceramic tiles were stacked like columns, emphasizing repetition, and modularity from afar. On approach, each tile reveals itself as not an identical unit, but rather unique parts, each with varying effects from the process in which they were made.

Titled “Mia, Kate, Mackenzie, Veronica, Sara, Patrick, Rob, Kyle, Sarah” (2022) after the participants who took part in shaping the ceramic tiles on view, the artwork emphasizes the idea of shared labor though collaboration and community.

Photographing the work, its site-specificity can be appreciated as the work’s surroundings play an important role in framing it and enhancing our experience of it.



Kate Newby's "Mia, Kate, Mackenzie, Veronica, Sara, Patrick, Rob, Kyle, Sarah" Photo by Erin Keever.



Detail Kate Newby's "Feel noise" installation of glazed ceramic pieces pressed into empty flower beds. Photo by Erin Keever

Making my way back to the other activated portion of the yard, Newby's installed cables made of twisted coconut fibers are interspersed with bronze casts of ropes, reminiscent of some vintage handmade tool or ancient excavation object. Titled "All I planted came up" (2022), the rope work's linear axis almost parallels a backyard zipline left up, and draws attention to nearby telephone lines. It also launches a back and forth viewing exchange between intersecting lines overhead and those underfoot (in the landscape's borders) . Simultaneously considering materials above, while traversing what's below, requires balance and heightens the art viewer's physical awareness.

Ready to re-visit art closer to the exhibition's eastern entrance along that pathway, I check out more glazed ceramic installed in beds framed by limestone blocks. "Feel noise" (2022) is a series of works from which the exhibition takes its title. It consists of a ceramic mural split into four sections with glazed ceramic objects pressed into empty flower beds. Lining this portion of the backyard, the work bears the marks of the artist's varied processes, made by smashing and flipping clay across concrete surfaces such as sidewalks, roads, and the artist's studio floor. (Newby is an Auckland born artist living in Floresville, Texas.) The forms reveal textures from being bent, manipulated, modeled, and roughened. They are physically and forcibly handled repeatedly when fit and pressed into dirt beds.

Returning to where I started, the print "Wander Until You are Lost" (2022) hangs in its privileged position above the fireplace. Like the ceramic works Newby's black and white monoprint made using the artist's hair conveys bodily texture. Impressions of several delicate nests of hair imply a revolving movement, dancing in two concentric circles. Probably pulled from a brush or a comb, we reconsider the detritus of everyday lives, as what's left is culled, elevated and enlivened.

The pandemic forced many artists and galleries to re-imagine exhibition space and forsake four walls for foreign terrain. Despite its title, Newby's "Feel noise" features no built-in aural component or explicit sound focus. To find that, you might visit Tarek Atoui's new outdoor installation at the Contemporary Austin's Laguna Gloria site, which both creates sound and engages with its surroundings, so much though that it depends upon it.

Atoui is the winner of the 2022 Suzanne Deal Booth / FLAG Art Foundation Prize this year. He is a Lebanese-born artist now based in Paris, whose work explores sound as a medium. [Since April a major exhibition of his artwork](#) has taken up two stories of the Contemporary Austin's downtown Jones Center.

Even sound art enthusiasts might find the Jones Center display a bit daunting. Some are likely to snub shared earphones during a transition phase from pandemic to endemic. Then there's the sheer quantity of what's on view. Between "The Whisperers," spread across the first floor, and highlighting an ongoing project exploring sound as it relates to material, space, motion, and perception, and "The Wave" which fills the second floor with Atoui's projects from the last decade, it's a considerable amount of work all of which deserves considerable immersive effort.



Tarek Atoui, "The Wave," 2019. Installation view, "Tarek Atoui: The Whisperers," The Contemporary Austin –Jones Center on Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas, 2022. Artwork © Tarek Atoui. Courtesy the artist; Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; and Kurimanzutto, Mexico City / New York. Image courtesy The Contemporary Austin. Photograph by Brian Fitzsimmons.

Lastly, as objects, many works are visually less than inspiring, as they sit flat on the floor and requiring crouching or squatting in order to engage with them. (The work presumes your body is able to do so.) The Contemporary's programs like the immersive performance featuring musicians-in-residence Henna Chou, Chris Cogburn, and Parham Daghighi were reasonably successful in assuaging these criticisms though.

By the time Atoui's commissioned work "Whispered Pulses" was installed at the Contemporary's Laguna Gloria location two months after the exhibition's opening, I was eager to experience the sound-based installation in person. So, on a recent 100 degree-or-so June evening I made my way to the sculpture park only to be informed that recent rain (rain?!) had made Atoui's sound work not entirely operable. The announcement was simply "it's not working."

On closer inspection, there were some faint sounds detectable and well, there are always ideas to be gleaned from any experience of art, right?



Tarek Atoui's sound installation "Whispered Pulses" on the ground of the Contemporary Austin-Laguna Gloria. Photo by Erin Kever.

A sound art exhibition is a complicated process that involves considering vantage points and the physical positioning of the body of whoever interacts with it (and whether that body is physically able to interact). Atoui chose a hill underneath the little viewing platform just northwest of the museum's historic villa as his site. The quiet spot is accentuated by a low Italianate balustrade drawing visitors to it. Amidst the wild vegetation, vines, and trees below you see nestled four cisterns (three rectangular, one round), equipped with microphones. Water is meant to drip down brass rods into water. Microphones pick up sound and route it through speakers in the trees.

The artist is especially interested in what happens to sound as it travels through materials like metal, wood, and water and how we are able to perceive sound by listening not just with our ears but with our eyes and bodies. While due to technical issues, not much was emanating when I visited, I did detect a hollow whooshing sound punctuated by what sounded like the pluck of a stringed instrument. It was actually the sound of a water droplet amplified. This combined with the percussive cicada chorus rising up intermittently, left me wanting to experience Atoui's work more — when it's fully functioning.

Newby's "Feel noise" leads us physically and visually relying on structures and routine actions in place while Atoui's "Whispered Pulses" draws us in with the promise of sound and the potential for reflection. For both, sitting is integral, and both seem to lean in and advise us, just as our lives are unpredictable, art is malleable, so roll with it.

"Feel noise: Solo Exhibition by Kate Newby," a collaboration between Kate Newby and Mackenzie Stevens presented by Fluent~Collaborative & Testsite, is on view through Aug. 21 at [Testsite](#). There will be a public closing reception Aug. 21.

"Tarek Atoui: The Whisperers" is on view through Aug. 14 at the Contemporary Austin. It will travel to The FLAG Art Foundation, New York, where it will be on view Oct. 1-Dec. 10. An exhibition catalog co-published by The Contemporary, FLAG, and Radius Books is forthcoming in 2023.



3 min

« Réclamer la Terre », une exposition immersive pour penser notre place parmi la nature

Par Cécile Marchand Ménard - 13 mai 2022 à 17 h 11 min

#EXPOSITIONS

Jusqu'au 4 septembre, le Palais de Tokyo accueille l'exposition « Réclamer la Terre ». // PHOTO : Cécile Marchand Ménard pour Natura Sciences.

Le 15 avril dernier, s'est ouvert au Palais de Tokyo à Paris, l'exposition « Réclamer la Terre ». Exposés jusqu'au 4 septembre prochain, quatorze artistes repensent notre place dans la nature. Une exposition immersive et sensible.

Dans son ouvrage *Par-delà nature et culture* (Ed. Gallimard), paru en 2005, l'anthropologue Philippe Descola invitait à repenser les relations entre l'humain et le reste du vivant. Depuis le 15 avril dernier, l'exposition « Réclamer la Terre », présentée au Palais de Tokyo à Paris pense à son tour le monde au-delà de cette frontière.

Quatorze artistes du Chili, du Brésil, du Pérou ou encore de Guyane française présentent leurs œuvres organiques et engagées. Autant d'invitations à repenser les logiques extractivistes et capitalistes du monde contemporain. Dans cette exposition, conseillée notamment par la sociologue écoféministe australienne Arien Salleh, il est également question de la place des femmes et des luttes des premières nations australiennes ou canadiennes.

« Réclamer la Terre » avec tous ses sens

On est touché, en parcourant l'exposition, par la façon dont les quatorze artistes sollicitent tour à tour nos sens. Tabita Rezaire et Yusef Agbo-Ola invitent notamment à se déchausser pour fouler la terre de leur structure *Nono : temple de la terre*. « Conçu comme une entité spirituelle, cet espace sacré invoque le pouvoir de guérison du sol et fait appel à sa capacité à transformer, nourrir et libérer la vie », nous indique-t-on.

Lire aussi : Le Petit livre de l'écologie ou 10.000 ans d'histoire entre l'homme et la nature

Les clapotis d'un cours d'eau s'échappent d'une salle de projection plongée dans le noir. L'artiste d'origine Mapuche – peuple indigène chilien – Sebastián Calfuqueo, y présente *Liquid Being*. Un court métrage qui dénonce la privatisation de l'eau au Chili, mise en place par la dictature de Pinochet. À travers l'eau, Calfuqueo interroge également la notion de binarité de genre.

Pour ce qui est du regard, il est forcément attiré par le travail de la Néo-zélandaise Kate Newby. Cette artiste a travaillé des morceaux de verre collectés dans Paris avec de la porcelaine de Limoges. Le résultat, comme une plage de coquillages, interroge notre rapport à la matière et aux éléments du quotidien, que l'artiste réutilise dans son travail.

Un impact environnemental diminué ... mais non négligeable

« Notre rapport au vivant n'est pas seulement le thème de l'exposition, il a imprégné notre façon même de la penser », explique Matthieu Boncour, directeur RSE du Palais de Tokyo. « Les artistes travaillent à partir de matériaux naturels, s'inspirent du vivant, sont dans une logique de réemploi. Et puis nous avons réalisé des coproductions et certaines œuvres vont ensuite participer à d'autres expositions », complète-t-il. Le directeur RSE précise que la scénographie de « Réclamer la Terre » a en partie été récupérée d'une précédente exposition et sera en partie réutilisée pour une suivante.

Matthieu Boncour reste toutefois lucide, acheminer les œuvres d'une dizaine d'artistes originaires du monde entier représente un coût environnemental colossal. « Nous avons choisi de maintenir cette exposition à impact carbone élevé. Nous estimons en effet qu'elle possède également un impact primordial sur les consciences », explique-t-il. Un arbitrage encore délicat entre diminuer son impact environnemental ou sensibiliser le plus grand nombre.

Par Cécile Marchand Ménard - 13 mai 2022 à 17 h 11 min

#EXPOSITIONS

Reclaim the Earth, urge artists at Paris' Palais de Tokyo

Art| 4 hours ago | By Amy Serafin| Photography: Aurélien Mole

Reclaim the Earth, urge artists at Paris' Palais de Tokyo

In celebration of Earth Day 2022, we discover the group exhibition 'Reclaim the Earth', a wake-up call for humans to reconsider our relationship with the planet



Megan Cope, *Untitled (Death Song)*, 2020. Drills, oil drums, violin, cello, bass, guitar and piano strings, natural debris, iron thread, metal, rocks, gravels. Stereo sound.

Acknowledgment: Hoshio Shinohara. Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery (Brisbane).

Seen on the walls are paintings on textile by Judy Watson

'Reclaim the Earth' is both the title and the rallying cry of a new group exhibition at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris. It looks beyond the Western model to other ways of existing in the world, where humans are an integral part of the environment rather than a dominating, and often destructive, force. 'I am convinced that artists are like sentinels, warning us about the problems of society,' says exhibition curator Daria de Beauvais.

The title comes from a collection of ecofeminist texts published in 1983. It is not a reference to militant feminism, De Beauvais explains, but rather 'a term we find a lot in different struggles – to reclaim a territory, a sovereignty, an identity – and for different kinds of populations, notably Indigenous.' Reclaiming the Earth means giving all life forms equal power to act.

Kate Newby, *it makes my day so much better if i speak to all of you.*, 2022. Porcelain, minerals, found glass (Paris). Produced at CRAFT (Limoges). *Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris)*

The show features 14 artists or collectives, half of them Indigenous. The Palais de Tokyo brought in two scientific advisors to ensure curatorial accuracy. In line with the museum's own pledge to become more sustainable, 80 per cent of the scenography materials come from prior exhibitions.

'Reclaim the Earth' starts outside, in the urban environment, with two works by the New Zealand-born artist Kate Newby. Newby does all of her work in situ, using local materials and techniques, and is a careful observer of her surroundings, including the

oft-overlooked details of the places she exhibits. Near an outdoor fountain, she replaced five neglected squares of earth with bricks imprinted with traces like ancestral marks and fossils. On the building itself, Newby removed five damaged glass panes from the 1930s front door, inserting stained glass panes into which she pressed parts of her body – a hand, an elbow, a knee – to create abstract motifs. (The door can only be seen when the museum is closed to the public.) ‘She notices things nobody else does, and showed me the building in another way,’ says De Beauvais.

Newby created one more work by asking the Palais de Tokyo team to pick up all the bits of glass they found on the streets of Paris, then melting the pieces into porcelain shells that she scattered on the floor like a bed of colourful oysters.

Top, Asinnajaq, *Rock Piece* (Ahuriri edition), 2018. Video, 4'2". *Courtesy the artist.*
Above, Sebastián Calfuqueo, *Kowkülen* (Liquid Being), 2020. Video, 3'. *Courtesy the artist and Patricia Ready (Santiago)*

Two short videos bookend the exhibition, both of them showing artists literally blending into the landscape. One, by the Canadian Inuk artist Asinnajaq, portrays her emerging from a pile of rocks, a return to the land and a reference to funeral rites.

The other reveals Sebastián Calfuqueo, a Mapuche from Chile, in a ‘liquid state’, naked and half-submerged in a river.

Yhonnie Scarce, *Shadow creeper*, 2022. Blown glass yams, stainless steel, reinforced wire. *Courtesy of the artist and This Is No Fantasy (Melbourne)*

In Yhonnie Scarce’s *Shadow creeper*, a shower of blown glass pieces rains down from the ceiling. Their form was inspired by yams, which are important to the cuisine of Aboriginal Australians. Though beautiful, the glass cloud is meant to evoke the effects of the nuclear tests the British carried out in the Australian desert between 1956 and 1963, crystallising the sand and leaving radiation that persists to this day.

Megan Cope, a Quandamooka from Australia, has been directly affected by climate change, her studio destroyed by the recent floods in her country. She created her installation *Untitled (Death Song)* (pictured top) prior to the event, in 2020. It assembles the tools and debris of mining and drilling: soil augers, oil drums, rocks. The accompanying soundtrack evokes the particular wailing cry of an endangered Australian bird, the bush stone-curlew.

Solange Pessoa, *Cathedral*, 1990-2003. Hair, leather, fabric. Video, 7'. Rubell Family Collection (Miami). *Courtesy of the artist and Mendes Wood DM (Brussels, New York, São Paulo)*

Animism is a recurrent theme of the show, such as in the installation *Catedral*, by Brazil’s Solange Pessoa.

She took human hair, used as an offering in pagan rites, and attached it to a backing several metres long, rolled onto spools like a long, skinny carpet. Unfurled in the space, it snakes across the floor and up the wall as though alive.

Huma Bhabha, (from left) *Receiver*, 2019. Painted bronze. *The Past is a Foreign Country*, 2019. Wood, cork, Styrofoam, acrylic, oil stick, wire, white-tailed deer skull, tire tread. *Courtesy of the artist and Salon 94 (New York).* *God Of Some Things*, 2011. Patinated bronze

Huma Bhabha’s three totemic figures guard the entrance to a small room showing a film by the Karrabing Film Collective, founded by a group of Aboriginal Australians and the American anthropologist Elizabeth Povinelli.

With a substance rubbed onto her skin to make it extra-white, Povinelli assumes the role of the monster in *The Family and the Zombie*, a satirical tale about Indigenous children

playing in a natural setting that is increasingly corrupted by objects of consumption.

Karrabing Film Collective, *The Family and the Zombie*, 2021. Video, 29'23". *Courtesy of the artists*

In *Study for a Monument*, a sort of war memorial, the Iranian-born artist Abbas Akhavan's fragmented bronze plants lay on white sheets on the floor, like remnants of weapons, or corpses waiting to be identified.

The plants are endangered or extinct species from the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, an area that has repeatedly been subject to conflict and ecological disturbance.

Foreground, Abbas Akhavan, *Study for a Monument*, 2013-2014. Cast bronze, white cotton sheets. *Art Jameel Collection (Dubai)*. *Family Servais Collection (Brussels)*. *Courtesy of the artist, Catriona Jeffries (Vancouver) & The Third Line (Dubai)*.
Background, Thu-Van Tran, *De Vert à Orange – Espèces Exotiques Envahissantes* –, 2022. Photographic prints on Fuji paper, laminated and framed, alcohol, dye. *Courtesy of the artist & Almine Rech (Paris)*

To either side of this work are two others in which plants take the upper hand. The rebellion of the roots is a series of naïve drawings by Peru's Daniela Ortiz showing, for example, coconuts falling on the head of Belgium's interior minister.

Facing it, the Vietnamese artist Thu-Van Tran created a botanical panorama in fiery colours, superimposing photos of tropical plants in European greenhouses over images of rubber trees in the Amazon, a comment on how human intervention and colonisation can lead to mutations and invasive species. The implication is clear: if we don't reclaim the Earth, the Earth might just reclaim us. §

Daniela Ortiz, *The Rebellion of the Roots*, 2020 – ongoing. Acrylic on wood. *Courtesy of the artist & Laveronica Arte Contemporanea (Modica)*

Amabaka x Olaniyi Studio, *Nono: Soil Temple*, 2022. Soil, metal, stainless steel ropes, fabric (organic cotton, recycled ocean plastic fibre, seaweed fibre). *Courtesy of the artists*

D Harding, *INTERNATIONAL ROCK ART RED*, 2022. Wool felt made with Jan Oliver, red ochre, gum arabicum, hematite. *Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery (Brisbane)*

Othoniel, Picabia, Friedmann, Messenger... Des expositions à parcourir tout l'été

De Porquerolles à Rouen en passant par Oiron, les peintures, les gravures, les photos ou les installations se déploient dans toute la France. Les critiques du « Monde » vous en proposent une sélection.

LA LISTE DE LA MATINALE

Sur la route des vacances ou bien près de chez vous, allez rendre visite à l'incontournable Pablo Picasso, à l'Afro-Américain Arthur Jafa ou à Nadjia, la muse d'André Breton. Vingt-trois expositions à découvrir dans tout l'Hexagone, choisies par les critiques du *Monde*.

« Réclamer la terre » au Palais de Tokyo



« Receiver », de Huma Bhabha, 2019. Bronze, 251 x 46 x 64 cm. HUMA BHABHA/ SALON 94 (NEW YORK)

Alors que la Terre, comme l'homme, s'épuise, le palais de Tokyo offre mille occasions de se ressourcer mutuellement. Partie sur les traces d'artistes qui nouent une intense conversation avec la Terre, l'institution nous dévoile notamment une passionnante scène venue d'Australie et de la communauté aborigène. L'exposition s'orchestre ainsi comme un envoûtant chant des pistes, à la rencontre d'artistes qui travaillent l'eau, le feu, l'air, les végétaux ou les pierres.

Ensemble, de l'artiste Asinnajaq d'origine inuk à Kate Newby qui prend soin du bâtiment, ils nous invitent à recomposer cette « communauté du sol » dont parlait la pionnière de l'écologie Rachel Carson dans son fondateur *Printemps silencieux*. Au Palais vous attend un été riche de voix peu entendues jusque-là.
Emmanuelle Lequeux

RÉCLAMER LA TERRE

Jusqu'au 4 septembre, à Paris

Enfouir son corps sous la pierre, en signe de deuil mais aussi de renaissance : les images de cette vidéo de l'artiste Asinnajaq, d'origine inuit, ouvrent magnifiquement la **saison Réclamer la terre** du Palais de Tokyo. Un riche parcours qui se veut « *cri de ralliement autant que prise de conscience* », avertit l'institution en préambule de cette invite à renouer d'autres liens avec la nature et la planète. Plus qu'une exposition, un manifeste en plusieurs chapitres qui fait partie des propositions les plus excitantes du moment.

Pour se défaire de notre vision eurocentrée et faire émerger d'autres pensées, la commissaire Daria de Beauvais est allée chercher des artistes du bout du monde, en Australie notamment.

Leurs propositions sont parfois spectaculaires, à l'instar des immenses sculptures molles de la Brésilienne Solange Pessoa, crinières qui s'emparent de l'espace. D'autres fois, elles s'avèrent si délicates qu'on pourrait passer à côté. La Néo-Zélandaise Kate Newby a ainsi pris soin du bâtiment, restaurant par exemple quelques carreaux de verre de la porte d'entrée. Le parcours se poursuit avec d'autres ensorcellements, notamment la mise en scène immersive de la Française Mimosa Echard, alchimiste d'aujourd'hui. (M) E. L.

PALAIS DE TOKYO, 13, AVENUE DU PRÉSIDENT-WILSON. 9 € (TARIF RÉDUIT) ET 12 €.
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Daria de Beauvais : « L'idéologie eurocentrique est un discours dominant qui réduit au silence les autres voix »

Daria de Beauvais, commissaire de l'exposition « Réclamer la terre » au Palais de Tokyo. © François Bouchon L'exposition « Réclamer la terre », que vous avez conçue avec les conseillers scientifiques Ariel Salleh et Léuli Eshrāghi, souhaite « s'éloigner d'une vision eurocentrique du monde » : qu'est-ce que l'eurocentrisme ?

Daria de Beauvais : « L'idéologie eurocentrique est celle qui fait de l'Europe et de l'Occident la norme du jugement de l'Histoire. C'est un discours dominant qui réduit au silence les autres voix. Pour Ariel Salleh, c'est un système de croyance qui permet de prétendre que « tout ce qui est autre peut être utilisé et éliminé à sa convenance », et de « remanier la nature au gré de la volonté de l'Homme ». « Réclamer la terre » est un projet de recherche que je mène depuis plusieurs années. Tout est parti des artistes (14 au final, dont un duo et un collectif), mais j'ai sollicité l'accompagnement d'Ariel Salleh, sociologue australienne et écoféministe importante qui a, dès les années 80, participé à différentes luttes – contre le nucléaire, pour la protection de l'environnement... J'ai aussi demandé les conseils de Léuli Eshrāghi, qui est d'origine samoane, persane et chinoise, et qui vit entre l'Australie et le Canada : Léuli est artiste, chercheur.e, commissaire d'exposition, poète et travaille sur les questions autochtones. Je trouvais important d'avoir des recherches, points de vue, paroles autres que les miens.

Léuli Eshrāghi, conseiller scientifique de l'exposition « Réclamer la terre »

© Rhett Hammerton

Comment l'eurocentrisme imprègne-t-il le monde de l'art et ses discours ? Comment, en tant que commissaire d'exposition européenne, avez-vous tenté de déconstruire votre propre regard ?

« Dans de nombreuses traditions autochtones, tous les êtres vivants sont parents : l'être humain n'est pas au-dessus mais parmi les autres... »

Ce projet est né entre autres de mon premier voyage en Australie en 2018 : j'ai fait une soixantaine de visites d'ateliers d'artistes, à différents endroits du pays, et notamment d'artistes d'origine aborigène. Une rencontre m'a marquée : un artiste m'a expliqué que son travail consistait à retrouver son identité. Car durant la colonisation de l'Australie par le Royaume-Uni, dès la fin du XVIII^e siècle, les populations aborigènes ont été massacrées, leur culture a été annihilée, de nombreuses langues ont disparu. Il y a eu une volonté de faire de l'Australie une nation blanche. Beaucoup d'enfants aborigènes ont été enlevés et placés dans des familles blanches. Il s'agissait de mélanger les populations et de faire disparaître les Aborigènes... J'ai trouvé extrêmement fort qu'un travail artistique puisse servir à retrouver son identité, ses racines. Cela m'a donné de quoi réfléchir : j'ai commencé à faire des recherches, développé différents projets, comme l'exposition de Jonathan Jones en 2021 au Palais de Tokyo, en partenariat

avec Artspace à Sydney. J'ai rencontré des artistes qui ont d'autres relations au monde et au vivant. Dans de nombreuses traditions autochtones, tous les êtres vivants sont parents : l'être humain n'est pas au-dessus mais parmi les autres... Nous avons beaucoup à apprendre de ces modes de pensée.

Cette vision dominante a invisibilisé nombre de cultures : vous évoquez désormais un « besoin de réparation, de soin et de guérison des cultures autochtones discréditées par le colonialisme ». Pourriez-vous nous en dire plus sur ces notions de réparation, de soin et de guérison ?

C'est l'une des bases du travail de Léuli Eshrāghi, qui est actuellement en résidence à la Cité des Arts à Paris : ces cultures doivent exister, doivent revenir sur le devant de la scène et ont besoin d'être soignées parce qu'elles ont été violentées. Il faut sortir de notre vision eurocentrique : il y a différents modes de pensée, différentes formes d'art, qui doivent coexister.

Les montrer, c'est donc en prendre soin, voire les guérir ?

Je ne prétendrais pas les guérir car ce serait un peu ambitieux, voire arrogant, mais cette idée de soin est importante. L'un des plus beaux compliments que j'ai reçus lors du vernissage vient d'artistes d'origine autochtone, qui m'ont dit : « Merci pour cette invitation, nous nous sommes sentis respectés, en confiance. » Être montrés dans un contexte international sans être labellisés « art aborigène », insérés dans un lieu d'envergure, était pour eux très important. Lorsqu'on parle d'« art aborigène », le public pense tout de suite à une certaine forme d'art, mais il y a d'autres façons de faire.

Kate Newby, Lots to do here, Vue de l'exposition « Réclamer la terre », **Palais de Tokyo**, Paris

Argile, verre trouvé, dimensions variables • **Palais de Tokyo** / © Aurélien Mole

Avez-vous adopté une méthode de travail et de recherche singulière ?

Ma méthode de travail en tant que commissaire est de toujours partir des artistes. Il ne s'agit pas de s'intéresser à un thème puis de chercher des artistes, c'est l'inverse. Je fais un aparté : pour cette exposition, mes recherches ont suivi quatre grands axes : l'écoféminisme, l'écologie au sens large, les relations avec le vivant dans un contexte anthropologique – notamment Philippe Descola qui a beaucoup écrit sur cette idée de dépassement de la dichotomie entre nature et culture [son livre, et beaucoup d'autres, est en libre accès au niveau 1 du **Palais de Tokyo**, où a été installée une mini-bibliothèque thématique, NDLR] – et enfin, la question autochtone et le post-colonialisme. Tout s'est fait en discutant avec les artistes.

Qui sont les artistes que vous avez invités ? Comment les avez-vous choisis, comment les connaissiez-vous ?

« Le soutien aux artistes, ce n'est pas seulement les inviter à faire une exposition, mais c'est aussi regarder leur travail dans le temps, les accompagner. »

J'ai toujours un dialogue au long cours avec les artistes. Par exemple, j'avais déjà invité D Harding, artiste non binaire australien.ne d'origine aborigène, pour la 15 e Biennale d'art contemporain de Lyon en 2019. J'ai réitéré l'invitation au **Palais de Tokyo**,

l'occasion de réaliser une grande peinture murale in situ . Cela fait plusieurs années que j'échange avec l'artiste néo-zélandaise Kate Newby, qui est intervenue tant à l'extérieur qu'à l'intérieur du **Palais de Tokyo**. Je connais également depuis longtemps Thu-Van Tran, la seule artiste de l'exposition basée en France. Le soutien aux artistes, ce n'est pas seulement les inviter à faire une exposition, mais c'est aussi regarder leur travail dans le temps, les accompagner, visiter leur atelier, leur écrire un texte pour une publication... Il y a aussi des personnalités que j'ai rencontrées plus récemment, en faisant des recherches spécifiquement pour l'exposition. Deux d'entre elles m'ont été présentées par Léuli Eshrāghi : Sebastián Calfuqueo, artiste Mapuche du Chili, et Asinnajaq, Inuk du Canada.

Tran Thu-Van, De Vert à Orange – Espèces Exotiques Envahissantes, vue de l'exposition « Réclamer la terre », **Palais de Tokyo**, Paris

Photographie, alcool, colorant, rouille • **Palais de Tokyo** / © Aurélien Mole

L'exposition veut aborder tout à la fois l'écologie, le féminisme, le socialisme et les politiques autochtones : comment les concilier ?

Votre question me permet de citer Ariel Salleh, avec une phrase extraite de son livre *Ecofeminism as Politics*, fondateur pour ce projet [publié en 1997, pas encore traduit, NDLR] : « Rassembler écologie, féminisme, socialisme (au sens anglo-saxon du terme) et politiques autochtones signifie renoncer à la vision eurocentrique pour adopter un regard véritablement global. » Ce qu'elle dit ici, c'est que les luttes écologique, autochtone, post-coloniale, féministe n'en forment qu'une, résultat d'une société patriarcale, capitaliste, extractiviste.

Megan Cope, Untitled (Death Song), Vue de l'exposition « Réclamer la terre », **Palais de Tokyo**, Paris

Palais de Tokyo / © Aurélien Mole

Qu'est-ce que ce « regard global » ?

« Il n'y a pas de « planète B » : faisons en sorte de rester sur la planète A sans totalement la détruire, et nous autodétruire. »

Cette idée de « regard global » revient à votre première question : c'est sortir de l'eurocentrisme pour avoir une vision plus ouverte, sortir de sa propre culture. Par exemple, comment en tant que commissaire européenne je change mon mode de pensée. Il s'est agi pour moi d'un voyage intérieur. J'étais déjà sensible à ces questions et ne partais pas de zéro, mais il s'agissait, petit à petit, d'abandonner certains réflexes, certaines façons de voir le monde. Échanger avec les conseillers scientifiques a été très important. J'avais cette idée d'être dans le respect, tout en gardant ma position de commissaire française qui travaille pour une grande institution française. En ouvrant le débat, et en partageant avec le public les recherches d'artistes qu'on ne voit pas ou peu en France et même en Europe.

Quel rapport à la terre, au vivant et au monde avez-vous voulu faire apparaître au fil de l'exposition ? Qu'espérez-vous que vos visiteurs en retiennent ?

Yhonnice Scarce, Cloud Chamber, vue de l'exposition « Réclamer la terre », **Palais de**

Tokyo, Paris

1000 ignames en verre soufflé, acier inoxydable n fil renforcé, dimensions variables •

Palais de Tokyo / © Aurélien Mole

Ce qui m'intéresse, c'est que de questionner notre présence humaine dans cette époque que l'on appelle l'anthropocène, une époque où la Terre a été profondément modifiée par l'action humaine – période extrêmement courte mais destructrice... J'aime l'idée d'arrêter de penser que nous sommes « au-dessus », pour considérer que nous sommes « parmi ». Je citerai Rachel Carson, qui a écrit en 1962 Printemps silencieux, un ouvrage fondateur de l'écologie dans lequel elle parle de la « communauté du sol ». Nous faisons partie de cette communauté. L'idée est d'accepter que la Terre ne soit pas une ressource agricole, ni une source de richesse... Enfin, elle en est une, mais il faudrait en profiter dans un respect mutuel. Il n'y a pas de « planète B » : faisons en sorte de rester sur la planète A sans totalement la détruire, et nous autodétruire, les êtres humains étant les premiers à en pâtir. Beaucoup d'espèces étaient là avant nous et seront là après nous...

On finit sur ça ?

Peut-être pas, car c'est une exposition qui pose des choses, parfois menaçantes, parfois inquiétantes, mais j'aimerais que les visiteurs en retiennent de la joie, car elle s'est faite avec beaucoup d'enthousiasme... J'ai envie qu'ils sortent de là transformés. Oui, c'est un peu ambitieux (rires) ! »

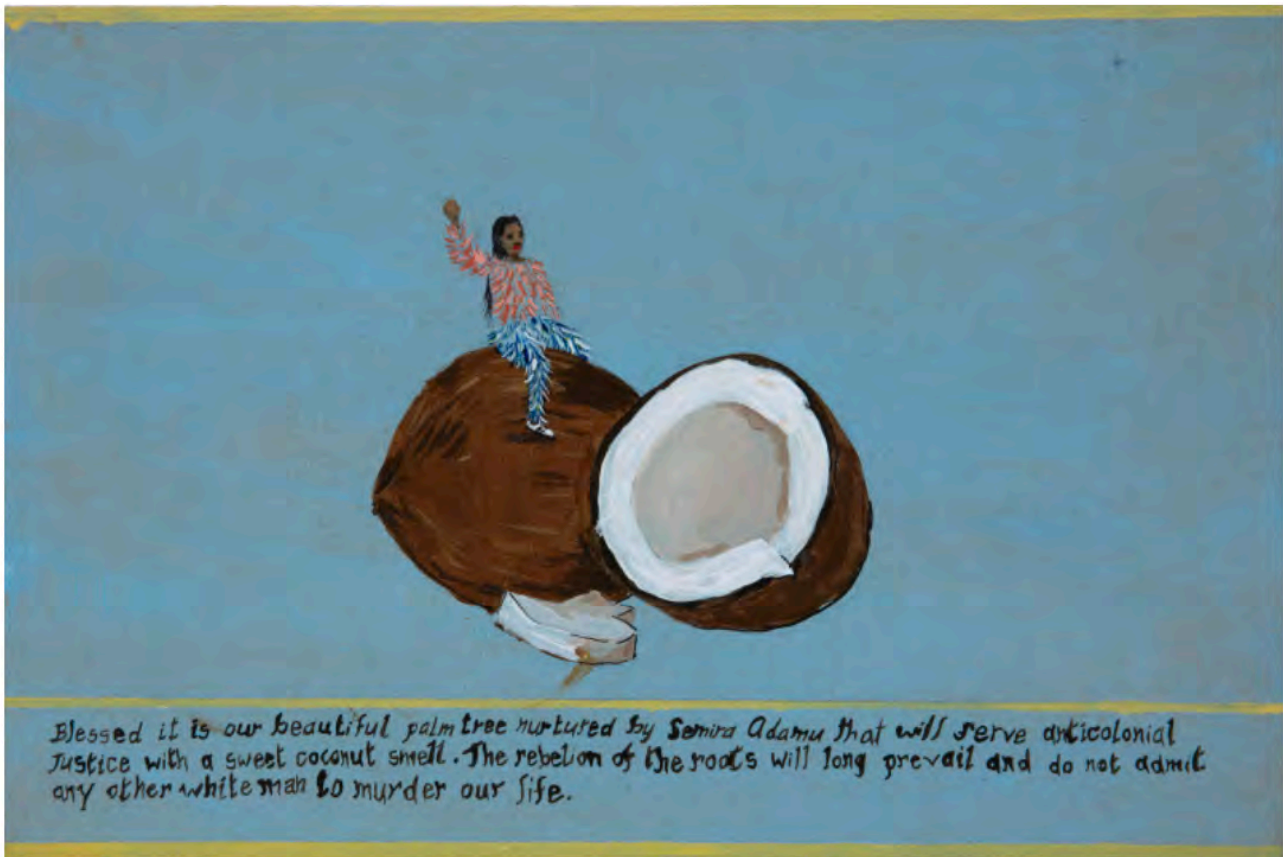
Réclamer la terre

Du 15 avril 2022 au 4 septembre 2022

www.palaisdetokyo.com

Palais de Tokyo • 13, avenue du Président Wilson • 75116 Paris

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Prendre soin de la terre

LE 12 MAI 2022

On peut s'agacer de voir la question écologique invoquée pour toute exposition qui se respecte aujourd'hui. De même qu'il y a peu -et aujourd'hui encore-, la question du postcolonialisme était le sésame qui ouvrait toutes manifestations culturelles se voulant sérieuses, même les plus médiocres. Pourtant ces deux notions sont essentielles et, concernant l'écologie, le changement climatique que l'on constate avec désolation tous les jours prouve l'urgence d'une prise de conscience et la nécessité d'une action. L'exposition *Réclamer la terre* qui vient de s'ouvrir au Palais de Tokyo ne s'inscrit donc que naturellement dans un mouvement qui remet en question la place de l'homme dans son environnement et que Nicolas Bourriaud a théorisé dans son récent essai *Inclusions, esthétique du capitalocène* (cf [Quel art pour demain? – La République de l'Art \(larepubliquedelart.com\)](#)). Mais elle a ceci d'intéressant que, plutôt de montrer une nouvelle fois des artistes qui dénoncent l'exploitation de la nature par l'homme, elle en présente qui, d'une certaine manière, ont déjà dépassé ce stade et fait de cette nature et des éléments le sujet même de leur travail. Ainsi, sous la houlette d'un conseil scientifique composé de Léuli Eshrāghi et d'Ariel Salleh, elle propose quatorze artistes de différentes générations et origines culturelles, qui, comme le dit le communiqué de presse « montrent que nous ne sommes pas « face au paysage », ni « sur terre » mais qu'au contraire nous faisons corps avec elle, créant cette « communauté du sol » dont parlait Rachel Carson, à l'origine du mouvement écologiste ».



Parmi eux, quelques interventions se dégagent : celle, spectaculaire, de Solange Pessoa, cette artiste brésilienne qui a fait de la matière organique (terre, mousse, cuir, cire, plumes, cheveux, sang, graisse...) un médium dont l'évolution naturelle transforme les œuvres et qui présente ici une installation monumentale faite à partir de cheveux (*Catedral*, 1990-2003), qui évoque des chevaux fantomatiques ; celle de la péruvienne Daniela Ortiz qui, à travers une série de petites peintures intitulée *The Rebellion of the Roots* dépeint non sans humour des scènes présentant des plantes tropicales qui, « séquestrées » selon ses mots dans des jardins botaniques, trouvent leur propre chemin pour confronter les politiciens et autorités responsables de ces crimes afin de rendre justice ; celle de l'iranien Abbas Akhavan qui présente une série de sculptures en bronze des espèces végétales autochtones et endémiques des rives du Tigre et de l'Euphrate, mais étendues au sol sur un drap blanc, en contradiction avec la verticalité des monuments traditionnels, *Study for a Monument* (2013-en cours) ; celle de l'australienne Yhonnie Scarce, et qui évoque autant un nuage radioactif qu'une chute d'eau et qui est faite de centaines d'ignames (légume primordial dans l'alimentation Aborigène et symbole du lien au territoire) en verre soufflé à la main. Mais la plupart de ces travaux sont puissants (on pourrait aussi citer l'architecture de Tabita Rezaire et Yussef Agbo-Ola, qui est un véritable temple dédié à la terre) et prennent tout leur sens dans le contexte.



Une installation, toutefois, retient particulièrement l'attention : celle d'une artiste néo-zélandaise installée désormais aux Etats-Unis, Kate Newby. Kate Newby est une artiste particulièrement attentive au milieu qui l'entoure et qui glane au cours de ses pérégrinations des objets, matériaux dont personne ne veut et qui sont souvent considérés comme des rebuts. En ce sens, elle est particulièrement représentative de l'esprit de cette exposition qui consiste à recycler et à prendre soin. Car ces matériaux, elle les travaille, les transforme, en fait de subtiles sculptures qui allient la rudesse à la préciosité. Pour le Palais de Tokyo, elle a entre autres imaginé de faire fondre des tessons de bouteille ou des morceaux de verre dans des petits récipients en porcelaine blanche fabriqués à Limoges. De ces matières délaissées, elle a ainsi créé une mosaïque multicolore qui s'insère dans la matière noble comme dans un cocon. Une des composantes essentielles de la démarche de l'artiste est aussi de collaborer avec des artisans et de faire en sorte que les œuvres prennent corps dans l'environnement, tant physique que social, qui les accueille.

La même artiste bénéficie parallèlement d'une exposition personnelle à la galerie Art-Concept. Là, elle a en particulier réalisé un mur de briques avec la briqueterie Rairies-Montrieux sans aucun mortier, laissant ainsi l'air libre de circuler derrière. Et dans ces briques, elle a inclus, avant la cuisson, des tessons de verre ou des pièces de monnaie trouvés par ses amis dans les rues de Paris (au-delà des artisans, la participation s'étend au cercle amical). Et elle est aussi intervenue sur les grilles d'aération si typiquement parisiennes qui se trouvent devant la galerie. Elle les a travaillées avec du sel, du vinaigre ou de la simple rosée pour créer de multiples effets, de texture et la de couleur (de mêmes interventions, quasi imperceptibles mais très poétiques, ont été effectuées sur les portes du Palais de Tokyo). Il y a une forme de minimalisme dans le travail de Kate Newby, mais un minimalisme féminisé, plein de douceur et de chaleur. L'attention qu'elle porte aux matières, la manière dont elle les écoute, est le contraire d'une approche brutale et machiste. C'est un travail qui n'impose rien, mais se met au service des lieux dans lesquels il trouve sa place, qui révèle plutôt qu'il n'exhibe.

–*Réclamer la terre*, jusqu'au 4 septembre au Palais de Tokyo (www.palaisdetokyo.com)

–Kate Newby, *Try doing anything without it*, jusqu'au 21 mai à la galerie Art-Concept, 4 Passage Sainte-Avoye 75003 Paris (www.galerieartconcept.com)

e-flux Announcements

New season: *Reclaim the Earth*

Palais de Tokyo



Tabita Rezaire, *Peaceful Warrior*, 2015. HD Video, 5:39 minutes. Courtesy of the artist and Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg/Cape Town/Londres.

April 14, 2022

Reclaim the Earth

April 15–September 24, 2022

Palais de Tokyo

13, avenue du Président Wilson
75116 Paris
France

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The relationships between human beings and nature are some of our most stimulating contemporary preoccupations, in that they put into question the ideological basis of our ways of doing and of thinking. In this respect, within a few years, ecological events have given rise to a merging of essential issues, which are political, economic, scientific, moral, societal and, of course, aesthetic. This is an alinement of affects, as if they were planets, and artistic creation is beholden to it.

In reply, there are no injunctions to "go back" to former, so-called virtuous models, but rather to invent other types of relationships with our environments, based on what we have learned from anthropology, ethology and ecofeminism. In other words, this involves an inversion of rights and duties in the spheres of life, a contestation of human domination, a reconsideration of non-humans as subjects and no longer as objects and, overall, a system of relationships that are in motion within ecosystems, rather than power balances.

This season of the Palais de Tokyo, "Reclaim the Earth," evokes not only the relationships between bodies and the earth, the disappearance of some species of flora and fauna, or the transmission of minoritized narratives and knowledges, but also spirits, biological energies, agriculture, gardening and winemaking. It thus resonates with all these various questions which, from a certain viewpoint, come down to the same thing. From the arts to crafts, without forgetting activism, this season is thus intrinsically an ecosystem of forms derived from an ecological thought process, not as an end itself but as a way of sharing other energies and other breaths of life that animate today's forms and ideas. —**Guillaume Désanges**, President of the Palais de Tokyo

Exhibitions

"Reclaim The Earth"

A wake-up call as much as a rallying cry, this collective exhibition develops new connections with the environment, moving away from a Eurocentric vision of the world. By bringing together ecology, feminism and Indigenous politics, it imagines ways out of an extractivist society.

With: Abbas Akhavan, Amakaba x Olaniyi Studio, asinnajaq, Huma Bhabha, Sebastián Calfuqueo, Megan Cope, D Harding, Karrabing Film Collective, Kate Newby, Daniela Ortiz, Solange Pessoa, Yhonnie Scarce, Thu-Van Tran, Judy Watson

Reclaim the Earth, urge artists at Paris' Palais de Tokyo

In celebration of Earth Day 2022, we discover the group exhibition 'Reclaim the Earth', a wake-up call for humans to reconsider our relationship with the planet



Megan Cope, *Untitled (Death Song)*, 2020. Drills, oil drums, violin, cello, bass, guitar and piano strings, natural debris, iron thread, metal, rocks, gravels. Stereo sound. Acknowledgment: Hoshio Shinohara. Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery (Brisbane). Seen on the walls are paintings on textile by Judy Watson

Reclaim the Earth' is both the title and the rallying cry of a new group exhibition at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris. It looks beyond the Western model to other ways of existing in the world, where humans are an integral part of the environment rather than a dominating, and often destructive, force. 'I am convinced that artists are like sentinels, warning us about the problems of society,' says exhibition curator Daria de Beauvais.

The title comes from a collection of ecofeminist texts published in 1983. It is not a reference to militant feminism, De Beauvais explains, but rather 'a term we find a lot in different struggles – to reclaim a territory, a sovereignty, an identity – and for different kinds of populations, notably Indigenous.' Reclaiming the Earth means giving all life forms equal power to act.

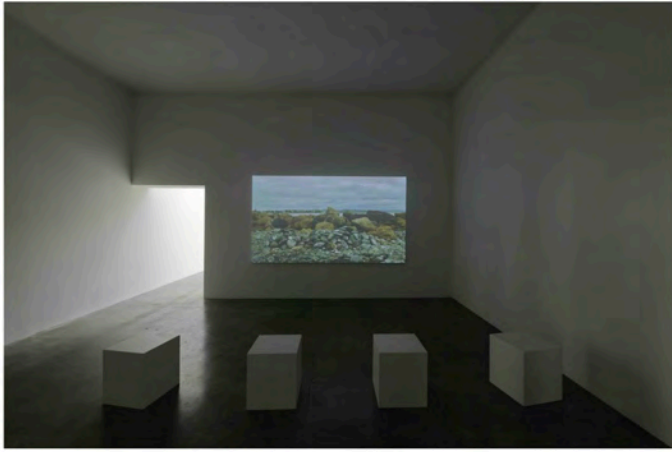
The show features 14 artists or collectives, half of them Indigenous. The Palais de Tokyo brought in two scientific advisors to ensure curatorial accuracy. In line with the museum's own pledge to become more sustainable, 80 per cent of the scenography materials come from prior exhibitions.

'Reclaim the Earth' starts outside, in the urban environment, with two works by the New Zealand-born artist Kate Newby. Newby does all of her work in situ, using local materials and techniques, and is a careful observer of her surroundings, including the oft-overlooked details of the places she exhibits. Near an outdoor fountain, she replaced five neglected squares of earth with bricks imprinted with traces like ancestral marks and fossils. On the building itself, Newby removed five damaged glass panes from the 1930s front door, inserting stained glass panes into which she pressed parts of her body – a hand, an elbow, a knee – to create abstract motifs. (The door can only be seen when the museum is closed to the public.) 'She notices things nobody else does, and showed me the building in another way,' says De Beauvais.

Newby created one more work by asking the Palais de Tokyo team to pick up all the bits of glass they found on the streets of Paris, then melting the pieces into porcelain shells that she scattered on the floor like a bed of colourful oysters.



Kate Newby, *it makes my day so much better if i speak to all of you., 2022*. Porcelain, minerals, found glass (Paris). Produced at CRAFT (Limoges). Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept (Paris)



Top, Asinnajaq, *Rock Piece (Ahuriri edition)*, 2018. Video, 4'2". Courtesy the artist. Above, Sebastián Calfuqueo, *Kowkülen (Liquid Being)*, 2020. Video, 3'. Courtesy the artist and Patricia Ready (Santiago)

Two short videos bookend the exhibition, both of them showing artists literally blending into the landscape. One, by the Canadian Inuk artist Asinnajaq, portrays her emerging from a pile of rocks, a return to the land and a reference to funeral rites.

The other reveals Sebastián Calfuqueo, a Mapuche from Chile, in a 'liquid state', naked and half-submerged in a river.



Solange Pessoa, *Cathedral*, 1990-2003. Hair, leather, fabric. Video, 7'. Rubell Family Collection (Miami). Courtesy of the artist and Mendes Wood DM (Brussels, New York, São Paulo)

Yhonnie Scarce, *Shadow creeper*, 2022. Blown glass yams, stainless steel, reinforced wire. Courtesy of the artist and This Is No Fantasy (Melbourne)

In Yhonnie Scarce's *Shadow creeper*, a shower of blown glass pieces rains down from the ceiling. Their form was inspired by yams, which are important to the cuisine of Aboriginal Australians. Though beautiful, the glass cloud is meant to evoke the effects of the nuclear tests the British carried out in the Australian desert between 1956 and 1963, crystallising the sand and leaving radiation that persists to this day.

Megan Cope, a Quandamooka from Australia, has been directly affected by climate change, her studio destroyed by the recent floods in her country. She created her installation *Untitled (Death Song)* (pictured top) prior to the event, in 2020. It assembles the tools and debris of mining and drilling: soil augers, oil drums, rocks. The accompanying soundtrack evokes the particular wailing cry of an endangered Australian bird, the bush stone-curlew.

Animism is a recurrent theme of the show, such as in the installation *Catedral*, by Brazil's Solange Pessoa.

She took human hair, used as an offering in pagan rites, and attached it to a backing several metres long, rolled onto spools like a long, skinny carpet. Unfurled in the space, it snakes across the floor and up the wall as though alive.

Huma Bhabha's three totemic figures guard the entrance to a small room showing a film by the Karrabing Film Collective, founded by a group of Aboriginal Australians and the American anthropologist Elizabeth Povinelli.

With a substance rubbed onto her skin to make it extra-white, Povinelli assumes the role of the monster in *The Family and the Zombie*, a satirical tale about Indigenous children playing in a natural setting that is increasingly corrupted by objects of consumption.



Huma Bhabha, (from left) *Receiver*, 2019. Painted bronze. *The Past is a Foreign Country*, 2019. Wood, cork, Styrofoam, acrylic, oil stick, wire, white-tailed deer skull, tire tread. Courtesy of the artist and Salon 94 (New York). *God Of Some Things*, 2011. Patinated bronze



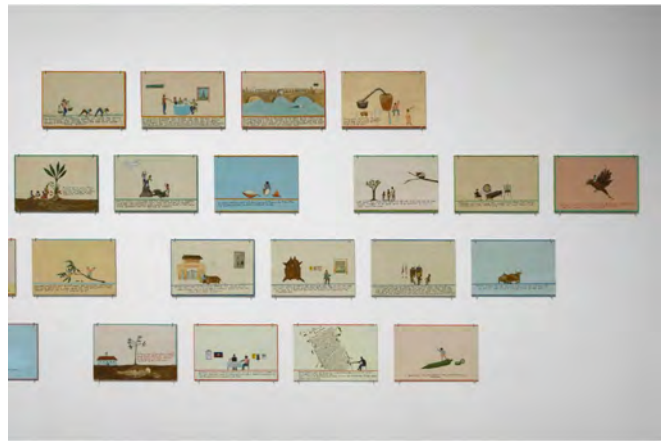
Karrabing Film Collective, *The Family and the Zombie*, 2021. Video, 29'23". Courtesy of the artists

In *Study for a Monument*, a sort of war memorial, the Iranian-born artist Abbas Akhavan's fragmented bronze plants lay on white sheets on the floor, like remnants of weapons, or corpses waiting to be identified.

The plants are endangered or extinct species from the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, an area that has repeatedly been subject to conflict and ecological disturbance.



Foreground, Abbas Akhavan, *Study for a Monument*, 2013–2014. Cast bronze, white cotton sheets. Art Jameel Collection (Dubai). Family Servais Collection (Brussels). Courtesy of the artist, Catriona Jeffries (Vancouver) & The Third Line (Dubai). Background, Thu-Van Tran, *De Vert à Orange – Espèces Exotiques Envahissantes –*, 2022. Photographic prints on Fuji paper, laminated and framed, alcohol, dye. Courtesy of the artist & Almine Rech (Paris)



Daniela Ortiz, *The Rebellion of the Roots*, 2020 – ongoing. Acrylic on wood. Courtesy of the artist & Laveronica Arte Contemporanea (Modica)

To either side of this work are two others in which plants take the upper hand. The rebellion of the roots is a series of naïve drawings by Peru's Daniela Ortiz showing, for example, coconuts falling on the head of Belgium's interior minister.

Facing it, the Vietnamese artist Thu-Van Tran created a botanical panorama in fiery colours, superimposing photos of tropical plants in European greenhouses over images of rubber trees in the Amazon, a comment on how human intervention and colonisation can lead to mutations and invasive species. The implication is clear: if we don't reclaim the Earth, the Earth might just reclaim us. ✱



Amabaka x Olaniyi Studio, Nono: Soil Temple, 2022. Soil, metal, stainless steel ropes, fabric (organic cotton, recycled ocean plastic fibre, seaweed fibre). Courtesy of the artists



D Harding, INTERNATIONAL ROCK ART RED, 2022. Wool felt made with Jan Oliver, red ochre, gum arabicum, hematite. Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery (Brisbane)

Information:

'Reclaim the Earth' runs until 4 September 2022 at Palais de Tokyo, 13 Avenue du Président Wilson, Paris 16e

The exhibition is a collaboration with the Embassy of Australia in France, the Embassy of France in Australia, the Canadian Cultural Centre (Paris), the Ecole normale supérieure (Paris), E-WERK (Luckenwalde), Fondation Opale (Lens, Switzerland), Ikon Gallery (Birmingham), Laboratoire Espace Cerveau (IAC, Villeurbanne), Madre (Naples), and the Serpentine Galleries (London).

Réclamer la Terre, le sursaut écologique, social et artistique du Palais de Tokyo

Bérénice H | Expo | Publié le 15 Avril 2022 à 12h16



Karrabing Film Collective

D'ici trois ans, il faut que nous ayons inversé la courbe des émissions de gaz à effet de serre et qu'elles plafonnent, ou il sera trop tard. Le dernier rapport du GIEC est alarmant : plus que 3 ans pour sauver la planète avant que ce ne soit irréversible. L'exposition *Réclamer la terre* du Palais de Tokyo apparaît comme un élan d'espoir dans cette urgence climatique. 14 artistes autochtones mettent en avant un nouveau rapport à la terre, la nature et les êtres qui la composent.

Comme à son habitude, le Palais de Tokyo a installé un véritable parcours – presque initiatique – où le visiteur déambule d'œuvre en œuvre. Peinture, sculpture, vidéo, ambiance sonore. Au fil de son avancé, les œuvres entrent en résonance les unes avec les autres et transforment notre appréhension de la terre, la nature et les être qui la composent. La puissance de l'art autochtone redéfinit les liens qui nous unissent à la terre.

Chérir la terre

Tous les artistes exposés ont un point en commun : ils chérissent notre terre. Ils ont une profonde conscience écologique qui découle dans toutes leurs œuvres. Leur appréhension de notre passage sur terre dépasse l'idée du simple visiteur : pour eux, nous faisons corps avec la terre – littéralement. Le merveilleux chapiteau « *Nono: Soil Temple* » d'**Amakaba et Olaniyi Studio** se présente à nous comme un temple des temps nouveaux. Il cherche précisément à **nous reconnecter à la terre**. Des tissus de couleur corail sont tendus et forme un espace chaleureux et spirituel. Le chapiteau se transforme en véritable refuge. Au centre, un amas de terre. La disposition du chapiteau induit qu'il est le maître des lieux, l'entité à aduler. Pendant la pleine lune les visiteurs pourront s'immerger dans cette terre que l'on a perdue l'habitude de côtoyer dans nos milieux citadins. On a l'impression de respirer à nouveau.



© Amakaba × Olaniyi Studio, *Nono: Soil Temple*, 2022 Adaptation
environnementale © Aurélien Mole

Cette attention portée à la nature se retrouve dans les matériaux utilisés dans l'exposition : le verre soufflé de Yhonnie Scare, la terre d'Amakaba et Olaniyi Studio, les cheveux de Solange Pessoa. **Les débris sont upcyclé et transformé en véritable œuvre d'art.** Fine observatrice du monde qui l'entoure, **Kate Newby** glane et collecte objets, matériaux et fragments au gré de ses pérégrinations. Son œuvre a été réalisée à partir de tessons de verre collectés dans les rues de Paris. L'artiste dépose ces éclats dans le fond de coquilles en porcelaine produite à Limoges.



It make my day so much better if i speak to all of you , Kate Newby © B.H

Décentrer son regard grâce à des artistes autochtones

Le prisme social de cette exposition est essentiel puisque les 14 artistes exposés viennent tous de communautés autochtones. Léuli Eshrāghi, conseiller·e scientifique de l'exposition, montre le besoin de souveraineté, réparation, soin et guérison de **ces cultures discréditées par le colonialisme**. Le décalage entre les valeurs modernes et traditionnelles est si grand qu'il fragilise les individus comme les communautés. S'éloignant d'une vision eurocentrique, les artistes de l'exposition développent de nouvelles connexions avec la nature, le vivant ou l'environnement.

Lorsqu'on découvre l'œuvre monumentale de **Solange Pessoa** on ne comprend pas tout de suite de quoi il s'agit. Un immense tissu descend du plafond et zigzague dans toute la pièce. Puis, on s'approche et on réalise que cette masse brune est en fait un tissage de mèches de cheveux. Chez la communauté brésilienne, **les cheveux sont souvent utilisés comme offrandes religieuses**. On comprend alors pourquoi Pessoa a voulu hisser son œuvre au plus près du ciel.



© Solange Pessoa, Catedral (1990-2003) Vue d'installation, Rubell Family Collection / Contemporary Art Foundation (Miami), 2015 © Chim Lam

Cette œuvre fait le lien entre présent et passé ancestral. On en revient finalement à la première œuvre de l'exposition, un film d'**Asinnajaq** qui tourne en boucle dans une salle plongée dans le noir. La vidéo performative qui nous accueille présente l'artiste s'extrayant du sol, avant d'y retourner. Elle explore ainsi la puissance **des gestes cérémoniels funéraires tel que la disposition de pierre sur le corps d'un individu**, symbolisant pour les Inuks les cycles de vie et de mort. « Tu es poussière et à la poussière tu retourneras » disait la Genèse de la Bible. Comme quoi il y a des valeurs communes avec la civilisation européenne. Mais, particulièrement dans ce contexte d'urgence climatique, **cette exposition nous fait réfléchir sur nos pratiques économiques et culturelles**. Nous gagnerons beaucoup à nous inspirer des modes de vie autochtones.



© Asinnajaq, Rock Piece (Ahuriri Edition), 2018 Vidéo, 4'02'' Courtesy de l'artiste

Réclamer la terre

Palais de Tokyo

13, avenue du Président Wilson -16 e

Du 15 avril 2022 au 4 septembre 2022

[Plus d'infos](#)

LES RAIRIES

Des briques à l'art contemporain

Les établissements Rairies-Montrieux accueillent en résidence Kate Newby, une artiste mondialement connue. Elle y prépare une œuvre programmée au Palais de Tokyo.

Au milieu de l'espace de production des établissements Rairies Montrieux, quatre grands carrés de briques sont posés à même le sol. Sur l'un d'eux, une jeune femme frêle attaque la terre avec une petite truelle. Elle enlève la matière par petits coups, avec effort. Même si la terre est crue et les briques humides, il faut de la force pour retirer la glaise.

Kate Newby est une artiste d'origine néo-zélandaise mondialement connue, diplômée de l'Elam School of Five Arts d'Auckland. En 2012, elle a reçu le Walters Prize, la plus importante récompense pour l'art contemporain de son pays. Depuis, ses œuvres sont exposées dans le monde entier.

Elle réside aujourd'hui aux États-Unis. Depuis une dizaine d'années, elle réalise des œuvres façonnées lors d'interventions in situ. Kate s'inspire des lieux, observe les techniques spécifiques, écoute les histoires, s'imprègne de l'endroit où elle agit.

Elle a été marquée, à son arrivée à Durtal, par l'usure du vieux carrelage de terres cuites chez Agnès, chez qui elle loge, et a remarqué un mur de brique percuté et troué par des engins dans l'enceinte de la fabrique des Rairies Montrieux. Ce sont ces petits détails qui l'inspirent.

Pour l'entreprise, une expérience unique

Le Palais de Tokyo, à Paris, cherchait une entreprise capable d'accueillir Kate et de lui fournir la matière première pour une exposition.

Celle-ci, intitulée « Réclamer la terre » aura lieu du 15 avril au 4 septembre, et regroupera de nombreux artistes. L'entreprise devait pouvoir aussi démonter l'œuvre brique par



L'artiste Kate Newby en résidence aux Établissements Montrieux Les Rairies, où elle prépare une exposition pour le Palais de Tokyo.

brique, sécher artificiellement la matière pour la cuire, et la livrer à temps pour que les quatre œuvres carrées prennent place dans un espace prédéfini à l'extérieur de la salle d'exposition.

C'est une course contre la montre pour l'artiste, qui achève ce week-end sa semaine aux Rairies ; et pour l'entreprise c'est une expérience unique.

Rémy Montrieux, le co-dirigeant de la briqueterie est fier de se faire petit à petit connaître dans le milieu

des arts. « On a travaillé d'abord avec Natsuko Uchino et le musée des Beaux-Arts du Mans », explique-t-il. « Elle nous a fait faire une exposition à Paris. Le réseau s'étoffe peu à peu. »

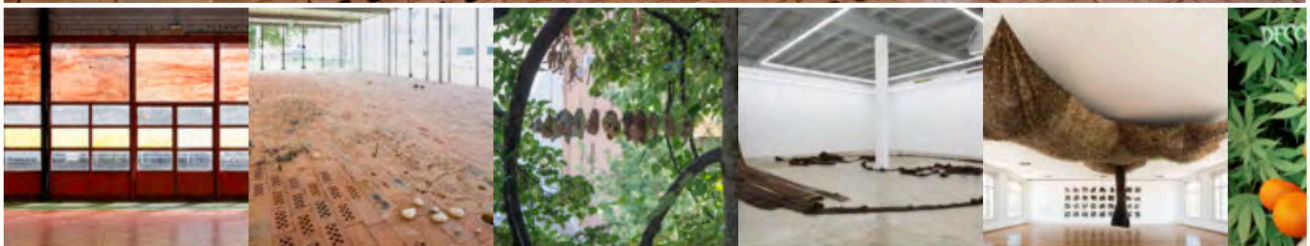
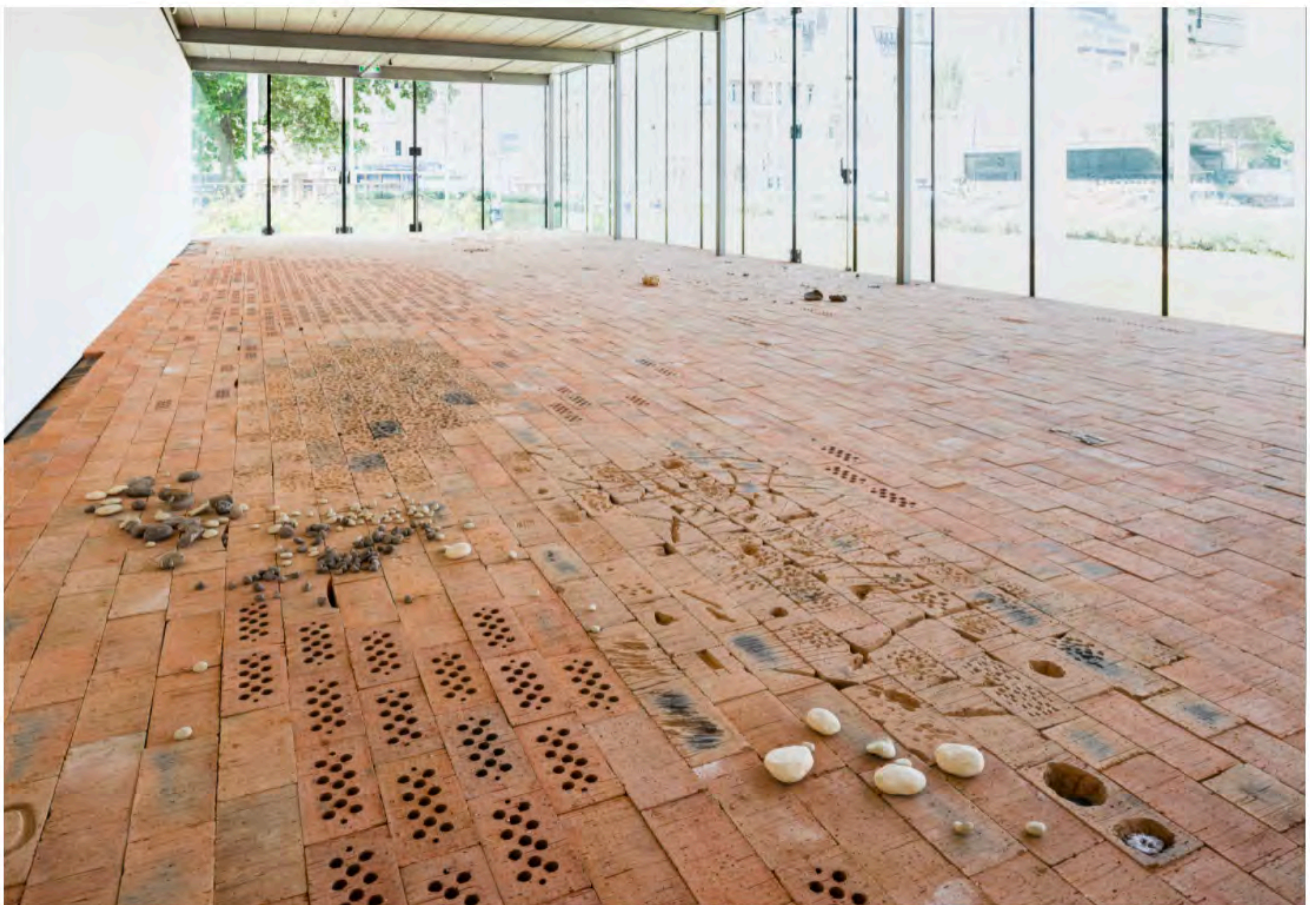
Kate Newby est tout sourire, débordante d'énergie, trouant et creusant la terre. « D'habitude on entasse la terre pour créer un volume, moi, au contraire, j'enlève de la matière. Je veux que les gens puissent toucher l'œuvre, pour se l'approprier », explique l'artiste. Et elle ajoute : « Chaque endroit est différent, les techniques

sont intéressantes, et les rencontres aussi. Je suis logée à Durtal. Le lieu et l'hôtesse sont tellement agréables qu'on a du mal à partir le matin. » L'artiste ira ensuite à Limoges, puis à Chartres, sa vie est faite de rencontres. Kate Newby prépare, en parallèle de son projet pour le palais de Tokyo, une autre exposition pour une galerie, « avec des briques empilables qui formeront un mur. » Des éléments trouvés au hasard seront inclus, comme des morceaux de verre cassés.

L'usage de la matière brute dans l'exposition Réclamer la terre au Palais de Tokyo

Palais de Tokyo

Du 15 avril au 4 septembre 2022



Le temps d'une exposition, le Palais de Tokyo nous invite à repenser notre rapport à la terre. En réunissant une douzaine d'artistes de tous les continents, l'institution parisienne développe une réflexion écologique, féministe et sociale, ancrée dans notre époque. Ici, les matériaux « naturels » sont mis à l'honneur. Bois, pierre, coquillages et plantes deviennent de véritables objets d'arts, porteurs d'un message, irréductibles à leur simple matérialité. Grâce à différents procédés, les artistes développent de nouvelles connexions avec le vivant et l'environnement. Ainsi, les photographies d'Asinnaja interrogent les liens entre le corps et la terre, créant un parallèle entre le mouvement naturel et celui créé de toute pièce par l'homme. Les peintures de Judy Watson mettent en avant les racines et la transmission des récits et savoirs autochtones, grâce à un imaginaire de l'arbre très développé. De son côté, Megan Cope dénonce avec force l'extractivisme grâce à des compositions tout en finesse et en subtilité. Une exposition qui prône un retour nécessaire à l'essentiel pour ressentir et soutenir une nature changée, et surtout promouvoir l'importance du savoir : savoir-penser, savoir-faire, mais aussi savoir-être au sein d'un monde en détresse.

PALAIS DE TOKYO

Du 15 avril au 4 septembre 2022

[13, avenue du Président Wilson, 75016 Paris](#)

All artworks by Kate Newby
from *YES TOMORROW*, Adam
Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi, 2021

Always humming, 2021, glass,
and *What Kind of Day Has it
Been*, 2021 (detail), screed,
pigment, glass, silver, bronze.
Photo: Ted Whitaker

Opposite: *SHE'S TALKING
TO THE WALL*, 2012–21 (detail),
assorted clay, glaze, glass, thread,
wire. Photo: Ted Whitaker





Shaper

Lachlan Taylor assesses an exhibition infused with context and rich in collaboration.

Exhibition-making is always a collaborative enterprise, we just try really hard to pretend it isn't. With unnaturally slick presentation and small tricks of concealment, institutions hide most of the laboured marks and indents that go into producing a show. We use misnomers like 'solo exhibition' to enforce the illusion that what we're seeing is the final stage in a linear process of creative production that begins and ends in the body of a single person. Even the spaces themselves, our congenial white cubes, are burnished with layers of cultural history to appear as nonplaces – empty cups to be filled and emptied again.

The truth, of course, is that any exhibition is the consequence of an enormous network of people, objects, places and histories. That in the final product these chains of creation and production are made to resemble the tree and not the roots is ultimately to the detriment of good art and good exhibitions. This dynamic, and the problems it poses, are at the centre of Kate Newby's exhibition practice. The Floresville, Texas-based artist offers a direct challenge to orthodoxy by bringing collaborative labour to the forefront of her processes and presentation, and

through a commitment to fundamentally altering the meaning and felt-sensation of exhibition spaces.

YES TOMORROW is Kate Newby's largest and most ambitious project in Aotearoa to date. Beginning in the Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi, the exhibition spills out of the gallery itself, onto the Kelburn campus of Victoria University and into a nearby park. The seven individual elements or interventions that comprise the show represent a kind of art and exhibition-making that forefronts values of community, collaboration, openness, patience and labour. The exhibition rejects the seamless individualism that shadows much contemporary art in favour of the mess and marks of collaborative work and creation.

The exhibition follows a string of recent projects for Newby with a shared framework. Invested and engrained in specific sites, Newby works with a network of local makers to create works that variously operate within, intervene in and transform a given exhibition space. It's an approach that encourages a focus on the body in space, the constant renegotiation of your own presence within a complete environment rather than contemplation on individual objects.



SHE'S TALKING TO THE WALL (2012–21) is a composite of seven ceramic wind chimes produced over a decade. The finger-like forms, a familiar aspect of Newby's practice, are strung from cables that extend along the full length of the Adam, bowing across the upper gallery like absurd clotheslines that hold each set in place. As a support structure the cabling is impractical, if not farcical, but it's not there to be pragmatic. The structure pulls the building in towards itself and announces from the first that the points of contact and experience that walk you through the exhibition are not being dictated to by the usual supports and spaces of the building.

There's a cliché that arts writers use when describing exhibitions at the Adam Art Gallery – one I've definitely turned to. The trick is to establish a conflict between the artist tasked with presenting their practice in the space and the building's unique or idiosyncratic architecture. It sets up a dialectic: artist on one side, gallery on the other, and the exhibition emerging as the synthesis of the two. *YES TOMORROW* reveals how conditional thinking through this binary really is. This exhibition controls, occupies and transforms the space with an absolute confidence. There is a strength, will, and muscularity to Newby's practice that rarely enters discussions of her work, but can't be escaped in this context. Yes, her interventions open up a space, but a wrench is a better metaphor than a blooming flower.

Mounted directly behind the wind chimes is one of the three glass panes that make up *Always humming* (2021). Interventions into the skin of the building itself, each of the three panes is an opaque and perforated

replacement for one of the Adam's original windows. These panels were individually cast by glass artist Claudia Borella in Whanganui. One, facing out onto the university courtyard, is mounted high on the building with two large holes; another is placed low, pocked and perforated like glass coral. The works puncture the sense of grounded stability that the gallery's gridded steel, concrete and glass usually suggests. Instead, the exterior becomes something membranous, open and breathy. The pane behind *SHE'S TALKING TO THE WALL* in the right conditions allows wind to enter into the space, awakening the chimes to a gentle clatter as the building itself breathes.

How funny you are today, New York (2010–21) occupies the Adam's Kirk Gallery. Old and new bodies of work are displayed on a raised timber platform that restricts movement in an already small space to a thin pathway. The presentation brings with it a museological feel that seems at odds with the rest of the show. Arranged in tight clusters, some of the works displayed with paper labels, it's a closed and prescribed moment in an otherwise open and expansive exhibition. There is something to be said for a tonal shift that prevents us from getting too comfortable, too convinced by the romantic lightness of the rest of the show. Whether that was the intention or not, it comes at the expense of the works in the room – huddled, clustered, stifled and atonal.

The bottom floor of the gallery is entirely covered by a cement-like blue screed. Or rather, the bottom floor of the gallery has become a blue screed. It stretches from the stairs to the end of the gallery space and is marked at every pace by the indents and gouges of fingers and hands.

Left: *Always humming*, 2021, glass. Photo: Ted Whitaker

Below right: *You got to write a song and I got to be in it*, 2021, terracotta tiles. Photo: Ted Whitaker

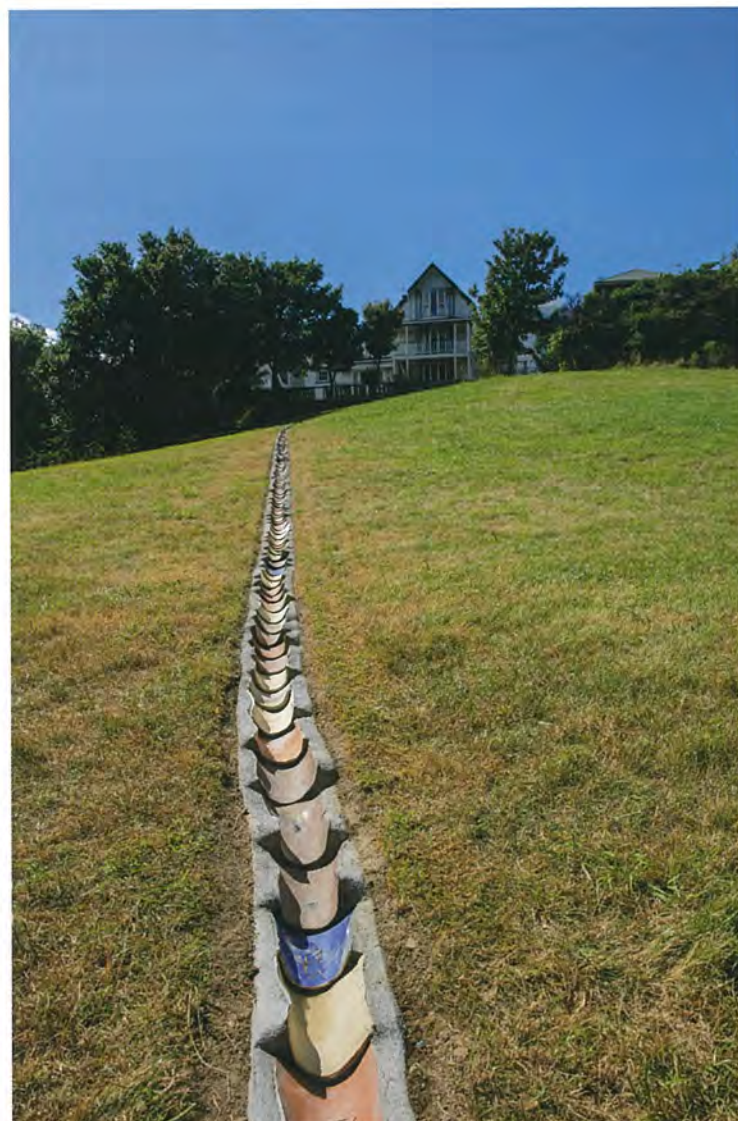
Far below: Rob Duncan Megan Daniel Margaret Lynn Samuel Deb Nico Marilyn Sarah Henry Mieko Kate Ruth Mike Briana Justine Grace Romesh Josefine Madison Nerissa David Nina Gabrielle Dayle Isabelle Ana Lilith Christian Ruby Sophie Millie Michaela Loretta Laura Christina Alison Olly Miriam Fred Lise Hazel Simon Mia Anita Caroline Anna Prak Nadya Alba Xander Flavia Emma Stef Areez Bella Rachel Kirsty Kate Nicola Emerita Tim Megan Ruby Fina Felixe Ella Eva Ben Julian Bena Huhana Max Lily Tina Rose Bill and Teresa, 2021, assorted clay, glaze, mortar. Photo: Ted Whitaker

The marks are an incredibly human relief on an unnatural surface that manages to seem at once dense and buoyant. There are sweeps, pulls, gutters and claws, met by occasional artificial elements like an aluminium can tab. Shaky horizontal lines punctuate each stretch of the screed. Newby evolved the surface with her marks after the screed was poured, in sections, and up close the effect is like a messy contemporary equivalent of the Renaissance *giornata* – the area of wet fresco that could be applied and painted in a single day. Viewed from above, the horizontal lines become waves rolling across the coarse blue floor, a fitting vision for its oceanic complexion.

Like so many of the works in *YES TOMORROW*, the pleasure of being with the floor isn't so much in contemplation of materials or forms, but in the bodily experience of standing on it and walking through it. It is the most radical of Newby's alterations to the Adam, and the one that most enthusiastically reinforces the change the gallery has undergone as a whole. Instead of a compromise between artist and architecture, *YES TOMORROW* is what happens when a gallery is fully transformed by a project and animated into a space that offers a different kind of experience.

One of Newby's gestures outside the gallery is a grid of terracotta tiles full of sweeping marks and divots similar to those of the screed floor. This work, *You got to write a song and I got to be in it* (2021), lies in a courtyard next door to the gallery and can be seen from within. The second is much harder to find – placed in Terrace Tunnel Park, a small pocket of green space above the motorway that many Wellingtonians may never have seen nor heard of. The work is a row of clay tiles embedded into a ditch in the sloped park, resembling a tessellated water drain. Each of the tiles was shaped across the thigh of a volunteer, the final installation a product of their collective patience. The names of each shaper have been enshrined as the title of the work. The tiles were fired at potter Duncan Shearer's kiln in Paeroa before being fixed in this strange, out-of-the-way pocket of turf. Separated from the main body of the exhibition, the work quietly exemplifies its same values: collaboration, patience, an opening up of space. It's a fitting place to end time spent with *YES TOMORROW* – out in the open, standing with the product of collaborative work frozen in an expansive stillness, while cars gently rumble beneath your feet.

Kate Newby's *YES TOMORROW* is at the Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi, Wellington, until 30 May.



Swallowing Geography / Len Lye: Rainbow Dance

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery



Ana Iti, the woman whose back was a whetstone, 2021. Metal, limestone. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Hayley Bethell.

October 22, 2021

Swallowing Geography
Len Lye: Rainbow Dance
October 23, 2021–February 13, 2022

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery
Devon Street West and Queen Street
New Plymouth 4342
New Zealand

govettbrewster.com
[Instagram](#)

Two new exhibitions at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery | Len Lye Centre offer four artists' responses to the Taranaki landscape related to land, place and histories and fresh insights into the innovative thinking and multimedia practice of Len Lye.

Swallowing Geography addresses the voids in the histories written by others, and is an opportunity for artists to speak personally of their identification and value of place. Bringing together four Aotearoa New Zealand artists—Matt Pine (Te Ātiawa, Te Atihaunui-a-Pāpārangi and Ngāti Tūwharetoa), Shona Rapira Davies (Ngāti Wai ki Aotea), Kate Newby and Ana Iti (Te Rarawa)—the exhibition presents expansive newly-commissioned installations and reimagined works which collectively interrogate how we engage with and absorb the landscapes and built environments in which we live. The show also explores how these geographies and spaces carry and communicate our collective histories.

Matt Pine's installations are forms that abstract and map Pā (fortress) sites—pre-European forms of Māori architecture. Shona Rapira Davies' *Ko Te Kihikihi*, 2021 addresses the devastating colonial exploitation of people, land and sea particular to Taranaki. Ana Iti's *the woman whose back was a whetstone*, 2021 references atua wāhine (female deity) Hine-tua-hōanga and her relationship with sculpture—the works are based on the akmon forms which stop the sea eroding the land at Port Taranaki.

Kate Newby incorporates elements from the city's urban environment through installations of handmade ceramics that transform the architecture of the gallery and bring in the overlooked everyday surroundings. Her cast glass and tile work in the Open Window are visible from outside the gallery and includes glass made with sand sourced from her family home on the West Coast near Auckland.

Swallowing Geography explores personal, cultural, regional, and national histories contained within the particular lands of Taranaki. For curator Megan Tamati-Quennell (Te Ātiawa, Ngāi Tahu) the three generations of artists “engage visitors and highlight the ways in which we absorb and reflect our surroundings, and how we may become grounded in a particular place.”

The Govett-Brewster acknowledges Ngāti Te Whiti as haukaingā and mana whenua of Ngāmotu.

In the adjoining Len Lye Centre, *Rainbow Dance* surveys Len Lye's multimedia practice over his 50-year career, bringing together his innovations in film and sculpture as well as lesser-known projects and works from the Len Lye Foundation collection and archive. The exhibition builds on Lye's live action film *Rainbow Dance* (1936) and reflects the work's vibrant colour, stencilled pattern and live dance to bring Lye's experimentation in film and photo media to life. The moving image, photograms, paintings, sculptures and other objects expand the picture of one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most important artists. *Rainbow Dance* is curated by the Gallery's Len Lye Curator Paul Brobbel.

Also presented from December 2022 will be the newly-created *Convolutions*, Lye's first wall-based kinetic sculpture developed by the Len Lye Foundation.

The Serpent's Eye

Musée d'art contemporain de la Haute-Vienne, Château de
Rochechouart



Kate Newby, *I love you poems*, 2018–2021. Salt and soda fired ceramics, found glass, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Art : Concept. Installation view, *washed up*, Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY.

October 11, 2021

The Serpent's Eye

October 1–December 15, 2021

**Musée d'art contemporain de la Haute-
Vienne, Château de Rochechouart**

Place du Château

87600 Rochechouart

France

Hours: Wednesday–Monday 10am–6pm

T +33 5 55 03 77 77

musee-rochechouart.com

[Instagram](#)

Artists: Carolina Caycedo, Chioma Ebinama, Simone Fattal, Barbara Hammer, Kate Newby, Sophie Podolski, Kiki Smith

Throughout autumn, the first floor galleries feature works by seven artists on the theme of animism and native myths. The exhibition's title is borrowed from a collection of Japanese folk tales and serves as the doorway to a world of beliefs and rituals seen through the eyes of international artists rarely shown in France.

Representing different generations and cultures, they share an interest in connections with the earth, with plants and with an inherent life force. Several recent additions to the museum's collection are presented (works by Carolina Caycedo, Simone Fattal, Sophie Podolski) plus two site-specific installations made for the castle Hunt Gallery by New-Zealand artist Kate Newby.

Suspended between dream and magic spell, *The Serpent's Eye* offers a vision of mankind melded with the natural world. Spirits from Igbo mythology evoked in Chioma Ebinama's blue-tinted drawings join the company of feminine figures dancing with lion, wolf and bear in sculptures by Kiki Smith.

The same overwhelming meditative thrall of landscape so central to Kate Newby's artistic practice of collecting, observing and composing also finds expression in Simone Fattal's endeavour to seize fleeting shapes of clouds on the horizon.

Ultimately, all these poetic perspectives are the fruit of introspection into ecology, renewed faith in ancient wisdoms and the need to find new models for continued existence on our planet.

The Musée d'art contemporain de la Haute-Vienne was opened in 1985 in the château de Rochechouart on the initiative of the Haute Vienne département council. It includes a major collection of contemporary art works and offers a range of exhibitions.

Located within the château de Rochechouart, the museum differentiates itself through a permanent dialogue between contemporary creation and historical heritage. From the museum's early years onwards, permanent works have been commissioned from international artists (Giuseppe Penone, Dora Garcia, Yona Friedman, Richard Long).

Each year, in parallel to the contemporary collection and Raoul Hausmann Resource Library, the museum organises themed or monographic exhibitions dedicated to the most current contemporary art (Jochen Lempert, Babette Mangolte, Anthony McCall, Simone Fattal, Carolee Schneemann, Laure Prouvost...).

The Serpent's Eye was made possible through the generous contributions of Balice Hertling Galleries (Paris), Fortnight Institute (New York), Catinca Tabacaru (Bucharest), Instituto de vision (Bogotá), KOW (Berlin) as well as the Barbara Hammer Estate, Joelle de La Casinière and Catherine Podolski.



Exposition La Mer imaginaire : immergez-vous à la Fondation Carmignac sur l'île de Porquerolles

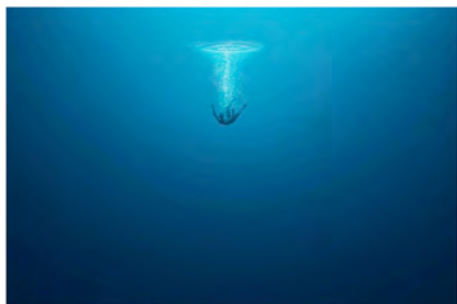
Carnet de voyage



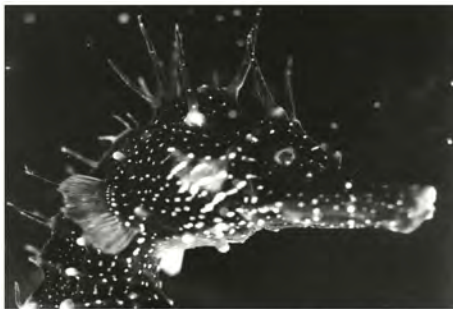
Par Mahaut Malmont-Marchal | Vendredi 11 juin 2021 à 12h00



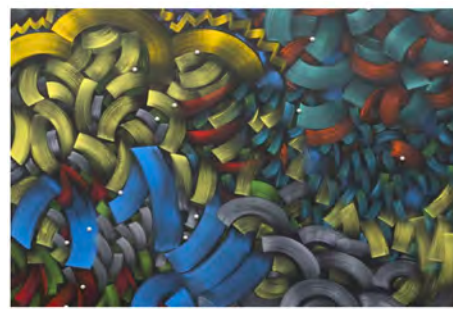
Du 20 mai au 17 octobre 2021, pour la quatrième saison de la Villa Carmignac, l'exposition "La Mer imaginaire" transforme ses espaces en un musée d'histoire naturelle sous-marin interrogeant les interactions entre notre civilisation et le monde subaquatique.



Exposition La Mer imaginaire Fondation Carmignac



jean Painlevé, Boute de Porquerolles, 1930, Les Documents Contrepointés, Paris

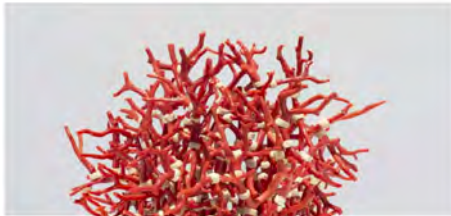


Alex Olson, Eelbow, 2019, Fondation Carmignac

La traversée de l'exposition

Conçue par le commissaire américain, Chris Sharp, elle puise son inspiration aussi bien dans l'architecture du lieu - les espaces immergés sous la villa et son plafond d'eau - que dans les œuvres de la collection : la fresque sous-marine de Miquel Barceló ou encore le homard perché sur une chaise de Jeff Koons. Plusieurs prêts d'artistes français et internationaux comme Henri Matisse, Gilles Aillaud, Mathieu Mercier ou Gabriel Orozco viennent enrichir cet ensemble aux côtés de nouvelles productions de Bianca Bondi, Miquel Barceló, Lin May Saeed, Kate Newby et Hubert Duprat, créées pour l'occasion. L'exposition *La Mer imaginaire* se prolonge dans le Fort Sainte-Agathe et à la Villa Noailles, avec une commande photographique de Nicolas Floc'h sur les fonds marins de Porquerolles et de ses îles voisines, grâce à un partenariat avec le Parc National de Port-Cros. À travers des œuvres aussi bien modernes que contemporaines, l'exposition entend célébrer la mer comme une ressource précieuse et évocatrice, grouillant de vie connue et inconnue, ouverte au merveilleux, à l'étrangeté, l'inattendu et dont l'immensité alimente depuis toujours notre imagination.

Cette exposition en véritable immersion est une constellation de micro-environnements subaquatiques, des surréalistes aux artistes pop et leurs héritiers, des représentations scientifiques à celles de l'imagination. Par contrastes ou similitudes, les œuvres se lient et se délient en plusieurs regroupements qui se précisent et s'affirment au fil de la traversée. C'est à travers la figure « paternelle » de Jean Painlevé, choisie par Chris Sharp, que nous sommes guidés tout au long de l'exposition dans les profondeurs de la mer. En effet, un hippocampe majestueux photographié par le réalisateur et biologiste français inaugure la traversée poétique. Dans la première salle, baignée par les « couleurs de l'eau » de Porquerolles de l'artiste français Nicolas Floc'h, les visiteurs découvrent une œuvre de l'artiste californienne Alex Olson. Représentant la flore ondulante d'un fond marin, cette dernière devient ici l'habitat d'une araignée de mer et d'un corail réalisés respectivement par les artistes Jean-Marie Appriou et Hubert Duprat. Cette première partie de *La Mer imaginaire* interroge plusieurs thèmes présents tout au long de l'exposition, notamment la notion d'artifice mais aussi notre regard sur la dichotomie entre nature et culture, héritée du siècle des Lumières et omniprésente dans les muséums d'histoire naturelle.



HUBERT DUPONT Coral (Steel Bronze 1984–2020) Marc Damge



BIANCA BONDI The Fall and Rise, 2021/ AGAGP, Paris, 2021 – Fondation Carmignac



MICHAEL E. SMITH Untitled, 2011/6 Marc Damge



JEFF KOONS Animals, 2003–2009/6 Jeff Koons – Collection Carmignac



Leidy Churchman Untitled (Billboard of an Empty Bed), 2018/6 Lewis Ronalds



JEAN-MARIE APPRIOU The Dances, 2018/6 Fondation Carmignac

Un squelette géant de baleine nous accueille ensuite, survolant et habitant l'espace en forme de croix d'une présence à la fois merveilleuse et menaçante. A travers la transformation quasi alchimiste de la matière, où les os deviennent vibrants de vie sous le bassin d'eau, l'artiste sud-africaine Bianca Bondi évoque le cycle de mort et de renaissance de la nature. Les oeuvres de Michael E. Smith viennent approfondir les thèmes abordés au début de la traversée. Une petite photographie de poissons lumineux (GloFish) aux couleurs variées, exemples des premiers animaux de compagnie génétiquement modifiés mis sur le marché au début des années 2000, est exposée entre une forêt de méduses multicolores de Micha Laury. Dans une autre salle, parmi d'autres photographies de Jochen Lempert et Jean Painlevé, des oeuvres de Henri Matisse, Gabriel Orozco et Yuji Agematsu dialoguent de façon toute aussi insolite et inattendue. Les Spume en lévitation de l'artiste mexicain Orozco des sculptures qui ressemblent autant à de pâles raies manta qu'à des oiseaux qui flottent devant une tapisserie de Matisse mêlant ostensiblement ciel et mer avec élégance et ambiguïté.

Ailleurs dans l'exposition, des artistes puisant dans le vocabulaire du pop art produisent un effet surprenant, si ce n'est éclatant. Du homard gonflable en équilibre de Jeff Koons à l'orque en peluche sur un banc d'écolier de Cosima von Bonin en passant par la baleine imaginaire d'Allison Katz ou la peinture monumentale de Leidy Churchman, il devient ici évident que la mer est à la fois une source d'inspiration et une métaphore parfois tragique de l'inconscient. Au moment de quitter les lieux, les visiteurs reçoivent de l'artiste californien David Horvitz, une discrète invitation, différente chaque jour, pour une pensée ou un comportement à adopter au contact de la mer, près de la Villa. Dans les jardins, longeant la prairie, Mathieu Mercier met en scène un couple de salamandres anthropomorphes évoluant entre un paysage de terre aride et un aquarium pendant que les requins de Jean-Marie Appriou dansent au milieu des cannes de Provence du jardin. Tous ces exemples ne sont que quelques-unes des nombreuses représentations qui nourrissent la réflexion derrière *La Mer imaginaire* et dont les juxtapositions génèrent autant de relations que de digressions.

Walking Tour With Ana Iti And Christina Barton

Walking tour

with Ana Iti & Christina Barton

2pm Saturday 22 May 2021

Meet at Adam Art Gallery

Friday, 14 May 2021, 2:37 pm

Press Release: [Adam Art Gallery](#)

Rain day: 2pm Sunday 23 May

A feature of artist Kate Newby's practice is the way it is rooted in her observations of the world around her. Signs of this are manifold in *YES TOMORROW*, her solo exhibition at Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi. They include the found glass scavenged from the streets of Wellington that has made its way into the show, and the clay-tile drains that are the inspiration for her installation above the Terrace Tunnel.

Join Adam Art Gallery director Christina Barton and artist Ana Iti, who will take you for a walk sparked by Newby's exhibition. Adopting the Situationist's concept of the 'dérive', they will traverse the city, starting with Newby's outdoor works and ending not far from the Carillon on Buckle Street, offering a random tour that encourages participants to see the city through a different lens.

Christina Barton has worked with both Kate Newby and Ana Iti, inviting them to produce new work for the Adam Art Gallery. She has a longstanding interest in contemporary sculpture and the recent history of artists who work with materials, bodies, sites and language to expand, de- and re-materialise the medium in self-consciously anti-monumental and environmentally sensitive ways.

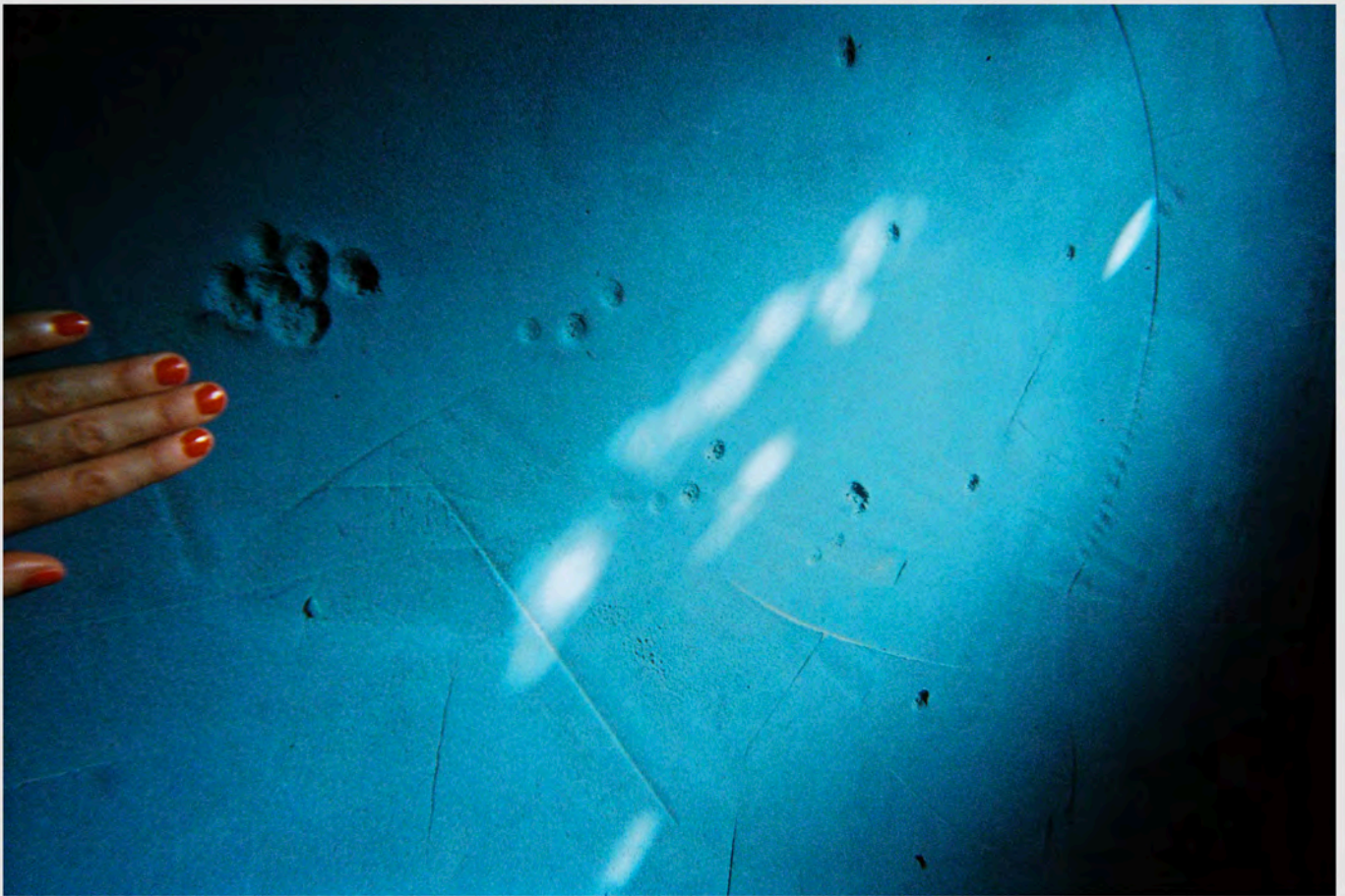
Ana Iti (Te Rawara) is an artist based in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington who has produced a body of work that draws on embedded histories and grants them material form in moving images, text-based works and sculptural installation. She is currently one of four artists in residence at the Art Centre in Ōtautahi Christchurch and last year she undertook the McCahon House Residency in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Her most recent work, *Takoto*, 2020, can be seen on the roof of the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. This was commissioned as part of the *Toi Tū Toi Ora* exhibition.



Detail of 'prison' bricks, Tasman Street Brick Wall, Wellington, 2021
(photo: Christina Barton)

AND I DO CARE

On poetry, institutional interrogation, and Kate Newby's predilection for the everyday.



Disposable camera documentation. Courtesy of the artist.

[Photo Credit](#)

Cameron Ah Loo-Matamua
May 07 2021

[SHARE](#)

The poem is at last between two persons instead of two pages. —Frank O'Hara

IF THE PAGE IS AT TIMES an unruly partner to the poet, so too is the gallery to the artist. The gallery—with all of its walls and its patrons, its curators and technicians, catalogues and art histories—does as much to cradle the artist as it does to confine them. Within this dilemma Kate Newby's work glides in like an incision, a deliberate imposition upon the temperature-controlled and neatly ordered parameters of the gallery. It is her page—cut up, bent out of shape, and twisted to her will.

Walking into the Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi—the artist’s most recent page—its lofty white walls and austere architecture seem more severe than usual. A kind gallery attendant peeks out from behind a computer screen to greet me and asks if I’m familiar with Newby’s work. I think to myself they look a bit cold amidst all of this open space. The feeling is made all the more pronounced by Newby’s utter stripping back of the gallery, from the removal of blinds to the complete omission of a wall-text announcing her exhibition *YES TOMORROW*. It is her largest undertaking in Aotearoa to date, and it challenges the capacity of the gallery to accommodate her distinct, evolving, and at times overwhelming sculptural idiom.



Kate Newby, *SHE'S TALKING TO THE WALL*, 2012-2021, detail, assorted clay, glaze, glass, thread, wire. Courtesy of the artist and Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi.

[Photo Credit](#)

NEWBY OFTEN MAKES REFERENCE to Frank O'Hara, the late New York School poet and former curator at the Museum of Modern Art, appropriating lines of his poetry as work titles when she takes a liking to portions of his meandering writings. She shares with me an old, weathered printout she made of 'Personism: A Manifesto,' written by O'Hara in 1959 as a letter to an unnamed friend. It's an entertaining treatise that moves from diaristic justifications ('It was founded by me after lunch with LeRoi Jones [later Amiri Baraka] on August 27, 1959, a day in which I was in love with someone (not Roi, by the way, a blond)') to vulgar philosophising ('As for measure and other technical apparatus, that's just common sense: If you're going to buy a pair of pants you want them to be tight enough so everyone will want to go to bed with you. There's nothing metaphysical about it.') He is funny, his writing flirtatious, and I giggle when I notice Newby has underlined that latter line about pants and metaphysics.

O'Hara's cynical sense of humour almost overshadows one of the points he was trying to make: that the poem, or art, should primarily form an experience, an unmediated communion between an author and their reader, that imagined yet real 'someone'. Rather than write the poem into existence, why not, O'Hara says, just pick up the telephone? Who really cares about all the pomp and circumstance? What about life and living? It is an idealistic position, and one that has influenced much of Newby's work. You can see it in her invocation of communal and folk artisanship, her uses of common materials such as clay and glass, and her attraction to the ephemeral matter that makes up our everyday lives. I think of the barrel tiles she creates with a group of eighty companions, each participant lending their thighs for the moulding of what is to become a channel-like drain on a hill five minutes' walk from the gallery. The distance from the gallery—that problematic page—provides a reprieve from all of the preciousness and expected orderliness.



Kate Newby, Rob Duncan Megan Daniel Margaret Lynn Samuel Deb Nico Marilyn Sarah Henry Mieke Kate Ruth Mike Briana Justine Grace Romesh Josefine Madison Nerissa David Nina Gabrielle Dayle Isabelle Ana Lilith Christian Ruby Sophie Millie Michaela Loretta Laura Christina Alison Olly Miriam Fred Lise Hazel Simon Mia Anita Caroline Anna Prak Nadya Alba Xander Flavia Emma Stef Areez Bella Rachel Kirsty Kate Nicola Emerita Tim Megan Ruby Fina Felixe Ella Eva Ben Julian Bena Huhana Max Lily Tina Rose Bill and Teresa, 2021, assorted clay, glaze, mortar. Photo courtesy of the artist and Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi.

Photo Credit

the poem, or art, should primarily form an experience, an unmediated communion between an author and their reader, that imagined yet real ‘someone’.

ANOTHER DOCUMENT NEWBY SHARES with me is a practice statement she wrote in 2007 while studying for her master's at the Elam School of Fine Arts. It features expected terms such as ‘building scenarios,’ ‘interventions,’ ‘rebuilding,’ ‘unbuilding,’ and ‘the everyday,’ along with other, less expected ones such as ‘détournement,’ ‘piracy,’ and ‘counter-monumental.’ On reading those last three, a timid hunch I had lost all its trepidation and I began to follow its lead. Critics and curators have in the past skirted the politics of Newby's work, or at least not given it ample consideration. In 2014, in an otherwise detailed appraisal of the artist's practice, Jennifer Kabat proclaimed ‘Newby's questions are subtle. This isn't institutional critique, nothing that heavy. The answers are left open-ended.’ Slight as Newby's gestures may be, that declarative separation from a lineage of institutional interrogation seems burdensome, especially upon looking at her most recent work.

YES TOMORROW's commissioning curator, Tina Barton, might agree. In her catalogue essay for the exhibition, ‘Seven Notes (for Kate),’ she details the at-times gruelling lengths it took for the exhibition to be mounted, and the political dimension firmly placed within that. In her sixth note, frankly titled ‘Strained Relations,’ she says: (1)

Newby's show tests the building, and its guardians. Usually art is placed inside its container, which serves as a neutral box, a safe haven [...] a space separate from the world designed for a special category of discrete objects we call ‘art.’ There's a politics to this, with prescribed responsibilities assigned to both institutional host and artist-guest [...] A history of institutional critique has tested this relationship, as Newby is well aware [...] and she's learnt from all of them about the value and purpose of the dialectical push/pull between ‘white cube’ and world.

Barton places Newby in a lineage with Hans Haacke, Nancy Holt, Francis Alÿs, Roni Horn, and the American minimalists. In person, Newby and I discuss another helpful addition: the arte povera movement, an early influence that continues to stream through her practice. The movement was famously aligned with the late critic and superstar curator Germano Celant, who gifted its name, literally translated as ‘poor art.’ Arte povera came into being during the social upheavals of the 1960s where artists began to metabolise into their practices the growing disdain and skepticism toward cultural institutions, governments, and history’s grand narratives. Much of the work made under its banner was characterised by an elemental naivety in materials (earth, water, air, raw metals, stone) and placed an emphasis on the experiential capacity of art, attempting to move away from the growing commercialisation of the cultural sphere. In *Arte Povera*, Celant’s influential book, his characterisation of the movement’s quintessential artist echoes the same form of idealism found in O’Hara: ‘He has chosen to live within direct experience, no longer the representative – the source of pop artists – he aspires to live, not to see.’ (2)

The gallery is a monument, one that Newby and many artists before her have tried to counter, or at least antagonise. Mami Kataoka, in her judge’s statement for the 2012 Walters Prize, extolled Newby’s winning installation for being ‘the most reserved but radical way of transcending the fixed architectural space for contemporary art, liberating us towards wider universal space.’ This transcendence is as present in *YES TOMORROW*, if not more pointedly so. Within the space is her long ‘scratch,’ made directly into the gallery’s peculiar rubber floors, patched up with hundreds of miniature ceramic and glass pools; there are her wind chimes, strung from the floor and led right up to the peak of the building, wobbling and signalling your eyes up, emphasising both the capacity of the gallery architecture and, moreover, its usual stagnancy—its ‘dead space’; there are perforated panes of glass, pierced with finger-sized holes that disrupt and expose what sculptor Robert Morris might refer to as the ‘insulated setting’ of the gallery, its theoretical and physical lack of sensuality; and then there is that impossible blue floor, the inescapable anchor of the exhibition, lying proudly on top of that aforementioned page, superseding it in every way possible.



Kate Newby, *Always humming*, 2021, glass; and *What Kind of Day Has it Been*, 2021, detail, screed, pigment, glass, silver, bronze. Courtesy of the artist and Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi. [Photo Credit](#)



Disposable camera documentation. Courtesy of the artist. [Photo Credit](#)

The gallery is a monument, one that Newby and many artists before her have tried to counter, or at least antagonise.

I VISIT NEWBY AT HER FAMILY HOME, out at Te Henga where she grew up. Here, she was surrounded by a community of artists and artisans. All that nature, too. Allie Eagle was a neighbour, taking her ‘under her wing from a young age,’ showing her how to use watercolours. Her dad built a kiln back in the day also, which local potters would come to use. She points at it familiarly. We talk through her work over coffee that her partner Rob has made, and she sorts through a box of her ceramics. She mentions reading a book, *Ninth Street Women*, which looks at the lives of painters Lee Krasner, Elaine de Kooning, Helen Frankenthaler, and others. I google it later that night and a *New York Times* review pops up. ‘To be put in any category not defined by one’s work is to be falsified.’ That’s de Kooning, speaking from 1971.

Another time, I run into Newby in Ngāmotu New Plymouth, where she is staying in an Airbnb just down the road from the Govett-Brewster. She knows that I’ve injured my leg and I’m quite fatigued, so she lets me nap in a spare room while she moulds clay that will house her scrounged-for glass. A few days later we message through Instagram, our conversation drifting from skincare to criticism. She recalls something that I said earlier in the week about criticism being a form of affection for a Virgo. I respond: ‘I wouldn’t bother if I didn’t care, y’know?’ to which she replies, ‘YES’ ‘And I do care.’

Endnotes

(1) Newby, Kate, *Kate Newby Yes Tomorrow*, Wellington: Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi, 2021, 141-142.

(2) Celant, Germano, *Arte Povera*, New York & Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1969, 225.

Musée de Rochechouart : une artiste lance un appel aux Haut-Viennois pour ramasser des bris de verre et créer une oeuvre

Publié le 01/03/2021 à 17h38 • Mis à jour le 01/03/2021 à 17h48

Écrit par Ayed Olfa



Le château de Rochechouart accueillera à l'automne 2021 l'oeuvre participative dans le cadre d'une exposition. © Mehdi Fedouach / AFP

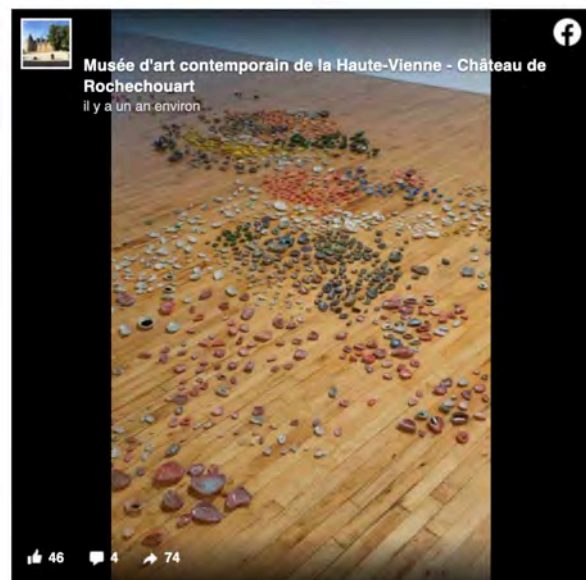
Du 15 février au 3 mai 2021, le musée de Rochechouart (Haute-Vienne) s'associe au projet de Kate Newby et propose aux personnes intéressées de récolter, lors de leur balade, des bris de verre, afin que l'artiste néozélandaise puisse créer une oeuvre d'art.

"C'est lié à l'idée de la marche. D'habitude elle le fait elle-même. Elle réalise une oeuvre avec des bris de verre lors de ses promenades comme ce n'était pas possible d'être là, elle fait participer les gens", explique Sébastien Faucon, directeur du musée d'Art contemporain de Rochechouart. Depuis le 15 février et jusqu'au 3 mai 2021, le musée d'art contemporain du château de Rochechouart s'associe à Kate Newby, en lançant un appel à participer aux Haut-Viennois. Le but ? Aider l'artiste néozélandaise à créer une oeuvre d'art collective à partir de bouts de verres cassés, et de tessons de bouteilles ramassés lors de balades quotidiennes.

Cette oeuvre, qui associe préservation de l'environnement et art, est en symbiose avec le regard de l'artiste qui s'intéresse à la relation nature-architecture entretenue au quotidien par l'homme.

On espère qu'elle pourra venir pour faire cette oeuvre ici. Dans le cas contraire elle la réalisera chez elle à distance et on lui enverra les éléments.

Sébastien Faucon, directeur du musée d'Art contemporain de Rochechouart



Une exposition à l'automne 2021

Car une fois les débris récoltés, ils seront transformés par l'artiste, refondus en céramique pour former ensuite un grand sol dans une pièce du château de Rochechouart à l'occasion d'une exposition en automne 2021. Le musée organisera, si les mesures sanitaires le permettent, une exposition collective rassemblant trois femmes artistes.

Les détails de Sébastien Faucon, directeur du musée de Rochechouart sur France 3 Limousin (1 minute 19 secondes)

Les personnes qui auront participé à la collecte peuvent laisser leurs coordonnées sur les lieux de dépôts. Elles seront invitées par le département à l'exposition en automne et découvriront l'œuvre à cette occasion et le reste de l'exposition ainsi que l'artiste.

Les lieux de dépôts : détails sur le site internet du Musée de Rochechouart

Au Château de Rochechouart, du lundi au vendredi de 10h à 12h30 et de 14h à 18h.

A l'Hôtel du Département (11 rue François Chénieux - Limoges) du lundi au jeudi de 8h30 à 17h30 et le vendredi de 8h30 à 16h30.

A la Maison du Département du Dorat (10 rue de la Croix Parot - Le Dorat) du lundi au jeudi de 8h30 à 12h et de 13h30 à 17h30 et le vendredi de 8h30 à 12h et de 13h30 à 16h30.

A la Maison du Département de Nantiat (56 avenue des Pins - Nantiat) du lundi au jeudi de 8h30 à 12h et de 13h30 à 17h30 et le vendredi de 8h30 à 12h et de 13h30 à 16h30.

A la Maison du Département de Châteauneuf-la-Forêt (7 impasse des Thuyas - Châteauneuf-la-Forêt) du lundi au jeudi de 8h30 à 12h et de 13h30 à 17h30 et le vendredi de 8h30 à 12h et de 13h30 à 16h30.

Voir les détails sur le [site internet du Musée de Rochechouart](#).

Te Hīkoi Toi: The wind blows through the gallery

Mark Amery • 05:00, Feb 27 2021



TED WHITAKER

Kate Newby's work is on show at Kelburn's Adam Art Gallery.

Mark Amery takes a walk up and down from the city to a major solo show at Kelburn's Adam Art Gallery

University has begun and, with it, a show by Kate Newby at Adam Art Gallery, up on Victoria's Kelburn campus.

The gallery has had a darkened bunker-like nature of late and in this respect this gallery-filling installation is a radical agent - opening spaces out to the light, and to the air. Literally: organic-shaped holes in window panes break the institution's climate control; panes are frosted to glow as if cracked under a natural icy wonderland transformation. Newby's work then spills playfully outside: a marked tiled patio beside a bike park below and, way down the hill to another little noticed space, a ceramic channel in a small park atop The Terrace Tunnel.

With the air heavy with the sound of cicada and smell of kawakawa, a bush walk is offered to and from the city. It's a gift; for the Adam's public challenge is its site. Parking is tricky, and from the city it's a climb. Yet in design and programming the gallery can, as here, play powerfully to this elevated position.



TED WHITAKER/STUFF

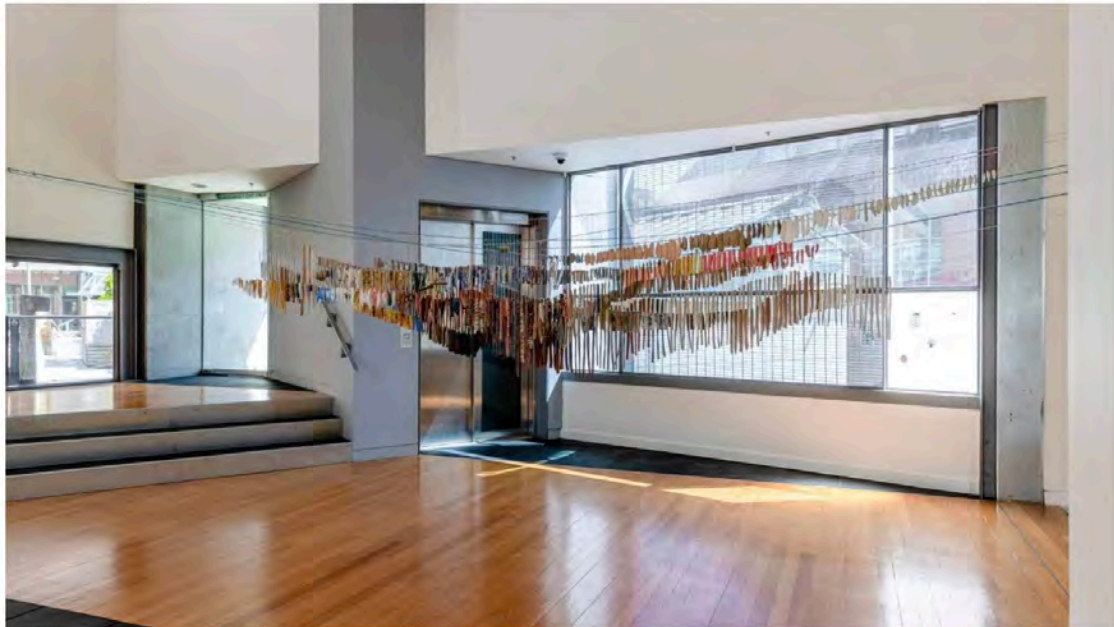
Kate Newby's new clay and mortar work installed in the grass of the Terrace Tunnel Park.

Ian Athfield's remarkable 1999 building perches in a narrow, steep stairway space between buildings, like an enormous slim black hard-drive, clad by scaly armour as if combating both the elements and indifference to new ideas. Inside are unusually deep vertical and long horizontal spaces and sight lines, which the gallery excels in challenging artists to respond to.

Newby makes us look down, and walk out, relishing what we usually pass by. Employing clay, glass, screed and other earth materials her work gifts attention to multitudinal diversity in the weathering surfaces around us.

Before Covid-19 Newby, in 2018 and 2019 alone, produced installations in Portland, Bergen, Vienna and Villeurbanne, near Lyon. As a traveller she responds to new spaces with a familiar set of materials and forms, disrupting spaces temporarily with physical changes – here, she cuts a channel into a rubber floor, filling it with small encrusted ceramic vessels; they gather like glittering leaves.

Start your walk through off The Terrace. A long chattering curling channel of clay half pipes runs in the grass, counter to the motorway tunnel beneath. Seventy-nine named people folded wet clay around their thighs to make it. In its many parts it accepts and holds difference, and encourages creative play, like a small helter-skelter to roll stones down.



TED WHITAKER

Kate Newby's work at the Adam Art Gallery. Foreground: *She's Talking to the Wall*, 2012–2021, assorted clay, glaze, glass, thread, wire. Background: *Always humming*, 2021, glass.

Inspired by old open water drains alongside hill stairways, its lack of positioning for utilitarian function is slightly irritating, yet it offers more active community engagement than the erect monumental art of men you'll mostly find at the Botanic Gardens.

From an enormous clothesline-like structure stretching across one length of the gallery hang 1000 cast ceramic and glass wind chimes in the light, like a giant necklace for the building.

Arranged to form melodious musical lines, as if on a stave, these provide an open catalogue of associations: pendants, sinkers, skeletons, and icicles. Evoked here and elsewhere is the earth's surface, cooling, heating, and revealing. The wind chime is precious, fragile, yet like nature and unlike most art objects, it tingles with the aliveness of touch, and is a collective able to withstand breakage. A light breeze through a small hole moves chimes gently, bringing the sounds of sirens and cicadas. Watch when that southerly hits.

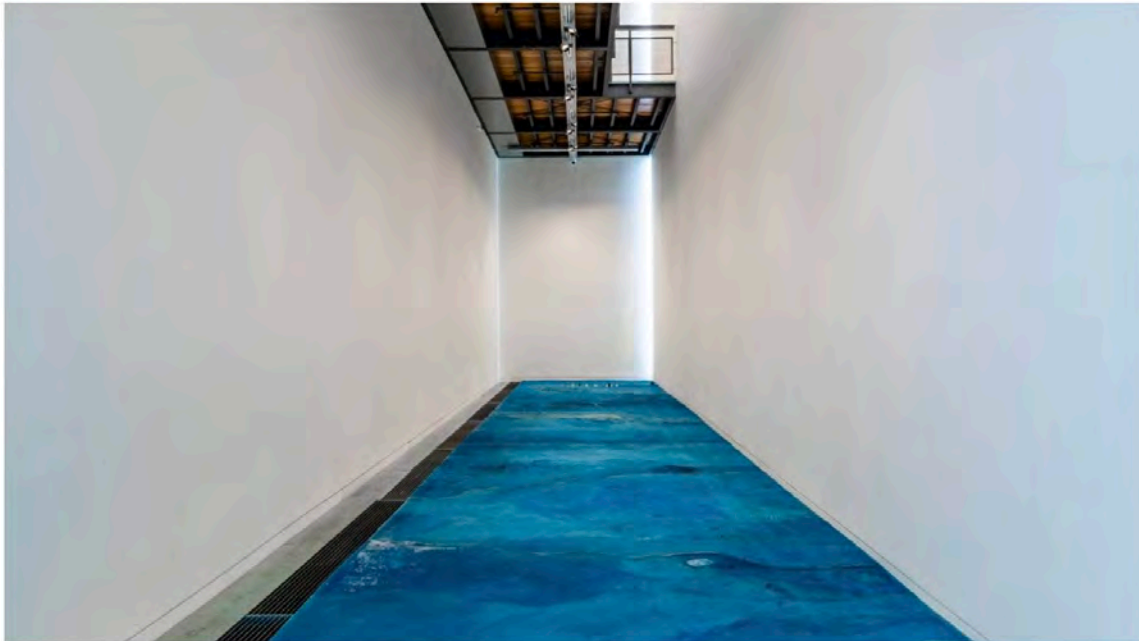


TED WHITAKER

Kate Newby, *How funny you are today*, New York, 2010–2021, assorted clay, glass, glaze on timber.

In the Kirk Gallery clusters of painted ceramic rocks celebrate both difference and commonality. They're like archeological dig findings that refuse singular categorisation. Instead, each pile has a different style of label with a personal, creative text, avoiding any sense beyond that of the poets: 'Yes, me' runs one, 'skim stones formed by clapping hands' another.

Similarly, all of Newby's artworks have these lively poetic titles that open them out to social energy out there in the everyday.



TED WHITAKER

Kate Newby, What Kind of Day Has it Been, 2021, screed, pigment, glass, silver.

The lower gallery is almost entirely covered by an oceanic blue compacted layer of screed, as if the floor flooded and sediment dried. From the gallery high above, it could be a global surface, or zooming in, from Waiotapu on the Volcanic Plateau. Standing on it, there's the interactive pleasure of a walk on a coastal rock shelf.

Yet closer things are more culturally complex - scoured with marks, it's more evocative of shifting furniture than geological forces. Embedded in one place are silver cast fizzy drink can tops and needles. It's a precious rough abstract painting you can not only scuff but which heightens your experience of the world outside.

- *Yes Tomorrow, Kate Newby, until May 30, Adam Art Gallery and Terrace Tunnel Park, access between 214 and 216 The Terrace.*

Participatif

Et si vous participiez à la création d'une œuvre d'art pour le musée de Rochechouart ?

Publié le 15/02/2021 à 08h55



Le musée d'art contemporain de Rochechouart prépare sa prochaine exposition d'automne ©

Populaire du Centre

Dans le cadre de la préparation de son exposition d'automne, le musée d'art contemporain de Rochechouart invite les Haut-Viennois à participer à la création d'une œuvre d'art.

Pour participer, c'est assez simple. Ramassez et collectez lors de vos promenades quotidiennes les petits bouts de verres cassés.

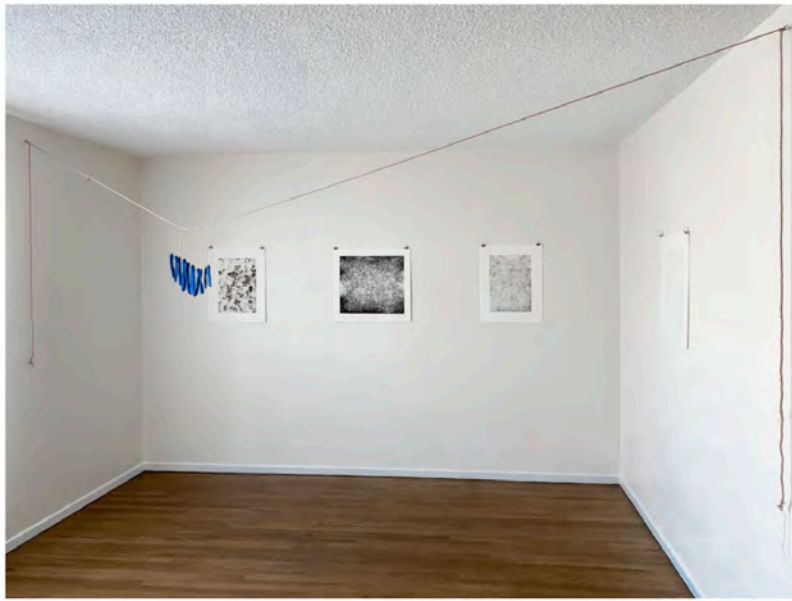
Ces tessons de verre, ramassés au fil de vos marches dans la nature, serviront à produire une nouvelle version de l'œuvre *I love you poems* de Kate Newby, présentée en 2019 à New-York. L'ensemble des bris de verre seront recuits et associés à des éléments en céramique pour créer une grande installation chromatique au sol.

L'œuvre sera présentée à l'automne 2021 au sein d'une exposition collective rassemblant trois femmes artistes. Cette exposition mettra en lumière le rapport de l'homme à son environnement.

Les participants au projet bénéficieront d'une visite privée de l'exposition.

Pratique. Vous pouvez constituer un lot et venir le déposer au château de Rochechouart, du lundi au vendredi, de 10 heures à 12 h 30 et de 14 heures à 18 heures. La collecte se déroulera du 15 février au 3 mai 2021.

Kate Newby at Feuilleton



Installation view courtesy of Feuilleton

Kate Newby is an artist of the immediate and quotidian. Her work is rooted in place, which she defines through the conditions, actions, and events that occur there. Her investment in the local is often expressed through site-specificity. This exhibition gives its viewers insight into how the artist navigates distance, when proximity is so integral to her practice. In this way, "As far as you can" reads as a conceptual challenge to herself during a pandemic.

With a porcelain wind chime and four environmental soft ground etchings, Newby devises recording devices that embrace the random conditions surrounding the creation and reception of her work. *But still LOVE this* is sensitive to the flux of the everyday, registering movement and the elements as an ephemeral sonic recording, at least theoretically. In reality, I found that the sculpture remained indifferent to my presence, the adjacent open window, and nearby fan. The wind chime, a recurring form in Newby's work, strives to encourage attentiveness to the here and now. With her etchings, she drops her gaze to the ground. Created in dialogue with their surroundings, these works harness the aleatory. Copper plates coated in a thin layer of a wax substance and left outside at night, sometimes surrounded by bird feed, are marked by the actions of visitors. These unchoreographed gestures become embedded in the surface. The resulting print serves as a record of movement and traces left by the environment, a history of that place at that time.



But still LOVE this, 2020. Porcelain, silk thread, handmade wool rope, 13.5 x 10 in (34.29 x 25.4 cm)



New Guy, Shadow, Carrots One and Carrots Two, 2018. Soft ground etching, 22.8 x 18.2 in (57.9 x 46.2 cm).

The etchings, which were composed during Texas residencies at Artpace and the Chinati Foundation between 2017 and 2018, memorialize the situational and performative. *Between Flavin and the Horn* is sparse, as if pecked at the edges by birds. At Chinati, the works in the museum's contemporary art collection are installed in separate buildings or outdoor areas. I suspect that the physical placement of this plate on the ground fell between the works of its eponyms Dan Flavin and Roni Horn, fellow sculptors whose precise significance to the artist, if any, remains unclear. The other three works on paper track the feet of animals—claw scratches, paw prints, the heel of a shoe. Pockmarked like skin and dense, *Just be prepared (backyard, birds, Southtown)* represents a violent, chaotic flurry. A sum of calls and responses, "As far as you can" reflects an inclination to capture the fleeting and the ordinary with similar urgency.

Kate Newby

As far as you can

July 1, 2020 – July 15, 2020

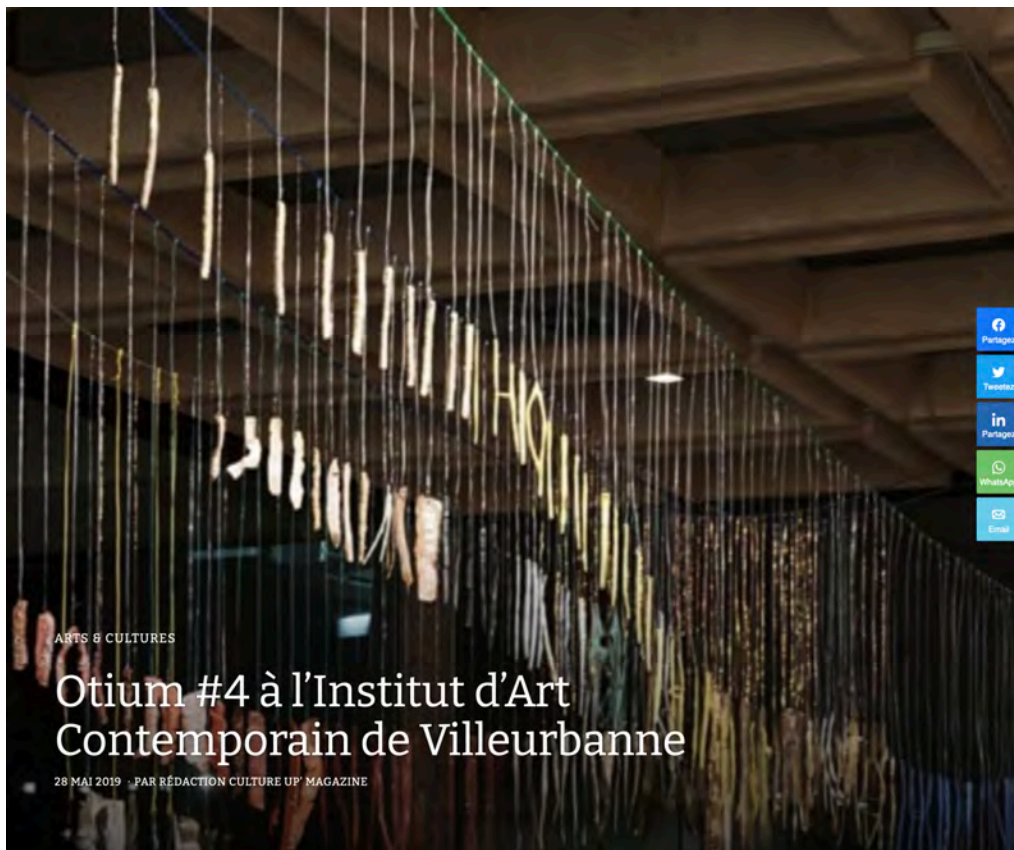
Feuilleton (1440 Logan St., Apt. 1, Los Angeles, CA 90026).

Une « Mer imaginaire » à la Villa Carmignac



Pour la troisième année, la Villa Carmignac, située à Hyères, va proposer une exposition qui va transformer ses espaces. Cette fois-ci, la thématique s'est portée sur *La Mer imaginaire* et la fondation va devenir un véritable muséum d'histoire naturelle sous-marin, dont le but sera d'interroger les interactions entre notre civilisation et le monde subaquatique. Un événement qui se tiendra du 24 avril au 4 octobre et qui a été conçu par le commissaire d'exposition américain Chris Sharp qui va faire venir de nombreuses œuvres d'artistes modernes et contemporains célèbres.

Parmi les œuvres attendues, une fresque sous-marine de Miquel Barcelo sous forme de grotte organique à base d'argile, *Acrobat* de Jeff Koons, des peintures de Matisse, des œuvres de Gilles Aillaud, Mathieu Mercier, Gabriel Orozco, Lin May Saeed, Kate Newby ou encore Hubert Duprat. La plupart de ces artistes ont une vraie conscience écologique et tentent de créer des mondes où l'humanité n'est plus l'espèce dominante, mais fait partie intégrante de la vie animale, en totale interrelation avec tous les écosystèmes. Les visiteurs seront ainsi directement au cœur d'un dispositif à portée esthétique à travers un parcours sensible, mais également mélancolique et d'impuissance, propice à éveiller des consciences endormies. Une exposition qui se prolongera ensuite au Fort Sainte-Agathe et à la Villa Noailles, avec en plus, une commande photographique de Nicolas Floc'h sur les fonds marins de Porquerolles. Ce sera aussi l'occasion de (re)découvrir les œuvres permanentes de la Villa Carmignac, signées notamment Andy Warhol, Botticelli, Basquiat, Richter ou encore Lichtenstein.



L'Institut d'Art Contemporain de Villeurbanne (IAC) propose *Otium #4*, rassemblant les expositions personnelles de trois artistes d'une même génération : Leone Contini, Maria Laet et Kate Newby, du 29 mai au 11 août 2019. La réunion de ces trois jeunes artistes venus de trois continents permet, chacun à leur façon, un recentrement, un souffle, le plus souvent en lien avec la terre et l'environnement. Ils œuvrent à initier ou rétablir des liens entre les humains et les choses, souvent les plus ordinaires... L'IAC, qui place la recherche au cœur de ses activités, se présente ponctuellement comme lieu de *l'otium*, un laps de temps intermédiaire propice à la réflexion, à la méditation, à la prise de conscience. Les jardins, comme les espaces intérieurs, sont alors ouverts comme pour initier un autre espace-temps.

Avec des gestes simples et mesurés, ces artistes partagent le désir d'initier d'autres modes d'être, en porosité avec l'environnement, auquel ils accordent leur attention et leur soin. Ils proposent un recentrement, un souffle, le plus souvent en lien avec la terre, entre germination, collecte et réparation. Dans ce temps ralenti, Leone Contini, Maria Laet et Kate Newby œuvrent à initier ou rétablir des liens entre les humains et les choses, souvent les plus ordinaires, que l'on ne regarde plus ou que l'on ne peut pas voir. Leur pratique est synonyme d'organicité et d'inframince. Appréhendées de façon cosmomorphe*, ces trois expositions proposent des œuvres qui tels des « cosmo-gestes », conduisent à la transformation de notre rapport au monde.

** Alternative au schéma anthropomorphe qui marque notre civilisation moderne occidentale, la pensée cosmomorphe se représente le monde comme relation, en dehors de toute dichotomie et catégorie. Introduite par l'anthropologue Maurice Leenhardt et réactivée par le philosophe Pierre Montebello, elle se fonde sur la coactivité qui mobilise chacun des acteurs du cosmos, en décentrant et en élargissant notre perception. Un monde cosmomorphe est conduit par un processus en mouvement continu dont chaque terme est inséparable. Il entrelace ainsi l'homme à la multiplicité des êtres qui le composent, leur redonne la parole et repositionne l'humain comme acteur solidaire du milieu dans lequel il vit.*

Leone Contini

With year-long Portland exhibit, artist Kate Newby asks viewers to 'look very deeply'

Updated: Aug. 29, 2019, 9:44 a.m. | Published: Jan. 25, 2019, 2:00 a.m.

By [Special to The Oregonian](#)

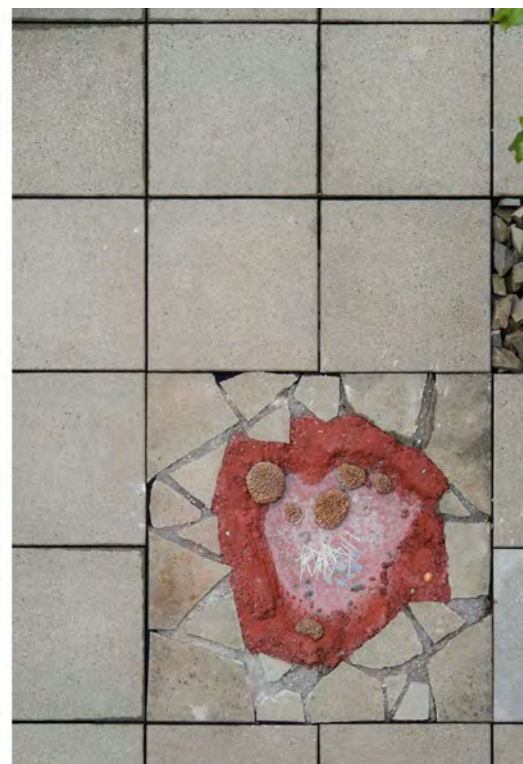


"I love you poems," detail, Kate Newby. (Evan LaLonde)

Call it three-dimensional poetry, with chimes rather than rhymes.

Words play an integral part, conveying a layer of ideas, observations and ruminations, in sculptor [Kate Newby](#)'s current Portland exhibit, "A Puzzling Light and Moving." Newby often carries a copy of poet Frank O'Hara's "Second Avenue" collection and she considers titles for her works carefully, as shown by her installations at the Lumber Room, collector Sarah Miller Meigs' pied-a-terre/gallery: "Three two one," "I love you poems," "The having seems great" and "Nothing that's over so soon should give you so much strength."

Working in ceramics, glass, wood and concrete, Newby looks for combinations of words that intrigue her, Meigs said. "She is very much present in the world, and she notices every little detail. She's asking you to look very deeply and not just to brush by, because maybe it's more than what you initially think."



"For dinner every night," Kate Newby. (Evan LaLonde)

Usually, artists install their works and leave, but this show is a prolonged engagement - it opened in October and will continue through Oct. 6 - and while Newby is Lumber Room's current artist-in-residence, she comes back and forth from Brooklyn, New York, where she lives. During her visit this January, she's rearranged, replaced, subtracted and added elements. She'll also present a lecture at the Oregon College of Art and Craft, on Jan. 28.

Newby's "I love you poems" cluster on window ledges in the large lofty front room of Meigs' second-floor space. "Kate finds broken glass on the streets and then she puts it into bowl-shaped ceramics, subjects it to high heat, and transforms them into beautiful objects," Meigs said. "I believe Kate is simply exploring the idea in the potential beauty of the discarded."

The room also temporarily housed "Three two one," which was composed of ceramic hand-thrown chimes suspended from ropes.

"The having seems great," Kate Newby, as seen from the interior of the Lumber Room. (Evan LaLonde)

Elsewhere, new works include a text piece placed on the floor in the entry and 39 handmade windows with holes in the front room.

"Many things are possible when an artist is given time, support, encouragement and permission to carry forward and reflect," Meigs said. She added that this project is a "moving target," and since Newby was given the opportunity "to alter the past, to begin another future, or extend the present," the installations are constantly evolving.

In an inner patio, "The having seems great" is a slanted wall of 112 barrel tiles, chosen from 140, in different clays, firings and textures. For one, Newby threw on a piece of spruce, whose sap burned into the tile. She imprinted another with couscous. Some have a rippled effect; others are smooth, lined or poked.

"Nothing that's over so soon should give you so much strength," Kate Newby. (Evan LaLonde)

On another patio, "Nothing that's over so soon should give you so much strength" is a handmade puddle in concrete, oxide, ceramics and silver.

"I wanted to create a puddle to capture some of Portland's rainfall, which has a reputation," Newby said. "The concrete puddle is able to capture and reflect back what is happening in the outside environment."

"Also, since it is quite unique that I am able to do a one-year project, I wanted to include works that could participate with this unique time frame. I plan on leaving the puddle there for the entire time, and this will change and react as things change seasonally in Portland. I hope for snow, dust, litter, anything that will keep it as a work continually developing itself."

The Lumber Room project presents her with an interesting and unpredictable challenge, Newby said. "I didn't necessarily want to know the outcome at the beginning; I wanted to step into the duration of it and see what might be possible."



Sculptor Kate Newby (left) and Portland collector Sarah Miller Meigs. (Evan LaLonde)

Kate Newby, "A Puzzling Light and Moving."

When: Noon to 6 p.m. Friday and by appointment through Oct. 6.

Where: Lumber Room, 419 N.W. Ninth Ave.

Admission/information: Free, lumberroom.com, info@lumberroom.com or @ [lumberroompdx](https://www.instagram.com/lumberroompdx) on Instagram.

Artist talk: 12:45 p.m. Monday, Jan. 28, Oregon College of Art and Craft, 8245 S.W. Barnes Road, free.



Kate Newby, *I screamed "i was there!!"* (detail), 2019, glass panels in window frames, 9' 3/4" × 47' 9 3/4".

Kate Newby

LUMBER ROOM

In an era when the monumental has proven surprisingly ephemeral, can the ephemeral conversely have enduring power? At the Lumber Room, the New Zealand-born, New York-based artist Kate Newby brought her peripatetic art practice to Portland, Oregon, for a long-term residency and a shorter culminating show that burrows into intimate modes of perception and leaves a lingering effect. With tendrils extending into the sculptural, the conceptual, and the socially relational, Newby's work operates on an interdisciplinary cusp, under the sign of what one might call the strongly subtle or the assertively lyrical.

The central work is *I screamed "i was there!!"*, 2019, a site-specific intervention into the gallery's grid of street-facing windows. After removing many panes from their mullions, Newby replaced them with glass fashioned to resemble ice in various states of dissolution. Milky and perforated with holes, the panes together perform a metaphoric phase change on the room's atmosphere, infecting the remaining panes with a vibration of entropy and highlighting the impermanence and porosity of the architecture in general. As an exclamation point, Newby installed a set of brightly colored sculptures on the top of a building a few blocks away, directing the viewer's gaze across the city's rooftops and expanding the show's theater of perception in a dramatic, if elliptical, flourish.

On the windowsills, the artist arranged her *I love you poems*, 2018. The crude, fairy-size ceramic vessels resemble oyster shells, with pools of melted glaze bedizening their basins like collected dew. Bewitching to the eye and inviting to the touch, the bowls conspire with the frozen panes above to set the sound of melting ice tinkling in the mind's ear.

The ceramic receptacles are echoed again in another piece, a Newby signature—a tide pool chiseled into the gallery’s back patio. *Nothing that’s over so soon should give you so much strength*, 2018, is a small pit sprinkled with cast-silver matchsticks and filled to varying levels with water and leaves depending on the day and the hour. At first glance seeming to be a tranquil oasis, the piece takes on a harder edge as a viewer recognizes the permanent destruction it caused to the gallery’s property. The nature-smitten sentimentality of, say, Andy Goldsworthy’s work seems to fuse with the vandalistic punch of that of Gordon Matta-Clark.

Newby includes many other objects and gestures in the show, both in and out of the gallery, in various registers of space and time. A flock of ceramic teacups used at the opening doubled as take-home invitations to a closing event; dangling, handmade rope installations lead the viewer’s eye outside, upstairs, wherever the mind travels; musical performances gather groups of people into a shared sonic realm; a welcome carpet emblazoned with the words COLD WATER lies in the stairwell of the gallery; and another sculptural piece sits in a park across town. Throughout the show, the prevailing feeling is of fruitful distraction—nature-oriented but sociable, pensive but observant, critical but wistful. And at the center of this cosmos floats Newby herself, a flickering presence. With a friendly, commanding hand and some pixie dust, she guides the viewer’s attention to one glinting facet after another, then disappears. It is as if she had opened her fingers to reveal a palmful of rocks, pills, and gems and said, “Take one.”

—Jon Raymond

June 2018
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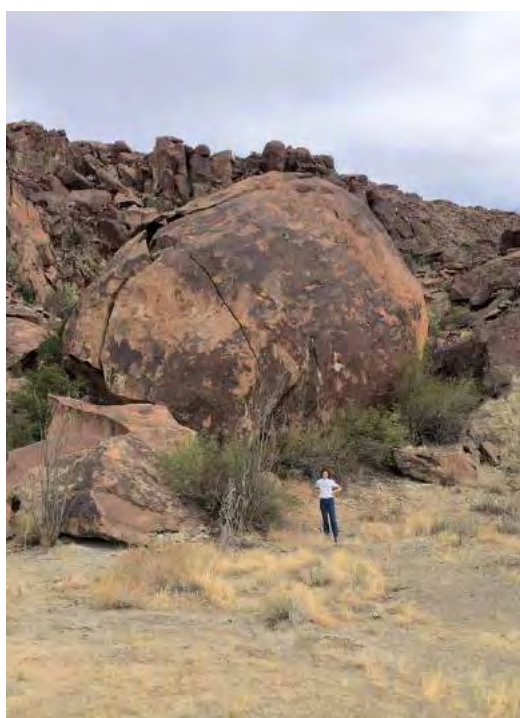
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FOLLOWING KATE NEWBY



A rock in this pocket., 2018 (detail), 21st Biennale of Sydney installation view at Cockatoo Island, 2018. Commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney with assistance from Creative New Zealand; Michael Lett, Auckland; Austral Bricks; Paving By Design Pty Ltd. Courtesy: the artist; Michael Lett, Auckland; Fine Arts, Sydney. Photo: silversalt photography

BY CHRIS SHARP



Marfa residency, 2017. © Kate Newby. Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland

DOWN THE ROAD

Kate Newby (1979, Auckland, New Zealand) lives and works in Auckland and New York. Her recent solo shows include *All the stuff you already know* at The Sunday Painter in London, *I can't nail the days down*, curated by Juliane Bischoff at Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, *Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around* at Michael Lett in Auckland. She has participated in the 21st Biennale of Sydney.

Chris Sharp is a writer and independent curator based in Mexico City, where he co-runs the project space Lulu. He is currently preparing a survey of the work of Tom Wesselmann, entitled *La Promise du Bonheur*, for the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, and the group exhibition, *Dwelling Poetically: Mexico City, A Case Study* for the Australian Center for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, both in 2018. His writing has appeared in many magazines, journals, catalogs, and online forums.



Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around (detail), 2018, *Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around* installation view at Michael Lett, Auckland, 2018. Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland. Photo: Alex North



Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around (detail), 2018, *Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around* installation view at Michael Lett, Auckland, 2018. Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland. Photo: Alex North



I can't nail the days down installation view at Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, 2018. Courtesy: the artist. Photo: Jorit Aust



Ah be with me always, 2015, *I memorized it I loved it so much* installation view at Laurel Gitten, New York, 2015. Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland

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Try it with less pennies and direct light, 2017-2018, Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around installation view at Michael Lett, Auckland, 2018.
Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland. Photo: Alex North



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Marfa residency, 2017. © Kate Newby. Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland



Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around (detail), 2018, *Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around* installation view at Michael Lett, Auckland, 2018. Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland. Photo: Alex North



A rock in this pocket., 2018 (detail), 21st Biennale of Sydney installation view at Cockatoo Island, 2018. Commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney with assistance from Creative New Zealand; Michael Lett, Auckland; Austral Bricks; Paving By Design Pty Ltd. Courtesy: the artist; Michael Lett, Auckland; Fine Arts, Sydney. Photo: silversalt photography



I memorized it I loved it so much, 2015, *I memorized it I loved it so much* installation view at Laurel Gitten, New York, 2015. Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland

In an age of such profound distrust, the seemingly naive candor and trust of Kate Newby's work strikes me as almost heroic. It is probably most succinctly conveyed in the language she uses, for instance in her work and exhibition titles.

One phrase in particular always stays with me: "I'll follow you down the road," the title of her 2011 exhibition at Hopkinson Mossman gallery in Auckland, New Zealand. Interestingly, that direct address also brings to mind one of Newby's personal artistic heroes, Frank O'Hara, and his mock manifesto and movement, Personism. "Personism," O'Hara wrote somewhat ironically in his celebrated 1961 manifesto, "has nothing to do with philosophy, it's all art... One of its minimal aspects is to address itself to one person (other than the poet himself), thus evoking overtones of love without destroying love's life-giving vulgarity." Such a statement feels almost like a key to Newby's work, and something the viewer should keep in mind when looking at it. But before discussing how the work operates, I should say a few words about what it is.

Kate Newby is essentially a sculptor, working with ceramics, casting and glass, textiles and wood, among other materials. Generally of a modest, even intimate scale, the work has nevertheless been known to occupy entire rooms or other spaces through architectural interventions or subtle modifications, which range from altered floors to expansive layers of modified bricks to textile walls. Only ever figurative symbolically, her ceramic, porcelain, cast silver "pebbles," "rocks," or flora are sometimes inserted in "puddles" of poured, pigmented concrete. Over the last few years, Newby has been making wind chimes out of ceramic, porcelain, and cast metal, which might be placed outside or inside and have recently evolved into hanging, tendril-like or vertebrae-like sculptures consisting of irregularly round objects stacked up like spines. At times, the works include elements she finds on walks, primarily in New York's Central Park, which could be anything from debris to broken bits of glass, which are fired with the ceramics, becoming small, transparent puddles among the concave surfaces of the ceramics, single combinations of which can also be small, stand-alone sculptures, as in her recent solo at Michael Lett gallery, Auckland, and Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna.

The architectural interventions can consist of low, raised platforms, which are sometimes painted and bedecked with various collections of materials, which are liable to assume a rune-like syntax, as in her show at Laurel Gitlen gallery in New York in 2015, or semitransparent fabric walls hanging in front of windows or solid walls. Newby has a propensity to leave a given exhibition space and site works, such as puddles or ceramic rocks, either nearby the exhibition space or somewhere in the same city. This propensity is motivated less by an antipathy for the white cube and more by an interest in lived experience, which the white cube tends to preclude, or at least bracket.

This is precisely where the work links up with both Frank O'Hara and Land art, and especially Robert Smithson, not to mention the classical minimalism of Carl Andre (especially his brick works). For it is no mistake that one of the primary operative references for this work is Land art—but Land art from a semi-urban, and decidedly non-monumental, perspective.

Smithson of course enters the discussion here from the point of view of the site/non-site, but even more importantly, perhaps, in terms of his interest in what he called the dialectal quality of art: something that evolves and changes and has a much greater chance of happening, it goes without saying, outside the white cube. As such, the work is ideally never removed from human experience. It exists in the world and is subject to its vicissitudes. This is precisely why, although what Newby does is embedded in studio practice, walking and the peripatetic mode play such an important role in what she makes. Hers is a practice that seeks to continually break down the barriers of the studio and the outside world, and in doing so, not necessarily deny art its rarefied space and thus collapse the boundaries between art and life, but rather assert the degree to which art and life are mutually dependent. Such an affirmation is as informed by the legacy of the post-studio practice of Francis Alÿs, which is very out-in-the-world, as by the apparent spontaneity and lived-ness (for lack of a better word) of O'Hara's poetry.

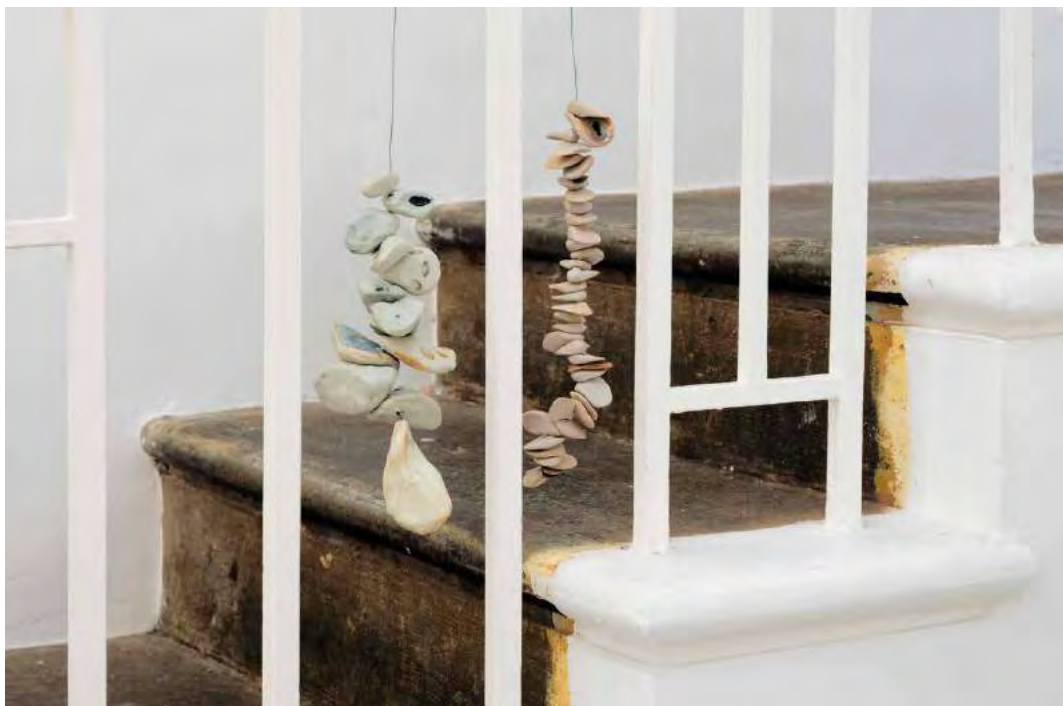
Whence the humanity of the work, and its refreshing lack of (defensive) irony or cynicism. This may lead to accusations of sincerity or earnestness, but the work's conspicuous humanity has a lot more to do with trust, which lies in a rare willingness to be vulnerable. This vulnerability is evident in everything from the relative fragility of the work as it makes its way through the world, to the language the artist uses to communicate it (as in her titles), to how she presents it. For instance, one series consists of a collection of ceramic and silver pebble-size objects, which the institutional guard or invigilator keeps in his or her pocket and shares with visitors upon request, letting them handle the objects themselves.

Given the interactive component, this might seem to evoke something along the lines of relational aesthetics, but that is not the case at all. Newby is much more interested in how and where sculpture happens—or even, at times, how it un-happens. I am thinking in particular of her series of ceramic skipping stones, which she gives to someone who skips them on a body of water while she photographs the action. The most interesting part of this work might be the difficulty of locating exactly when and where it happens: in the creation of the ceramic stone? Its being handed over? Its final resting place at the bottom of the body of water? The act of skipping? the photography and/or the resulting photograph?

I think the work comprises all of these. And thus, despite its apparent simplicity, it puts a productive pressure on the very notion of sculpture. Newby never takes sculpture for granted, but always questions what it is, how it can be, and where it can take place, in a way that acknowledges and engages with its history. Such a committed approach is refreshing in a moment increasingly preoccupied with "the contemporary" as an almost objective, aesthetically justifying value in and of itself. And yet more refreshing and challenging is the trust at the heart of the work. At the risk of sounding corny, I'll follow Newby down the road, exactly because I sense she would do the same for me.

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Arriving in Marfa on a Sunday / Marfa New Years Day, 2017, Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around installation view at Michael Lett, Auckland, 2018.
Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland. Photo: Alex North



A rock in this pocket., 2018 (details), 21st Biennale of Sydney installation views at Cockatoo Island, 2018. Commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney with assistance from Creative New Zealand; Michael Lett, Auckland; Austral Bricks; Paving By Design Pty Ltd. Courtesy: the artist; Michael Lett, Auckland; Fine Arts, Sydney. Photo: silversalt photography



Leap, oh leap!, 2015, I memorized it I loved it so much installation view at Laurel Gitten, New York, 2015. Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland



A rock in this pocket., 2018 (details), 21st Biennale of Sydney installation views at Cockatoo Island, 2018. Commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney with assistance from Creative New Zealand; Michael Lett, Auckland; Austral Bricks; Paving By Design Pty Ltd. Courtesy: the artist; Michael Lett, Auckland; Fine Arts, Sydney. Photo: silversalt photography



Marfa residency, 2017. © Kate Newby. Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland



Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around (detail), 2018, *Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around* installation view at Michael Lett, Auckland, 2018. Courtesy: the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland. Photo: Alex North



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June 2018
Art News New Zealand

in residence



Western exposure

Kate Newby reports on the weathering forces of a residence in Marfa, Texas, where the long-laid plans of American artist Donald Judd are still unfolding.

Closed on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. That's what a lot of visitors complain about on internet forums in regards to Marfa – that everything shuts down on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. Food is scarce and the art galleries and museums close. For me, though, it's one of the things I've enjoyed most about Marfa. Many common ways of doing things are awkward and hard to work out, which keeps me continually listening with full attention. A local woman told me that when she first arrived in Marfa she was told, "The goods are odd but the odds are good."

I am here for a residency at the Chinati Foundation and I'm not the first New Zealander. Someone I don't know called Richard Wearn did it in 1999, and of course Julian Dashper was here in 2001 and it was through him that this place became famous to me. You have to apply, and

the application was just a cover letter, a CV and a CD of images sent off in the post. It seemed like I was sending off a needle into a haystack.

In an attempt to find out more about the residency, I met with a previous Chinati artist-in-resident in Brooklyn, New York, before I came. She gave me tips: drink a lot of water because Marfa is very dry; take lots of sunscreen and moisturiser for the same reason; and bring everything I might need as it was not easy to get stuff. She was right about all this, including the dryness. At night I see flashes of static electricity when I move my bed sheets. The elevation is high, over a mile, and it's not a desert of cactus and sand but filled with grasses, mesquite trees and little else to break up the views; views that go so far there is nothing that gets in the way – not a building and rarely a hill.

All photos by Kate Newby, 2017

Opposite: Marfa landscape with Donald Judd,
15 untitled works in concrete, 1980–84, Chinati
Foundation, Texas

Below: Artillery sheds with pronghorn antelope

Construction and installation of a contemporary art museum began at the Chinati Foundation in 1979, initially with assistance from the Dia Foundation in New York. Named after a nearby mountain peak, the Chinati complex is housed in an ex-military base, Fort D.A. Russell. When Donald Judd and the Dia Foundation bought it, it was run down, empty, long forgotten. Now there are Judd's 100 milled aluminium pieces, his series of 15 concrete works and six barracks of work by Dan Flavin, as well as pieces by Carl Andre. Former mess halls contain works by Ingólfur Arnarsson, a horse stable now holds paintings by John Wesley and a Richard Long sculpture rests on a concrete tennis court. Ilya Kabakov's abandoned school house is in a former barrack; David Rabinowitch sculptures occupy an ex-hangar now called the Arena; and John Chamberlain's work is sited in the former Wool & Mohair Company building, in downtown Marfa.

The museum was opened to the public in 1986 and operates as an independent, non-profit institution. Works are continually – albeit slowly – added. A Robert Irwin piece, for instance, was finished in 2016, after 16 years of

planning. I think about what it might be like to work on something for 16 years. I think back to my work from 16 years ago that is sitting in a cramped bedroom at Bethells Beach inside my mum's house.

The works at Chinati are all permanent, here to stay for a long time. The exception is the rotating barrack, which has a new commission every year – or two years, in the case of Bridget Riley, the current artist. There are two women in the permanent collection: Coosje van Bruggen, who made work in collaboration with her husband, Claes Oldenburg, and Roni Horn. The Horn work – *Pair Object VII (For a Here and a There)* (1986–88) – is a pair of copper conic forms that sit directly on the former mess-hall floor. The work feels confident and tenuous at the same time.

If I am frank, I'm not entirely sure what to think of Donald Judd, but that is also easy to say. When I take a tour of his home or work spaces in the Marfa township I get frustrated at all his rooms and desks, filling up an entire 1930s building. What is so important about him that even his pencils are preserved? But then again, why not? He had a vision while he was alive which is now being carried out,





Outside the Locker Plant, Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas

protected and preserved in various shapes and ways, and it's definitely not uninteresting nor unimportant. The more time I spend here the more I am blown away by his work, and the work of others, and how he moved to this rural town in the 1970s to carry it all out. It seems so audacious and entitled, but completely original. I try to think about people who have done similar things and no one really comes to mind.

My studio is in the Locker Plant, next to the library in downtown Marfa. It's an old meat processing plant. The building is divided into three spaces, which feel precious and invigorating. The front space is bright, clean, with a front wall of windows and lots of warmth, literally. A few small rooms in the middle are pitch black, and I never go in them. Then there is the back space, which has a raw concrete floor, a ceiling of wooden rafters filled with rusty nails and an old bird's nest tucked into a corner. Two doors open on to a back yard where there is a tree and one of Judd's classic adobe walls – I say 'classic' because you see them all over his properties, which are many in Marfa. They are about 30 percent eroded. The adobe, which he preferred to leave uncoated, is slowly getting eaten away. While this back space is exceptionally cold, it's unlike any studio I have worked in before. And with no expectations coming from the Chinati Foundation, I am able to work at my own speed with my own deadlines.

I am thankful that Judd did the hard yards here. No one blinks an eyelid when I say that I am an artist – there are a lot of others, and have been for some time. And I've bumbled my way through residencies before: I pack a

bunch of clothing that I don't end up wearing; I arrive and I ask a lot of questions; I eat frozen pizza; and I buy new shampoo because the water is always different. Here, the water is very 'hard', and it's quite a topic of conversation. Donald Judd had a plan to bottle it, and in 2007 Adam McEwen made an edition of 75 jerrycans of Marfa water. Evidently it has a high content of lithium, which makes people happy. I pick up the water report at the local council, but it doesn't make too much sense. I see residue cake around my shampoo bottles and taps in the shower, so I decide to hang a metal sculpture under the shower head to see if I can't grab some of that calcium or fluoride for the work. I also patina metal sculptures in my studio with the tap water. Using a blowtorch, I have been heating up bronze and brushing water over the pieces, repeating this many times. A red comes through in reaction – a simple transaction between heat, minerals and repetition giving a slow transformation.

In thinking about my work and thinking about making my work, I often circle around nature and the weather and wildlife, although most often I end up landing on smaller things or where people have been. These act as some sort of frame for understanding the bigness of it all. It's like when I try to take a photo of the landscape on a walk through the Chinati property and the photos end up dull – I need a small tree or a building or something else in the shot to make the surrounding space understandable, so it's not just a vague blur of grass and sky.

It has snowed during my time here. I saw on the weather app that it might be arriving, but these reports change and



Metal sculptures and eroded adobe wall in the back yard of the Locker Plant; above, with lasso during a snow storm

the little snowflake icons can disappear as quickly as they arrive. One evening in early December I rode my bike to a friend's place for dinner through rain. It never seems to rain in Marfa, so I circumnavigated puddles on my bicycle for the first time. When I cycled back it was silent and calm except for the sound of snowflakes hitting my bike helmet. I moved as slowly as I could, soaking it in, knowing that a dark street with a small amount of snow would make for a pretty boring photo. I was thankful that I had left a lot of my work outside, giving it the opportunity to experience the elements. The only other time I've seen the rain in Marfa I had just arrived and hadn't made work yet. This time, I had an expanse of fabric lying out on a gravel road by the unfinished Judd buildings, and many small sculptural installations in the back yard of the Locker Plant. I rejigged a chain of brass leaf-like pieces to hang vertically with a lasso, hopeful that this new angle might catch the forecast snow. The works were now out in the snow storm, gaining exposure to extreme temperatures, light and weather.

With all the structures here, in all the bigness of this place, I keep coming back to the question of what would it mean to embark on a project that I hoped would be around forever. Something that could be installed permanently, or for a really long time, exceeding the usual potential of conventional exhibition practices. What would that mean for me and my work right now? And also – so what now?

Kate Newby's exhibition which includes works from Marfa, Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around, is at Michael Lett, Auckland, until 10 March.



March 2018
21st Biennale of Sydney

SUPERPOSITION: Equilibrium & Engagement

Kate Newby

A rock in this pocket., 2018, on Cockatoo Island. See also *I'm actually weirdly exciting*, 2018, at the Art Gallery of New South Wales

21st Biennale
of Sydney



Two aspirins a vitamin C tablet and some baking soda, 2015 (detail)
bricks, pennies, coins, silver, porcelain stones, aluminium, glass
Courtesy the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland
Photograph: Fredrik Nilson

For her new site-specific work at Cockatoo Island, Kate Newby has modified approximately 900 house bricks. The bricks are laid as a large flat surface, replacing a section of the enclosed courtyard of Cockatoo Island's Convict Precinct. Newby's response to this environment is also to embed the bricks with small objects and inscribed markings.

By working with the everyday, and moving from the large scale of architectural space to small objects and marks made by hand in the bricks, Newby asks us to look closely at details and intimate and commonplace objects, as well as the spaces we take for granted. This play between large and small, and inside and outside, is extended through the 'building blocks' of architecture, and against the conventions of the traditional exhibition space.

Titled *A rock in this pocket.*, the work asks us to look at the familiar differently; at ordinary spaces, not just objects designated as art and framed by the cultural institutions and traditional forms. This is emphasised by its location at a historical site on Cockatoo Island, rather than a gallery space.

March 2018
The Pantograph Punch



THE PANTOGRAPH PUNCH



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Art

02.03.2018

The Unmissables: Four Exhibitions to see in March

By Pantograph Punch

A monthly round-up of notable, controversial and unmissable exhibitions in Tāmaki Makaurau and beyond.

Welcome to autumn! With the weather (maybe) beginning to cool down, things seem to be hotting up in our galleries. New exhibitions are opening left, right and centre – including the long-awaited unveiling of Toi Art, the new Te Papa art gallery, later this month.

Also in Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara, there's still time to catch Aaliyah Winter's solo exhibition *hardening* at Enjoy Gallery. Close by in Lower Hutt, a new exhibition of contemporary jewellery entitled *The Language of Things* has opened at The Dowse – and from the looks of their Instagram, there are some particularly dazzling public programmes and special projects to be enjoyed (gold-leafed drain covers, anyone?).

Back in Tāmaki Makaurau, there are two exquisite exhibitions happening on and around Karangahape Road right now which deserve your attention: Sam Thomas' *Brass Glove* at Bowerbank Ninow and Sarah Hillary's *Things to remember* at Anna Miles. Both of these artists have utterly singular practices and I challenge you to find any other makers in Aotearoa today whose work comes close to either.



Reaching shadows, endless plains. Dirt, dust, rocks, faded pinks and baby blues. This is the swirl of Marfa that exists in my memory. I am taken back there entering Michael Lett on a clear skied Saturday morning, sunlight catching in the blown-glass 'bags' now hanging from the gallery ceiling.

The works in Kate Newby's latest exhibition, *Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around*, came out of the artist's residency at the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas. Across the room from the glass bags and collections of handmade nails, stones and other sculpted pieces gathered on the window ledges, is a work that feels like a literal manifestation of the exhibition's title. Rope, lasso and grass reins hang from wall to wall with small pieces shaped around them. The ropes create the action and the pieces that they are threaded through are the nouns. It is a simple and touching scene capturing big things happening quickly, maybe unexpectedly. It makes me think of Newby arriving in the tiny, desert town of Marfa, a place so filled with art history (have you read *I Love Dick?*), but so far from anywhere known.

The staircase is adorned with other stories from her residency, stories told with stoneware, porcelain or stacks of bronze. I feel soft and sad reading their titles: *I'm glad we've done it just to see*, *All I want is a room and you up there in it*, *I'll be here in the morning*, *Arriving in Marfa on a Sunday*. There is one week left for Newby to take you to a forlorn, gently moving time in the Texan desert. –
Eloise Callister-Baker

Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around

Kate Newby

Michael Lett

7 February – 10 March 2018



Campbell Patterson, *toot floor*, 2018.
Installation view. Image courtesy of
Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o
Hākena, University of Otago.
Photograph by Iain Frengley.

March 2018
Eye Contact

Newby at Marfa at Lett

AA JH

John Hurrell – 5 March, 2018

I also wonder if the beautiful title is a witty allusion to Richard Serra's process sculptures and Bruce Nauman's videos; maybe Smithson's texts too. The intransitive versus transitive verb distinction. Poor bullied nouns indeed.

MICHAEL LETT

Auckland

Kate Newby

Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around

7 February - 10 March 2018

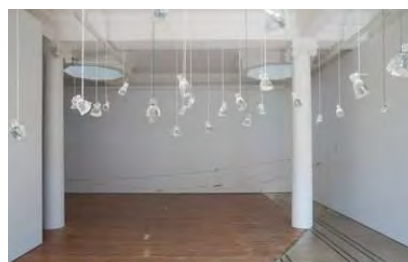
The two exhibitions currently running at Michael Lett's, by **Kate Newby** <<https://chinati.org/programs/kate-newby-open-studio-on-new-year%E2%80%99s-day>> and the late Julian Dashper, both reference these artists' residencies at Marfa, the west Texan town made legendary by the activities of resident sculptor/painter/installation artist/critic Donald Judd (1928-1994). Newby's stay was in January 2018, (her Lett show is on the ground floor and ascending staircase), Dashper's was in 2001 (his Lett show is down in the basement), and both on occasion reference Judd's friend, the light artist Dan Flavin (1933-1996) who has six barracks of work in the Chinati complex that Judd set up in 1979.

Flavin's work with fluorescent tubes provides a minor reference for Newby, his name being part of the title (along with Roni Horn's) of a framed etching in the landing by a staircase. Two other etchings are nearby and a number of ceramic, brass, copper, glass, bronze and porcelain sculptures are suspended by wire from the banister. Some allude to shellfish.

In my view the most exciting work is *Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around* on the ground floor, which is in two parts, one being arrangements of small objects laid out in the window ledges on the street front, the other being on the bay on the opposite side of the room where three extended parallel lines of suspended rope, wire and threaded-on ceramics horizontally cross the gallery floor. Much of the material used here **Newby** <<http://www.noted.co.nz/culture/arts/quiet-wanderer-kiwi-sculptor-kate-newby/>> found on the ground as detritus when wondering around Marfa, obsessively picking it up like, say, Kurt Schwitters, and sorting it into a kind of archive.

What is surprising about this installation is that there are no large planes of intensely saturated colour applied to walls, floor, ceiling or draped curtains, like Newby has done in the past. The emphasis instead is on shape, line and light, and reflection or transparent colour, on rope, wire, cord, leather, chain, ceramic shell-like forms, cast brass knobs, nails and glass. They are sculptures used as drawing in space, and both parts amusingly reference museum installations: the arrangements in vitrines, and crowd control barriers.

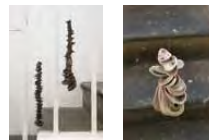
In between the window wall and the three long, suspended, tied-together, lengths of rope, wire and leather is another work suspended from the ceiling,



transparent glass forms that look as if cast in soft bags, hanging from 36 lines of jute. It is a collaboration with Jake Zollie Harper (a San Antonio glassblower), and a beautiful central foil for the activity on the walls and spaces on either side. It glows, reflects and refracts like a collection of little glass sacks hovering just above your head.



I think this is the best show I've ever seen from Newby, and I've seen quite a few. The *Swift little verbs pushing the big nouns around* work I find especially wonderful visually with its careful attention to intimate detail (the coiling of the rope around itself, or lined up collections of bent tacks, for example) and contrasting spatial vectors—and it takes advantage of Lett's gloriously unusual space. I also wonder if the beautiful title is a witty allusion to Richard Serra's process sculptures and Bruce Nauman's videos; maybe Smithson's texts too. The intransitive versus transitive verb distinction. Poor bullied nouns indeed.



A treat.

John Hurrell

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ARTS&ENTERTAINMENT

MUSIC ART FILM LITERATURE

by ANDREW TRAVERS

LITTLE GALLERY, BIG IDEAS

EVEN IF you're an enthusiastic regular at the Aspen Art Museum, nobody would blame you for skipping the building's smallest exhibition space on most visits. Known officially as "Gallery 6," this quaint space tucked into the far side of the basement doesn't connect to the bigger underground galleries and its exhibitions are often overshadowed by the meaty, massive shows that fill the galleries upstairs.

But this little orphan of a gallery space has often hosted challenging shows that reward repeat visits, like Mary Ramsden's "(In/It)" last winter and the group show "Gravity & Grace" last spring, along with intimate gems like the Agnes Martin drawing exhibition that inaugurated the space in 2014.

The group exhibition that's filled the gallery in recent months, "Ritual," invites viewers to reflect on experiences with routine and to explore ways that mundane daily practices might connect them to something bigger than themselves. The show demands

repeat visits and will include special events to bring you back.

Running over the course of a full year, the show is running in three iterations. The first, which opened in December and runs through April 1, includes psychedelic prayer rugs by Baseera Khan, a menagerie of odds and ends picked up by Yuji Agematsu while walking the streets of New York, and depictions by Joachim Koester of people dancing to free themselves of tarantula venom. (All three segments of "Ritual" also include cast found objects by Kate Newby, which museum staff are carrying in their pockets over the course of the year, and are viewable only by request.)

"Embedded into the everyday, (rituals) serve as an implement of certainty in an uncertain world," reads the exhibition catalog. "Ritual" invites museum visitors to engage with this universal human experience. It also offers a window into the various ways artists use rituals as a transformative instrument of art making to construct personal or collective

meaning, process experiences, memorialize people or events, mark the passage of time, and act out spiritual or religious traditions."

The second segment, opening April 4, will include polaroid aura portraits by Anne Collier and works by Tony Feher, Meschac Gaba, Yayoi Kusama and Kris Martin.

The museum is inviting patrons to take notice of the show with a daylong event Thursday, March 29. The aura photography studio Radiant Human will be on hand throughout the day taking portraits — of individuals or groups — that promise to capture the subject's aura in a chromatic photograph. The museum hosts a free guided meditation at noon that day.

In July, When the museum transitions into its third and final iteration of "Ritual" — which boasts work by the great David Hammons along with Francis Alÿs, Sophie Calle and Ana Mendieta — the occasion will be marked with a performance of Alison Knowles' "Proposition: Make a Salad," which invites viewers to literally make a

giant salad and has drawn worldwide attention since its premiere in 1962. It has been performed (and eaten) in recent years at the Tate Modern in London, on the High Line in Manhattan and at Art Basel in Miami.

atravers@aspenartmuseum.org

IF YOU GO...

WHAT: "Ritual"

WHERE: Aspen Art Museum

WHEN: Segment One, through April 1; Segment Two, April 3-July 15; Segment Three, July 17-Nov. 25

HOW MUCH: Free

MORE INFO: www.aspenartmuseum.org

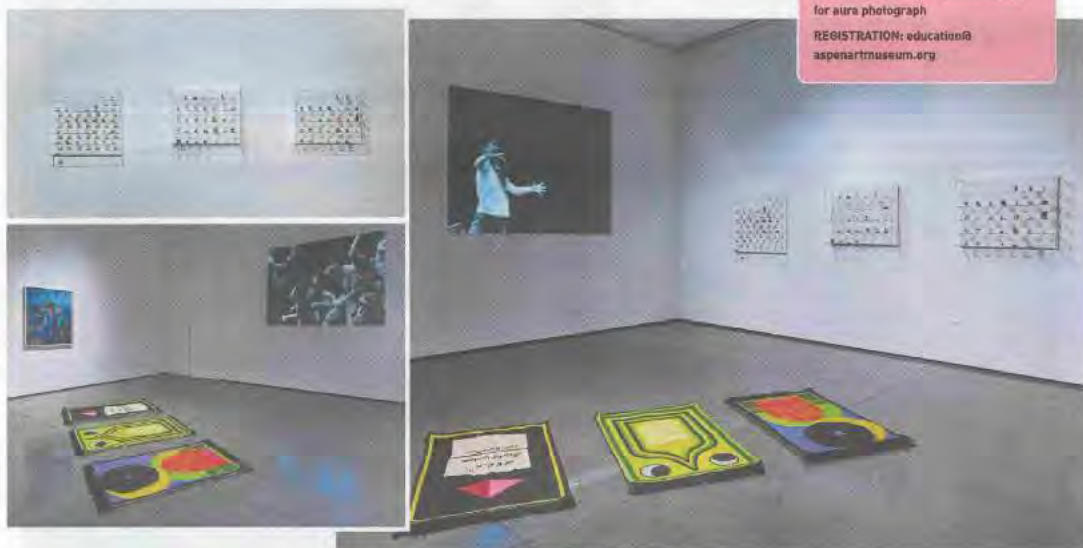
WHAT: "Marking Rituals: Aura Photography & Meditation"

WHEN: Thursday, March 29, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; meditation at noon

WHERE: Aspen Art Museum

HOW MUCH: Free for meditation; \$35 for aura photograph

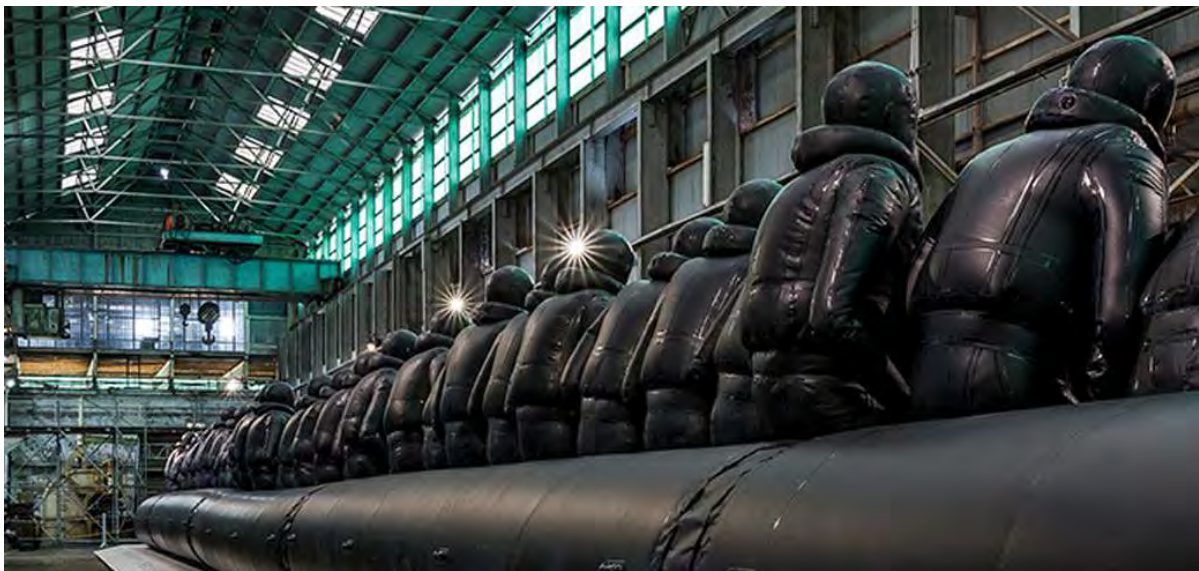
REGISTRATION: education@aspenartmuseum.org



"Ritual," at the Aspen Art Museum, will run in three different iterations through November.

March 2018
Frieze.com

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REVIEW - 29 MAR 2018

21st Biennale of Sydney

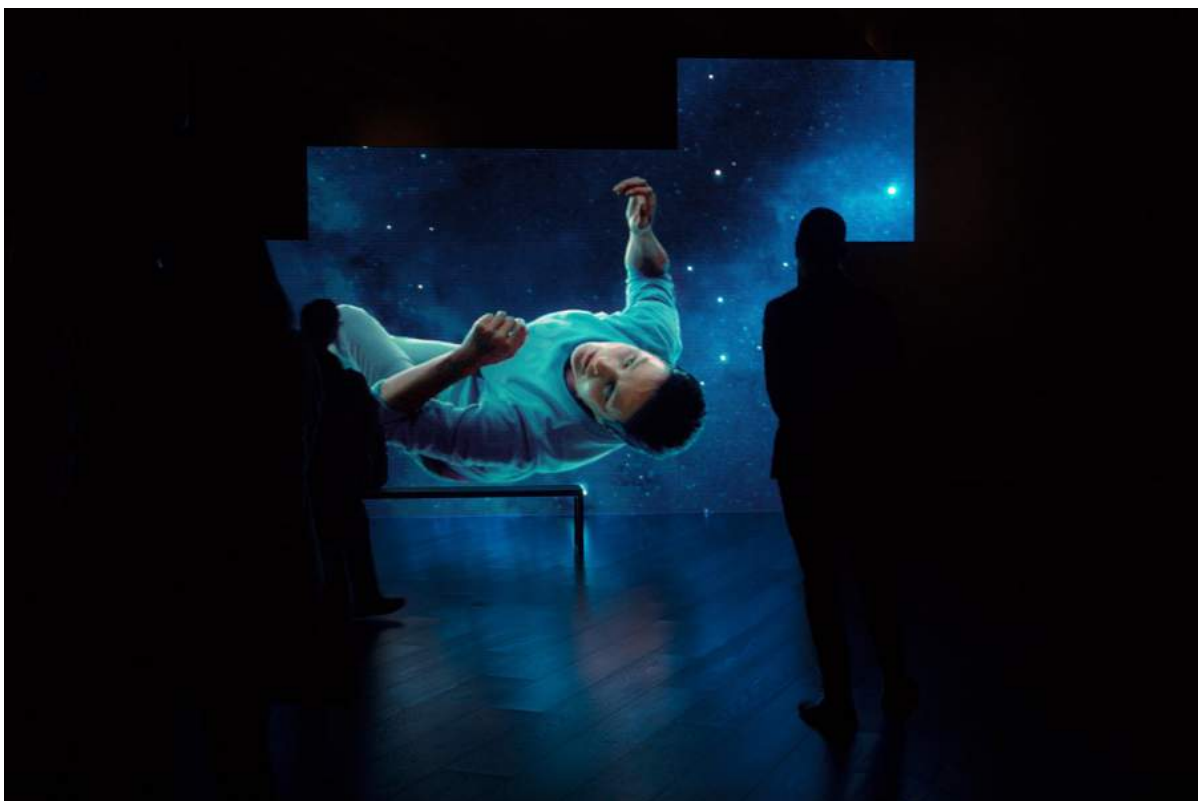
Titled 'Superposition: Equilibrium & Engagement', the invitation is to consider accelerating global conflicts from opposing perspectives

BY JON BYWATER

Mami Kataoka, the artistic director of the 21st Biennale of Sydney – titled 'Superposition: Equilibrium & Engagement' – elaborates on her borrowing from quantum mechanics with the Taoist concept *wu xing*, aligning the modern scientific view that some entities are a sum of multiple distinct states (both wave and particle) with the ancient metaphysical idea that all being is composed of types of *chi* (earth, metal, water, wood, fire) in simultaneous interactions of generation and destruction. Her curatorial statement invites us to consider

accelerating global conflicts in these terms; she frames the works of the 70 artists and artist collectives on view as a microcosm of 'multiple and sometimes opposing perspectives'.

Neither multiple perspectives nor any shade of grey are the province of Kataoka's headliner. Ai Wei Wei's 60-metre black rubber Mediterranean migrant boat, *Law of the Journey* (2017), installed in Cockatoo Island's industrial precinct, and his two-tonne *Crystal Ball* (2017) at Artspace, effectively advertise his film on the global refugee crisis, *Human Flow* (2017). (It was screened on the opening weekend, but outside the official list of works.) Shown last year in the Czech Republic, where anti-immigration and anti-Muslim anxiety has held unusual sway, through these pieces Ai adds his voice – with the rude force of legibility, scale and media access – to that of the United Nations in condemning Australia's continuing offshore processing of asylum seekers. 'There's no refugee crisis, only a human crisis,' his artist statement goes; and having lost the wires it floated from in Prague, his dinghy sits on a plinth with a crib sheet of quotations on cosmopolitanism, from Socrates to Hannah Arendt to the phrase that founded an Australian hashtag, local activist Arnold Zable's line: 'With the exception of Indigenous peoples, we are a nation of boat people.'



Eija-Liisa Ahtila, *Potentiality for Love – Mahdollinen Rakkaus*, 2018, moving image sculpture in 3 parts, installation view. Courtesy: the artist, Crystal Eye, Helsinki, and 21st Biennale of Sydney

Possibilities for imagining increased empathy are enriched elsewhere in the show by works such as Khaled Sabsabi's *Bring the Silence* (2018) – a literally multi-perspective, five-channel video installation, carpeted with mats and

scented with rose oil, documenting a Sufi maqam in New Delhi where Hindus, Christians, Sikhs and Muslims seek blessings together– and Eija-Liisa Ahtila's *Potentiality for Love* (2018) – a multi-screen, lab-chic invitation to experience inter-species empathy with chimpanzees. More directly, though, Ai's generalization of the issue of forced migration is complemented by work acknowledging the origin of the hot-button term in Australia, 'boat people'. At Artspace, Tiffany Chung presents a sample of her ongoing research into the Vietnamese diaspora between 1975–96, following the American War, including the summary graphic of *Reconstructing an Exodus History: Boat Trajectories, Ports of First Asylum and Resettlement Countries* (2017), a mural-scaled, colour-coded embroidery.

This thread goes some way to uphold the cause of those artists who organized to precipitate a recent crisis in the Biennale. In 2014, Luca Belgiorno-Nettis resigned as chairman due to pressure over funding ties with Transfield Holdings, who manage services in Australia's offshore detention centres. His immigrant father founded the parent company, construction giant Transfield, as well as the Biennale. Someone with some feeling for irony composed a wall label stating: '[Franco] Belgiorno-Nettis's own words best convey his passion and commitment to the Biennale: "Art has no boundary and we should not put up fences."' It introduces the presentation of a new Biennale archive funded by a gift from Transfield Holdings, though the company is now acknowledged as a founding patron (as it happens, on a floor of the Art Gallery of NSW named for the Belgiorno-Nettis family). Poster summaries of each edition confirm what regular attendees might quickly surmise: that this is the smallest for some time. Funding figures are not included, but as well as the departure of the long-term principal partner, a wider neoliberal erosion of support for art in Australia must give context to the invitation in the same wall text 'to consider the role of the Biennale in the future'.

In this spirit of retrospection Kataoka successfully involves historical works and has re-invited previous participants. At the Art Gallery of NSW, for example, Lili Dujourie (who exhibited in 1988) greets visitors with *American Imperialism* (1972); and work by Miriam Cahn (who exhibited in 1986) is hung intriguingly and effectively next to paintings by Wathaurung elder Marlene Gilson. Artists of a similar generation, though at the removed poles of folk art narrative and feminist neo-expressionism, they participate in a leitmotif of masked, faceless or generic figures (connecting with Michaël Borremans, Sosa Joseph and even CATPC and Sa Sa Art Projects, among others). Another, similar consistency coheres between pieces involving clay (by Anya Gallaccio, Geng Xue, Kate Newby, Yasmin Smith). Along such lines, the complex patterns that visually unify the installation at Carriageworks (including works by George Tjungurrayi, Semiconductor and Sam Falls) surface a limit to the curatorial engineering of harmony. The cloth-eared Eurocentrism of Laurent Grasso's use of Yuendumu sacred sites as a backdrop to his sci-fi archetypes in *Otto* (2018) betrays every well-worn principle spelled out in Nguyen Trinh Thi's lovely, nearby essay film *Letters from Panduranga* (2015). Here, equilibrium comes at the cost of what journalism calls 'false balance', the embrace of work that offers 'beauty' over engagement excessively diplomatic.

The 21st Biennale of Sydney <<https://www.biennaleofsydney.art/>> 'SUPERPOSITION: Equilibrium & Engagement' runs at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Artspace, Carriageworks, Cockatoo Island, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney Opera House and 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art until 11 June.

June 2017
Belonging to a place



KATE NEWBY

Let me be the wind that pulls your hair, 2017

Porcelain, black clay, cobblestone glaze

Dimensions variable

My list of places to drop in on regularly, 2017

Hand-dyed cotton rope, hand-dyed silk thread, pink silver, silver,
white brass, bronze

Dimensions variable

Skimming stones formed by clapping hands, 2017

Porcelain, stoneware, glaze

Dimensions variable

Let the other thing in, 2012-2013

Posters

Courtesy of Cooper Cole, Toronto

Kate Newby's installations are intimate engagements with specific spaces. Often finding form as handcrafted pieces that respond to spatial environments, events and the people that surround her, as well as to local materials and available resources, her methodology displays a profound interest in the peculiarities of place.

Newby's wind chime sculptural works on view address central aspects of the exhibition, such as the specificities, contradictions and transitions of belonging; the manifold relations that arise between physical space and bodily encounter; and deep considerations of the qualities and symbolic character of materials. For Newby, the specific conditions of an object's creation are inseparable from the object itself. Drawing attention to the ephemeral and the minutiae of everyday life in order to disrupt conventional ways of seeing, her pieces—often radically small and modest—spark curiosity, invite the viewer to look closer, and reflect upon more than meets the eye, or indeed, what greets the ear.

Let me be the wind that pulls your hair was made while Newby participated in a residency at Artpace, San Antonio. The work consists of two types of clay and glazes, and although each individual piece falls into a general, uniform identity, they are at the same time wildly different from one another due to varying reactions of the cobblestone glaze to the clay and temperature. Newby left this sculpture hanging in a friend's garden for the duration of her Texas residency. Conceived to acknowledge the wind, the sculpture makes a soft, gentle sound. So long as there is a breeze, it remains constantly, casually, in motion.

My list of places to drop in on regularly was first exhibited at the Sculpture Center, New York. Each piece was made from wax and then cast; every single one is thus a discrete, original thing, and not made from a mould. A quiet noise resonates when each element, resembling a tiny bell, knocks against another. Similar to the porcelain wind chime, My list of places to drop in on regularly also responds to the wind and to people brushing past the work: to shifts in conditions.

The temporary nature of Newby's subtle interventions can be taken, in one respect, to underscore the experience of a fleeting moment. Open to manifold interpretations, the artist's quirky, enigmatic work could also be perceived as portraying a sense of fragility and preciousness. Based on direct observations, and inspired by poetry, the banality in her practice becomes rather transcendent.

Kate Newby was born in 1979 in Auckland and lives in Brooklyn. She works with installation, textile, ceramics, casting and glass. She received her DocFA and MFA from the Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland. In 2012 she was awarded the prestigious Walter's Prize by international judge Mami Kataoka, chief curator at the Mori Museum of Art in Tokyo, Japan. Recent solo exhibitions include: Let me be the wind that pulls your hair, Artpace, San Antonio (2017); Big Tree. Bird's Eye, Michael Lett, Auckland (2016); Tuesday evening, Sunday afternoon, Stony Lake, Cooper Cole, Toronto (2016); The January February March, The Poor Farm, Wisconsin (2016); I memorized it I loved it so much, Laurel Gitlen, New York (2015); Let the other thing in, Fogo Island Gallery, Newfoundland (2012). Recent group exhibition include: The Promise, Index - The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation, Stockholm (2017); In Practice: Material Deviance, Sculpture Center, New York (2017); Ordering Nature, Marianne Boesky, New York (2015). During November and December 2017 Kate will undertake a residency at The Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas.

My work does not claim to have any special purchase or insight into the everyday, as if perceiving the extraordinary in the ordinary. It is much more interested in preserving a certain attitude, an openness that allows for those kinds of perception to happen.

Kate Newby

December 2017
Chinati

CHINATI

Artist in Residence

KATE NEWBY



Kate Newby, *Let me be the wind that pulls your hair*, Artpace, San Antonio, 2017. Materials: porcelain, stoneware, glaze.

Chinati's current artist in residence is Kate Newby, who is based in New York City and from New Zealand. Newby will be in residence at Chinati in November and December.

Working with a variety of media including installation, textile, ceramics, casting and glass, Kate Newby is a sculptor who is committed to exploring and putting pressure on the limits and nature of sculpture. As such, she is interested in not only space, volume, texture and materials, but where and how sculpture happens. Varying in scale, works are liable to take place fugaciously, as in the case of her ceramic skipping stones which she asks people to skip and have themselves photographed doing so, on the street in a given city, as in her concrete, poured puddles, or in the gallery proper, in subtly, but noticeably present architectural disruptions of the space itself. In every case the work bears a strong link to not just the every day, but to the lived—it wants to experience as much as it generates experience, collecting and registering the traces of the passing world, which it incorporates and is incorporated into. It is for this reason that if the handmade plays a very important role in what she does it is not merely romantic or even retrograde, but rather the aesthetic byproduct of a position that shamelessly embraces direct experience over the mediated.

Learn more about Kate Newby [here](#).

April 2017
Linnea West

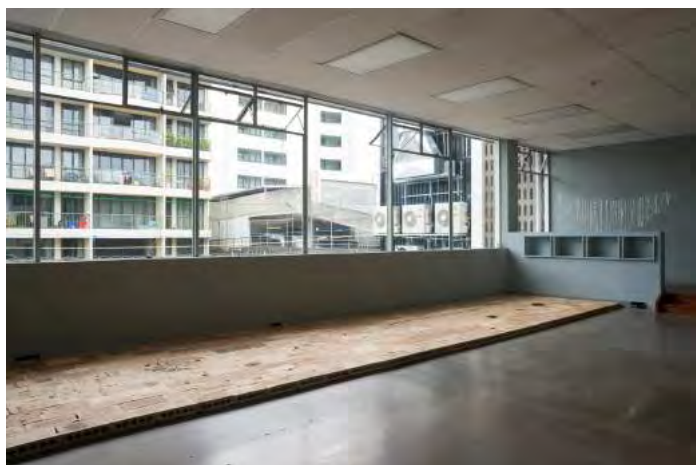
Linnea West

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← Wind and Stone: Seung-taek Lee at Levy Gorvy Gallery A Humble Humor: Maria Nepomuceno and Lucas Blalock at Sikkema Jenkins →

Phone Tag: Interview with Kate Newby

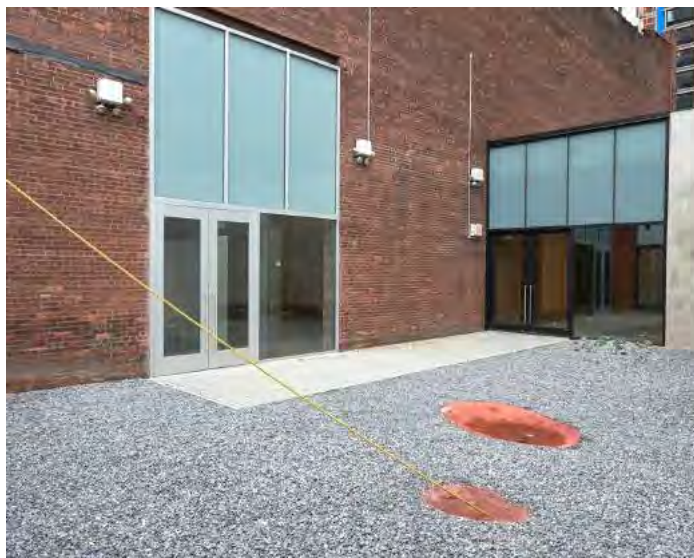
Posted on April 23, 2017



Kate Newby, *They say you've got to live there for a while*, 2016. Bricks, coins, white brass, pink silver, yellow silver, bronze, stoneware, porcelain, glaze, bottle top, paper clip, nail, glass. Courtesy of Michael Lett Gallery. Photo credit: Alex North

I speak with Kate Newby about her practice and current projects in this Phone Tag interview. From landscape and everyday materials, Kate brings a sensitivity to her environment to create what she calls “situations.” The New York-based artist is originally from New Zealand. However, she has been in Texas on a residency, and so we recently Skyped about how her approach to objects is informed by her surroundings, how art became a profession, life in New York, and her need for the female voice.

Phone Tag is a generative interview format, where I ask each participating artist five questions (plus others as the discussion meanders). At the end, I ask him or her to introduce me to a working artist whose attitude and work they find interesting and inspiring, who I then interview with the same five questions.



Kate-Newby, *Not this time, not for me*, 2017. Mortar, concrete pigment, silver, white brass, bronze, porcelain, cotton rope, blown glass, glass, stoneware. Courtesy of Michael Lett Gallery (exhibited at the Sculpture Centre, NYC)

Linnea West: “So, you’re in Texas now for a residency. Could you tell me a little bit about what you’re doing?”

Kate Newby: “I’m in San Antonio at Artpace. It’s my first time in Texas. It’s also my first time doing a residency since I did one on Fogo Island in 2013, so it has been quite some years since I’ve been in a residency situation. I’ve only been

here a few weeks, but I think the time is going to fly. The residency is set up in a way where you work in a studio for two months, which then becomes your exhibition space for the following two months. There are three studios and three artists in residence. So there's the pressure of an exhibition at the end but I came down here quite conscious that I didn't want to think about that, that I wanted to be more involved in the processes.

One of the things I do is, I work in clay. I've worked in clay for quite some time. It's gotten to a point where I'm bored with it. Being down here what I want to do is to get outside more. Digging clay. I want to experiment with firings. Barrel firings. Pit firings, and building my own kiln. And I kind of think I'm more interested in experiences than outcomes, and I think work will naturally arise out of that process."

LW: "So you're trying to give yourself two months to breathe and explore?"

KN: "Yeah, I want to breath and explore. I'm realizing that that it is actually more work. I'm getting up at 6 am to do firings and other stuff, but it is good. There are people here who can help. In New York, I feel very singular; it's just me. It's nice to have people around who say, 'Can we help? What can we do? Do you need this?' 'Yeah, I need a half cord of firewood, please.' "



Kate Newby, *Ah be with me always*, 2015. Colored mortar, brick, porcelain, bronze. Courtesy of Michael Lett Gallery (exhibited at Laurel Gitlen, NY)

LW: “Yeah, that’s a great thing to be able to say. From what I know of your work, I do see that you work a lot with clay, but not traditional ceramic vessels and that you work with other material as well. Could briefly describe what you make?”

KN: “Sure. I think what I do is, I create situations. I think about things like atmosphere and weather, being outside. Things that I absorbed and paid attention to, and I want to reflect that back out in my work. So my work is never a singular object. In fact, it might be several hundred objects in the case of some of my studies of rocks, or it could be as simple as using a piece of rope, which is what I just did at the SculptureCenter. I used 600 feet of rope to go from a puddle I had made on the ground, out of concrete, to weave into a tree, to weave across the building, and to hang down the very front of the building. I like to call peoples’ attention to these discrete actions. They don’t give a lot away, but they try to belong to a site in a way that is not too foreign. The materials

I use, concrete and clay and rope, are never totally removed from what I'm looking at when I am installing."

LW: "How site-specific are these? Would you reinstall the work somewhere else using the exact components or is it unique to that site?"

KN: "It's both. It's totally specific and I'll use the same components anywhere. But they would change and I would want them to change and I would want them to be responsive. I think about site-specificity versus site-responsiveness—No, I don't think about any of it. I just think about, what am I looking at? And what do I respond to, and what do I think is curious? I try to trust my instincts more and more. Just see what is happening and make works that responds to that."



Kate Newby, *Crawl out your window*, 2010. Concrete ramp, rocks, crystals, cotton fabric, wall, yellow paint. Courtesy of Michael Lett Gallery (exhibited at GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremen). Photo credit: Peter Podowik

LW: “Now that you’re in this new space in Texas, what does an ideal day in your studio look like?”

KN: “Hmmm, I know what an ideal of what that would be like... I don’t have a studio in New York; I have a small room in my apartment that kind of acts like an office and storage area. Now I have a huge studio that would be awesome to utilize, but I don’t quite know what to do with it.

I’m definitely a morning person, so I’m trying to get up at 6 am, which is actually a little too early for me, but ideally I would be up at 6, shower, eat, and be in the studio before anyone is around so I can get my head into it. My ideal day is to do everything. To have practical, hands-on work. It would be to finally do my taxes; it would be to do some deep reading and research. It would be to eat properly. But it’s never like that. I wake up, I have 30 good minutes, and then I’m just walking around with a bit of paper in my hand, just trying to fumble through the day.”

LW: “What about time for email, does that factor in?”

KN: “It’s funny because that’s something I do everything morning in New York, and here I don’t and I’m really behind on email. It’s chronic; it’s terrible. But I’m here now, and I just want to get out of the apartment. I just feel like I’m so excited to get to the studio and to get to work. And I’ve got all these time constraints because of firings and drying times. I’ve been very physical and doing all this other stuff, where in New York I do email all the time.”

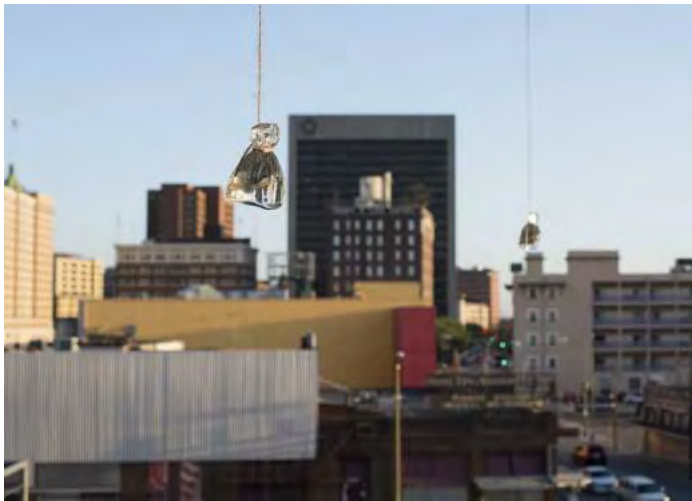


Kate Newby, *The January February March*, 2015. Porcelain stoneware, earthenware. Courtesy of Michael Lett Gallery (installation view: Margaretville, The Catskills, NY)

LW: “That’s great. That sounds like freedom. When did you first think of yourself as an artist?”

KN: “It developed incrementally. I had this moment when I was 15 and I thought— ‘Oh, this is a way I can look at things and make sense of the world,’ and for the first time I intentionally became involved with art. It became my full focus when I was in high school and then I went to art school and then I went and traveled for several years. I wasn’t exhibiting—I wasn’t traveling as an artist. I was traveling just as a person. I was ironing sheets; I was waitress-ing; I was whatever. When I came back to New Zealand, I thought about it, and that’s probably the moment I became an artist, because that’s the moment I basically looked at art and thought, ‘What’s here, and what do I want out of it, and what do I want to do with this, if this is what I am going to do.’ Before then, art had been something that I carried around like a backpack. In my mid-twenties, it became something

bigger and harder, and not so convenient. This is the minute that things became quite alive for me.”



Kate Newby, *Try it with less pennies and direct light*, 2017. Glass, Jute.
Fabricated by Jake Zollie Harper. Originally commissioned and produced by
Artpace San Antonio. Photo credit: Adam Schreiber

LW: “Is it more important for an artist to be in a big city with a strong cultural scene, opportunities to show their work, lots of people, etc. or to be in a place maybe more like San Antonio or even quieter where you’re just focused on making?”

KN: “I think it’s both. I’m from New Zealand and I grew up at a beach and in a valley with a lot of trees. I grew up with a lot of solitude and I really need that. Strangely I get a lot of solitude in New York still. But what I do really need is the landscape. I need my work to be involved with the landscape. When I think about my work, I don’t think about it in terms of galleries; I think about it in terms of how can I take it back outside to where it came from, and how can I work these elements that are so crucial to my thinking back into the work.

So, that's not answering your question, but I've done some really remote residencies, like Fogo Island, which is off the coast of Newfoundland in Canada. You can get more remote than that, but it's very remote. Once I was in a town called Worpswede in rural Germany, which is this tiny little village. I was there for 5 months alone while I worked on an exhibition in Bremen. It's weirdly exhausting, because you just have so much to do with yourself. But I think it's both. I love going back to New York. I wouldn't change that and I love leaving just as much."

LW: "I'm interested in this idea of landscape that you mentioned, especially if you're going to such different landscapes and then going to a place like New York. Are you think of an abstract, generalized idea of landscape or does New York City as a landscape feed into your imagination?"

KN: "It's just whatever experience I'm having. In New York, it's a huge influence on me in terms of how I work, because I'm pretty obsessed with sidewalks and the residue from people and the residue from wear and tear of us just being alive. I'm not looking at nature too much in New York City, but what I am looking at is this experience that we have every day. Even the tilt of the sidewalk or something, I find these kinds of things interesting. I don't know why, I just do. These tiny, tiny things. The first time I made them I put them in this community garden in Brooklyn because it was kind of protected and they could be outside. They lasted for several months and they didn't break and they made a sort of gentle sound. I like this idea that my work is a collaboration with weather and with elements and with these things that come in to complete the work. I'm only half making the work and then I'm putting it in a situation where these other things might come in and infiltrate it and work with it. So,

when I say landscape, sometime it is a big general thing, like being on a ranch in Texas, but it doesn't have to be."



Kate Newby, *Let me be the wind that pulls your hair*, 2017. Assorted clay and glaze, bronze, cotton, wire. Originally commissioned and produced by Artpace San Antonio. Photo credit: Adam Schreiber

LW: "Who has influenced your practice?"

KN: "That's a tricky questions. I don't know. But I will say that less than a year ago I went on a trip from Los Angeles through Nevada up to Utah and I saw a lot of these land art pieces. I was blown away by this Nancy Holt piece called *Sun Tunnels*, which was phenomenal but also really challenging. She worked on it for four years and she was out there in the desert working on this thing. It's a totally deep meditation. I come to a site and I could bang a work out in a day, that's the way I work. It was interesting to think about what if you just made one thing but made it really, really well while keeping it simple. That was the thing, it was just really simple. She's come to me at a really good moment—it's making me question things a lot more. Especially in New York, where I feel like I'm exclusively making work that could fit in my backpack.

Roni Horn is really interesting. She also has a type of this deep awareness of what's going on. I want to be careful about that, because the last few years for me have been very busy and I've had to perform for these deadlines. I just want to be aware, keeping an eye on my work in a way that the thoughtfulness, the considered rigor of both of their practices is something that I absorb and keep in mind."

LW: "Is it a coincidence that they are both women, or is that something you think about as well?"

KN: "It's something I think I need; I really want that. I listen to a lot of music, and more and more I want female voices around me. It's because they make phenomenal work and it's because I need more female voices around me."



Kate Newby, *Let me be the wind that pulls your hair*, 2017. Assorted clay and glaze, bronze, cotton, wire. Originally commissioned and produced by Artpace San Antonio. Photo credit: Adam Schreiber

LW: "What's next—you have two months in Texas and then you'll be back in New York—what does your upcoming future

look like?”

KN: “Someone mentioned to me years ago, ‘Kate, how are you going to keep working like this? Turn up somewhere, make a show, and move on. How are you going to keep doing that?’ My next year is already feeling a bit like this. But I’m doing things I really want to do. I’ll go to Stockholm for an exhibition at *Index*, which is great, which is phenomenal, and the project is the second extension of a project I did two years ago at the *Arnolfini* in Bristol, by the same curator Axel Wieder. He’s doing the second chapter of an exhibition called *The Promise*, and it’s all in the public space—that’s a dream come true—when you can gain permission to work in public space and have support to do this. You’re not making necessarily public sculpture, but you’re able to work outside with the support of an institution. How do you utilize that? I’ve just got a lot of questions. How do I keep doing things with integrity? That’s the stage I’m at. How do I maintain this, and how do I keep it honest? Funnily enough I have a second residency this year in Texas at the Chianti Foundation in Marfa. I think this will be an interesting opportunity to re-visit a lot of the ideas that I may open up while working here in San Antonio.”

LW: “But that’s a great place to be, because it’s a sign that what you’re doing is working, right?”

KN: “Yeah. I think so. I’m just aware that the work has to lead. I don’t know what’s going to happen, but this time here is good.”

LW: “Well, thank you. This has been great.”

KN: “Thank you for talking to me.”

October 2017
Sans

Kate Newby, Artist

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Kate Newby is a New Zealand artist known for her quiet, poetic and humorous installations that often respond to the conditions of every day life. Sans [ceuticals] spoke with Kate about her own daily rituals and how they inform her art making.

On daily rituals:

I don't spend a lot of time in the studio making my work. A lot of what I do happens during the installation or exhibition time. So it's important that I have a lot of time to process thoughts, ideas, possibilities etc.

I make coffee first thing in the morning and this is a great moment of the day for me. I don't have to talk or do much and I sit on the sofa and have a bit of time to think very clearly about what's happening. Then the rest of my day is really about what needs to happen and this can range from a lot of activity, to a day in bed!

On nature informing her work and the process of making:

My work feels strongest to me when it's somehow in conversation with the environment that it exists within. Paying attention to natural elements such as light, wind, rain, and sun form the basis of my work. I also spend a lot of time observing moments around me in my day-to-day existence.

On humour:

I think it's important not to take myself too seriously and I think humour is a good way to relax in a space and with work. I enjoy myself a huge amount when I'm working and hopefully this comes through in the work itself.

October 2017
University of Auckland

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Kate Newby



In 2014, the influential British art magazine *Frieze* described New Zealander Kate Newby's art as "radically slight", and, more significantly, "earthwork in miniature". Wind chimes, coins pressed into the pavement, plastic bags fluttering in trees – quiet interventions like this have made Kate one of New Zealand's most internationally successful artists, praised and fêted by some of the most influential curators and critics in the world.*

As a child growing up at Auckland's Bethells Beach, where her father was a potter, there were always places to explore and the constant sound of the waves to keep you connected to the land. It's an upbringing Kate contrasts with her current lifestyle living in New York, where she is now based, though Auckland, and particularly Bethells, remains her 'spiritual' home and somehow she manages to live and work between both cities.

"My parents provided me with a base from which I felt comfortable and confident to experiment and try things out. I grew up listening to a lot of punk music and artists like Patti Smith had a big influence on me. Even today I still listen to music to help me think."

Accepted into Elam, Kate completed her Bachelor's degree in 2001 (Fine Arts), a Masters in 2007 (Fine Arts) and most recently a doctorate of Fine Arts in 2015, also winning the Walters Prize in 2012, New Zealand's richest contemporary art award.

"Getting into Elam I just felt incredibly excited. From the age of 15 I had my heart set on studying fine arts. In fact, it wasn't even a discussion. I absolutely knew that was what I was going to do and that I would become a painter."

But in her third year that all changed. Switching to sculpture, Kate says she became very interested in exploring space which is where she finds herself today.

A natural-born traveller, her recent exhibition schedule has included: New York, London, Stockholm, Melbourne, Mexico City, Toronto, as well as a much-sought-after residency on Fogo Island in Newfoundland.

Embracing risk and learning to be comfortable feeling uncomfortable she says have been key learnings.

"The most important thing I have learned is how to take small steps toward something greater, even when I cannot see how they will add up ahead of time. It is always tempting to hold back and wait for all the pieces to align, but more and more I see how the most momentous and crucial opportunities and experiences I have had come from embracing my incomprehension and moving forward; despite my reservations and discomfort."

Kate singles out Bethells resident and former art teacher Allie Eagle and Dr P Mule at Elam for special mention as two people who have had a significant influence on her work.

“Allie took me under her wing when I was very young and gave me lots of encouragement to explore my interest in art and P.Mule was the main reason I returned to art school to undertake my Master’s degree, which in turn really changed my work for the better and opened up a trajectory that my work is still following.”

**Quiet wanderer: Kiwi sculptor Kate Newby* by Anthony Byrt (Dec 2016) used with permission

March 2017
Art Viewer

Jade Bi at MADRAGOA

March 4, 2017

Curated by: Sara De Chiara

Venue: MADRAGOA, Lisbon, Portugal

Date: January 28 – March 11, 2017

Photography: all images copyright and courtesy of the artists and MADRAGOA, Lisbon

MADRAGOA is delighted to present Jade Bi, that will inaugurate MADRAGOA ENCIMA, the new space of the gallery.

In 2010 British Museum director Neil McGregor presented *A History of the World in 100 Objects*, a successful radio series articulated in 100 episodes, each one of them devoted to the description of one of the objects selected from the Museum's collection, aimed at tracing one of the possible histories of humanity. Surprisingly, the majority of these objects are everyday artifacts, unpretentious tools or simply fragments that, seen from this perspective, reveal them to be eloquent witnesses of ancient and contemporary civilizations, as well as unexpected turning points in a history that stretches back two million years. Deciphering the layered messages conveyed by the objects means to immerse ourselves in a nebulous matter. A large number of the selected objects bear on them the marks of later events, damages that come with time or interventions deliberately designed to change their meaning, according to their new owner's wish. For some of them we are not even able to understand precisely their original function and we can only approach them by approximation. Jade Bi is one of the 100 selected objects, now collected in a book. It is a Chinese jade disc, made around 1200 BC, whose original function remains unclear. In the 18th century AC it was owned by the Qianlong Emperor who in 1790 had the disc inscribed with a text he had written, commenting on its antiquity and possible function.

Compared to the study of texts «with objects, we do of course have structures of expertise – archaeological, scientific, anthropological – which allow us to ask critical questions. But we have to add to that a considerable leap of imagination, returning the artifact to its former life, engaging with it as generously, as poetically, as we can in the hope of winning the insights it may deliver» (from the author's introduction).

A further leap of imagination is in this case asked to the audience: presented on the radio, they do not see the objects and have to figure them in their minds, combining the information received – materials, shapes, uses, patterns, colours, temperatures – and relying also on personal experiences and memories.

Jade Bi is inspired by the relationship between the objects and the poetry and narratives they can convey, starting from their own physicality. It will be introduced by texts by Gianluigi Ricuperati, a collection of short stories, each one triggered by the photograph of the exhibited objects, with the purpose to continue the leap of imagination that connects the things and the words.

All the pieces presented in the show possess a mysterious quality, a captivating facet that makes the viewer wonder about their creation process, activating an exercise of interpretation that goes beyond the artwork itself. The objects look familiar and unfamiliar at the same time, they could be findings from other eras, near and far, they may have been used, but we no longer know how to use them. In different ways, the works reflect on the passage of time, on the migration of images and the survival of forms, oscillating between ephemeral and permanence. They preserve ancient fragments or shapes, sometimes betray or fake them.

Darren Bader's works from the series *To Have and to Hold* question our way of looking at objects, how we perceive them, what we really know about the things we live with, their origins and story, and also the meaning of possessing or collecting them.

Namsal Siedlecki's starting point is a deep knowledge of peculiar objects, investigating their provenance, how they have been produced and how their shapes evolve or remain unaltered through time. In *Nerbo*, the precariousness of the organic material used – a stretched and dried bull penis – encounters the persistence of this traditional instrument still produced for the horse race Palio of Siena since its ancient origin. To further preserve this whip over time, its shape as well as its vibrant strength, it has been coated with nickel.

Dalila Gonçalves' practice is rooted in the idea of passage of time that leaves its traces on the objects. In her installations and sculptures, everyday objects are decontextualised from their original

function and reinterpreted in order to reveal unpredictable aspects of their own matter. The two sculptures *Rastos*, that appear like tree trunks, are composed by layers of used sandpaper discs gathered from furniture factories. *Translado* consists of found patterns on paper used for clothing manufacture that look like a tangled city plan.

Related to the act of measuring time and space is *Corrispondenze (lo spazio di luce tra Torino e Lisbona)*, a new work by Renato Leotta. It is a personal interpretation of a correspondence, of a letter which, instead of containing a written message, records the light that separates the sender and the recipient. Treated with cyanotype paint, the paper turns into different shades of blue according to the light it has been exposed to during its travel, measuring the distance with an unconventional, fortuitous system.

Kate Newby's wind chimes *Hummed, whispered, and moaned*, suspended in the gallery space, captivates the eye of the viewer that lingers on the thin elements hanging from the same string, discovering that each piece is unique in shape and bears traces and echoes of previous uses, incidental marks and signs of process.

In Rodrigo Hernández's papier-mâché works *OONZE!* and *The Compass Rose of Will* figurative and abstract elements, coming from different references from Mexican art to Italian Futurism, are superposed and integrated to form a new composition, always open to different interpretations. Belén Uriel's *The fairy place (1)* is inspired by Bruno Taut's *Glasbauspiel*, a glass block building set designed in 1920: the blocks can be put together to form a wide variety of constructions. Made in blown colored glass, Uriel's blocks – in the shape of cubes, parallelepipeds, prisms, and a sphere – lose their geometrical rigor and their light and softened forms remind those of familiar objects. They compose a transparent structure, one of the possible combinations of the pieces, that can then be collected in the octagonal wooden box which constitutes the plinth of the sculpture.

Luís Lázaro Matos' contribution to the show is a drawing which is the visual translation of an imaginary object described to him by Gianluigi Ricuperati.

Darren Bader (Bridgeport, USA, 1978), lives and works in New York City. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Such are promises*, Sadie Coles HQ, London, 2016; *Rocks and mirrors*, Galleria Franco Noero, Turin, Italy, 2015; *The World As Will And Representation*, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Köln, Germany, 2015; *39/50, fig-2*, ICA, London, 2015; *Reading Writing Arithmetic*, Radio Athènes, Athens, Greece, 2015; Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York, USA, 2014; *Come away with me*, Frieze Project at Frieze New York 2014, USA. In 2013 he was awarded The Calder Prize.

Dalila Gonçalves (Castelo de Paiva, Portugal, 1982), lives and works in Oporto. Recent exhibitions include: *Quid Pro Quo*, Panal 361, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2017; *The clock has no place in the woods*, Lamb-Arts, London, 2016; *Keep calm and carry on*, Tabacalera, Madrid, 2016, *Um horizonte de proximidades*, Contemporary Art Center, Azores, 2015; *Notas sobre a construção do tempo*, Anozero, Contemporary Art Biennial, Coimbra (2015).

Rodrigo Hernández (Mexico City, Mexico, 1983), lives and works in Mexico City. His recent solo exhibitions include: *I am nothing*, Heidelberger Kunstverein, Germany, 2016; *Every forest madly in love with the moon has a highway crossing it from one side to the other*, Kurimanzutto, Mexico City, 2016; *El pequeño centro*, Museo Universitario del Chopo, Mexico City, 2015; *What is the moon?*, Bonnefanten Museum, Maastricht, The Netherlands, 2015; *Gentle Scorpio!*, Parallel Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico, 2014; *Dutch Flat Things*, Jan Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, The Netherlands, 2014.

Renato Leotta (Turin, Italy, 1982), lives and works in Turin. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Aventura*, Madragoa, Lisbon, 2016; *Piccola Patria*, Galleria Fonti, Naples, 2015; *MUSEO (Cavalli e Cavalle, Cavalli, Cavalli)*, Cripta 747, Turin, 2015; *Museo Archeologico Nazionale*, Wilson Project and Museo Nazionale E. Sanna, Sassari, 2013; *Centramento*, Torre Piacentini, Genova, 2013.

Luís Lázaro Matos (Évora, Portugal, 1987), lives and works in Lisbon. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Super Gibraltar*, Kunsthalle Lissabon, Lisbon, 2015; *Models for Solitude*, Old School, Lisbon, 2014; *Houses On Punta Massulo*, Neoteorismo Toumazou, Nicosia, Cyprus, 2013; *One, Two, Three! Position!*, Hinterconti, Hamburg, 2013.

Kate Newby (Auckland, New Zealand, 1979), lives between Auckland and Brooklyn. Recent solo exhibitions include: *The January February March*, with Jennifer Kabat, The Poor Farm, Wisconsin, USA, 2016; *Two aspirins a vitamin C tablet and some baking soda*, Laurel Doody, Los Angeles, 2015; *Always Humming*, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, 2015; *Big Tree. Bird's Eye*, Michael Lett, Auckland, New Zealand, 2016. In 2012 she was awarded the Walter's Prize.

Namsal Siedlecki (US 1986), lives and works in Seggiano, Italy. He was recently awarded the Cy Twombly Italian Fellow in Visual Arts and the Premio Moroso. His work has been shown at institutions such as the American Academy in Rome; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; Villa Romana, Florence; Villa Manin, Udine; Museo Apparente, Napoli; Cripta 747, Turin; Frankfurt am Main, Berlin.

Belén Uriel (Madrid, Spain, 1974), lives and works between London and Lisbon. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Segunda-feira*, Culturgest Lisbon, 2016; *Sand, Paper, Scissors*, Projektraum, Museum, Wiesbaden, 2016; *Lama no sapato*, Parkour, Lisbon, 2014; *Pedra, papel e tesoura*, Pavilhão Branco Museu da Cidade, Lisbon, 2013; *Useful household objects under 10\$,* Montehermoso Cultural Centre, Vitoria, 2012.

March 2017
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<http://www.mysanantonio.com/entertainment/article/Homemade-fly-repellent-inspires-Artpace-artist-11021192.php>

Homemade fly repellent inspires Artpace artist

By **Elda Silva** Updated 9:47 am, Thursday, March 23, 2017



IMAGE 1 OF 9

Kate Newby, of Auckland, New Zealand, talks about her installation during a walk through of Artpaces Spring 2017 International Artists-in-Residence Program.

Soon after arriving in San Antonio, Kate Newby encountered something she had never seen before — clear plastic bags filled with water and strung up outdoors.

The Auckland, New Zealand, artist was struck by the odd pendants, believed by some to repel flies (and by others to be useless).

“I was just like, ‘What are these? They’re beautiful! Somebody had the best idea!’” she said.

With the help of glassblower Jake Zollie Harper, Newby created her own version of the bags for “Let me be the wind that pulls your hair.” The show is one of the three spring International Artist-In-Residence exhibitions at Artpace curated by Michelle Grabner of the University of Chicago.

Also on view: works by Houston artist Robert Hodge and Milwaukee artist Nicholas Frank.

“This group has been so amazing and has gotten so involved in the San Antonio community — in what we do as an arts community, but (also) in really learning who we are as a city,” executive director Veronique Le Melle said during a walk-through. “And I think some of the work reflects that back.”

Newby, who has recently had solo shows in Los Angeles, New York and Mexico City, creates site-specific projects that draw directly from the locations where they are presented.

"I rely a lot on casual observation, so the Ziplock water bags, I saw those the very first night I was in San Antonio," she said. "How I researched my project is just through curiosity. It's not through historical research. It's just about how I spend my time and what I notice."

Two dozen of the delicate-looking glass pieces are suspended with twine from a shade structure on the roof of Artpace. Works in the gallery space include a set of three prints Newby made by placing copper plates covered with birdseed in a friend's back yard. The resulting prints show the beak and claw marks of the creatures that stopped by for a meal; at least one of them also appears to show evidence of the tornadoes that ripped through the city in February.

Also in the gallery, Newby used a panel of fabric she exposed to the elements as a partition to create a more intimate space in front of a bank of windows. Small clay works that resemble stones are arranged along the sill. "I think when you go behind the cotton, you get to be in your own space," she said. "That's what I would want looking at work."

During her residency, Newby also installed works at five different sites — ranches and friends' homes where she spent time. The pieces are viewable through an artist book she made for the show.

Like Newby, Hodge found inspiration — and materials — for his exhibition in the San Antonio environs. The artist, whose work is rooted in hip-hop culture, purchased records from "practically every record store I could find" and collected posters around the city to make the thickly layered collage works in his show, "Between the Devil and the Deep." Stitching, paint and neon add to the vibrancy of the pieces. In a couple of the works, music fans will recognize lyrics by Big Sean: "Blessings on blessings on blessings."

"Music guides the way for a lot of the work," Hodge said. "I kind of start there."

The title of Hodge's show is taken from "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea," the pop song from 1932 recorded by a number of artists including Thelonious Monk. In its truncated form, it is a reference to famed blues musician Robert Johnson, who according to legend sold his soul to the devil in exchange for mastery of the guitar. As part of the residency, Hodge checked into the same room at the Sheraton Gunter Hotel where Johnson recorded several songs in 1936; while there, he recorded an album that will be released on vinyl later. His exploration of the myth also lead him to consider questions of spirituality and the soul, which also are reflected in the collage works.

Hodge acknowledges a certain perversity in trying to capture music through visual art.

"It's hard," he said. "I used to separate them, and I'm trying now to make them merge together, so I have an audio (component) to every exhibition I do. I make a vinyl record with artists in the community."

During his residency, Frank invited San Antonio into his space, organizing "Schist," a show featuring a handful of local artists as well as some Houston artists.

"I wanted to flip the usual artist/audience equation and become an audience for San Antonio as well, so I invited people to occupy my space," he said.

As part of his own exhibit, he acknowledges the various people who helped him make his work in a video made in the style of a movie's closing credits.

"When you're sitting in a movie and you're taken in by it and then you get up and leave while the credits are rolling, you kind of know that maybe you missed the fact of how many people it takes to make a film, and it's

hundreds and hundreds,” he said. “And it’s the same with minimal sculpture. The amount of work that went into this show is astonishing.”

A audio piece that Frank made with San Antonio-based sound artist Justin Boyd references the recent presidential election. The recording captures the sound of a sheet of plate glass cracking as it is run through a highly pressurized intaglio press. It cuts off at the point where the microphone was crushed. In this case, the piece refers to the figurative glass ceiling that was not broken as anticipated by Hillary Clinton, but that Frank imagines giving way under a tremendous weight and raining down in pieces.

The space is bisected by a 32-foot chain made out of glass, a border rendered ineffective by its transparency and fragility. Likewise, a pair of Perspex saw horses placed in front of the rubble of broken ceramic vessels serve as translucent barricades. The pieces are a reference to “our political conversation right now,” Frank said. “It’s important not to build 50-foot tall walls and then pretend like you can’t see what’s happening on the other side,” he said. “So I’d like to kind of make all of that as transparent as possible.”

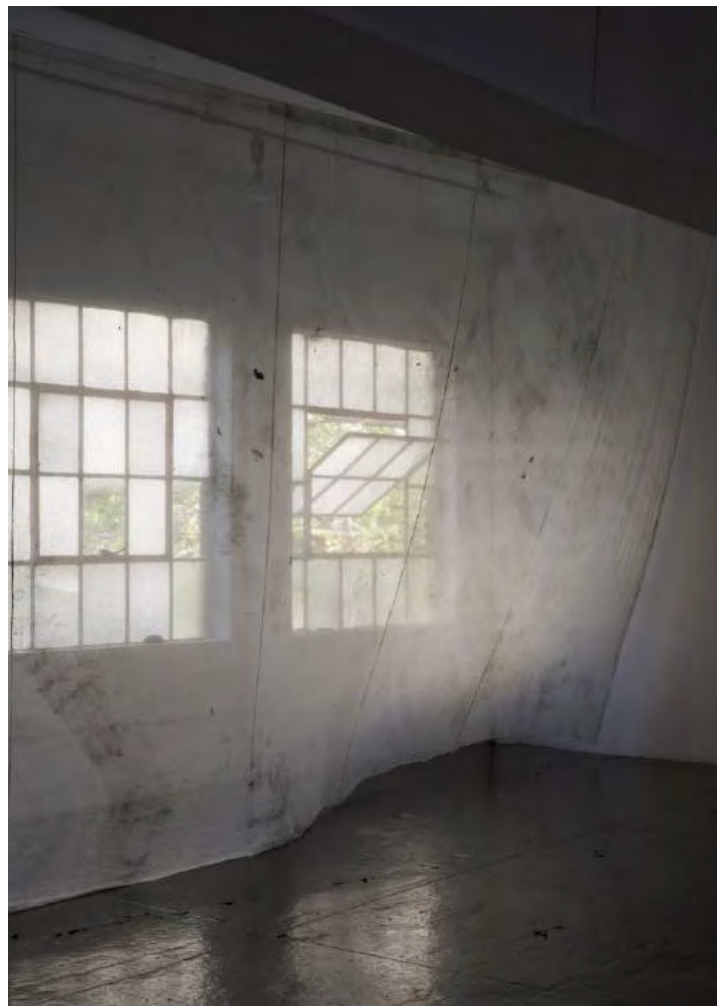
The Spring 2017 International Artist-in-Residence exhibition continue through May 7, Artpace, 445 N. Main Ave., 210-212-4900, www.artpace.org.

April 2017
Glasstire

Glasstire (Texas visual art)

Artpace Spring Artist-in-Residence Exhibition

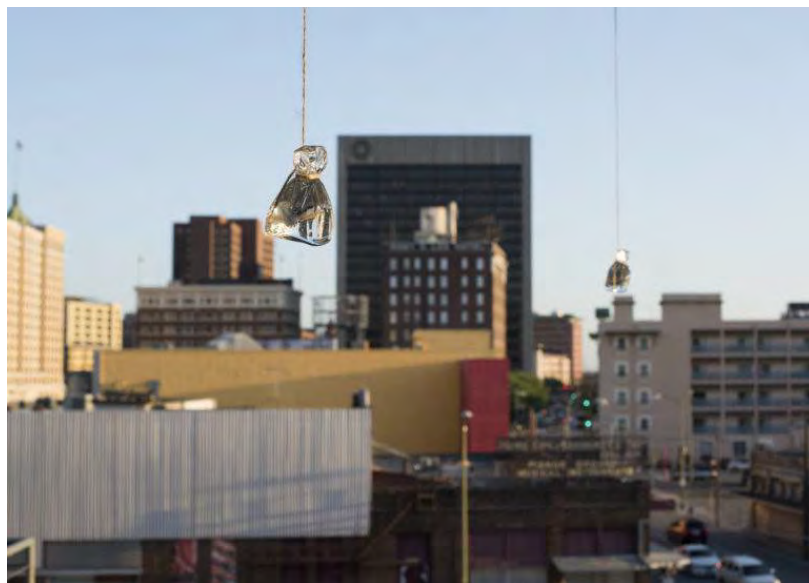
03 Apr 2017 / Neil Fauerso /



Kate Newby

Astutely placed on the second floor and roof, New Zealander Kate Newby's *Let me be the wind that pulls your hair* is simultaneously the work most tethered to earth and nature and

most vaporous and celestial. A weathered dirty scrim (like if the scrims in the new Robert Irwin Chinati Foundation installation were left to blow in the wind and decay) billows serenely, obscuring a gathering of objects Newby made or found during her residency. Pit-fired scarlet ceramics (echoing the shatters in Frank's piece) were made with the collaboration of a local potter and sit next to shells and stones creating a tableau of sentient harmony—the objects almost seem to be *chilling* with each other. Prints made from birds scratching birdseed on copper plates conjure the Zoroastrian burial method of giving back to the earth by leaving a body on a tall pillar until the vultures remove all remnants. On the roof, Newby, struck by the southern tradition of hanging bags of water to deal with mosquitos, made several perfectly clear glass “bags” and hung them on the roof. Newby also installed several pieces throughout San Antonio and the surrounding countryside, leaving a permanent latticed remnant of the piece and her residency.



Kate Newby

Taken together, Newby's works form a balanced and reassuring conclusion to the narrative of the exhibit. The triptych begins with Hodge's emotional, overwhelming well delivering one to Frank's austere auditorium to witness the cracks and finally ascending to Newby's denouement, of the swinging stasis of the scrim and glass bags—a frozen moment of calm.

The importance and input of community is the prevalent vein running throughout the three artists' work. The artists have accomplished quite a dexterous feat—forged a bond with the people of a city to create works that profoundly understand mortality and loneliness and convincingly conclude that liberation requires going out and meeting those with whom to plan the escape.

March 2017
Saccurent

Artpace Brings Transparency to the Creative Process

Tuesday, March 14, 2017

Posted By Bryan Rindfuss on Tue, Mar 14, 2017 at 6:00 am



Work by Kate Newby

In Kate Newby's studio space upstairs, reference images of flora and fauna are attached to the wall and tables are filled with objects and supplies that conjure an odd cross between a science experiment and an archeological dig. On the floor, a blue wooden surface functions as a backdrop for an array of organic-looking ceramic pieces. Some look like glossy river rocks and ladybugs, others resemble fish fins or fossils — and all seem to be prototypes for elements and techniques that might factor into Newby's exhibition. "When you work with clay, you always work in a specific scale, and you might want to expand that to be more environmental," she said. "So this is a test to see if I could possibly do it on a larger scale ... I've done a lot of stuff with clay ... I've been looking at digging it and pit-firing it and barrel-firing it. But it's not going to be 'my work,' it's going to be the fact that I wanted experiences over making final works." Fitting for a curious collection of objects one might collect on a surreal hike, Newby ponders presenting her new works outside the confines of the gallery. "I have this idea that what I want to do — and this is why barrel-firing is really interesting — is literally taking the atmosphere and putting it into the work," she said. "And I like this idea that the more I absorb, the more that might come through on the work ... I really want to use the rooftop for my exhibition ... It could possibly respond to rainstorms and wind and sun and weather."

International Artist-in-Residence Exhibitions

Free // Opening reception 6-9pm Thu, Mar. 16 // On view noon-5pm Wed-Sun through May 7 // Artpace // 445 N. Main Ave. // (210) 212-4900
//artpace.org

September 2016
Vqr

To Write About A Hole

A #VQRTrueStory Essay

Aa Aa Aa

By [Jennifer Kabat \(/people/jennifer-kabat\)](/people/jennifer-kabat)



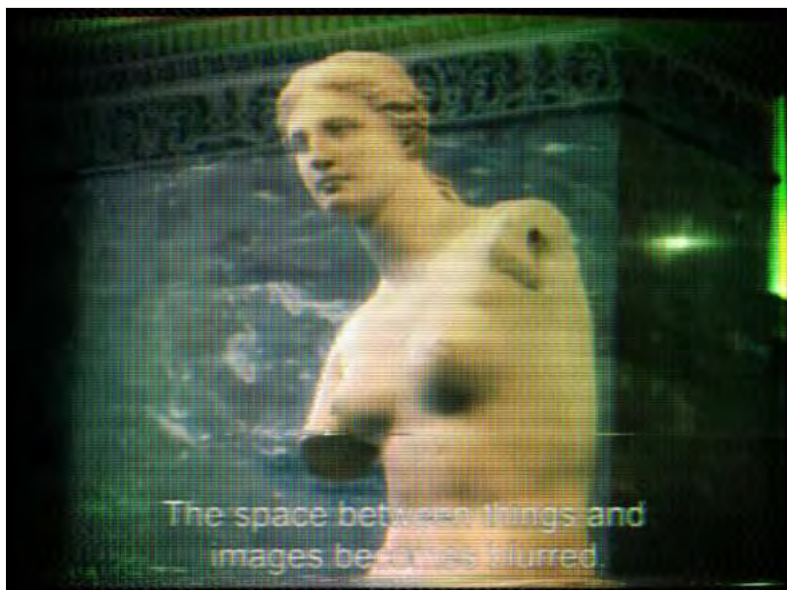
[\(/sites/vqr.virginia.edu/files/story-images/kabat.jpg\)](/sites/vqr.virginia.edu/files/story-images/kabat.jpg)

I found halcyon on a street in New York. Not graffiti, but part of the pavement: a mound of tarmac, in the middle of which was a steel plate where the word appeared. Shining in the light, it looked like frosting. Who put it there? Who thought a steel plate on the street equaled peace or nostalgia? The company that installed it, Halcyon Construction, is based in Pleasantville, New York. It repairs sewers. It makes holes and covers them.

Halcyon began as Alcyone, daughter of Aeolus, god of the winds. She was married to Ceyx, son of the morning star. They were practically inseparable. Then one day Ceyx sailed off and died in a shipwreck, and in her grief Alcyone tried to drown herself. The gods took pity on the couple and turned them into birds so they could be together.

When Alcyone, now incarnated as a bird, chose to lay her eggs on a beach, her father, Aeolus, paused the winds and crashing waves so she could nurture the clutch in safety. Today those birds are kingfishers, which, according to legend, bring calm from storms and a string of peaceful days in winter. “Halcyon” went from a lover’s grief to peace, peace to a street in New York. Along the way, her name was adopted by Shakespeare. “Halcyon days,” with their moments of calm, carry us to an idyllic past and nostalgia, which might just be what happened to me on that street.

In 2007, Halcyon Construction was involved in a suit with Marianne Bingham, who’d tripped over one of its coverings. The hole had been covered but imperfectly. Bingham lost the case. She would be eighty-four now. I wonder about that day when she was crossing Madison Avenue, her confident steps. In her testimony, she talked of looking up. She wasn’t walking with the careful shuffle of the elderly, conscious of each footfall, but focusing ahead. The court papers report, “It is undisputed that Halcyon Construction...had placed the steel plate in the intersection, pinned it in place and ramped it with asphalt.” Ramping, in turn, is described as, “the creation of a smooth transition from one elevation to another through the use of asphalt.” Smooth transitions. Holes covered. Streets made neater, and on most days safer.



[\(/sites/vqr.virginia.edu/files/story-images/tv.jpg\)](https://sites/vqr.virginia.edu/files/story-images/tv.jpg)

Last year I watched a short film about an anonymous guy who’d lost his memory. We never see him, just everything he does to try to recover his past. The movie is made from images that look like they’d been snatched wholesale from YouTube. The footage doesn’t narrate his search so much as fill the hole in his memory, as if anything would do. In the film, the unseen narrator describes going to the library because he’d heard all knowledge was stored there. Afterwards he realized, “There is no memory in photographs and texts.... Memory is the before and after of the history.” The film drove a wedge between history and memory, as if the two were distinct.

There are so many memories available that if we lose ours we can always make do with others, surrounded by unhinged personal histories. There’s little collective memory but infinite individual ones.

All those holes—in cities, in memory, in history, in collectivity, in language—remind me of renegade surrealist and spiritualist René Daumal. In his essay “The Pataphysics of Ghosts,” he tells a nearly cosmic joke as one circus clown asks another, “What is a hole?” Then answers his own question: “An absence surrounded by a presence.”

Daumal explains that this hole is a ghost, because ghosts are holes with “intentions, a sensibility, morals ... an absent being amidst present beings.” Like the gaps and ghosts I find in the city, they’re absences among presence, with intentions, sensibility—morals. “We endow ghosts with intentions,” Daumal writes, “sensibility ... these attributes reside not in the absent beings, but in the present ones that surround the ghost.” Basically, this also sounds like memory—and language.

Halcyon: a steel plate, a peaceful state, a bird, a wounded lover, the calmed wind and seas, nostalgia, this portal that I can’t describe all that well, but try to.



[\(/sites/vqr.virginia.edu/files/story-images/alien-princess2.jpg\)](https://sites/vqr.virginia.edu/files/story-images/alien-princess2.jpg)

There was the city street—I can’t remember if it was Broome, but let’s say it was. I’ve decided this based on a staircase, metal steps covered with diamond-shaped lozenges, so you wouldn’t slip. A printer that made stickers had been on that block in the early 1990s. I went there when I was twenty-two with the idea of posting a serial story across the city, of an alien princess and the cockroaches from which she was descended. I was trying to find a way to cope with the legions of roaches in my tenement apartment and thought if I turned them into a story, I might magically transform the insects into something I could love. Does that give you a sense of place?

Or, there’s the smell of diesel’s gritty powder, and the sound of a horn. Does that carry you there with me? I doubt it. I can barely remember anything but stopping to take pictures and the person I was with and the other person I was thinking of, to whom I was going to send the photos. All my descriptions fail. They inevitably do because language, too, is a ghost of its intentions. It’s an approximation that never quite fits.



[\(/sites/vqr.virginia.edu/files/story-images/orange-corner.jpg\)](https://sites/vqr.virginia.edu/files/story-images/orange-corner.jpg) The smell and sound and steps here just below Houston Street carried me back two decades, to that time when I lived in a tenement dominated by drug dealers and an air of violence. My walls were marked with faint outlines in the dust of the posters that had hung there before I'd moved in. Every morning I'd wake up and write in a journal at a tiny table in the narrow kitchen. I'd stare out the window at a lone tree and a pair of mourning doves. Each morning I'd peer into another apartment across the way. Its walls were orange, McDonald's bright, hideous no doubt, but the color seemed bold and full of hope. One day I decided to paint my own walls that same perversely enthusiastic color. At the hardware store, the clerk asked if I was sure this was the shade I wanted. Yes, definitely.

Six months later, at the kitchen table again, I looked across the way. It was afternoon this time, and the walls in that other apartment were white. Not orange. All I had seen was the morning sun.

Nearly two decades after that paint job, I met an artist, Kate Newby, who got me to think about that time again. We were on a remote island in the North Atlantic. It was winter, and together we bought an orange knit hat, that very same shade, which triggered the story. Afterward she made a piece for that place, that story, that time—pebbles pressed from porcelain, glazed orange and silver. She called it Orange Hat / Orange Room.

Now when I go to New York, I'm always juxtaposing what was twenty years ago. When I'm in the city it's always in two moments, as if both are overlaid. I walk across Houston Street and down Clinton Street, where I lived. I stare up at the old apartment. I cross Broome, and there is "Halcyon." I take the picture to send to Kate, who at that moment is half a world away, and those words in the street tear a portal through to where she is, as well as opening me up to nostalgia, to a different sort of day.



[\(/sites/vqr.virginia.edu/files/story-images/img_8350.jpg\)](https://sites/vqr.virginia.edu/files/story-images/img_8350.jpg) Halfway through One-Way Street, Walter Benjamin writes of love and memory, what we see and what we don't. He talks about seeing your lover and how you don't see her faults or rather the faults are endowed with beauty because they belong to the one you love. He goes on to say, "If the theory is true that feeling does not lodge in the head, that we feel a window, a cloud, a tree not in our brain but in the place where we see them, when we look at the loved one we are likewise outside ourselves." And, I wonder here about memory and time travel, about being "likewise outside ourselves." Is it possible as in the flood of images on the internet as images and memory separate, that by looking at your memories, I might be in two places at once? Could that be like Benjamin's window or cloud, that I am here *and* there? Is that empty? Is that a hole? Maybe that is a promise.

That halcyon bird, the kingfisher, follows me in my upstate life. Here outside my office but also as I kayak along the shores of a reservoir. The reservoir is here but there; it's also a hole in a place.

It's in the mountains more than a hundred miles from New York City but part of the city too, owned by the city and policed by city cops. I paddle along the banks and the bird chases me, no doubt to protect her brood.

I look at art as something that rips open holes. On that island in the North Atlantic with her orange rocks made of porcelain, Kate got me to see the city anew, but writing often means trying to cover over the holes, making things neater, easier to see. I describe something so you picture it as I do. The words fill in the gaps—writing about art even more so. Art works, however, on multiple layers of meaning and questions, while writing about art is meant to close them and make art more approachable. What if I stop now and don't tell you what something is like? That leaves a gap, a hole open for understanding and meaning. Describing it to you only covers it up. Instead I want to leave you here, haunted, open, perhaps with questions of your own.

December 2016
Noted

Quiet wanderer: Kiwi sculptor Kate Newby

by Anthony Byrt (/authors/anthony-byrt/) / 01 December, 2016



Sculptor Kate Newby's subtle interventions – currently on display in a studio above Karangahape Road – have made her one of New Zealand's most internationally successful artists.

SHARE

In the early 1970s, several artists abandoned the white-walled galleries of New York, contemporary art's epicentre, and headed for the wide-open expanses of the American West. Out there, Michael Heizer made 'Double Negative' – two enormous trenches that intersect with a natural canyon and form an almost 500-metre-long, 15-metre-deep sculpture.

Robert Smithson constructed 'Spiral Jetty', a massive coil that stretches out into Utah's Great Salt Lake. And

Nancy Holt built her 'Sun Tunnels': huge pipe forms in the Great Basin Desert, oriented so each catches the sun at a different time of day.

An unlikely inheritor of their breakthroughs is exhibiting in Auckland at the moment. In 2014, the influential British art magazine Frieze described New Zealander Kate Newby's art as "radically slight", and, more significantly, "earthwork in miniature". Wind chimes, coins pressed into the pavement, plastic bags fluttering in trees – quiet interventions like this have made Newby one of New Zealand's most internationally successful artists, praised and fêted by some of the most influential curators and critics in the world.

When we meet in Auckland, she's jetlagged – not long back from her adopted home of New York, where she's lived since 2012. Newby's return to Auckland is for her first exhibition with dealer Michael Lett, having recently shifted to his gallery from Hopkinson Mossman.

Our interview is on her first full day in the city, though she's been back in the country for most of the week, working in Huntly. There, she made more than two tonnes of clay bricks for her show, working with the last North Island outfit still producing them. "They had a healthy amount of suspicion of someone [like me] coming in, but in the end they were really excited," she says. "They hadn't experienced anything like it."

Newby modified 300 bricks before they were fired, pressing characteristic little gestures into their surfaces – old coins, little stones, pull tabs from soft drink cans, and mucky little pieces of ceramic that look like birdshit or chewing gum, depending on the angle. She also left another 300 as they were. “The more I handled the bricks,” she says, “the less I wanted to do to them. I started out being really aggressive, but by the end I just liked them as they are.”

And this is the big challenge of Newby’s work: marrying up the slight with the radical, the banal with the ethereal. In other words, her interventions can at times seem so quiet they barely make a squeak.

A case in point was her work ‘Pocket Charms’ for the 2011 Wellington exhibition Prospect, in which gallery attendants carried tiny trinkets around in their pockets, unseen unless you specifically asked for them. Buying into Newby’s significance means accepting this delicate obsession with leaving the barest trace of her own presence behind, in an attempt to show us that even tiny gestures can dramatically alter our experience of a site.

Installed in a rear space at 321 Karangahape Road, Newby’s new show Big Tree. Bird’s Eye seems to represent a more forthright shift in her practice. On the floor, she’s laid out almost all of her bricks – their insipid colour somewhere between sun-bleached clay and pale flesh – in a long grid, which becomes a footpath you can walk along as you lean down to look at her gentle marks.

Article continues below gallery



Newby’s latest exhibition uses bricks she commissioned from a Huntly

1 of 9

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There are more forceful moments too: oval cavities like craters; a long, serrated gouge like a canyon; random holes like something has burrowed through the pre-fired clay – incisions that are more visceral than we’ve come to expect from her, and that accumulate into tiny desert landscapes. There’s also a massive ‘wind chime’ made from dangling pieces of blown glass, most of which look like icicles, while others, ribbed and bulging, have the slightly disconcerting appearance of high-end sex toys.

Outside the massive windows, Newby has tied several pieces of brightly coloured rope, like a makeshift washing line. Beyond them are the dreary backsides of apartment and office buildings. It’s an exhibition that messes with the boundaries between inside and outside, and between architecture and sculpture, so that we’re never entirely certain where Newby’s work begins and ends. As I’m looking past her ropes, in a perfect accident of site-specificity, a man with hairy legs and little shorts comes out onto his beige balcony and hangs his laundry to dry.

When I point out it seems an unusually big undertaking by her standards, Newby bristles slightly. In fact, she says, she sees a lot of her sculptures as huge – particularly the ones in cities or landscapes, such as a concrete pedestal that wraps around the base of a tree in a public space in Bristol, England. What matters most for Newby is not size, but how she responds to the spaces she finds herself in.

Karangahape Road is a special space for her to exhibit. She was a key member of the group associated with the K’ Road artist-run space Gambia Castle in the mid-2000s, which included other luminaries like Fiona Connor, Nick Austin and Simon Denny, and Newby’s former dealer Sarah Hopkinson. “I have so much history on K’ Road,” says Newby. “My very first

apartment was in St Kevins Arcade when I was 19. When I walk up and down K' Road everything is pretty heavy. But in this space, there were none of those connotations, which is kind of nice." In here, it's the architecture of the space itself, particularly the huge windows letting in soft light, that Newby is so responsive to.

Newby grew up at Bethells Beach and keeps close ties with Auckland: she completed her doctorate at the Elam School of Fine Arts last year and was the 2012 winner of the Walters Prize, New Zealand's richest contemporary art award. But it's clear she's a natural-born traveller. Since 2010 she's had an insane exhibiting schedule: New York, London, Berlin, Melbourne, Mexico City, Toronto, as well a much-sought-after residency on Fogo Island in Newfoundland, and an exhibition in Wisconsin, smack in the rural centre of America, with the important artist, curator and writer Michelle Grabner – a particularly tricky gig, Newby jokes, given she doesn't drive.

Earlier this year, she took a road trip with friends through the American West to see some of the great works of earth art, including 'Double Negative' and Holt's 'Sun Tunnels', which she was particularly struck by. The journey helped her think about her connections to their work, and to 1960s and 1970s sculpture more generally. "What am

I doing that's any different?" she asks. "These encounters, these gestures. For them, I think it was brave new territory, and for me it's not. So in a way I'm interested in creating that brave new territory for myself."

What does she think that will be, I ask? She's not entirely sure yet. But, "I don't think it's [inside] the gallery," she answers, cautiously. In 2017, she'll have every chance to test this, with two residencies in Texas: at Artpace in San Antonio, and a prestigious opportunity at the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, a huge institution in the desert developed by Donald Judd as a temple to Land Art and Minimalism.

But for now, Newby has to fly back to her adopted home. In the time she's been in New Zealand – just a week or two – America has changed dramatically with the ascent of Donald Trump to the presidency. When I point this out, she seems unflustered; New York, as she says, is still one of the most liberal, tolerant, open cities in America. She has the permanently optimistic air of someone intrigued by the tiny details of the world around her. I also sense that if things get too oppressive in the States, Newby, the quiet wanderer, will find a new home somewhere else.

"I don't think I'm a creative genius with a lot of ideas," she says. "What I am is an observer. I'm interested in continually listening and being able to change and adapt. I don't want to be stuck in anything."

This article was first published in Paperboy magazine.

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May 2016
Art Viewer

Kate Newby at COOPER COLE

October 5, 2016

Venue: COOPER COLE, Toronto, Canada

Date: September 9 – October 15, 2016

Photography: all images copyright and courtesy of the artist and COOPER COLE, Toronto

COOPER COLE is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Kate Newby. This marks Newby's first exhibition in Toronto, Canada.

There is condensation on my glass. It seems like the fluid inside (apple cider) travelled through to the outside of the glass, which is itself in a liquid state. The glass is dirty but I don't need a clean one. I will taste the grit, kiss the previous user and absorb the nutrients. The ice is dirty too, and melting.

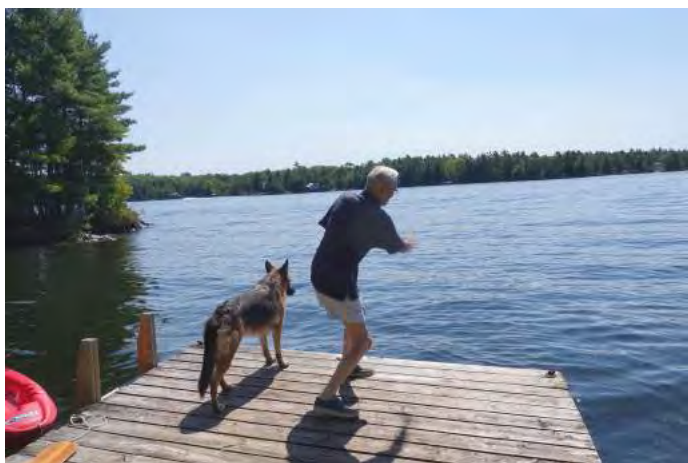
There's a saying... when something, usually an idea or argument "holds water", it is watertight, dependable, definite. However, some things' hold is not so tight. Some things hold like a hand can hold a handful of water for only a few wet moments. Long enough for a sip.

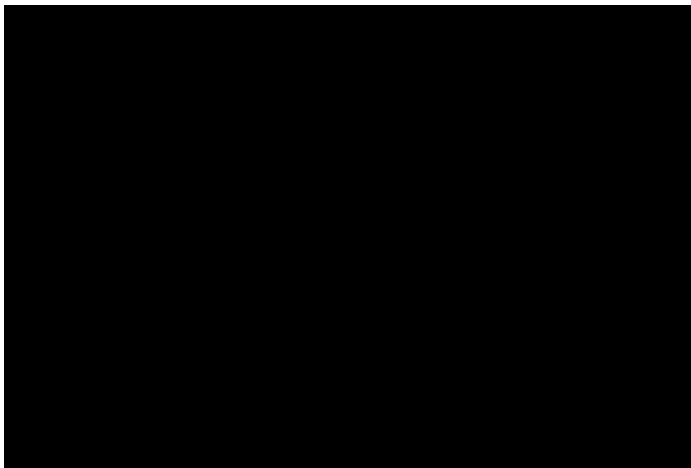
Everything in the universe is tiny. It can be held in your ear, or in your teeth. But this perspective takes distance. From way up here those things could be planets or puddles, buildings or pebbles, gum scraped from a shoe or rocky landforms. Remember the grain of dust in every raindrop?

Ice clinks and I chew the grit. Steam walks through walls and dirt flies up into the clouds. These things are terrestrial, and gravity is love of the earth.

—Jenine Marsh, 2016

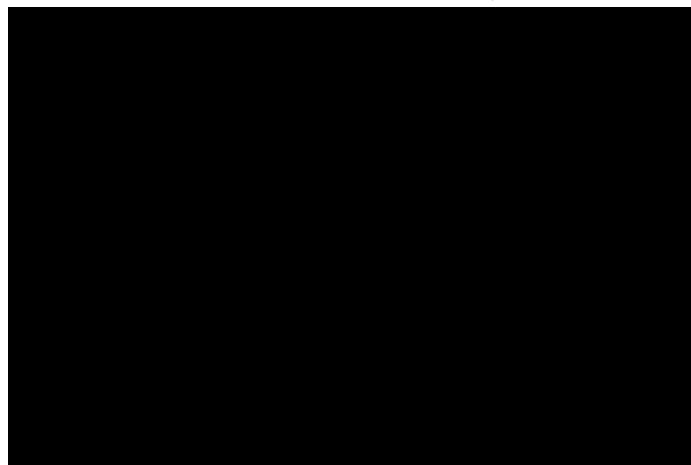
Kate Newby (b. 1979, Auckland, New Zealand) works with installation, textile, ceramics, casting and glass. Her work explores the limits and nature of sculpture, not only in space but also where and how sculpture happens. She received her DocFA and MFA from the Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland. She has shown internationally at such venues as Auckland Art Gallery, Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland, New Zealand; Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne; Minerva, Artspace, Sydney, Australia; Fogo Island Gallery, Newfoundland, Canada; Marianne Boesky, Laurel Gitlen, Ludlow 38, New York; Laurel Doody, Los Angeles, USA; Lulu, Mexico City, Mexico; La Loge, Brussels, Belgium; Philipp Pflug Contemporary, Frankfurt, Germany; P420, Bologna, Italy; Josh Lilley, London; Arnolfini, Bristol, UK. Newby currently lives and works between Auckland, New Zealand and Brooklyn, USA.





12/10/2017

Kate Newby at COOPER COLE



Kate Newby, *Always humming*, 2016

High fired porcelain and stoneware, mason stain, silk thread, rope, white brass fixtures , Dimensions variable

2016
Artforum

Kate Newby

LAUREL DOODY

"The main thing is to tell a story," Frank O'Hara declares in "Fantasy," which appeared in his seminal 1964 collection *Lunch Poems*. In the text, O'Hara slaloms back and forth between daydreams of Helmut Dantine, the Nazi antihero of the 1943 film *Northern Pursuit*, and tending to an ailing Allen Ginsberg, who spends the poem wrestling with indigestion behind a bathroom door. The story the poet tells has no single narrative but skitters between reverie and a makeshift recipe for Alka-Seltzer.

Kate Newby borrowed O'Hara's formula—"two aspirins a vitamin C tablet and some baking soda"—as the title for both her exhibition and its sole work. The multimedia installation was on view at Laurel Doody, a gallery nested in the second floor of a residential complex on a tree-lined street just off Wilshire Boulevard's Miracle Mile. Like the poet before her, Newby emphasizes the quotidian character of her work, positioning complex formal responses to her surroundings as if they were incidental observations of a casual passerby. The artist has carved out a practice that mixes pinprick interventions with major architectural overthrows, coaxing a fleet-footed lyricism from such common building materials as concrete and brick. For this installation, she started by stripping the floors of the gallery, a move that offset the domestic accent of the interior while imbuing the space with equal measures of vigor and vulnerability. Newby then covered nearly a third of the room with a surrogate carpet of bricks, which she had subjected to various alterations while they were still in the factory. These were laid flat across the floor, the intentional gaps and misalignments in their coursing aggravated by the tiny acts of violence Newby inflicted on the clay before the bricks were fired. These ranged from hatch marks scored into the surface, to shallow craters lined with melted glass, to dusty blooms of zinc residue left from pennies pressed into the clay, only to explode in the heat of the kiln. Once the bricks had been baked and assembled, the artist added a handful of what she calls her "pocket charms," a half-found, half-fabricated collection of odds and ends comprising aluminum pull-tabs, bottle caps, nails, and ceramic stones that had been painted to look like pebbles. Rounding off the assortment was a set of talon-like metal awls that Newby had sand-cast as tools for working the clay. No bigger than a finger, each instrument bore the impressions of its making, preserving the various imperfections of the casting process.

As part of her bid to redefine the gallery space, Newby pushed her installation beyond the bounds of the existing architecture into the areas immediately outside the windows, which were left open. Two clear glass objects, made to look like rocks but sized and shaped like



Kate Newby, *Two aspirins a vitamin C tablet and some baking soda*, 2015, mixed media. Installation view. Photo: Fredrik Nilsson.

lungs, sat perched on the outside ledge—a nearly invisible intrusion into the residential landscape. Suspended from a nearby tree was a set of icicle-shaped wind chimes in silver, steel, and ceramic, strung together on rough cords, suggesting a necklace of twigs or a mouthful of long, skinny teeth. This free exchange of the indoors and outdoors was formalized in one final, seemingly spontaneous gesture: a puddle of pale yellow beeswax, which fixed a handful of black, larva-like flower stamens to the wooden floorboards, not far from the gallery door.

Brought together, the various components of the installation produced an impression not unlike that of an animal's lair, where bits of fur and undigested bones testify to past brutalities, unrelated save for their role in the larger enterprise of sustaining a living creature. Like O'Hara with his *Lunch Poems*, Newby deploys her fragmented gestures in the service of a greater alchemy. Unlike the poet's homemade remedy, however, Newby's work provides little relief, inducing a wearying state of wariness in the viewer, lest they miss "the main thing."

—Kate Sutton

THE
SUNDAY PAINTER

2015
Osmos

OSMOS

MAGAZINE

ISSUE 06
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EYE OF THE BEHOLDER KATE NEWBY

Kate Newby

INTRODUCED BY HER GALLERIST CHRIS SHARP

I remember a dinner party a few years ago graced with the collective epiphany that artists tend to be like their work, which is to say that their personalities resemble their work and vice versa. If the work is misanthropic, chances are the artist will be a misanthrope. A gentle, soft-spoken artist will generally create gentle, soft-spoken art (whatever that means). It's not easy to produce examples of such a hokey equation, but try this with the artists you know and you may discover it to be true. If I invoke this heterodox mode of thinking about art, it's because I find this to be particularly true in the case of the New Zealand-born, New York-based artist Kate Newby. I first met Kate about five years ago, during a short professional visit to Auckland, New Zealand, and was immediately taken by her casually candid demeanor. Having forgotten about our studio visit, she had overslept and didn't have anything for us to look at (she was working at a bar at the time, and worked late). Fortunately, anything but arrogant, she was suitably apologetic, and something about her attitude implicitly gave me permission to take a break from my capacity as visiting curator, abandon the traditionally fraught dynamics of the studio visit, and just be. Not to go all Sophie Calle here, but this came as a huge relief to me because my girlfriend had broken up with me literally the day before (over email, read in a hotel room), and I was devastated. But since I was only visiting for three days and had something like a dozen studio visits scheduled, in addition to other meetings, I didn't have the time or space to be devastated, at all. I didn't burden Kate with the knowledge of my sorrow. We had, after all, just met. We just sat in her kitchen and drank coffee and talked. And I felt as if I had met someone who was much more interested in me as a human being than as a professional, looked at me directly as she spoke, and whose sole relationship to strategy seemed to be about inhabiting the present, together, as thoroughly as possible.

I mention all of this especially because her work has a very similar effect—and therein lies its great and unique power. The frankness and openness of what she does gives the viewer permission to be totally human. Kate Newby is a sculptor. She is a sculptor in the traditional sense of the term in that she works with materials, volume, and space as well as architecture. However, the sculpture she creates is anything but traditional and often evades identification as such; it is full of paradox. That said, for all its sophistication, her work is not about outfoxing her viewer—there is nothing arch or necessarily evasive about it. It is entirely open, approachable, even honest to the point of seeming almost naive. As well all know, this is not an easy position to sustain, nor is it common. And this is precisely one of the things that makes her work so compelling. Because it is less about trying to transmit an idea than it is about trying to disarm the viewer in order to

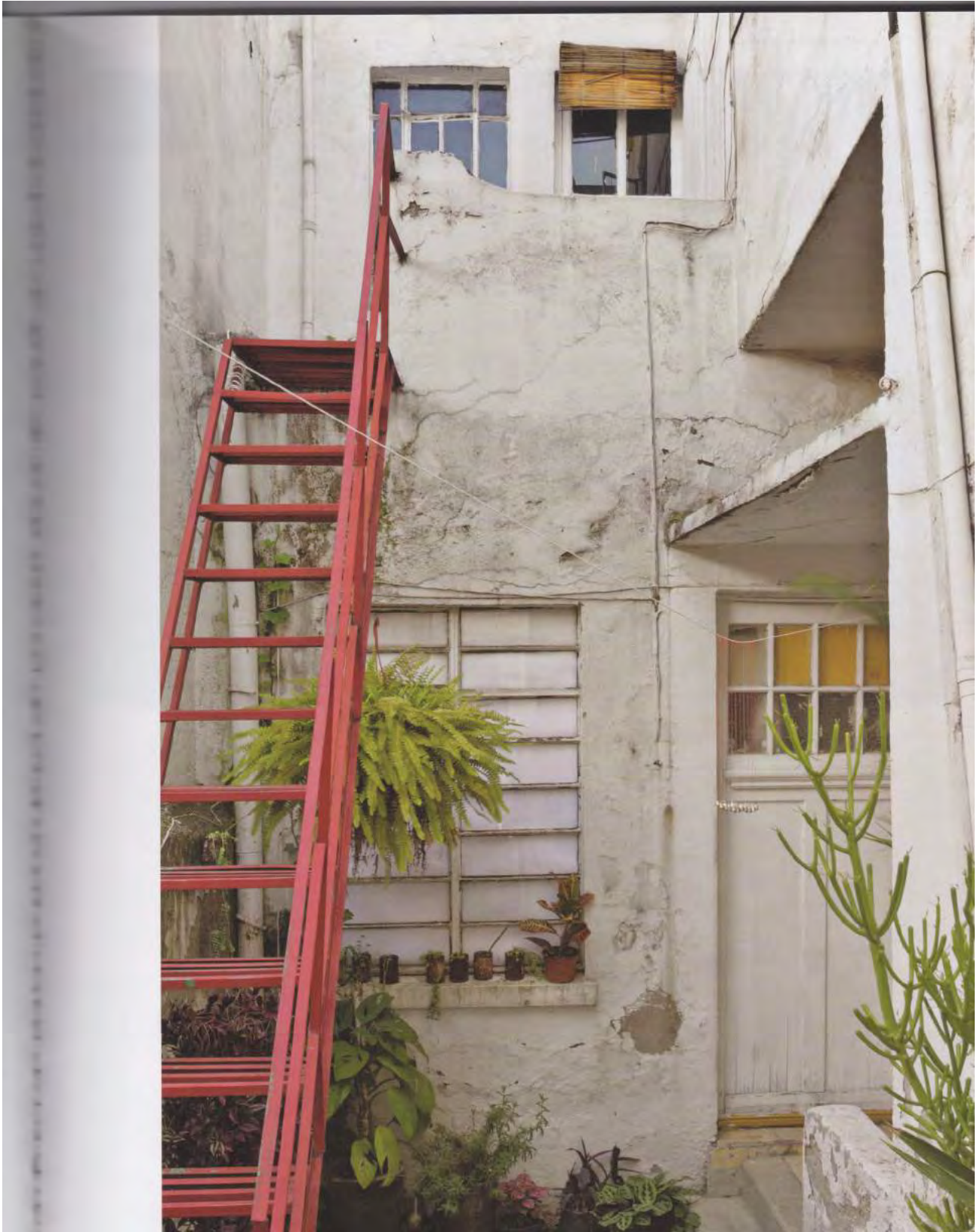
generate a similar openness, attitude, and engagement with the world.

Perhaps the best way to go about understanding her work is to map out and try and unpack the above-mentioned paradoxes. First of all, while the work is traditional, so to speak, it is not classical, since she is not working figuratively, although the human figure—as in the viewer—does play a very important role in her work. Working primarily with concrete, textiles and ceramics, Newby's work ranges from interventions in architectural space to handheld ceramic sculptures meant to be skipped like rocks, and everything in-between. The interventions themselves can manifest in, say, a long curtain-like textile hung in a given space to the addition of a slanted slab of concrete on a given floor. In both cases, the interventions interrupt the space and its intended function, temporarily transforming it from a fixed and rigid structure to something much more fluid and mutable.

This brings us to the second paradox of Newby's work, which involves questions of durability and permanence. Despite sculpture's claim to relative immutability, she has a decidedly non-precious, fleeting relationship with it. This fugacity issues not only from the comparative fragility of the materials she most often uses, such as ceramic, but perhaps more importantly, from the way she would like her work to be encountered or handled. For instance, the skipping stones Newby fashions out of ceramic and gives to friends, who then skip them in a body of water. She asks that the act of skipping be photographed such that this documentation becomes the only remaining trace of a piece of sculpture and its ephemeral encounter with its context.

Context is crucial, which is the main reason that the artist almost always insists on installing the work herself, because she wants it to be in conversation with its surroundings. At certain times this conversation is bound to be audible, as with her largely ceramic wind chimes, while other instances are more discreet and strange, as with her concrete puddles, which Newby inserts into urban environments. The question of context is rarely limited to the exhibition space itself. Newby almost always displaces elements of a given exhibition outside the space, seeking to create links to its immediate or local surroundings. In doing so, she underlines the importance of lived experience in the work, in that for her, it is important that the work not be isolated in a white cube, but placed out there, so to speak, in the world, directly encountering it, participating in it, and even modifying it, if only on a micro-poetic level.

It is precisely these interests and Newby's will to paradox that demonstrate her drive to never take sculpture for granted. Although what she does is rooted in tradition, sculpture as an art form is never fully defined and always subject to change. And for all the humbleness and candor of her approach, it is one of the things she does best.



EYE OF THE BEHOLDER KATE NEWBY





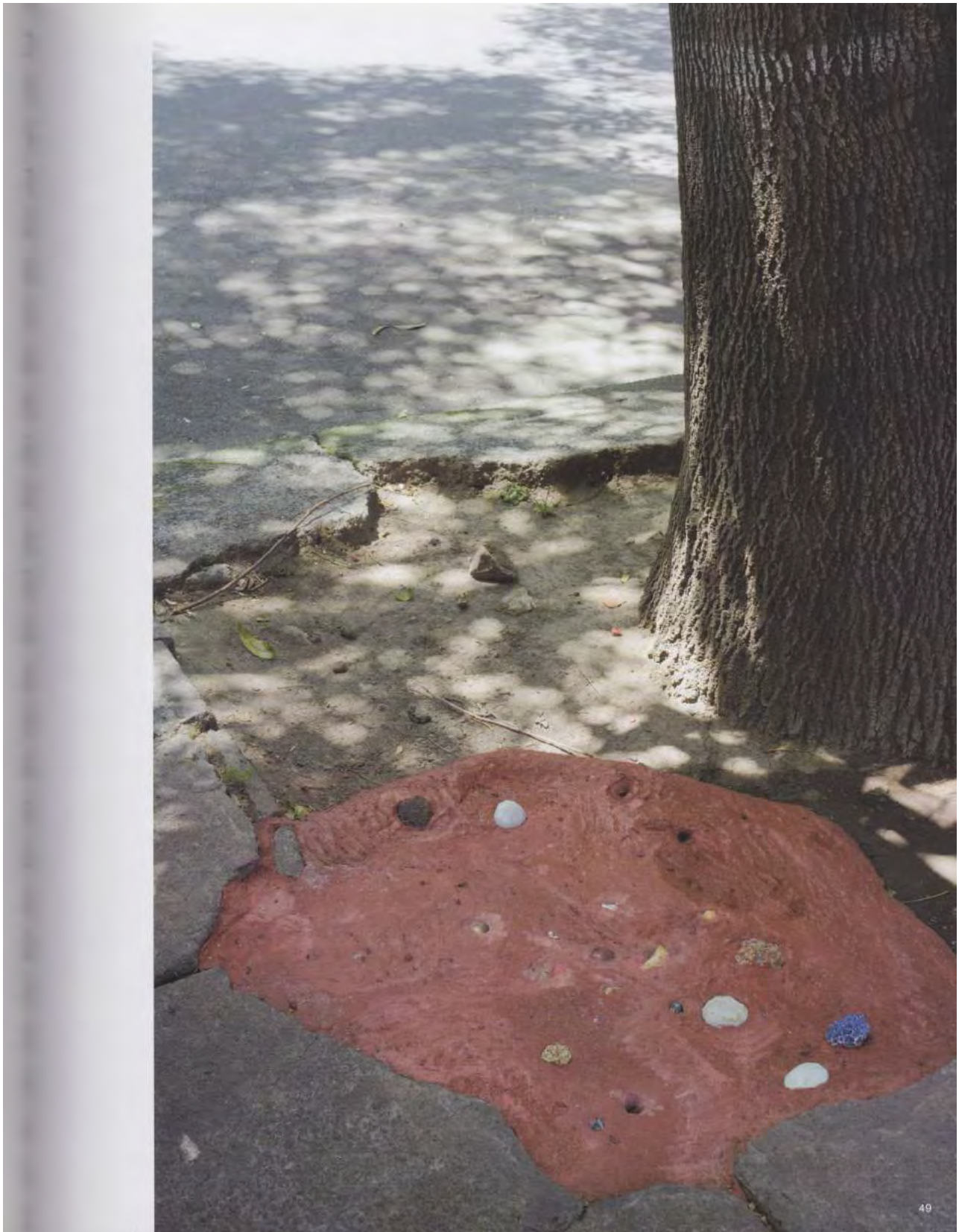
EYE OF THE BEHOLDER KATE NEWBY





EYE OF THE BEHOLDER KATE NEWBY





2015
Australian Center for Contemporary Art

KATE NEWBY
Chris Sharp



And they kicked her out of New York City (Avalon), 2015, Brisbane Airport

Kate Newby is a sculptor. She is a sculptor in the traditional sense of the term in that she works with materials, volume and space, as well as architecture. However, the sculpture she creates is anything but traditional and often evades identification as such. This is not the first or only paradox that accompanies her work, as there are many. That said, for all its sophistication Newby's work is not about outfoxing her viewer – there is nothing arch or necessarily evasive about it. It is entirely open, approachable and sincere to the point of seeming almost naive. This is not an easy position to sustain, nor is it common. And this is precisely one of the things that makes her work so compelling, because it is less about trying to transmit an idea than it is about trying to disarm the viewer in order to generate a similar open engagement with the world.

Perhaps the best way to go about understanding Newby's work is to map out and try to unpack the abovementioned paradoxes. First of all, while the work is traditional, so to speak, it is not classical, since she is not necessarily creating figures, although the human figure – in the form of the viewer – does play a very important role in her practice. Working primarily with concrete, textiles and ceramics, Newby creates everything from interventions in architectural space to handheld ceramic sculptures intended to be skipped like rocks. The interventions themselves can manifest in varied forms, including a long curtain hung in a given space and the addition of a slab of concrete to a given floor, causing it to slope upward. In both cases her interventions interrupt the space and its intended function, temporarily transforming it from a fixed and rigid structure to something much more fluid and mutable.

This brings us to the second paradox of Newby's work, which involves questions of durability and permanence. Although she works with a medium that is associated with permanence, especially when made with more traditional sculptural materials such as bronze and marble, she approaches her work from a much more unassuming angle. A temporary quality issues not only from the comparative fragility of the materials she most often employs, such as ceramic, but perhaps more importantly from the way she would like her work to be encountered. For instance, the skipping stones. Fashioned out of ceramic, Newby gives these stone-like objects to friends who then skip them along a body of water. She asks that the act of skipping be photographed, such that this documentation becomes the only remaining trace of a piece of sculpture and its otherwise imperceptible encounter with its context.

Context is crucial to the artist's work. Unlike classical sculpture, which is often supposed to be entirely self-sufficient, Newby's practice is always very mindful of context, whether indoor or out. This is the main reason that the artist almost always insists on installing the work herself, as she wants it to be in conversation with its surroundings. At certain times this conversation is liable to be audible, as with her largely ceramic wind chimes; at others it is more discreet and strange, such as with the concrete puddles that she inserts into the ground of urban environments. Additionally, the question of context is rarely, if ever, limited to the exhibition space itself. Newby often displaces elements of a given exhibition outside the space, seeking to create links to its immediate or local surroundings. For her it is important that the work not be isolated in a white cube, but out there in the world, directly encountering it, participating in it, and even modifying it if only on a micro-poetic level.

It is precisely these interests and Newby's attraction to paradox that demonstrate her drive to never take sculpture for granted. Although what she does is rooted in tradition, for Newby sculpture as an art form is never fully defined. It is something that is always subject to change, something that needs to be continually questioned and explored. And for all the humbleness and candor of her approach, this is one of the things she does best.

August 2015
Art Viewer

Where the trees line the water that falls asleep in the afternoon at P420 Arte Contemporanea

August 27, 2015



Artists: Rodrigo Hernández, Clare Grill, Kate Newby

Exhibition title: Where the trees line the water that falls asleep in the afternoon

Curated by: Chris Sharp

Venue: P420 Arte Contemporanea, Bologna, Italy

Date: June 4 – September 19, 2015

Photography: images copyright and courtesy of the artists and P420, Bologna

The exhibition *Where the trees line the water that falls asleep in the afternoon*, opens Thursday, June 4th from 6pm to 8pm. Curated by Chris Sharp, this group exhibition features artists of different backgrounds, nationalities and mediums. If they are united by anything, it is a penchant for the so-called natural and a certain ambient quality. Prioritizing thoughtfulness over thought, the work presented here is more interested in the creation of mood than the transmission of ideas.

The Mexican, Basel-based artist, Rodrigo Hernández's work, which is executed with a typically disarming simplicity, appeals to the sensuous, handmade character of objects while inquiring into the nature of the most fundamental media, such as sculpture and drawing, and the distinctions that supposedly separate and define them. The carefully crafted, multilayered paintings of the US-born, New York-based painter Clare Grill possess an atmospheric and muted character, variously reminiscent of textiles or shimmering surfaces. Finally the sculptures of the New Zealand, New

York-based artist Kate Newby, fashioned out of everything from ceramic to textiles, generally engage the architectural aspects of a given space, subtly renegotiating it into something more meditative than functional.

Together they form the mood at the heart of *Where the trees line the water that falls asleep*, which comes from a poem by Pierre Reverdy, Afternoon, and which could be just the title, but also the press release of this exhibition.



Kate Newby, *It is better to be brutal than indifferent*, 2015

July 2015
Eye Contact

The Poetics of Sorting

AA JH

John Hurrell – 9 July, 2015

Looking at Newby's assorted groups of ceramic objects laid out on the pallets, apart from an obvious love of texture, muted mottled colour and twisted gnarled forms, we see - as with Paul in her poem - a focus on classification. Newby is interested in the structures of organisation and sorting, a taxonomic mindset that in this country can be traced to the eighties, especially the museological, cupboard sculptures of Christine Hellyar and the large paper grid work, Vademecum, of Julia Morison.

HOPKINSON MOSSMAN
Auckland

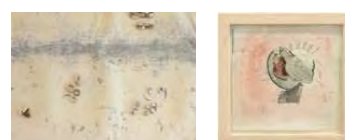
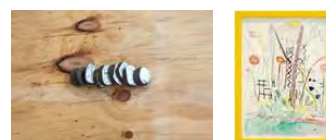
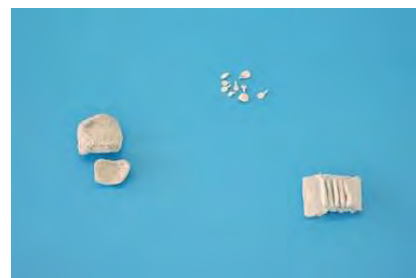
Kate Newby & Joanna Margaret Paul
Lunch Poems

26 June - 25 July 2015

This exhibition juxtaposes the short films and delicate drawings of the late **Joanna Margaret Paul** <<http://www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz/features/paul/>> with the colourful ceramics and 'casual' installations of Walters Prize winner Kate Newby - while tangentially referencing the interest both artists have (or had) with language. Paul is represented by four short films (1971 -1982) in the small gallery, with five framed pencil, pastel, watercolour or gouache drawings coming from the 80s and 90s, in the larger one, while nearby the Newby works - glazed ceramic shards and objects or found metal items - are laid out in clusters or lines on four differently sized combinations of flat wooden pallet.

Paul <2015/06/joanna-paul-and-ziggy-lever/>'s very short (3-4 minute long) films <<http://circuit.org.nz/artist/joanna-margaret-paul/>> - a sort of home movie where, instead of family members, we see ordinary objects (part of a domestic environment), ordinary sources of natural energy (blowing wind, dripping or flowing water), or ordinary vistas (the stark concrete forms of a motorway overpass, clumps of flowers, a section of wirenetting fencing, the choppy sea and abrupt cliff forms of Otago peninsula filmed out a bus window) - emphasise strange angles or activity on the edge of the frame, and a familiar household environs. Paul seems revolted by the exceptional or exotic, taking repeated pleasure in the prosaic and normal, enjoying their simplicity and presence.

Her pencil and wash drawings reflect this interest in what is close at hand as part of day to day existence. Sometimes though there are references to other writers or other artists, the world of intellectual debate pondered during daily tasks. (These published **notes** <<http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Ba09Spo-N77158.html>> show her complex ruminations on poetic thought (1)). *The White Hotel* suggests an internal monologue alluding to the famous **novel** <<https://www.nytimes.com/books/98/12/06/specials/thomas-hotel.html>> by the poet and translator, D. M Thomas.



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July 2015
The New York Times

The New York Times | <https://nyti.ms/1KaTDDb>

ART & DESIGN

Review: Kate Newby and Helen Johnson at Laurel Gitlen

By ROBERTA SMITH JULY 16, 2015

Each of these side-by-side solos introduces an extremely promising artist: one with a full-fledged New York gallery debut, and the other with three paintings that feel more like a trailer for a debut.

Kate Newby, who is from New Zealand, weaves in and out of the gallery's larger space with sculptures in glazed ceramics, glass and metal. There are forays into delicate intervention: A spiky object — part cactus, part mollusk shell — in glazed porcelain rests on the air-conditioner cover outside the gallery's side window; above it, two slabs of glazed stoneware curl over a fire escape like pancakes hung out to dry.

Inside, a low platform with a large concrete mound — both of them painted highway-stripe yellow — spans one end of the space. Atop the platform are several tiny, amulet-like objects and groups of small things — four twigs in glazed brass and 17 nails made of silver.

Also on the platform are distinct clusters of tiny smooth ceramic spheres or discs, in some cases meant to be carried in the pocket like unstrung worry beads. In a back corridor, a set of ceramic wind chimes resembles something from the Whole Earth Catalog. More suavely 2015 is a set made of clear glass (with the help of a glassblower) that hangs in the gallery's front window. This second set of wind chimes appears to be held aloft by a rope that extends through a wall to a rock on the yellow platform. Despite a tendency toward the twee, Ms. Newby's work has a wonderful sense of freedom and material inventiveness and an idiosyncratic beauty.

The paintings that Helen Johnson, who is from Australia, is showing here suggest that reproductions of Modernist figurative paintings have been torn up, reassembled and then loosely copied onto canvas, with areas of white around or among them; the disorienting combination suggests that the old is being wrestled into something new and is vaguely Cubist. They are smart and expertly made, but slightly stuffy.

A small catalog at the gallery indicates that Ms. Johnson works in a range of styles, much as Laura Owens does, which makes the show even more of a tease.

June 2015
Laurel Gitlen

LAUREL GITLEN

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Kate Newby

I memorized it I loved it so much

JUNE 26–AUGUST 7
OPENING RECEPTION FRIDAY, JUNE 26 6–8PM

Laurel Gitlen is proud to present the first US solo exhibition of the New Zealand, New York-based artist Kate Newby. Working with a variety of media including installation, textile, ceramics, casting and glass, Newby is a sculptor who is committed to exploring and putting pressure on the limits and nature of sculpture. As such, she is interested in not only space, volume, texture and materials, but where and how sculpture happens. Varying in scale, works are liable to take place fugaciously, as in the case of her ceramic skipping stones which she asks people to skip and have themselves photographed doing so, on the street in a given city, as in her concrete, poured puddles, or in the gallery proper, in subtly, but noticeably present architectural disruptions of the space itself. In every case the work bears a strong link to not just the every day, but to the lived—it wants to experience as much as it generates experience, collecting and registering the traces of the passing world, which it incorporates and is incorporated into. It is for this reason that if the handmade plays a very important role in what she does not merely romantic or even retrograde, it is rather the aesthetic byproduct of a position that shamelessly embraces direct experience over the mediated. Indeed, winsomely frank, Newby's work wields a disarming familiarity, which is not unlike like seeing an old friend who starts the conversation by saying: "Tell me about yourself."

For her exhibition at Laurel Gitlen, Newby presents a broad variety of works including an architectural intervention, which manifests through a wooden platform, an alteration of the gallery's lighting, and a rope snaking through the gallery. Other works include a rock, a ceramic wind chime as well as a new glass wind chime, a concrete puddle, a postcard piece, and other elements.

—Chris Sharp, June 2015

Kate Newby, *I memorized it I loved it so much* will be on view at the gallery from June 26–July 31, 2015. Her work has been presented internationally, including recent solo exhibitions at Lulu, Mexico City (2014); La Loge, Brussels (2014); Fogo Island Gallery, Newfoundland (2013); and Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland (2013).

For images or more information, please contact gallery@laurelgitlen.com.

September 2015
Eye Contact

Newby at Gertrude Contemporary

A A CA

Carmen Ansaldo – 9 September, 2015

Continuing a series of installations in the style that has become her signature, 'Always Humming' was characterised by a centrepiece of the same name involving the suspension of large horizontal panels roughly three metres below the gallery's ceiling. These panels spanned the entire length of the ground floor spaces, and created a new surface that hung above the viewer's head. The wall space between this material and the actual ceiling had been painted a rough, gaudy yellow which, although concealed from the viewer looking up from below, had the effect of backlighting the thin fabric with a subtle glow.

GERTRUDE CONTEMPORARY
Melbourne

Kate Newby
Always Humming

17 July - 29 August 2015



Always Humming was the extensive solo exhibition of New Zealand artist **Kate Newby** <2013/06/newby-installation> that recently finished at Gertrude Contemporary in Fitzroy. Continuing a series of installations in the style that has become her signature, *Always Humming* was characterised by a centrepiece of the same name involving the suspension of large horizontal panels roughly three metres below the gallery's ceiling. These panels spanned the entire length of the ground floor spaces, and created a new surface that hung above the viewer's head. The wall space between this material and the actual ceiling had been painted a rough, gaudy yellow which, although concealed from the viewer looking up from below, had the effect of backlighting the thin fabric with a subtle glow. This installation was bordered by various ceramic works located in the gallery's stairwell and second floor studios on one side, and a series of sculptures installed on the top of shopfronts opposite the gallery on the other side of Gertrude Street. New Zealand composer Samuel Holloway collaborated closely with **Newby** <2015/07/the-poetics-of-sorting> for this show, composing a soundscape that played continuously within the main gallery space.

Newby <2012/10/the-walters-prize-winner-for> has enjoyed rapid (and well-deserved) success for her exploration of the understated and often unappreciated materials of our daily lives, stuff that is typically used and discarded without second thought. Often this exploration has led her to install and exhibit sculptures within contexts that extend beyond gallery spaces, in ways which outlive the exhibition timeframes.

Newby <<http://eyecontactartforum.blogspot.co.nz/2008/07/newby-installation.html>>'s intention in this exhibition was to provoke us to look harder, longer and closer at such discarded ephemera in the hope that this reflection would cultivate a new appreciation. What distinguished her exploration from the plethora of other artists working with the same interests was the way she only slightly altered their mainstream usage and/or materiality in order to assert their status as artworks. Previously she had achieved this by attaching specific directives onto objects to control the parameters of audience engagement - through crafting identical copies of selected natural items in dense and highly unlikely materials (such as bronze) or by installing works in spaces which required something of a treasure hunt procedure to be located. These slight readjustments and repurposings created works which were novel and clever, reorganising the space around them subtly, with thoughtful intention and lingering significance.

12/10/2017

Newby at Gertrude Contemporary – EyeContact

Sometimes, however, these overlooked aspects were not self-evident, and the gesture of Newby in simply choosing to work with such everyday ephemera failed to attract notice. This was the dilemma in which *Always Humming* found itself: the installation of the dropped ceiling, the high-pitched buzzing soundscape, the existence of the extra-gallery sculptures did not demonstrate a substantial interrelationship - nor did they command much interest aesthetically when viewed in isolation. Consequently the exhibition failed to convince that such objects warranted either the viewer's attention or any renewed sense of appreciation.

Part of **Newby** <2011/06/newby-at-hopkinson-cundy>'s intention has always been to reject the grandeur of the sculptural object, but when the adjective selected by the gallery to describe the exhibition's energy was 'anti-climactic' it seemed the artist's concept had started to become lazy in execution. Unfortunately *Always Humming* was not helped by its accompanying media release which simply asserted that the viewer will be able to 'see, hear and frame the gallery and its environs in a new way', through the suspension of the panelling, or the 'almost imperceptible, perhaps even accidental', amorphous lumps of glass installed onto the shop rooflines opposite the gallery. These were not quotes to disagree with at face value, but certainly the implicit curatorial assertion that simply the existence of such qualities ensured the exhibition's success did not stand.

The works that existed outside the gallery were not a new phenomenon, nor was the importance of the extra-gallery contribution self-evident through its status as such. **Newby** <2014/09/newby-in-mexico-city>'s fabric ceiling panels were noticeably marked by signs of weathering, due to their being washed in the ocean and then laid out to dry in the garden of the artist's mother in New Zealand. Although the viewer was invited to appreciate their changing texture, consistency and colour there was no indication as to why this was done and why it was significant. The wind chime sculpture installed between the first and second floors was poorly executed and not compelling, either in its construction or in its response to its environment, unlike many of Newby's previous works. Without that interest, the argument that such an installation was significant in and of itself simply fell flat.

Coming from an artist whose concepts have so far proven to be well thought-out, where their rigorous realisation has been propelled by the intimate wonder they initiate, *Always Humming* felt like an attempt to ride on the success of past endeavours; perhaps Newby's gruelling international exhibition commitments (particularly during the past three years) was to blame. Irrespective, one can only agree with Gertrude Contemporary that 'anti-climactic' is the adjective that appropriately comes to mind.

Carmen Ansaldo

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July 2015
Gertrude Contemporary

GERTRUDE CONTEMPORARY

MEDIA RELEASE



KATE NEWBY, *ALWAYS HUMMING*

CURATORS: PIP WALLIS, HELEN HUGHES

EXHIBITION OPENING: FRIDAY 17 JULY 2015, 6–8PM

EXHIBITION DATES: 17 JULY–29 AUGUST 2015

Gertrude Contemporary is pleased to present a new, major exhibition by New Zealand artist Kate Newby, featuring a newly commissioned collaboration with composer Samuel Holloway. Titled *Always humming*, the exhibition takes over both downstairs galleries and extends to the rooflines of buildings on Gertrude Street, and into its back alleyways, creating a fluid relation between indoors and outdoors. *Always humming* is an exercise in creating an atmospheric experience rather than a series of discrete objects. Its force is anti-climactic, continuous, infectious; what Jennifer Kabat has described as 'radically slight'.

In contrast to Newby's recent series of puddle works, which draw viewers' attention to the pavement underfoot, all the works in this exhibition are elevated, leaving nothing to see on the floors or walls. A drop ceiling made from large panels of fabric mediates a warm glow emanating from the ceiling. One section of the fabric ceiling has travelled from New Zealand where it was washed in the ocean (salt is a natural fixative) then left on the lawn for several weeks to gather information from the weather and environment. Another of the fabric panels was sewn in an upstairs studio at Gertrude Contemporary then hung out on a washing line in industrial Brunswick for several weeks.

Across the street, on the top ledge of one of the buildings opposite the gallery, Newby has installed

a cluster of glazed ceramic shapes. Viewable from inside the gallery, as well as from the street outside of gallery hours, the ceramics operate unlike conventional public sculptures—almost imperceptible, perhaps even accidental.

In the back alleyway, where the vans for neighbouring shops Aunt Maggie's and Harry Evans & Son move in and out, Newby and Holloway have created a wind chime. Using clay, metal, and glass, the wind chime will interact and respond to the environment of the alleyway: the weather, the trees, the day-to-day bustle of the backstreets. Holloway draws sound back into the gallery, creating a sonic connection between the back laneway and the gallery's interiors. Much like the other parts of this exhibition, this installation concerns attention—it is about listening rather than hearing.

In response to a question about the ephemeral nature of her practice, Newby has said: 'I often wonder if things get taken for granted when they are permanent. I know for me, I stop seeing a sculpture if I know it's going to be there tomorrow, so it becomes given, invisible.' With the gallery's impending move from its thirty-year home on Gertrude Street, Newby's commission will create an atmosphere in which viewers see, hear and frame the gallery and its environs in a new way—making it visible again, if only for a moment.

CREATIVE
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MEDIA RELEASE

Kate Newby's recent solo exhibitions include: *I memorized it I loved it so much*, Laurel Gitlen, New York; *I feel like a truck on a wet highway*, Lulu, Cuauhtémoc, Mexico, 2014; *Maybe I won't go to sleep at all*, La Loge, Brussels, 2014; *Let the other thing in*, Fogo Island Gallery, Newfoundland, 2013; *What a day*, Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland, 2013; and *How funny you are today*, Green Acres Garden, Clinton Hill, Brooklyn, 2013. Recent group exhibitions include: *Ordering Nature*, Marianne Boesky, New York; *Where the trees line the water that falls asleep in the afternoon*, curated by Chris Sharp, P420, Bologna; *NEW15*, curated by Matt Hinkley, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2015; *An imprecise Science*, Artspace, Sydney; *The January February March* (with Tim Saltarelli, Jennifer Kabat and Anna Moschovakis), New York, 2015; *Eraser*, Laurel Gitlen, New York, 2015; *The Promise*, curated by Axel Weider, Arnolfini, Bristol, 2014; *Portmanteaux*, Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland, 2014; *Thin Air*, curated by Brooke Babington, Slopes, Melbourne, 2014. Forthcoming exhibitions include a solo exhibition at Laurel Doody, Los Angeles in October 2015; and the group exhibition *Inside the City* at GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremen in July 2015. Kate Newby is represented by Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland, New Zealand.

Samuel Holloway is a composer based in Auckland, New Zealand. His work has been performed by prominent artists and ensembles in Asia, Europe and North America, including Klangforum Wien, the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Stroma, and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. Holloway has recently undertaken a number of projects with the collective et al., most recently for *the common good*, West den Haag, The Netherlands, 2015.

Kate Newby has produced a new editioned artwork, titled *The more I listen to it the more I love it*, specifically for this exhibition. Proceeds from sales of the edition contribute to the artist production costs. Please refer to the website or contact the gallery for more information.

This exhibition has been kindly supported by Chartwell Trust.

Samuel Holloway's participation in this exhibition is possible thanks to the support of Unitec Institute of Technology.

Gertrude Contemporary's Studio Program is generously supported by the Danielle and Daniel Besen Foundation.

Gertrude Contemporary's Education Program is generously supported by the Marjorie M. Kingston Trust.

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KATE NEWBY | ALWAYS HUMMING |
AT GERTRUDE CONTEMPORARY



Kate Newby, *Always Humming*, 2012 and 2015
(installation view)
Photograph: Christo Crocker

"One thing I was really clear on from the very beginning was that I didn't want to do very much."

To be fair, a lot of work has in fact gone into Kate Newby's current exhibition at Gertrude Contemporary. Install took a couple of weeks and there was a lot of time spent high up on a ladder painting the entire ceiling of both downstairs gallery spaces in a vivid shade of achtung yellow. It's just that the art itself isn't trying to *do* very much.

Allow me a brief aside. I have a friend who doesn't like narrative films because, as she always says, "I

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don't like the acting". What she really means is she doesn't like *acting* acting, acting that announces itself, acting that's too actorly. I would hazard a guess that you could say something similar of Kate Newby. I don't think she likes art that acts too much like art, art that announces itself, art that's too much about art and not enough about the world. As she says, in various ways and at multiple times during our interview, "I don't really like galleries. I like real life and people and situations."



Kate Newby, *Always Humming*, 2012 and 2015
(installation view)
Photograph: Christo Crocker

Earlier this year for *NEW15*, Newby constructed little "concrete puddles" in the gravel outside ACCA and made mini portable sculptures that visitors were invited to hold as they made their way through the exhibition, allowing for the possibility that people might forget they were even carrying 'the art' and would accidentally take it home with them. In another series Newby sculpted little porcelain pebbles which she then invited friends to skip across water, making artwork so ephemeral it's quite literally throwaway. Newby's current exhibition *Always Humming* (at Gertrude Contemporary until 29 August) continues her interest in making art that isn't obviously art and/or in spaces that aren't necessarily art galleries.

Two massive sheets of white gauze have been hung below the gallery's freshly-painted yellow ceiling. Before installing them, both pieces of fabric had

<http://primermag.net/art/2015/7/kate-newby-interview-gertrude-contemporary>

been left to weather outside for lengthy periods. One was hung on a washing line in Brunswick and on a roof outside the Gertrude studios; another had been rinsed in the ocean near Newby's home in New Zealand and later laid out in her mum's garden for several weeks. The fabric is streaked with the environmental stains culminating from this exposure so that their patina is also a kind of field recording.

The other works in *Always Humming* are situated outside the gallery. There's a collection of small, temporary sculptures on the roof of the building across the road that can be glimpsed from the street or through the window of the front gallery. They are public art without being Public Art. In the back offices there's a hushed sound recording, made by Newby's frequent collaborator Samuel Holloway, which consists of ambient recordings of the surrounding neighbourhood abstracted into a minimal score. The two artists also made clay wind chimes that have been installed up high in the laneway out the back of the gallery. As Newby explains, "What I really love - and there's an element of risk to this - is the idea that you can encounter it and that it exists outside of gallery hours and those restrictions that come with institutions and gallery spaces."



Kate Newby, *Always Humming*, 2012 and 2015
(installation view)
Photograph: Christo Crocker

Newby tends to make site specific works that mirror in an odd way what already exists (or might likely

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exist) in a space. Pebbles, puddles, sounds, ceilings and so on are remade using new materials. It's an approach Newby describes in terms of choreography and collaboration rather than installation or intervention. Of the wind chimes placed in the rear laneway, for example, Newby says "I like making this thing that only works with something I can't control, which is the weather. I can set up the potential for something but I can't control it." And with the floating fabric "ceiling mural", she likes the way it makes you look up, how it warms the space, the way it makes it seem like the lights are on. Of the amendments she's made to Gertrude Contemporary and its surrounds, Newby says, "I think it's on scale of what could be termed experiential, visceral and atmospheric, it's on the low end of them, but it's still on the scale."

It would be hard to miss the floating yellow ceiling but other works in *Always Humming* are so 'low on the scale' that unless you've read up on the show (why hello there!) and come prepared, you might not even notice them, so peripheral are they to the Gertrude galleries proper. And that's okay with Newby. "My experience in the past is that more people see things than you realise, and it's often not the people you expect. I just like toying with that formula. I'm not upset if no-one notices it but I'm way more excited if they do." *Always Humming* encourages you to take notice of your experience of the spaces in and around Gertrude Street, but it doesn't dictate what those experiences should be. It creates an opportunity for revelation, but only if you're amenable. Or as Newby puts it, "I don't think art is about teaching lessons, but I do think it's an invitation to pay attention."

>> **Maura Edmond**
>> **13 August 2015**

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EXHIBITIONS

Kate Newby “I memorized it I loved it so much” at Laurel Gitlen, New York

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(<http://www.moussemagazine.it/kate-newby-laurel-gitlen-2015/>)

Laurel Gitlen is proud to present the first US solo exhibition of the New Zealand, New York-based artist Kate Newby. Working with a variety of media including installation, textile, ceramics, casting and glass, Newby is a sculptor who is committed to exploring and putting pressure on the limits and nature of sculpture.



(<http://www.miaart.it/>)

As such, she is interested in not only space, volume, texture and materials, but where and how sculpture happens. Varying in scale, works are liable to take place fugaciously, as in the case of her ceramic skipping stones which she asks people to skip and have themselves photographed doing so, on the street in a given city, as in her concrete, poured puddles, or in the gallery proper, in subtly, but noticeably present architectural disruptions of the space itself. In every case the work bears a strong link to not just the every day, but to the lived—it wants to experience as much as it generates experience, collecting and registering the traces of the passing world, which it incorporates and is incorporated into. It is for this reason that if the handmade plays a very important role in what she does; not merely romantic or even retrograde, it is rather the aesthetic byproduct of a position that shamelessly embraces direct experience over the mediated. Indeed, winsomely frank, Newby's work wields a disarming familiarity, which is not unlike like seeing an old friend who starts the conversation by saying: “Tell me about yourself.”

For her exhibition at Laurel Gitlen, Newby presents a broad variety of works including an architectural intervention, which manifests through a wooden platform, an alteration of the gallery's lighting, and a

rope snaking through the gallery. Other works include a rock, a ceramic wind chime as well as a new glass wind chime, a concrete puddle, a postcard piece, and other elements.
Chris Sharp

at Laurel Gitlen, New York (<http://laurelgitlen.com>)

until 31 July 2015



November 2015
Albertini 2014 the kite

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About THINKING as the art of desire, and ART as the desire of
THINKING FRESH 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017...

KATE NEWBY – SILENT BRICKS

A FICTIONAL LEGEND

by Rosanna Albertini

"There is a big difference between using a rock and making a rock." (Kate Newby)

Let's imagine things and people never were, so we could

breath such emptiness in and out

and feel murmurs of silence

subject and names are gone

a field remains of impersonal vibrations

the simple fact of an existing energy field

as impersonal as 'it rains' 'it's cold' 'it's foggy'

names can't tell about it, verbs maybe can

no offense to time and space they don't count

compared with human energy

incurable daughter of fate

no one nothing will change her

what kind of art now?

(Emmanuel Levinas, *Le temps et l'autre*, 1979. Translation from French RA)

One of the many answers could be: Kate Newby's **Two aspirins a vitamin c tablet and some baking soda – 2015** *In Los Angeles, at Laurel Doody.*



https://albertini2014.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/20151021_ld_newby_012-e1446088665945.jpg

KATE NEWBY, "Two aspirins a vitamin C tablet and some baking soda", 2015, detail.
Courtesy of the artist and of Laurel Doody. *Photo: Fredrik Nilsen*

Let's imagine a beginning without time, the artist looking for a space to visit, landing on its flatness like an alien presence bringing presents in a quiet and friendly manner, so quiet that visitors, or recipients, if they exist, could easily ignore them. John Cage's prepared piano's distinct notes would trace the spirit of this presence better than words: liquid sounds, ponds of feelings for a landscape that only exists if some body's expectations go astray, heading towards a field of sensations that float and fly, light feet on the floor.

I can hear you
making small holes
in the silence
rain

(Hone Tuwhare, *Rain*, in *Deep River Talk*, 1993)

In that landscape Kate's art makes sense if we forget all the strings we attach to the word 'meaning.' An impersonal field of energy offers tactile surprises to the eyes: a small island of wax on a wooden skin, coins melted in clay, a couple of glass stones at the edge of the window sill, as if they were two feet waiting to fly rather than jump. And even more surprising, four irregular metal cylinders with a point that worked holes and lines and angles in the clay, helping the artist's fingers. Her magic fingers, not merely tools. Strangely, they make me think of Mahuika in the Maori mythology, the

image of the goddess grandmother who hides fire in her body, and gives it to the living humans pulling out her fingernails one by one, her fingers bursting into flame. Although Kate Newby is from New Zealand, this is only a fantasy of mine.

She carved small and big holes in each brick, made the bricks one by one preparing them for the kiln, pierced the silence of the matter introducing scratches, cavities, scars produced by pieces of metal or glass. Wounds of the same kind, in a place run by history, would be normal accidents happening over time. As I told before, time is gone. This is reverse archeology: a fictional legend.



https://albertini2014.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/20151021_ld_newby_023-e1446088446817.jpg

KATE NEWBY, "Two aspirins a vitamin C tablet and some baking soda, 2015, detail.

Photo: Fredrik Nilsen



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KATE NEWBY, "Two aspirins a vitamin C tablet and some baking soda", 2015, detail.

Photo: Fredrik Nilsen



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KATE NEWBY, "Two aspirins a vitamin C tablet and some baking soda", 2015, detail.
Photo: Fredrik Nilsen



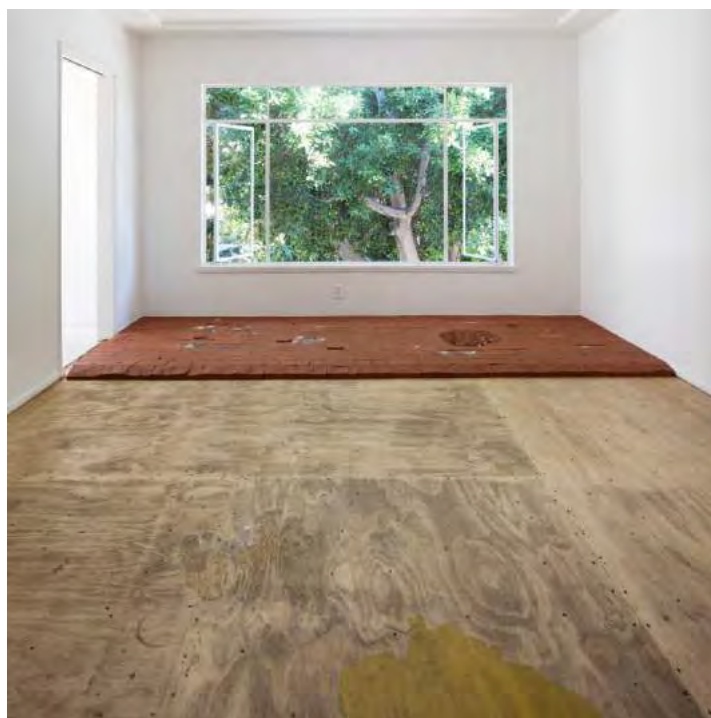
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KATE NEWBY, "Two aspirins a vitamin C tablet and some baking soda", 2015, detail.
Photo: Fredrik Nilsen

It's a cluster of unnamed, brand new objects: never used, human hands made them all, they might not be useful or noticeable. The artist brought them into a friendly room, aware of their novelty which is first of all a lack of experience: who ever looked at them? In their primordial, perhaps pre-historical surface they wear without knowing, why are they sprinkled with something white looking like bird shit (what's a bird?), or with colored pebbles and small shells (where do colors come from?), can they stand to be under scrutiny? Scrutiny is an architecture of thoughts as cold as a laser beam. The whole energy field could be destroyed.

A window, a thick expansion of green outside, emptiness in a room. I don't know if Kate Newby still feels like a pile of leaves, this time she has aspirin, a tablet of vitamin c and baking soda in her mind's pocket. Is she able to shut down her self and bring up only her (and our) alterations? Being impersonal like rain and dry like the destiny?

When she looks from afar at the scattered sculptures released by her hands, she sees them together in her mind as they cannot be seen in the physical space where they are installed. Suspended from a branch outside the window, the musical fingers can perhaps visually connect to the glass feet, not to the bricks inside the room. They are dispersed family members, that only a mental vision would bring together. Distance and displacement don't reduce her attachment. The conversation she had in mind in the making of the art has been slowly decanted into the objects' physical quality, so as not to disturb the sediment, that is different for each material. A physical conversation between wind, leaves and silver fingers, and between the sky and the glass blocks, takes place outdoors; while the iron, that makes the clay red inside the room, reverberates the iron in her blood and viceversa: human and inhuman temperament of the metal share the same nature. A wish of infinity, in the blue pebbles? The raw matter that is in her is also in the body of her art: an "incredible feeling" arouses her vision. She will never say it in words, nor should I. It's a feeling of certainty, though, joined to the pleasure of giving.



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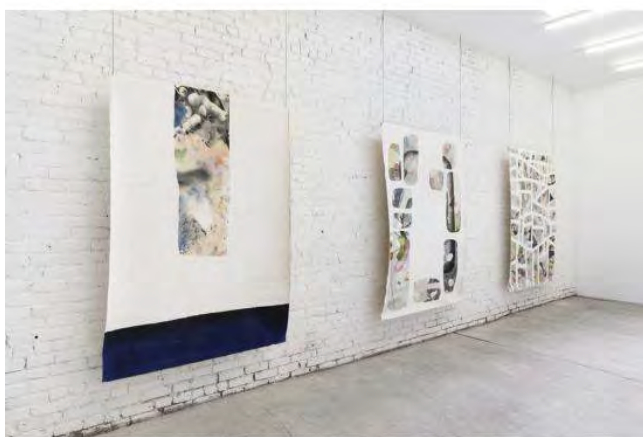
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Q



Helen Johnson and Kate Newby

at Laurel Gitlen,

through Jul. 31

122 Norfolk Street

There's a shared desire between these two artists from Oceania—Brooklyn-based New Zealander Kate Newby and Melbourne-based Helen Johnson—to fracture and reconfigure the stuff of everyday life. The centerpiece of Newby's sculptural installation, in the front room of Laurel Gitlen, is a yellow platform on which she displays clustered remakes of natural materials—coral-like forms, sticks and puddles—in materials like porcelain, silver and glaze. A rock on the platform anchors a rope strung diagonally from the ceiling, effectively mixing the aesthetic registers of tweeness and post-Minimalism. The viewer walks across the platform and through a narrow hallway to reach Johnson's show, "The body is through." Three canvases hanging from the ceiling depict portions of figurative images, like torn pieces of photographs, against textured white grounds. Though the statement accompanying the paintings alludes to social alienation produced by digital technologies, the pleasure of these works lies in their emphatic tactility.

Pictured: Installation view of Helen Johnson's "The body is through"; at Laurel Gitlen, New York.

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October 2015
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Bringing The Outside In

AA JH

John Hurrell – 2 October, 2015

Varied in their interests and media use, most of these individuals have been Walters Prize finalists and so - certainly in Auckland where they all have dealers - the personal preoccupations that they regularly explore are well known to most art punters. Consequently there are few surprises.

AUCKLAND ART GALLERY TOI O TAMAKI
Auckland

Kate Newby, Simon Denny, Ruth Buchanan, Ronnie van Hout, Fiona Connor

Inside Outside Upside Down: Five Contemporary New Zealand Artists
Curated by Natasha Conland

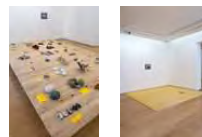
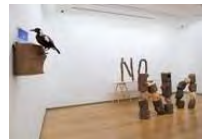
18 July - 1 November 2015

Most of the five Kiwi artists Natasha Conland has picked here are known for having a sort of nomadic existence where they live outside New Zealand, often moving from residency to residency, from country to country, living as guests, borrowing a studio - maybe doing some teaching - and creating exhibitions on the spot. The title, *Inside Outside Upside Down*, plays on this border-crossing aspect, an osmotic or permeable passing-through of identity-fixing membranes, transitioning from southern hemisphere to north and (eventually) back again.

Varied in their interests and media use, most of these individuals have been Walters Prize finalists and so - certainly in Auckland where they all have dealers - the personal preoccupations that they regularly explore are well known to most art punters. Consequently there are few surprises.

Which is not to say that the show is uninteresting. It is. Very. Due to Conland's juxtaposed selections, the elaborations of her theme - the nature of physical barriers that separate the private individual from the community beyond them, the limits of the sign systems we think (internally) and communicate with, and governmental stipulations that enforce nationality - and how these artists examine them. We ponder the means of surmounting such obstacles, ways through which the five talents in their installations discover commonalities; various chains of cross connections.

Conland sets up a clever structure for all this; a row of five rooms parallel to Wunderrūma, with the entrances at opposite ends preoccupied with language (Ruth Buchanan at one (internal thought), Ronnie van Hout at the other (external communication)). In the middle space Simon Denny looks at nationhood, the development (or deterioration) of its intellectual culture as reflected in non-commercial community television, and its passport - and what that indicates about the people who possess it. In rooms two and four we find in both an interest in physical barriers: Kate Newby has a window exposed in the gallery wall so we can see - looking through her suspended chimes - the



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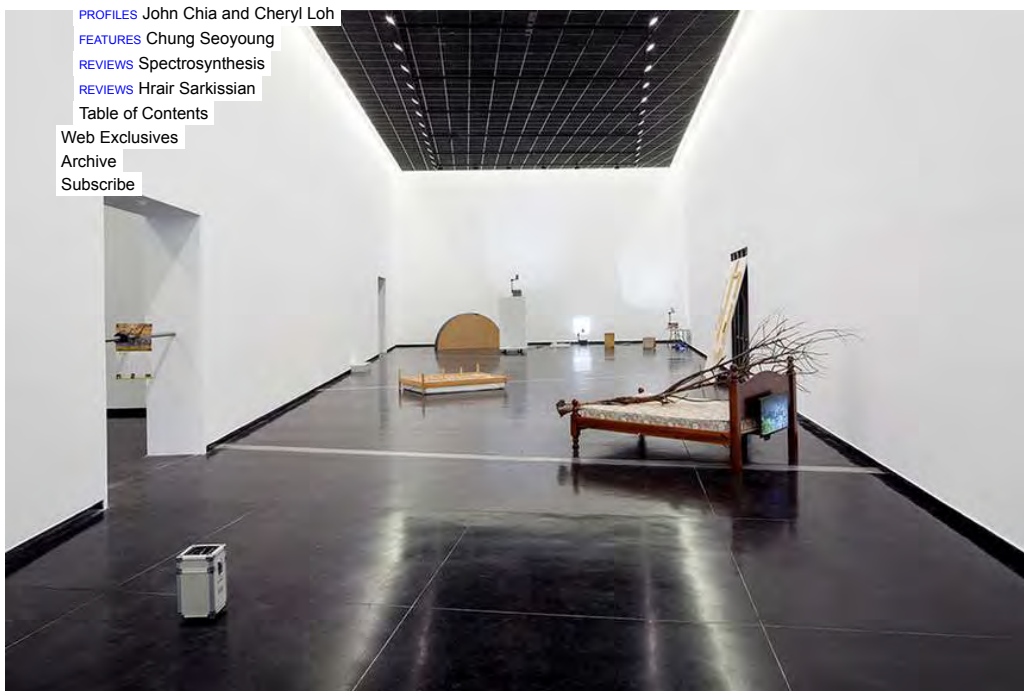
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Installation view of "NEW 15" at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA), Melbourne, 2015. Photo by Andrew Curtis. Courtesy ACCA.

NEW 15

LAURA SKERLJ

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

AUSTRALIA

In various transits across the world, pockets are chiming with tiny objects. Everyday items such as can-tabs and stones, recreated as silver, bronze and ceramic "pocket sculptures," are hitching a ride with the people who possess them. These diminutive miscellanies, made by artist Kate Newby, are part of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art's (ACCA) "NEW 15" exhibition—though the objects are yet to see the inside of the gallery. Instead they have been gifted to the exhibition's eight artists and curator for the duration of the show, travelling where they each person travels, seeking intimate meetings and finding new sites for display.

This sort of unexpected turn predates ACCA's annual showcase of emerging talent, who have been handpicked to exhibit their most vanguard work at the iconic Melbourne institution. In the past, guest architects and curators have altered the gallery considerably, establishing challenging parameters for their chosen talent to respond. This year, artist and "NEW" exhibition alumni Matt Hinkley chose eight artists from Australia and, for the first time, New Zealand, to occupy, alter and alienate ACCA's bounds. Unlike more ostentatious incarnations from previous years, Hinkley asked that the space be returned to its original state—for him, the archetypal site was enough.

This modesty defines both Hinkley's art practice and overall decision making. He didn't choose artists based on a desire to show particular existing works, nor was he overt with his curatorial direction. Instead, he chose those whose practices have captivated him over an extended period of time—artists who would be able to rise to the occasion and challenge the exhibition space, viewers and their own oeuvre. In turn, Hinkley's selected artists have delivered works that are diverse and fresh, with some having been conceived even as the show was being installed.

Though the exhibition revolves around the concept of newness, the works seem to invigorate the past through an exploration of the "second-hand" or the "re-



KATE NEWBY, *Legs. Legs.*, 2014, cast silver and bronze, ceramic, nine elements (pineapple), dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist and Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland.

take.” In Adelle Mills’ videos, words and actions are re-enacted from memory or an obscured set of instructions, amplifying the lacuna present in even our most intimate communications. Paul Bai’s “borrowed” installation—which includes a large neon sculpture by Janet Burchill and Jennifer McCamley (*Inland Empire*, 2008)—is an allusion to a Lynchian other-world. A blue-screen-like wall and a live feed of the gallery’s doorway (filmed by a surveillance camera installed on the ceiling), where visitors are reflected back through a luminescent orb, is an inflected portal—a site in constant mediation with its audience. Alex Vivian’s sprawling objects in various states of decay—mouldy microwaveable pasta, damaged plinths, hell-gone cream cheese—reflect his poetic definition of neglect as an energetic state and one that continues to evolve instead of destruct.

Elsewhere, in keeping with this thematic focus on the past, there are odes to historical places and people and the things they have produced. In George Egerton-Warburton’s *Eucalyptus Standard* (2015), a dead gum tree is laid to rest, quite literally, on a mattress. The tree, taken from American conceptualist Agnes Denes’s site-specific environmental installation in Melbourne’s outer suburbs (*A Forest For Australia*, 1998), pays homage to her aforementioned work, which now stands neglected and forgotten. In contrast, Richard Frater’s central and formidable *April* (2015) comprises a Greenpeace calendar and a camera both skewered onto a steel pole, which horizontally bisects an entryway located within the gallery space. The camera—its line of sight now replaced with the artist’s violent intervention—makes reference to the French intelligence service’s fatal bombing of Greenpeace’s Rainbow Warrior ship, while the latter was en route to protest the country’s nuclear test in the Pacific atoll of Moruroa in 1985. In a caustic turn of events, one of the offending French officials, Alain Mafart-Renodier, who became a nature photographer in later life, was unwittingly commissioned to photograph the calendar image that is seen pierced in Frater’s installation.

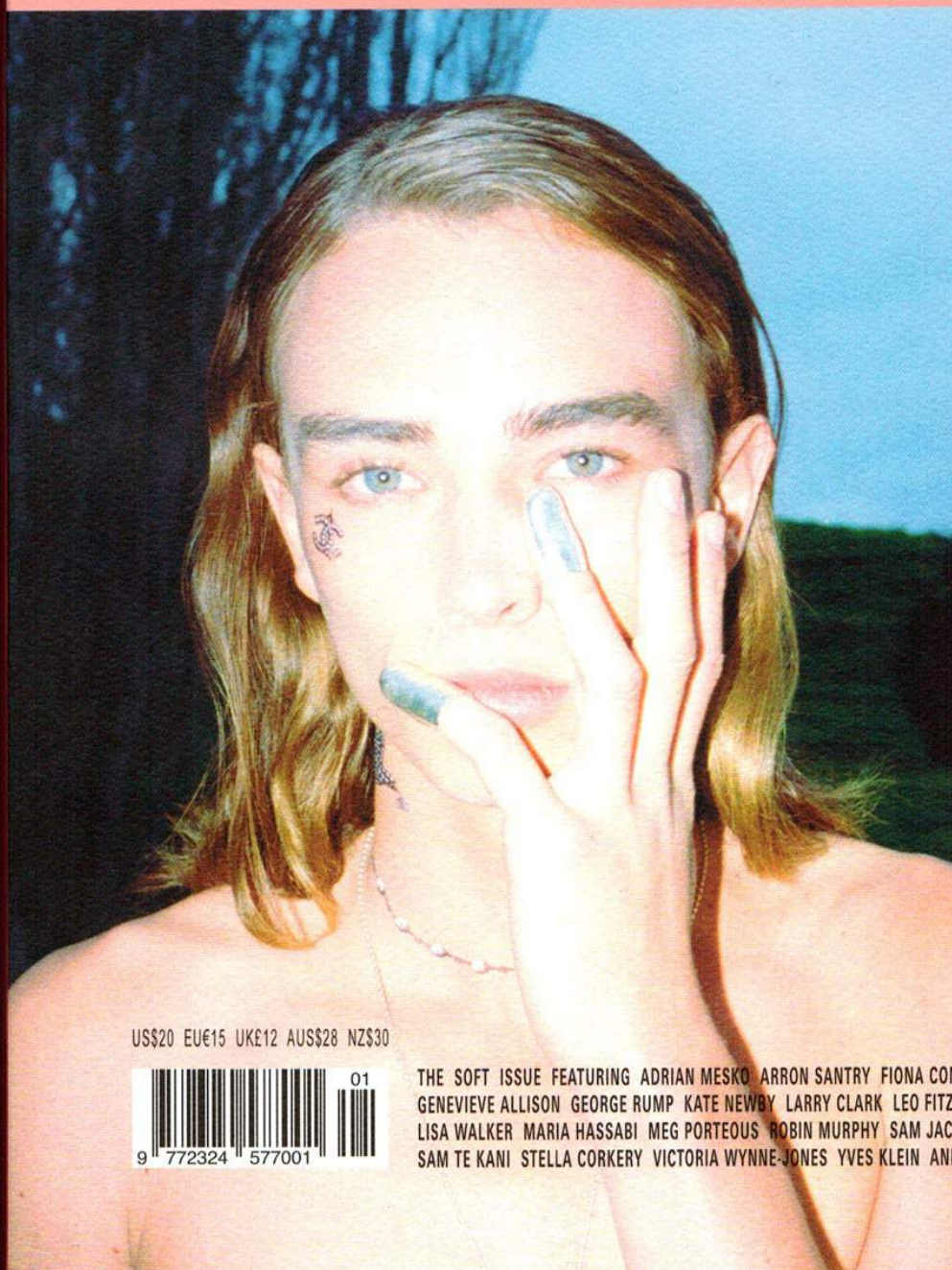
In a subtle ode to sites of reflection, Ash Kilmartin has created a poetic intervention with *En Ondes* (2015), where a section of ACCA’s wall is cut out and spun around, revealing the remnants and scars of past exhibitions. Tucked behind the inverted wall are two additional items—an old boom-box that whispers Kilmartin’s personal reflections of an abandoned observatory in Parramatta, New South Wales, and an excavation of gallery paint that reveals a miniature palimpsest of walls from the past. Here, two loci for understanding the world—the observatory and the gallery—are united.

As with any recollection of history, there is also an evocation of absence. Like Kate Newby’s travelling sculptures that have never seen the literal space of the exhibition, there is another work on display that is similarly evasive. Jessie Bullivant directed the gallery’s invigilators to offer a casual bodily shrug to passersby. While viewing the show, an eccentric visitor insisted upon seeing “the shrug”: not the performative action, but an actual garment that the person believed was hidden somewhere in the space. Bullivant’s work leads the audience to search for the inconspicuous that at times goes unnoticed, which nonetheless infiltrates the institutional cocoon, however subtly.

Overall, the atmosphere of the exhibition is quiet and subdued, interrupted only by the nuanced inflections of the eight artists’ works. Together they create a secondary thread, informed by a penchant for reinvigoration, which permeates the show. Here, each artist has introduced an old or alternative site, action or artwork into ACCA’s blank shell. This is not to deny the gallery’s own history, as seen in Kilmartin’s wall strata. Yet Hinkley’s modest curation allows the works of the exhibition, both shown in and outside the gallery, not to fall beneath the potential theatrics of the space’s architecture, but to become elevated through the show’s incitation toward rebirth and newness.

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KATE



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It's necessary I don't see why not, 2013, quilted felt, wool, cotton, steel with metal pins, needles, scraps, Masterpiece, turned, turned, turned with turned stitching, turned selected into with assistance of Linda Oatwell, Pippa Island

NEWBY

DAN

LIFE LIVED OUTSIDE

"Kate Newby's titles are scraps of language borrowed from a range of sources (conversations with friends, motivational slogans from supermarket products, thoughts, songs, poetry) that, collected together, assert the artist's commitment to openness, construction, mobility, improvisation, and self-sufficiency; to everyday practices and the ephemeral vitality of a life lived outside. The artist's approach, marked by an 'adaptive mobility' or 'improvisational materiality', is echoed in the fluidity of her forms and media. Newby's works range from large-scale spatial interventions, to publications of compiled ephemera, to photographs, text works and, more recently, itinerant sets of handmade sticks and sticks. Her materials are typically drawn from the built environment—'primary materials' such as concrete, timber, bricks, rocks, clay and wire—and materials associated with inhabitation: carpet, fabric, clay and plants. The forms these materials take in Newby's work tend to allude directly to their functional properties: cotton is hung as a curtain, bricks used to build walls, concrete and carpet laid as floor coverings etc. Once inside the gallery, these forms are repurposed to construct a series of rich, traversable ambiances that serve to both bring the 'outside' in, and lead the viewer from the inside out. Newby's practice offers multiple narratives for escape. The most apparent escape routes are physical—passways through an interior space that leads to a geographical location that is outside, but proximal to the 'interior'. Sometimes works are sited outside—in the street, public parks, community gardens or disused lots in the city. In both instances, Newby's interventions work to alter the experience of everyday by altering the spatial determinants of the built environment. The visitor is invited to meander from prescribed paths, to be diverted, to pay a different kind of attention to his or her surroundings. Other works are directed towards spheres of possibility." — Sarah Hopkinson

This essay includes "eyewitness" accounts of interactions with Newby's work in public space by Celia Archer, Matthew Harris, Heather Phelps-Lipton, Sriwhana Spong, Nick Waterson and Sue-Li Tasker Yeo.

MUNN

An escape journey the street and Hopkinson (Waterson, Audiences), various (Hopkinson, Yeo)

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Life the other thing in (Drew), 2013, o-type print

When I think about offsite projects I take Andy Goldsworthy's land art as a point of reference, his simple operation of doing something outside of the gallery, and outside of infrastructure and the built environment, and then bringing it back to the gallery, making a return, through photography.

In Kate's skim stone works, invited persons throw a flat ceramic rock away, into a pond, pool, the ocean, etc. There's a good chance it's not coming back. I've never thrown one of these, but I imagine that I would want the water to be completely flat. To give an artwork only a few seconds to live, bouncing across the water to its doom: that's a lot of pressure. Some of the most famous, and perhaps important, artworks today were rediscovered or were fortunate enough to be reappraised due to some political, curatorial or editorial turn outside of the work, sometimes hundreds of years later. This just doesn't happen for a 2cm ceramic rock at the bottom of a lake. Photos of people caught midway through their casting of the stone make their way into Kate's publications and shows. I recognise a few of these people and it seems to work at least partly like an acknowledgement of those involved in her projects.

Sriwhana: She gave me this skimming stone, I can't remember the occasion, in white clay that has been fired with a soft green glaze like moss, rough but shiny where the glaze is, the size of a thumb and forefinger held together. I was meant to skim it, but I decided that I would rather keep it. I had it in the front pocket of my jacket, which is by a favourite designer of ours from New York, Bull By Waddy. The jacket pockets are square and quite big, and I would work around with my hand in my pocket, playing with this skimming stone. One day I parked the car just off K Road. I was walking down the street, and when I put my hand in my pocket it wasn't there, and I was in a total panic. I went back to the car and found it lying in the grass. When I came to Rotterdam I could only bring 23 kg, so I just brought clothes, books, and this skimming stone, which now sits on my windowsill at home, where other Newby works have collected around it over time.



Life the other thing in, 2013, (reproduction detail) (from: Island (Drew), (Drew/audience))

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OUTSIDE

LIVED

LIFE

NEWBY:

KATE

Matthew: I am hoping to have it all figured out some day (oil on hardboard) is probably one of Kate's first self-exhibited works. In 2001, she went and hung a few pieces of her work out on a temporary building fence for the public to take—I can't remember whether it was Saint Benedict's Street or Stables Lane. Anyway, what struck me about the piece—and it's the same thought I have about all of Kate's text work—is that the statement "I am hoping to have it all figured out some day" is like a misplaced caption. Or a cartoon thought-bubble where the image itself is missing. Or like a meme without an image. For me, it implies any number of contexts or images: an 18th-century philosopher at his desk, a 15-year-old girl writing in her diary about her first breakup, myself staring at my ceiling, a Leaning character gazing at his pet duck, the artist herself at work. Whatever. There's just the right amount of concreteness in the phrase to situate it within experience, but enough abstraction to keep it away from being didactic. It's through the way she carefully provides her abstractions with just enough detail to glue them to experience, or our knowledge of others' experiences. The same balance applies to other texts and phrases I've seen in her work, like "feed it forever", "you want something to happen and nothing does", "I'm so ready", "holding onto it only makes you sick" and "try, try again". If they have something in common in terms of content I think it's a unique sort of pathos for personal duty. There's a slight self-doubt to a lot of the phrases, which I relate to.

I am hoping to have it all figured out some day.

Snowdrops: I think it would have been when Kate was living off Symonds Street, around 2000 or 2001. Behind her apartment block was a wooden fence running along the driveway into a back carpark. She would pin up posters and hand-painted signs along this fence. The space was quite ambiguous, and I assumed you could take them from what Kate was telling people. One night I walked past and took one there were around five pieces hung at the time, and she would restrict them. It was an old bit of found wood, about 30 x 30 cm, with a little star painted on it, and in red it said, "I always knew you had it in you." It hung in my bedroom for years, and I always wonder who she wrote that about. At the same time Kate was producing posters and stickers around where we lived. The posters were glossy A3, black with white writing and said something like, "a story about a girl and a movement".

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Photo: Matthew Hill

DAN

One of the most memorable (in a good way) aspects of going to primary school in Minnesota was Show and Tell. You would bring something to show from home. I think maybe I brought a mole that had fallen into our basement window, or maybe my unicycle, and you would tell a story, usually about the weekend. It was, I suppose, a way of reintegrating you back into the school week in a way that made your weekend activities part of the program.

Dick: When Kate was near completion of her Doctorate, she said she would like to swap me something. I ended up receiving two of her ceramic rocks. The rocks live on my desk, on top of a University magazine with a beautifully photoshopped image of her in New York. Kevin Roberts has his arm around her saying, "Wazzup Newby," and she is saying, "Get ya hands off me." This is my shrine to Kate Newby, which I see every day at work and it makes me smile. Kate chose a ceramic piece of mine, as you can see from my office there are quite a few. I have no idea who did the photoshop.



At Hell Gallery, Melbourne, I saw Andrew and Kristine in the line for the bathrooms: Kristine, who's clothing line I was later fortunate enough to exhibit. Andrew, who I accidentally pushed in front of. I also saw Kate, who asked me what I thought about Australian art. It was a group show with a lot of people crammed into Hell's really small space. Part of the vibe of Hell was the BBQ just outside the door of the gallery and taking up just as much space. Kate's work was a little hard to find, and I think I might have asked her where it was. She had made a piece that was either a doorstop or just outside the door, and she had also placed some t-shirts or fabric in a tree near the door. I remember at the time being a little surprised that she had been given this artistic platform, a place in this white pub space, and had chosen not to participate or compete within that space at all.

Photo: Nick Wilson

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OUTSIDE

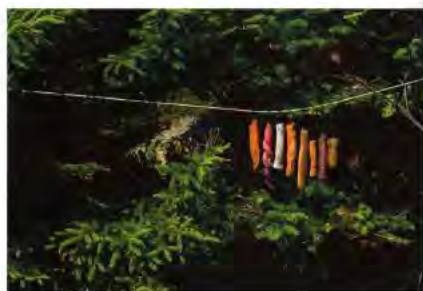
LIVED

LIFE

NEWBY:

KATE

Heather: My husband and I have recently moved to the Catskills from Brooklyn, and it's a bit of culture shock; he's a playwright and I'm a photographer, and we're living in this tiny village. So having this art event out here in the middle of winter was really exciting. Jennifer had put together this January/February walk. We'd never been snowed out; they had snowshoes for everyone. It had been an incredibly cold couple of weeks (I'm making this up completely, but it could have even gotten below zero) so we'd been stuck in the house all the time. It was about a 45 min drive to Jennifer's house and a little drive from there. I don't think it was officially a park, it might be private land, but it ran into the watershed owned by New York City. There were a few other people doing the walk out there and that was all. There were flags to mark where it started, and they gave us audio walks and trail guides; you were basically listening to a talk about the land as you walked. And there was this subtle, fantastic installation of Kate's work. I don't mean to be silly, but it almost seemed like a plotting. It had just snowed, and it was so austere, really beautiful, and these wonderful ceramics dangling in the trees caught my attention and made a magnificent sound. The ceramics had hard edges and were still wintry, like icicles, or even like the crystalline shape of the snow, but they were definitely warmer musically, and incredibly natural, as if it had always been there and perhaps should also be in my house. They were a subtle discovery; you would be rounding up the hill in your snowshoes and hoping they weren't falling off and flooding to the audio, which was separate, about the watershed. And then you'd be like, "Waaah!" and there was this really elegant little string of dangling ceramics.



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Get the other story at: 2013, published 2013. Photo: (left) Selen, Newby/Heather

DAN

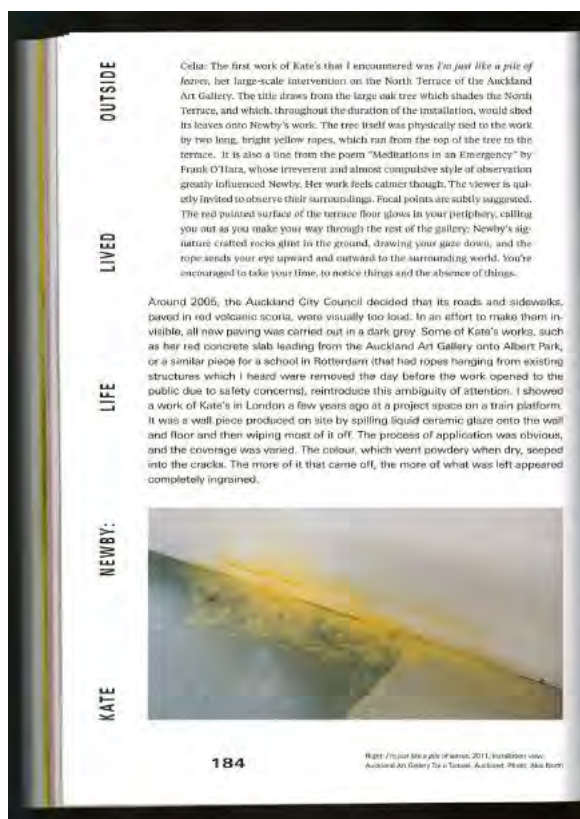
Writing on Kate's show in Brussels I bumped into Ben who was living in Germany at the time. It turns out that a lot of the people visiting this show had made some kind of pilgrimage. Kate's show was in a former Masonic lodge, and there was an internal window with decorative lattice in a corner of the main hall from which traditionally the elders or whoever could look down on the goings on in the hall, but Kate had put up a piece of fabric halfway up the walls, a sheer material, which blocked this view. There was a stairway that was built to Masonic dimensions, which left a piece of each floor empty. Kate had made a carpet piece for this left-over space that said, "oh hi" like she had just come across the space, or the building design had just realised what it had done to the vernacular construction. I had a tutor in Maori and Pacific art history at university who I remember vividly for two instances. The first was when he brought in a cologne to teach us that there were some things in art that ran behind the surface as an underlying tone. The second was when he couldn't get his PowerPoint presentation to work and so proceeded to walk us through, in verbal descriptions, exactly what we would have seen on each slide.



Michael (over) got it along at all, 2013, cotton cloth, pigment, installation detail (c) Ligo, Brussels Photo: Kaitoko Jettli

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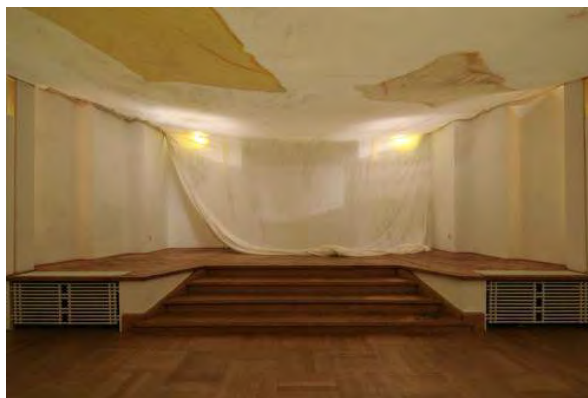
June 2014
The Weeklings

**THE SMALL OFTEN VAGUE THINGS – KATE NEWBY’S RADICALLY
SLIGHT ART**
JENNIFER KABAT
Thursday, June 12, 2014

GAUZY COTTON SHEETS wave across the ceiling of a former Masonic temple. They veil the lights and a wooden grille overhead with slats in the shape of stars. I stare up and get stuck on the word “like,” not whether I like the installation and how it reconfigures the room (I do immensely) but the idea of *likening* itself. What if you stop and cut off the analogy you’re about to make and leave it open? I was going to try to describe the fabric in terms of something familiar and recognizable, which would help you picture the room. But what if I stop there, rather than completing the image the words connect to? What if they’re not *like* anything? What any analogy exposes is not the exact thing itself but its failure, that it’s *not* this thing. Hold back and there’s a gap, the space the simile was going to paste over. Let the hole remain and you expose something more profound, certainly more unfinished and shaggy than the thing you were going to compare it to in the first place.

This is what happens in Kate Newby’s work where the changes she makes in her installations are slight, some stained fabric billowing overhead, a curtain hung to create a corridor in a gallery, or a bit of concrete put in an awkward spot, and she uses them to make us aware of small, subtle things. So, as I rush to turn her work into gleeful associations because I love the sheets and the way they billow, the words I write in my notebook are “clouds, sky, weather....” The fabric “laps down in waves,” yes, “waves” on the altar. But her installation is not any of this, and my associations obscure its possibilities. The fabric hangs a third of way down from the ceiling, shrouding it while also making you more aware of it. Temples, like churches, by their very nature are hierarchical, directing attention to the front, to the altar, but she interrupts that order. She makes you look up. Then, there are the sheets themselves, a puzzle too, with footprints and rain-stained striations from where they’ve hung for a month outside as she worked. Now they’re a quasi-chronicle of her time in a studio on the roof of a Masonic lodge. And, there’s the concrete blob forcing the temple doors open.

For her installation *Maybe I won’t go to sleep at all* last autumn in Brussels at La Loge, these ghostly interventions spread across the building let you see it anew. Why ruin that by making her work like something else? It asks you to pause on the tiny gaps, the word *like* maybe.



Sheets as, as, what? Stains, covering, clouds... Kate Newby's "Maybe I won't go to sleep at all." 2013, installation view: La Loge, Brussels, all images courtesy of the artist and Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland.

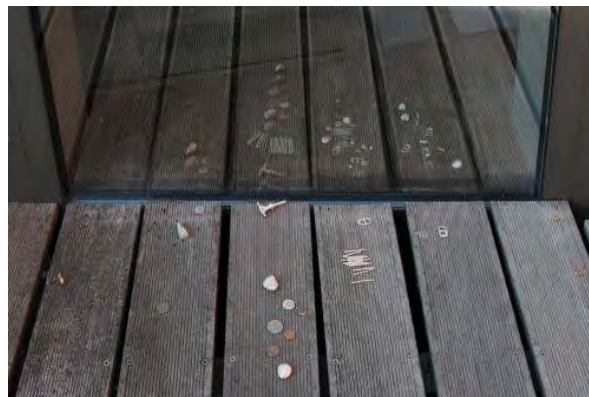
A Masonic lodge turned art space, La Loge comes loaded with those associations of secret societies and the pyramid and all-seeing-eye on the US dollar bill that always accompany Masons. Newby's installation subtly interrupts that. She starts in the basement with her groupings of rocks on a low plywood platform in the middle of the room. Before each set is a tag, not quite a caption, to the pieces. Labeled "Shelter Island," or "Depend upon it," or "Do more with your feelings," they could be commands or places or something else entirely.



Maybe I won't go to sleep at all., 2013, installation view: La Loge, Brussels

On the next floor is the temple and above that a corridor she's covered in the same cheap carpet landlords hope will hide stains. On it she writes in chalk, "oh hi." The dot on the "i" is rubbing off where people have walked on it. On the top floor a clay wind chime hangs knotted to the outside of the building. It's as if she's moving from bedrock and foundation to air and wind, but that *as if* also elides the strangeness in the pieces, the way the tags don't fit the stones, the way the string on the chimes is threaded through rough holes gouged into the walls, letting in light. She attacks the building but not like other artists might; this is no grand gesture. Meanwhile, some of her rocks look "real," others handmade and rough, bearing the scars of their making, the glaze imperfect. At the window is a collection of nails and coins and pull-tabs from cans. They're "pocket charms" she calls them that she's

carried around with her for months, and they're laid out on both sides of the glass. Some she's found on the street, others remade and cast in silver. It's not important to know what's "real" and been collected or what's "art" in being remade. Instead it's the question, that gap of not knowing.



Maybe I won't go to sleep at all., 2013, installation view: La Loge, Brussels

Just to enter the temple you're forced to step onto a blob of concrete that shoves open the doors. Obscuring the Masonic symbol, the blob is a question too. Is it blocking the entrance? Do you walk on it? How do you know what to do? Are you allowed in? Then, how do you interact with something defined as art? The question is subtle. This isn't institutional critique, nothing that heavy. The answer is left to the viewer, but the question itself is the same gap left open if you pause to consider the small situations and interruptions in Newby's work. At its heart she's asking us to reconsider the world around us. She's offering us an attunement to it.



Maybe I won't go to sleep at all., 2013,
installation view: La Loge, Brussels

In 2012 she won New Zealand's biennial Walters Prize, and up until about five years before she didn't even show in galleries. She refused to. Instead she'd choose ad-hoc spaces like the path students used as a shortcut to the university in Auckland. There on a hilltop she put up a flagpole. There was also work in abandoned buildings and friends' flats,^[1] and this fall in Copenhagen for part of a show at Henningsen Gallery she installed a set of wind chimes atop the city's highest hill. Only there was no sign for the chimes, no didactic text or directions at the gallery, nothing marking this out as art. To see them you'd have to stumble on them, and she's said she likes work that's a bit "renegade," that "you encounter if you are walking or you might hear from a distance."

Last winter on Fogo Island off the Newfoundland coast, she made a pothole. (Her work is full of literal gaps and holes like this often celebrating puddles and scabs in pavements, and the small ways they transform the world). Getting to Fogo Island takes at least two planes and a ferry, and her piece was remoter still, at the end of a dead-end drive by the sea. Meant to fill with snow, melt, cover with ice, get driven over and eventually disappear like an actual puddle, her puddle required burning a fire over the spot for a day just to thaw the earth to dig the hole. The piece was almost an earth-work in miniature, except only a few people ever knew of its existence.



Not the puddle on Fogo Island but Newby's "Walks with men," 2011
mortar, glazed ceramic rock, bronze, silver pebbles.
installation view: Prospect: New Zealand Art Now, City Gallery, Wellington
photo: Kate Whitley

For several years she's made a series *Let the other thing in* of rocks to skip in water. It's possibly a performance, but maybe not. Maybe that's too defined a word for it. Kate hands a porcelain pebble to friends to skip across everything from swimming pools on Long Island to remote ponds on Fogo Island, the East River and the Mississippi, wherever she and a friend happen to be. She'll slip you the stone, and I can tell you the moment is difficult, exhilarating and an honor. You're being given something she's made and asked to chuck it away. But what is *it* exactly? What transpires? Is the moment art? Is it the pebble she, the artist, makes, or is it the friendship being celebrated, or the act of skimming the stone? Or, that you throw away something she's made and it disappears forever? Or, the photo documenting it on her iPhone? No matter the answer, something ephemeral is being marked and that becomes a way to consider all those questions.



Let the other thing in (Drew), 2013, c-type print.
Courtesy: the artist and Hopkinson Mossman,
Auckland

When Newby handed one to Anne-Claire Schmitz who curated the Brussels show, she protested that she couldn't, that she didn't know how to skip a stone. She was also scared of throwing it away and wasting it. Newby told her it didn't matter, and Schmitz skipped it, the one time she's succeeded in bouncing a pebble off the water's surface. Afterwards she said the loss was worth it because she did it right. Her success made the sacrifice okay, a comment I love because it adds to the levels of interpretation with the series. When I tried, mine skidded on the ice stopping in the middle of a frozen pond. Maybe the rock got covered with snow later, or maybe it's at the bottom. Maybe it's been picked up by a bird and carried off. The project, though, was originally meant to exist entirely outside of galleries because as Newby puts it, she doesn't "want to wait for a nod from the art world saying it's okay to make art now."

In her gallery installations you get the sense that she's trying to escape the gallery itself. Just the title alone of her show at Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst in Bremen hints at what she's up to: "Crawl out your window." Nominated for the Walters Prize for her installation there, Newby created a corridor with a curtain shaping the light from the window and drawing attention out of the gallery. If you looked across the river you'd see two hand-scrawled words on a wall: "Try, Try." They were in response to a Lawrence Weiner piece on GAK's riverside foundations. In perfectly kerned letters he'd written, "HAVING BEEN BUILT ON SAND WITH ANOTHER BASE (BASIS) IN FACT" about the sinking of culture and GAK itself and the island on which the gallery stands. Her piece and its exhortation were filled with hope and humor. Try, try.... She knows it will fail. Her graffiti will inevitably be erased or covered up or wear off, and people won't get it or will miss it entirely, but it's about the encouragement to see, to respond, about the hope offered up in the tiny revelations available to us if we look, if we are open.

When awarding her the Walters Prize Mami Kataoka, the head juror, called Newby's work the "least eloquent" of the four nominees.^[2] Her own art dealer has called it "indifferent," speaking of the skim stones,^[3] and Kataoka went on to describe Newby's installation as "the most reserved but radical way of transcending the fixed architectural space for contemporary art." Newby's word for all this is "casual," meaning unfixed and responsive, reacting to the situation where the work exists, and she gets frustrated when people fill up the spaces, be it in a

gallery or, say, that gap left by an incomplete analogy. She writes in notes for her thesis about an artist who altered his gallery's space and lighting to create a new awareness of it. Then, he filled it up with his sculptures. Why so much stuff, she asks. "Why do people always have to put their work into things? Why can't it just be a thing? Not like a performance but more like a situation. A situation with less stuff."



Maybe I won't go to sleep at all., 2013, installation view: La Loge, Brussels

Instead, she wants to underline how you see the space itself. For a show at Hopkinson Cundy in New Zealand in 2011 she fell in love with a line of nails in the floor and remade it with shinier, newer ones, shaping the light so people would hopefully notice them. On the top floor at La Loge, the flag outside is an invitation to look beyond, to see the sky and sun, and the white sheet flaps there emblazoned, "I think I'm doing it in a really interesting way."

Her work shows the possibility in noticing the small failures and fissures and approximations of the world around us. Like she did on her flag, she reuses scraps of language and inspirational slogans found on packaging and juice bottles. She'll also write odes to a carrier bag caught in a tree, and the patches and scars on a stretch of sidewalk transfix her: "The debris, bits of rubbish, sticks, gum and concrete impressions left on pavements are very special things. They are markers of time spent and people living." Meanwhile, she's been photographing the bag for days, "having the time of its life out there. Blowing about being cheeky, somehow flying past the rules and regulations of the city and the things around it. Not a bad idea or model for art in the world. Why stop short?"

Why indeed? There's such a joy in the world in her observations, and as she recreates these elements in her work, the banal becomes transcendent, only it's not necessarily pretty or graceful. It can look awkward and disarming. It's a blob on the ground, a handmade puddle gouged into a ramp she's made in gallery like she did at the Auckland Art Gallery for her Walters Prize show. Or, stained cotton strung across a ceiling. They make you stop because they're not "like" what they're supposed to be, because they're weird and out of place or vaguely familiar but not quite enough.

Newby sees the everyday as an emotional terrain inseparable from what she makes. It's there in her rocks and pocket charms and the sheets in the Masonic temple. Because she develops her work in response to an actual space, what she shows is her emotional engagement with it over time, inserting herself and her daily, lived experience into temples, galleries, museums.... I'm tempted to call her work feminist, only Newby herself makes no grand claims and refuses to ascribe to larger theories or critiques. Her work is intensely small and personal.

How do you write about a woman who makes work from the residue of emotions without that sounding like a trap? Yet she uses these to transfigure the spaces where she shows, and she doesn't ask for a perfect understanding or you to untangle her feelings or for them to be made manifest.

Back in the temple, I stand under the canopy, the _____. I stop, stuck again on the word "like." Similes, they're cheap and easy – and the art writer's stock in trade. Her work is full of holes and approximations, which if you pause on them provide new openings. So, instead I want to stop on the act of approximation and leave that hole open a bit longer. In notes for her thesis, she writes of a friend using a word in a slightly off way. He was describing a fight with his boyfriend as "really heavy scenery" versus "a heavy scene." That small mistranslation delighted her. She calls it "jolting and brilliant.... It's fitting, but not correct. It's saying something but in a fresh and unusual way. It's that little bit of a tweak, that little twist, that perhaps all things need, art and otherwise." It opens up that moment so you see it anew, and that's really a way of describing her work – jolting, awkward, slightly off and maybe a bit embarrassing. She's said she knows a piece works if she's embarrassed by it. What she makes is "really heavy scenery," where you pause on the approximation that never quite fits. Her work allows the image you (or I in this case) would use to describe her to fail.

To be an art writer and have your words ripped out from under you, to experience – as I did in that temple – the very failure of language, is incredibly profound. It felt like a philosophical proposition, as if Newby hasn't just reconfigured the space, but the very way I see the world and the way we try to normalize it by the pasting over the bits that don't fit, by making them understandable, by making them seem like something else. Instead the gaps and trash, patches and emotions, the shonky everyday that she celebrates seems full of limitless possibility.



[1] Sarah Hopkinson, "Kate Newby's Outside," *Incredible Feeling*. Published: Clouds and Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland, 2014 p. 72-73.

[2] <http://www.aucklandartgallery.com/whats-on/events/2012/august/the-walters-prize-2012>

[3] Email with Sarah Hopkinson May 14, 2013.

August 2014
The Weeklings

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Mexico City

Kate Newby

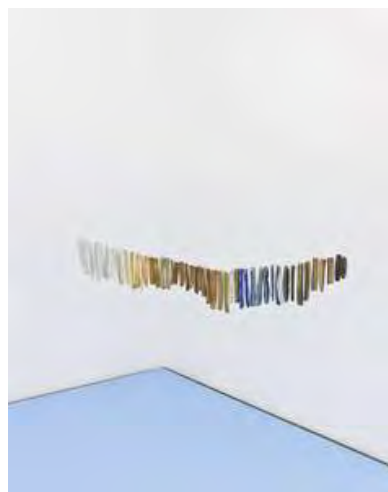
LULU

Bajío 231, Colonia Roma, Cuauhtemoc
August 2, 2014–October 5, 2014

Kate Newby's latest solo exhibition features a modest and contemplative sculptural installation that playfully exploits the conventions of the physical gallery and extends her ongoing investigation of linking different spaces in nuanced ways. Two components of *I feel like a truck on a wet highway*, 2014, manifest this idea. The first is a sculpture of bulbous silver bells hanging in the gallery's entryway. The bells have a precious quality, which is heightened by the artist's subtle fingerprints on the metal. They are suspended individually by thin, multicolored strings, the other end of which swoops up connecting them to a neighboring roof.

The second is a sculpture of ceramic wind chimes arranged from light to dark—white, creams, blues, then blacks—on a thin, white string in the gallery's small main space. The pieces are long and narrow, but each is unique in shape and incorporates signs of process, such as air bubbles and fingerprints, while hanging from the same string as the bells. The chimes' string loops through the bells' knot before it passes through a door into a private bedroom and out to a patio space. With this gesture, Newby's work becomes reliant on the walls of the gallery as much as it is dependent on an outside context for its meaning to be legible.

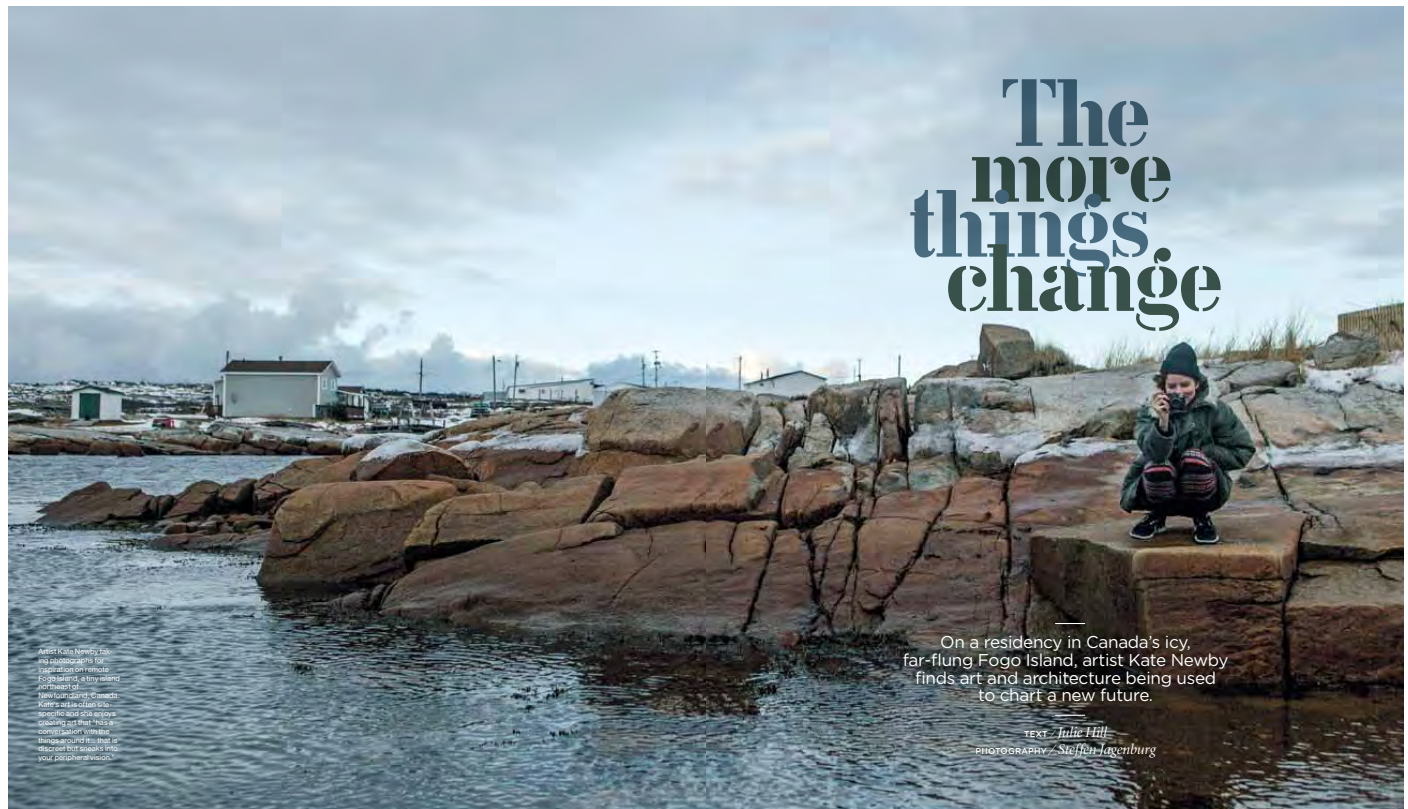
The installation as a single work highlights the mundane and commonplace, and much like works by artists such as Michael Asher and Francis Alÿs, Newby's work examines where place becomes as much a part of art's content as objects.



Kate Newby, *I Feel Like a Truck on a Wet Highway* (detail), 2014, ceramic, string, dimensions variable. Installation view.

— Leslie Moody Castro

2014
Home New Zealand



On a residency in Canada's icy, far-flung Fogo Island, artist Kate Newby finds art and architecture being used to chart a new future.

TEXT / Julie Hill
PHOTOGRAPHY / Steffen Jagenburg

The artist Kate Newby is in her sickbed. You can't blame her: outside it's been minus 18 degrees and in her studio, cups of water are freezing. She is in a saltbox house on the very edge of the earth (quite literally, if you're a member of the Flat Earth Society) called Fogo, a tiny island northeast of Newfoundland, Canada. Here, Elizabethan English and old Irish dialects still infect the accent and the towns have strange, lonely names like Tiltling, Seldom-Come-By and Farewell. There are seals, whales, caribou and coyotes, and 11 little villages with a total population of 2700.

To be in residence here seems perfectly suited to Kate, whose art gently interrogates its surroundings, and is usually site-specific because "I like work that has a conversation with the things around it." "Crawl out of your window," which won last year's Walter's Prize, was an unearthly pale-blue pool, potted with puddles and scattered with leaves and bottle tops, covering a large area of floor at Auckland Art Gallery. It was called "radical but reserved" by the judge.

How funny you are today, New York, consisted of two space-age coloured rocks nonchalantly hanging out in a park in Brooklyn.

The Fogo Island residency comes with a car, a restored historic home in Shoal Bay and a studio on the village's coastline, one of four spectacular new buildings dotted around the island. Named Tower, it is a misshapen diamond of vertical black clapboard, windowless aside from a giant skylight on the top ceiling, with two storeys that twist like a waist. Kind locals helped her lug her materials the 15-minute climb from the road to the studio.

She's been into rocks for a while, she says, and now finds herself in rock nirvana. Here, rocks are everywhere, literally and metaphorically. They turn up in stories and appear in ceremonies (one makes an occasion by turning a rock); locals warm their beds with rocks, make Killick anchors out of rock and even, in little heritage town Tiltling, name their rocks.

For around four centuries (after killing off the original Beothuk people), the English and Irish settlers fished for cod. Then, suddenly but predictably, the cod ran out and in 1992, the government placed a moratorium on fishing. Life as the people knew it was over. The island needed an angel, ASAP, and found one in the form of Zita Cobb.

The daughter of illiterate Fogo Islander fishers, Zita Cobb spent her first 17 years here, in a saltbox without power or electricity, before heading off to the mainland to make her frankly stupendous fortune as the head of a fibre-optics company. In her 40s, and one of Canada's richest women, she cashed up and sailed the globe. Already a veteran philanthropist, or in her own terminology, a social entrepreneur, she turned what

was meant to be a brief visit home into a resolution to stay there until she fixed it. Her tools in this mission? Art and architecture.

That art has transformative social power seems a radical idea in a rural parable such as this. But art has saved this place once before. In the 1960s, the islanders faced resettlement on the mainland when the Canadian government decided to centralise its services. At that time the island's villages were disparate, so a university in Newfoundland and Canada's National Film Board collaborated on a series of short films that exquisitely depict life on the island. Once the villagers saw their reflections in each other, they got organised. "For the first time, the communities talked to each other, then they rallied together and said, no, we don't want to move, and they stood up to the government," says Kate. The Fogo Process has since been used elsewhere in America, and in Asia and Africa, as a means to address repatriation.

Zita Cobb was a child at the time of the process (she appears as a wedding guest in one of the films) and now, almost 50 years later, she is more or less single-handedly spearheading her own, updated version of it. Her aim is to use art to provide the same level of awareness and reflection that the little black-and-white films afforded her parents in the 60s.

She has commissioned four (and intends to build two more) artist's studios, strategically placed on various parts of the island for maximum engagement with the different communities, and funded international residencies to go with them. Designed by former Fogo Islander and now Norway-based Todd Saunders of Saunders Architects, the studios, named Long Bridge, Tower and Squish, are magical syntheses of traditional building techniques – like wooden clapboard and stilt – and modern simplicity. Each one is eco to the core and positioned for the best possible view of the island's many miracles: whales in the summer, for example, or majestic, creaking icebergs in the spring.

Then there is the almost-completed Fogo Island Inn in the capital Joe Batt's Arm – no ordinary inn, but a luxury eco hotel-sauna-cinema-library-art gallery, long and white, on stilts, with kooky, skinny windows. The interior is decorated in traditional handcrafted furniture and happy-coloured quilts. Not only a generator of jobs but also owned by the community, "this inn is a phenomenal building and enterprise," says Kate.

Her days are spent working with quiltmaker Linda Osman and geologist Paul Dean, firing rocks out of clay and porcelain at a kiln in a church and revelling in the lyrical lingo and culture.

On the benefits of her presence on the island, Kate says, "there's definitely something to be said for artists coming here and making work, and the benefit for me is immediate, direct research into a new place."

Below Please provide caption information.

Right Kate looks skyward in her studio, a spectacular new building named Tower. A misshapen diamond of vertical black clapboard, it is windowless aside from a giant skylight on the top ceiling.

Below right Caption information please.



February 2014
Frieze

frieze

In Focus: Kate Newby

The art of tiny revelations

Stained cotton sheets, pebbles made of clay, a lump of concrete – Kate Newby's work can look radically slight. In 2011, the New Zealand artist fell in love with some nails that were embedded in the floor of the Auckland gallery Hopkinson Cundy (now Hopkinson Mossman), and for her show there, 'I'll follow you down the road', she re-created their line with shiny new ones, turning off the lights so that only daylight from the windows illuminated them. Last winter, on the remote Fogo Island off the coast of Newfoundland, Newby made a pothole at the end of a track. Approximating a puddle, it filled with snow, melted, iced over and will eventually (if it hasn't already) disappear – an earthwork in miniature.

Newby often celebrates the minutiae of everyday life; her work is an invitation to look further and see more.

Consequently, what she creates is frequently overlooked, and she doesn't worry about whether you know where the 'art' is. Her series 'Pocket Charms' (2011–ongoing) includes nails, coins and pull-tabs from cans – some found, others remade and cast in silver – which remain indistinguishable from the originals. When Newby first exhibited the charms in 2011, as part of the biennial 'Prospect: New Zealand Art Now', they were hidden in the pockets of gallery attendants, who would take the work home with them at night.

For several years, the artist has been working on the series 'Let the other thing in' (2011–ongoing), which comprises rocks for skipping on water. She'll hand a porcelain pebble to a friend to skip across everything from a swimming pool on Long Island to a remote pond on Fogo, from the East River to the Mississippi – wherever she and the friend happen to be. But what exactly transpires? Is the moment itself art? Or the pebble she's made? Or the friendship being celebrated? Or the throwing away of something she, an artist, has created? Or, is it the photographs she takes on her iPhone to record the event? Whatever the answer, something ephemeral is marked that becomes a way to consider all of these questions.

Last September, at La Loge in Brussels, Newby created the

About this article

Published on 13/02/14
By Jennifer Kabat



Let the other thing in (Drew), 2013, c-type print, 42 × 32 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland

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installation 'Maybe I won't go to sleep at all' (2013), which spread across all four floors of the Masonic-lodge-turned-gallery. Gauzy sheets billowed over the ceiling. Bold swatches of yellow silk were laid on top of the cotton, which was covered with rain-stained striations and footprints. Seen from a window above, the room was calm; it reminded me of watching clouds from an aeroplane. From below, in the former temple itself, the installation reconfigured the room, veiling the lights and wooden grille overhead. Temples and churches all drive attention to the front, to the altar, but Newby interrupts that. She makes you look up, not forward, transforming the hierarchy endemic to the space.



'Maybe I won't go to sleep at all', 2013, exhibition view at La Loge, Brussels. Courtesy: La Loge, Brussels

For her show 'Crawl out your window' (2010) at Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst (GAK) in Bremen, Newby hung a soiled curtain in the gallery. Here, the dirt had accumulated when the artist and her friends used the sheet as a picnic blanket, while at La Loge the stains came from Newby hanging bolts of fabric outside her studio on the top floor of the building – both works, however, serve as a kind of diary. At GAK, the artist made a corridor with the sheets, shaping light from the window and drawing attention to the outside. Looking out of the window and across the river, the visitor could see scrawled on a wall: 'Try, try.' Newby wrote this in response to a Lawrence Weiner piece on GAK's riverside foundations: 'having been built on sand with another base (basis) in fact.' His statement was both about culture and about the island on which GAK stands, which is sinking. Newby's exhortation was filled with hope and humour: try and try again, even if you know it will fail. Her graffiti will be painted over or wear off – people might miss it entirely – but it's about the encouragement to see, to respond, and the hope offered up in the tiny revelations available to us if we look.

June 2014
The Weeklings

'Crawl out your window' won Newby the 2012 Walters Prize. Bestowing the award, judge Mami Kataoka described the work as 'the most reserved but radical way of transcending the fixed architectural space for contemporary art'. A 'translation' of the GAK show installed at the Auckland Art Gallery, it included a concrete ramp with a puddle, gum and silver pull-tabs stuck in the surface. It looked like something from the street dragged into a museum and, indeed, Newby has written odes to stretches of footpaths and carrier bags caught in trees. In a gallery setting, the ramp was as confusing as the concrete mound the artist created in La Loge to force the temple doors open. The concrete stops you short. Is it blocking the entrance? Do you walk on it? Are you allowed to? How do you interact with something defined as art? Newby's questions are subtle. This isn't institutional critique, nothing that heavy. The answers are left open-ended.



Just enough to feel stronger and a little bit fond, 2011, silver, bronze, ceramic, dimensions variable

Newby's work reflects her daily observations and, in her hands, the banal becomes transcendent – but that doesn't make it pretty or graceful or grand. Her approach is confusing and potentially awkward. It's meant to stop you, to ask you to notice more, like her pothole that you may or may not see. In an email to me about a wind chime she was going to hang on Fogo Island, Newby wrote that she likes her work to be a bit 'renegade', something you could 'encounter if you're out walking or might hear from a distance'. In the end, she couldn't install the chime; the wind was too strong. So she held off and, last autumn, hung one at the highest spot in Copenhagen as part of a group show at Henningsen Gallery. Of course, there are no signs or directions to the piece. After all, it's an invitation.

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Julia Morison

Freedom Farmers / Len Lye / Hotere Culbert

Harry Wong / Jude Rae / Séraphine Pick

Kate Newby / Dane Mitchell / The Crystal Chain Gang

Russ Flatt / Masculinity in Performance Art

John Panting / Dennis K. Turner

Greer Twiss / Barry Cleavin





Belgium Rocks

Kate Newby's Residence in Brussels

DAN MUNN

Kate Newby installed *Maybe I won't go to sleep at all* on all four floors of La Loge during a five-week residency in the Northern autumn of 2013. The gallery is based in a former Freemason house commissioned by the international obedience Le Droit Humain in 1934 and used by the group until 1976. Newby's work is at once a response to this architecture, a continuation of residency-based projects over the last few years, and a mining of the social and emotional content of her few short weeks in Brussels. Each floor showcases a specific body of work, leading the viewer through a series of concerns from basement to rooftop.

In the basement there is a plywood platform painted bright pink-red; on it are laid just over 500 unique ceramic sculptures (which the artist calls 'rocks'), all produced in the space of two days. During their formation the pieces picked up a variety of hand and finger marks; one set was textured by being thrown against the gallery's wooden floor. Grouped by colour, size and style, each set is labelled with a phrase such as 'Do more with your feeling', 'I'm just like a pile of leaves', 'Depend upon it', and 'I'm embarrassed because Lou Reed doesn't know me'.¹ The lines are copied from the artist's notebooks; there are names, imperatives to act (ambitiously!), fragments from personal conversations in Brussels, and lines from Frank O'Hara's *Lunch Poems* (1964).

This method of linking phrase and form in varyingly straightforward and abstract instances brings to mind sentiment analysis in social media. This is a growing area in which affective data in feedback posted on social media websites—likes, comments and soon, latent webcam feeds²—is moulded into a form to which businesses can offer a product or service. How are you feeling today? The nonlinear yet loosely diaristic³ nature of the phrases excavates the social and emotional content of free time, employing it for production as O'Hara does his lunch hour. This new seductive periphery of productive time, a key source of the work's openness and generosity, may also be a woefully precarious position; the exhibition title referring equally to ambition and exhaustion.

In a recent article in *The New Inquiry* the 'land of nod' is presented as the final frontier of the labour market.⁴ It foresees the 24/7 end-game, where time that is not 'work time, consumption time, or marketing time'⁵ loses relevance, as in the reality television show *Shattered*, in which the winner lasted 179 sleepless hours.

On the ground floor, propping open the doors of the temple,⁶ Newby has installed a rough concrete mound. The piece's pallid yellow wash clashes with the natural brown of the wooden floor, making manifest its loosely simulative nature. Like her ceramic rocks, this mound places the deep time of

(all images) KATE NEWBY *Maybe I won't go to sleep at all* 2013
Installation at La Loge, Brussels
(Photograph: Isabelle Arthuis)

rock formation alongside what novelist Jennifer Kabat refers to as 'the temporal space of Kate',⁷ the comparatively minuscule moment of production. In doing so we approach the perspective that Timothy Morton writes of in *Ecology without nature*, a non-anthropocentric view in which our own processes are placed alongside the myriad others present within that 'something called Nature.'

On the stairs to the next level a series of warmly amateur photographs is hung as billposters. The images show the artist's friends and colleagues skimming her ceramic rocks across various bodies of water: a swimming pool, a lake in a city park, in a puddle downtown, and in the ocean (good luck). The performatively produced⁸ object is turned back into an event, the sculpture lost forever in the process. The process speaks to land art and particularly the projects of Andy Goldsworthy in which temporary structures composed and conducted in isolated locations are delivered back to the big smoke as permanent photographic works. Perhaps the spoken anecdotes⁹ that naturally develop around the performative elements of the artist's work are in this case the more appropriate record. Unlike the photographs, which adhere to a documentary aesthetic, these anecdotes are told in the perspective and voice of the viewer and have a greater capacity to take on board the range of subjectivities brought to the event.

In the temple a loose weave cotton sheet divides the height of the space in two, on top of which sit two panels of sunny yellow oxide-dyed silk. The cotton was laid on top of the building during the production period and carries the marks of weather

and sneaker treads. Like the silk panels it points to an escape from the lodge's architecturally discrete and previously covert heart. The fabric forms a veiling mechanism against the gaze from the claustra (i.e. one-way viewing window) on the second floor, which during Freemason occupation would have been used for monitoring the activities within the hall. The French term 'Loge', used to refer to a masonic lodge, can also indicate a caretaker's dwelling, a theatre box, or an actor's dressing room; each space playing host to drastically distinct norms of engagement. By disrupting the surveillance of the claustra, the installation also antagonises the typical organisation of the visual within the white cube. One of the most complete views of the space, in which the warm yellow panels of silk are aligned with the illuminated sun, moon and star wall lights behind, is from the toilets upstairs.

In Jacques Tati's 1958 film *Mon Oncle*, the protagonist's world is divided into modernist and vernacular architecture and urban design. Much of the humour arises from his attempts to navigate the impersonal spaces of the modern house and factory. At the very end of the film an estranged father reconnects with his son by taking part in a petty prank; through this brief engagement with uncertainty he forms a vital connection. In the same way this installation subtly but consistently questions the conventions of navigating an exhibition. Entering the temple one must decide whether one is comfortable climbing over the sculpture at the door. The chance-influenced form of this fixture covers almost completely the stylised tool iconography within a Square and Compasses¹⁰ tile mosaic. Similarly, when the temple was constructed to ideal proportions it unintentionally produced, on each

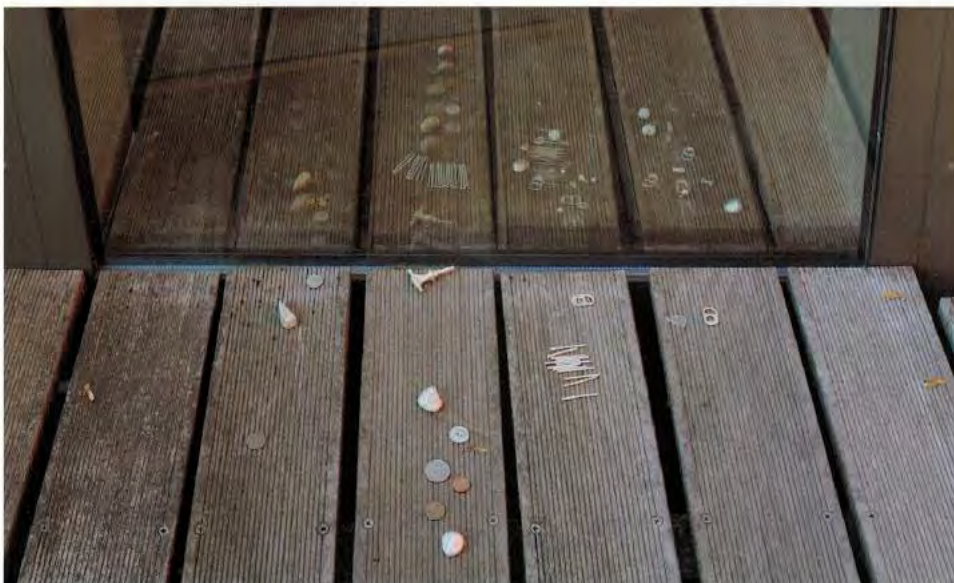




floor, a wedge of leftover space. On the second floor in this area Newby has scrawled the words, 'Oh hi' in chalk on an industrial blue carpet, greeting the chance architectural development as a pleasant surprise.

On the top floor a ceramic wind-chime is strung through the space and out across the roof terrace. The tensioned line passes straight through a hole drilled in the thick concrete wall and is attached to the exterior of the building at each end. Neatly scattered on either side of the window to the terrace are an

assortment of found and silver-cast pocket detritus; matches, cigarette filters, soda can tabs, coins, and wads of paper. This series began during an exhibition at Wellington City Gallery in 2011 in which staff chose pieces to carry around. At the end 'a lot were missing, some were never returned, and some were tarnished' which the artist gladly accepted, saying 'I just wanted the works to circulate and be out living a life in the world'.¹¹ In her public conversation at the gallery with curator Laura Preston, Newby mentioned that she



wonders if things 'get taken for granted when they are permanent'. These silver accessories, paradoxically concealed within the holder's pocket, accentuate the event of viewing, the pocket echoing the withdrawal allowed by the cotton veil in the temple.

One final work visible from the top floor is a flag hanging from an apartment across the street. Produced during Newby's Bachelors degree, it bears the handwritten phrase 'I think I'm doing it in a really interesting way'. Following the dissolving of the British bank Lloyds TSB this year, *The Economist* wrote that it was strange that TSB would keep its 213 year-old name, noting (post-recession) the evolution of customer trust tending towards 'informal brand names [that] reflect more integrity and honesty than stuffy, impassive legacy ones'.¹² In contrast, Newby's 'I think' works to develop our trust in the art institution's potential. In her candidly informal way of working on the periphery of the art object and within the wider physical and historical context of the exhibition space, she asks us to trust in art's capacity for openness, expansiveness, and ultimately, relevance.

1. This phrase was written several months before the songwriter's passing, as many visitors to the show have been curious to know.

2. 'IRENE is a facial expression based mood detection model that has been developed by capturing images while [social network] users use webcam supported laptops or mobile phones. This image will be analysed to classify one of several moods. This mood information will be shared in the user profile... several activities and events will also be generated based on the identified mood.' From the abstract for 'IRENE: Context aware mood sharing for social network' a paper presented at the 2011 IEEE International Conference on Service-Oriented Computing and Applications by Haque, M.M., Adibuzzaman, M., Polyak, D., Jain, N.; Ahamed, S.I. and Lin Liu.

3. Newby writes in *Let the other thing in* that 'The energy I had on a particular day (depending on how my day had gone, what I had eaten, exercise, what sort of music I was listening to, etc.) is quite evident in the work. Some sets of stones are larger and more angular—they look like I had run out of patience—whereas other days resulted in fine, detailed sets of tiny pebbles with subtly varied glazes. It was a curious way to document a six month period—in clay sticks and stones.' See Kate Newby *Let the other thing in*, Fogo Island Arts and Sternberg Press, Berlin, 2013.

4. Erwin Montgomery and Christine Baumgarthuber, 'My Soul to Keep', *The New Inquiry*, 15 October 2013.

5. *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep* by Jonathan Crary, cited in 'My Soul to Keep' (details above).

6. The term by which the Freemasons referred to the main hall, and which is also used by the gallery staff.

7. Kate Newby, op.cit.

8. This set of rocks is labelled 'Skimming stones formed by clapping hands'.

9. As employed by Tino Seghal in his work *These associations* in the Tate Turbine Hall this past summer. The Tate website notes that the artist 'has risen to prominence for his innovative works which consist purely of live encounters between people'. For the duration of the exhibition the space was 'inhabited by an assembly of participants whose choreographed actions use movement, sound, and conversation'.

10. The Square and Compasses is the single most identifiable symbol of Freemasonry.

11. Right now a set of these objects is taking two months to travel from New Zealand to Munich for an exhibition. The artist has 'no idea' who is carrying these, stating 'it's more just the movement that I like.' A further edition of ten sets of these objects titled *I cross the road all the time* is available from the gallery.

12. W.B., 'Corporate Names, Verbal Identities', *The Economist*, 18 September 2013.



2012
Essay

Fig. 1
Research image
(with the artist's text)
Printed copy of
photograph
Kate Newby's *I'm just like
a pile of leaves* Archive,
TTC McCormick Research
Library, Auckland Art
Gallery (to o Tamaki)

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If Not Concrete Then What?
Kate Newby's *I'm just like a pile of leaves* Archive
Julia Waite

"Even trees understand me! Good heavens, I lie under them,
too, don't I? I'm just like a pile of leaves."
— Frank O'Hara, *Meditations in an Emergency* (1957)

Kate Newby took a line from American poet Frank O'Hara's *Meditations in an Emergency* as the title of her 2011 commission for Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Situated on the Edmiston Sculpture Terrace, *I'm just like a pile of leaves* was site-responsive and insistent on first-hand experience. It drew Gallery goers' attention to the surrounding cityscape and to Albert Park. The work's uneven, stained expanse of pinkish concrete, from which a yellow climbing rope emerged to lasso a nearby historic oak, the standard-issue cinder block wall and embedded ordinary foot-path detritus — bottle tops, sticks, buttons, nails and small stones — were at once familiar and disorientating. At first glance parts of the installation, such as the cinder block wall, appeared lifted straight from industry, contrasting with the richly coloured and painterly concrete floor. Less obvious than its constituent parts but intentional nevertheless was the subtlety of the work's embrace of the everyday, and qualities of "embeddedness" that seemed at one with the Gallery's surroundings. At deinstallation in March 2012, the expanse of pink concrete floor in *I'm*

just like a pile of leaves was ripped up with the same tools used in roadworks, leaving almost no remnants. Any meaning tied to the work's physical experience is now lost.

What does remain is Kate Newby's *I'm just like a pile of leaves*, 2011, Archive, compiled after the work's demolition and comprising the project proposal; annotated pencil sketches on watercolour and tracing paper; watercolours showing proposed objects, some of which never eventuated; research images taken in Auckland and abroad; colour photographs with oil stick and Vivid Marker jottings; documentary images taken during the installation; and industrially produced concrete samples. The archive also holds artefacts of the artwork, including a section of the floor and wall, saved during deinstallation (Col. pl. 1).

The Newby archive is now stored in manufactured archive boxes with museological conditions in mind (Col. pl. 2), serving to emphasise that it exists, as Alex

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Potts has written, "at a different level from the physical phenomenon itself": Potts argued that the physical nature of material traces, like those stored in the archive, have the potential (in the absence of the original artwork) to be "integral to the phenomenal qualities of the work of art we conjure up in our mind's eye."¹ However, the Newby archive was not composed to self-consciously "capture" or represent the artwork proper; it instead records the artist's working process and some of the materials she used. Full of textual and visual material made by the artist's own hand, it provides an insight into her thinking and experiences. It also, for the most part, includes material that predates the work and reveals much about the context and space in which Newby worked in the unfinished redeveloped Auckland Art Gallery. The archive is a mostly two-dimensional record of thought and working processes.

Reading the sketches, research material and watercolours reveals a long process of decision-making and negotiation which is seemingly at odds with the fleeting observation present in O'Hara's *Meditations*. Interpreting the volume of research material and preparatory sketches in the archive tells the story of a complex development, which belies the characteristic spontaneity of Newby's oeuvre. Her practice typically involves working with materials associated with construction including fibreglass, bricks and concrete, which, when combined, create a handmade, individually rendered effect. But the Edmiston Sculpture Terrace commission was a large-scale project in an outdoor environment with a life of six months; it needed to withstand high visitation and environmental impact. The archive's watercolours and quick sketches reflect the ephemeral nature of Newby's practice and make clear the project's long development, with its complex logistics and health and safety requirements.

Newby's original proposal and sketches (Col. pls 3, 4 and 5) show her intention to reference the cityscape and park that lies beyond the Terrace. In them you can see her literally composing the space, using a

combination of architectural floor plans and her own photographic notations. She wanted her spatial interventions to "work with elements already at play in the North Terrace such as various viewpoints, wall, the terrace ground, and trees," yet the Terrace had quite literally not yet been built. Down the side of one enlarged photograph (Col. pl. 5), Newby wrote: "Keep the construction vibe going and more — great bush!" Her playful annotations include to-do lists: "Remember: concrete, watercolour effect, call Terry." Scribbled on images of the Terrace and its periphery, they sound like diary entries, with the writing's tone suggesting personal use different from the formality of the proposal submitted to Gallery staff. In fact, Newby had not intended her working material to remain with the Gallery; rather, the notes and jotted-down commentary reveals a private process, and the steps she took as an artist to personalise public space.

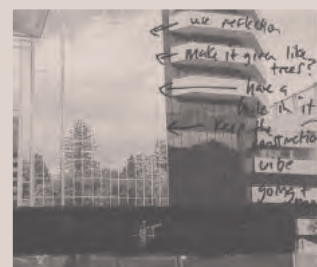
One of the most labour-intensive and technically complex tasks involved in the work was the construction of the pink concrete floor. And by far the greatest amount of the material in the archive refers to the construction of and material used in the concrete floor — its thickness, position, gradient, weight distribution solutions and strength (Col. pl. 7). Newby's lightly tinted watercolours illustrating this part of her proposal (Col. pls 3, 6 and 8) contrast with later more careful drawings (Col. pl. 7) which reveal technical issues and the "red tape" she faced in constructing a 6 x 12-metre ramp of concrete. The cross-section sketch of the floor (Col. pl. 7) shows how Newby negotiated drains on the Terrace and considered base layer options. This was annotated with questions such as: "A light weight substance for height, what?," "Age it?," "How thick does the concrete need to be so it does not crack?," "Wooden block? Or another framing device?," and, at the bottom of one sketch the more bleak, "Is it still the project I want to do?"

The archive shows some of the logistical issues the artist faced — due to the physical constraints of the new building. There is also a sense in the archive that Newby bends or reorders logistical — literally

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IF NOT CONCRETE THEN WHAT? KATE NEWBY'S *I'M JUST LIKE A PILE OF LEAVES* ARCHIVE / Julia Waite

Fig. 2
Research image of
Terrace under
construction (detail)
Printed copy of
photograph with
Vivid marker
Kate Newby's *I'm just like
a pile of leaves* Archive,
TTC McCormick Research
Library, Auckland Art
Gallery (to o Tamaki)



concrete — problems to her own will and in so doing creates a space in order to have, as Jon Bywater has written of previous work, "things on [her] own terms."² The collected documentation is not only interesting for its ability to show "what has been" it also suggests "what for example could have been," like the proposed seat with "handmade rocks" and "real boulders" (Col. pl. 6) and the various iterations of text, or "speak," which she initially imagined inscribed into the concrete floor included, "Ooh windy, I ran out," "I'm just like a pile of leaves? You are so Big!" and "it'd feel just terrible," but these, along with the earlier sculptural elements like the planted stonewall and seat, would never eventuate (Col. pl. 10). We can see that in the process of working to realise "things on [her] own terms," Newby heavily edited her work.

Different from the technical drawings, the first set of sketches and watercolours of the floor and wall appear informal, not over-thought; their freshness is

reflected in the painterly marks and rough edges of the oil stick on colour photographs. Newby's pale mid-toned watercolours (Col. pls 3, 6 and 8) give an impression of what she imagined the final work would look and feel like, and these diverge in their mode of documentation from the heavier pen and oil stick sketches (Col. pls 4 and 5) in which she drew over colour photocopies of North Terrace photographs. In those sketches, Newby solves problems presented by the site in order to achieve the artistic intention as described in the watercolours.

Images in the archive (Col. pl. 9) taken during her many site visits show her first-hand experience of major construction — a site surrounded in scaffolding, unfinished walls and columns. In one drawing (Col. pl. 4), fellow artist Fiona Connor stands on the roughly painted pink concrete floor in her trademark denim, cut out and stuck down like a paper doll in a scrapbook. Here we see Newby going beyond the logistics of the project, perhaps imagining its place in her world, populated with her friends.

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Newby did not, as O'Hara did, write about or respond to the everyday — she built it somewhat laboriously as these materials reveal. The archive is most telling for its ability to extract this account of the labour entailed in her construction of the "everyday" or vernacular, a far cry from the casual and temporary effect implied by "a pile of leaves." While some objects, such as found bottle tops and shop-bought crystals, were quickly placed in the concrete by Newby before it set, others, such as ceramic rocks and branches, Newby made herself as pseudo-found objects. You see some of these objects in planning images and the floor remnant saved during deinstallation, but there is no record of their collection or manufacture in the archive.

One of the most playful and surprising elements in *I'm just like a pile of leaves* was the yellow climbing rope, which tethered the Gallery to Albert Park behind it. The rope continued a theme in Newby's work reflecting ideas about "resistance, escape routes, and opposition." Sketches in the archive show her working through various propositions for using a rope and then for how it might be secured to the Terrace (Col. pl. 6). From her dashed-off notes which read like loosely connected thought bubbles, we learn that she initially planned to imbed the rope in layers of flooring material: "Polythene, fibrecrete, plaster" in addition to her drawings, a short, knotted section of the rope rests in the archive.

Newby's installation — her "intervention" as she might describe it — created tension between public and private spaces, between what she wanted to do (her "private space") and what she could get away with doing (what the Gallery's public space would allow). A close reading of the archive divulges this. Mischievous notes, such as "Keep it simple — cheeky, 'tough. Drop something off the roof onto the ground," open for consideration the artist's complex relationship with the site and the project.

In totality, the archive reveals a long process of decision-making seemingly at odds with the

improvisational nature of the work and individual almost "craft-based" production. Reading the archive affords a clear view of the artist's intentions for the work, which some readers may take as being commensurate with its "meaning," and demonstrates how acutely aware Newby was of engaging with "context." The *I'm just like a pile of leaves* Archive offers readers a complicated story of an artist's vision meeting the practical demands of its realisation.

1. Alex Pettit, "The artwork, the archive, and the living moment," in *What is Research in the Visual Arts?* (Otago, Archive Encounter) (Wellington, Museum of Contemporary and Contemporary Arts, 2008), 119.
2. Pettit, 120.
3. Kate Newby, "I'm just like a pile of leaves," Project Proposal for Auckland Art Gallery North Terrace Commission, 2011.
4. Jon Bywater, "Discreet poetry: Kate Newby's 'Get Off My Garden,'" October 2009, on the occasion of the exhibition *Kate Newby: Get Off My Garden*, Sun-Credited Gallery, Auckland, http://shop.museumofcontemporary.com/kate_newby_jon_bywater.pdf.
5. Marlene van Huizen, "The Archive Archive," *Manitoba Journal 6* (Autumn/Winter 2005): 382–85.
6. "Kate Newby Presents First Institutional Solo Exhibition in Europe," http://www.artdaily.org/index.asp?int_sec=11&int_news=4031&int_mod=1 [accessed December 15, 2012].

Col. pl. 1
Section of concrete saved during deinstallation
Kate Newby's *I'm just like a pile of leaves* Archive.
© F. H. McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

Col. pl. 2
Various colour concrete samples from Peter Fell and section of rope
Kate Newby's *I'm just like a pile of leaves* Archive.
© F. H. McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

200_201 IF NOT CONCRETE THEN WHAT? KATE NEWBY'S *I'M JUST LIKE A PILE OF LEAVES* ARCHIVE / Colour Plates



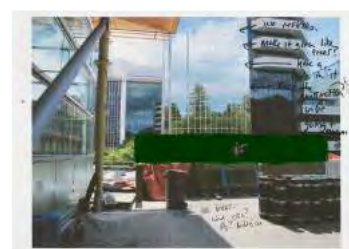
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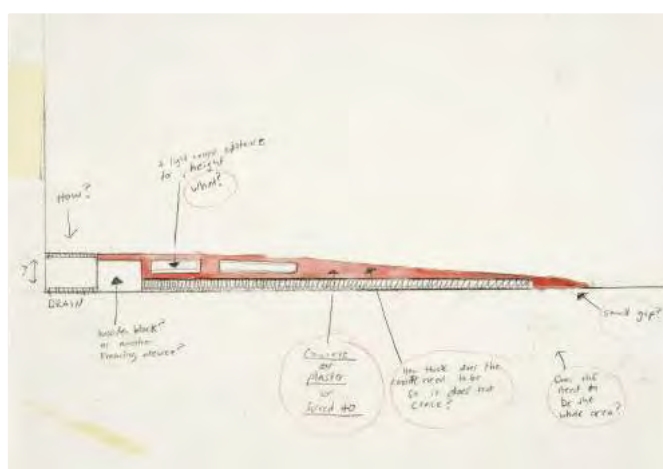
Col. pl. 3
Terrace
Pencil and watercolour sketch
Kate Newby's *I'm just like a pile of leaves* Archive.
© F. H. McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

Col. pl. 4
Research image of terrace under construction
Oil stick and collage on printed copy of photograph
Kate Newby's *I'm just like a pile of leaves* Archive.
© F. H. McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

Col. pl. 5
Research image of terrace under construction
Printed copy of photograph with void marker
Kate Newby's *I'm just like a pile of leaves* Archive.
© F. H. McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki



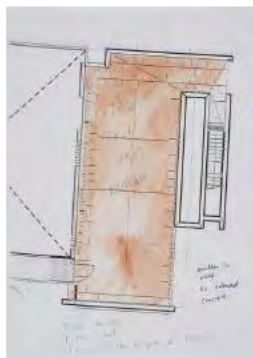
202_203 IF NOT CONCRETE THEN WHAT? KATE NEWBY'S *I'M JUST LIKE A PILE OF LEAVES* ARCHIVE / Colour Plates



PREVIOUS SPREAD
Col. pl. 6
Various iterations of
commission elements
Pencil and watercolour
sketch
Kate Newby's I'm just like
a pile of leaves Archive,
E H McCormick Research
Library, Auckland Art
Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

ABOVE
Fig. 7
Cross section drawing
of concrete floor
Pencil and watercolour
sketch
Kate Newby's *I'm just like
a pile of leaves* Archive,
E H McCormick Research
Library, Auckland Art
Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

RIGHT
Col. pl. 8
Plan of concrete floor
and wall
Pencil and watercolour
sketch
Kate Newby's *I'm just like
a pile of leaves* Archive,
EH McCormick Research
Library, Auckland Art
Gallery Toi o Tāmaki



Cat. pl. 9
Architectural plan
Pencil and watercolour
sketch
Katie Newbery's 'The Just like
a job of home Archive'
E H McCormick Research
Library, Auckland Art
Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

Cat. pl. 10
Research image of terrace
under construction
Oil stick on printed copy
of photograph
Katie Newbery's 'The Just like
a job of home Archive'
E H McCormick Research
Library, Auckland Art
Gallery Toi o Tāmaki



Fig. 1
Mackelvie Gallery 1953
Sculpture court with
entrance to offices and
library (at rear)
Black and white
photograph
E H McCormick Research
Library, Auckland Art
Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

208.209 **Room for Reading: The Foundation
of the E H McCormick Research Library**
Anna Parlane

Auckland Art Gallery's E H McCormick Research Library first opened as a small reading room on 12 October 1953. An area of a few square metres, containing bookshelves and chairs and doubling as a waiting room adjacent to the staff offices, the Library's quiet beginning was somewhat overshadowed by the fanfare surrounding the opening of the Gallery's latest renovation and the installation of its first artificial gallery lighting system.¹

The reconstruction in question was a dramatic modernisation by Auckland City Council's Chief Architect, Tibor Donner, of the 1916 neoclassical Mackelvie Gallery. Donner carved up the cavernous space, splitting it into an upper and lower area, to create a sculpture court, workshop, offices and library on the ground floor, with a mezzanine picture gallery above (Fig. 1). Photographs documenting the renovation focus on the cutting-edge perspex lighting troughs and the gravity-defying curved, cantilever staircase that was the centrepiece of Donner's design — when the library

appears in these images it is only ever as incidental backdrop (Figs 2 and 3). The opening of the remodelled Mackelvie Gallery was the most visible of a number of changes associated with the appointment of Eric Westbrook in 1952 as the Gallery's first dedicated director.² Westbrook was formerly Chief Exhibitions Officer at the Arts Council of Great Britain, and British art historian Sir Kenneth Clark was horrified by his decision to move to New Zealand, writing to him: "You are making the worst mistake of your life. I wouldn't mind so much if you were going to Australia."³ However, Westbrook was young, energetic and resourceful, and though his tenure as director lasted less than four years he transformed the Gallery from a forlorn appendage of the Public Library into an exciting centre for Auckland's cultural life.⁴

While the Gallery's new library only ever received brief mention in 1953's media reports, it was indicative of a larger shift in the Gallery's institutional identity than is suggested by its diminutive

2008
Frieze Magazine

http://www.frieze.com/shows/review/kate_newby_nick_austin/

Previous Shows

Kate Newby & Nick Austin

WESTERN PARK, AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

Fake seagulls, a folded newspaper and a telescope in an inner city park were the basic elements of 'Hold Still', Kate Newby and Nick Austin's project for 'One Day Sculpture', a series of temporary public commissions taking place throughout New Zealand over the next year. Part of a strongly curated series of one-day events, the day drew together features of Austin's quizzical assemblages and paintings (which borrow from vernacular forms such as the sandwich and the crossword puzzle) and the gestural energy of Newby's personalized messages made as actions (for example, *Thinking with My Body*, 2006 saw the artist work with a length of rope, tied to the gallery window sill and fixed across street). The artists' collaborative response to the 24-hour brief maintained a lightness and rigor that local audiences have come to expect from their practices.

Developed by the Litmus Research Initiative at the Massey University School of Fine Arts, Wellington, 'One Day Sculpture' is the outcome of curator Claire Doherty's 2006 curatorial residency in New Zealand and aims to 'stretch the format of a scattered-site exhibition over time and place'. Doherty has previously criticized the biennial model, and this programme - of 20 commissions over 12 months, each existing for a maximum of one day only - purposefully offers an antithetical move, allowing the work produced and its reception to operate on a cumulative scale. The upshot is a scenario where it is difficult, practically, to visit every commission; an intentional situation, given that, here in New Zealand, the local is necessarily often acknowledged as the primary site of engagement.

Newby and Austin's title, 'Hold Still', suggested a way through these concerns. Existing from 9.00am to 9.00pm, in Western Park in central Auckland, the work created a kind of diorama *in situ*. The mannered yet visually quiet tableau of a ready-made seagull decoy (made from polystyrene and chicken feathers) placed on top of a park bench, and perching on the day's paper - the quintessential single-day artefact, perhaps? - was framed in the viewfinder of a brand new telescope to create a kind of *Étant donnés* (1946-66) *en plein air*. To break the short circuit affect of the viewer's position, the telescope and the object given to view, some oddly balanced rocks under the table, and a couple of other gulls on another bench across the park expanded the work from the view through the lens.

Through detailing a view of the park, this simple construction gave a kaleidoscope-like effect to the act of looking. The idea of looking at a work through a telescope literalized a frame and a perspective, and joked about the difficulty of being quiet contemplation outside the white cube - perhaps poking fun at those who aren't looking for art within a public context. As a limited-time-only event, the work was often surrounded by viewers watching other viewers' viewing. (Of course, in the tradition of English landscape gardening, the park itself is an invented view, a picturesque space for aesthetic contemplation.) Once you got to have a turn, there was an unexpected kick in that the magnifying lens made an already absurdly artificial scene look even more unreal - something like a stereoscopic postcard. The surprise of the sight through the viewfinder amplified the comedy of concentrating on a common seagull. In this way 'Hold Still' was the best kind of joke, creating an occasion out of the transformation of the familiar, and asserting with a casual confidence art's great potential to shift our awareness - even just for a day - of that which already surrounds us.

Louise Menzies