

TOYS R US :

A PLAYLAND OF ONES OWN

second space projects

* 17.3 UNTIL 25.3 *

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A PLAYLAND OF ONES OWN

ROLE CALL !

Agus, Patricia
Crane, Verity
Denny, Tara
Han, Bing
Hattam, Ava
Holland, Mikayla
Kaindel, Madlena
Kraus, Adina
Lamb, Madeline
Mclean, Raisa
Nguyen, Melissa
Přesa, Elizabeth
Shewan, Fiona
Smart, Jordan
Spring Voss, Rosa
Tsiavos, Alice
Varmalis, Keely



tangerine
baby doll
a room of one's own
zones of non-
knowledge
remembering you by
colour
lights in my house
playland
a moment and break
breaking ritual
transitional
the idea of becoming
axolotl
fantasy and life
the space of illusion
the atoms of woman
and the tale of toys

- Jordan Smart

This publication has been designed and printed on the lands of the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging. Indigenous sovereignty has never been ceded.

Han Bing

My interest is to explore the relation between language and image making. *Untitled* is inspired by maps, scientific illustrations and comic books. It loosely reflects the flood in the subway that occurred in 2021, in Zhengzhou, China. and my distant memory of the map of the city. The process of making *Untitled* is spontaneous as my attempt to maintain the ambiguity of narrative in this work. The child-like gestural marks in paper are to record the making process of this work.



Untitled, 2022
Colour pencil and oil pastel on paper.



Tswizzchi, 2022
Ink, *Live* by Jennifer Lopez, and fabric dye on Kitakata paper.

Long Live (by JLo) Taylor Swift and Tamagotchis.

Melissa Nguyen

Tara Denny

My name is Tara . It is mine to keep and I belong to me. I like my life a lot. I am happy with the wind on my neck. I am free with the thoughts in my head. I like the ideas in my head. The idea of a blue fizzy drink gives me a rush to the bathroom. Motion changes the direction in the head. Calm down. Look away and lightly hum. The ta-dum ta-dumb song in the head. In the wind. I am something-something and getting checked for ID makes me feel either young or old. Why- because I have lived a life before now and I like my birthdays when I get to blow out the candles in the dark. In the dark my ideas turn off and fall apart.

When I buy fake things my teeth grin like pearl spots around my neck. This happy look makes the dress. My head jumps fast and thinks I want to box dye my hair red. Instead, I shift the feeling with serious shades like navy, grey and black.



Silent Spring, 2022
Papier mâché, clay, and acrylic paint.

Ava Hattam

SOLO FEELINGS, 2022
Lunch box, white bread sandwich with ham, resin, paper letters, foam board, and push pins.

Maddie Lamb

Jesus Christ Was My First and Favourite Imaginary Friend, 2022
Mirror in wood frame, acrylic paint, and oil pastel.



Untitled, 2022
Lead-free pewter alloy.

Alice Tsiavos

Formal Pres, 2022
Timber, cotton, pewter, champagne glass, champagne, oil pant, Taylor Swift CD.



Raisa McLean

Flurries of work called a flight of ideas meshing to create a practice that is pathologised and saddled. Or maybe it's a fake nail left on the coffee table after a night out, caught in one of the wire sculptures and ripped off. There's a violence to the sculptures, as pretty as they are, they cut, catch and enclose the body, preparing it for consumption by an audience. My work explores power - or maybe a delusion of

it - social power, sexual power, the power of the seductress and especially the power of being able to manoeuvre my way into a gallery space. I like to imagine the works as a parasite, their shiny allure poisoning the curatorial brain. Saturated in too many ideas, events and feelings; characters with clashing storylines tied together by a mess of different mediums all bathed in sultry red light and maybe even a smoke machine for dramatic effect. The works are created zooming between the social space and the studio space (conveniently partially located in my garage). I use the social space as a testing ground, both for sculpture and performance. I build environments fresh out of the party, practice the power I preach, literally entangling my guests with my woven nets. Maybe the group creepily staring at us from the couch is a motivator, or the girl who told my friend she wasn't like the others as she lit her cigarette stating "I look older than I am". Vignettes of moments, captured in writing and installation - visual dis tracks and love songs that I secretly hope the subject understands. Little ceramics to be played with, dancers who's stares you indulge in, caught on video and played back to you. Do you understand it yet?

Elizabeth Presa

Sculpture of a girl, 2022
clay and plaster.



Toys, like art and ritual objects occupy what Giorgio Agamben calls a “placeless place”, where things are neither “subjective or objective, personal or impersonal, material or immaterial”. During the last three weeks this sculpture has been made and remade many times, as the material and process obey then disobey me, a reminder that art like a child exists as infinite potentiality, a frustratingly illusive yet vital presence.



Tales of thought, 2022
Inkjet print on paper, ink on arches paper.

Jordan Smart



Pillow Fort/Earth vs Spider, 2022
Found furniture, pillows, sheets, mermaid tail, video inside, super 8 film-projector, and 10 min video on loop.



Adina Kraus & Fiona Shewan

“There are twenty thousand types of spiders and every one of them has a unique manner of weaving on which the form of the web depends.”

Ferdinand Deligny

Pillow Fort considers the importance of the dwelling place, particularly the habitats or houses we construct as children. As a child, pillow forts express realms of imaginary delight. They are magical playlands we build as an expression our innate creativity, as such they are houses of the spirit. In this way the pillow fort exists as an architectural foundation for the extension of play. As children we build our playgrounds when they are absent. This building is itself a form of play, but it also lays the groundwork for limitless creativity. Once inside this dwelling the potential for play is endless. The imagination has no bounds.

Pillow Fort/ Earth vs Spider, 2021 is a collaborative work by Adina Kraus and Fiona Shewan that prompts the viewer to think about the relationship between dwelling places and play. Made using everyday household items, this cosy cave houses a ten-minute looped video. Coloured imagery of animal habitats illuminates the sheeted walls of the fort. This moving display of light was made by repurposing old super 8 and 16mm reels of documentary and science fiction film.

Blending documentary and fiction, the film considers the creative potential we all have. Painted, scratched, and reassembled with playful curiosity, the film encourages others to embrace their unique creativity spirit. Clips from a science fiction short *Earth vs Spider* in which a monster spider wreaks havoc on a quaint Middle American town, are interspersed with footage from animal documentaries. This giant spider hints at Fernand Deligny’s creative evocation of the insect in his essay *The Arachnean*.

In this work Deligny develops an alternative ontology that celebrates diversity and creativity. His notion of wander lines refers to the ways in which humans express themselves beyond the confines of language and the social impulse to name, describe and define. To wander is to be guided by the spirit and it takes place without intention. The body or mind meander liberally, free from the expectations of the social order. Using linguistics to strengthen his claim about arachnean modes of being, Deligny evokes the French word for “web” *toile* which has a dual meaning, also referring to “canvas” or “cloth”. He sees the spider’s web as a creative manifestation of being, a collective process of making art and living in communion with others. Deligny’s arachnean web exists in tandem with the pillow fort, a foundational structure for the harnessing of play, the wander lines of the imagination.



A Simple Magic, 2022
Silk, ink, wire, cotton, gum leaves, pennies, cauldron, and water.

Extending upon a legacy of domestic craft and an inherited adoration of textiles, my interdisciplinary practice aims to evoke sensations of simple magic. Through tactile memory and a methodology of assemblage, I navigate the slow act of stitching, drawing together copper, fabric and disparate items. Moved by the loneliness of rejected domestic objects, I play upon fragility and metamorphosis: rehousing and recontextualising objects within my own emotionally charged, immersive dream narratives. In reaction to feeling overwhelmed and exhausted by the mass produced and the mass discarded, my sculptures encourage a time-slowed through repetitive acts that imbue the trace of human love.



Keely Varmalis

Madlena Kaindel



Mein Spielland, 2022
Oil on canvas.

Mikayla Holland

Using layering techniques to create works that visually immerse the viewer. Biomorph and natural forms are a key element, triggering a highly subjective response, unique to the individual viewer. These and other forms are generated from my transitional object as a child. As the works do not visually depict a specific object rather, they form an impression of texture and different shapes of an object. The resulting image can only be a fragment, a trace reminiscent of a transitional object and its influential impact on my life.



Comfort, 2022
Lithographic crayon and chine-collé.

Patricia Agus

My practice expands on traditional forms of printmaking through the incorporation of photography and sculpture.

I have taken elements from my childhood home and my current home in the form of a dollhouse to compare and contrast the similarities and differences of those two places but also the two different moments of my life. Historically, dollhouses were used to educate the girls in the house of their social role and to observe how a 'home' should look like. I have used my dollhouse in a similar manner as viewers are able to see into the homes I grew up in, look into childhood and get a glimpse of what it was like growing up as me. I encourage the viewer to sit down with the dollhouse, play with the miniature woodcuts and pretend to be a kid again. I want a playful and interactive experience which printmaking does not typically have.



Blanket Weaving #1, 2022
Woven materials, bedsheets, scrap canvas strips, builders twine, 2/4 recycled wood cuts, nails, and elastic.

Verity Crane

Dollhouse: The Agus Household, 2022
Woodcuts, acrylic on plywood, fabric, torch, blanket, linocuts in photo album, and installation.



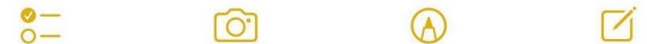
Rosa Spring Voss

Telstra 4G 9:17 am 67%

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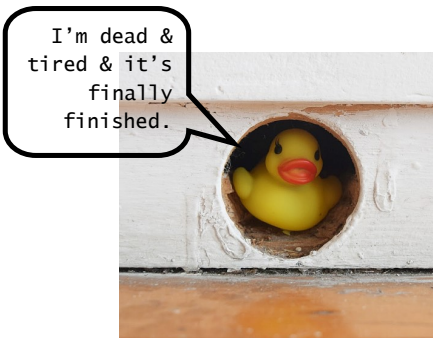
Unfortunately I was not able to create a work as I am cleaning up my hometown after the unprecedented and devastating floods here in Northern NSW.

Untitled, 2022
Screenshot from notes app on paper.



A Thank You

In 2021 the emerging artists from this exhibition gathered together each Wednesday morning to attend Elizabeth Presa's compelling lecture series Toys "r" us. We were reminded of the child-like wonder that exists around us and were able to revisit and relive memories and heal together through new understandings of what it is like to 'become child' once again. It is because of Elizabeth, that we are collectively doing this show together. Her generosity makes this happen each year for her students, which is frankly an incredible honour for us on top of attending her classes from which we all learnt an immense amount. Our gratitude extends out towards Bon Mott, for providing us with the beautiful space to present our creations, as well as lightning guidance with grant writing and logistics. We also want to thank Justin Clements and H el ene Frichot for your fascinating talks and discussions as guests in our class. To each of us, for sharing personal histories, holding space and pulling this together, go team! And lastly a thankyou to our guest curator - Little, a wholesome child of 5 who brought sunshine and light to the curation process, and reminding us that things can just be!



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