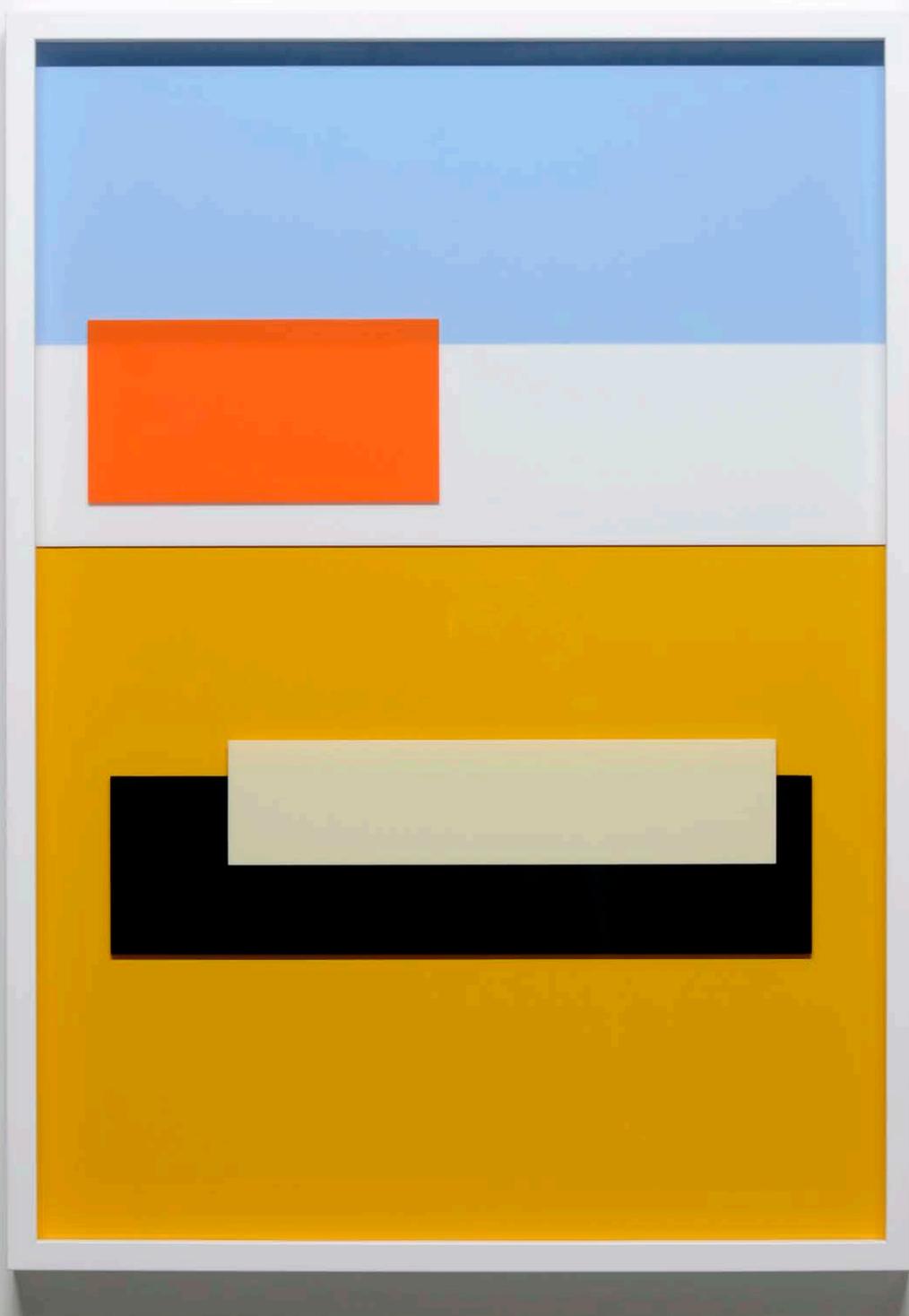


HERE&NOW17: NEW PHOTOGRAPHY



LAWRENCE WILSON ART GALLERY
29 APRIL – 8 JULY 2017



NEW PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography has always been in crisis. In the beginning, the terms of this crisis were cast as dichotomies: Is photography science or art? Nature or technology? Representation or truth? Over the intervening years such questioning has intensified and become more complex. At times, the conditions of cultural representation and the advent of new technologies have required a profound rethinking of what photography is, does, and means. This is one of those times.

What is at stake today in seeing something as a photograph? What is the value of continuing to speak of photography as a specific practice or discipline? Is photography over?

Well, it's not. The artists in *New Photography* open up a space for new ways of thinking about photography as it rapidly changes. Some are armed traditionally with a camera; from digital, medium format to 35mm film. Some manipulate, enlarge or distort images using Photoshop. Some use camera-less processes or some do not use cameras, instead capturing moments with the sun. Some even explore how we can consider human faculties, such as memory, as being photographic tools.

Dan McCabe captures significant sites in Western Australia that resonated with him when he first moved here four years ago. Rejecting the cultural dominance of the camera, he relies on his own memory of the landscapes he has encountered to formulate

a representation based on highly saturated blocks of colour. With a lack of immediate site specificity or recognisability they remain abstractions; the compositions draw attention to the viewer's reflection in the work; the coloured shapes are recognisable as an out of focus background of a selfie or a pixelated thumbnail from a Facebook profile page.

The camera is a dumb recording device for Lucy Griggs who utilises Perth's uniquely harsh sunlight, the brightest of any capital city in Australia, using the early photographic technique, of cyanotypes to create blueprints of wildflowers she collected during the 2016 wildflower season. The flowers are hand-pressed, placed onto paper, doused in ammonium iron citrate and potassium ferricyanide and then left in the sun to react with ultraviolet light. This process results in a positive image tracing only the outline of the pressed flowers.

There does stand a great deal of variation in the materiality and texture in Jacqueline Ball's work. She has battled with five different cameras to create a cluster of 28 large scaled images. Taken in a moment of recalibration, the images trace her recent experiences of place with her own body, her close relationships and her own environment and by exploring how the nature of these spaces can shape gender and identity.



A photograph can also be ontologically tied to reality — a reproduction or copy. Lydia Trethewey challenges this connection in her images by applying a solvent wash process to photographs. By treating the photographs physically as objects or surfaces and working on them with the solvents, the action across the photographic surface disperses the toner and ink, which shifts and moves. It becomes a space where elements of the familiar press against the unfamiliar.

Among the millions of artists who use Instagram, Scott Burton (@scobierobie) confounds the digital-age boundary between 'user' and 'artist'. Scott does not consider himself an artist, but he has a strong understanding of architecture which he previously studied. This understanding lends to an ability to see to how bodies 'sit' within the surrounding formalism of architecture as an element in the design of his photographs, and how, as shapes or aesthetic forms, these bodies contrast or compliment the suburban architecture and setting. Popping into a square frame, his subjects include unassuming members of the public and unremarkable, brutally sun-lit Perth suburbia, which is transformed into abstract formalist settings. By liberating the images from the screen, printing and framing them, we are presented with a new appreciation for these selective moments frozen in time.

Similarly, Georgia Kaw uses her iPhone to capture random moments in her immediate surroundings. However, she does not upload them online. Instead, her intention lies on using low-resolution images as a starting point for a sculptural intervention which is developed over time. Operating on a tenuous boundary between sculpture and photography, the scale of the image becomes so large that it is printed in two separate pieces. The depiction of a humble 'Op-shop' front on Leach Highway is completely transformed making the viewer physically realign themselves with how and what they view in an image that was once was trapped behind the screen.

It remains a new challenge to find ways to tackle how fluid photography is because of its multifaceted nature. Considering its inherent ambiguity, the approaches of the six artists in *New Photography* becomes a useful tool for interrogating the very conceptual, theoretical and ontological debates that are integral to a cultural and aesthetic understanding of contemporary photography.

Chelsea Hopper
Curator, *HERE&NOW17: New Photography*



CURATOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Chelsea Hopper, Curator of *HERE&NOW17: New Photography*, would like to thank all of the staff of the UWA Cultural Precinct, particularly Caine Chennatt, Kate Hamersley, Clare McFarlane, Anthony Kelly, Lyle Branson and the install team of the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery for their assistance in producing this exhibition.

Thanks also goes to Stefaan Bruce-Truglio and Ryan Gibson for their assistance in the production of the 24SEVEN video; Danny Bourke for the design and production of the upcoming exhibition catalogue of *HERE&NOW17: New Photography*; Michael Power for editing; and Stuart Ringholt, Shaune Lakin, Helen Ennis, Helen Hughes, Darren Jorgensen and Peter Hopper for their ongoing support and guidance throughout this project.

This project would not be made possible without the work, patience and support from all of the artists, Jacqueline Ball, Scott Burton, Lucy Griggs, Georgia Kaw, Dan McCabe and Lydia Trethewey, who continue to keep me on my toes. Special thanks also to Ted Snell, Chief Cultural Officer at the University of Western Australia and to the Australia Council for their support.

Published by the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery at
The University of Western Australia, 2017.

All rights reserved. ISBN 978 1 876793 87 6

IMAGE CREDITS

Cover:

Dan McCabe, *-33.101547, 115.687146 (plane)*, 2017, acrylic sheeting on Alubond in custom frames, 87cm x 62cm

Inside left - right:

Jacqueline Ball, *Diving, high viz*, 2017, Inkjet print on photo rag, 108 x 72cm

Scott Burton, *Herdsmen Business Park 2*, 2017, digital print on premium art stock

Georgia Kaw, *There Must Be A Rainbow Somewhere*, 2017, digital print on paper

Lucy Griggs, *Purple Tassels - Sowerbaea laxiflora - Family Anthericaceae*, 2016, cyanotype, 26cm x 18cm

Back cover:

Lydia Trethewey, *On this Particular Day I was Happy About the Future*, 2017, solvent wash, 82 x 111.9cm



LAWRENCE WILSON ART GALLERY
OPEN TUES - SAT 11AM - 5PM
FREE ADMITTANCE
@LWAGallery

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
35 Stirling Highway, Crawley, WA, Australia 6009
P +61 (0)8 6488 3707 W lwag.uwa.edu.au
CRICOS Provider Code: 00126G



This project has been assisted by the
Australian Government through the
Australia Council

