



artCollectiveWA  
Down South

Merrick Belyea

Antony Muia

Penny Bovell

Lesley Munro

Paul Caporn

Ron Nyisztor

Penny Coss

Kevin Robertson

Jo Darbyshire

Helen Smith

Sarah Elson

Alex Spremberg

Caspar Fairhall

Angela Stewart

Chris Hopewell

Michele Theunissen

Jeremy Kirwan-Ward

Paul Uhlmann

Eveline Kotai

Trevor Vickers

Joanna Lamb

Peter Zappa

Andre Lipscombe

8 February - 7 June 2015

## artCollectiveWA Down South

This exhibition presents the work of senior and mid-career WA artists from this city based artist-run collective. The artCollectiveWA began as a response to major commercial galleries in Perth closing over a sobering twelve-month period during 2012 and 2013 leaving these artists without WA gallery representation and promotion, storage and exhibition space. The artists had to come up with a new model if they wanted to continue showing their work in WA.

With the support of Mossenson Galleries/Indigenart, the Collective took up residence in one third of the Indigenart space in Subiaco. The enterprise is set up as a not-for-profit, membership-based organisation with a current board of eight member-artists. This makes the collective artist-run with a commercial gallery focus through Felicity Johnston as Director. Members fulfil organisational responsibilities to reap the collective benefits. Their current vision is an open and inclusive one which aims to exhibit and promote senior and mid-career artists locally, nationally and internationally, and to run an ongoing series of exhibitions, residencies, publications and education programs in order to encourage discussion and support for the arts in WA. Interstate, international and emerging artists will be invited to participate in the program, adding to the depth of activities on offer.

The idea of having an exhibition down south for artCollectiveWA came out of our desire to show our appreciation of and our support for these artists and their efforts. For so many years, along with a mass of visual art lovers across the metropolitan area, we had taken for granted their self-driven production of new works and the regular exhibitions that followed with their representing galleries. We recognised the dilemma they found themselves in and we respected the initiative they'd shown.

The collective was on board when we put the proposal to them. It presented an opportunity for them to show the Collective artists together at once, room for very large works to be displayed and an interstate and international audience passing through the gallery. The exhibition would have a four month long duration which would give very good exposure.

For the gallery it presented a unique opportunity to show the works of these twenty-three artists, for the enjoyment of Vasse Felix visitors and the wider local audience. The exhibition, intense and visually stunning, stands as a tribute to the continuing presence of this particular group of artists in the West Australian visual arts scene.

**Sharon Tassicker**  
Collection and Exhibitions Manager  
**Janet Holmes à Court Collection**



**Helen Smith**

Helen Smith's practice is influenced by a formal, minimalist viewpoint with simplicity of form and geometric abstraction generally contributing to the outcome. Oil on canvas paintings, large scale wall works and a number of ongoing photographic series derived from an interest in social and cultural systems form the basis for her enquiry.



**Caspar Fairhall**

Caspar Fairhall is a visual artist whose work intersects painting, video and interactive art. As his subject matter, he often looks at the tension between our intuitions of space and time, and what we understand about the world from modern physics. This particular work was inspired by the ancient rock formations of the Pilbara region, Western Australia.



**Penny Coss**

Penny Coss's luscious style has evolved from the tradition of abstract expressionism, taking its formal elements and melding them into her own visual gestural language. There are echoes of Helen Frankenthaler; her dramatic poured works of the 1960s taking on a new form as Coss's staining and soaking of the canvas is permeated with a new interpretation of the Australian landscape. As Coss explains, "My work is about those important moments of exchange within the landscape and with the possibility of being simultaneously in there and out there". Excerpt from catalogue essay, *Out There* by Sandra Murray, Curator Bankwest August 2012



**Jeremy Kirwan-Ward**

Jeremy Kirwan-Ward has been an exhibiting painter for four decades - in that time he has had over twenty solo exhibitions and participated in a variety of prestigious group shows. *Torrent* is his most recently completed work - its scale designed to envelop the viewer and provide a physical experience, while the subdued colours within the dark forms invite a closer inspection.

Helen Smith, *Blue Highway #8*, 2014, oil and gesso on canvas, 137.1 x 213.4 cm

Jeremy Kirwan-Ward, *Torrent*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, 202 x 350 cm



**Joanna Lamb**

*Suburban House 04* is part of a series of paintings depicting the exterior of suburban houses. The image of the house is reduced and abstracted to emphasize an interest in more formal aspects of image making. The way different elements of the composition relate to one another in terms of their shape and colour are just as important as the subject matter depicted. A narrative element is introduced with the depiction of the parked car and the view into the house.

Caspar Fairhall, *Strata IV*, 2014, oil on canvas, 133.5 x 133.5 cm

Joanna Lamb, *Suburban House 04*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, 122 x 180 cm

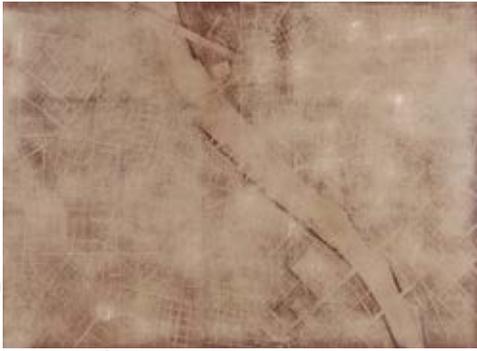


**Eveline Kotai**

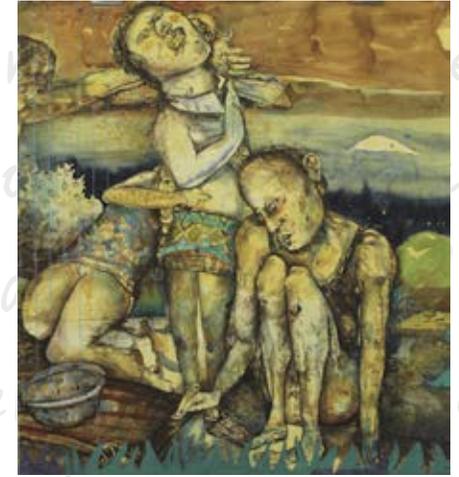
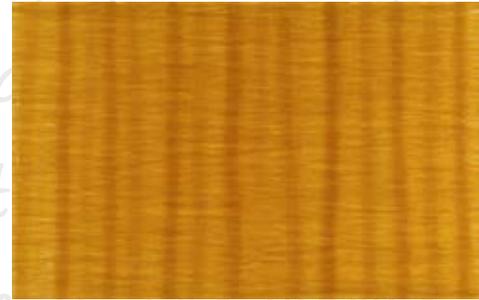
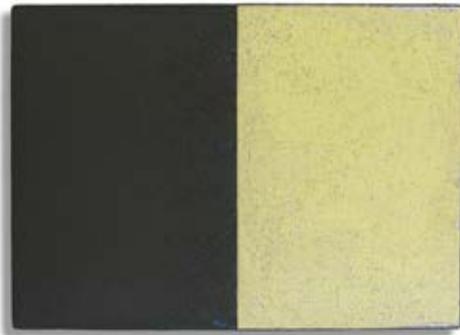
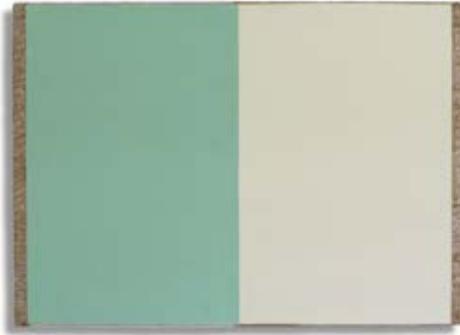
Eveline Kotai lives in Fremantle, Western Australia, and has been exhibiting regularly for 30 years. She continues to produce unexpected combinations of colour, pattern, and texture. Technical mastery and a deep sense of subject have produced strong, idiosyncratic studies. The Margaret River landscape where Kotai lived for 7 years continues to permeate her work as much as her current Fremantle surroundings and engagement with Buddhist philosophy.

Penny Coss, *Red Bloom Trespass*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, 153 x 198 cm

Eveline Kotai, *White noise*, 2014, mixed media, 80 x 240cm, (study pictured)



**Merrick Belyea**  
Merrick Belyea has been a prolific Western Australian artist over the past 20 years. For a number of years his work has focussed on the curiously human appetite for destruction. This new body of work is based on aerial photographs taken during World War II in the European and Pacific theatres of war. These paintings are part of an ongoing series of work examining the effects of trauma in an urban landscape. The titles of the paintings refer to a potential for destruction and offer a portent to future mechanical scarification of the landscape. Paring back the veneer of previously prepared paint layers reveal the detritus of process and the fragility of surface.



**Lesley Munro**  
Lesley Munro is a West Australian artist based in Fremantle. Her painting practice at times drifts into sculpture, revealing a strong interest in abstraction and experiment in the materials and processes of making. Her recent work draws upon the landscape of industrial processes as found in the crafting and repairs that occur within boat making. In *Conversations with Time* she considers similarities between these processes and the choices and experiences that create us over a lifetime: ultimately reflecting upon the possibility of restoration within endeavour.

**Andre Lipscombe**  
Andre Lipscombe is a visual artist based in Perth, whose practice is centred upon painting and drawing. He has exhibited regularly since graduating from (WAIT) Curtin University in 1983 and in his early career was a member of a Perth based group of artists committed to representation and figuration, later exhibiting as Oddfellows. Over twenty years he has conducted studio practices in Melbourne, (1990-96) and Esperance, WA (1997-2001) before currently at Artsource, Fremantle. Andre Lipscombe is represented in private and public collections in Western Australia.

**Alex Spremberg**  
*Transparency and an apparent lack of colour are the hallmark qualities of varnish. Here the paint deprived of its pigmentation can be scrutinised, observed, its every move naked and open for inspection. And yet unpredictable - each layer deposited builds its own history. Just like the growth traced from the rings of a tree, each sediment of varnish a clearly measured trace of lack and abundance - more and less.*

**Antony Muia**  
*I'm a figurative artist making work about relationships and the body. I'm interested in scenarios that explore the human aesthetic including the nude and themes surrounding 'what it is to be good' My work often addresses the mundane and illogical and depicts the human condition through sub groups, counter culture and the marginal. I'm interested in links art has with low culture and non art practices and see similarities between the painted portrait and the social media selfie.*

Merrick Belyea, *Bombing run 1*, 2014, oil on board, 120 x 150 cm

Lesley Munro, *Conversations with time*, 2014, acrylic, woodfiller and pigment on marine ply, 122 x 122 cm

Andre Lipscombe, *Outfield*, 2014, acrylic on plywood, 60 x 84 x 3 cm

Andre Lipscombe, *Lining (after CW)*, 2014, acrylic on plywood, 60 x 84 x 3 cm

Alex Spremberg, *Tilting #10*, 2002, enamel, varnish on wood, 42 x 32 x 4 cm

Alex Spremberg, *More and Less*, 2007, varnish on wood, 122 x 200 x 3 cm

Antony Muia, *Yield*, 2014, mixed media on paper, 102 x 102 cm

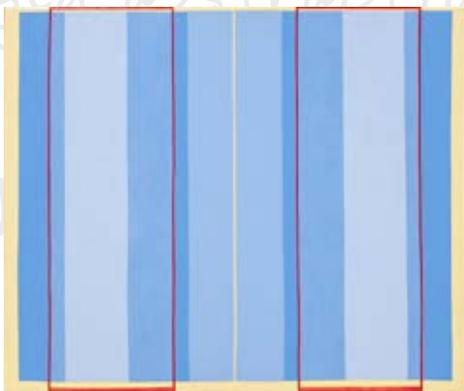
Antony Muia, *Untitled*, 2014, mixed media on paper, 115 x 78 cm



**Ron Nyisztor**

Ron Nyisztor is a mid-career Western Australian artist working with a wide range of materials and subjects; he has been exhibiting regularly since 1989. His consistent practice involves discarded building materials being used as part of the actual work and also as support grounds for paintings.

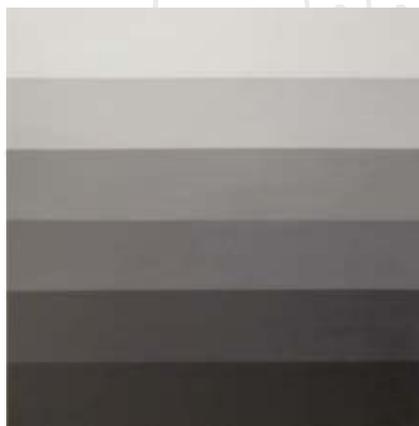
As still life subjects for paintings the found objects are incorporated into dynamic compositions. The mundane subject matter used in his work attains compelling intrigue; it communicates a sense of the metaphysical expressed through familiar and extra-ordinary means.



**Trevor Vickers**

Trevor Vickers is one of the most highly regarded artists currently working in Western Australia. He has been exhibiting for almost 50 years primarily in Melbourne and Perth. He exhibited in the 1970s at the avant-garde Pinacotheca Gallery in Melbourne alongside Australia's most significant conceptual and post-object artists. He also exhibited at the seminal 'Field' exhibition in 1968 at the reopening of the National Gallery of Victoria. Arguably the most important single exhibition in Australian art history the exhibition included young artists committed to hard-edged abstraction

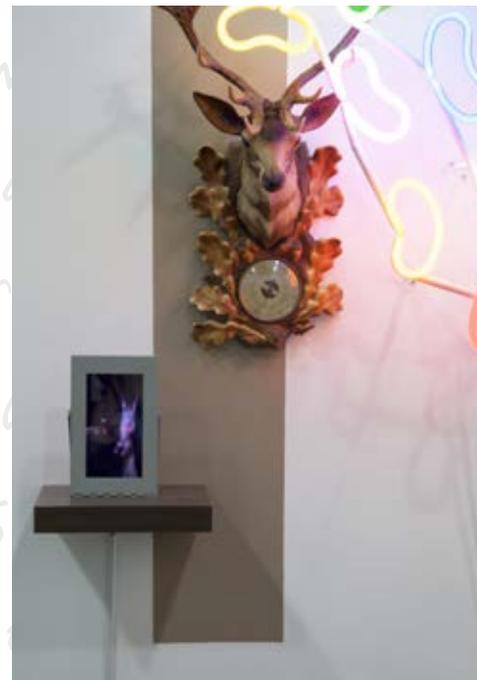
Ron Nyisztor, *Realm of Agreement*, 2014, oil on linen, 201 x 203 cm  
Trevor Vickers, *Stratton BV*, 2012, acrylic on canvas, 121.5 x 152.5 cm



**Kevin Robertson**

Kevin Robertson was born in Norseman, Western Australia in 1964. He studied painting at the Western Australian Institute of Technology, graduating with a B.A. in 1984 and was also awarded a Master of Arts from the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales in 1992. He has had nine solo exhibitions at Galerie Dusseldorf, Perth and participated in numerous group exhibitions nationally and internationally. His work is represented in many public and private collections.

Kevin Robertson, *Interior with grey scale painting*, 2014, oil on linen, 120 x 90 cm  
Kevin Robertson, *Grey scale painting 1*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 120 cm



**Paul Caporn**

Paul Caporn lives and works in Perth, Australia. He has exhibited nationally and internationally, making art primarily in the realms of sculpture, animation, video and installation. His work often engages with themes that circulate notions of industry and science. This can involve a nostalgic play, dealing with technologies in what is often a low-tech manner, describing the relationships between people, memory, time, space and places.

Paul Caporn, *Incident with a memory*, 2014, neon, resin, timber, media player, 150 x 60 x 20 cm



**Chris Hopewell**

*My painting is process orientated, applying gestured marks, tones and textures over the top of a succession of previous layers. My interest is to weave space through these dimensions to create random environments that facilitate threads in free association during the observation of the completed piece. An aesthetic I strive for in my work is that a painting continuously represents itself to the viewer with a "randomness", that is similar to that employed in the evolution of the artwork, a phenomenon ever present in the world around us.*

Chris Hopewell, *Blueprints for Blackholes and Big Bangs 1*, 2013, acrylic and epoxy on canvas, 60 x 90 cm  
Chris Hopewell, *Blueprints for Blackholes and Big Bangs 2*, 2013, acrylic and epoxy on canvas, 60 x 90 cm



**Paul Uhlmann**

*To respire is to breathe in and out – to empty and fill one's lungs. Echoes of our breathing can be seen writ large over our heads as great volumes of air move and change as airy watery clouds above. These clouds are the stuff of life itself and these shifting forms seem at times to also form images within our minds. A kind of alchemy transpires as wet oil paint is swept together through the focused activity of bodily involvement – the image finds its form through chance and deliberation. I see this process and breathing as part of the beat of my creative life which recognizes the impermanence of all things.*

Paul Uhlmann, *respire I*, 2014, oil on canvas, 200 x 100 cm

Paul Uhlmann, *respire II*, 2014, oil on canvas, 200 x 100 cm



**Jo Darbyshire**

Jo Darbyshire is an established Western Australian visual artist. She exhibits regularly in solo exhibitions and has an established and successful Public Art profile. Her abstract paintings reference the social and environmental history of places, but also aim to suggest their sensory and poetic nature. These particular paintings were inspired by a residency in Ireland. Jo tried to capture the restrained palette and glowing light of the Irish landscape.

Jo Darbyshire, *Waterville*, 2013, oil on canvas, 150 x 140 cm

Jo Darbyshire, *Ballinskelligs Bay*, 2013, oil on canvas, 84 x 112 cm



**Penny Bovell**

Recent investigations with paint involve imagining what deep space might look like. What's out there? *Other night skies #1* and *#2* propose a fanciful and playful view of space. I have relied on accidental and poured methods to create shapes that float, fall, explode and morph. I understand Cosmology to be an investigation of space beyond what we can visibly see; employing knowledge of science, spirituality, poetics, perhaps even science fiction to reflect on how we belong in the world.

Penny Bovell, *Other night skies #1*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 120 cm

Penny Bovell, *Other night skies #2*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 120 cm



**Angela Stewart**

Angela Stewart is a visual artist whose practice includes Portraiture and Renaissance painting. Her recent body of work examines the detail in costume and landscape that may surround a historical portrait. Placed out of context these oval and circular works suggest to be 'detail' of a painting yet to be made or discovered. They combine delicately painted portrait fragments and sumptuous floral and lace motifs with stencilled acrylic and layered oil paint.



**Michele Theunissen**

*Using a system as a starting point, I work with it and away from it, in order to find something else, in order to surprise myself. Marks, lines, are built slowly, numbing the controlling mind which struggles prematurely to name an inchoate and evasive surface. Slowly in the interplay of materials, hand and mark, recognition occurs. A presence emerges. Unexpectedly not a translation of the experience at all, but a field of engagement with pigments and space. From nothing to something, and from something to nothing. The presence of the painting feels complete, a whole entity, but paradoxically elusive in its naming.*

Angela Stewart, *Poesis #12*, 2014, oil and acrylic on board, 75 cm

Michele Theunissen, *Ways to nothing #5*, 2014, pigment, acrylic, artists' ink, 152 x 137 cm



**Sarah Elson**

The body of work *Phalaenopsis therapy* plays homage to Rene Mackintosh designs and the recent fire that destroyed his work in the library at Glasgow School of Art. It consists of an installation of several cast orchids in varying states of flowering with each stem of the orchid forming a wearable pin. Elson uses re-claimed metal to re-flesh plants and found matter into intimate sculptural forms and her works are often made up of individual parts that can be worn as jewellery or pinned into a surface.



**Peter Zappa**

*My artworks explore the aesthetics of drawing. In recent years, I have used sculpture as the medium to create three dimensional drawings or 'drawings in space'. In transposing a drawing from paper into a metal sculpture, the work defies definitions as the object that is seen by the viewer will depend on where you view the work.*  
*My current work explores mark making using pencils. The dissection of mark making reveals an unseen aesthetic that deconstructs the mark maker into colour, texture, shape and dynamic forms.*

Sarah Elson, *Phalaenopsis therapy*, 2014, reclaimed silver, copper and gold alloys in perspex, 250 x 150 x 180 cm, (multi-piece installation)

Peter Zappa, *The Mount*, 2014, hand worked and welded stainless steel, 106 x 80 x 20 cm

Artists' CVs may be viewed in full at [www.artcollectivewa.com.au](http://www.artcollectivewa.com.au)

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