

side gate presents

TOUGH AND TENDER

7 March 2020

porous identities / pliable bodies / tough shells / tender edges



Carla Adams (WA) ~ Thomas Blatchford ~ Leonie Brialey
John Brooks ~ Jess Cockerill ~ Lill Colgan (WA/NSW)
Anna Dunnill ~ Hannah Gartside ~ kg [Karolina Gnatowski] (USA)
Kate Just ~ Grace McArthur ~ Danni McGrath
Sean Miles (Ngāti Raukawa) ~ Laura Mitchell ~ Zamara Zamara
Athena Thebus (NSW) ~ Bras Tree ~ Paul Yore

curated by Anna Dunnill

LIST OF WORKS



Garden

Athena Thebus, *Angry Angels*, 2015
printed vinyl banner

John Brooks, *Foetal scorpions gaining their powers*, 2019
concrete, foam, faux fur, life detritus, wire, wood, rocks (various), paper, pearl, latex

Grace McArthur, *SHARK*, 2017
upholstery fabric, ceramic teeth, blood, 5'8" (artist's height)

Laura Mitchell, *Nesting Instinct*, 2020
cotton thread, aida cloth, plastic shards, bird's nest

Nesting Instinct embodies Laura Mitchell's attempts to find a safe place to rest the grief of their mother's death in a motorbike accident. Shards of the motorbike's headlights are bound in cotton inherited from the artist's grandmother. Audience members are invited to assist the artist in binding these plastic shards. The resulting objects are placed to rest in the nest of a pardalote, a small bird native to Wurundjeri country, and a nest of an unknown bird. Alongside this, a cross stitch kit belonging to the artist's mother has been completed and corrupted—it depicts a blue wren, native to the stolen Noongar Pinjarup land on which Laura's mother lived and died. The work grapples with themes of legacy, loss, and longing for softness.

Leonie Brialey, *Love is... shirts*, 2019
screen printed t-shirts

Danni McGrath, *Opening Night Nails*, 2015-ongoing
participatory nail-painting performance

The Thomas Ferguson Band, *Tough + Tender Sounds*, 2020
performance

Despite being framed in this instance as performance art, The Thomas Ferguson Band aims to obliterate the concept that 'disc jockeying' needs to be an artform, requiring technical proficiency and flashy equipment, in an attempt to restore its sense of intimacy and instinct. Having been part of a cassette-swapping community during their formative years, where mixtapes were compiled with a sole receiver specifically in mind, The Thomas Ferguson Band finds the notion of today's playlists being created through automatic online data collection - and hence treated as a kind of problem-solving calculation - as cold at best, and dehumanising at worst. Picking records from a mostly second-hand vinyl collection and playing them on a single cheap turntable in a houseshare environment both elevates and reduces 'party music' selection to an act of improvised tenderness.

Living Room

Kate Just, *Postscript: A Burial Suit*, 2013
digital Type-C Print on Dibond aluminium, 200 x 76 x 1 cm

Hannah Gartside, *Ascension III (Peach, pink, lemon yellow)*, 2019
found synthetic nightgowns, silver-plated chain and jump rings, wood, paint, wire

Zamara Zamara, *peace:up yours*, 2019
glazed stoneware

Lill Colgan, *There Are Times When I Look Above And Beyond*, 2016
torn king-size fitted sheet, torn queen-size fitted sheet and adhesive

Lill Colgan, *King-Single / Expanded Queen*, 2016
two-channel audio (4:24 min looped)

Dining Room

Danni McGrath, *Dogs manifesto*, 2016
screen print on silk

Bras Tree, *once a desire is birthed it is meant to be yours*, 2020
handspun yarn (merino dyed with madder root and marigold flowers, tussah silk, black lambs wool, carding waste, naturally dyed cotton/linen/silk/wool scraps from past projects)
a journey of rebirth cycles , disillusion as ritual act of re-remembering discarded/
rejected aspects of self , to reveal the self to the self , be-longing to self , in embracing
transformation of the vessel/body the essence of being is metamorphosed , we find
ourselves in the simultaneous joy and grief of the overlap

Hallway

Carla Adams, *Decoration*, 2019–2020
mylar, yarn, acrylic, glass, pearls and shells

Decoration is a tribute to my identity as a very femme queer woman. Often overlooked
and erased, I want to stand proud in my shiny, glittery, pink glory.

kg, *Tiny Weaving*, 2014
woolen swirls with two dime bags from my Father's medicine cabinet

Anna Dunnill, *All things gathered up* #3, 2019
tapestry woven with silk, cotton and handspun merino wool; plant dyes (soursob
flowers, avocado pits, brown onion skins, red onion skins, mint, eucalyptus leaves
and bark, mulberries, dandelion flowers and greens, Australian indigo, purple
potato skins)

Bathroom

Jess Cockerill, *LCL*, 2020

serving shells, expanding foam, chrome paint, glow-in-the-dark 3D paint, Cuddly fabric softener, silicone beads, dried parsley flowers, dandelion seeds, temporary glitter tattoos, diamantes, plastic gems, SNS ombre nails, scorpion nail charms, own fingernails, own hair (twined by Anna), haberdashery, chain, Easter shred, marine novelty erasers

Sean Miles, *Ngā Mata o te Ariki*, 2020
performance

Jess's Room (on left)

Paul Yore, *Art is Theft*, 2016

mixed media textile, beads, sequins, buttons, marker, fringing, cotton thread

Jess Cockerill, *Fading away*, 2019

two-colour screen print on satin, haberdashery, rhinestones, embroidery thread, collage; printed by Danni McGrath

Jess Cockerill, *Binge*, 2019

two-colour screen print on satin; printed by Danni McGrath

Anna & Danni's Room (on right)

Zamara Zamara, *REBELLION STOLES: ode to the Gorgons*, 2019

digital print transfer, fabric, thread

Zamara Zamara, *Cross*, 2018

glazed stoneware

Zamara is a sculpturally grounded artist invested in installation and performativity through textile/tactile materials. Their practice deals in the re-appropriation of restrictive devices imbued with traditional notions of power to 'queer' patriarchal and colonist histories and devices, thus debasing their normativity, transforming them into articles of rebellion. Meddling with religious/mythological iconographies and culturally developed instructional/directive devices to deconstruct how we consider and use bodies socially and politically, Zamara's latest series of works pursues the fabrication of queered iconography and propaganda, through which alternate histories and futures may be performed and embodied.

shells are some kind of home, some kind of body. when the snail secretes protein this binds to the ocean's calcium, forming a hard mineral layer on their mantle. but they are not made of cells, and do not hold the snail's DNA.

the snail's shell delineates interior and exterior. and yet, the shell is made by unifying both worlds. it gives protection to the mollusc, but traps them, too. the narrow point of a conical shell was once the infant snail's entire armour. the snail incorporates these old layers into their new shell continuously. a snail is always running from their own shell, their former iterations: the only way to grow, is out.

i can't stop biting my nails, and i think it's a way of checking i'm still here. creating a feedback loop with my own body, like pinching yourself in a dream. it's grounding. you see your hands in almost every waking moment, they are the frames of your vision. the primary location of the self may be the head, but i think the self is also very much in the hands. we talk with our hands, eat with our hands, hurt with our hands, fuck with our hands. unlike shells, fingernails do contain cells, and DNA. once, we would've called them claws. they were our armour. but mine are blunt and bitten. they peel off if i let them grow too long.

my mother does not want to get into the water because it's so cold, so instead she stands on the beach, waving her arms at me. i won't get out. my fingertips are puckered, my body is losing the fight to stay warm. 'we're going to leave without you if you won't come in,' she threatens, as always. i duck my head under again, foetal position, and breathe out. i relax my muscles against instinct, become more similar to the sea, let go of all air. my body hangs between two lines: horizon and seafloor. the only thing i hear is the strange clicking of seasound. one day i realise this is actually millions of shells being ground, piece by piece, into sand.

we're afraid of losing our edges, letting everything and anything in. losing our self in the onslaught. bleeding out. we're afraid of being alone, too. getting all locked up. falling off the deep end into our own navels, our own fingernails. i don't know the balance, except maybe that whole semi-permeable membrane thing our cells have going.

have you seen that weird scene from neon genesis evangelion, where everything falls apart? you should look up 'nge freedom scene' on youtube. imagine a cartoon without that line, that makes the ground. we like the ground. draw the line.

but now, you've lost one aspect of your freedom. you must stand on the ground.

without the monstrous ocean, the snail cannot form its shell. without the snail, the ocean has no sand. they draw each other's line, together. calcium and protein.

Jess Cockerill

TOUGH/TENDER TAPE

(compiled just for you by The Thomas Ferguson Band)

Tough Side

Chemical Restraint - Can't Slow Down
The Colli Crew - For My People
Face Face - Good Fight
Sister Nancy - Ain't No Stopping Nancy
No/Trauma - Six Foot Flawless
Special Interest - Don't Kiss Me In Public
Paula Temple - Gegen
Otoboke Beaver - Dirty Old Fart Is Waiting For My Reaction
Banish - Simple Animal
Divide & Dissolve - Prove It

Tender Side

Fridge - Cut Up Piano & Xylophone
Yelle - Tristesse / Joie
Mega Emotion - Laura
Pillow Pro - Sex Appeal
Girls On Top - Romance V.3
Ebony Steel Band - Neon Lights
Bruising - Emo Friends
American Standard - My Bathroom
Alice Skye - I Feel Better But I Don't Feel Good
Neko Case & Her Boyfriends - Twist The Knife

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

9 0 Garden

Halloween in January, 2020, plastic skeletons, felt, leather (front garden)

Pumpkins, 2019–ongoing. Our first crop of pumpkins.

Fig Tree, date unknown–ongoing. When we moved in this was literally a bare stump but now look.

Hollyhocks, 2019–ongoing, the laciest friends.

9 0 Bungalow (Leonie's Room)

John Porcellino, *Root Hog or Die Print*, 2014

Archie Dimas, *Walking Man*, 2017

Billie Justice Thompson, *Gold Glitter*, 2015

Jonah Welch, *Coast of Maine*, 2019

Leonie Brialey, *Horse Drawings*, 2017

Leonie Brialey, *Tasmanian Myrtle*, 2015

Peter Cole, *Working hard or hardly working bowl*, 2019

Leonie Brialey, *Bowl with hand holding heart in it*, 2017

Archie Dimas, *Stone Man*, 2018

Rock Collection:

Rock that looks like an egg (gifted by Alex Griffin)

Rock that looks like a mountain (upright)

Rock that look like a mountain (laying down)

Ugly Beautiful Rock

Nout Papyrus, Graphic Design for Sky Goddess Nout, found at Vinnies, 2019

John Porcellino, Screen print, 2011

Chris Hudson, *My New Fighting Technique Is Unstoppable*, 2006

Matthew Winstanley, *Fruit Bowl*, 2018

Finn Williams, *Picture the horse you see when you hear the word horse*, 2019

Decorated Jug, bought by Leonie at op shop in Fremantle

9 0 Living Room

Phil, *Good Luck Charm / Masterpiece*, 2020, Hama beads.

Jenny Holzer, *All Things are Delicately Interconnected*, wooden postcard

John Brooks, *Forms of Protection (Holding Space)*, woven vessel

Jess Tan, work from *House Pets*, 2016, poodle fur, concrete, thread, plastic gems

M Harwood, title unknown, 2012, acrylic, thread, aluminium on board

Grace McArthur, *Jessica : FUCK THE CHURCH series*, 2018, glazed stoneware

9 0 Dining Room

Glenn Barkley, two objects from *yetmorecontemporaryart*, 2017, Artspace, Sydney, glazed ceramic.

(Danni and Anna arrived to see this show but we got the dates wrong and Glenn was deinstalling it. We had never met him before. He told us to choose one of the objects each and described the top one as 'Mr Whippy doing a poo'. He also demonstrated this action.)

Oliver Garlick, *Object for watering*, 2016, ceramic, dowel and string.

Iain Dean, *Pot*, 2015, glazed stoneware

Barnacle Flower Jug, bought from Vinnies because the handle broke off when picked up in store.

Danni McGrath, *Leather Jacket Vase*, 2015, glazed stoneware

Danni McGrath, *Soccer Bowl and Basket Bowl*, 2015, glazed stoneware

Sheridan Hart, two works from *Wilderness User*, 2015

Hayley Bracknell, *Pelicans*, 2017, glazed ceramic.

(This family of pelicans hail from Mandurah. Jess bought them on a journalism mission, becoming an official Patron Of The Arts.)

Dog Shrine

Various dog ornaments, some made by Leonie

James Cooper, *Dog*, 2016, graphite and acrylic on board.

Elizabeth Marruffo, *Amethyst Pup*, oil on panel

(Danni won this in an instagram competition. Amethyst is also her birthstone.)

Anna Haifisch, *Dog roundel poster*, 2019

9 0 Jess's Room (on left)

Glom Press, *Piss Tarot*, c. 2018, risograph prints

Aaron Billings, *We pulled you out of the sea / Overwhelmed we had to tell you prisons run for profits*, 2018. Print.

Meng Tsung Lee, *Everyone's dick*, 2018. Pen and pencil on paper.

Brunswick Police Officer, *Photographic evidence #2*, 2019. Inkjet print on office paper.

After a small altercation the police were kind enough to send Jess some photos of this illegal artwork.

Pink boxing gloves, date unknown.

Found at the very back of the Footscray Savers.

9 0 Anna & Danni's room (on right)

Postcard from Lily (from her grandmother Toyo's collection)

Postcard from Melissa

Danni McGrath, mastheads postcard from News Xpress performance, 2018, four colour screen print

Danni McGrath, *birthday objects for Anna*, 2017, watercolour

Danni McGrath, *Camp Doogs 2019 patch*, screen print on calico

Community Research Action Centre / ALGA postcard, *Homosexuality: Be In it*

Ele Jenkins, *A History of Brunswick (if it all happened at once)*, 2018, risograph print



Side Gate is a space for experiments, community and backyard hangs. It's located in the home of Anna Dunnill, Danni McGrath, Jess Cockerill, Leonie Brialey, and Triceratops.

Catalogue illustrations by Leonie Brialey.
Cover screen printed by Danni McGrath.



We acknowledge that we live and work on country that belongs to the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation, whose sovereignty remains unceded.

We recognise and honour the long history of art, culture and deep knowledge that is intimately connected to this place: its cycles and rhythms, its plants, animals and waterways, its dances and songs.

We hold this knowledge in the highest esteem. As occupiers, we strive to live respectfully and in a spirit of collaboration with this place.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.