



Domain

ANU SCHOOL OF ART 2007



CLEM BAKER-FINCH

BEAM

RACHEL BOWAK

SARA FREEMAN

MICHAL GLIKSON

JAY KOCHER

JANET MEANEY

JULIE RYDER

SHARNIE SHIELD

SAMANTHA SMALL

PETER VANDERMARK

Domain

ANU SCHOOL OF ART

2007

A TEMPORARY PUBLIC ART PROJECT
IN THE STREETS OF **CANBERRA**

ALINGA STREET
CANBERRA CITY

1ST TO 17TH NOVEMBER 2007

opened by

David Broker

Director Canberra Contemporary Art Space



THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY



Introduction

Domain is a temporary Public art project funded by the ACT Government's Community Outreach Program and managed by the ANU School of Art.

The aim of Domain is to bring art out of the art school, particularly the art school gallery and place it in to the public arena.

2007 was the 7th domain and this year, and as in 2006 it was held in the new arts precinct in Alinga Street, Canberra City. Eleven artists were selected through application to respond to this area of the city. The works ranged from direct, site specific responses to the Alinga Street site, to projections, painting and sculpture.

Domain enables everyone but particularly members of the general public to see art in a different way, to come across art in their everyday lives and to view specific familiar areas in a different way.

The exhibition remained in place for 17 days and then it completely disappeared and all the sites were returned back to how they looked before the exhibition. Nothing remains of the works except the memories and this catalogue. This catalogue is the proof of Domian 2007.





Public Art is Public Property

Public art helps to create a city and unify communities. Good public art changes our perception of places, energise our public spaces, arouses thinking and transforms our communities. Public art helps define an entire community's identity and reveals the unique character of specific areas where the art is placed. Temporary public art, of course can only transform an area temporarily. Although the memory of the work in a particular area will live on. Beyond its enriching personal benefits public art is also a symbol of a city's maturity - increasing community assets and expressing a community's sense of identity and self esteem.

"While the forms our public places take tell us about our values as a community, it is the finer details of these places that engage us at a deeper level, making us feel these places are genuinely ours. "¹

Public art is public property. It is owned by its community. And this is what makes it simultaneously more accessible yet more vulnerable than other art.

Public art is created by an artist to be specifically sited, either temporarily or permanently in a public place. Galleries generally act as safe houses for art. Decisions about the placement, inclusion and the intentions of the work are read within the gallery context. The work is also protected physically by the gallery walls. However all this changes when work comes out in the public domain. Cities are owned by the people who live in them, who work in them, who grow up in them, who love them. Cities belong to their people. So bringing art out into the open throws open and breaks down structures that usually exist around the viewing of art.

Public art should reflect and reveal a society and add valuable meaning to a city. This has been recognised by the current government in Canberra who as well as funding this project, have recently published a public art policy for the Australian Capital Territory and are actively encouraging public art in Canberra.

Good public art doesn't always have to please everyone. In a healthy community all art cannot appeal to all people, nor should it be expected to do so. Art is designed to attract attention and public art in particular needs to be sited to be seen. Varied popular opinion is inevitable and it is a healthy community that brings a variety of opinions on what constitutes good public art.

Making art for the public arena however demands of the artist the same vigour and intensity of any other art making process. In fact the visual distractions around the placement of public art can often demand more of an artist.

Public art projects work as interactive community processes in another way by often involving people not usually connected with art administration. In this it is an inclusive process. This is certainly the case with Domain with many government agencies and businesses being involved.

Public art becomes part of a public history of a place, part of its evolving culture and part of its collective memory. As artists respond to our times, they reflect their inner vision to the outside world. As a society and its mode of expression evolves so does our definition of public art. Materials, conceptual ideas and methods change to reflect contemporary culture that combines with artistic integrity, creativity and skill.

Domain is a temporary public art project that is held in Canberra each year. A panel of art professionals selects it and for two weeks art is brought out of the art school and into the Canberra community. For the last two years the same site in Alinga Street West has been used. This is close to the arts precinct that has been designated by the present ACT Government.

In selecting Domain the panel looks for a variety of responses to a specific public area. In 2007 10 individual artists and one art group BEAM were selected. In selecting the works, the panel were asked to bring their own individual responses to the selection. Overall, however the panel selected the best responses to the site using space, site specificity and originality.

Clem Baker- Finch's *Vigil* again used humour, with coconut heads that electronically tracked people passing in the street. The heads quietly observed from behind the glass window as the business world hurried from one repetitive task to the next. While for Baker- Finch the work was more about the ability of a computer program to track human movement, it was easy to see these silent mundane coconut heads as observing a society's inability to slow down and take stock of ourselves and our lives. Like Bowak's work this work while seemingly funny was in fact making a serious reflection on our society.

BEAM is a group of individual artists who come together to work with light manipulation through projections in a public space. The artists however, all use different ways to make their work. In Domain 2007, BEAM projected on two sides of the Post Office Clock tower and each night presented a different selection of work. Unlike the other works in Domain, Beam's work arrived unannounced on the skyline after dusk. The silent projections lasted for two hours and then disappeared, only to reappear another night.

Rachel Bowak made a site within the larger site, by transporting a ready-made container to Alinga Street. Each day the container was opened in a performative way to reveal a coffin like construction made from an old discarded fridge. While on the surface this was a humorous piece, with the general public being invited to practise for the life hereafter, by laying in a coffin, Bowak's work had a serious side and strong personal reference, questioning western society's inability to deal with death and dying.

Sara Freeman also made a work that encouraged public interaction. Freeman painted a decorative painting using fragrant stains on an otherwise bland concrete wall in the street. Freeman's work encouraged the public to interact in an unusual way in the city- by smelling a wall. The colour and smell of the work also referenced the many Asian restaurants in the area.

Michal Glikson's also made a site specific work on one of the poles outside the Health building. She used a delicate light hand to make a colourful work that referred to consumerism and small businesses in an area of Canberra where there are many small businesses.

Jay Kochel also responded to the role of the city not only siting his work on top of one of Canberra's major communications cables, but also making a Pod form that referred to a huge telecommunication receiver or maybe it was an over grown loud speaker. Kochel's work looked very strong and robust but was in fact made from cardboard that could easily be broken apart - much like most communication networks.

Janet Meaney reiterated many of the ideas of the other artists in her performative works titled *Perpetual Ordinance*. Meaney herself interacted with the banal streetscape performing on five different days, as different forms of concrete walls and pavers. In one performance Meaney simply lay herself down as a paver. Again bringing humour to the work she was making serious comments on our concrete jungle cities that are striped of life and alienating to humans.

Both **Sharnie Shield** and **Julie Ryder** responded to the idea of Canberra as a garden city. Ryder's work *Morphogenesis*, on the Alinga Street bus shelter resulted from a morphing process using at its base microphotographs of sections of Canberra plant life. Ryder used computer technology to morph these with other images to create new life forms that were adhered to the bus shelter windows.

Sharnie Shield's work on the other side of the road referenced Canberra's history as a planned city and specifically Marion Mahony Griffin's landscape and lighting designs for Canberra. Shield work made a new geometric space frame garden that wove itself into the already established Alinga Street Gardens. As daylight reflected off the metal constructions, the work simulated visual motion bobbing in and out of the older garden.

Samantha Small responded to the rarely used concrete constructed overpass in Alinga Street. Small's work *Ceremony*, breaking the bleakness and blandness in the street laid a red carpet on the steps of the overpass to nothing - to no one. At the top of the red carpet was a curtain placed to be viewed from the street. If you walked Small's red carpet you ended up at the locked door of the Canberra Club. Behind her curtain was nothing. Canberra is often thought of as a closed community where it is easy to be locked out and it is often said of Canberra that it is simply an artificial showpiece for the nation. Small's work was about artifice. A beautiful new carpet, a rich velvet curtain but both lead us to nowhere.

Peter Vandemark also used humour and the ready made by using a large electronic street sign that displayed anagrams of the word Alinga Street. The board was placed, not on the road, but the walkway and flashed different messages every 30 seconds. The work was user interactive by encouraging the public to work out the code that linked the messages. It also encouraged people to challenge themselves to think of more anagrams.

Domain 2007 embraced the notion of the meaning and intention of good public art. Each of the artists responded to Alinga Street in a particular way using as a basis their own conceptual interests. Taken together the works in Domain 2007 reflected and revealed our society and added valuable meaning to this city in 2007.

Cathy Laudenbach
Coordinator Domain 2007

Vigil consists of five computer controlled coconut shell 'heads' standing at eye level on polished steel poles. The heads are programmed to turn to watch and track pedestrians as they pass by. Careful observers may notice different personalities among the coconuts: perhaps one is more easily distracted; another's response is less frantic. Rationally, we see the artifice: we recognise these things as the inanimate constructions they are, and we see the technology driving them. At the same time we quite naturally suspend disbelief, to knowingly engage in the deception that animates these characters.

Clem Baker-Finch

Clem Baker- Finch is currently a candidate for a Master of Philosophy at the ANU School of Art. He graduated from the University of Tasmania in 1985 with a PhD in Computer Science and is currently employed as a lecturer in the ANU Computer Science Department.

In 2007 he was selected as one of 20 Australian and international participants into a three week intensive programme RESkin Wearable Technology Lab organised by Craft Australia and the Australian Network for Art and Technology. He also exhibited work in Domain 2005.





Trespass

Beam is an artist collective, whose works find a temporary home on the walls of buildings and other public structures. Beam members use both traditional art practices such as drawing and photography together with computer graphics, animation and video. The resulting work is given final form via projection. The artists are only constrained by the site in which projections take place and the content of their work. Access to sites can sometimes be tricky requiring permission from the relevant stakeholders as well as access to power, but thankfully there is no law against projecting images in public space – not yet at any rate. The content of work may be influenced by the site and generally encompasses a range of aesthetic and political concerns.

So why do it? Krzysztof Wodiczko, a Polish artist, who pioneered the use of projected images in the early 1980's, believes that public space is an arena in which no single authority reigns and multiple voices can be heard. Artists can use projections to reclaim public space, albeit temporarily while at the same time attempting to reach an alternative audience to the usual gallery or museum-goer. Projections like other street art – graffiti, stencils, posters, stickers, and performance – are transitory. Projections leave no mark except perhaps in the memory of passers by. As street art they urge citizens to interpret, challenge and lay claim to the city and its institutions rather than to submit quietly, often unwillingly to their authority.

How does this work? By projecting images on to buildings one can question the public image these buildings are designed to project. Simply using the building as a screen contrasts the ephemeral nature of projected imagery with the monolithic form of the built environment. If urban space represents the power of the state, its corporations and the anonymity of its subjects then public projections serve to remind us that none of these things are fixed in stone.

BEAM

BEAM exhibited together initially in 2003 in conjunction with the Canberra based conference for Art and Human Rights. In 2004 they participated in the ANU School of Art Print Symposium and were included in 24/7 Dwell in 2005 projecting onto the walls of the High Court in Canberra. BEAM also participated in Domain 2006 and will participate in the National Photographic Exhibition Vivid in 2008.



Benjamin Forster, T.J. Phillipson, Liang Xia Luscombe, Jessica Herrington, Peter Jordan, Ivo Lovric, John Pratt, Rose Montebello, Lucy Quinn, Patsy Payne



MACQUARIE



MACQUARIE

Rachel Bowak

Container

The work consists of a standard shipping container with a domestic interior. A refrigerator lays on its back with the door open on black and white lino floor. The interior of the fridge has been remodelled as a coffin interior with spearmint satin then covered in clear protective plastic. The concept looks at mortality and consumer culture. This installation is humorous and interactive.

Rachel Bowak graduated from the ANU School of Art in 2001 with a Master of Visual Arts after completing a Bachelor of Arts(Visual) in 1994. She has held five solo exhibitions since 1994 and participated in numerous group exhibitions. She has received numerous public and private commissions and has also received numerous grants and awards for her work including a 2006 artsACT grant and the 2003 CAPO Sculpture Prize.





Wall Painting

A painted wall using rice paste and turmeric to build up a glowing yellow then over painted with cardamom and red pigment. The wall had a slight fragrance of otherness.

Sara Freeman

Sara Freeman graduated from the ANU School of Art in 2006 with a BA (Visual) Honours. She has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions including the Churchie Emerging Art Prize in Brisbane in 2007 and was also the printmaker in residence at Megalo Access Arts in 2007. She is currently completing a residency in Holdenstein, Switzerland.





Michal Glikson

I am interested in the contradictions that afflict capitalist society.

Recently shopkeepers on Alinga St expressed distress over the expansion of the Civic Center and that they are doing it tough due to lessened flows of shoppers in the precinct. In the work vines I have sought to visualise my contemplation of the ambivalent position occupied by the petit bourgeoisie whereby competition to “catch” the shopper is a dehumanizing battle between themselves and greater economic powers in this capitalist society. Using found materials and copper wire I have used the metaphoric idea of the carnivorous flowering vine to weave a work that ponders this local example.

Michal Glikson graduated in 2007 with a Bachelor of Visual Art (Honours) from the ANU School of Art and in 1991 from the University of Western Sydney with a Bachelor of Arts (Performing Arts). She received the Academy of Interactive Entertainment Animation Studies Scholarship in 2007 and has participated in numerous group exhibitions including *Witnessing to Silence* at the ANU School of Art Gallery in 2003 and the Amnesty International - Human Rights Week Exhibition at the Front Gallery Canberra in 2006.





A descended form sits astride the main avenue of the capital, ambiguous and forboding, evoking the familiar with a seemingly ubiquitous design, yet unsettling with its innate foreignness.

Constructed from a seemingly robust exterior of cardboard and bitumen, this tarred lander activates the public imagination towards a fear of surveillance and the presence of the unfamiliar.



Jay Kochel

Jay Kochel graduated from the ANU in 2002 with a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours) and in 1996 with a Bachelor of Law/ Arts (Anthropology). His work was exhibited in *Lingoplasty* in 2005 in a solo exhibition at the Canberra Contemporary Art Space and *Lingoplasty – replay* at the ANCA Gallery . He has participated in numerous group exhibitions in Canberra and was graduate in residence in the Sculpture Workshop of the ANU School of Art in 2005. He has received numerous awards including an ANU Honours Scholarship.



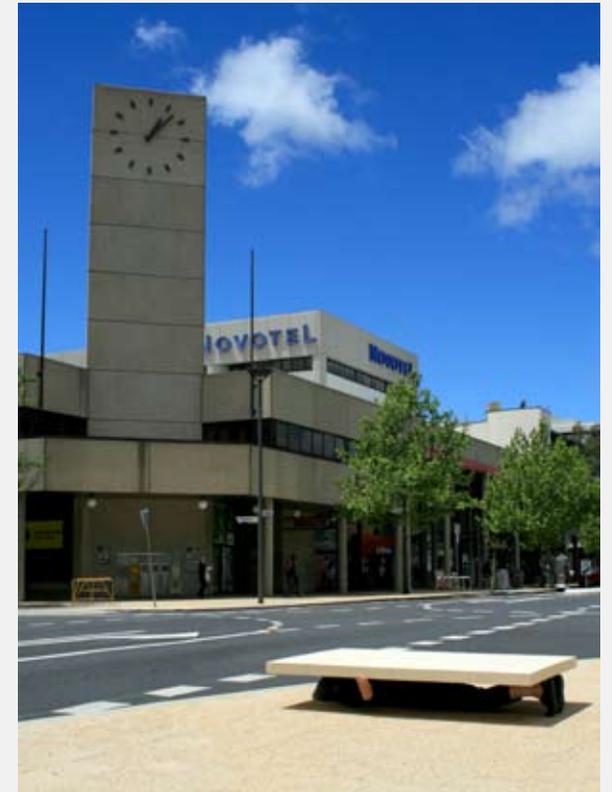
Janet Meaney

Perceptual Ordonnance

Perceptual Ordonnance is the general arrangement of architectural elements from a human perspective. It is a series of 5 performances in which I portray myself as a piece of cement attempting to integrate into and align with the built environment: Through this futile attempt I am also alluding to the various roles one assumes in attempting to assimilate into mainstream society.

My performances address the human experience and evoke emotional responses that challenge the audience perception of the norm.

Janet Meaney is currently a candidate for a PhD at the ANU School of Art. She previously graduated from the Australian National University with a Graduate Diploma in Art History and Curatorship. She has received numerous grants for her work including artsACT funding in 2000. Recently her performance work has been seen at the ANU School of Art, Canberra Contemporary Art Space and at the opening of the Exchange Area in Canberra City in 2007. She also participated in Domain 2006.





Julie Ryder

Morphogenesis

Morphogenesis is a series of images that have been created in response to our growing awareness of, and fears about, genetically modified and engineered organisms. Photomicrographs taken with the Scanning Electron Microscope have been fused with other images taken by digital photography and then manipulated through computer software. By morphing these disparate elements together, I create my own cloned species, which seem fantastic but could in fact be the phylogenies of the future. Specifically this work is a comment about transgenesis, the insertion of the genes of one species (i.e. deep sea flounder) into another (eg strawberries or tomatoes) in order to render the plants immune to very low temperatures.

Julie Ryder completed a Master of Arts (Visual Arts) at ANU School of Art in 2004 after a career in science. In 2005 she was the recipient of an ANAT Synapse Award to become the inaugural Artist in Residence at the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra. She has held 10 solo exhibitions and over 80 group exhibitions. She received an Australia Council New Work Grant for Established artists in 2006, and has also received several grants from artsACT and CAPO.





Geo-C Garden

This work is a geometric space frame garden simulating visual motion through the construction of perspectival space and moire geometry in 3-dimensional drawing. The work references Marion Mahony Griffin's landscape and lighting designs. The space frame is erected above and between garden shrubbery and is constructed from 72 modules that utilise the triangulated geometric motifs by Marion Mahony Griffin, fused with hypothetical 4-dimensional geometry.

Sharnie Shield graduated from the ANU School of Art with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Visual) Honours in 2001 and is currently a candidate for a Master of Fine Art (Research) at the College of Fine Arts at the University of NSW. She has exhibited in numerous exhibitions since 2001 including *x2 kinetoscape* at West Space in Melbourne in 2004 and *Kinetoscape* at ARTSPACE in Sydney in 2002. In 2003 Sharnie received a Visual Arts Craft Board New Work Grant and in 2004-2005 a University of New South Wales Post Graduate Award.





Leading up to the once exclusive Canberra Club, the stairwell adjoining the overpass on Alinga St has more recently become a sanctuary for smokers and junkies seeking shelter from public view. The VIPs long gone, the unexpected formality of *Ceremony* creates a sense of ritual and anticipation designed to last 21 days.

The installation of red carpet and drapes creates a strong contrast to the deteriorating architecture of the neglected site. The brutality of concrete and steel is hardly disguised by the soft fabrics, but the introduction of these theatrical elements invite the public to imagine the extraordinary as they perform their own daily rituals.

Samantha Small graduated with a Master of Art (Fine Art) from Goldsmith's College London on 2004 and a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours) from the University of South Australia in 1997. Samantha has held seven solo exhibitions since 2001 including the Waiting Room at the Canberra Contemporary Art Space and the Centre for Contemporary Photography Melbourne in 2007 and exhibited in numerous group exhibitions including New York Calling at the Australian Studio PSI Contemporary Art Centre New York. Samantha has received numerous awards and prizes including an Anne and Gordon Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarship in 2003 and recently an Australia Council New Work Grant in 2007.





Steeped in the tradition of the readymade with an absurdist twist, VMB07 is a hybrid resulting from the blending of two current sculptural approaches: collapsed 'word' sculptures fabricated from second hand and disused signage and 'bunkers' that are informed by my interest in industrial / minimal forms.

A road sign illuminated with anagrams of 'Alinga Street'.

Some of the serendipitous outcomes used are:

LETTERS AGAIN
ELEGANT STAIR
SEATING ALERT
STARE AT NIGEL

Others more obscure:

ALIEN GETS ART
REALIST AGENT
RAGE IS TALENT
ANGER IT LEAST
IS ART ELEGANT

Peter Vandemark graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Visual) from the ANU School of Art in 1989.

He has exhibited continually since 1990 in both solo and group exhibitions all over Australia. He has had six solo exhibitions including *Recent Past* in 2004 at the Tim Olsen Gallery in Sydney and in 2007 *Babble* at the Helen Maxwell Gallery in Canberra. He has also participated in numerous group exhibitions including being a finalist in both the *Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize* in 2003 and the *Canberra Contemporary Art Prize* in 2004. He has received numerous prizes and awards including two Capital Arts Patrons Awards and an artsACT Grant for Studio equipment and materials in 1996.

Peter Vandemark



CANBERRA HOUSE
ARCADE

CHEMIST

**CHEMIST
OPEN**



Acknowledgements

The artists in Domain whole heartily thank their families and friends for their assistance with their individual projects.

In particular the organisers of Domain and the artists gratefully acknowledge and extend thanks to the following:

The selection committee members: Helen Maxwell, David Broker and Paul Hay.

Shane Breynard (artsACT)
Peter Strong (Smiths Bookshop)

The ACT Government.
ArtsACT staff.
The City Ranger's Office
Graham McCloud from the ACT Government.
The Canberra Club Management and staff.
The ACT GPO in Alinga Street.
Smiths Book Shop.
The Wig and Pen, management and staff.
The Novotel Hotel.
Australian Network for Art and Technology.
Nunie's Fashions Alinga Street.
Qantas management and staff, Alinga Street.



