



CONSTANCE
GORDON
JOHNSON

constance gordon-johnson
sculpture and installation prize

INTRODUCTION **CONSTANCE GORDON-JOHNSON SCULPTURE AND INSTALLATION PRIZE 2008**

Since 2004 the Constance Gordon-Johnson Prize has recognised the outstanding achievements of four emerging artists from the Sculpture and Installation studio of the South Australian School of Art. In 2008 the fifth annual prize will be awarded to one of the nine artists whose work is featured. The event however is more than a generous cash prize for an individual artist. Since the inaugural exhibition we have presented the work of 26 talented and committed emerging artists. In some cases this has been the first professional opportunity the artists have had to present their work, in most cases it has been the first of many professional engagements the Sculpture and Installation Studio Alumni have enjoyed.

This year I have had the opportunity to involve a talented student from the Bachelor of Visual Arts program as co-curator. Alex Tuffin has provided creative input and administrative support in the development of the exhibition, extending her curatorial experience and gaining professional expertise. In this regard her student learning has been accurately modelled on the professional gallery environment. I am confident that she will continue to work in the field of curatorial practice.

UniSA Graduates with a specialisation in Sculpture and Installation typically engage in an intensive process of experimentation with materials, they are inventive in response to technical processes and most push themselves to determine innovative forms to express their ideas. The memorable works over the past five years of the

Constance Gordon-Johnson Prize have been somewhat unconventional. The meaning of such works is not always easy to access yet the artists ask viewers to think, to feel or consider our responses to their work, to engage with it.

As students within the Bachelor of Visual Arts or Bachelor of Visual Arts Honours degrees, such a position requires a measured degree of courage and vision to work beyond expectations and to find fresh approaches to art-making. As professional artists our graduates have enjoyed invitations to exhibit in prestigious galleries locally, interstate and further afield. For several of the artists featured over the past five years the list of significant achievements continues to grow. So it is with confidence I believe that my students

achieve big things. Their creative idiosyncrasies distinguish them among a highly competitive field of artists.

I've enjoyed working with each of the artists featured in this year's show and I am very pleased to present the 2008 Constance Gordon-Johnson Prize exhibition.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and congratulations to all of the artists and to the numerous individuals who have worked to present this exhibition.

*Steven Carson
Studio Head - Sculpture
and Installation*

1950 – 2000 CONSTANCE GORDON-JOHNSON

Constance Gordon-Johnson was an artist, community arts worker, project coordinator, designer and educator. She established a diverse professional practice including numerous community art projects and murals, artist-in-residence appointments, as well as undertaking several significant leadership positions within the arts. Constance graduated from the University of Tennessee with a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and throughout her study she pursued an interest in museum studies. Other study included classes at the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, Memphis Academy of Arts, and Memphis State University, where she earned entry with a scholarship.

The early years of Constance's career during the 1970s included managing a design and manufacturing business for several years. During the 1980s after a period of extensive international travel she returned to the United States and undertook a coordinating role with the Dulin Downtown Art Gallery, where she managed all aspects of the gallery from cataloguing to community relations.

Constance relocated to Australia during the mid 1980s settling in Adelaide. She established her reputation within the local arts community coordinating public art events and activities for the Unley Council, and Eastwood Community Centre. During 1986 Constance undertook artist-in-residence positions at Mitchum Girls' School, Annesley College, and the City of Unley, developing the Unley Youth Photographic Exhibition. During the 1990's she completed private design commissions and worked on several

interpretive centres including the Geo Centre Museum in Broken Hill, The Port Adelaide Visitors Centre, and the Signal Point Murray River Interpretation Centre at Goolwa.

Throughout her career Constance held several solo exhibitions in Australia and The United States however she was most active with private commissions and design projects. Exhibition highlights include International Year of the Child (1979), Knoxville Tennessee Mayoral Buildings, and Public Sites (1985), Constitutional Museum Adelaide. Individual mural commissions included the Parkside Community House and the Highgate Shopping centre.



ANNIKA EVANS NOTE TO SELF

Sculpture enables me to make sense of my interior emotional geography. I birth these beings so they no longer haunt the hallways of my psychological architecture. My work is a partnership of concepts, materials, and narrative. Forms and materials that are recurrent in my work are domestic in nature. I call these close to home, or my intimate acquaintances, which allow inroads into my work. This generates possibilities to get up close and personal with things that otherwise remain hidden or internalised. My recent work focuses on 'the material nature of desire'.

The presented piece is a celebration without sound, a silent yearning, a calculated waiting. It is an invitation and an expectation. It is contactable in the middle of nowhere, with no

numbers, no return address and no forwarding mentionable. It is carnivorous code spelled out for the indecipherable few. It is nothing but letters approaching the end of a line. Insert here: *note to self*.

*Note to self, 2007,
royal and rolled
fondant icing
dimensions: variable.*



CATHY SARLES **SUSPEND**

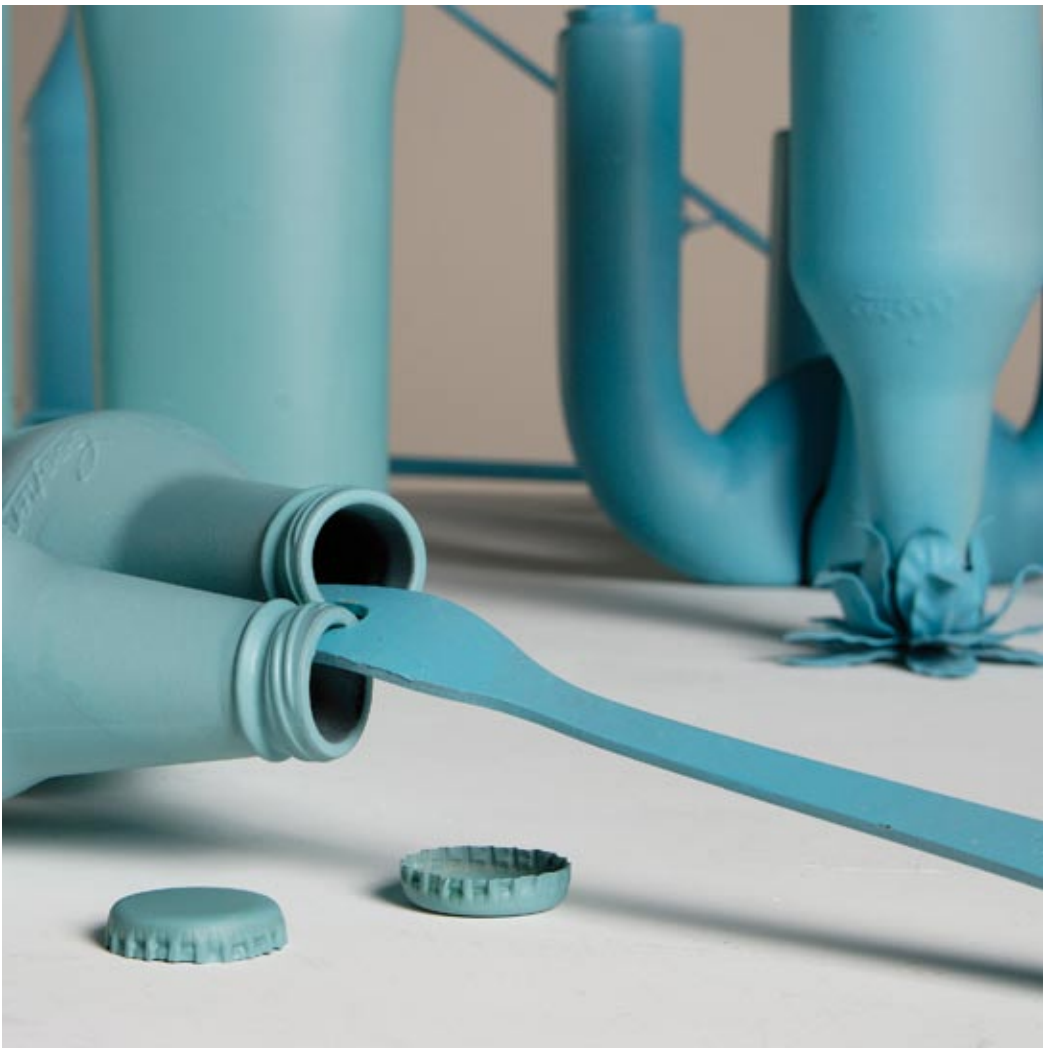
When I build castles in the air,
can it be real?

Felt meaning embedded in material,
(meaning resides in the space
between).

What once was is still in my mind,
might not be in yours:

Suspend yourself – can you see me?

*Suspend, 2007 - 08,
Blankets (mixed media),
3000 x 3000 x 2000mm.*



CHLOE TJINGAPA **STILL LIFE (BLUE)**
BOWER

*Still Life (Blue), March
2007, spray putty and
found objects, dimensions
variable.*

Beauty is in the eye of the beer holder. Like oiling the cogs, poetry fills into the details of everyday life.

For my father,

Is it possible to give a gift to a bloke beyond the predictable or expected, beyond the grog, the socks, jocks, beer coasters, shot glasses, car seat covers, singing wall mounted artificial fish, and Ed Harry coupons? So then, the details: watering the garden, viewing the flowers or fishing on Sunday afternoons.

These were once objects made in different eras, some sturdy, fragile, light or heavy, but have now become elements of their own variety. With their simple complementary characteristics, I have considered their aesthetics and meaning.



HEIDI KENYON **EVERYTHING YOU THINK OF
IS TRUE**

*Everything you can think of is true
I'll take you to a place.*

Where your breath escapes from your lips and becomes a cloud, and the trees talk quietly amongst themselves
Where you must tread carefully – for the vines are so entangled they don't know who they are anymore.

Where records are liquorice soliloquies, and your heartbeat is the loudest thing in the world. Where the shadows are more real than you are...

Everything you can think of is true, 2007, avocado leaf cut-out, dimensions variable.

My practice is defined by my intuitive process of 'making' more than a common material or theme. I am motivated by the complexity of materials and found objects, both natural and human-made. I am fascinated by the memories they contain, and their capacity for storytelling, be it personal, political or cultural. By exploring nuances in ordinary things, my work seeks to encourage people to find meaning in the everyday objects and rituals of their lives. *Everything you can think of is true* examines notions of play, creativity, and imagination, and the way in which memory and unconscious desires can manifest throughout the creative process. The work seeks to inspire imagination and personal narrative for the viewer.



KAREN PARIS **EMOTIVE**

Emotive Memory

"Our whole childhood remains to be reimagined. In reimagining it, we have the possibility of recovering it in the very life of our reveries as a solitary child"
(Gaston Bachelard 1971:100).

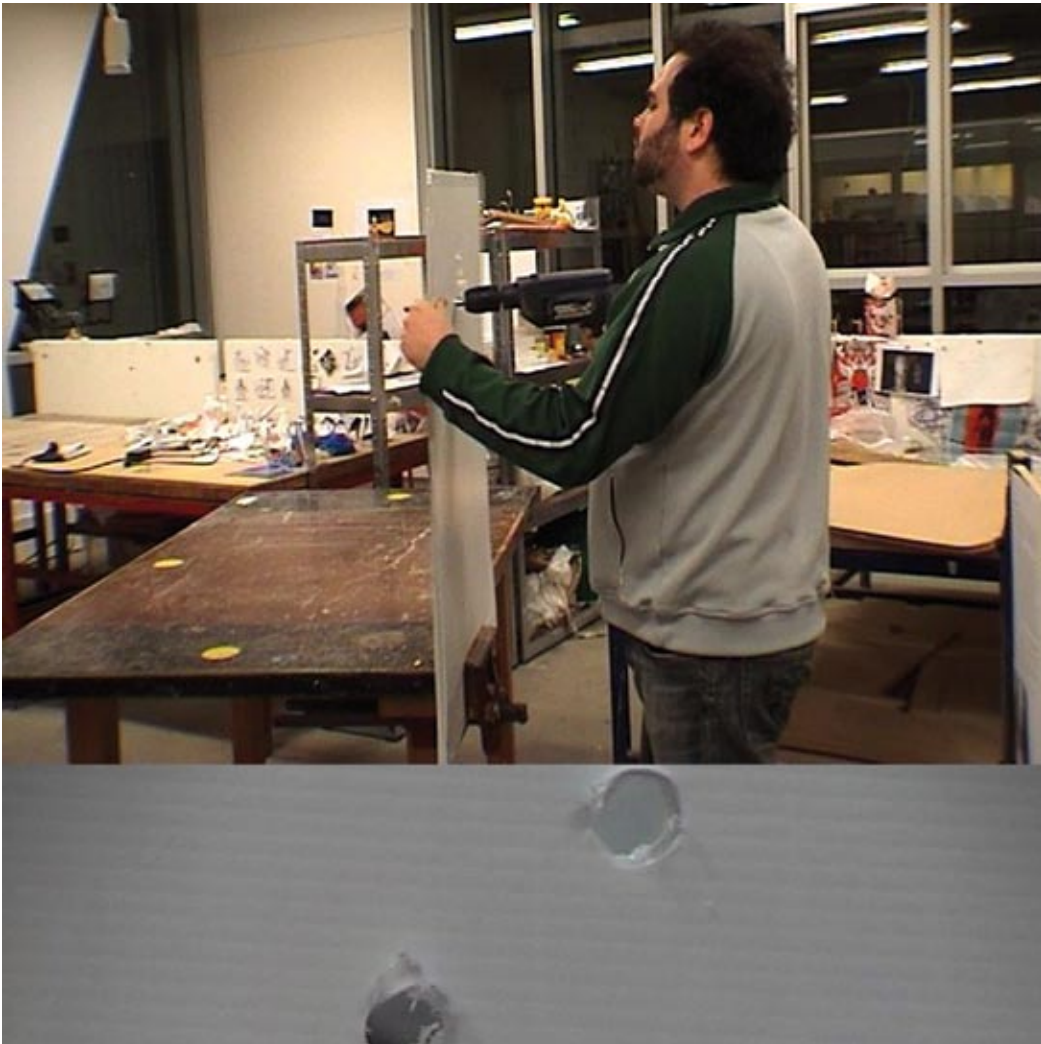
As an adult I often reminisce about childhood. Images come back to me, moments remembered, bringing with them a longing and sense of loss. What do these memories mean and why do they create this sense of nostalgia?

Emotive is an exploration of memories, of my own desire for a nostalgic return to childhood. Through video and photography I am investigating memories that trigger emotional responses and attempting to link those emotional memories with nostalgia and sadness at what is

now gone forever. The work attempts to express my nostalgic views on childhood and my own personal resistance, shared by many, to walk away from childhood, tentatively, into the unknown of adulthood, leaving the past behind forever.

Do we as adults share the same nostalgia based on similar memories, etched in our minds for all of our adult lives? Is it our intense perceptual sense as children that embeds these specific images into our minds forever, emotionally charged with a magic that seems impossible to retrieve?

*Emotive Thought, 2008,
Digital Print on German
Etching Paper 600 x
400mm (approx).*



MONTE MASI DECLARATION/TABLEAU

The dual channel installation piece *Declaration/Tableau* attempts to interrogate 'the mirror' of the screen and camera while also acknowledging the present saturation of images within culture, exploring liminal states of performance and ritual. This work playfully references the history of video and performance; however there lies an emphasis on poetry, on narrative: incongruous action is privileged over physical experiment. The interest and intrigue in these works lies in the slipping in and out of cultural performance norms; working from the basis that most human interaction is performed to some degree – and deconstructing and reconstructing the self according to a life lived in front of the screen.

Declaration/Tableau, 2007, dual channel video installation, dimensions variable.



PETER DYSON THE ANXIETY OF DEATH AND THE THE PETTINESS OF LIFE

If I take death into my life, acknowledge it, and face it squarely, I will free myself from the anxiety of death and the pettiness of life – and only then will I be free to become myself
(Martin Heidegger).

Following on from my work on the body in space and the perception of time, this work again hinges on the early philosophy of Martin Heidegger.

In his form of existentialism, he identified the relationship of man to space and time – and the fundamental difference from the mode of existence of ‘things’.

Our knowledge of our own mortality differentiates us from all other things; he defines this as the temporality of human existence.

Investigation of the perception of mortality has increasingly influenced my approach to my work. As I live life and encounter the spectre of death in its varied forms, it has become less fearsome and more intriguing to comprehend its function in moulding the human psyche. Also fascinating is the symbolism and visual and aural signifiers associated with mortality, the macabre, and the fear of extinction. The iconic symbol of a swimming pool is a mixed metaphor where it can evoke both notions of glamour, wealth, and leisure or something more sinister as drowning or suicide.

The installation presents a simple, swimming pool diorama (containing a looped projection as the water) and an ambient, but potentially hostile, soundscape. Through the duration

of engagement with the work, the viewer may perceive narrative as metaphor, inviting a cocktail of serenity, violence, and restitution. As well as evoking a potent, emotional response, the work endeavours to address our perception of our own mortality, phobias, and perhaps human existence itself.

The anxiety of death and the pettiness of life, 2008, video installation, 600 x 450 x 1000mm (approx).



ROMI GRAHAM EXCERPT FROM RE-ENACTMENT
OF JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE'S 2007
FUTURESEX/LOVE SHOW
CONCERT IN NEW YORK CITY
AS IT WAS BROADCAST ON HBO

Justin Timberlake is the new pop icon, with the first single from his recent Futuresex/Lovesounds album, 'Sexy Back' being played more than 85,000 times on his MySpace page on the day of its debut and voted number one on NME's 'Cool List' in 2003. In 2007, Justin Timberlake performed live at Madison Square Gardens in New York City as part of his 'Futuresex/LoveShow' tour. This concert was broadcast live on the American TV network, HBO, and later released on DVD.

mimesis are abject in comparison to the slick sets, costumes, and performance of the original concert, however, I hope for this aesthetic to convey the pathos and humour of obsession, imitation, and fan worship. My performance is riddled with imperfections, however an important part of the work is the process of trying to be perfect – while knowing this is impossible, and inevitable failing.

What Goes Around...Comes Around', Re-enactment of page eleven of the Futuresex/ Lovesounds' CD Booklet, 2008, photograph: Karen Paris.

Re-enactment of Justin Timberlake's 2007 Futuresex/Love Show concert in New York City as it was broadcast on HBO is a live performance in which I re-create Timberlake's original performance, aiming to impersonate his dance moves, singing, dress, etc. down to his mannerisms and the smallest gestures. My attempts at



SOFIA CALADO **BLOG ON ME: I KNOW I WOULD**

Blog on me, I know. I would.
Blog on. Me, I know I would.

Understanding the anonymity of the private in public spheres and its affect on identities through video and performance as a process and tool for blogging.

I blog: contemporary editions of the self.

iBlog: new technologies and their applications, such as text and video diaries on the Internet.

EyeBlog: personalities presented through means that reach both a private and a public audience.

AightBlog: blogging utilising video performances, the Internet, text, and typescript to explore both identity and anonymity.

This work focuses on the use of web blogging as a diarising form for self-identity and its effect on the assumptions and relationships between anonymity and self-portraiture in public spheres, like the Internet. This examination investigates the roles of time based art mediums like performance art and video art against the documentation of the personal and the confessional of the web blog.

Blog On Me: I Know I Would, 2007 - 8, digital C Print, 508 x 762mm.

The 2008 Constance Gordon-Johnson
Sculpture and Installation Prize 2008
exhibition, was jointly curated by
Steven Carson, Studio Head – Sculpture
and Installation and Alex Tuffin.

Special thanks to
Mary Knights, Director – SASA Gallery
Keith Giles – Gallery Administrator,
Julian Tremaine and Peter Harris.



University of
South Australia

South Australian
School of Art



Perrini
ESTATE