

4A CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ASIAN ART

PRESENTS

VARIABLE TRUTH / TONY ALBERT, BROOK ANDREW, MELISSA HOWE, ROSLISHAM ISMAIL (ISE), MICHAEL LEE, GREG SEMU, ALEXANDER SETON, TIM SILVER, TONY TWIGG

25 MAY - 14 JULY 2012



IMAGE: Michael Lee, *Triumph* from the series *After Humans* (2011). Courtesy of the artist.

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art is proud to present the group exhibition, **Variable Truth** which launches **6pm on Thursday 24 May 2012.**

Variable Truth is a group exhibition bringing together a unique selection of artists who each look to the Asia-Pacific region for cross-cultural fertilisation and an understanding of their own historical trajectories. By doing so, they reveal alternate perspectives and histories, and expanding aesthetic and conceptual understandings of Australia's role in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Since at least the 1980s, Australia has experience drastic shifts in its cultural environment through an increased awareness of its geography, cultural diversity, social history, globalisation and the impact of emerging economic powerbases outside of its historical allies in the West.

Curator and Director of 4A, Aaron Seeto says, '**Variable Truth** looks at these significant changes that have affected Australian society and reviews the modernist desire of a generation of Australian artists who have looked to the Asia-Pacific region for adventure and cross-cultural fertilisation, and in doing so, have expanded the aesthetic and conceptual understandings that have emerged in contemporary Australian art.'

The exhibition includes a number of key Australian artists alongside their international counterparts, to explore an alternate perspective of Australia's role in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Artists include: Tony Albert, Brook Andrew, Melissa Howe, Roslisham Ismail (ISE), Michael Lee, Greg Semu, Alexander Seton, Tim Silver, Tony Twigg. (See page 3 for more information on artists)

A selection of participating artists will be in Sydney and will be available for interview.

For all media enquiries, please contact Hannah Skrzynski on Hannah@4a.com.au or 0412 825 586.



ABOVE : Michael Lee, Petronas, from the series After Humans (2011) Giclée on archival paper. Courtesy of the artist.
 BELOW : Michael Lee, Triumph, from the series After Humans (2011) Giclée on archival paper. Courtesy of the artist.



ABOVE: Tony Albert, Be Deadly - Father (2011 - 2012), acrylic, collage elements and mixed media print with silver leaf on paper. Courtesy Ravinder Singh and Sullivan & Strumpf, Sydney.



ABOVE: Greg Semu, The Assassination of Atai (2010) Digital Print, 120 x 165cm. Courtesy of the artist.



LEFT: Melissa Howe, Sectional Model 1 - Entry detail (2010) Archival pigment print and cardboard. Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Torunn Higgins
 RIGHT: Melissa Howe, Sectional Model 1 - Kitchen detail (2010) Archival pigment print and cardboard. Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Torunn Higgins

About the Artists

Michael Lee is based between Berlin and Singapore. Lee's research revolves around urban memory and fiction, especially regarding the contexts and implications of loss. He transforms his observations into objects, diagrams, situations, curations or essays. He has staged solo exhibitions at Hanart TZ Gallery (Hong Kong), Baba House (Singapore) and Alliance Francaise de Singapour (Singapore). His group exhibition participations include The 2nd Asia Triennial Manchester 2011, The 3rd Singapore Biennale 2011, The 8th Shanghai Biennale 2010, The 4th & 3rd Guangzhou Triennial 2011 & 2008. Lee's accolades include the APBF Signature Art Prize 2011 (People's Choice Award), conferred by the Singapore Art Museum, and the Young Artist Award (Visual Arts) 2005, conferred by the National Arts Council, Singapore. He received his Master and Bachelor of Communication Studies from Nanyang Technological University in 2001 and 1997 respectively. **Prints from his After Humans (2011) series will be on exhibition in Variable Truth.**

Melissa Howe is a Sydney based artist with a background in architecture and photomedia. A reoccurring theme in her artistic practice has been an investigation into aspects of the built environment, the urban landscape and architectural space through the realm of photography. Recent work has been primarily concerned with the representation of object, space and form through site-specific installation work and constructed models created from reformed photographic imagery. **In Variable Truth a model of her suburban family home built in the international style in the series "The Deconstruction and Reconstruction of the Family House" (2010) will be exhibited.** She has a Bachelor of Design in Architecture (2004) and Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) from COFA, Sydney.

Greg Semu is a Sydney based, New Zealand photographer who has spent a decade in Paris. His work portrays histories of the Pacific responding to colonialism and cultural reappropriation as produced on high gloss digital prints and is highly regarded in New Zealand. He has exhibited across France, Germany, Taiwan and Australia and has been curated in this year's Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, APT 7. In the past two years Semu has been featured as part of the Niu Warrior and Body Pacifika exhibitions at Casula Powerhouse. His work is held in the collection of the Musee du Quai Brandy in Paris, Queensland Art Gallery, TePapa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, Wellington.

Tony Albert's artworks are complex interrogations into the human condition. Mining imagery and source material from across the globe and drawing upon personal and collective histories, Albert questions how we understand and imagine difference. Weaving together text appropriated from popular music, film, fiction and art history along with clichéd images of extraterrestrials, photographs of his family in Lucha Libre and an immense collection of "Aboriginalia" (a term the artist himself coined to describe objects that feature naïve portrayals of Australian Aboriginal people and their culture), Albert presents a tapestry of ideas. Albert has exhibited his work at many international venues including Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel; City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand; and Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art, Korea. He has also been represented in The 10th Biennial of Havana, Cuba and represented in exhibitions and collections of institutions within Australia including the National Gallery of Australia and Gallery of Modern Art – Queensland Art Gallery in Brisbane. **As part of Variable Truth, prints of Albert's work will be exhibited.**

Malaysian artist Roslisham Ismail (ISE) is a conceptual artist whose work centers on his personal experience of urban communities and describes his modus operandi as 'making friends and talking to people'. His practice often utilises an extensive network of collaborators all over the world he calls his 'superfriends'. **As part of Variable Truth, Ise is interested in developing a project with the ethnic Chinese Malaysian and Singaporean migrant community who work as vegetable sellers at Paddy's Market.** His previous projects include an installation at the Singapore Biennale 2011 that explores a cross section of Singaporean domestic lives through an installation of six refrigerators storing groceries that the participating families would normally buy. In 2006, he was the Australian High Commission artist in resident at the Gunnery Studio, Art Space, Sydney and was took part in the Istanbul Biennale with Indonesia collaborative Ruangrupa in 2005

About the Artists

Brook Andrew is a Melbourne based artist who works with neon, installation, photo-media, performance and video. Andrew challenges cultural and historical perception, using text and image to comment on local and global issues regarding race, consumerism and history. Apart from drawing inspiration from public media and found archival collections, Andrew travels nationally and internationally to work with communities and museum collections to comment and create new work reflecting objects, concepts and local thought. He is known more recently for his "Travelling Colony" piece as part of the 2012 Sydney Festival and has also exhibited at the 2010 Biennale of Sydney with notable work "Jumping Castle War Memorial". He has also previously exhibited at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney; Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane; and has also exhibited in group exhibitions across Korea, Beijing, the Netherlands and Belgium. Brook Andrew was the recipient of the Australia Council ISCP residency, NYC 2008–09, South Project at Museo de Arte Contemporáneo residency, Santiago 2006, Australia Council for the Arts Fellowship 2001. He graduated with a Master of Fine Arts (Research) from COFA in 1999.

Alexander Seton is a Sydney based artist who graduated from the College of Fine Arts, UNSW in 1998. He has exhibited in numerous sculpture exhibitions over the years, including Sculpture by the Sea four times since 2002 and The Helen Lempriere Sculpture Award 06. Seton has participated in group shows such as Flaming Youth at the Orange Regional Gallery, international sculpture symposiums such as the 2007 Hanyu International Sculpture Cup, in Shenzhen in China, and a number of solo shows, including both 'Security Blanket' at Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane, and 'Panoply' at Chalk Horse Gallery, in 2007, and Memeoid at Chalk Horse in 2008. Alex's practice has earned a growing reputation based upon producing carved marble and synthetic stone sculptures that play on optical illusion and the perception of surface. The work uses the tension and often contradiction between the traditional laborious skill of carving and use of contemporary subject matter and concerns.

Tim Silver's sculptures crafted from fragile and ephemeral materials question permanence in a process which involves erosion and decomposition. In his series of "Everything in its right place(2011)" Silver created busts of his own head created from woodfiller which were later documented in an arresting photographic series portraying the various stages of the sculpture's decay. Silver's work was most recently featured at the 2012 Adelaide Biennial, "Parallel Collisions" and is currently represented by BreenSpace in Sydney. Sydney based and a graduate of COFA completing his Master of Fine Arts (Research) in 2004, he has exhibited across Australia including National Gallery of Victoria, Perth Institute of Contemporary Art and his work is in the collection of The Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

Tony Twigg is known for his multi-disciplinary works from film to performance. Tony Twigg has produced over 45 solo exhibitions of wall based objects and installations in Australia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines, and has been included in group exhibitions across Australia, Asia and Europe. Twigg was represented by Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney 1987-2009 and currently shows with Damien Minton Gallery. He has been showing and working in Southeast Asia now for 17 years, an engagement presented in a monograph published in 2009 with assistance from the Australia-Malaysia Institute. He will complete a Red Gate Residency in Beijing China late 2012. Twigg is represented in major collections in Australia and the Philippines including the National Gallery of Australia, the Queensland Art Gallery, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the Ateneo Art Gallery, Manila, BenCab Museum, and University of Philippines Los Baños Collection and private and corporate collections internationally. **In Variable Truth, Tony Twigg will present a work which responds to interpretations of the Ian Fairweather, "Anak Bayan" held in the Art Gallery of NSW Collection.**