

— WATCHING CLOUDS PASS THE MOON —



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discerning salt and fresh waters

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I wanted to write a letter to the senses and the moments between

to the changing scenes of water on the train south (salt then lake and salt again)

to trees green yellow by the time

to the rocks and their stoic flux, weathered

to the Aquila plume rufous, marked tawny

to the south side of the headland and beyond the native beach on all hour watched with dog alone, feet bare

to running on the sand with the ocean and unnerving current swim

to being lost at the sea

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————— *the sun is setting behind a film layer grey cloud, making it watery, gold through grey*

*yesterday smelling warm river rocks, inland, the water ran through a valley floor flanked by mountain trophies to ages*

*(we knew the rocks were moss green by their scent out of sight)* —————

the air on the island's coast is buttery, it whispers softness in your ears

*the birds watching from the big tree soar to the coast shifts daily with lunar-pull*

(hollow bones help flight)

we know the birds but do the birds know us (what's a human without a name)

there's a cherry memory, fresh-picked and eaten secretly in one aisle of the garden,

hidden from family but surrounded by sun-sky blue and blossoms, leaves and some of us know it in our bodies

and some of us know it in stories but missing from there are stained fingers, red tips



on the same island the sky reminds you of the planets

the planets remember the plants

GLENN BARKLEY WAS BORN IN 1972 IN SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES

mud on hands on mud (between toes)

he uses clay to make works that give shape to nature, history, horticulture, and popular text,

maybe we remember a time where hands voiced limb, root, pollen

fusing all to bear fruit of pots and ceramic objects, a menagerie outcome

clay is one of the most sustainable forms, demolished it goes back to the earth in immediate particles,

(maybe in our human crashes we forgot)

firing is the main emission source

Glenn says his work is 'based on organic plant forms but seen through the lens of ceramics history —

it has distinct conceptual and formal relationships with English and European porcelain;

folk art traditions and studio pottery of the 20th century.

Many of these traditions had observation of the natural world incorporated in their making —

the language of ceramics has a visual parallel in the garden — the pod, the leaf, the stem, the seed, the flower,

the branch, the root — are a lingua franca depicted, or mirrored, within a broad ceramics history\*

clay and porcelain are currently being experimented with as recyclable materials for 3D printing\*

\* Artist statement

← Glenn Barkley

sketches for *themorningcantcomesoonenough(itsalrightalrightalright)* 2016

© the artist

## Permission to forage

As part of the community engagement project *Let it be wild, a garden, a journey, a story*, permission is granted by Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery at my request to forage plants in the grounds and surrounding area from 10 June through 31 July 2016.

  
Diego Bonetto, artist  
3 May 2016



← Diego Bonetto  
statement from permission-to-forage contract,  
illustrations by Mirra Whales, 2013  
© the artists

\* in this northwest Italian town, foraging and common plant knowledge was the norm

\* Diego brought this knowledge to Australia in 1994, extending it to our local flora, and since then has been working with community

and government alike in efforts to reinstate the language of plants within everyday lexicon

\* a strong cross-disciplinary approach characterises Diego's practice,

as he combines research from the studies of biology, anthropology, paleontology, social ecology, and ethnobotany in order to

formulate ethical questions about cultural representation in our current age of environment exhaustion

\* at Lake Macquarie, his living grass and plant installation can be read as a provocation,

a learning arena where we can reacquaint ourselves with common plants that surround us everyday, and yet we do not see

close your eyes tightly, open them and touch it just to know that it's true

\* Diego includes the ideas of American botanists James Wandersee and Elisabeth Schussler,

who in 1998 defined plant blindness as 'the inability to see or notice the plants in one's

own environment', which brings the 'inability to recognise the importance of plants in the biosphere and in human affairs'

\* the inclusion of a 'permission to forage' in this project for the exhibition duration calls to attention

the absence of implied permission or practice across Australia to glean or forage at any other time

\* with this project there is no discrimination between weeds and natives

\* *the history of weeds is the history of man* \*

\* Edgar Anderson (1952)

BENJAMIN GALLAGHER WAS BORN IN 1976 IN NEWCASTLE, AUSTRALIA

\* working for his father restoring historic roofs, he has honed and harboured the labour and skill attached to an antiquated

body of the artisan through coarse yet tactile daily contact with materials slate, copper, steel, timber, brass and bronze

\* a design background has informed Benjamin's practice

and his desire to use materials that will age with grace

to endure eras, primed by a caring for sustainability

\* contrary to popular belief in progression,

he is driven conceptually by thoughts of a regressive future

\* this regressive future is manifested in the project *The Wooden City*,

a place where resources have run dry and where the need to preserve energy hence dictates hourly activity

there was a place and we collected wood for the fire on the woodpile there was a snake

and we made bread from hand, found urchin in the sea

\* proof of idleness replaces patterns of production and consumption

untying, eating from the ocean

\* 'a moment of recovery will be forced upon us. In a twist of expectations, inhabitants of the *The Wooden City* will endure "forced leisure".

do you have a place to go where time doesn't move

*To accommodate such a scenario, herein lies a set of games. Instruments of leisure from a bygone era*

where waves wash, buildings fall,

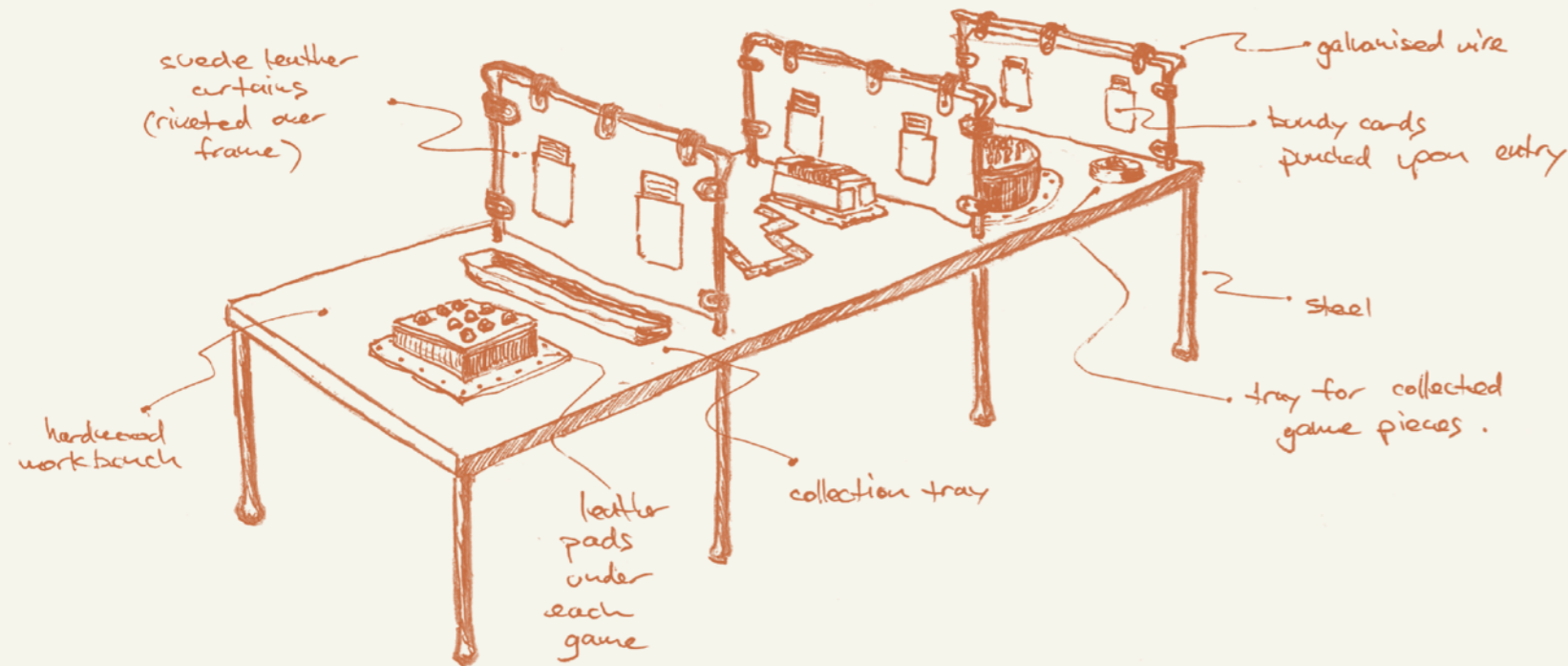
*dragged brutally into focus for the needs of today'\**

streets cry,

\* clocks unwind \*

and it's impossible to tell if the next sun will rise or set

\* Artist statement



Benjamin Gallagher  
sketch for *Intermission* (from *The Wooden City*) 2016  
© the artist

'INTERMISSION'



EIKO OTAKE WAS BORN IN 1952 IN TOKYO, AND TAKASHI KOMA OTAKE WAS BORN IN 1948 IN NIIGATA, JAPAN

✿ they were law and political science students when they met in 1971 after joining the Tatsumi Hijikata dance company in Tokyo

✿ moving to New York in 1976 via an exploration of *Neue Tanz* in Hanover in 1972,

they began carving a name for themselves as movement artists, always performing original choreography

and collaborating with each other to design and handcraft all aspects of their works

✿ their long-duration choreography and gestures are often performed outside —

on the beach, in a river, in a park, amongst trees — or they bring nature inside

✿ dances in the landscape are intended to form part of that scape,

they are an offering and a gesture rather than an oil over water product

————— see some times how the sand mirrors the sky

✿ with their movement Eiko & Koma reshape crystallised patterns of time and human

(clouds trapped in waves)

action by performing instinctual, strong, creature-like actions washed by soft tidal motion

✿ watching, calendar time becomes otiose

✿ Eiko & Koma entwine themselves with the elements,

using their bodies as a conduit to kindle empathy

from the audience for their symbiosis

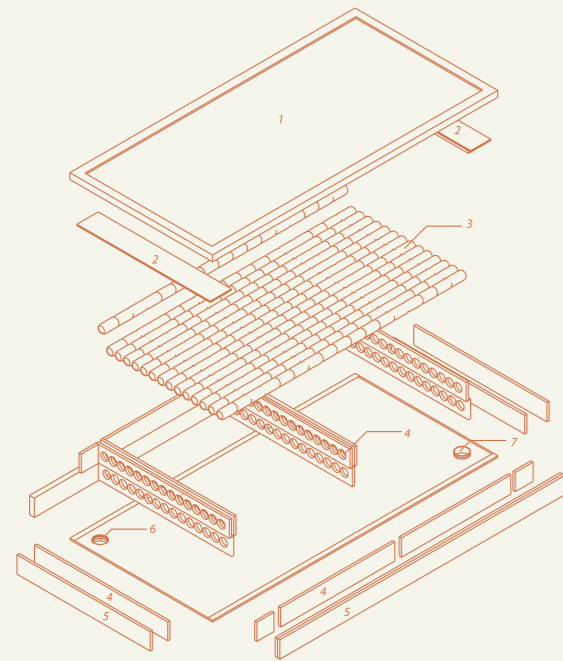
and vulnerability with nature ✿

← Eiko & Koma

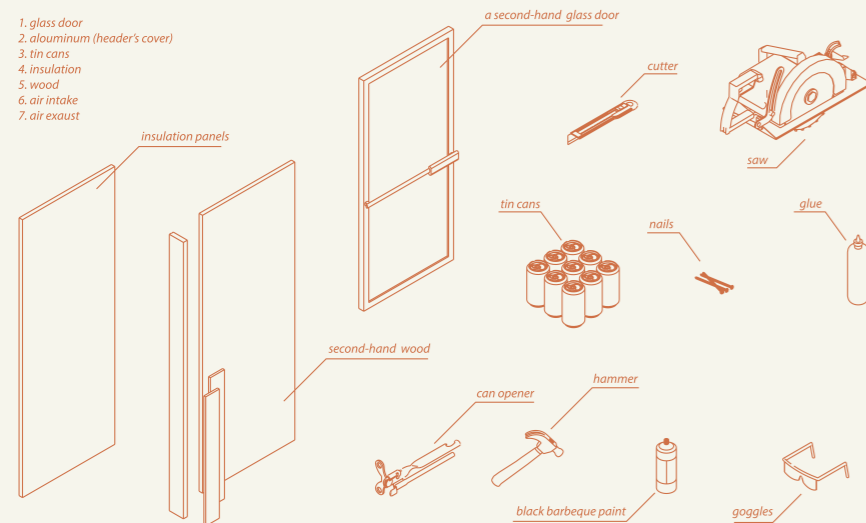
*Breath* [video still] 1999

© the artists





← Valentina Karga  
*Active Sustainable Chamber, a manual [installation detail] 2010*  
 © the artist



VALENTINA KARGA WAS BORN IN 1986 IN CHALKIDIKI, GREECE

✿ she studied her master of architecture in Thessaly before moving to Berlin to cross disciplines with art,

architecture, economy and the social realm

✿ of concern to Valentina is the sharing of common pool resources.

Traditionally these are natural resources such as fossil fuels and water; contemporary equivalents include knowledge and technology

✿ DIY trends and sustainable living techniques are stone-like in Valentina's practice

✿ her interventionist experiments encourage public engagement

and participation with real-life challenges to the status quo

✿ an overarching hypothesis guides

Valentina: that knowing how to be self-sufficient and provide for oneself,

independent of government structures or power paradigms,

somewhere there's a picture of the world as an eggshell, hollow, near to crack

develops an autonomy and with that comes one form of freedom for the individual ✿

(somewhere there's bare feet on concrete barring earth)

somewhere feet want sole on soil but we learnt to unlive with it

(dancers are touching the elements for us)



NICOLE MONKS WAS BORN IN 1981 IN SUBIACO, AUSTRALIA

✿ she has Aboriginal, Dutch and English heritage; her practice is informed by this,

focusing on learned behaviours and how we attach these to objects and places

✿ undercurrents subversively question Australian culture

we came from water and so is the edge

✿ Nicole places mounds of soil from Wajarri Yamatji land into clean compound contexts,  
(cities whelmed by nature)

the outside inside, summoning cultures that don't cover the earth

between disorder and measure we want to shape it

in their daily living spaces and interactions

but some chance that birthed the stars now filters stomachs

✿ she believes her thoughts are a combination of all those that have come before her, they comprise her

✿ ideas in Nicole's work reach beyond objective black letter, acknowledging connections, experiences and feelings caused by the visceral

← Nicole Monks

photograph of earth from Wajarri Yamatji Country

© the artist

✿

*I have been to country*

*I have stood in these places*

*Now I share this with you.*

*Close your eyes*

*Feel the earth under your bare feet*

*Immerse yourself in the smell of the desert*

*Hear the sounds of ancient language echoing across the land*

*Feel a depth to these places as deep as you know your own family*

*And when you are in this moment*

*Look into the landscapes*

*What do you feel? \**

✿

\* Artist statement

IZABELA PLUTA WAS BORN IN 1979 IN WARSAW, POLAND

✿ she migrated to Australia in 1987

✿ Izabela creates places absent of a date yet full of time memory and place

✿ materials and photographs, through layers, expose the invisible

✿ in part this is achieved through process, the act of Izabela as a person being still,

stagnant, watching and photographing a landscape transitioning around her

left at the end of a spiral jetty with the time it sounds confused

but at the edge of day you'll see the sun go down and know it rises

✿ things are caught, physically and un-physically, that might be missed by a moving person

and when it does seconds stop and bones float

✿ photos and images are tethered on site to their corresponding depiction

✿ *The cluster of works in Rupture uses the photographs*

*where is the world* ————— *i.d.*

*that I developed while artist-in-residence at the Lake Macquarie Gallery in 2000 as a point of departure.*

*They explore the transitional nature of an environment, specifically the location of the current gallery building*

*and the pre-developed Awaba House site, as it existed fifteen years ago ... I am interested in the nature of the landscape*

*and how it shows traces of its past as well as the ever-changing nature of a location.*

*This new work attempts to capture the transformation of a specific place and its constant state of flux —*

*where temporal shifts and spatial transformation can occur'\** ✿

\* Artist statement



← Izabela Pluta

*Construction Series [detail] 2000-01*

© the artist



**EIKO & KOMA**

Eiko Otake born 1952 Tokyo, Japan  
Takashi Koma Otake born 1948 Niigata, Japan  
live in NYC, USA

*Wallow* 1984

single-channel video  
camera by Peter Yaple, editing by Eiko with Jeff Bush  
duration 11:30mins

*Breath* 1999

single-channel video with sound  
duration 14:12mins

courtesy the artists



**BENJAMIN GALLAGHER**

born 1976 Newcastle, Australia  
lives in Newcastle, Australia

*Intermission* (from *The Wooden City*) 2016

installation: partition – steel, bronze, brass, hardwood, wool, linen, lead, cardboard, oil; O + X – steel, bronze, brass, hardwood, leather, magnets; Chess – steel, brass, copper, hardwood, leather; Dominoes – steel, brass, hardwood, enamel, leather; Wall of Authentication – bundy cards, hardwood, steel, brass  
dimensions variable  
courtesy the artist



**VALENTINA KARGA**

born 1986, Chalkidiki, Greece  
lives in Berlin, Germany

*The construction of fire and other stories* 2015

20 risograph prints  
each print 29.7 x 21cm, ed.15

*30 Days in the Garden / 15 Days on Mars* 2014

installation: project archive (diary, notes, photo documentation, book *Geology of Utah*, stones, crystals and fossils from Utah, freeze dried food, packaging), digital print  
3 digital videos with sound  
dimensions variable

*Active Sustainable Chamber, a manual* 2010

installation: risograph prints, manual  
dimensions variable

courtesy the artist



**NICOLE MONKS**

born 1981 Subiaco, Australia  
language group Wajarri Yamatji  
lives in Sydney, Australia

*My Country, Mine Country* 2014

installation: digital photo media, Wajarri Yamatji Earth  
dimensions variable  
courtesy the artist



**EIKO OTAKE**

born 1952 Tokyo, Japan  
lives in NYC, USA

*A Body in Hong Kong* 2015

single-channel video with sound  
duration 28:46mins

*A Body in Fukushima* 2015

single-channel video with sound  
(from digital photographs by William Johnston)  
duration 52:04mins

courtesy the artist



**IZABELA PLUTA**

born 1979 Warsaw, Poland  
migrated to Australia in 1987  
lives in Sydney, Australia

*Rupture* 2016

installation: latex-based inkjet-prints, aluminium, mirror  
courtesy the artist and This Is No Fantasy +  
dianne tanzer gallery Melbourne

from *Construction Series* 2000-01

12 silver gelatin photographs  
dimensions variable  
collection Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery



**Watching Clouds Pass the Moon**

Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery

10 June – 31 July 2016

Glenn Barkley  
Diego Bonetto  
Eiko & Koma  
Benjamin Gallagher  
Valentina Karga  
Nicole Monks  
Izabela Pluta

*Watching Clouds Pass the Moon* is a gallery exhibition project  
curated by Ineke Dane, in consultation with Meryl Ryan

*Publisher* Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery

*Director* Debbie Abraham

*Editors* Meryl Ryan and Ineke Dane

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*Designer* Stephen Goddard / Project Two

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**Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery**

First Street Booragul NSW 2284  
Box 1906 Hunter Region Mail Centre NSW 2310  
T: +61 (0)2 4965 8260 F: +61 (0)2 4965 8733  
E: artgallery@lakemac.nsw.gov.au  
www.lakemac.com.au

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cover image from Eiko Otake *A Body in Fukushima* 2015

© the artist and William Johnston



The exhibition project *Watching Clouds Pass the Moon* originated with a striking submission to Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery by emerging curator Ineke Dane. A key focus of the Gallery’s mission is to encourage and support arts practitioners – artists, curators, designers, writers – on their evolving professional pathway. Working alongside Gallery Curator Meryl Ryan throughout the development and presentation process, Ineke has produced a highly original exhibition that considers contemporary DIY techniques and alternate methods of working with the world. The subject is timely, as 21st-century humankind struggles to determine what constitutes true quality of life and being satisfied in the everyday.

I would like to thank Ineke Dane for her commitment to this wonderful project, and the international field of artists, some of whom have either made new work or greatly facilitated the loan of their works. In particular, Sydney-based Diego Bonetto and Hunter-based Benjamin Gallagher have made meaningful site-specific interactive pieces with which exhibition visitors can engage. Thanks also to the gallerists for facilitating loans and providing information, and the Aboriginal Reference Group for their ongoing support and valuable guidance. Thank you again to Stephen Goddard for another beautifully designed catalogue.

All of the relationships forged in the exhibition process are deeply appreciated by the Gallery and paramount to our continuing strive for excellence. It is gratifying that works from the collection, by Izabela Pluta, were contextualised anew for this exhibition. Finally, it must be acknowledged that generous financial support from the State Government through Arts NSW and from Lake Macquarie City Council, made an exhibition project of this high quality and scope possible.

**Debbie Abraham**

Gallery Director

Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery



— LAKE MACQUARIE CITY ART GALLERY ✿ 10 JUNE - 31 JULY 2016 —