

The Grammar of Glitch

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23072018—01092018

In evolutionary biology it is the mutation that drives changes in the system. Unexpected modifications can enable adaptation to shifting environmental circumstances and ultimately, promote survival. Some apparent errors are the answers to problems that are often unseen.

The *Grammar of Glitch* takes a look at how the language of this process expresses itself in artwork. Whether through fragmentation of the visual field in drawings of interiors or the distorted forms of the sculptural figure, the exhibition offers ways of understanding how glitches in systemic regularity can find productive and creative ends.

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Michael Georgetti, *QUASI-BODIES (GHOST DISPLAYS)* (2018), acrylic paint on cut out canvas, wood, screws, wooden platform, duct tape, aluminium support with silver enameling, aluminium plinth, brass, perspex, custom made vinyl stickers, vinyl matt, concrete garden statue, plaster, adhesive. Dimensions variable.
Wall display (painting) (2018), acrylic paint, linen collage, adhesive, spray paint on 2 panel canvas, custom-made aluminium frame with gold enameling. Dimensions 200 x 187 cm. (c) Courtesy of the artist



James Little

FW19, La Trobe Art Institute
2018
Vinyl film, coloured fluorescent lights.
740 x 347 cm

Michael Georgetti

QUASI-BODIES (GHOST DISPLAYS)
2018
Acrylic paint on cut out canvas, wood, screws, wooden platform, duct tape, aluminium support with silver enamelling, aluminium plinth, brass, perspex, custom made vinyl stickers, vinyl matt, concrete garden statue, plaster, adhesive
Dimensions variable

DeFacto Monuments II

2018
Acrylic paint, spray paint and collage on canvas. Custom made frame with gold enamel
187 x 200 x 20 cm

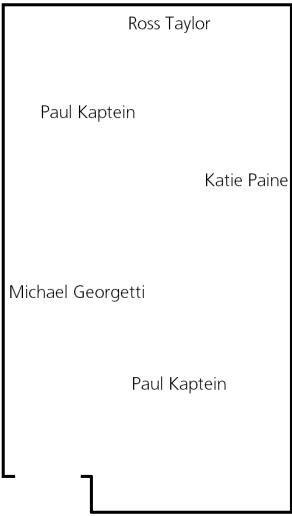
Antonia Sellbach

Collapsing Logic (taken from Unstable Object Series)
2018
Acrylic and housepaint on linen
300 x 300 cm

Ross Taylor

Altar
2017
Pencil on paper
84 x 59 cm
Courtesy of private collection

Artworks



Michael Georgetti

Baguette
2018
Magazine rack, baguette, fake Rolex watch
Dimensions variable

Katie Paine

Indelible Visions 1:
Their bodies, heavy and cumbersome, were at odds with this deficient calendar
2018
Inkjet and lenticular print, engraved glass and engraved frame, coloured pencil drawing
64 x 100 cm

Indelible Visions 2:

A Polysemous Apparition - What might be left for us, in this chasm without voice?
2018
Inkjet and lenticular print, engraved glass and engraved frame, coloured pencil drawing
64 x 100 cm

Ross Taylor

Carousel
2018
Pencil on paper
84 x 59 cm
Ross Taylor is represented by Sophie Gannon Gallery

Norwegian Gem
2018
Pencil on paper
84 x 59 cm

Paul Kaptein

Mute Figure #3
2018
Laminated, hand-carved wood
graphite
58 x 31 x 55 cm

Mute Figure #9 (Magnets within magnets)
2018
Laminated, hand-carved wood, graphite
80 x 30 x 25 cm

George Egerton-Warburton

A creative writing response to the theme of the exhibition

The city as a sentence

From the vantage point of an apartment within a London social housing tower, the protagonist of author Huw Lemmey's short story "Polling" gives an image of who he might be, not by describing himself, but by describing what he sees through the window.¹ Dire election results drip in over the radio as he lusts after a younger gay couple in the adjacent tower. Their bodies represent a humanist hope, set against the hardness of the built environment as it intersects with policy such as the "spare room subsidy".² He laments, "Politicians are erotic but profoundly unsexy; their scandals are named after locations in the city, bricks and locked rooms, to hide the fact that they're obsessed with bodies, that their appearance on TV is a fleshwound". 'Melbourne' was named for a British prime minister whose life was rife with scandal, and no small portion of blood and tears have trickled down the city's heritage-listed bluestone gutters since.³ Increasingly artists chose to acknowledge the city as 'Narrm', as it was known to the Wurundjeri people. I see it often written in administrative contexts, as 'Narrm / Melbourne', and the fusion is both hopeful and unsettling; respectfully acknowledging the traditional custodians of the place, whilst adhering to its ongoing occupation by settlers. There is the necessity for this awkward poetic caution to acknowledge the multiplicity of experiences of the built environment, including the ability to exist between 'site' and 'non-site'.⁴

Country grammar

During a few hot weeks in Bendigo, I would drift ambivalently into its edgelands, where streetnames give way to twisted eucalypts and crushed cans with their words scorched off. Unexpected slopes and dents in what felt like uncharted territory gave me the sensation of drunkenness as I stumbled around. It took me a while to pinpoint this uncanny feeling - a result of the landscape being dramatically altered during the gold rush, and then furtively allowed to regrow. A parabolic hill covered in hundred-year-old bush exudes an eeriness of feeling simultaneously organic and cultivated; violated and undiscovered. To prevaricate, hedge, fence, or beat around the bush, I felt caught between a few places.

Blink and you'll miss it

In *The Colonial Present*, Derek Gregory elucidates the consequence of shorthand for complex subjectivities; a site with multiple ethnocultural groups becomes a disembodied word on the screen of a pilot's dashboard. Images of an event repeating on screens, made it possible for the global north to pin all responsibility for the *terror* that apparently flew out of nowhere, on a single location. Pilots subsequently obliterated this site at such a pace that there wasn't time to recognise their victims:

"Modern cartographic reason, including its electronic, mediatized extensions, relies on these high-level, disembodied abstractions to produce the illusion of an authorizing master-subject. It deploys both a discourse of objectivity - so that elevation secures a higher truth - and a discourse of object-ness that reduces the world to a series of objects in a visual plane. Bombs then rain down on co-ordinates on a grid, letters on a map, on 34.518611N, 69.15222 E, on K-A-B-U-L; but not on the city of Kabul, its buildings already devastated, its population already terrorized. Ground truth vanishes in the ultimate 'God-trick', whose terrible vengeance depends on making its objects visible and its subjects invisible."⁵

'Cofveve' emerged on our personal screens years later, and sat uneasily between a joke, a mistake and a threat.⁶ Verbiage fluctuates and temporarily attaches itself to things but mostly flails around, symbols, for argument. Their glitchiness allows them to be a product, to be exported, drunk, mispronounced. Today I am wearing a laneway and sipping bricks. Tomorrow I will be disemboweled by a bluetooth signal. Yesterday we were inebriated on cow. Grammar is a glitch.

In the mental process of interpretation there is a moment of non-compliance, before we obey language

The textures I came of age in are disappearing at the same rate as my memory of them, and so to, the words are harder to come by, as if the vocabulary for the time has disappeared. The grass is thin this winter as the seasons seem to be longer, or in some cases, blending into one. National security purveys a sort of structural pandemonium... a base layer of narcissism and anxiety constantly afoot. The favoured navy blue cotton reebok shorts that were old when purchased at a thrift store, are now so worn that the front of them has evolved from navy, to grey, to brown. A few unfortunately located stains on the shorts, which are the only thing I have on my body, are immobilising. I look as if I never left the house, ever, and just sat in the shorts sweating, seeking out dopamine hits and swilling barbecue sauce and coffee. The effect they have, of not being fit for public, burns my focus from both ends, as it prevents me from leaving the house, getting a coffee, a change of scene, a bit of 'inspiration'. This glitch prevents me from streamlining all my effort into economic progress, using this inherited language (debt). An extracurricular glitch. The suburbs I have walked through seemed to have disappeared too, through gentrification and the recklessness with which I once engaged with them; various meltdowns and cognitive bias. Walking through the cemetery at Princess Hill the other day, graves and mausoleums lined up like buildings and suburbs. People end up as a place in this context, a site designated for grief. The specificity of this struck me as strange for the first time, and acknowledging this transformed the space. I tried to imagine the inscriptions on the stones as indications of something other than bodies, but I still felt exposed in the shorts.

¹Huw Lemmey. "Polling." dazeddigital.com. Website: <http://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/article/24647/1/huw-lemmey-polling> (accessed April 10, 2018).

²Patrick Butler and Haroon Siddique. "The bedroom tax explained." Theguardian.com. Website: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jan/27/the-bedroom-tax-explained> (accessed June 15, 2018).

³"Operating procedure: bluestone in Melbourne's streets and lanes." melbourne.vic.gov.au. Website: <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/operating-procedure-bluestone.pdf> (accessed June 15, 2018).

⁴Robert Smithson. "A Provisional Theory of Non-Sites." robertsmithson.com. Website: <https://www.robertsmithson.com/essays/provisional.htm> (accessed June 22, 2018)

⁵Derek Gregory. *The Colonial Present*. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 54.

⁶Matt Flegenheimer "What's a 'Covfefe'? Trump Tweet Unites a Bewildered Nation." nytimes.com. Website: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/31/us/politics/covfefe-trump-twitter.html> (accessed July 24, 2018).