—UNSW Galleries stands on an important place of learning and exchange first occupied by the Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples of the Eora Nation.

—We recognise the Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples as the traditional owners of this site and acknowledge them as the first artists to inhabit this land.

—We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and extend this respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from all nations of Australia.
—RACHEL O’REILLY

© Courtesy: the artist
—LÉULI ESHRĀGHI

Photograph: Rhett Hammerton
GERWYN DAVIES

Courtesy: the artist
SAM SMITH
— FERNANDO DO CAMPO

Photograph: Anna Kubera
KYOKO HASHIMOTO

Photograph: Carine Thévenau
IZABELA PLUTA
This major exhibition brings together recent works by Quandamooka artist Megan Cope that investigate listening practices and extractive industries in Australia.

‘Untitled (Death Song)’ 2020 comprises sound sculptures constructed from discarded mining and industrial equipment accompanied by a soundtrack made in collaboration with musician and instrument builder Isha Ram Das. It takes its first note from the haunting cries of the yellow-eyed Bush Stone-curlew. An endangered species within New South Wales, the Bush Stone-curlew is known for its distinctive call, a ghost-like “weer-lo” sound. Heard in chorus and crescendo with other Bush Stone-curlews, the eerie call is often mistaken for a crying baby or wailing woman. ‘Untitled (Death Song)’ is a meditation on the sound of Country and Gurrell (Curlew) who is also known as a harbinger of death in Quandamooka culture.

The exhibition also features several related projects, including the sound sculpture ‘Old Kahibah’ 2018, which maps the sound vibrations of Awabakal Country in the Lake Macquarie area which has experienced significant geological alteration from industrial coal extraction.

—

‘The threatened status of the bird not only registers significant ecological change and the impact of modern agricultural land management; it is a harbinger, a warning for the future.’

—

Megan Cope
PERFORMANCE: UNTITLED (DEATH SONG)
3.00pm Sat 10 & 17 Apr | Register via unsw.to/galleries
—A quartet of musicians draw the call of the curlew out of the instruments using a range of extended musical techniques developed by Isha Ram Das and Liquid Architecture.

Isha Ram Das is a composer and sound artist concerned with ecologies of environment and culture. He works with experimental sound techniques to produce performances, installations and recordings. Liquid Architecture are Australia’s leading organisation for artists working with sound and listening.

KEYNOTE: ART & DESIGN IN THE AGE OF ECOCIDE
5.30pm Thurs 21 Jan | Register via unsw.to/galleries
—Climate activist and creative Suzanne Dhaliwal (UK) presents a keynote on contemporary decolonial design and art practices used in activism that aim to challenge white supremacy and oppression within environmental movements. Dhaliwal will outline anti-oppression and creative action trainings developed to support an inclusive environmental movement grounded in anti-oppression principles.

Images courtesy: of the artist

you are standing on a beautiful land.

As Western Europeans you are so...

that’s when I started doing all of this painting...

Company submissions put forward water use figures of 65-60 million litres per well in the Beetaloo sub-basin

but they started...

ILLU = Indigenous Land Use Agreements

Direct contracts between corporations and Aboriginal parties, they are not overseen by the Native Title Tribunal
‘As Western Europeans, you are so long in your disconnection from your own stories or laws of the land... At the critical time that we are now, globally, with climate change and the destruction of local ecosystems, when we think about what we have, to hold onto the future, to care for country, we have a Western European legal system that has no concept of those responsibilities.’

Professor Irene Watson

‘INFRACTIONS’ is a feature length video installation platforming the struggles of frontline Indigenous cultural workers against threats to more than 50% of the Northern Territory from shale gas fracking. As Australia becomes the leading exporter of planet-warming fossil fuels, mining companies seek to roll out toxic drilling rigs over vast underground flows. Elders warn of stories of manufactured consent, and Indigenous legal theorist Irene Watson explains the limits of the Western international legal system for planetary survival and justice.

Archie Moore’s ongoing interests include key signifiers of identity—skin, language, smell, home, flags—as well as the borders of intercultural understanding and misunderstanding, including the broader concerns of racism. For this project, Moore reflects on ideas of empirical evidence from the perspective of Indigenous Australia. Moore’s new commission, ‘Graph of Perennial Disadvantage’ 2021, begins by revisiting The Australian Constitution of 1901 that stated that Aboriginal people were to be no part of statistical information. Alongside this new work, Moore will recreate and update his ‘Family Tree’ 2018 wall drawing, a sprawling chalkboard style genealogy that complicates historical diagrams drawn up by anthropologists. The photographic series ‘Blood Fractions’ 2015 is also presented, exploring the politics of skin and the words used to classify, quantify and assign meaning based on race.
‘The Colour Chart’ is an artist-led research initiative created in dialogue with artist, curator and scholar Dr Léuli Eshraghi. It addresses issues of race hierarchy, exclusion and cultural illiteracy within Australia’s visual arts sector, which overwhelmingly impact First Peoples, and other racialised and marginalised communities.

It involves the collation and presentation of data visualising curatorial decision-making across Australia. It focuses on addressing the absence of First Peoples and racialised people in leadership, and the associated effects on employment, education, public programming, acquisitions and exhibition-making. The project aims to start a conversation about systemic racism and selective access in the arts by interrogating the executive, curatorial and governance appointments that enable individual voices to be heard, platformed or silenced.

Léuli Eshraghi’s work is celebrated internationally for its exploration of embodied knowledges, ceremonial-political practices, language renewal, and hopeful futures throughout the Great Ocean. Eshraghi is committed to developing new scholarship and strategies for complex intersectionality in leadership and curatorial practice.
Gerwyn Davies’s photographs explore the expression of Camp as an aesthetic strategy in photographic self-representation. They renew and affirm Camp’s queer critical capacities, moving beyond popular understandings of Camp as a gay sensibility, a mode of theatrical performativity, or an ironic inversion of taste.

‘Plush’ brings together works from the series ‘Utopia’, ‘Deluxe’, ‘Sunny Boys’, ‘Idols’ and ‘Bel-Air’ all produced over the last three years. In each series, the artist’s body is adorned, concealed and transformed by extravagant costuming constructed from readymade and mass-produced materials. They take on characteristics that reflect the architectural and symbolic properties of the locations they appear within—digital habitats created from altered and enhanced ‘real world’ spaces.

For Davies, Camp is a performative and aesthetic intensification that can be applied to images and the image-making process itself. Through character development, costume assemblage, performance and postproduction, his work makes evident the fabrications involved in the act of photography. They celebrate the incongruities that enable the body to resist identification and renegotiate the fixed conditions of normative visibility—or be hidden in plain sight.
Shortlisted from over 400 applications, the seven finalists of the 2021 John Fries Award present newly commissioned works, developed with the support of curator Miriam Kelly.

For more than a decade, the John Fries Award has recognised the contributions and achievements of early-career practitioners from across Australia and New Zealand. Profiling more than 120 contemporary artists since 2009, the Award matches the philanthropic support of the Fries family with the Copyright Agency’s enduring commitment to developing and sustaining artistic practices. The finalist exhibition acts as a closing celebration, with 2021 marking the conclusion of this longstanding prize.

ARTISTS
Darcey Bella Arnold
Daniel Jenatsch
Sara Morawetz
Ryan Presley
JD Reforma
Melanie Jame Wolf
Shevaun Wright

Curator: Miriam Kelly

JD Reforma, ‘Why should I be sad?’ 2019.
Site-specific installation of 275 motivational images sourced from the Instagram account of Britney Spears, printed on adhesive vinyl. Image courtesy: the artist.
Photograph: Zan Wimberley
‘Capture’ is the first comprehensive survey of Australian artist Sam Smith. It brings together four major projects from the past decade alongside a new commission that explores relationships between geology, technology and environment.

Working across video installation, sculpture and performance, Smith’s practice interrogates both the apparatuses of image-making and the framework for their reception. His practice provides new understandings of montage, narrative, and the camera instrument itself, while also addressing the question of image-making conventions in an era of digital production.

‘Capture’ covers the breadth of Smith’s practice to date. It includes works which combine experimental video and documentary practices by interweaving speculative fictions with historical data, alongside works that reveal the capacity of moving images to manipulate our sense of time and space and to absorb viewers into imaginary realms. Smith’s practice also includes live performances that combine film, video and photographic material into streams of collaged audio-visual vignettes.

Representing Smith’s largest project to date, ‘Capture’ 2021 is a two-channel video that seeks to understand the politics of extraction and labour that enable video camera manufacture and the environmental impact of technological production. The work begins with the dismantling of a digital video camera and then aims to trace its mineral elements back to their possible origins. It draws conclusions that address potential complicity in ecological damage through the use of technological tools and features footage from geological sites in Australia and the United Kingdom.

Curator: José Da Silva

Sam Smith’s new commission is assisted by Australia Council for the Arts and supported by the UNSW Mark Wainwright Analytical Centre, Solid State & Elemental Analysis Unit.
Kyoko Hashimoto is a Japanese-born Australian designer working across critical design, jewellery and body adornment. Concerned with environmentally sustainable practices, Hashimoto creates objects that address existential threats posed by globalised resource extraction and the particular materials that dominate urban experience: plastic, concrete and fossil fuels.

‘Bioregional Bodies’ brings together new and recent works made from locally sourced materials found in the Sydney Basin, a bioregion characterised by the presence of sandstone, oyster shells, and intriguingly, coal. A challenge to obtain, Hashimoto forages coal from decommissioned mines and carves it with diamond tools. By contextualising this fossil fuel within the typology of contemporary jewellery, Hashimoto prompts an examination of coal form different vantage points—political, ecological, aesthetic and temporal—and questions the role that coal plays in our economy and environment. In revaluing local materials, Hashimoto’s jewellery questions the design, making and manufacturing paradigms of our time, as well as the ethical complexities of local versus global resources.
Adelaide-based ceramicist Kirsten Coelho works in porcelain, producing reduction fired forms and vessels that fuse the precious and the everyday. Coelho’s forms often reinterpret utilitarian objects and draw from the material culture of ceramics, glass and metal wares. In their installation, Coelho creates ensembles and grouping of forms that play with shadow, translucency and abstraction. The groupings also act as allegories for ideas of convergence and transformation, reflecting the medium’s long history of trade and exchange, the movement of people and the changing function of objects in our everyday lives. Recent works have also explored the surface possibilities caused by the introduction of metal compounds such as iron oxide that create delicate signs of aging.

‘The Return’ brings together a number of new and recent works inspired by Grecian and Roman artefacts and architectural remnants. Coelho’s forms are suggestive of columns, statues and plinths, creating elusive modern ruins. It includes the installation ‘Ithaca’ 2020 inspired by Homer’s epic tale ‘The Odyssey’ (900-700 BC) and the ancient Greek island seen by Odysseus on his return home after a ten-year journey. Alongside this work, ‘Passages’ 2019 considers physical and metaphorical changes to home and material culture abstracted by time and different historical and cultural contexts.
Humans have historically co-inhabited sites with companion species. Many were always present, but many non-human animals have also been mobilised by the human, often introduced into foreign spaces. The intentions for these actions by the human carry complex contradictions — in our encounters with birds we find a hybrid of anthropocentrism and affection for the way animals have been imagined in relation to the human.

These histories and affects are layered, and knotted: colonial, migratory, nationalistic, anthropogenic.

'To companion a companion' is an exhibition of new work by Argentinean-Australian artist Fernando do Campo that proposes the human as the companion species to birds. It proposes companionship as an artistic strategy through painting and archiving, listening and non-verbal forms of responding, and plural histories. It includes the painting series '365 Daily Bird Lists (January 3rd 2019–January 2nd 2020)' which presents a year-long archive of every bird perceived by the artist, alongside the video 'Pishing in the archive' 2021 that documents forms of non-verbal communication with the history of house sparrows in the Americas via Green-wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, and the performance lecture 'The archive of we' 2021 discussing these knotted histories.


Presented in partnership with Contemporary Art Tasmania.
‘I became other. I became one of the wearied, dusty faces from across the border. And although there was no boundary between us, and we were all citizens of one country, suddenly an invisible border of horror was drawn around me that made it impossible to get out.’

Khadim Ali

In his largest Australian solo exhibition to date, Hazara artist Khadim Ali explores the normalisation of war and the experience of refugees through a series of poetic installations and paintings. ‘Invisible Border’ comprises sound installation, miniature painting and a monumental 9-metre-long tapestry, hand woven by a community of Hazara women who have lost male family members in war.

Ali’s interest in tapestries developed soon after his parents’ home in Quetta, Pakistan was destroyed by suicide bombers. Amongst the rubble and debris left from the blast, a collection of rugs and weavings remained the only thing intact: miraculously able to withstand the reign of terror inflicted upon his family and community. In this new large-scale tapestry, and other works, Ali explores the impact of war, trauma and displacement drawing parallels from the Book of Shahnameh, a Persian literary masterpiece comprising of 50,000 couplets and written between c. 977 and 1010 CE.

Just like the many great mythic tales in the Shahnameh, Ali’s intricate works depict stories of demons and angels, conquest and war through the lens of the persecuted Hazara community. Expressing the profound grief, trauma and loss experienced at the hands of modern-day warfare, ‘Invisible Border’ is a necessary and vital exhibition during a time of political propaganda, violence, and fear.

Curator: Liz Nowell

An Institute of Modern Art touring exhibition
This survey of Melbourne-based jeweller and maker Blanche Tilden reveals her remarkable and critically acclaimed practice, celebrated for its transformation of everyday and industrial materials into aesthetically refined, conceptually rich wearable objects. Tilden has a unique approach to her materials, in particular glass, which she explores both as a material for jewellery making and deploys as metaphor for the connections between making, industry, the wearable object and the body. Her fascination with mechanical devices, fuelled by a desire to understand how things work, continually inspires her work.

This first comprehensive survey of Tilden's career includes historical and contemporary works loaned from numerous public and private collections. Tilden has reinterpreted previous work to create new forms that expand on her preoccupations with value, mechanical movement, and industrial and architectural uses of glass, translating something of the macro immensity of the built and material world to the intimacy of the jewellery object.

Curator: Jason Smith
A Geelong Gallery touring exhibition

Izabela Pluta, 'Variable depth, shallow water' 2020.
Izabela Pluta is a Polish-born, Australian artist, who interprets and re-conceptualises the function of photographic images by fragmenting, translating and reconfiguring things that are both photographed and found. Recent works have used outdated atlases and pictorial dictionaries to reconsider systems of navigation and land demarcations, creating works that query the concept of territory and deep time. Pluta has also drawn on experiences of deep-sea diving, incorporating imagery from underwater ruins and submerged rock formations, and used camera-less printing processes to echo the shape of land and ocean.

At the centre of this exhibition is the new installation ‘Variable depth, shallow water’ 2021 that visits the underwater limestone rock formation known as The Azure Window on the island of Gozo in Malta. Pluta was drawn to the site as one of the world’s most spectacular expressions of geological time and investigated the changing location with images, video, objects and sound. The work includes corrupted data filmed using a drone lost at sea and subsequently retrieved. It also incorporates handmade contact negatives of unhinged atlases and acrylic artefacts recast from the depths of where the Pacific Ocean and the East China Sea meet.
The Uluru Statement from the Heart is a call from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for constitutional change and structural reform in their relationship with Australia—a relationship based on fairness, truth, justice and self-determination where Indigenous cultures can flourish, and the Australian nation can reach a fuller potential.

Throughout 2021, UNSW Galleries will stage conversations and events connected to The Uluru Statement from the Heart. At special times throughout the year, the Uluru Statement will be made available for viewing at the Galleries.
At UNSW Galleries, supporting Australian artists and designers is at the core of all our activities. In recent years, we have seen a contraction in public funding for the arts, and the sector faces increasing obstacles resulting from the global COVID-19 health emergency. Now more than ever, UNSW Galleries is committed to supporting Australian practitioners by investing in the development of new works and supporting the production of ambitious new commissions.

The UNSW Galleries Commissioners Circle provides much-needed funding directly to mid-career artists and designers alongside unprecedented access to facilities at UNSW Art & Design to make and exhibit new works.

The 2021–2023 Commissioners Circle includes six major commissions. Projects will premiere as part of the UNSW Galleries exhibition program and are supported by digital engagement, publishing and touring to ensure their longevity and impact.

In 2021, we are supporting the development of new works by Archie Moore and in January 2022, new works by Elizabeth Pulie premiere as part of a mid-career survey.

Visit unsw.to/galleries for information on how you can support this initiative.
A showcase of graduate contemporary art and design, the A&D Annual launches the next generation of artists, designers, makers and digital media creators. It encompasses installation, animation, digital media and film, visual communication and graphic design, painting, sculpture, photography, printmaking, sound, furniture and jewellery. This year, more than 150 emerging practitioners will display their work at UNSW Galleries and online at unsw.to/annual. UNSW Galleries is grateful for the support of our 2021 program partners and presented with the support of Bridging Hope Charity Foundation.
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—UNSW GALLERIES
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—ACCESS
Please contact us for information on access to exhibitions and programs for visitors with disability.

—COVID SAFE
UNSW Galleries has implemented a number of safety and hygiene measures to keep our audiences safe. We are following NSW Government guidelines and continually update procedures as necessary. Visit the website for details.

Gerwyn Davies, 'LA #2 (Norms)' 2020. Archival inkjet print. Image courtesy: the artist; Michael Reid Gallery, Berlin and Jan Murphy Gallery Protege, Brisbane
UNSW GALLERIES — PROGRAM 2021