

NEXUS|2022

Laura MITCHELL (PhD) | Brenton ROSSOW (PhD) | Harrison SEE (PhD) |
Xinwei XU (PhD) | Steven BAITZ (MA)

Nexus|2022 showcases the creative works of candidates undertaking Masters and PhD research in Visual Arts in the School of Arts & Humanities at ECU.

Curated by Dr Nicola KAYE and Associate Professor Lyndall ADAMS

Gallery25

Opening Event: 10 August 5pm–7pm
To be officially opened by Dr Nicola KAYE and Associate Professor Lyndall ADAMS at 5.45pm
Exhibition dates: 9 August - 1 September 2022
ACDC Floor Talk: 24 Aug 12.30–1.30pm
Gallery opening hours: Tuesday to Friday 10am–4pm
Sunday 21 Aug 9am–2pm
Building 10, 2 Bradford St, Mount Lawley

ECU Galleries acknowledge the traditional custodians, the Whadjuk Noongar people, and elders past, present and emerging. We pay our respects for the great privilege of living, making and researching on these unceded lands.

ECU Galleries



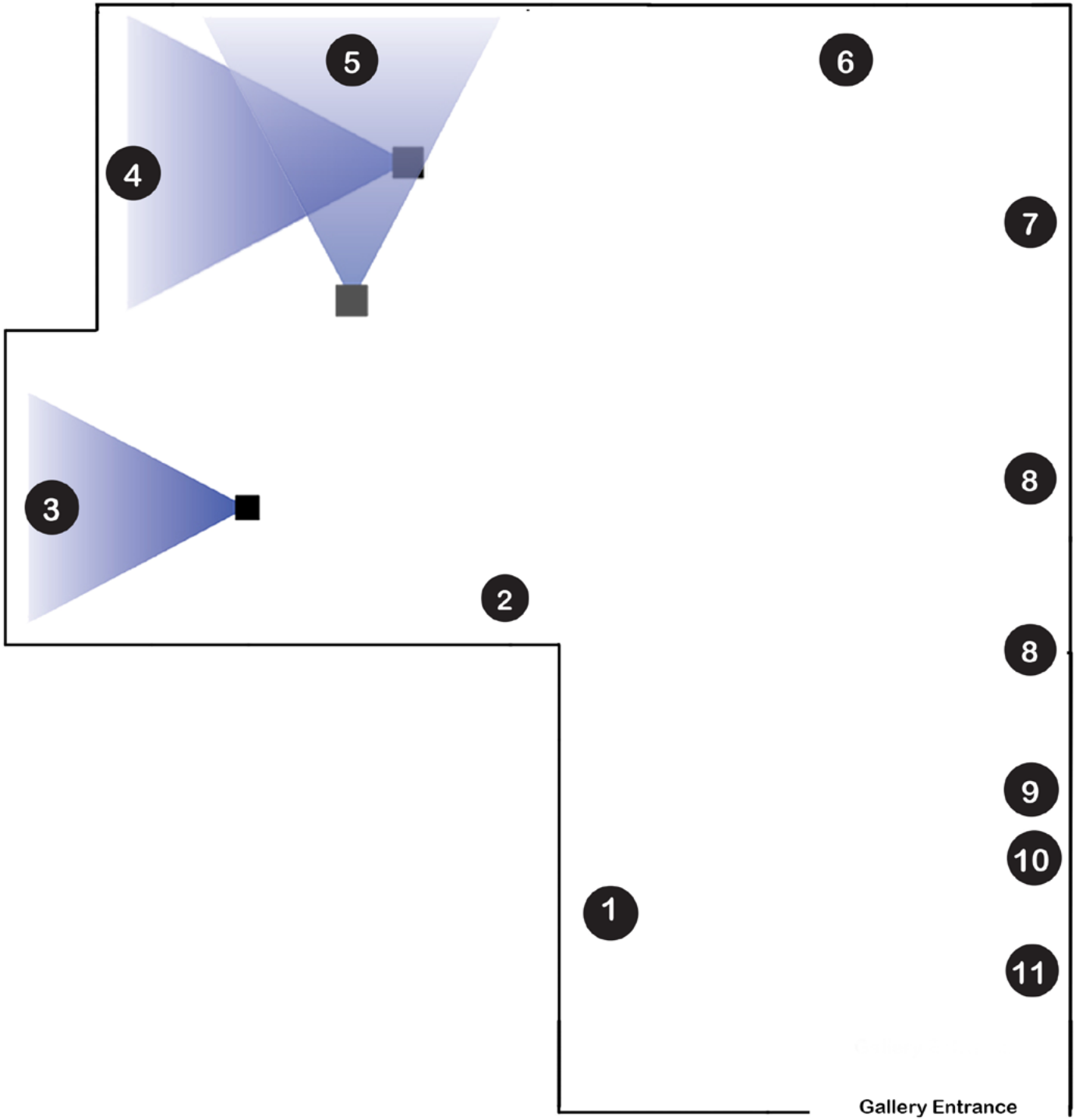
Curatorial statement

Dr **Nicola KAYE** and Associate Professor **Lyndall ADAMS**

The NEXUS series encompasses the showcasing of the artworks by higher degree by research candidates (HDR) and staff in the School of Arts & Humanities. Specifically highlighting HDR candidatures NEXUS|2022 is the fourth in the series. Our curatorial rationale for this iteration is focused on peer mentoring Masters by Research and Doctor of Philosophy candidates in various aspects of professional exhibition practice. The candidates are required to submit an application containing an artist's statement, biography, and up to five artworks for selection. As a curatorial team we then bring the works together in installation and present them as a cohesive whole. This whole may not reflect the candidates vision, which is the point. Presenting the works differently to these novice researchers is a great privilege and one that we do not take on lightly. A high degree of trust and respect is required from both sides. We hope they and the public the works are designed for are surprised and delighted.

The artworks selected for the exhibition are not required to be resolved but do need to reflect the research undertaken by the candidate. Part of the artwork **'Iterative Boat Studies'** (2020–2021) by Harrison See (PhD candidate) for example was chosen because it sketches an installation concept speculating on how a particular set of works might be installed for his final exhibition scheduled for 2022. Brent Rossow's (PhD candidate) artwork similarly exhibits short excerpts from a much larger animated film. Here we use installation practice unfamiliar to Rossow presenting the work as an immersive graphic novel, emphasising the complex fracturing of narrative. The ambient cacophony overlays the entire exhibition with sounds of a foreboding contemporary Australian: crickets, wind, stormy rain, birds, bodies moving through the bush, and human meanderings and rantings. Laura Mitchell's painting, **Retrosurbia: homage to Warhol** (2020–21) epitomises her PhD research focused on critiquing consumer culture in order to highlight what we may have jettisoned in our obsessive desire for the new. The earliest in their PhD candidature is Xinwei Xu. Our installation of **Unread The Diamond Sutra: emptiness in materiality**, (2022) references the cave in which the Diamond Sutra was stored, the musicological and taxonomic context in which it now resided. We also emulate calligraphic with its lyrical undulating rhythmic materiality. We used Steven Baitz's (Masters by research) artwork as a bridge that ties the walk through the gallery space together. The grids punctuate the installation, emphasising the architectural space to carry the viewer with peripheral vision.

There are many conversations created by this installation, we would like to highlight some, such as the reference to the Australian landscape—architectural sites and the persistent call of the bush, imagined and real, constructed and poetic. Metaphors and analogies run through all of the works. There is no overarching media or style, and yet the concerns link. It is a testament to the breadth and depth of the HDRs in the School of Arts & Humanities.



Artist's Statements and Biographies

Laura MITCHELL (PhD)

Artist's statement

Mitchell's PhD research involves expanded painting as a way to critique consumerism and its impact on place, space and collective memory. As with contemporary musical applications, Mitchell recontextualises mashup methods for use in visual arts media. Philosopher Zygmunt Bauman's term liquid modernity provides theoretical framework for discussing consumerism in our post-internet, GFC and COVID-19 climate, characterised by economic austerity, constant change and uncertainty. Mashup methods are applied to expanded painting in Mitchell's research through the juxtaposition or fusion of disparate visual elements, including imagery, media, genre, techniques and tools. The word mashup is a useful container for many associated terms—sampling, remix, collage, recombination—that provide relevant visual methods for reflecting and critiquing our infinitely reconfigurable post-internet culture. Mitchell uses the term retroscapes, a tool used in retrobranding to sell commodity through the power of nostalgia, as source material for the works. The intent is a conflation of anachronistic imagery, from the street and the ether, rendered in mashup of digital and tactile, traditional and contemporary paint and expanded media techniques. Outmoded suburban streetscape imagery is replicated in a Warhol-esque way, referencing the explosion of planned communities that began in the 1950s and evolved into contemporary urban sprawl. Vintage and online slogans and imagery are recombined in reflection of the way things used to be and way things are now: the evolution of virtual meetings, physical travel restrictions, and fear of mortality as COVID-19 conditions continue to evolve and redefine the way we live. The interface in these works between vintage consumerist images and current social media feeds is intended to splice fictional retroscapes with current conditions. The intention being to highlight the universal human desire to escape—from the dystopic feeling to utopian mythologies located in the past, present or future.

Bio

Mitchell is a US-Australian contemporary artist who works between these two locales. She holds an MFA in Visual Arts and Design from Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia, USA. Mitchell's works have been internationally exhibited and collected. In 2017 she completed a dual artist residency with A.I.R. Gallery, NYC where she is a member and Fremantle Arts Centre, WA. This project resulted in another DLGSC supported project: an inaugural exhibition at PS Artspace as a co-founder of Destabilising Walls artists collective. After a 2019 solo exhibition at ECU Galleries Spectrum Project Space (SPS). Mitchell was one of three artist-researchers nationally to receive a Postgraduate Travel Bursary for ACUADS 2019. Additional recent exhibitions include Perth Fringe World 2020 at SPS and 2021 at Gallery25, recent acquisitions include The Center for Art + Environment (CA+E) at the Nevada Museum of Art, USA with A.I.R. Gallery, NYC.

Brenton ROSSOW (PhD)

Artist's statement

Brenton Rossow is an interdisciplinary artist, educator and filmmaker who has a passion for telling stories through photography, video, and mixed media. Focusing upon people from diverse cultures and social groups, Brenton has made several short films, such as *Roy's Princess* (2016), *Camphor – The Story of Shanghai's Tree People* (2016), *The Junk That Ate Kwinana* (2017), and *Clouds and 4 cigarettes* (2017). As a filmmaker in Western Australia, Brenton has been involved in several creative projects, including the 2018 SeeMe Festival at the State Theatre Centre of WA, The Rockingham Nyoongar Stories Project 2019, the West Australian Museum 2019 Migrant Stories Project, the City of Kwinana Business Development Project 2020, and the Moorditij Footprints Project 2021-22. Brenton's research papers on Taoist body cultivation practices and the anthropocosmic perspective in film were presented at the Revelation Film Festival's academic conferences in 2018 and 2020, and in 2022 he was awarded a grant from Rev and The City of Vincent to make a film about Noongar families who grew up in East Perth in the 60s and 70s. His creative works can be found in *The Emerson Review*, *Spectrum Literary Journal*, *The Perch: An Arts and Literary Journal*, among other publications.

Biography

Exploring elements of the puzzle film genre, this practice-led research consisting of a series of animations, examines liminality and rebirth through human and nonhuman incarnations and anthropocosmic and anthropocentric modalities in Shanghai and the Kwinana bushland. Drawing upon Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949) and adapting Taoist, Zen and other spiritual practices, this visual autoethnographic research aims to apply experimental filmmaking techniques to create a feature length film that draws awareness to the illegal dumping of trash and the Anthropocene. Using a combination of animation, scripted drama, and poetic montage, *The Junksaw Puzzle* investigates cinematic devices used in films such as *Sans Soleil* (1983), *The Holy Mountain* (1973), and *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* (2010) to express themes of trauma, alienation, metamorphosis and regeneration, while incorporating key elements of the puzzle film genre, including a non-linear narrative structure and a fragmented spatio-temporal reality. Studying phenomenological experiences within practices such as Guo Lin Qigong, Christian prayer, and trance, this project aims to encourage dialogues about the destruction of the environment, and draw attention to illegal dumping and anthropocosmic worldviews. This series of 3 short animations written, directed and produced by Brenton Rossow and animated by Roham Ahari are works in progress that are part of a PhD research project that consists of feature length experimental film and an accompanying exegesis.

3

Brent Rossow, **Blue Paradise The Puppet Master of K-Town**, 2022, Animation, 4 minute loop

4

Brent Rossow, **Pete The Christian, The Creature, and The Crystal**, 2022, Animation, 4 minute loop

5

Brent Rossow, **An Anthropocosmic Journey Into Blue Paradise**, 2022, 2022, Animation, 4 minute loop

Harrison SEE (PhD)

Artist's Statement

My research examines cross-cultural collaborative practice with a focus on storytelling through figurative painting. This practice-led research understands collaboration as a reciprocity of verbal, written and material exchanges through which meaning is negotiated and renegotiated intersubjectively. These re/negotiations accommodate a plurality of meaning, do not require consensus or compromise, and embrace difference as a precondition for any collaborative exchange. Collaboration took place between numerous local and international artists, embracing plurality and difference as an opportunity to disrupt and extend our artistic practices, as well as broader notions of cultural exchange. At times collaborators and I worked side-by-side on the same canvas, while other times we sent and received paintings via post. In both cases artists negotiated what emerged on the canvas together, each collaborator bringing with them the potential to explore and transform figurative elements across each iteration.

Across many of these collaborations representations and stories concerning boats continued to resurface, bringing with them a plurality of significance to explore from leisure, travel and discovery, to refuge, diaspora and colonialism. Each reiteration prompted an intersubjective exploration of what boats signify to those collaborators involved, and eventually boats became analogous to the notion of cross-cultural exchange itself. In-between and in-response to collaborative encounters, I continued to iteratively extend how boats could be renegotiated as this element became an important touchstone to track how my studio practice shifted throughout collaboration. The boat studies are examples of such iterative extensions from an early stage of my PhD, many of which serving as catalysts for much larger paintings.

Biography

Harrison See is a Perth-born contemporary painter who completed his bachelor of Visual Arts at Edith Cowan University (ECU) while receiving the 2016 Louise Macfie Painting Prize. The following year See held his first solo exhibition in Perth, before travelling to Shanghai to undertake his honours research funded by a New Colombo Plan Scholarship. Upon his return See was awarded First Class Honours before travelling back to China for his first artist's residency in Xiamen. Since 2017, he has continued to undertake numerous solo shows, collaborative exhibitions, and artist's residencies across both Western Australia and China. More recently, See received an Ellenbrook-Swan Art Award, and was the co-recipient of a Yagan Square Digital Tower Screen Initiative grant (Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority) and an Arts U-15k grant (DLGSC). At present, See is a PhD candidate at ECU's School of Arts and Humanities (SAH) funded by a Research Training Program Scholarship.

- 8 Harrison See, 2020-2021, Installation concept for '**Iterative Boat Studies No. 1-9**', acrylic on cartridge paper, 29.7 x 42 cm (each page)
- 9 Harrison See, 2020-2021, **Sweet Tooth II**, oil on plywood, 40 x 50cm
- 10 Harrison See, 2020-2021, **Sweet Tooth IV**, oil on plywood, 50 x 40cm
- 11 Harrison See, 2021, **Sweet Tooth (revisited)**, oil on canvas, 91 x 121cm

Xinwei XU (PhD)

Artist's Statement

My practice-led research project focuses on the Buddhist concept of emptiness and its paradoxical relationship to materiality. It is informed by the study of the non-linear temporality of objects. This research is based on the finding and repairing of the earliest dated printed book known as The Diamond Sutra (11th May, 868), now preserved in the British Library. Scholarship reveals this sacred text as one of the most influential Mahāyāna scriptures in East Asia and it is noteworthy that it was found in the 'Caves of a Thousand Buddhas', which was a major Buddhist centre from the 4th to 14th centuries. The patron of the book whose name appears in the printed colophon is Wang Jie and he dates the production of the book, in our terms as the 11th May 868.

My work for Nexus|22 focuses on the materiality created by absence along with an imaginary daily written conversation between the patron Wang Jie and myself. My central aim is to reveal that The Diamond Sutra embodies compressed layers of time which indicates a non-linear temporal structure. This non-linear temporal structure contributes to the communication of the past and the present while partly explains the paradoxical materiality discussed by Buddha and Subhūti in the text. The work explores how particular temporal structure simultaneously constructs emptiness and materiality.

The process: This work will be achieved through a daily practice which spans 100 days starting on the Feb 25th – June 4th 2022. Everyday upon waking the artist will read the Diamond Sutra and, immediately after the reading, generate an image – utilising a range of media, including ink on rice paper, photography and digital printing. This process will be a form of active meditation whereby an imaginary conversation will occur between the artist and the patron Wang Jie, and ultimately, when exhibited, with the audience.

Biography

Xu Xinwei's art practice is based on her deep interest in Chinese historical media and her identity as a researcher. She also focuses on the missing of meanings in transcultural events.

Xu Xinwei is a translator and a researcher in Design Studies in China. She is currently a PhD candidate at Edith Cowan University conducting a practice-led research project which researches the Buddhist concept of emptiness and its paradoxical relationship to materiality through the key work, the Diamond Sutra (11th May, 868). Previously, she worked as a lecturer in Jiangxi Fenglin College of Foreign Economy and Trade. She also works as a translator with a focus on translating key works from English Arts and Design Studies. Translated works include: Gray, C., & Burleigh-Motley, M. (2019). *The Russian Experiment in Art, 1863-1922*; Steadman, P. (2019). *Vermeer's camera: uncovering the truth behind the masterpieces* and Bailey, M. (2020). *Starry night: Van Gogh at the asylum*.

1

Xinwei Xu, 2022, **Unread The Diamond Sutra: emptiness in materiality**, ink on rice paper, dimensions variable

Steve **BAITZ** (MA)

Artist's Statement

'My moving body counts in the visible world, participates in it; that is why I can direct my body in the visible. Moreover, it is also true that vision depends on movement' (Merleau-Ponty, 2007, p. 353).

My photographic practice-led research investigates walking, vision and physical movement through specific places, such as parks. I work in both digital and analogue formats using a range of cameras, digital, 6x6 cm analogue and Holgas, as they provide less control and a sense of play and unpredictability. My artwork combines multiple images to evoke a sense of complexity; circumventing the camera's natural linear or geometrical perspective as I capture walking and movement through Hyde Park, in Perth, Western Australia.

This practice-led research investigates the way people engage with the park at different times of the year, and how the park itself changes through the various seasons. The images are constructed to represent a full but fleeting impression of looking at the Hyde Park vista without intent, whilst the photographer is also strolling through the park, allowing the senses to provide a general impression of the Hyde Park vista.

The works are constructed purposefully large, so to require the viewer to move around the work to view the whole image. To further enable this, there is movement of the camera both laterally and horizontally, movement of the people and animals being photographed and finally movement of the viewer, through time, to absorb the image in its totality.

Biography

Steve was born in Zimbabwe where he developed a keen interest in photography during his early teens. This interest stayed with him through a successful career and travel which took him from Zimbabwe to South Africa, Canada and then in 1986, Australia.

Steve became exposed to art generally and academically through his wife Joanne whilst she completed a PhD in Art History. Steve enrolled in a Bachelor of Creative Industries at ECU and exposure to the aesthetics and history of art and photography revitalised his lifelong interest.

Steve has combined his passion for photography and art to pursue a Master of Arts by Research. His practice-led research examines how movement, walking and vision can be depicted through photography. Previous PLR was shown in Gallery 25 at Edith Cowan University during Nexus|2022 in the form of a triptych also designed to promote the feeling of walking.

6

Steve Baitz, 2021, **Hyde Park - September 2021**, digital photographs on adhesive film, 311.3 x 61cm

7

Steve Baitz, 2022, **Hyde Park - February 2022**, digital photographs on adhesive film, 355.6 x 76.2cm